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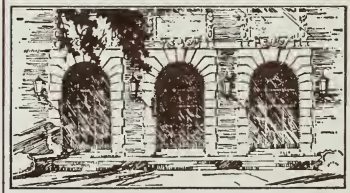
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From a scarce Print published in the Year 1765

Eng. by A.H. Duncanson

REV. JOHN WESLEY M.A.

Aged 63

THE LIFE
OF THE
REV. JOHN WESLEY, A. M.
FELLOW OF LINCOLN COLLEGE, OXFORD;
IN WHICH ARE INCLUDED,
THE LIFE OF HIS BROTHER,
THE REV. CHARLES WESLEY, A. M.
STUDENT OF CHRIST CHURCH;
AND MEMOIRS OF THEIR FAMILY:

COMPREHENDING AN ACCOUNT OF
The Great Revival of Religion,
IN WHICH THEY WERE THE FIRST AND CHIEF INSTRUMENTS.

BY THE REV. HENRY MOORE,
ONLY SURVIVING TRUSTEE OF MR. WESLEY'S MSS.

According to this time it shall be said, "WHAT HATH GOD WROUGHT!"
NUMBERS xxiii, 23.

"Not by might, nor by power, but by MY SPIRIT," saith the Lord of Hosts.
ZECHARIAH iv, 6.

Venturæque hiemis memores, æstate laborem
Experiuntur, et in medium quæsitæ reponunt.

VIRGILII GEORG.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

NEW-YORK,

PUBLISHED BY N. BANGS AND J. EMORY, FOR THE METHODIST
EPISCOPAL CHURCH, AT THE CONFERENCE OFFICE,
13 CROSEY-STREET.

Azor Hoyt, Printer.

1826.



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PREFACE.

MR. WESLEY is universally allowed to have been an extraordinary man. His long life, spent in great and uninterrupted labours, and his eminent success as a minister of the Gospel, in this and other countries, mark him out as a highly distinguished character.

However, like all eminent men, he paid to the public the usual tax of censure. Many were his enemies, and many the aspersions thrown out against him. But he rose above them all; and the general voice at length confessed, that he was free from vice, and a man of real virtue and piety. His death put an end even to that favourite accusation, "that he was amassing riches by his influence over his societies:" For he died worth nothing except his books, and left even these burdened with a heavy debt. It is therefore reasonable to suppose, that a History of the Life and Labours of this great and good man will be acceptable to the public, and especially to the truly religious of every denomination.

Some, who have been acquainted with Mr. Wesley, and have read his printed Journals, may perhaps think, that no other account of him is needful; and that his own writings are abundantly sufficient to enable the public to form a just estimate both of the man, and of the great work in which he was engaged. This was the decided and avowed opinion of the compiler of these volumes, immediately after the death of their venerable subject. Mr. Wesley had so regularly detailed the occurrences and labours of his whole life, and his doctrines and motives so largely appear in his own writings, that it was feared the subject, if undertaken by any other, would, as Cicero said concerning Cæsar's Commentaries, but mar the beauty and weaken the effect of the whole. This opinion, however, was soon relinquished. It was quickly announced, that a Life of Mr. Wesley, by Mr. John Hampson, junior, afterward Rector of Sunderland, was then in the press. He had intended to publish it during the life of the Founder of Methodism; on whose unexpected decease, all publicity was given to the intended work. Mr. Hampson's motives could not be mistaken. He had been in connexion with Mr. Wesley for some years as a preacher of the Gospel, having been introduced by his father, an old Itinerant, and received with that charity, but not with that caution, which Mr. Wesley usually displayed. Indeed, this young man was the first instance of a preacher's irregular admittance into the

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Connexion. Mr. Wesley had cause to be dissatisfied with the father for a considerable time before, on account of his avowed democratic principles;* and, in the issue, had still less cause for satisfaction in the son. But he remembered that Divine direction, "*Judge nothing before the time,*" and behaved to them with his wonted kindness.

That "time" soon arrived. THE DEED OF DECLARATION, which is now well known, will be considered in its proper place: By it the Chapels throughout the Methodist Connexion obtained a legal settlement, one hundred Preachers being enrolled by name, in the Court of Chancery, as THE CONFERENCE, to whom the right of appointing persons to occupy the pulpits was, by the Trust-Deeds of those chapels, specially secured. In filling up that document, the names of both the Hampsons, father and son, were omitted. This greatly offended the elder Hampson, who strove to make a party against the Deed; and the son naturally partook of the feeling in which his father indulged. But that attempt failed; and Mr. Wesley affectionately consented to receive an apology at the following Conference, chiefly through the intercession of Mr. Fletcher, so that the father and son were again appointed to circuits. The elder Hampson, however, departed from his circuit before the end of the year, and accepted an offer to superintend a school in the county of Kent. About the same time the young man listened to a proposal from some pious gentlemen, who had formed an association for introducing religious young men into the ministry in the Church of England; and having received the rudiments of a classical education in Mr. Wesley's school at Kingswood, he was sent by them to Oxford. They both addressed letters of resignation to Mr. Wesley, which were read to him in course, by the writer of these Memoirs. The father wrote under a strong feeling of resentment, and displayed many of his old principles. The young man wrote with more mildness, and expressed some grateful acknowledgments, of the many benefits which he had received; but it was very apparent that he thoroughly participated in the irritation of the father. Quite enough was said by both, about the arbitrary power exercised by Mr. Wesley;† who took little notice of these letters at first, only saying to me, "You see the strength of the cause." But he was afterwards much moved, when he considered the mischief that might ensue; and said with some warmth, "I have

* It is not exactly certain to what extent the Biographer intended this phrase to be applied. It is probable, however, that it has no reference to any regular system of representative government, such as is established by our own happy constitution; but to certain loose, disorganizing principles of a very different character, which are known, in some instances, to have prevailed in England.—AM. ED.

† Mr. Wesley's *arbitrary power*, so called, was exercised, from first to last, in keeping his associates to that *work of God*, that wholly religious design and employment, which they all professed to embrace as their duty and calling, when they joined him: And from this he certainly would not consent that any of them should swerve. In every thing else, he was, even by their own account, a father, and a friend.

been too tender of these men. *You should have opposed my receiving them again. You know I halt on that foot."*

That Mr. Hampson's *LIFE of Mr. Wesley* would not be a friendly one, was easily augured; and the perusal of it fully justified the supposition. It was the "*amende honorable*" made to the Church into which, when he wrote, he was about to enter as a Minister. But, I believe, none of those from whom he had departed expected to see laboured dissertations introduced into the Memoir, with an evident purpose to overthrow those doctrines of the Gospel which he had formerly professed to believe, and the power of which he must have professed to experience, before he could be admitted into that Connexion of which Mr. Wesley was the head! He was constrained, however, as all others have been, to acknowledge the great virtues and talents of the man, whom it was the design of his book to lessen in the estimation of the public.

Mr. Wesley had devised by Will all his Manuscripts to "Thomas Coke, Dr. Whitehead, and Henry Moore, to be burnt, or published, as they should see good." At the period of his decease, Dr. Coke was in America, and Mr. Moore was fully engaged as an Itinerant. Dr. Whitehead resided in London, and was at that time a Local Preacher, acting under the direction of Mr. J. Rogers, the Superintendent of the Circuit.

Dr. Whitehead had been an Itinerant Preacher for some years. He then married and settled in business at Bristol. From thence he removed to Wandsworth, in the vicinity of London, and opened a school. He there became acquainted with the late Dr. Lettsom, two of whose sons were his pupils. Under the Doctor's direction, he studied physic, and by his recommendation he obtained from the late Mr. Barclay, an eminent Quaker, the appointment of guardian to his son, who was pursuing his studies at Leyden in Holland. Mr. Whitehead himself at the same time completed his own studies in that University, and returned to England with the diploma of Doctor of Medicine. He had, some time before, joined the Society of Quakers; and, by their influence chiefly, he obtained the situation of Physician to the London Dispensary. After a few years, he again joined the Methodist Society, and was received by Mr. Wesley with his usual kindness.

The rumour of the intended publication of Mr. Hampson's *Memoirs* decided Mr. Wesley's friends to publish a *Life* of him, for the benefit of that charity to which he had bequeathed all his literary property. At a meeting held by the Preachers for the purpose of giving effect to this determination, at which Mr. Wesley's Executors, and other friends, were present, it was proposed by Mr. Rogers, that Dr. Whitehead should compile a *Life* of Mr. Wesley, from his published Journals, and other Documents in print and manuscript, for which he should receive One

Hundred Guineas, as a remuneration for his trouble and loss of time. To this proposal, Dr. Whitehead cheerfully acceded, and it was unanimously adopted as the resolution of the Meeting. The manuscripts were also deposited with him, under an express stipulation that they should be examined according to the Will of the Testator, previously to any of them being published. At the following Conference this agreement was confirmed in every particular, and Dr. Whitehead was appointed a member of the Book Committee in London.

He had now an opportunity of proving the sincerity of his attachment to his old friends, and to the cause which, with various changes, he had first and last espoused. This opportunity he lost. His reputed friends considered his engagement respecting the life of Mr. Wesley, as the effect of weakness : and he was told, “that he ought not to regard it ; that the work would produce a great sum of money ; that he might realize *Two Thousand Pounds* by it ; and that, to be thus employed for so small a sum as *One Hundred*, would be an act of injustice to himself and his family.” The Doctor unhappily listened to this advice, and fell into the temptation. To the astonishment of those who were immediately concerned in this affair, he declared, “that he would write the Life of Mr. Wesley *as an independent man* ; that the copy-right should be solely his own ; and that, if it should be printed at the Office of the Conference, he would have half of the clear profits.” But that which constituted his indelible dishonour, was his absolute refusal to suffer the manuscripts, with which he had been intrusted, to be examined according to the Will of the Testator. The effrontery and injustice of the man utterly confounded those with whom he had entered into the former engagements.

It must needs be, considering what human nature is, *that offences should come*. Every religious society, however pure in its origin, has had, after some time, its offended and prejudiced members. The Doctor’s advisers were of this description. He had listened to them, and departed from simplicity and rectitude. They now embarked with him in the design to which they had given birth, and formed themselves into a “Committee to advise, support, and defend Dr. Whitehead.” A party was thus formed, which troubled and divided the Society in London for a considerable time : and many were hurt by the contention. The Preachers and those who supported them in their just and benevolent views, laboured to bring the Doctor to a better mind ; but their efforts were in vain. Nothing but a suit in Chancery would do, and this could not be safely undertaken, without the consent of the Conference. No course therefore seemed to remain, except that of publishing a Life of Mr. Wesley, to be compiled by the two remaining Trustees of his Manuscripts. This was accordingly performed, without the smallest

personal emolument to them, and with a success which was beyond their most sanguine expectations.

Nothing was introduced into that Life to give even a hint of the unhappy dispute which had arisen. It was not expected, however, that Dr. Whitehead would follow this pacific example. His character had been awfully compromised; and, under a feeling of the need of self-defence, he lost no opportunity of defaming the Preachers in the Memoirs which he gave to the world. Although a known Dissenter in principle, he assumed the language and sentiments of a High-Church man, and laboured in that way to exalt the character of Mr. Charles Wesley, at the expense of his brother, and of the Itinerant Preachers. He is particularly sarcastic and bitter in treating of Mr. Wesley's giving a regular ministry, by Ordination with imposition of hands, to the Societies in America after their political independency had been acknowledged by the mother-country. Among gamblers, it is said, the loser is considered as having a privilege to rail: the Doctor had a feeling somewhat similar to this, added to the party spirit by which he was influenced. He had been much pleased with Mr. Wesley's exercise of that power in his Societies; and had applied to him, through the compiler of the present work, requesting to receive ordination from his hands, and to be appointed a Superintendent. He engaged, in that case, to relinquish the Dispensary and his medical practice, and to come out into the work of the ministry as at the beginning. As I felt an ardent wish to serve my friend in what I esteemed to be his best interests, I accordingly informed Mr. Wesley of the Doctor's request, adding my own to it. Mr. Wesley replied to every part of my letter except that which concerned the Doctor; on this point not a word was written. Hoping, with the Doctor, that the omission was to be attributed to forgetfulness, I wrote again, and strongly repeated the former request. The answer was as before,—a total silence on that point. The Doctor's disappointment was extreme. I believe, at that time, he sincerely desired to resume what he considered to be the call of God, given in his best days; but he would not undertake the work again without Ordination. Mr. Wesley loved the man; but he knew his versatility, and would not trust him again with so important an office.

I have now lying before me a minute account of all these transactions, the publication of which I hope will never be required. It is needful, however, that I should state thus much respecting the Doctor, as I shall be obliged to animadvert on many parts of the Memoirs which he has published. His book is still extant, and should be answered, though he himself is no longer accountable to men.

When Dr. Whitehead had made such use of Mr. Wesley's papers as he thought proper, he returned them to the Chapel-house in the City

Road, in the year 1796. But those into whose hands they fell, seem to have had no more regard to Mr. Wesley's will than the Doctor himself. The trustees of Mr. Wesley's manuscripts were thus again deprived of many valuable documents, which would have made this Life more complete. So easy is it to follow a bad example! So light does trespass appear, when once the hedge is broken! Upon my expostulating with those who acted thus, the papers and manuscript books *that remained*, were sent to me; but none of those which had been thus unjustly taken away have to this day been restored. Wherever they are found, they belong to me; and those which have been published, either by Dr. Whitehead, or any other person, are my property, which I shall freely use, according to my best judgment. Among those which have been restored to me, there are several documents, which are highly useful in such a work, and have never yet been printed.

A Life of Mr. Wesley, as full as possible, without being tedious, seems now to be a desideratum, especially since the strange Memoir lately published by Robert Southey, Esq., Poet Laureate. Concerning that production, it may be thought that little need be said, as it has been an ample subject of animadversion in various publications, and has been ably reviewed by Mr. Watson. It has indeed been generally acknowledged, by competent judges of religious biography, that the names of WESLEY and of SOUTHEY were never designed to be joined together in the same sentence. But Mr. Southey is, to use the words of Johnson, a writer by trade,—an able and industrious servant of all work. His industry, indeed, is conspicuous and laudable. It has been said, and, we believe, with truth, that Mr. Southey exerts himself beyond almost any writer, to collect every thing which bears on his undertaking. He lays the whole world of letters under contribution, for facts, images, and arguments, until every magazine of information is utterly exhausted. He has thus given such a portrait of Mr. Wesley, and of the eminent characters connected with him, as has astonished both the religionists and the skeptics of the present age. They were not prepared to see religion in its peace, power, and purity, as set forth not only in the writings of Mr. Wesley, but of the Fathers of the Church of England, described as a *mental disease* of the most pitiable description; which, nevertheless, excited the subjects of it to the most extraordinary exertions for the good of mankind, (a good, not only acknowledged, but applauded by Mr. Southey,) and which continued without intermission during threescore years! The work, too, in which these worthies were engaged, is owned to have been planned with a wisdom, and executed with an energy, that astonishes the biographer himself! He considers also the subject of his history, not only as a man of the greatest natural endowments, of the deepest and most solid erudition, of “great views

and great virtues ;” but as one whose sincerity in religion can never be questioned,—who “ loved the Lord his God with all his heart, and all his soul, and all his strength, and his neighbour as himself.”* He considers him not only as sacrificing ease, (and that of the most bewitching kind, *learned ease*,) honour, emolument, and all that the world admires and longs after, but as not counting even his life dear, provided he might be the instrument of making men the happy partakers of that kingdom of God, that *righteousness, peace, and joy*, for which the Eternal Son of God not only “ laid his glory by, and wrapped himself in our clay,” but gave his life a ransom for the world, “ *an offering and a sacrifice to God.*”

This great man is, however, represented by Mr. Southey, not only as labouring under the disease already mentioned, (which, with the pertinacity of the cuckoo, he calls ENTHUSIASM, without once defining the term,) but as artful, politic, and ambitious beyond all men ;—spreading delight wherever he came by the buoyancy of his own happiness, and exciting all around to follow after every virtue and every grace that can adorn the human character ; yet, at the same time, exciting the uneducated and uninformed part of the community to embark in the wildest schemes of religious fanaticism that could occupy the hearts of the children of men !

Such a work might be expected to excite great interest ; and the very high price of the book has not, I believe, prevented an extensive sale. It comes, however, a little too late to do much harm. Religion, even that religion which Mr. Southey denominates, “ the religion of the heart,” has been going onward for many years, according to the Divine intimation, *from the least to the greatest*. As of old when it began at *Nazareth*, taking its course upward, it has leavened our Universities and our Literary Societies ; given a religious character to many of our polite circles ; introduced an Evangelical ministry into the Established Church ; quickened the Dissenters, by leading them to recur to their first principles ; and given us to see again *saints in Cæsar’s household*.

It is in vain that Mr. Southey is found the apologist of Warburton, Middleton, and even of Lavington—

Who proved, and proved, and proved at last,
When Wesley held the Proteus fast,—
Christianity alone exists
In Papists and in Methodists !

The deplorable ignorance of evangelical truth which was manifest in those enemies to the *rise* of Methodism, sheltered itself under the

* Mr. Southey does not know, that this love, through faith in an atoning Saviour, is the “ Christian Perfection” against which he inveighs so much !

imposing character of great learning and high station ; and for a time it shed a baneful influence on the heavenly plant. But

The day is broke which never more shall close.

Methodism is now so recognised, as being, in truth, old Christianity, that it defies the renewed attack which has been made upon its doctrines in the pages of Mr. Southey.

The history of an *ambitious* man is, in reality, the history of a hypocrite. Religious ambition is the worst of all hypocrisy ; for it is ambition acting in the name of God. In drawing the portrait of Mr. Wesley, Mr. Southey unites enthusiasm with ambition. In such a biographer, this course is perfectly natural. From his whole work it undeniably appears, that Mr. Southey knows nothing about religion, as purifying the deceitful and desperately wicked heart of man from ambition, with its concomitant evils. From this vicious passion, he seems very cordially to believe, no person ever was or can be saved ; and even contemplates it as an original temper in man, which, consequently, his Maker cannot justly condemn. Hence arise his hatred, and contempt of the doctrine of Christian Perfection ; which is in truth the only possible cure for that and all other corruptions of our fallen nature, by fixing in the heart that constant love of God and man which is the fruit of *faith made perfect*. Mr. Southey seems also not to know, that sincerity is essential to the character of an Enthusiast, and even to that enthusiasm which is unscriptural, and therefore, a real mental disease ; and that it is totally incompatible with ambition. There can be no doubt, from his statements, that he considers salvation from that Babel of the natural man, even by the atonement of the Son of God, and by the whole power of the Eternal Spirit, as promised to man through that atonement, to be only a creature of the imagination.—Perhaps to a mere poetical creation,—to such a “fine phrenzy” in drawing an ideal character,—Mr. Southey would not object : but he seems to have no conception that God ever did, or indeed ever could, realize such a character. “*The world knoweth us not,*” says St. John, “*because it knew Him not.*”

Men will endeavour to account for the most stupendous works without God ; and he who will not believe the Bible, will believe any thing against it. Gibbon, the Historian, thus tried to account for the conversion of the whole heathen world ; which drew forth that sarcasm from Paley, that the religion of the Roman Empire was overthrown by a Jewish peasant ! Mr. Southey accounts for Methodism in a similar way ; and the mockers on the day of Pentecost accounted for that illustrious display of the power of GOD THE SPIRIT, in his poor and weak instruments, by imputing the manifest elevation of their minds to the operation of new wine ! To every such dreamer we may reply, “*Sir,*

thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep."—*The mystery of the faith, kept in a pure conscience, is indeed a mystery to Mr. Southey. God grant that it may not so continue!*

The founder of Methodism is frequently complimented by Mr. Southey. He supposes Mr. Wesley would have been the Founder of an Order, or perhaps the General of the Jesuits, if he had been in the Romish Church! Mr. Southey might imagine something similar respecting St. Paul, and that his "ambitious, restless spirit" would in some such way have found employment and gratification, if Christianity, in its beauty and glory, had not intervened, and given him an opportunity to *turn the world upside down*. Mr. Wesley, as well as the Jewish bigot, had doubtless ability and courage quite sufficient to obtain that or any similar advancement. But they both laid their bigotry and narrow spirit at the feet of Him who "*tasted death for every man,*" and who commanded that his "*Gospel should be preached to every creature.*" They both became Christians, and (with Mr. Southey's good leave) Perfectionists. Their "*love was made perfect;*" and, walking in love they looked upon the guilty children of men *with the bowels of Jesus Christ*. But the path, which was prescribed by that love, utterly unfitted them for such preferment as Mr. Southey supposes. With the Apostle, Mr. Southey does not meddle: *He* is a Saint by prescription; and to attack him, would forfeit the Laureate's reputation in the world. There is a halo round the converted persecutor, which repels the bold dissector of characters. Bishop Warburton called Mr. Wesley, the Apostle's "Mimic," adding the epithet "paltry:" This "mimic" seems fair game with Mr. Southey, and with his patrons the Booksellers. It is for that gentleman to consider, (and I hope he will seriously consider it,) that the day may come, when the friend and pupil of Hume, the bold Historian of "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," and the compiler of "The Life of Wesley," may be considered as having been engaged in the same work,—as "*kicking against the pricks,*" and labouring (the latter unconsciously, we trust,) to save mankind from "*repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.*"

My duty lies plain before me. Mr. Wesley needs no panegyrist; and, indeed, for such an office I should be utterly incompetent. "*His witness is in heaven, and his record is on high.*" But to rescue the character of such a man, and such labours, from interested, prejudiced, or ignorant declaimers, is worth some pains. I must again state the plain facts; connecting and elucidating them, so as to give a clear view of the man, and of the work in which he was so long engaged. It is especially my duty to do this, since inquiry is much more excited; and being now in possession of ample materials, were I not to do it, I should be involved in the guilt of unfaithfulness both to the dead and the living.

METHODISM (so called) identifies itself with CHRISTIANITY in this striking peculiarity, that it is the same this day as it was in the beginning. Every attempt to mend it has utterly failed, and only served to show the ignorance and weakness of the attempt. A "*falling away*" from Christianity was predicted, (2 Thess. ii, 3,) but yet "*the gates of hell prevailed not.*"—The "*grain of mustard-seed,*" as our Lord describes his religion in its rise, "*became a great tree, so that the fowls of the air lodged in the branches;* and many of them proved to be *unclean and filthy birds.*" Exotics were planted around it, and the sacred tree was thus hidden for ages and generations; but it remained the same. The plants that obscured it were esteemed decorations; the world loved them, and warred against all that objected to them. The keen eyes of Luther, and of some of his predecessors, discerned the plant of God's own planting, and denounced the corrupt exotics. Mr. Wesley, after great toil, discovered it in England: and, much to the displeasure of those who had forgotten our martyred Bishops and Confessors, he planted scions from the sacred tree in every part of the land; and, though greatly increased in magnitude, they still exhibit the genuine fruits of the common stock from which they are derived. They cannot be improved. "What a Legislator!" says Mr. Southey. "What plans!" "What a system!" says another writer, "grown up so rapidly, and yet established so firmly! Its rules so admirably contrived for perpetuating and enlarging its influence! A system so *entirely* religious, and founded on all those grand principles which characterize the Gospel of Christ!"—And was this, we ask, the work of man? Yes, as the work recorded in the Acts of the Apostles was of man. The workmen in England had no more *plan* than the workmen in Judea. The Acts of the Apostles may with truth be called, the Acts of the Holy Ghost. Mr. Hampson, in his sarcastic way, says of Mr. Wesley, "He called the work in which he was engaged, THE WORK OF GOD." Mr. Hampson gave it the same appellation, while he was engaged in it, else he would never have been so employed. It rescued him as it did many others, from poverty and vice. But he soon grew weary of such a work, and, like Mark or Demas, chose one more easy and honourable. Had it, indeed, been the work of man, it would long since have come to nought; for the powers of earth and hell were banded against it. And it will continue, notwithstanding these renewed efforts, till it has

Filled the earth with golden fruit,
With ripe millennial love.

The name of Wesley will not then be forgotten, neither will those of his coadjutors, some of whom Mr. Southey has condescended to notice, giving them, with the same inconsistency, their share of praise, and of the general opprobrium. They will shine among those "*who have turned many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever.*"

Mr. Southey observes, that “in some of Mr. Wesley’s biographers, the *heart* has been wanting to understand his worth, or the *will* to do it justice.” This we must allow: I have with pain stated it in this preface, and acknowledge that, in this respect, Mr. Southey rises above them. But he adds, “others have not possessed freedom or strength of intellect to perceive wherein he was erroneous.” Mr. Southey, according to his own showing, has only discovered his *Enthusiasm*; and what that discovery amounts to, Mr. Southey has not informed us. When Mr. Fletcher, who was certainly one of the first men of his day, Mr. Southey’s great and almost impeccable favourite, did not, after a long and close intimacy, discover wherein Mr. Wesley, whom he always called “Father,” was erroneous, it is no wonder that the evil was hidden from his common friends: and I confess, that I have neither the *heart* nor the *head* that could make the discovery. I can, however, remember the time when I had both; when I could cry out, “Enthusiast!” “Fanatic!” as readily as Mr. Southey himself, (for whom therefore I feel much,) and could set the bubble *virtue*, and the *pride of Churchmanship*, against the Scriptures, and the real doctrines of our venerable Establishment; thus, “*speaking evil of the things*,” (the things of God!) “*which I knew not*.” From this deep mixture of pride and ignorance I was delivered, by my long-suffering and gracious Redeemer, before I had any connexion with the people called Methodists, or with their venerable Founder. But his writings and preaching, with the preaching of his sons in the Gospel, alone strengthened and settled me in that “*work of the Spirit of God*,” which had delivered me from the “*deceivableness of unrighteousness*,” in which I was involved; and confirmed me both in those great truths of the Gospel, and in that attachment to him and to his people, which the experience of nearly fifty years has not weakened, and which, I trust, will never be dissolved. Even now my state is so deplorable, that a wish to maintain and propagate those errors which Mr. Southey has discovered—to maintain that “*foolishness of preaching*” and “*believing*,” without which there can be no life, power, or peace,—is, I acknowledge, the chief cause of my again bringing before the public Memoirs of the Apostolic Wesley. A wish to maintain that faith, and to prevent the mischief which a denial of it might produce in the world, rather than a desire to eulogise the man who suffered the loss of all which the world could offer him, that he might possess and propagate this pure religion, is the sole motive which could impel me to undertake the task. Were the man only concerned, I could be well content that the world should judge from his own writings between him and his mistaken or interested biographers. The reader who can believe,—that this man of “great views, great energy, and great virtues,” was stimulated by a mental disease to unpa-

ralleled labours for the good of mankind, and of those especially who most needed his labours,—and that he persevered in them for threescore years, with a success which astonishes and excites the admiration of the narrator ;—the man who can believe all this, must himself, it should seem, have a mental disease, (alas, too common !) which even men of plain apprehension, but who read their bibles, may pronounce *pitiable*, and may even fear lest it should be incurable. Mr. Southey, whatever he may have intended, has written to pull down the faith, though he exalts the man. I write to maintain the faith ; the man, with all competent judges, will be his own eulogist.

I will also acknowledge, I am not wholly without fear, that the very people raised up by Mr. Wesley's labours, and by those of his coadjutors, who are distinguished by his honoured name, may be in some danger of stopping short of his faith, or of departing from it. If this fear should unhappily be realized, and a spurious race should in time succeed, it may be well to have a corrective of this kind at hand, without the trouble of a voluminous reference. We know what advantage the Articles, Liturgy, and Homilies of the Church of England gave to Mr. Wesley in maintaining the cause of truth. That the Pulpit and the Reading Desk should be at variance, is not a mere supposition ; and it is not impossible, (such is our opinion of human nature,) that Methodist pulpits may, in time, wander from the faith once delivered to the people : yea, that the people themselves may "*wish to have it so.*" It may, therefore, serve the cause of truth to have it known, (when the hand that now writes shall be mouldering in the dust,) in this way also, what were the real views, doctrines, and practice of those who now rest from their labours ; that all who are in truth "*way-faring men*" in the path that leads to God, "*may not err therein,*" either through the wisdom or the ignorance of men who "*know not God.*"

My wish and aim, in publishing these Memoirs, is to "*do good to all men : though especially to the household of faith.*" But I am sensible, I shall need the candour of the Reader in detailing many particulars respecting these eminent men. It has been observed by a late writer, that "the language of egotism cannot well be avoided where the Biographer speaks from his own knowledge, and aims to delineate the features of an original character from more immediate intimacy and observation ;" and I may add, from personal and direct information.

THE LIFE

OF

THE REV. JOHN WESLEY, A. M.

BOOK THE FIRST,

Containing an Account of his Family.

CHAPTER I.

HIS GREAT-GRANDFATHER AND GRANDFATHER WESLEY, AND HIS MATERNAL GRANDFATHER ANNESLEY.

ACCOUNTS of Mr. Wesley's ancestors are sufficiently numerous. For a hundred years past, and to the present day, honourable mention has been made of them, and their worth is acknowledged to be of no common kind. I must, however, again present an account of them, but in a compressed form, to the readers of these Memoirs; that they may know the estimable root from which such a distinguished character as Mr. Wesley sprung, and may see that the *work of God*, which it is the design of these volumes to illustrate, did not originate with those ancestors. His own family, as well as the greater part of the nation, at the time when Mr. Wesley entered on his vast labours, were, to use the words of the great Apostle, *shut up to the faith which should afterwards be revealed*.

Mr. Wesley's ancestors were eminent for learning and piety. BARTHOLOMEW WESLEY, his great-grandfather, was educated in one of our Universities, and afterward held the living of Allington in Dorsetshire. When the Act of Uniformity passed in 1662, he was ejected from his living, choosing rather to suffer the loss of all things than violate his conscience. While in the University, he had applied himself to the study of Physic as well as Divinity,—a practice not then fallen into disuse. He was often consulted as a physician while he held his living; and, after his ejection, devoted himself chiefly to the profession of medicine, though he still preached occasionally. It is said, that he used a peculiar plainness of speech, which hindered him from becoming a popular preacher. He lived several years after he was silenced; but the death of his son, John Wesley, of whom I shall next speak, affected him so much, that he afterward declined apace, and did not long survive him.*

JOHN WESLEY, M. A., of New-Inn Hall, Oxford, was son of Bartholomew, and grandfather of the late Rev. John Wesley. He remem-

* See Nonconformists' Memorial, Vol. I, p. 442.

bered his Creator in the days of his youth; and, when a schoolboy, had a very humbling sense of sin, and a serious concern for his salvation. He soon after began to keep a diary, in which he recorded the remarkable instances of providential care over him, and of the Lord's dealings with his soul. This method he continued, with very little intermission, to the end of his life.

During his stay at Oxford he was noticed for his seriousness and diligence. He applied himself particularly to the study of the Oriental languages in which he made much progress. Dr. John Owen, who was at that time Vice-Chancellor, had a great regard for him; which affords strong evidence both of his abilities and piety, at this early period of life. He began to preach at the age of twenty-two; and in May 1658, was sent to officiate at Whitchurch in Dorsetshire. Soon after the Restoration, some of his neighbours gave him a great deal of trouble, because he would not read the Common Prayer. They complained of him to the Bishop of Bristol, and laid many heavy things to his charge. Mr. Wesley, on being informed that the Bishop desired to speak with him, waited on his Lordship, and has recorded in his diary the conversation which arose on that occasion. As it displays the character of the man in a much clearer view than I can place it by any thing I am able to say, and as it reflects much honour upon the Bishop, considering the darkness of the times, I give it at large :

BISHOP. What is your name ?

WESLEY. John Wesley.

B. There are many great matters charged upon you.

W. May it please your Lordship, Mr. Horlock was at my house on Tuesday last, and acquainted me that it was your Lordship's desire I should come to you : and on that account I am here to wait on you.

B. By whom were you ordained ? or, are you ordained ?

W. I am sent to preach the Gospel.

B. By whom were you sent ?

W. By a Church of Jesus Christ.

B. What Church is that ?

W. The Church of Christ at Melcomb.

B. That factious and heretical Church !

W. May it please you, Sir, I know no faction or heresy that Church is guilty of.

B. No ! Did not you preach such things as tend to faction and heresy ?

W. I am not conscious to myself of any such preaching.

B. I am informed by sufficient men, gentlemen of honour of this county, namely, Sir Gerard Napper, Mr. Freak, and Mr. Tregonnell, of your doings. What say you ?

W. Those honoured gentlemen I have been with ; who being by others misinformed, proceeded with some heat against me.

B. There are oaths of several honest men ; and shall we take your word for it, that all is but misinformation ?

W. There was no oath given or taken. Besides, if it be enough to accuse, who shall be innocent ?—I can appeal to the determination of the great Day of Judgment, that the large catalogue of matters laid to me, are either things invented or mistaken.

B. Did not you ride with your sword, in the time of the Committee of Safety, and engage with them ?

W. Whatever imprudences in civil matters you may be informed I am guilty of, I shall crave leave to acquaint your Lordship, that his Majesty having pardoned them fully, I shall waive any other answer.

B. In what manner did the church you spake of, send you to preach? At this rate every body might preach.

W. Not every one. Every body has not preaching gifts and preaching graces. Besides, that is not all I have to offer to your Lordship, to justify my preaching.

B. If you preach, it must be according to order, the order of the Church of England, upon ordination.

W. What does your Lordship mean by ordination?

B. Do not you know what I mean?

W. If you mean that sending, spoken of Romans x, I had it.

B. I mean that: What mission had you?

W. I had a mission from God and man.

B. You must have it according to law, and the order of the Church of England.

W. I am not satisfied in my spirit therein.

B. Not satisfied in your spirit! You have more new-coined phrases than ever were heard of! You mean your conscience, do you not?

W. Spirit is no new phrase. We read of being sanctified in soul, body, and spirit.

B. By spirit there, we are to understand the upper region of the soul.

W. Some think we are to take it for the conscience: but if your Lordship like it not so, then I say I am not satisfied in conscience as touching the ordination you speak of.

B. Conscience argues science, science supposes judgment, and judgment reason. What reason have you that you will not be thus ordained?

W. I came not this day to dispute with your Lordship; my own inability would forbid me so to do.

B. No, no; but give me your reason.

W. I am not called to that office, and therefore cannot be ordained.

B. Why have you then preached all this while?

W. I was called to the work of the ministry, though not to the office. There is, as we believe, *vocatio ad opus, et ad munus*.*

B. Why may you not have the office of the ministry?

W. May it please your Lordship, because they are not a people who are fit subjects for me to exercise office-work among them.

B. You mean a gathered church: but we must have no gathered churches in England; and you will see it so. For there must be a unity without divisions among us: and there can be no unity without uniformity.—Well then, we must send you to your church, that they may dispose of you, if you were ordained by them.

W. I have been informed by my cousin Pitfield and others concerning your Lordship, that you have a disposition inclined against morosity. However you may be prepossessed by some bitter enemies to my person, yet there are others who can and will give you another character of me. Mr. Glisson hath done it. And Sir Francis Tulford desired me to present his service to you, and being my hearer, is ready to acquaint you concerning me.

* A call to the work; and a call to the office.

B. I asked Sir Francis Tulford whether the presentation to Whitchurch was his : Whose is it ? He told me it was not his.

W. There was none presented to it these sixty years. Mr. Walton lived there. At his departure the people desired me to preach to them ; and when there was a way of settlement appointed, I was by the Trustees appointed, and by the Triers approved.

B. They would approve any, who would come to them, and close with them. I know they approved those who could not read twelve lines of English.

W. All that they did I know not ; but I was examined touching gifts and graces.

B. I question not your gifts, Mr. Wesley ; I will do you any good I can : But you will not long be suffered to preach, unless you will do it according to order.

W. I shall submit to any trial you shall please to make. I shall present your Lordship with a confession of my faith, or take what other way you please to insist on.

B. No, we are not come to that yet.

W. I shall desire those severals to be laid together, which I look on as justifying my preaching.

1. I was devoted to the service from my infancy.

2. I was educated in order thereto at school, and in the University of Oxford.

B. What age are you ?

W. Twenty-five.

B. No sure, you are not !

W. 3. As a son of the prophets, after I had taken my degree, I preached in the country ; being approved of by judicious able Christians, ministers and others.

4. It pleased God to seal my labours with success, in the apparent conversion of many souls.

B. Yea, that is, it may be, to your way.

W. Yea, to the power of godliness from ignorance and profaneness. If it please your Lordship to lay down any evidences of godliness, agreeing with Scripture, and that are not found in those persons intended, I am content to be discharged the ministry. I will stand or fall on the issue thereof.

B. You talk of the power of godliness ; such as you fancy.

W. Yea, to the reality of religion. Let us appeal to any commonplace-book for evidences of graces, and they are found in and upon them.

B. How many are there of them ?

W. I number not the people.

B. Where are they ?

W. Wherever I have been called to preach. At Radpole, Melcomb, Turnwood, Whitchurch, and at sea. I shall add another ingredient of my mission :—

5. When the church saw the presence of God going along with me, they did, by fasting and prayer, on a day set apart for that end, seek an abundant blessing on my endeavours.

B. A particular church ?

W. Yes, my Lord, I am not ashamed to own myself a member of one.

B. Why, you may mistake the Apostles' intent. They went about to convert heathens. You have no warrant for your particular churches.

W. We have a plain, full, and sufficient rule for Gospel-worship in the New Testament, recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, and in the Epistles.

B. We have not.

W. The practice of the Apostles is a standing rule in those cases which were not extraordinary.

B. Not their practice, but their precepts.

W. Both precepts and practice. Our duty is not delivered to us in Scripture only by precepts, but by precedents; by promises, and by threatenings mixed. We are to follow them as they followed Christ.

B. But the Apostle said, "This speak I, not the Lord:" that is, by revelation.

W. Some interpret that place, "This speak I now by revelation from the Lord; not the Lord in that text before instanced concerning divorces." May it please your Lordship, we believe that "*Cultus non institutus, est indebitus.*"*

B. It is false.

W. The second commandment speaks the same. "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image."

B. That is, forms of your own invention.

W. Bishop Andrews, taking notice of "*non facias tibi*,"† satisfied me that we may not worship God, but as commanded.

B. Well then, you will justify your preaching, will you, without ordination according to law?

W. All these things, laid together, are satisfactory to me, for my procedure therein.

B. They are not enough.

W. There has been more written in proof of preaching of gifted persons, with such approbation, than has been answered yet by any one.

B. Have you any thing more to say to me, Mr. Wesley?

W. Nothing; your Lordship sent for me.

B. I am glad to hear this from your mouth; you will stand to your principles you say?

W. I intend it, through the grace of God; and to be faithful to the King's Majesty, however you deal with me.

B. I will not meddle with you.

W. Farewell to you, Sir.

B. Farewell, good Mr. Wesley.

It is to be hoped that the Bishop kept his word. But in the beginning of 1662, Mr. Wesley was seized on the Lord's-day as he was coming out of church, carried to Blandford, and committed to prison. Sir Gerard Napper was one of the most furious of his enemies, and the most forward in committing him; but meeting with an accident by which he broke his collar-bone, he was so far softened, that he sent to some persons to bail Mr. Wesley, and told them, *if they would not, he would do it himself*. How various are the ways by which God brings men to a consciousness of their guilt! Mr. Wesley was thus set at

* Worship not enjoined is not binding

† Thou shalt not make to thyself.

liberty, though bound over to appear at the next Assizes. He appeared accordingly, and came off much better than he expected. On this occasion the good man recorded in his diary the mercy of God to him, in raising up several friends to own him; inclining a solicitor to plead for him; and in restraining the wrath of man, so that the judge, though noted as a passionate man, spoke not an angry word.

Mr. Wesley came joyfully home from the Assizes, and preached constantly every Lord's-day till August 17th, when he delivered his farewell sermon to a weeping audience, from Acts xx, 32: "*And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified.*" October the 26th, the place was declared vacant by an apparitor, and orders were given to sequester the profits; but his people had given him what was due. On the 22d of February, 1663, he quitted Whitchurch, and removed with his family to Melcomb; upon which the corporation there made an order against his settlement, imposing a fine of 20*l.* upon his landlady, and 5*s.* per week upon himself, to be levied by distress. These violent proceedings forced him to leave the town, and go to Bridgewater, Ilminster, and Taunton, in which places he met with great kindness and friendship from all the three denominations of Dissenters, and was almost every day employed in preaching in the several places to which he went. At length a gentleman, who had a good house at Preston, two or three miles from Melcomb, gave him free liberty to live in it without paying any rent. Thither he removed his family in the beginning of May, and there he continued while he lived. He records his coming to Preston with great thankfulness. By the Oxford Act he was obliged for a while to withdraw from Preston, and leave his family and people. Upon his coming to the place of his retirement in March, 1666, he put this question to himself, "What dost thou here, at such a distance from church, wife, children," &c? In his answer, he sets down the oath required by Government, and then adds the reasons why he could not take it, as several ministers had done; and particularly, that to do it, in his own private sense, would be but juggling with God, with the King, and with conscience. After he had lain hid for some time, he ventured home again, and returned to his labour among his people, and occasionally among others. But notwithstanding all his prudence, he was often disturbed; several times apprehended; and four times imprisoned,—once at Pool for half a year, and once at Dorchester for three months; the other confinements were shorter. He was in many straits and difficulties, but wonderfully supported and comforted, and many times very seasonably and surprisingly delivered. "And having filled up his part of what is behind of the afflictions of Christ in his flesh, for his body's sake, which is the Church, and finished the work given him to do, he was taken* out of this vale of tears to that world where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest, when he had not been much longer an inhabitant here below than his blessed Master, whom he served with his whole heart, according to the best light he had. The vicar of Preston would not suffer him to be buried in the Church."†

* I conjecture that he died about the year 1670.

† Nonconformists' Memorial, Vol. I, p. 478 to 486.

SAMUEL ANNESLEY, LL. D., grandfather of the late Mr. Wesley, by the mother's side, was born at Killingworth near Warwick, in the year 1620. He was first cousin to the Earl of Anglesea. His grandmother, an eminently pious woman, dying before his birth, desired that the child, if a boy, might be called Samuel, assigning as the reason of her request, "*I can say I have asked him of the Lord.*" In his infancy, he was strongly impressed with the thoughts of being a minister; and such was his ardour in pursuing this design, that when about five or six years old, he began a practice, which he afterwards continued, of reading twenty chapters every day in the Bible. This practice laid an excellent foundation of useful knowledge, for the future exercise of his ministry.

He lost his father when four years old; but his pious mother took great care of his education; nor did he want the means of obtaining the best instruction, as the paternal estate was considerable. At the age of fifteen he went to the university of Oxford, and took his degrees in the usual course. His piety and diligence at Oxford were so much out of the common way of the place, that he attracted considerable notice. In 1644 he was appointed chaplain in the ship called the *Globe*, under the Earl of Warwick, then Lord High Admiral of England. He went to sea with the fleet, and kept a diary of the voyage. But he soon quitted the sea, and settled at Cliff in Kent. The minister of this place had been turned out for his barefaced encouragement of licentiousness, as Dr. Williams reports, by attending meetings for dancing, drinking, &c, on the Lord's day. The people on this account were exceedingly fond of him, and greatly prejudiced against his successor, Dr. Annesley, who was a man of a very different character. When he first went among them, they rose upon him with spits, forks, and stones, threatening to destroy him. This was no small trial to a young man of about twenty-five years of age. But he remained firm as a rock in his Master's cause; and as the people were not hardened against the evidence of gospel truth, he had some hopes of doing them good, notwithstanding their profaneness and violence. He therefore told them, that, "Let them use him as they would, he was resolved to continue with them, till God had prepared them by his ministry to entertain a better; and solemnly declared, that when they were so prepared he would leave the place." His labours were incessant, and the success of his preaching and engaging behaviour was surprising; so that in a few years, the people were greatly reformed, and became exceedingly fond of him. Though he enjoyed here an income of four hundred pounds per annum, yet he paid so conscientious a regard to his first declaration, that he thought himself bound to leave them, which he accordingly did, and the people who at his coming threatened to stone him, now parted from him with cries and tears, thus testifying their affection for him.—It is by no means clear, however, that he acted right in all this. In matters of a mere personal nature we may use much freedom: but where the souls of men are concerned, it is very different.

A very signal providence directed him to a settlement in London in 1652, by the unanimous choice of the inhabitants of the parish of St. John the Apostle. Soon after he was made Lecturer of St. Paul's; and in 1658 Cripplegate was made happy by his settlement there.

He was a man of great uprightness, never regulating his religious profession by his secular interests. He was turned out of his Lecture,

because he would not comply with some things which he deemed extravagant and wrong : he thought conformity in him would be a sin, and he chose to quit a full maintenance rather than injure his conscience. He was acknowledged by all parties to be an Israelite indeed, and yet he suffered much for Nonconformity ; but such was then the spirit of party, that an angel from heaven would have been persecuted and abused, if he had appeared as a Dissenter. In his sufferings, God often interposed remarkably for him : One person died, while signing a warrant to apprehend him. He afterwards suffered, because he thought it his duty to bear witness for the old truth against Antinomianism. His integrity made him a stranger to all tricks or little artifices to serve his temporal interest ; and his charitable and unsuspecting temper sometimes gave to those who practised them an opportunity to impose upon him.

In ministerial labours he was abundant. Before he was silenced, he often preached three times a day ; during the troubles almost every day ; afterwards twice every Lord's-day. His sermons were instructive and affecting ; and his manner of delivery very peculiarly expressed his heartiness in the things which he spoke.

His care and labour extended to every place where he might be useful. In some measure the care of all the churches was upon him. When any place wanted a minister, he used his endeavours to procure one for them : when any minister was oppressed by poverty, he soon employed himself for his relief. " O ! how many places," says Dr. Williams, " had sat in darkness, how many ministers had been starved, if Dr. Annesley had died thirty years since ! He was the chief, often the sole instrument in the education as well as the subsistence of several ministers. The sick, the widows, the orphans, whom he relieved, were innumerable. As a minister, his usefulness was extensive, and God kept him faithful in his work to the last, for which he thus thanked Him on his deathbed : " Blessed be God, I can say, I have been faithful in the ministry above fifty-five years." Many called him FATHER, as the instrument of their conversion ; and many called him a COMFORTER.

He had uninterrupted peace, and assurance of God's love and favour, for above thirty years of the latter part of his life. This assurance had not one cloud in all his last sickness. A little before his departure, his desire of death appeared strong, and his soul was filled with the foretaste of glory. He often said, " Come my dearest Jesus ! the nearer the more precious, the more welcome." Another time his joy was so great, that in an extasy he cried out, " I cannot contain it : what manner of love is this to a poor worm ? I cannot express the thousandth part of what praise is due to Thee ! We know not what we do when we offer at praising God for his mercies. It is but little I can give thee ; but, Lord, help me to give thee my all ! I will die praising thee, and rejoice that others can praise thee better. I shall be satisfied with thy likeness ; satisfied ! satisfied ! Oh ! my dearest Jesus, I come !" Thus departed this excellent man, December 31, 1696, in the 77th year of his age ; leaving us an example how to live and how to die.

CHAPTER II.

SAMUEL WESLEY, SENIOR.

MR. JOHN WESLEY, of whom I have spoken above, left two sons, Matthew and Samuel. Matthew, following the example of his grandfather, studied physic, and made a fortune by his practice.* Samuel, the father of the late Mr. John Wesley, was born about the year 1662, or perhaps a little earlier; but he could not, I think, have been more than eight or nine years old when his father died. The first thing that shook his attachment to the Dissenters was, a defence of the death of King Charles the First; and, afterwards, the proceedings of the Calf's Head Club.† These things shocked him: and though it is certain, that many of the Dissenters disapproved of the King's death, and that the proceedings of a Club ought not to be attributed to a large body of men, who had no connexion with the members of it, and differed greatly in opinion from them; yet they had such an effect upon his mind, that he separated himself from the Dissenting interest while yet a boy,—as appears from the following lines in his son's elegy upon him:

With opening life his early worth began;
The boy misleads not, but foreshows the MAN.
Directed wrong, though first he miss'd the way,
Train'd to mistake, and disciplined to stray:
Not long—for reason gilded error's night,
And doubts well-founded shot a gleam of light.

He spent some time at a private academy, before he went to the University; but where, it is not said. About the age of sixteen‡ he walked to Oxford, and entered himself of Exeter College. He had now only two pounds sixteen shillings; and no prospect of future supplies, but from his own exertions. By assisting the younger students, and instructing any who chose to employ him, he supported himself till he took his Bachelor's degree, without any preferment, or assistance from his friends, except five shillings. This circumstance does him great honour, and shows him to have been a young man of wonderful diligence and resolution. He then went to London, having increased his little stock to Ten Pounds Fifteen Shillings. He was there ordained Deacon, and obtained a curacy, which he held one year, when he was appointed chaplain on board the fleet. This situation he held one year only, and then returned to London, and served a cure for two years. During this time he married, and his wife brought him a son. In this period he wrote several pieces, which brought him into notice and esteem, and a small living was given him in the country. He was soon after strongly solicited by the friends of King James II to support the measures of the Court in favour of Popery, with promises of preferment if

* I shall afterwards insert some fine Verses on the death of this gentleman, by his niece, Mrs. Wright.

† Notes of Samuel Wesley to his Elegy on his Father.

‡ Mr. Southey disputes this, and brings forward extracts from the Registers of Exeter College to prove, that he must have been "two-and-twenty." But, as the name is spelt Westley, in those entries, and in the person's own signature, it is more reasonable to suppose it was another person, than that his son, who says he was but sixteen, was mistaken.

he would comply with the King's desire. But he absolutely refused to read the King's *Declaration*; and though surrounded with courtiers, soldiers, and informers, he preached a bold and pointed discourse against it from Daniel iii, 17, 18.—“*If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O King. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.*” His son Samuel describes this circumstance in the following lines :

When zealous James, unhappy, sought the way
To 'stablish Rome by arbitrary sway;
In vain were bribes shower'd by the guilty crown,
He sought no favour, as he fear'd no frown.
Secure in faith, exempt from worldly views,
He dared the *Declaration* to refuse:
Then from the sacred pulpit boldly show'd
The dauntless Hebrews, true to Israel's God,
Who spake, regardless of their King's commands,
“The God we serve can save us from thy hands;
If not, O Monarch, know we choose to die,
Thy gods alike and threat'nings we defy;
No power on earth our faith has e'er controll'd,
We scorn to worship idols, though of gold.”
Resistless truth damp'd all the audience round,
The base informer sicken'd at the sound;
Attentive courtiers conscious stood amazed,
And soldiers silent trembled as they gazed.
No smallest murmur of distaste arose,
Abash'd and vanquish'd seem'd the Church's foes.
So, when like zeal their bosoms did inspire,
The Jewish martyrs walk'd unhurt in fire.

In this instance of integrity and firmness of mind, Mr. Wesley has given us an unequivocal proof, that a person of High Church principles may be a true friend to the Protestant cause, and the liberty of the subject. It is evident, that he as much disliked the arbitrary proceedings of King James, as the religion which he endeavoured to introduce. When the Revolution took place in 1688, Mr. Wesley most cordially approved of it, and was the first who wrote in its defence. This work he dedicated to Queen Mary,* who, in consequence of it, gave him the living of Epworth in Lincolnshire, about the year 1693; and in 1723 he was presented to the living of Wroote, in the same county, in addition to Epworth.

Mr. Wesley held the living of Epworth upwards of forty years. His abilities would have done him credit in a more conspicuous situation; and had Queen Mary lived much longer, it is probable that he would not have spent so great a part of his life in such an obscure corner of the kingdom. In the beginning of the year 1705, he printed a poem on the Battle of Blenheim, with which the Duke of Marlborough was so well pleased, that he made him chaplain to Colonel Lepelle's regiment, which was to stay in England some time. In consequence of the same poem, a noble Lord sent for him to London, promising to procure him a prebend. But, unhappily, he was at this time engaged in a controversy with the Dissenters, who, in the first part of Queen Anne's reign, had a very powerful influence in both Houses of Parliament, and at Court; and were then preparing to present a petition to the House of

* MS. papers.

Lords, praying for justice against the authors of several pamphlets written in opposition to them, and against Mr. Wesley in particular: but they were dissuaded from taking this step by two members of that House. They had, however, interest enough to hinder Mr. Wesley from obtaining a prebend's stall; and they soon also worked him out of the chaplainship of the regiment, and brought several other very severe sufferings upon him and his family.

I believe it was at this time, while residing in London, as Mr. J. Wesley informed me, that he happened to go into a coffeehouse to obtain some refreshment. There were some gentlemen in a box at the other end of the room; one of whom, an officer of the Guards, swore dreadfully. Mr. Wesley saw that he could not speak to him without much difficulty; he therefore desired the waiter to bring him a glass of water. When it was brought, he said aloud, "Carry it to that gentleman in the red coat, and desire him to wash his mouth after his oaths." The officer rose up in a fury; but the gentlemen in the box laid hold of him, one of them crying out, "Nay, Colonel! you gave the first offence. You see the gentleman is a clergyman. You know it is an affront to swear in his presence." The officer was thus restrained, and Mr. Wesley departed.

Some years afterwards, being again in London, and walking in St. James's Park, a gentleman joined him, who, after some conversation, inquired if he recollected having seen him before? Mr. Wesley replied in the negative. The gentleman then recalled to his remembrance the scene at the coffeehouse, and added, "Since that time, Sir, I thank God, I have feared an oath, and every thing that is offensive to the Divine Majesty; and as I have a perfect recollection of you, I rejoiced at seeing you, and could not refrain from expressing my gratitude to God and you."—"A word spoken in season, how good is it!"

As a Pastor, he was indefatigable in the duties of his office; a constant preacher; diligent in visiting the sick, and administering such advice as their situations required; and attentive to the conduct of all who were under his care, so that every one in his parish became an object of his attention and concern. No strangers could settle there, but he presently knew it, and made himself acquainted with them. We have a proof of this from a letter he wrote to the Bishop of Lincoln, after being absent from home a very short time.* "After my return to Epworth," says he, "and looking a little among my people, I found there were two strangers come hither, both of whom I have discovered to be Papists, though they come to church; and I have hopes of making one or both of them good members of the Church of England."

But this conscientious regard to parochial duties, did not divert him from literary pursuits. His favourite study seems to have been the original Scriptures, in which he was indefatigable; a practice which must be commended in a minister of the Gospel, when joined with a proper attention to practical duties.

The following extracts from two of his letters to his son, the late Mr. John Wesley, will give some idea of his diligence in this respect; and the second of them will show us his opinion of a subject on which learned men have been much divided:

* Mr. C. Wesley's Papers.

“ January 26, 1725.

“ I have some time since designed an edition of the Holy Bible in octavo, in the Hebrew, Chaldee, Septuagint, and the Vulgate, and have made some progress in it. What I desire of you on this article is,—
1. That you would immediately fall to work, and read diligently the Hebrew text in the Polyglott, and collate it exactly with the Vulgate, writing all, even the least variations or differences between them.—
2. To these I would have you add the Samaritan text in the last column but one; which is the very same with the Hebrew, except in some very few places, differing only in the Samaritan character, which I think is the true old Hebrew. In twelve months time, you will get through the Pentateuch; for I have done it four times the last year, and am going over it the fifth, and collating the two Greek versions, the Alexandrian and the Vatican, with what I can get of Symmachus and Theodotian,” &c.

Mr. John Wesley was in the twenty-second year of his age, not yet ordained, nor had he attained any preferment in the University, when he received this letter from his father. It gives a pleasing view of his progress in biblical learning at this early period of life, and shows his father's confidence in his critical knowledge of the Hebrew Scriptures. The second letter was written in 1731, and very clearly states the old gentleman's opinion of the translation of the Seventy, after a most laborious examination of it.

“ I find in your letter an account of a learned friend you have, who has a great veneration for the Septuagint, and thinks that in some instances it corrects the present Hebrew. I do not wonder that he is of that mind; as it is likely he has read Vossius and other learned men, who magnify this translation so as to depreciate the original. When I first began to study the Scriptures in earnest, and had read it over several times, I was inclined to the same opinion. What then increased my respect for it was,—1. That I thought I found many texts in the Scriptures more happily explained than in our own or other versions. 2. That many words and phrases in the New Testament, can hardly be so well understood without having recourse to this translation. 3. That both our Saviour and his Apostles so frequently quote it. These considerations held me in a blind admiration of the Septuagint; and though I did not esteem them absolutely infallible, yet I hardly dared to trust my own eyes, or think they were frequently mistaken. But upon reading this translation over very often, and comparing it verbatim with the Hebrew, I was forced by plain evidence of fact to be of another mind. That which led me to it was, some mistakes, (I think not less than a thousand,) in places indifferent, either occasioned by the ambiguous sense of some Hebrew words, or by the mistake of some letters, as *Daleth* for *Resh*, and *vice versâ*, which every one knows are very much alike in the old Hebrew character. But what fully determined my judgment was, that I found, or thought I found, very many places which appeared purposely altered for no very justifiable reason. These at last came so thick upon me in my daily reading, that I began to note them down; not a few instances of which you will see in the Dissertation I shall send you in my next packet. I would have you communicate it to your learned friend, with my compliments, earnestly desiring him, as well as you, to peruse it with the greatest prejudice you can;

and after you have thoroughly weighed the whole, as I think the subject deserves, to make the strongest objections you are able against any article of it, where you are not convinced by my observations. For I should not deserve a friend, if I did not esteem those my best friends who do their endeavours to set me right, where I may possibly be mistaken, especially in a matter of great moment."

Mr. Wesley was a voluminous writer. His Latin Commentary on the book of Job is a most elaborate performance; but the subject of this book, and the language in which the commentary is written, are but ill adapted to the generality of modern readers. As a poet, he has been censured by Garth and others; though when he failed, it was, perhaps, as much owing to the difficulty of the subject as to a want of poetical abilities. In an early edition of the *Dunciad*, he and Dr. Watts were associated together, and involved in the same censure. But it is well known that the earlier editions of this poem were all surreptitious, in which the blanks were filled up by the mere caprice or envy of the editors, without any regard to the intention of the author. Thus, in a surreptitious edition printed in Ireland, the blank in the 104th verse of the first book was filled up with Dryden instead of Dennis, which, no doubt, was far enough from the intention of Mr. Pope. With the same *propriety* and *good judgment*, in the surreptitious editions, the names Wesley and Watts were inserted thus, W——ly, W——s, in the 126th line of the same book; but they never appeared in any edition published by Mr. Pope. The lines originally stood thus:

A Gothic Vatican! of Greece and Rome,
Well purged, and worthy Withers, Quarles, and Broome.

In a London edition of the *Dunciad*, printed in 1729, there is the following note on the last of these lines, "It was printed in the surreptitious editions, W——ly, W——s, who were persons eminent for good life; the one writ the *Life of Christ* in verse, the other some valuable pieces of the lyric kind, on pious subjects. The line is here restored according to its original."

Of Mr. Wesley's larger poetical performances, his son Samuel passes the following candid and impartial judgment, in the elegy above mentioned:

Whate'er his strains, still glorious was his end,
Faith to assert and virtue to defend.
He sung how God the Saviour deign'd t' expire,
With Vida's piety, though not his fire;
Deduced his Maker's praise from age to age,
Through the long annals of the sacred page.

Most of his smaller pieces are excellent. I shall insert the following, both for its intrinsic beauty, and as a specimen of his poetical talents.

EUPOLIS' HYMN TO THE CREATOR.

THE OCCASION.

Part of a (new) dialogue between Plato and Eupolis the Poet.
The rest not extant.*

EUPOLIS.—But is it not a little hard that you should banish all our fraternity from your new commonwealth? What hurt has father Homer done, that you dismiss him among the rest?

PLATO.—Certainly, the blind old gentleman *lies* with the best grace in the world. But a lie, handsomely told, debauches the taste and morals of a people. Besides, his tales of the gods are intolerable, and derogate in the highest degree from the dignity of the Divine Nature.

EUPOLIS.—But do you really think that those faults are inseparable from poetry? May not the ONE SUPREME be sung, without any intermixture of them?

PLATO.—I must own, I hardly ever saw any thing of that nature. But I shall be glad to see you, or any other, attempt and succeed in it. On that condition I will gladly exempt you from the fate of your brother poets.

EUPOLIS.—I am far from pretending to be a standard. But I will do the best I can.

THE HYMN.†

AUTHOR of Being, Source of light,
With unfading beauties bright,
Fulness, goodness, rolling round
Thy own fair orb without a bound;
Whether Thee thy suppliants call
Truth or Good, or One, or All,
Ei or *Jao*: Thee we hail,
Essence that can never fail,
Grecian or Barbaric name,
Thy steadfast being still the same.

Thee, when morning greets the skies,
With rosy cheeks and humid eyes;
Thee, when sweet declining day
Sinks in purple waves away;
Thee will I sing, O parent Jove,
And teach the world to praise and love.

Yonder azure vault on high,
Yonder blue, low, liquid sky,
Earth, on its firm basis placed,
And with circling waves embraced,

* EUPOLIS was an Athenian. He is mentioned several times by Horace, and once by Persius; and was in high estimation at Athens for his poetical compositions, though he severely lashed the vices of the age he lived in. He was killed in an engagement at sea between the Athenians and Lacedemonians, and his death was so much lamented at Athens, that they made a law, that no poet should go to battle. He lived about four hundred years before Christ.

† It has been disputed whether Mr. Wesley or his daughter, *Mrs. Wright*, (of whom I shall speak hereafter,) was the writer of this poem. This dispute is of a very recent date, and does not appear to have any real foundation. Many years ago, the Critical Reviewers inserted some sarcasms against the poetry of the Methodists. Mr. John Wesley replied, and sent this poem to them as a specimen. The Reviewers so far did honour to the specimen, as to insert it at large in their next number. Mr. Wesley always declared that it was written by his father.

All creating power confess,
 All their mighty Maker bless.
 Thou shak'st all nature with Thy nod,
 Sea, earth, and air confess thee God :
 Yet does Thy powerful hand sustain
 Both earth and heaven, both firm and main.
 Scarce can our daring thoughts arise
 To Thy pavilion in the skies;
 Nor can Plato's self declare
 The bliss, the joy, the rapture there.
 Barren above Thou dost not reign,
 But circled with a glorious train ;
 The sons of God, the sons of light,
 Ever joying in Thy sight ;
 (For Thee their silver harps are strung,)
 Ever beauteous, ever young,
 Angelic forms their voices raise,
 And through heaven's arch resound Thy praise.

The feather'd souls that swim the air,
 And bathe in liquid ether there,
 The lark, precentor of the choir,
 Leading them higher still and higher,
 Listen and learn ; th' angelic notes
 Repeating in their warbling throats :
 And ere to soft repose they go,
 Teach them to their lords below :
 On the green turf their mossy nest,
 The evening anthem swells their breast.
 Thus like thy golden chain from high,
 Thy praise unites the earth and sky.

Source of light, Thou bid'st the sun
 On his burning axles run ;
 The stars like dust around him fly,
 And strow the area of the sky.
 He drives so swift his race above,
 Mortals can't perceive him move ;
 So smooth his course, oblique or straight,
 Olympus shakes not with his weight.
 As the Queen of solemn Night
 Fills at his vase her orbs of light,
 Imparted lustre ; thus we see
 The solar virtue shines by Thee.

Eiresione,* we'll no more
 Imaginary power adore ;
 Since oil, and wool, and cheerful wine,
 And life sustaining bread are Thine.

Thy herbage, O great Pan, sustains
 The flocks that graze our Attic plains ;
 The olive, with fresh verdure crown'd,
 Rises pregnant from the ground ;
 At Thy command, it shoots and springs,
 And a thousand blessings brings.
 Minerva only is Thy mind,
 Wisdom and bounty to mankind.
 The fragrant thyme, the bloomy rose,
 Herb and flower, and shrub that grows
 On Thessalian Tempe's plain,
 Or where the rich Sabeans reign,
 That treat the taste, or smell, or sight,
 For food, or med'cine, or delight,
 Planted by Thy parent care,
 Spring and smile and flourish there.

* This word signifies a kind of garland composed of a branch of olive, wrapped about with wool, and loaded with all kinds of fruits of the earth, as a token of peace and plenty. The poet says, he will no more worship the *imaginary* power, supposed to be the giver of these things ; but the great Pan, the Creator, from whom they all proceed.

O ye nurses of soft dreams,
 Reedy brooks and winding streams,
 Or murmuring o'er the pebbles sheen,
 Or sliding through the meadows green,
 Or where through matted sedge you creep,
 Trav'ling to your parent deep;
 Sound His praise by whom you rose,
 That Sea which neither ebbs nor flows.

O ye immortal woods and groves,
 Which the enamour'd student loves;
 Beneath whose venerable shade,
 For thought and friendly converse made,
 Famed Hecadem, old hero lies,
 Whose shrine is shaded from the skies,
 And through the gloom of silent night
 Projects from far its trembling light;
 You whose roots descend as low,
 As high in air your branches grow;
 Your leafy arms to heaven extend,
 Bend your heads, in homage bend;
 Cedars and pines that wave above,
 And the oak beloved of Jove.

Omen, monster, prodigy,
 Or nothing are, or Jove, from Thee!
 Whether various nature's play,
 Or she reversed Thy will obey;
 And to rebel man declare
 Famine, plague, or wasteful war.
 Laugh, ye profane, who dare despise
 The threat'ning vengeance of the skies,
 Whilst the pious, on his guard,
 Undismay'd, is still prepared:
 Life or death, his mind 's at rest,
 Since what Thou send'st must needs be best.

No evil can from Thee proceed;
 'T is only suffer'd, not decreed.
 Darkness is not from the sun,
 Nor mount the shades till he is gone:
 Then does night obscene arise
 From Erebus, and fill the skies;
 Fantastic forms the air invade,
 Daughters of nothing and of shade.

Can we forget Thy guardian care,
 Slow to punish, prone to spare?
 Thou break'st the haughty Persian's pride,
 That dared old ocean's power deride;
 Their shipwrecks strow'd th' Eubean wave,
 At Marathon they found a grave.
 O ye blest Greeks, who there expired,
 For Greece, with pious ardour fired!
 What shrines or altars shall we raise
 To secure your endless praise?
 Or need we monuments supply,
 To rescue what can never die?

And yet a greater Hero far
 (Unless great Socrates could err,)
 Shall rise to bless some future day,
 And teach to live, and teach to pray.
 Come, unknown instructor, come!
 Our leaping hearts shall make Thee room:
 Thou with Jove our vows shall share,
 Of Jove and Thee we are the care.

O Father, King, whose heavenly face
 Shines serene on all Thy race,
 We Thy magnificence adore,
 And Thy well-known aid implore;
 Nor vainly for thy help we call;
 Nor can we want—for Thou art all.

This hymn may throw light on that passage of St. Paul, respecting the heathen, Rom. i, 21, &c. "*When they knew God, they glorified him not as God.—Wherefore God gave them up,*" &c. Their polytheism was a punishment consequent upon their apostasy from the true God.

Every good judge will readily allow that the author of these verses did not want talents for poetry. But wherever we fix his standing in the scale of learning and abilities, he still rises higher by genuine piety, and a firm attachment to justice, mercy, and truth, in various trying situations of life. His integrity was conspicuous, and his conduct uniform. As he had chosen God and his service for his own portion, he also chose the same for his children. When two of his sons, as we shall see, were pursuing a course of piety at Oxford, which threw their future prospects of preferment into a cloud not likely to be dissipated, he encouraged them in it, choosing rather that *he and his children should suffer affliction with the people of God, than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.* Few men have been so diligent in the pastoral office as he was; none perhaps more so. Though his income may be called small, and his family large, he had still something to give to those in distress. In conversation he was grave, yet instructive, lively, and full of anecdote; and this talent the late Mr. John Wesley possessed in a high degree. His last moments were as conspicuous for resignation and Christian fortitude, as his life had been for zeal and diligence. His two sons, Mr. John and Charles Wesley, were both with him when he died, and the latter has given the following interesting account of his death, in a letter to his brother Samuel, dated April 30, 1735.

"DEAR BROTHER,—After all your desire of seeing my father alive, you are at last assured you must see his face no more till he is raised in incorruption. You have reason to envy us who could attend him in the last stage of his illness. The few words he could utter I saved, and hope never to forget. Some of them were, 'Nothing is too much to suffer for heaven. The weaker I am in body, the stronger and more sensible support I feel from God. There is but a step between me and death; to-morrow I would see you all with me round this table, that we may once more drink of the cup of blessing, before we drink it new in the kingdom of God. With desire have I desired to eat this passover with you before I die.' The morning he was to communicate, he was so exceeding weak and full of pain, that he could not without the utmost difficulty receive the elements, often repeating, 'Thou shakest me, thou shakest me;' but immediately after receiving, there followed the most visible alteration. He appeared full of faith and peace, which extended even to his body; for he was so much better, that we almost hoped he would have recovered. The fear of death he entirely conquered, and at last gave up his latest human desires—of finishing Job, paying his debts, and seeing you. He often laid his hand upon my head, and said, 'Be steady! The Christian Faith will surely revive in this kingdom; you shall see it, though I shall not.' To my sister Emily he said, 'Do not be concerned at my death: God will then begin to manifest himself to my family.' When we were met about him, his usual expression was, 'Now let me hear you talk of heaven.' On my asking him whether he did not find himself worse, he replied, 'O my Charles, I feel a great deal; God chastens me with strong pain, but I praise him

for it, I thank him for it, I love him for it.' On the 25th his voice failed him, and nature seemed entirely spent, when, on my brother's asking, whether he was not near heaven, he answered distinctly, and with the most of hope and triumph that could be expressed in sounds, 'Yes, I am.' He spoke once more, just after my brother had used the commendatory prayer; his last words were, 'Now you have done all!' This was about half an hour after six, from which time till sunset, he made signs of offering up himself, till my brother again having used the commendatory prayer, the very moment it was finished, he expired. His passage was so smooth and insensible, that notwithstanding the stopping of his pulse, and ceasing of all sign of life and motion, we continued over him a considerable time, in doubt whether the soul was departed or not. My mother, who for several days before he died, hardly ever went into his chamber but she was carried out again in a fit, was far less shocked at the news than we expected, and told us that now she was heard, in his having so easy a death, and in her being strengthened so to bear it."

It seems he received "*the witness of the Spirit*," (which it is almost certain he never *believed* for till then,) in this holy ordinance, and the *fruit* evidently followed. He might have received it, as a penitent sinner, "*believing in the Son of God, who was made sin for him*," before he attempted to teach others. But such was not the creed of that day. This good man, therefore, like his excellent partner, laboured in the fear of God, "through a long legal night of nearly seventy years." It is remarkable also, that it was in the Lord's Supper that the *Divine Witness* was given to both, as we shall see by comparing this account with that to be hereafter given of Mrs. S. Wesley.

It should not be omitted that the famous speech which was delivered in the House of Lords by Dr. Sacheverel, in the reign of Queen Anne, was composed by Mr. Samuel Wesley, as his son Mr. John Wesley informs us, in his *History of England*.

We have thus seen two ministers of the Gospel die; the one a Non-conformist, and the other a High Churchman. As they approach eternity, we see them dropping their singularities of opinion, and coalescing, and becoming one in Christ Jesus. Animated with the same spirit of devotion, they look up to God as their common Father, through the same Mediator and Saviour; they praise him for the same mercies; and, looking forward to his kingdom and glory with the same humble confidence, both triumph over death. They give satisfactory evidence, that they were united to Christ, belonged to the same family, and were heirs of the same heavenly inheritance, notwithstanding the external differences in their mode of worship. These considerations should teach us to be careful, not to overvalue those things wherein they differed, nor to exalt the discriminating distinctions of parties into the rank of fundamental doctrines of Christianity.

CHAPTER III.

MRS. SUSANNAH WESLEY, AND HER DAUGHTERS.

MRS. SUSANNAH WESLEY, the Mother of the late Mr. John Wesley, was the youngest daughter of Dr. Samuel Annesley, and a few years younger than her husband. Being educated in a truly religious family, she early imbibed a reverence for religion. Before she was thirteen years old, she had examined the whole controversy between the Dissenters and the Established Church, and from that time became a member of the Church of England. She afterwards examined the evidences of natural and revealed religion with scrupulous attention, and under every article set down the reasons which determined her to believe it. Of these things she speaks thus, in a letter to her son, Samuel Wesley, dated October 11th, 1709.

“ There is nothing I now desire to live for, but to do some small service to my children ; that, as I have brought them into the world, I may, if it please God, be an instrument of doing good to their souls. I had been several years collecting from my little reading, but chiefly from my own observation and experience, some things which I hoped might be useful to you all. I had begun to correct and form all into a little manual ; wherein I designed you should have seen what were the particular reasons which prevailed on me to believe the being of a God, and the grounds of natural* religion, together with the motives that induced me to embrace the faith of Jesus Christ ; under which was comprehended my own private reasons for the truth of revealed religion. And because I was educated among the Dissenters, and there was something remarkable in my leaving them at so early an age, not being full thirteen, I had drawn up an account of the whole transaction, under which I had included the main of the controversy between them and the Established Church, as far it had come to my knowledge ; and then followed the reasons which had determined my judgment to the preference of the Church of England. I had fairly transcribed a great part of it, when you, writing to me for some directions about receiving the sacrament, I began a short discourse on that subject, intending to send them all together ; but before I could finish my design, the flames consumed both this and all my other writings.† I would have you, at your leisure, begin to do something like this for yourself, and write down what are the principles on which you build your faith ; and though I cannot possibly recover all I formerly wrote, yet I will gladly assist you what I can, in explaining any difficulty that may occur.”

In one of her private meditations, she reckons the following among the signal mercies which God had bestowed upon her. “ Born in a Christian country : early initiated and instructed in the first principles of the Christian religion : good examples in parents and several of the family : good books and ingenious conversation : preserved from ill accidents, once from a violent death : married to a religious orthodox

* I believe there never was any such thing in the world, excepting only as it may mean that which was *not written*.

† When their house was burnt down, in February, 1709.

man ; by him first drawn off from the Socinian heresy, and afterwards confirmed and strengthened by Bishop Bull.”*

About the year 1700, she made a resolution to spend one hour morning and evening in private devotion, in prayer and meditation ; and she religiously kept it ever after, unless sickness hindered, or some absolutely necessary business of her family obliged her to shorten the time. If opportunity offered, she spent some time at noon in this religious and profitable employment. She generally wrote down her thoughts on different subjects at these times ; and great numbers of her meditations have been preserved in her own handwriting. I shall select a few, and make some extracts from others ; because they show us this excellent woman in her most private retirement, conversing without disguise with Him who knows the heart.

“ NOON. To know God only as a philosopher ; to have the most sublime and curious spéculations concerning his essence, attributes, and providence ; to be able to demonstrate his Being from all or any of the works of nature, and to discourse with the greatest propriety and eloquence of his existence and operations ; will avail us nothing, unless at the same time we know him experimentally ; unless the heart know him to be its Supreme Good, its only happiness ; unless a man feel and acknowledge that he can find no repose, no peace, no joy, but in loving and being beloved by him, and does accordingly rest in him as the centre of his being, the fountain of his pleasures, the origin of all virtue and goodness, his light, his life, his strength, his all ; in a word, his Lord, his God. Thus let me ever know thee, O God !”

“ EVENING. The mind of man is naturally so corrupted, and all the powers thereof so weakened, that we cannot possibly aspire vigorously towards God, or have any clear perception of spiritual things, without his assistance. Nothing less than the same Almighty power that raised Jesus Christ from the dead, can raise our souls from the death of sin to a life of holiness.—To know God experimentally is altogether supernatural, and what we can never attain to, but by the merits and intercession of Jesus Christ.† By virtue of what he has done and suffered, and is now doing in heaven for us, we obtain the Holy Spirit, who is the best instructor, the most powerful teacher we can possibly have ; without whose agency, all other means of grace would be ineffectual.—How evidently does the Holy Spirit concur with the means of grace ! And how certainly does he assist and strengthen the soul, if it be but sincere and hearty in its endeavours to avoid any evil, or perform any good !—To have a good desire, a fervent aspiration towards God, shall not pass unregarded. I have found by long experience, that it is of great use to accustom one’s self to enter into solemn engagements with God against any particular sin ; but then I would have them never made for a longer time than from morning till night, and from night till morning, that so the impression they make on the mind may be always fresh and lively. This was many years tried with good success, in the case of —. Glory be to thee, O Lord !”

“ MORNING. It is too common with me upon receiving any light, or new supply of grace, to think, Now I have gained my point, and

* In the manuscript it stands thus, B. B. which I believe is intended for Bishop Bull.

† Though this pious woman could write thus clearly, she did not attain this true Christian faith till many years after.

may say, 'Soul, take thine ease;' by which means I think not of going any farther; or else fall into dejection of spirit, upon a groundless fear, that I shall soon lose what I have gained, and in a little time be never the better for it. Both these are sins. The first proceeds from immoderate love of present ease, and spiritual sloth: the other from want of faith in the all-sufficiency of my Saviour.

"EVENING. If to esteem and to have the highest reverence for Thee; if constantly and sincerely to acknowledge Thee, the supreme, the only desirable good, be to love Thee, I do love Thee!

"If comparatively to despise and undervalue all the world contains, which is esteemed great, fair, or good; if earnestly and constantly to desire Thee, thy favour, thy acceptance, Thyself, rather than any or all things thou hast created, be to love Thee, I do love Thee!

"If to rejoice in thy essential majesty and glory; if to feel a vital joy o'erspread and cheer the heart at each perception of thy blessedness, at every thought that thou art God; that all things are in thy power; that there is none superior or equal to Thee, be to love Thee, I do love Thee!"

Though Mrs. Wesley allotted two hours in the day for meditation and prayer in private, no woman was ever more diligent in business, or attentive to family affairs, than she was. Remarkable for method and good arrangement both in her studies and business, she saved much time, and kept her mind free from perplexity. She had nineteen children, ten of whom, at least, grew up to be educated; and this duty fell upon her; and it was almost impossible for the children to have had a better instructor. From several things which appear in her papers, it seems to me that she had acquired some knowledge of the Latin and Greek languages in her youth, though she never makes any pretensions to it. She had studied human nature well, and knew how to adapt her discourse either to youth or age; and without this, no person is properly qualified to instruct others. Her children were very early taught obedience to their parents, and to wait their decision in every thing they were to have or do. As soon as they could speak, they were taught the Lord's prayer, and made to repeat it at rising and bed-time constantly. As they advanced, they were taught a short prayer for their parents, and some collects; a short catechism; and some portion of Scripture, as their memories could bear. They were early made to distinguish the sabbath from other days; and were soon taught to be still at family prayers, and to ask a blessing immediately after, which they used to do by signs before they could kneel or speak. Her method of teaching them to read was, I think, peculiar to herself, and deserves to be noticed. I shall give it in her own words, in a letter to Mr. John Wesley. "None of them were taught to read till five years old, except Kezzy, in whose case I was overruled; and she was more years in learning, than any of the rest had been months. The way of teaching was this: the day before a child began to learn, the house was set in order, every one's work appointed them, and a charge given that none should come into the room from nine till twelve, or from two till five, which were our school-hours. One day was allowed the child wherein to learn its letters; and each of them did in that time know all its letters, great and small, except Molly and Nancy, who were a day and a half before they knew them perfectly; for which I then thought

them very dull : but the reason why I thought them so was, because the rest learned them so readily, and your brother Samuel, who was the first child I ever taught, learnt the alphabet in a few hours. He was five years old on the 10th of February ; the next day he began to learn, and as soon as he knew the letters, began at the first chapter of Genesis. He was taught to spell the first verse, then to read it over and over till he could read it off hand without any hesitation ; so on to the second, &c, till he took ten verses for a lesson, which he quickly did. Easter fell low that year, and by Whitsuntide he could read a chapter very well ; for he read continually, and had such a prodigious memory, that I cannot remember ever to have told him the same word twice. What was yet stranger, any word he had learnt in his lesson, he knew wherever he saw it, either in his Bible or any other book, by which means he learnt very soon to read an English author well.

“ The same method was observed with them all. As soon as they knew the letters, they were first put to spell, and read one line, then a verse, never leaving till perfect in their lesson, were it shorter or longer. So one or other continued reading at school-time without any intermission ; and before we left school, each child read what he had learnt that morning ; and ere we parted in the afternoon, what they had learned that day.”

Mr. Wesley observes of his mother, that even she, as well as her father and grandfather, her husband and three sons, had been, in her measure, a Preacher of righteousness. As this is a remarkable circumstance in her life, and shows her zeal and steadiness in doing good, I shall relate it a little more at large than Mr. Wesley has done, the original letters being now before me.

Her husband usually attended the sittings of the *Convocation* ; and on these occasions was obliged to reside in London for a length of time that was often injurious to his parish, and at an expense that was inconvenient to himself and family. It was on this business, I apprehend, that he spent so much time in London in the beginning of the year 1712. During his absence, Mrs. Wesley formed a little meeting at her house on a Sunday evening, when she read a sermon, prayed, and conversed with the people who came for this purpose. She acquainted her husband of their meeting, who on account of the novelty and singularity of the thing, made some objections against it. Her answer is dated the 6th of February, 1712, in which she says, “ I heartily thank you for dealing so plainly and faithfully with me in a matter of no common concern. The main of your objections against our Sunday evening meetings, are, first, that it will look particular ; secondly, my sex ; and, lastly, your being at present in a public station and character ; to all which I shall answer briefly.

“ As to its looking particular, I grant it does ; and so does almost every thing that is serious, or that may any way advance the glory of God, or the salvation of souls, if it be performed out of a pulpit, or in the way of common conversation : because, in our corrupt age, the utmost care and diligence have been used to banish all discourse of God or spiritual concerns out of society ; as if religion were never to appear out of the closet, and we were to be ashamed of nothing so much as of professing ourselves to be Christians.

“To your second, I reply, that, as I am a woman, so I am also mistress of a large family. And though the superior charge of the souls contained in it lies upon you, as head of the family, and as their minister, 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 of heaven and earth; and if I am unfaithful to Him or to 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 that our most holy religion requires a strict observation of the Lord’s day, and not thinking that we fully answered the end of the institution by only going to church, but that likewise we were obliged to fill up the intermediate spaces of that sacred 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; especially in your absence, when, having no afternoon service, we have so much leisure for such exercises; 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 purely accidental. Our lad told his parents; they first desired to be admitted; then others who heard of it, begged leave also; so our company increased to about thirty, and seldom exceeded forty last winter; and why it increased since, I leave you to judge, after you have read what follows.

“Soon after you went to London, Emily found in your study the account of the Danish Missionaries; which, having never seen, I ordered her to read to me. I was never, I think, more affected with any thing than with the relation of their travels; and was exceedingly pleased with the noble design they were engaged in. Their labours refreshed my soul beyond measure, and I could not forbear spending a good part of that evening in praising and adoring the Divine Goodness for inspiring those good men with such an ardent zeal for his glory; that they were willing to hazard their lives, and all that is esteemed dear to men in this world, to advance the honour of their Master Jesus! 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 of the Gospel, and so cannot be engaged in such a worthy employment as they were; yet, if my heart were sincerely devoted to God, and if I were inspired with a true zeal for his glory, and did really desire the salvation of souls, I might do somewhat more than I do. I thought I might live in a more exemplary manner in *some things*; I might pray more for the people, and speak with more warmth to those with whom I have an opportunity of conversing. However, I resolved to begin with my own children; and accordingly I proposed and observed the following method: I take such a proportion of time as I can best spare every night, to discourse with each child by itself, on something that relates to its principal concerns. On Monday, I talk with Molly; on Tuesday, with Hetty; Wednesday, with Nancy; Thursday, with Jacky; Friday, with Patty; Saturday, with Charles; and with Emily and Suky together on Sunday.

“ With those few neighbours who then came to me, I discoursed more freely and affectionately than before ; I chose the best and most awakening sermons we had ; and I spent more time with them in such exercises. Since this, our company has increased every night ; for I dare deny none who ask admittance. Last Sunday, I believe we had above Two Hundred, and yet many went away for want of room.

“ But I never durst positively presume to hope, that God would make use of me as an instrument of doing good : The farthest I ever durst go was, It may be ; who can tell ? With God all things are possible. I will resign myself to Him ; or, as Herbert better expresses it,

Only, since God doth often make
Of lowly matter, for high uses meet,
I throw me at his feet ;
There will I lie, until my Maker seek
For some mean stuff, whereon to show his skill,
Then is my time——

And thus I rested, without passing any reflection on myself, or forming any judgment about the success or event of this undertaking.

“ Your third objection I leave to be answered by your own judgment. We meet not upon any worldly design. 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 as soon as it is over, they all go home. And where is the harm of this ? If I and my children went a visiting on Sunday nights, or if we admitted of impertinent visits, as too many do who think themselves good Christians, perhaps it would be thought no scandalous practice, though in truth it would be so ; therefore, why should any reflect upon you, let your station be what it will, because your wife endeavours to draw people to church, and to restrain them, by reading and other persuasions, from their profanation of God’s most holy day, I cannot conceive. But if any should be so mad as to do it, I wish you would not regard it. For my part, I value no censure on this account : I have long since shook hands with the world, and I heartily wish I had never given them more reason to speak against me.

“ 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 ; and how would that edify the rest ? 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 be 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.”

In this, as in every other part of her conduct, Mrs. Wesley acted upon principle, and from mature deliberation. No person, perhaps, ever had a greater regard for the established order of the Church of England than she had ; but she considered her conduct in this instance as coinciding with the spirit and intention of that order—to reform the

manners of the people, and to beget in them a reverence for the public worship. But, though she was satisfied of the propriety of her own conduct, she thought it her duty to abide by the decision of her husband. He had already written to her on the subject: and though he made some objections, yet, upon the whole, he seemed to approve of the meeting. But Mr. Inman, the curate, and two or three of his companions, highly disapproved of it, and wrote to Mr. Wesley, complaining heavily, calling it a conventicle, &c. These representations had such an effect upon Mr. Wesley's mind, that he wrote to his wife in a tone of disapprobation which he had not used before. Her answer, which is dated the 25th of February, is worthy of herself and of the cause in which she was engaged.

"Some few days since," says she, "I received a letter from you, I suppose dated the 16th instant, which I made no great haste to answer; because I judged it necessary for both of us to take some time to consider, before you determine in a matter of such great importance. I shall not inquire how it was possible that you should be prevailed on, by the senseless clamours of two or three of the worst of your parish, to condemn what you so very lately approved; but I shall tell you my thoughts in as few words as possible. I do not hear of more than three or four persons who are against our meeting, of whom *Inman* is the chief. He and Whitely, I believe, may call it a conventicle; but we hear no outcry here, nor has any one said a word against it to me. And what does their calling it a conventicle signify? Does it alter the nature of the thing? Or do you think, that what they say is a sufficient reason to forbear a thing that has already done much good, and, by the blessing of God, may do much more? If its being called a conventicle, by those who know in their conscience they misrepresent it, did really make it one, what you say would be somewhat to the purpose; but it is plain, in fact, that this one thing has brought more people to church, than ever any thing did in so short a time. We used not to have above twenty or twenty-five at evening service, whereas now we have between two and three hundred; which are more than ever came before to hear *Inman* in the morning.

"Besides the constant attendance on the public worship of God, our meeting has wonderfully conciliated the minds of this people towards us, so that we now live in the greatest amity imaginable; and, what is still better, they are very much reformed in their behaviour on the Lord's Day: and those who used to be playing in the streets now come to hear a good sermon read, which is surely more acceptable to Almighty God.

"Another reason for what I do is, that I have no other way of conversing with this people, and therefore have no other way of doing them good; but, by this, I have an opportunity of exercising the greatest and noblest charity, that is, charity to their souls.

"Some families who seldom went to church, now go constantly; and one person who has not been there for seven years, is now prevailed upon to go with the rest.

"There are many other good consequences of this meeting, which I have not time to mention. Now, I beseech you, weigh all things in an impartial balance: on the one side, the honour of Almighty God, the doing much good to many souls, and the friendship of the best among whom we live; on the other, (if folly, impiety, and vanity may abide in

the scale against so ponderous a weight,) the senseless objections of a few scandalous persons, laughing at us, and censuring us as precise and hypocritical; and when you have duly considered all things, let me know your positive determination.

"I need not tell you the consequences, if you determine to put an end to our meeting. You may easily foresee what prejudices it may raise in the minds of these people against Inman especially, who has had so little wit as to speak publicly against it. I can now keep them to the church; but if it be laid aside, I doubt they will never go to hear him more, at least those who come from the lower end of the town; but if this be continued till you return, which now will not be long, it may please God that their hearts may be so changed by that time, that they may love and delight in his public worship so as never to neglect it more.

"If you do, after all, think fit to dissolve this assembly, do not tell me that you *desire* me to do it, for that will not satisfy my conscience; but send me your *positive command*, in such full and express terms, as may absolve me from all guilt and punishment for neglecting this opportunity of doing good, when you and I shall appear before the great and awful tribunal of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Inman, the Curate mentioned above, was something of an original. Upon Mr. Wesley's return from London at one time, a complaint was made concerning his Curate, "that he preached nothing to his congregation, except the duty of paying their debts, and behaving well among their neighbours." The complainants added, "We think, Sir, there is something more in religion than this." Mr. Wesley replied, "There certainly is: I will hear him myself." He accordingly sent for *Inman*, and told him, that he wished him to preach the next Lord's day, adding, "You could, I suppose, prepare a sermon upon any text that I should give you." The Curate replied, "By all means, Sir." "Then," said Mr. Wesley, "prepare a sermon on that text, Heb. xi, 6. '*Without faith, it is impossible to please Him, i. e. God.*'" When the time arrived, Mr. Wesley read the prayers, and *Inman* ascended the pulpit. He read the text with great solemnity, and thus began: "It must be confessed, Friends, that faith is a most excellent virtue; and it produces other virtues also. In particular it makes a man pay his debts as soon as he can."—He went on in this way, enforcing the common social duties, for about a quarter of an hour, and then concluded. "So," said Mr. J. Wesley to me, "my father saw it was a lost case."—I think neither Mr. Southey, nor Bishop Lavington, would have entertained any fear of this man becoming an Enthusiast.

Mrs. Wesley continued to discharge the duties of a wife and parent with the greatest diligence and punctuality. The letters she wrote to her sons, when at Oxford, and after they had left it, show her in the most amiable light, both for knowledge and piety. In 1735, she lost her husband, and afterwards divided her time between her children, till about the year 1739; from which period, she resided chiefly in London.

It appears from all we have seen of Mrs. Wesley, that she was a woman really devoted to God; but it does not appear that she had a clear notion of justification, as distinct from sanctification. On the contrary, she seems to have confounded them together; and this hindered her from enjoying that full assurance of her state, and the

peace and joy consequent upon it, which otherwise she would have had. When her two sons, Mr. John and Charles Wesley, began to preach the doctrine of justification by faith, in 1738, and many professed to be so justified, and to know the time when this change in their state took place, she mentions their notions as new, in a letter she wrote to her son Samuel, in November this year;* but she had not then conversed with them on the subject, and therefore did not know what doctrines they taught, except from report. It has indeed been said, that she "lived long enough to deplore the extravagance of her sons;" and this assertion was founded on the letter above mentioned. But the following extracts from three of her letters to Mr. Charles Wesley, will show us her opinion of the doctrine and conduct of her sons, more clearly than any thing which has yet appeared in print.

"October 19, 1738.

"It is with much pleasure I find your mind is somewhat easier than formerly, and I heartily thank God for it. 'The spirit of a man may sustain his infirmity, but a wounded spirit who can bear?' If this hath been your case, it has been sad indeed. But blessed be God, who gave you convictions of the evil of sin, as contrary to the purity of the Divine nature, and the perfect goodness of his law! Blessed be God, who showed you the necessity you were in of a Saviour to deliver you from the power of sin and Satan, (for Christ will be no Saviour to such as see not their need of one,) and directed you by faith to lay hold of that stupendous mercy offered us by redeeming love! Jesus is the only physician of souls; his blood the only salve which can heal a wounded conscience. It is not in wealth, or honour, or sensual pleasures, to relieve a spirit heavy laden and weary of the burden of sin: These things have power to increase our guilt, by alienating our hearts from God; but none to make our peace with Him, to reconcile God to man, and man to God, and to renew the union between the Divine and human nature.—No, there is none but Christ, none but Christ, who is sufficient for these things. But blessed be God, he is an all-sufficient Saviour! And blessed be his holy name, that thou hast found him a Saviour to thee, my son! Oh! let us love him much, for we have much to be forgiven.

"I would gladly know what your notion is of justifying faith; because you speak of it as a thing you have but lately obtained."

The second letter is dated December 6th, 1738. In it she says, "I think you are fallen into an odd way of thinking. You say, that, till within a few months, you had no spiritual life, nor any justifying faith. Now this is, as if a man should affirm he was not alive in his infancy, because when an infant, he did not know he was alive. All, then, that I can gather from your letter is, that till a little while ago you were not so well satisfied of your being a Christian as you are now. I heartily rejoice that you have now attained to a strong and lively hope in God's mercy through Christ. Not that I can think you were totally without saving faith before; but it is one thing to have faith, and another thing to be sensible we have it. Faith is a fruit of the Spirit, and is the gift of God; but to feel, or be inwardly sensible, that we have true faith, requires a farther operation of God's Holy Spirit. You say you have peace, but not joy, in believing. Blessed be God for peace; may this

peace rest with you. Joy will follow, perhaps not very closely, but it will follow faith and love. God's promises are sealed to us, but not dated. Therefore patiently attend his pleasure ; he will give you joy in believing. Amen."

The third letter is dated December 27th, 1739, after she had come to reside chiefly in London. Here she enjoyed the conversation of her sons alternately, the one being always in town while the other was in the country. She now attended on their ministry, conversed with the people of their Society, became more perfectly acquainted with their whole doctrine, and seems heartily to have embraced it. Charles was in Bristol when she wrote this letter to him. She observes, "You cannot more desire to see me, than I do to see you. Your brother,—whom I shall henceforward call Son Wesley, since my dear Sam is gone home,—has just been with me, and much revived my spirits. Indeed, I have often found that he never speaks in my hearing, without my receiving some spiritual benefit. But his visits are seldom and short; for which I never blame him, because I know he is well employed ; and blessed be God, he hath great success in his ministry.

"But, my dear Charles, still I want either him or you. For, indeed, in the most literal sense, I am become a little child, and want continual succour. 'As iron sharpeneth iron, so doth the countenance of a man his friend.' I feel much comfort and support from religious conversation, when I can obtain it. Formerly I rejoiced in the absence of company : and found, the less I had of creature comforts, the more I had from God. But alas ! I am fallen from that spiritual converse I once enjoyed ; and why is it so ? Because I want faith. God is an omnipresent unchangeable good, "in whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." The fault is in myself ; and I attribute all mistakes in judgment, all errors in practice, to want of faith in the blessed Jesus. O ! my dear, when I consider the dignity of his person, the perfection of his purity, the greatness of his sufferings ; but above all, his boundless love, I am astonished and utterly confounded. I am lost in thought ; I fall into nothing before him ! O how inexcusable, is that person who has knowledge of these things, and yet remains poor and low in faith and love. I speak as one guilty in this matter.*

"I have been prevented from finishing my letter. I complained I had none to converse with me on spiritual things ; but for these several days, I have had the conversation of many good Christians, who have refreshed, in some measure, my fainting spirits. And though they hindered my writing, yet it was a pleasing, and I hope not an unprofitable, interruption they gave me. I hope we shall shortly speak face to face ; and I shall then, if God permit, impart my thoughts more fully. But then alas ! when you come, your brother leaves me. Yet that is the will of God, in whose blessed service you are engaged ; who hath hitherto blessed your labours, and preserved your persons. That he may continue so to prosper your work, and protect you both from evil, and give you strength and courage to preach the *true gospel*, in opposition to the united powers of evil men and evil angels, is the hearty prayer of dear Charles, your loving mother, S. W."

* She now began to feel the want of living faith. This conviction always precedes that divine gift.

This letter gives full evidence that Mrs. Wesley cordially approved of the conduct of her sons, and was animated with zeal for the success of their labours. She continued in the most perfect harmony with them till her death. Attending on their ministry, and walking in the light of God's countenance, she rejoiced in the blessed experience of the truths she heard them preach.—An account of her happy death shall be given in the proper place.

Mrs. Wesley had taken great pains with all her children, to furnish their minds with useful knowledge, and to instil into them the principles of religion and virtue. The daughters were by no means neglected; they shared their mother's care with the sons. Many of their letters are now before me, in which there is much strong sense, lively wit, and accurate language; though they were written on common subjects, and without any expectation that they would be preserved. Most of them had a fine genius for poetry: But Mrs. Wright shone the brightest in this walk of elegant amusement; and to her I shall chiefly confine my observations, in speaking of the daughters of these venerable parents.

Mrs. Wright was her mother's tenth or eleventh child; and it has been said, that when she was eight years old, she could read the Greek Testament. From her infancy she was gay and sprightly, and extremely addicted to wit and humour. As she grew up, she indulged herself in these dispositions so far, as to give great uneasiness to her parents. About the year 1724, or the beginning of 1725, a gentleman, respectable both for his abilities and situation in life, paid his addresses to her, and she had a sincere regard for him. But, from some circumstance, he and her father disagreed, and the affair was broken off. From a concurrence of circumstances in the end of the year 1725, she was induced to marry a person not at all adapted to make her happy; being rude in address, and much inferior to her in understanding: he also proved an unkind husband. Her situation preyed upon her mind, her health and strength gradually wasted away, and at length she sunk into a degree of melancholy that made her truly wretched. Most of her verses which have been preserved, are beautiful, and written in the true spirit of poetry; but they are saddened with an air of deep distress. The following address to her husband will give some notion of his character, and show the true cause of her wretchedness.

MEHETABEL WRIGHT TO HER HUSBAND.

THE ardent lover cannot find
A coldness in his fair unkind,
But blaming what he cannot hate
He mildly chides the dear ingrate;
And though despairing of relief,
In soft complaining vents his grief.

Then what should hinder but that I,
Impatient of my wrongs, may try,
By saddest, softest strains, to move
My wedded, latest, dearest love,
To throw his cold neglect aside,
And cheer once more his injured bride?

O thou! whom sacred rites design'd
My guide and husband ever kind,
My sov'reign master, best of friends,
On whom my earthly bliss depends!
If e'er thou didst in Hetty see
Aught fair, or good, or dear to thee,

If gentle speech can ever move
 The cold remains of former love ;
 Turn thee at last—my bosom ease,
 Or tell me why I cease to please.

Is it because revolving years,
 Heart-breaking sighs, and fruitless tears,
 Have quite deprived this form of mine
 Of all that once thou fanciedst fine ?
 Ah no ! what once allured thy sight
 Is still in its meridian height ;
 These eyes their usual lustre show,
 When uneclipsed by flowing wo.
 Old age and wrinkles in this face
 As yet could never find a place ;
 A youthful grace adorns the lines,
 Where still the purple current shines,
 Unless, by thy ungentle art,
 It flies to aid my wretched heart :
 Nor does this slighted bosom show
 The thousand hours it spends in wo.

Or is it that, oppressed with care,
 I stun with loud complaints thine ear,
 And make thy home, for quiet meant,
 The seat of noise and discontent ?
 Oh no ! those ears were ever free
 From matrimonial melody.
 For though thine absence I lament,
 When half the lonely night is spent ;
 Yet when the watch, or early morn,
 Has brought me hopes of thy return,
 I oft have wiped these watchful eyes,
 Conceal'd my cares, and curb'd my sighs,
 In spite of grief, to let thee see
 I wore an endless smile for thee.

Had I not practised every art
 T' oblige, divert, and cheer thy heart,
 To make me pleasing in thine eyes,
 And turn thy home to paradise,
 I had not ask'd, Why dost thou shun
 These faithful arms, and eager run
 To some obscure unclean retreat,
 With fiends incarnate glad to meet,
 The vile companions of thy mirth,
 The scum and refuse of the earth ?
 Who, when inspired with beer, can grin
 At witless oaths and jests obscene :
 Till the most learned of the throng
 Begins a tale of ten hours long,
 Whilst thou in raptures, with stretch'd jaws,
 Crownest each joke with loud applause !

Deprived of freedom, health, and ease,
 And rivall'd by such *things* as these,
 This latest effort will I try,
 Or to regain thine heart, or die !
 Soft as I am, I 'll make thee see
 I will not brook contempt from thee.
 Then quit the shuffling, doubtful sense,
 Nor hold me longer in suspense.
 Unkind, ungrateful as thou art,
 Say, must I ne'er regain thy heart ?
 Must all attempts to please thee prove
 Unable to regain thy love ?
 If so, by truth itself I swear,
 The sad reverse I cannot bear ;
 No rest, no pleasure will I see,
 My whole of bliss is lost with thee.
 I 'll give all thought of patience o'er,
 (A gift I never lost before,)

Indulge at once my rage and grief,
 Mourn obstinate, disdain relief;
 And call that wretch my mortal foe,
 Who tries to mitigate my wo;
 Till life, on terms severe as these,
 Shall, ebbing, leave my heart at ease;
 To thee thy liberty restore,
 To laugh when Hetty is no more.

The following beautiful lines seem to have been an extempore effusion, poured out from the fulness of her heart on the occasion, and sharpened with the keen distress of her hopeless situation.

ADDRESS TO HER DYING INFANT,* SEPTEMBER, 1728.

TENDER softness! infant mild!
 Perfect, sweetest, loveliest child!
 Transient lustre! beauteous clay!
 Smiling wonder of a day!
 Ere the last convulsive start
 Rend thy unresisting heart;
 Ere the long enduring swoon
 Weigh thy precious eyelids down;
 Ah, regard a mother's moan;
 Anguish deeper than thy own!

Fairest eyes, whose dawning light
 Late with rapture bless'd my sight;
 Ere your orbs extinguish'd be,
 Bend their trembling beams on me!
 Drooping sweetness! verdant flower!
 Blooming, with'ring in an hour!
 Ere thy gentle breast sustains
 Latest, fiercest, mortal pains,
 Hear a suppliant! let me be
 Partner in thy destiny!

That whene'er the fatal cloud
 Must thy radiant temples shroud:
 When deadly damps (impending now)
 Shall hover round thy destined brow;
 Diffusive may their influence be,
 And with the blossom blast the tree!

In this state of mind, and declining fast in health, she wrote the following Epitaph for herself:—

DESTINED, while living, to sustain
 An equal share of grief and pain!
 All various ills of human race
 Within this breast had once a place.
 Without complaint, she learn'd to bear
 A living death, a long despair;
 Till hard oppress'd by adverse fate,
 O'ercharged, she sunk beneath the weight,
 And to this peaceful tomb retired,
 So much esteem'd, so long desired!
 The painful mortal conflict 's o'er;
 A broken heart can bleed no more!

Mrs. Wright, however, lived many years after this; and at length true religion coming to her aid, soothed the anguish of her mind, and gave her peace, though she never recovered her health.

The first religious letter she wrote to Mr. Wesley was in 1743: She says, "Some years ago I told my brother Charles I could not be of his

* The child died the third day after it was born.—*Private Papers.*

way of thinking then, but that, if ever I was, I would as freely own it. After I was convinced of sin—and of your opinion as far as I had examined your principles, I still forbore declaring my sentiments so openly as I had inclination to do, fearing I should relapse into my former state. When I was delivered from this fear, and had a blessed hope, that he who had begun would finish his work, I never confessed so fully as I ought, how entirely I was of your mind, because I was taxed with insincerity and hypocrisy whenever I opened my mouth in favour of religion, or owned how great things God had done for me. This discouraged me utterly, and prevented me from making my change as public as my folly and vanity had formerly been. But now my health is gone, I cannot be easy without declaring that I have long desired to know but *one thing*, that is, *Jesus Christ and him crucified*; and this desire prevails above all others. And though I am cut off from all human help or ministry, I am not without assistance; though I have no spiritual friend, nor ever had one yet, except perhaps once in a year or two, when I have seen one of my brothers, or some other religious person, by stealth: yet (no thanks to me!) I am enabled to seek him still, and to be satisfied with nothing less than God, in whose presence I affirm this truth. I dare not desire health, only patience, resignation, and the spirit of an healthful mind. I have been so long weak, that I know not how long my trial may last; but I have a firm persuasion and blessed hope (though no full assurance) that in the country I am going to, I shall not sing HALLELUJAH, and HOLY, HOLY, HOLY, without company, as I have done in this. Dear brother, I am unused to speak or write on these things; I only speak my plain thoughts as they occur. Adieu! If you have time from better business to send a line to Stanmore, so great a comfort would be as welcome as it is wanted."

In July 1744, she wrote to her brother from Bristol, where it seems she then resided, at least for some time. She speaks of herself in the most humiliating terms. She highly commends the Christian friendship of Mrs. Vigor, Miss Stafford, and some others. She now enjoyed the means of grace, and the benefit of conversation with the people of the Society, and continued to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Mrs. Wright persevered in a religious course of life, patient in her sufferings, resigned to her weakness, and waiting for full salvation in a deliverance from this mortal state, till 1751. In March this year, Mr. Charles Wesley speaks thus of her:—"Prayed by my sister Wright, a gracious, tender, trembling soul; a bruised reed, which the Lord will not break." She died on the 21st of the same month, and Mr. Charles preached her funeral sermon. He observes, that he had sweet fellowship with her in explaining those words, "*Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended.*" He adds, "All present seemed partakers both of my sorrow and my joy."

From this authentic account of Mrs. Wright, taken from original letters, we may correct an error of Mr. Duncombe concerning her. This gentleman has insinuated in his *Feminead*, that her pungent distress and gloomy despair originated from mistaken and superstitious views of religion: It appears, on the contrary, that they arose from a very different

cause, and that religion restored her to peace and happiness ; and indeed it was the only thing that could do it. Mr. Duncombe's words are,

But ah ! why heaves my breast this pensive sigh ?
 Why starts this tear unbidden from my eye ?
 What breast from sighs, what eye from tears refrains,
 When sweetly mournful, hapless Wright complains ?
 And who but grieves to see her gen'rous mind,
 For nobler views and worthier guests design'd,
 Amidst the hateful form of black despair,
 Wan with the gloom of superstitious care ?
 In pity-moving lays, with earnest cries,
 She called on Heaven to close her weary eyes ;
 And long on earth, by heartfelt woes oppress'd,
 Was borne by friendly death to welcome rest.*

It is grievous to see authors, whose works are likely to be read, take every opportunity to dress out religion in the most ugly forms they can invent, and even attributing to it those calamities of life which religion alone is able to alleviate and redress.

The following among other poetical compositions, were written by Mrs. Wright ; but at what period of her life, is uncertain.

TO THE MEMORY OF HER UNCLE, A PHYSICIAN,† WHO DIED IN 1737.‡

How can the muse attempt the string,
 Forsaken by her guardian power ?
 Ah me ! that she survives to sing
 Her friend and patron now no more !
 Yet private grief she might suppress,
 Since Clio bears no selfish mind ;
 But oh ! she mourns to wild excess
 The friend and patron of mankind.

Alas ! the sovereign healing art,
 Which rescued thousands from the grave,
 Unaided left the gentlest heart,
 Nor could its skilful master save.
 Who shall the helpless sex sustain,
 Now Varo's lenient hand is gone,
 Which knew so well to soften pain,
 And ward all dangers but his own.

His darling Muse, his Clio dear,
 Whom first his favour raised to fame,
 His gentle voice vouchsafed to cheer ;
 His art upheld her tender frame.
 Pale envy durst not show her teeth ;
 Above contempt she gaily shone
 Chief favourite, till the hand of death
 Endangered both by striking one.

Perceiving well, devoid of fear,
 His latest fatal conflict nigh,
 Reclined on her he held most dear,
 Whose breast received his parting sigh ;
 With every art and grace adorn'd,
 By man admired, by heaven approved,
 Good Varo died—applauded, mourn'd,
 And honour'd by the Muse he loved.

* See Christian Mag. vol. iii, p. 523. † Ibid. p. 284.

‡ Mr. Charles Wesley's Journal.

TO THE MEMORY OF HER SISTER, MRS. WHITELAME, WHO DIED IN CHILDBED, ABOUT
A YEAR AFTER HER MARRIAGE.

If happy spirits are allow'd to know,
And hover round what once they loved below,
Maria, gentlest excellence, attend
To one who glories to have call'd thee FRIEND!
Remote in merit, though all'd in blood,
Though worthless I, and thou divinely good,
Accept, dear shade, from me these artless lays,
Who never durst unjustly blame or praise.

With business and devotion never cloy'd,
No moment of thy life pass'd unemploy'd:
Well-natured mirth, matured discretion join'd.
Constant attendants on the virtuous mind:
Ah me! that heaven has from this bosom torn
The dearest friend whom I must ever mourn,
Ere Stella could discharge the smallest part
Of what she owed to such immense desert.

Pleasing thy face and form, tho' heaven confined
To scanty limits thy extensive mind;
Witness the taintless lustre of thy skin,
Bright emblem of the brighter soul within;
That soul which, easy, unaffected, mild,
Through jetty eyes with pleasing sweetness smiled.

To soundest prudence, life's unerring guide:
To love sincere, religion void of pride;
To friendship, perfect in a female mind,
Which I can never hope again to find;
To mirth, the balm of care, from lightness free;
To steadfast truth, unwearied industry:—
To every charm and grace, comprised in you,
Sister and friend, a long and last adieu.

A FAREWELL TO THE WORLD.

WHILE sickness rends this tenement of clay,
The approaching change with pleasure I survey.
O'erjoyed to reach the goal with eager pace,
Ere my slow life has measured half its race.
No longer shall I bear, my friends to please,
The hard constraint of seeming much at ease:
Wearing an outward smile, a look serene,
While piercing racks and tortures lurk within.
Yet let me not, ungrateful to my God,
Record the *evil*, and forget the *good*;
For *both* I humble adoration pay,
And bless the power who gives and takes away:
Long shall my faithful memory retain,
And oft recall each interval of pain.
Nay, to high Heaven for greater gifts I bend,
Health I've enjoy'd, and I had once a friend.
Our labour sweet, if labour it may seem,
Allow'd the sportive and instructive scene:
Yet here no lewd or useless wit was found,
We poised the wav'ring sail with ballast sound.
Learning here placed her richer stores in view,
Or, wing'd with love, the minutes gayly flew.

Nay, yet sublimer joys our bosoms proved,
Divine benevolence, by heaven beloved:
Wan meagre forms, torn from impending death,
Exulting, bless'd us with reviving breath.
The shiv'ring wretch we clothed, the mourner cheer'd,
And sickness ceased to groan when we appeared.
Unask'd, our care assists with tender art
Their bodies, nor neglects th' immortal part.

Sometimes in shades impierced by Cynthia's beam,
 Whose lustre glimmer'd on the dimpled stream,
 We led the sprightly dance through sylvan scenes,
 Or tripp'd like fairies o'er the level greens :
 In ev'ry breast a gen'rous fervour glows,
 Soft bliss, which innocence alone bestows !
 From fragrant herbage, deck'd with pearly dew,
 And flow'rets of a thousand various hues,
 By wafting gales the mingling odours fly,
 And round our heads in whisp'ring breezes sigh.
 Whole nature seems to heighten and improve
 The holier hours of innocence and love.
 Youth, wit, good-nature, candour, sense, combined—
 To serve, delight, and civilize mankind :
 In wisdom's lore we ev'ry heart engage,
 And triumph to restore the golden age !

Now close the blissful scene exhausted Muse,
 The latest blissful scene which thou shalt choose !
 Sate with life, what joys for me remain,
 Save one dear wish, to balance ev'ry pain ?
 To bow my head, with grief and toil oppress,
 Till borne by angel-bands to everlasting rest.

Mr. John Wesley subjoins to this poem the following note : “ It is but justice to her memory to observe, that she was at rest before she went hence ; being for some years a witness of that rest which remains, even here, for the people of God.”

Dr. Whitehead, in his *Memoirs of the family*, observes, Miss Kezzy Wesley was addressed by Mr. Hall, a young gentleman of a good understanding, agreeable in his person, and engaging in his address. He was entered at Lincoln College as Mr. Wesley's pupil, on the 22d of January, 1731 ; but Mr. Wesley was totally ignorant of his addresses to his sister.* Mr. Hall entered into Orders while he was at Oxford ; and though most of the family thought highly of him in every respect as a religious character, yet Samuel Wesley strongly doubted his sincerity. Mr. John Wesley believed him sincere and pious ; but, in a letter written to his mother, when Mr. Hall was at Oxford, he speaks of him as highly enthusiastic and superstitious. After he had gained the affections of the young lady, he quitted her, and paid his addresses to her elder sister. The family opposed this conduct with great vehemence, especially the three brothers. But the marriage, notwithstanding, took place, and the future conduct of Mr. Hall by no means corresponded to the expectations they at first formed of him. After some years, he quitted his wife, having had ten children by her, and afterwards lived in the most loose and scandalous manner. Mrs. Hall bore her trials with remarkable patience and resignation. Indeed, in this respect, she was a pattern to all Christians ; for I do not remember, that I ever heard her speak ill of any person, whatever injuries she might have received.—Miss Kezzy Wesley died on the 9th of March 1741, and Mr. Charles gives the following account of her death in a letter to his brother :

“ Yesterday morning, sister Kezzy died in the Lord Jesus. He finished his work, and cut it short in mercy. Full of thankfulness, resignation, and love, without pain or trouble, she commended her spirit into the hands of Jesus, and fell asleep.”

* This appears from a letter Mr. Wesley wrote to Mr. Hall, in which he mentions this circumstance.

Miss Wesley, the only daughter of Mr. Charles Wesley, in a letter to Mr. Watson, the able defender of Mr. Wesley's character against the puerile attacks of Mr. Southey, observes, "I wish to correct an error into which *Dr. Whitehead* and *Mr. Hampson* have fallen, from whom *Southey*, I presume, has taken it, respecting my beloved aunt Hall, as it is not generally known to be false. Mr. Hall first courted *her* when she lived with her uncle, *Matthew Wesley*, in *London*; this was unknown to the family at that time. He then paid his addresses to *Kezia*; and when the match was fixed, he returned to *Martha*, whose affections he had won, and married her against the expostulations of her brothers. Had not this been the fact, my good grandmother would have strenuously opposed the match. I had this account from my aunt herself, and mentioned it to my father, who said, 'He knew, that she always justified herself from the circumstance of *first love*; but she ought not to have taken him.' *Kezia* lived four years after, and it certainly was not from any thing she suffered on this account that she died."

A letter now lying before me in Mrs. Hall's own hand, to Mr. John Wesley, dated June the 26th, 1743, shows that she had not even then the same opinion of her husband that her brothers had. She observes, "Doubtless you knew that I should be much concerned at what you said respecting Mr. Hall. I don't know whether I know certainly what you mean by *his new gospel* or no, but I suppose I may guess at it. I have long thought, I do still think him, a servant of Christ. How then could it be, that he should not be kept, at least from dangerous errors? I know that you are ready to answer me, nay, indeed, I can answer myself, that it must be from some unfaithfulness or other.—And now immediately come the false Moravians to my mind. For if he should be so unhappy as to fall into any or ever so many dangerous errors, I must lay them all at their door, who transformed themselves into angels of light to seduce him from that apostolic church in which he was baptized, and in which he was called to the honour of being not only a member, but a priest. O that he might, as you say, find them out!"

Love hopeth all things. I was well acquainted with Mrs. Hall, and could answer for her sincerity; but certainly the facts were strong against her unhappy husband. Mr. Wesley, however, hoped that, before he went hence, "*God gave him repentance unto life.*"

That Mrs. Hall at this time enjoyed *the faith of the gospel*, is evident from a passage in the same letter. She observes, "I have indeed that blessed peace which passeth all understanding, and have had such remarkable promises so particularly applied to me, that I stand astonished at the goodness of God, supplying in so wonderful a manner the loss of parents, children, and friends to me. One day at church, those words (which I had never taken notice of before,) were given me in such a remarkable manner as I believe you understand: '*As a bridegroom rejoiceth over his bride, so shall the Lord thy God rejoice over thee.*' I am ashamed that I should love so little, having so much forgiven, and such constant blessings."—Mrs. Hall was a woman of a remarkably strong understanding. We see, however, that she also became an enthusiast! She now enjoys the happy fruits of it.

In addition to the above, I have to add some interesting particulars from a letter of Miss Kezzy Wesley, now lying before me, to her brother John. It is dated June 16th, 1734.

“DEAR BROTHER,—I intended not to write till I could give you an account of Mr. Hall’s affair; but it is needless, because I believe he won’t do any thing without your approbation. I am entirely of your opinion, that we ought to ‘endeavour after perfect resignation;’ and I have learned to practise this duty in one particular, which I think is of the greatest importance in life, viz. marriage. I am as indifferent as it is lawful for any person to be, whether I ever change my state or not, because I think a single life is the more excellent way; and there are also several reasons, why I rather desire to continue as I am. One is, because I desire to be entirely disengaged from the world; but the chief is, I am so well apprised of the great duty a wife owes to her husband, that I think it is almost impossible that she should ever discharge it as she ought. But I can scarce say I have the liberty of choosing, for my relations are continually soliciting me to marry.—I shall endeavour to be as resigned and cheerful as possible to whatever God is pleased to ordain for me.”

It will not much surprise the sensible reader, that this courtship should not end happily. Mr. Hall was a man of strong passions, as was too fully proved in his after life. We cannot wonder, therefore, that he should grow weary of a suit, the object of which was, in every respect, so unlike the suitor.

I had written the above account, more than a year before I saw Dr. Clarke’s “Memoirs of the Wesley Family,” in which the subject of Mrs. Hall’s marriage is largely considered. I believe no person now alive, excepting only her nearest relatives, was so intimately acquainted with Mrs. Hall as I was. To all that is said of her excellent understanding and temper, and her most blameless life, I heartily subscribe. But Mrs. Hall did not speak of her marriage quite as the respectable Biographer of her family does. That it would be inexcusably wrong for Miss Kezzy Wesley to have accepted Mr. Hall, after she knew his previous engagement to her sister, even if he had desired it, she knew and felt, and so did every one of the family. But, I believe, Mrs. Hall was convinced for many years, that her brothers were so far right, that for both sisters to have refused him, after he had manifested such a want of principle and honour, would have been, at least, *the more excellent way*. I write to maintain *the faith of the Gospel*, which alone *overcomes the world, and purifies the heart*, and without which these fruits cannot be. Mrs. Hall, at that time, had only the faith common to all the family. Can we expect to find that high and constant self-denial which the Gospel inculcates, where “*righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*,” are unknown? No, we ought not. The conflicts, and the halting obedience, described in the seventh chapter of the Epistle to the *Romans*, (under which her excellent brothers so long groaned,) is a description given by the *Holy Spirit of God* of the real state even of the most sincere of such believers. I believe, if, before her marriage she had obtained the faith which she describes in her letter to her brother, inserted above, and which was her support during her suffering life, she would have acted a very different part. No person can dispute the prior claim of Martha; yet that claim, I still think, with Mr. Wesley, ought to have been disclaimed. But Martha’s affections were engaged; Kezzy’s were not. The marriage which took place was, with respect to her, a deliverance.

The indulgence of Mr. Hall's vicious propensities led him at length to *glory in his shame*. He would talk, with apparent ease, to his chaste wife, concerning his concubines! He would tell her that she was his *carnal* wife, but they were his *spiritual* wives! for he had taught them to despise all sober scriptural religion, and to talk as enthusiastically and as corruptly as himself. At length he broke all the bands, and retired, not to *Ireland*, but to the *West Indies*, taking his chief favourite with him. She was a remarkable woman; and appears to have had more personal courage than her wretched keeper. In an assault on the house in which they lived, by a black banditti, she seized a large pewter vessel, and standing at the turning of the stairs which led to their apartment, she knocked the assailants down, in succession, as they approached, and maintained the post till succour arrived, and dispersed the villains.

He continued his connexion with this wretched woman till she died; and then returned to *England*, weak, and in some degree humbled. Mrs. Hall, bound, as she most conscientiously thought herself, by her original vows, received him with her usual equanimity, and showed him every kind and charitable attention till his death. Mr. John Wesley, the most charitable of men, gives the following account of the closing scene:

"I came to *Bristol* just time enough, not to see, but to *bury*, poor Mr. Hall, my brother-in-law, who died on Wednesday morning, January 6, 1776, I trust in peace; for God had given him deep repentance. Such another monument of Divine mercy, considering how low he had fallen, and from what heights of holiness, I have not seen, no not in *seventy years*. I had designed to have visited him in the morning. but he did not stay for my coming. It is enough, if, after all his wanderings, we meet again in Abraham's bosom." JOURNAL, vol. v, p. 177.

Mrs. Hall survived all her brothers and sisters, and died in peace, July 12th, 1791.

CHAPTER IV.

THE REV. SAMUEL WESLEY, JUNIOR.

SAMUEL WESLEY, M. A., son of Samuel and Susannah Wesley, was born about 1692,* a year or two before his parents removed to Epworth; being nearly eleven years older than his brother Mr. John Wesley, and sixteen older than Mr. Charles. Concerning his childhood there is something very remarkable. He did not speak at all till he was more than four years old, and was thought to be deficient in understanding. But he one day answered a question which was proposed to a servant concerning him, in such a way as greatly surprised all that were present: and from that time he spoke without any difficulty. He was sent to Westminster school about the beginning of the year 1704, and admitted a King's scholar in 1707.† Before he left home, his mother, by judicious and constant instruction, had formed his mind to a knowledge and

* This date of his birth is taken from a memorandum, which Mr. John Wesley wrote on the back of one of his brother's letters.

† WELCH'S List of Scholars of St. Peter's College, Westminster, as they were related to Christ Church, Oxford, and to Trinity College, Cambridge, p. 91.

serious sense of religion; but she knew the danger of his situation at Westminster, and how exceedingly apt young persons are to be drawn aside from religion and virtue, by improper companions, and bad examples constantly before their eyes. On this account she was anxious for the preservation of his morals, as he grew up and became more exposed to temptation. After she had recovered from the shock of the fire, which destroyed all they had, and from the fury of which they saved themselves with great difficulty, she wrote him a long letter, dated October 1709; which, for the importance of the matter, and the energy with which it is written, is highly deserving of preservation; but, on account of its length, I can insert only a part of it.

"I hope," says she, "that you retain the impressions of your education, nor have forgot that the vows of God are upon you. You know that the first-fruits are heaven's by an unalienable right; and that, as your parents devoted you to the service of the altar, so you yourself made it your choice when your father was offered another way of life for you. But have you duly considered what such a choice, and such a dedication imports? Consider well, what separation from the world! what purity! what devotion! what exemplary virtue! is required in those who are to guide others to glory. I say *exemplary*; for low, common degrees of piety are not sufficient for those of the sacred function. You must not think to live like the rest of the world: Your light must so shine among men, that they may see your good works, and thereby be led to glorify your Father which is in heaven. For my part, I cannot see with what face clergymen can reprove sinners, or exhort men to lead a good life, when they themselves indulge their own corrupt inclinations, and by their practice contradict their doctrine. If the holy Jesus be in truth their Master, and they be really his Embassadors, surely it becomes them to live like his Disciples: And if they do not, what a sad account must they give of their stewardship!

"I would advise you, as much as possible in your present circumstances, to throw your business into a certain method; by which means you will learn to improve every precious moment, and find an unspeakable facility in the performance of your respective duties. Begin and end the day with Him who is the *Alpha* and *Omega*; and if you really experience what it is to love God, you will redeem all the time you can for his more immediate service. I will tell you what rule I used to observe when I was in my father's house, and had as little, if not less liberty than you have now: I used to allow myself as much time for recreation as I spent in private devotion; not that I always spent so much, but I gave myself leave to go so far, but no farther. So in all things else, appoint so much time for sleep, eating, company, &c. But above all things, my dear Sammy, I command you, I beg, I beseech you, to be very strict in observing the Lord's day.—In all things endeavour to act upon principle, and do not live like the rest of mankind, who pass through the world like straws upon a river, which are carried which way the stream or wind drives them. Often put this question to yourself, Why do I this or that? Why do I pray, read, study, use devotion? &c. By which means you will come to such a steadiness and consistency in your words and actions, as becomes a reasonable creature and a good Christian."—These observations were worthy of the mother, and they were properly regarded and followed by the son.

When he was senior scholar at Westminster, the Bishop of Rochester* took him to his seat at Bromley in Kent, to read to him in the evenings. He was at this time eagerly pursuing his studies; and this circumstance, which, for several reasons, would have been highly gratifying to many, was to him no small mortification. From this place he wrote a Latin letter to his father, in August 1710, in which he complains heavily of the Bishop for the interruption he gave him in his learning. An extract from this letter I shall insert below,† and give the general purport of it in English. Speaking of the Bishop, he observes: "He will always be exceedingly troublesome to me both in sacred and profane learning; for he interrupts the studies to which I had applied with all my might. Last year, in the midst of our business in the College, he took me off both from study and from school, not only without any benefit, but without calling me to any thing which had even the appearance of either utility or pleasure. To-day he is from home, or I should scarcely have leisure to write this letter. He chose me from all the scholars,—me, who am hoarse and short-sighted, to read to him at night. I am glad you enjoy good health. I beg yours and my mother's blessing. I saw my grandmother‡ in the last holydays; in those which are approaching, I cannot, because I am detained by an *unfriendly* friend."

He was about eighteen years old when he wrote this letter, and not then removed from school. We may observe in it marks of a strong mind, wholly devoted to the pursuit of classical knowledge: and, considering his age and situation at the time, it shows a progress in learning which does him credit.

His mother's advice had a proper effect on his mind, and was the means of preserving him from vices too common to the youth of the place. He retained his sobriety, his reverence for God, and regard for religion. In December this year, he wrote to his mother; and the following extract from his letter gives a pleasing view of his simplicity, and serious attention to the state of his own heart and the first motions of evil. "I received the sacrament," says he, "the first Sunday of this month. I am unstable as water. I frequently make good resolutions, and keep them for a time, and then grow weary of the restraint. I have one grand failing, which is, that, having done my duty, I undervalue others, and think what wretches the rest of the College are compared with me. Sometimes in my relapses I cry out, '*Can the Ethiopian change his skin, and the leopard his spots? Then may you also do good, who are accustomed to do evil.*' But I answer again, '*With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.*' Amen."—Yet this good man opposed with all his might *that faith* which his brother

* The predecessor of Atterbury, who was not advanced to the See of Rochester till 1718.

† "Ille mihi, et in sacris et in profanis rebus, semper erit infestissimus; studia enim intermittere cogit, quibus pro virili incubueram. Ultimo anno in Collegio agendo, ubi non mihi seniori opus est amicorum hospitio, a studiis et a scholâ me detraxit; non modo nullam ad utilitatem, sed ne ad minimam quidem vel utilitatis vel voluptatis speciem me vocavit. Ipse hodie foras est, aliter vix otium foret quo has scriberem. Me ex omnibus discipulis elegit, ut perlegerem ei noctu libros; me raucum, me *μωρα*. Gaudeo vos valetudine bonâ frui. Tuam et maternam benedictionem oro. Episcopus jussit me illius in literis mentionem facere. Da veniam subitis. Aviam ultimis festis vidi; his venientibus non possum, quia ab inimico amico detineor."

‡ The widow of Mr. John Wesley, of New-Inn-hall, Oxford, and niece of Dr. Thomas Fuller. She had then been a widow near forty years.

afterwards preached, and which alone can save us from those corruptions!

The next year, 1711, he was elected to Christ Church, Oxford;* and here, as well as at Westminster, he acquired the character of an excellent classic scholar. But his mind was too large, and his zeal for religion and the Established Church too ardent, to be confined within the bounds prescribed by the common exercises of the place.

The following letter shows that he took an active part in some of the principal questions agitated among the literati of that time. It is dated June 3, 1713, when he had been about two years at Oxford; and is addressed to the Honourable Robert Nelson, Esquire. He says, "I hoped, long ere this, to have perfected, as well as I could, my Dissertation on Ignatius, and gotten it ready for the press, when I came to town this year. But I found myself disappointed, at first, for some months, by my affairs in the East-India House, and since by my charity hymns and other matters. I think I told you some time since, that I had laid materials together for a second discourse on that subject, directly against Mr. Whiston's objections to the shorter and genuine copy of Ignatius; whereas my former was chiefly against the larger: because I then thought, if that were proved interpolated, it would be readily granted that the other was the genuine. But having found, when Mr. Whiston's four volumes came out, that he had in the first of them laid together many objections against the shorter epistles, I set myself to consider them; and having now got Archbishop Ussher, Bishop Pearson, and Dr. Smyth, on that subject, and as carefully as I could perused them, I found that many of Mr. Whiston's objections were taken from Daillé, a few from the writings of the Socinians and modern Arians, though most of them from his own observations. These latter being new, and having not appeared when Bishop Pearson or the others wrote, could not be taken notice of by them; and, being now published in the English language, may seduce some well-meaning persons, and persuade them that the true Ignatius was of the same opinion with the Arians, (whereas I am sure he was as far from it as light is from darkness,) and that the rather because there has been as yet no answer, that I know of, published to them, though they were printed in the year 1711. I know many are of opinion, it is best still to slight him, and take no notice of him. This I confess is the most easy way, but cannot tell whether it will be safe in respect to the common people, or will tend so much to the honour of our church and nation. Of this, however, I am pretty confident, that I can prove all his main objections, whether general or particular, against the shorter copy, to be notoriously false. Such as that, pp. 86, 87, 'That the smaller so frequently calls Christ God,' which he says was done to serve the turn of the Athanasians, and cannot in reason be supposed to be an omission in the larger, but must be interpolation in the smaller: whereas I find that the smaller calls him God but fifteen times, the larger eighteen, and if we take in those to Antioch and Tarsus, twenty-two times, for an obvious reason.

"Again, he says, p. 64, that serious exhortations to practical, especially domestic duties, are in the larger only, being to a surprising degree omitted in the smaller. But I have collected above one hun-

* WELCH's List, &c, page 95.

dred instances wherein these duties are most pressingly recommended in the smaller.

“ But what he labours most, is to prove, that the first quotations in Eusebius, and others of the ancients, are agreeable to the larger, not the smaller; whereas, on my tracing and comparing them all, as far as I have had opportunity, I have found this assertion to be a palpable mistake, unless in one quotation from the *Chronicon Alexandrinum*, or *Paschale*. I would gladly see *Montfaucon de causâ Marcelli*, *St. Basil contra Marcellum*, observations on Pearson’s *Vindiciæ*, and some good account of the Jewish *Sephiroth*; because I think the Gnostics, Basilidians, and Valentinians, borrowed many of their *Æons* from them, since they have the same names; and this perhaps might give farther light to the famous *ΣΙΓΗ* of Ignatius; for the clearing whereof Bishop Pearson, Dr. Bull, and Grotius have so well laboured.”

This letter shows the spirit and zeal of Mr. Wesley for sound doctrine, and does credit to so young a student. When he had taken his Master’s degree, he was sent for, to officiate as Usher at Westminster School; and soon afterwards he took orders, under the patronage of Dr. Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester, and Dean of Westminster. He was exemplary in discharging the various duties of life, and did honour to his profession as a Christian and a minister of the Gospel. He had the nicest sense of honour and integrity; and the utmost abhorrence of duplicity and falsehood. He was humane and charitable; not only administering to the wants of the poor and afflicted, as far as his income would permit, but also using his influence with others to procure them relief. In filial affection and duty to his parents, he was remarkable; no man in the same circumstances ever shone brighter in this branch of Christian duty, through the whole course of his life.

His political principles are strongly apparent in the following Poetical Epistle to the second Earl of Oxford, son of the famous Harley, Prime Minister to Queen Anne. The original, in his own handwriting, is before me; I believe, it was never before published. We see in it the firm friend of Atterbury, and of Harley; the loyal man, and yet the “unbending Tory.”

TO THE EARL OF OXFORD, ON HIS NOT APPEARING AT ST. JAMES’S ON KING
GEORGE THE SECOND’S ACCESSION TO THE THRONE.

WHILE thick to Court transported Tories run,
Spurned by the Sire, and smiled on by the Son;
Freed from an Iron Reign’s continued curse,
Expecting better, and secure from worse;
Beyond their principles, now *passive* grown,
They lick the spittle which the Whigs have thrown;
Embrace the authors of their former tears,
Forgetting, in an hour, the spoil of years;
Reserved and silent, you at distance stand,
Nor haste to kiss the oft-extended hand.

Their compliments and hopes let others show;
And if they will be laugh’d at—be it so.

So George, ascending his imperial throne,
With decent grief, a Father may bemoan;
Let not his partial greatness e’er require,
That duteous Oxford should neglect a Sire:
A Sire, who left a heritage more fair,
Than hoarded wealth, or sceptres to his heir.
A Harley seldom treads this mortal stage,
But Kings and misers rise in every age.

He used for public good the public store,
 Still daring to be just and to be poor.
 Firm to his country's and religion's cause,
 True to our ancient faith and ancient laws,
 He due regard to learning's seats profest;
 Nor awed with threat'nings, nor with troops oppress.
 Skilful through suppliant crowds to force his way,
 And call retiring merit into day,
 No narrow views his mighty soul confined,
 Friend to the world, and Patron to mankind!
 He join'd, in glorious peace, contending Kings,
 And pluck'd the Austrian Eagle's spreading wings.
 He knew the rage of faction's tide to stem;
 He gave the Brunswick race their diadem.
 Graved in your bosom let his image dwell,
 Great while he stood, but greater when he fell.
 Fearless, serene, he looked on danger nigh,
 Let Harcourt double, and let St. John* fly;
 Against the storm he turn'd his steady face,
 And scorn'd the shelter of an Act of Grace.
 Others by mean retreat their gains ensure,
 Conscious they need the pardons they procure.
 'T was vain, O George, that mercy to refuse
 Which Oxford could not want, and would not use,—
 T' except his name, who faithful to thy line,
 Among the British Kings inserted thine!
 What Prince so vast a benefit would own?
 Thou could'st not pardon, for he gave thy Crown.
 Fairly rewarded he, to death pursued!
 O glorious act of German gratitude!

To greet *their* power how nobly you disdain'd,
 Who strove with Oxford's murder to be stain'd!
 To George with supple fawning scorn to bow,—
 Persist; remember *you* are Oxford now!
 Faithful, but never *cringing*, to the Throne,—
 Forgive *his* father—nor forget *your* own.

The reader who is acquainted with the party feuds of that day, will not be surprised to hear, that he was deprived of his right to succeed as Second Master at Westminster. On a vacancy when it was thought no man should be preferred before him, his intimacy with the Earl of Oxford, Bishop Atterbury, and Mr. Pope, and the frequent exertions of his wit against Sir Robert Walpole, the minister of that day, prevented his advancement. The ostensible reason given was *his being married*, which caused him to send an elegant poetical compliment to his wife, glorying in his fault, and refusing to repent.

He was unhappily prejudiced against some of the highest truths of the Gospel. Many of the Dissenters had insisted on those great truths: but he, having been educated in the highest Church principles, had inadvertently imbibed a dislike to those very truths themselves, because they were so zealously enforced out of the pale of the Church although they are so plainly taught in the Articles and Homilies of the Church of England.† Some of his Letters to his brother John are still extant, and evince a most determined disapprobation of *the New Faith*, as he is pleased to term “the knowledge of salvation by the remission of our sins.” He published a quarto volume of Poems, some of which were

* Lord Bolingbroke.

† Dr. Whitehead seems to have been much offended at this assertion, and says, “If it were true, it would show him to be a man almost void of principle.” It was true, however; and true at one time of the whole family. Mr. John Wesley says the same thing of himself. In that account his words are, “I had been long since taught to construe away all those Scriptures relating to this, [viz. to the sense of forgiveness,] and to call all those *Presbyterians*, who spoke otherwise.”

of considerable merit. "The Battle of the Sexes," which was suggested to him by a paper in the Guardian, has been much admired. I shall give specimens of his abilities for English and Latin Poetry.

His Political Poetry, as we may term it, did not, perhaps could not, generally please; but his Religious Poetry made rich amends. The subjoined specimen of his skill in Latin Poetry is excellent. The following paraphrase of Isaiah xl, 6, as quoted by St. Peter, in his first Epistle, chap. i, 24, is also truly admirable.

ON DR. ALDRICH, DEAN OF CHRIST CHURCH, OXON.

Cum subit illius lætissima frontis inago,
 Quem nostri toties explicuere sales :
 Cum subit et canum caput, et vigor acer ocelli,*
 Et digna mistus cum gravitate lepos :
 Solvimur in lachrymas, et inania munera versus
 Ad tumulum sparsis fert Elegia comis.
 Aldricio, debent cui munera tanta Camænæ,
 Hoc tribuisse parum est, non tribuisse scelus.

The following translation may give some faint idea of the original, though it falls far short of it.

THAT cheerful aspect when we call to mind,
 So often smiling at our artless verse ;
 That mirth with serious dignity combined,
 That vivid piercing eye, those silver hairs ;—
 We melt in tears, and pensively bestow
 (Vain presents !) all we have, our grateful lays.
 Small to give this to whom so much we owe !
 Yet sin it were this trophy not to raise.

ON THE DEATH OF A VERY YOUNG LADY.

"All flesh is grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass."

The morning flowers display their sweets,
 And gay their silken leaves unfold,
 As careless of the noon-tide heats,
 And fearless of the evening cold.

Nipt by the wind's unkindly blast,
 Parch'd by the sun's directer ray,
 The momentary glories waste,
 The short-lived beauties die away.

So blooms the human face divine,
 When youth its pride of beauty shows.
 Fairer than spring the colours shine,
 And sweeter than the virgin rose.

Or worn by slowly rolling years,
 Or broke by sickness in a day,
 The fading glory disappears,
 The short-lived beauties die away.

Yet these, new rising from the tomb,
 With lustre brighter far shall shine ;
 Revive with ever-during bloom,
 Safe from diseases and decline.

Let sickness blast, let death devour,
 If heaven must recompense our pains :
 Perish the grass, and fade the flower,
 If firm the word of God remains !

Mr. Samuel Wesley's High Church principles led him to disapprove of the conduct of his brothers, Mr. John and Charles Wesley, when

* The Doctor's eyes, as Mr. J. Wesley informed me, were remarkably small, which was the reason of Mr. S. Wesley's use of the *diminutive*.

they became Itinerant preachers. Several letters passed between him and his brother John, both on the doctrine which he taught, and on his manner of teaching it. I shall have an opportunity of considering some of these letters, when I come to that period of Mr. John Wesley's Life in which he and his brother Charles became Itinerants.

Mr. S. Wesley was in a bad state of health, some time before he left Westminster; and it was not much improved by his removal to Tiverton. On the night of the 5th of November, 1739, he went to bed, seemingly as well as usual; was taken ill about three in the morning; and died at seven, after about four hours illness. But the following letter will state the circumstances more minutely. It was written to the late Mr. Charles Wesley.

Tiverton, November 14, 1739.

“REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,—Your brother and my dear friend, (for so you are sensible he was to me,) on Monday the 5th of Nov. went to bed, as he thought, as well as he had been for some time before; was seized about three o'clock in the morning very ill, when your sister immediately sent for Mr. Norman, and ordered the servant to call me. Mr. Norman came as quick as he possibly could, but said, as soon as he saw him, that he could not get over it, but would die in a few hours. He was not able to take any thing, nor able to speak to us, only YES or NO to a question asked him; and that did not last half an hour. I never went from his bedside till he expired, which was about seven the same morning. With a great deal of difficulty we persuaded your dear sister to leave the room before he died. I trembled to think how she would bear it, knowing the sincere affection and love she had for him. But, blessed be God, He hath heard and answered prayer on her behalf, and, in a great measure, calmed her spirit, though she has not yet been out of her chamber. Your brother was buried on Monday last, in the afternoon, and he is gone to reap the fruit of his labours. I pray God we may imitate him in all his virtues, and be prepared to follow. I should enlarge much more, but have not time; for which reason I hope you will excuse him, who is under the greatest obligations to be, and really is, with the greatest sincerity,

Yours in all things,

“AMOS MATTHEWS.”

Mr. S. WESLEY, Jun., was of a benevolent temper, which he cultivated upon principle. He was one of the projectors, and a very careful and active promoter, of the first Infirmary set up at Westminster, for the relief of the sick and needy, in 1719; and he had the satisfaction to see it flourish,* and to propagate by its example, under the prudent management of other good persons, many pious establishments of the same kind in distant parts of the nation.

The following extracts of letters from his patron, Bishop Atterbury, are too much to his honour not to be mentioned here; they were occasioned by that fine poem, printed in his works, *on the Death of Mrs. Morice*, his Lordship's daughter.

April 24, 1730.

“I have received a poem from Mr. Morice, which I must be insensible not to thank you for,—your Elegy on the death of Mrs. Morice. I cannot help an impulse upon me, to tell you under my own hand, the

* It is now St. George's Hospital at Hyde Park Corner.

satisfaction I feel, the approbation I give, the envy I bear you, for this good work ; as a poet and as a man, I thank you, I esteem you."

" Paris, May 27, 1730.

" I am obliged to W. for what he has written on my dear child ; and take it the more kindly, because he could not hope for my being ever in a condition to reward him, though, if ever I am, I will ; for he has shown an invariable regard for me all along in all circumstances ; and much more than some of his acquaintance, who had ten times greater obligations."

" Paris, June 30, 1730.

" The verses you sent me touched me very nearly, and the Latin in the front of them as much as the English that followed. There are a great many good lines in them, and they are writ with as much affection as poetry. They came from the heart of the author, and he has a share of mine in return ; and if ever I come back to my country with honour, he shall find it."

These extracts do honour to the feelings of Atterbury as a man ; and they give a noble testimony to the disinterested and unchangeable friendship of Mr. S. Wesley for a person whom he esteemed, and whom he thought deeply injured.

The following inscription on his grave-stone, in the churchyard at Tiverton, well expresses his character, and, I believe, does not exceed the truth :—

HERE LIE INTERRED

THE REMAINS OF THE REV. SAMUEL WESLEY, A. M.

Some time Student of Christ Church, Oxon :

A man, for his uncommon wit and learning,

For the benevolence of his temper

And simplicity of manners,

Deservedly beloved and esteemed by all.

An excellent Preacher ;

But whose best sermon

Was, the constant example of an edifying life :

So continually and zealously employed

In acts of beneficence and charity,

That he truly followed

His blessed Master's example,

In going about doing good.

Of such scrupulous integrity,

That he declined occasions of advancement in the world,

Through fear of being involved in dangerous compliances,

And avoided the usual ways to preferment

As studiously as many others seek them.

Therefore, after a life spent

In the laborious employment of teaching youth,

First, for near twenty years,

As one of the Ushers in Westminster School ;

Afterwards, for seven years,

As Head Master of the Free-School at Tiverton,

He resigned his soul to God,

Nov. 6, 1739, in the 49th year of his age.

We have now taken a view of the WESLEY FAMILY, and when their situation and circumstances are considered, they will appear, I believe, second to none of whom we have any clear record, either for learning, moral worth, or sincere piety. Their religion, however, must be estimated according to the day in which they lived. The real excellence of the Puritan dispensation had nearly passed away, and little remained

of it that was uncontaminated with Antinomianism. The first Puritans were eminent for holiness in all its branches; but the spurious race that followed were chiefly noted for turbulent zeal and a canting hypocrisy, that brought all true religion, in its life and power, into contempt. Their ambition also was manifest, and the nation felt it. It acted with an energy that seemed truly judicial, and succeeded even to the overthrowing both of the Church and the State.

The real Puritans (allowing the nickname,) had suffered like their Master, remembering his word, "*Vengeance is mine, I will repay.*" He did, indeed, terribly repay the despisers of religion. By the Antinomian descendants of his persecuted followers, he awfully avenged the cause of those who had, *in well doing, and patient suffering, committed themselves to Him who judgeth righteously. Thus God ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors.*

The Gospel, however, was disgraced, and the truly pious were offended; and though we are certainly, (through Him who always brings good out of evil,) indebted to that awful misrule for much of our civil and religious liberty, yet the wound then inflicted on vital godliness has not been fully healed unto this day.

The Wesley family, settled at Epworth, had imbibed this spirit of offence, with a considerable portion of contempt for those who still professed this *Puritanical* or *Presbyterian Faith*, as it was then called; although it was, in substance, the very faith of the Gospel, and of the Church of England. The family were eminent for learning, and sound in the faith, that is, in the doctrines of Christianity; but they were strangers to the living faith of the Gospel, not one of the family even professing any thing of the kind. The excellent mother, indeed, had an early knowledge of it from her pious father, who died in the full triumph of that faith. This might have led her to the possession of that *pearl of great price*; but other sentiments were entertained, which damped the real work divine. Like the first believers at Ephesus, the family knew only the baptism or dispensation of John, and needed to be taught, even by the unlearned, *the way of God more perfectly*. The baptism of the Holy Ghost, especially as being the privilege of all believers, was then but seldom mentioned. A *legalized* Gospel, that gave full employment to the understanding, but left the heart cold and unrenewed, was the fashionable Gospel of that day. The teaching was generally like that which is found in SECKER'S Lectures to Candidates for the Ministry.—"Gentlemen," says that pious divine, "I have no fear concerning your FAITH, but I greatly fear lest you should not have REPENTANCE." Such theology as this was not calculated to abase the sinner, or to *create him anew in Christ Jesus*. *Impenitent faith* is certainly not the faith whereby, as our church teaches, a sinner is justified before God, and by it *alone*; nor can it be the *faith of God's elect*; nor can it produce *righteousness, peace, and joy*; nor can a repentance, grounded on such a faith, be *repentance unto life*. We need not wonder, therefore, that when the true doctrine of faith came into the family, it should be looked upon, as Mr. Gambold observes, as a downright robber. "If you speak of faith," observes that pious theologian, "in such a manner as makes Christ a Saviour to the uttermost,—a most universal help and refuge,—in such a manner as takes away all glorying, but adds happiness to wretched man; as discovers a greater pollu-

tion in the best of us, than we would before acknowledge, but brings a greater deliverance than we could before expect: If any one offers to talk at this rate, he shall be heard with the same abhorrence as if he was going to rob mankind of their salvation."

The family were eventually thus divided; and not only about the true faith of the Gospel, by which we should learn from the Divine Author of it to be the friends of sinners, and to sit down on a level with them as soon as they begin to repent; but about that semblance of it, in its fruits and effects, which Mr. John Wesley had learned from Mr. Law, and other mystic writers, and inculcated in his latter visits to his father's house. When, as he informed me, he carried even this faith into the family, it seemed to turn the house upside down. "Never," said he, "did I see my mother so moved. Upon one occasion she said, with more appearance of anger than ever I saw in her before, '*Shall I be taught by a boy?*'" But his father exerted a more sturdy resistance; and when the son, from the height of his mystic elevation, would enforce the purity which he had learned from his contemplative friend, the old man desired him "*to get out of his house with his APOSTOLICAL NOSTRUMS!*" They were not, indeed, APOSTOLICAL; for they had not the EVANGELICAL root,

I the chief of sinners am,
But Jesus died for me!

This the whole family had yet to learn. Mr. Charles Wesley used to say, even in old age, "Mr. Law was our John the Baptist." He put them on a kind of penance, which thoroughly showed them their own hearts, but which gave them no *victory* over sin; no *peace* or *joy* in *believing*. The two brothers, however, held on their way, and became the Apostles, not only of their own family, but of the nation, yea, (and in a high sense,) of the world. I shall not, therefore, in this history, divide whom God thus joined, by considering Mr. Charles Wesley apart, or merely as one of the original stock; but shall present him as *bound up* in the same *bundle of life* with his devoted brother. The day of faith, called by the world, and by worldly writers, "the day of enthusiasm," now swiftly approached; that day, which was, chiefly through their ministry,

To fill the earth with golden fruit,
With ripe Millennial love.

The faith of the Gospel, though it could scarcely be seen in any of the existing religious communities, except in their forms or confessions, was not, however, extinct in the land. There were individuals at this time who enjoyed it in its peace, power, and purity. Two letters now lie before me which fully prove, that when Mr. Wesley shook the nation, by publicly declaring *that faith*, it was found to have its seat in the hearts of some whom the Lord knew, though they were unknown to man. We have heard Mr. Wesley breathing out his soul in those words,

Ah! join me to thy secret ones!
Ah! gather all thy living stones!

And we have seen the fabled power of Amphion's lyre gloriously realized. These living stones were drawn by the music of "*that only name given unto men whereby they can be saved.*" They gathered round the standard of truth when they saw it exalted, and comforted

the heart of the Lord's servant, who had the boldness to raise it up even in the highways. These letters were written in the year 1738, after Mr. Wesley had attained to the true faith of the Gospel, and was labouring to propagate it in the face of all manner of reproach and opposition. They describe the same work of grace, as having been experienced by the writer eighteen years before, when the Wesley family were either totally ignorant of any such faith, or deeply prejudiced against it.

“MY DEAR FRIEND, whom I love in the truth,—Grace be with you, and peace from God our Father, in our Lord Jesus Christ. I protest by the rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus my Lord, I die daily to myself, and grow stronger and stronger in the power of my Saviour's resurrection. The refreshments that come from his presence into my soul, satisfy it, as it were, with marrow and fatness. I know my Saviour's voice, and my heart burns with love and desire to *follow him in the regeneration, having no confidence in the flesh*. I loath myself, and love him only. My dear brother, my spirit even at this moment rejoices in God my Saviour; and *the love, which is shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Ghost*, so destroys all self-love, that I could lay down my life for the good of my brethren. May Jesus remember you, now he is in his kingdom; for he quickeneth whomsoever he will, and has now *power upon earth to forgive sins*. I know that my Redeemer liveth, and have confidence towards God, that, through his blood, my sins are forgiven. He has begotten me again, and loves and delivers me from the power of sin, so that it has no dominion over me. *His Spirit bears witness with my spirit*, that I am *his child by adoption and grace*. And this is *not for works of righteousness which I have done*, for *I am his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works*; so that all boasting is excluded. I was found of him that sought him not; and of this I am confident, that *whosoever cometh to him, he will in nowise cast him out*. It is now about eighteen years since Jesus took possession of my heart. He then opened my eyes, and said unto me, *Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven*; and since that time, the whole bent of my will has been towards him, night and day, even in my dreams! By abiding in him I am more than conqueror, (through his strengthening me,) over those corruptions which before I was always a slave to. I have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them yet. *The Comforter will lead you into all truth*, and his unction will show you far, far greater things than the most exalted wisdom of man can attain to. *Now the God of peace, which brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that Great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight; to him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus*. May you, and all those who wait for his appearing, find the consolation of Israel! This is the earnest prayer of

“Your affectionate brother in Christ,

“WILLIAM FISH.”

The second letter was evidently written in answer to some inquiries made by Mr. Wesley.

“London, December 5th, 1738.

“MY DEAR FRIEND,—I cannot but acknowledge that my joys are sometimes abated by sorrow, but then my sorrow is after a godly sort.

so that I must not say my joys are interrupted : For although *heaviness endures for a night, unspeakable joy cometh in the morning*. I am always in a habitual disposition for prayer, though I have not always the same fervency in prayer. I can *in every thing*, without exception, *give thanks* ; especially as troubles and afflictions have abounded, so, in an extraordinary degree, consolations in Christ have abounded also. My dear friend, bear with my narration after what manner I was born of God. It was an instantaneous act. My whole heart was filled with a divine power, a joy unspeakable, drawing all the faculties of my soul after Christ, which continued three or four nights and days. It was as a mighty rushing wind coming into the soul, enabling me from that moment to be more than conqueror over those lusts and corruptions which, before that time, I was enslaved to. It is a salvation beyond what we can express. I know *I dwell in Christ and Christ in me*. *I am bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh*. And what shall I say? O that I were dissolved, that I might be with him where he is ! But I will wait till he summons me hence ; for his time is best. O that I might have my request, and that God would grant the thing that I long for ! viz. that you and all that desire ‘ *The Beloved,*’ may be espoused to him, and receive the earnest of that *inheritance which is incorruptible and fadeth not away, reserved for those who are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation, ready to be revealed in these last times*.

“ Your sincere friend and brother in Christ,

“ WILLIAM FISH.”

These letters must have greatly strengthened Mr. Wesley in the faith which he received after his return from America, chiefly through the instrumentality of Peter Boehler. He saw by them, that the true faith of the Gospel was in England a long time before it was presented to him by the Moravian Missionaries. He saw also in these letters the reality of that faith, which is described in the Seventeenth Article of the Church of England, and in her Communion Service. They must also have greatly helped him to resist those Antinomian attacks, by which that faith was assailed soon after its reappearance. They show that the true *witness of the Spirit*, without which there can be no deliverance from guilt, always proves its divine origin by its holy fruits.

THE LIFE
OF
THE REV. JOHN WESLEY.

BOOK THE SECOND.

CHAPTER I.

THE LIFE OF THE REV. JOHN WESLEY, FROM HIS BIRTH TO THE YEAR 1735 ; WITH AN ACCOUNT OF HIS BROTHER, THE REV. CHARLES WESLEY.

MR. JOHN WESLEY was the second son of Samuel and Susannah Wesley, and born at Epworth in Lincolnshire, on the 17th of June, 1703, O. S. There has indeed been some variation in the accounts given of his age by different persons of the family ; but the certificate of it, sent him by his father a little before he was ordained priest, to satisfy the Bishop concerning his age, puts the matter beyond a doubt.

“ Epworth, August 23, 1728.

“ John Wesley, M. A., Fellow of Lincoln College, was twenty-five years old the 17th of June last, having been baptized a few hours after his birth, by me,

“ SAMUEL WESLEY, Rector of Epworth.”

When he was nearly six years old, a calamity happened which threatened him, and indeed the whole family, with destruction. By accident, as all that have written concerning it have supposed, but according to his own account, by the wickedness of some of his father's parishioners, who could not bear the plain dealing of so faithful and resolute a pastor, the parsonage-house was set on fire.

The following anecdote, related to me by Mr. John Wesley, will throw some light upon this event. Many of his father's parishioners gave him much trouble about the tithes. At one time they would only pay in kind. Going into a field, upon one of those occasions, where the tithe-corn was laid out, Mr. Wesley found a farmer very deliberately at work with a pair of shears, cutting off the ears of corn and putting them into a bag which he had brought with him for that purpose. Mr. Wesley said not any thing to him, but took him by the arm and walked with him into the town. When they got into the market-place, Mr. Wesley seized the bag, and, turning it inside out before all the people, told them what the farmer had been doing. He then left him, with his pilfered spoils, to the judgment of his neighbours, and walked quietly home.

A letter from Mrs. Susannah Wesley to the Rev. Mr. Hoole, gives the best account of this calamitous fire. It is dated August 24, 1709.

“REVEREND SIR,—My master is much concerned that he was so unhappy as to miss of seeing you at Epworth; and he is not a little troubled that the great hurry of business, about building his house, will not afford him leisure to write. He has therefore ordered me to satisfy your desire as well as I can, which I shall do by a simple relation of matters of fact, though I cannot at this distance of time recollect every calamitous circumstance that attended our strange reverse of fortune. On Wednesday night, February the 9th, between the hours of eleven and twelve, our house took fire; by what accident God only knows. It was discovered by some sparks falling from the roof upon a bed, where one of the children (Hetty) lay, and burning her feet. She immediately ran to our chamber and called us; but I believe no one heard her; for Mr. Wesley was alarmed by a cry of FIRE in the street, upon which he rose, little imagining that his own house was on fire; but on opening his door, he found it was full of smoke, and that the roof was already burnt through. He immediately came to my room, (as I was very ill, he lay in a separate room from me,) and bid me and my two eldest daughters rise quickly and shift for our lives, the house being all on fire. Then he ran and burst open the nursery-door, and called to the maid to bring out the children. The two little ones lay in the bed with her; the three others in another bed. She snatched up the youngest, and bid the rest follow, which they did, except Jacky. When we were got into the hall, and saw ourselves surrounded with flames, and that the roof was on the point of falling, we concluded ourselves inevitably lost, as Mr. Wesley in his fright had forgot the keys of the doors above stairs. But he ventured up stairs once more, and recovered them, a minute before the staircase took fire. When we opened the street door, the strong northeast wind drove the flames in with such violence, that none could stand against them: Mr. Wesley, only, had such presence of mind as to think of the garden door, out of which he helped some of the children; the rest got through the windows. I was not in a condition to climb up to the windows; nor could I get to the garden door. I endeavoured three times to force my passage through the street door, but was as often beat back by the fury of the flames. In this distress I besought our blessed Saviour to preserve me, if it were his will, from that death; and then waded through the fire, naked as I was, which did me no farther harm than a little scorching [of] my hands and face.

“While Mr. Wesley was carrying the children into the garden, he heard the child in the nursery cry out miserably for help, which extremely affected him; but his affliction was much increased, when he had several times attempted the stairs then on fire, and found they would not bear his weight. Finding it was impossible to get near him, he gave him up for lost, and kneeling down, he commended his soul to God, and left him, as he thought, perishing in the flames. But the boy seeing none come to his help, and being frightened, the chamber and bed being on fire, he climbed up to the casement, where he was soon perceived by the men in the yard, who immediately got up and pulled him out, just in the article of time that the roof fell in, and beat the chamber

out, just in the article of time that the roof fell in, and beat the chamber to the ground. Thus, by the infinite mercy of Almighty God, our lives were all preserved by little less than miracle; for there passed but a few minutes between the first alarm of fire, and the falling of the house."

Mr. John Wesley's account of what happened to himself, varies a little from this relation given by his mother. "I believe," says he, "it was just at that time (when they thought they heard him cry) I waked: for I did not cry, as they imagined, unless it was afterwards. I remember all the circumstances as distinctly as though it were but yesterday. Seeing the room was very light, I called to the maid to take me up. But none answering, I put my head out of the curtains and saw streaks of fire on the top of the room. I got up and ran to the door, but could get no farther, all the floor beyond it being in a blaze. I then climbed upon a chest which stood near the window: one in the yard saw me, and proposed running to fetch a ladder. Another answered, 'there will not be time: but I have thought of another expedient. Here I will fix myself against the wall: lift a light man, and set him on my shoulders.' They did so, and he took me out of the window. Just then the roof fell; but it fell inward, or we had all been crushed at once. When they brought me into the house where my father was, he cried out, 'Come, neighbours! let us kneel down! let us give thanks to God! He has given me all my eight children: let the house go, I am rich enough!'

"The next day, as he was walking in the garden, and surveying the ruins of the house, he picked up part of a leaf of his Polyglott Bible, on which just these words were legible:—*Vade; vende omnia quæ habes, et attolle crucem, et sequere me.* Go: sell all that thou hast: and take up thy cross, and follow me."

The memory of Mr. John Wesley's escape is preserved in one of his early prints. Under his portrait there is a house in flames, with this inscription: "*Is not this a brand plucked out of the burning?*" He remembered this event ever after with the most lively gratitude, and more than once has introduced it in his writings.

The peculiar danger and wonderful escape of this child, excited a good deal of attention and inquiry at the time, especially among the friends and relations of the family. His brother Samuel, being then at Westminster, writes to his mother on this occasion in the following words, complaining that they did not inform him of the particulars. "I have not heard a word from the country since the first letter you sent me after the fire. I am quite ashamed to go to any of my relations. They ask me, 'whether my father means to leave Epworth? whether he is building his house? whether he has lost all his books and papers? if nothing was saved? what was the lost child? a boy or a girl? what was its name?' &c. To all which I am forced to answer, I cannot tell; I do not know; I have not heard. I have asked my father some of these questions, but am still an ignoramus."

All the children received the first rudiments of learning from their mother, who, as we have seen, was admirably qualified for this office in her own family. There is no evidence that the boys were ever put to any school in the country, their mother having a very bad opinion of the common methods of instructing and governing children. But she

was not only attentive to their progress in learning, she likewise endeavoured to give them, as early as possible, just and useful notions of religion. Her mind seems to have been led to a more than ordinary attention to her son John in this respect. In one of her private meditations, when he was near eight years old, she mentions him, in a manner that shows how much her heart was engaged in forming his mind for religion. I shall transcribe the whole meditation for the benefit of the reader.

“EVENING, MAY 17, 1711.—SON JOHN.

“What shall I render to the Lord for his mercies? The little unworthy praise that I can offer, is so mean and contemptible an offering, that I am even ashamed to tender it. But, Lord, accept it for the sake of Christ, and pardon the deficiency of the sacrifice.

“I would offer thee myself, and all that thou hast given me; and I would resolve, (O give me grace to do it,) that the residue of my life shall be all devoted to thy service. And I do intend to be more particularly careful of the soul of this child, that thou hast so mercifully provided for, than ever I have been; that I may do my endeavour to instil into his mind the principles of thy true religion, and virtue. Lord, give me grace to do it sincerely and prudently, and bless my attempts with good success.” Her good endeavours were not without the desired effect.

In the month of April, 1712, he had the smallpox, together with four others of the children. His father was then in London, to whom his mother writes thus: “Jack has bore his disease bravely like a man, and indeed like a Christian, without any complaint; though he seemed angry at the smallpox when they were sore, as we guessed by his looking sourly at them, for he never said any thing.” In 1714, he was placed at the Charter-house, with that eminent scholar, Dr. Walker, the Head-Master, and became a favourite on account of his sobriety and application. Ever after, he retained a remarkable predilection for that place, and was accustomed to walk through it once a year during his annual visit in London. He had some reasons however to complain of the usage he received at the Charter-house. Discipline was so exceedingly relaxed, that the boys of the higher forms were suffered to eat up, not only their own portions of animal food, but those also which were allowed to the lesser boys. By this means he was limited, for a considerable part of the time he remained at that school, to a small daily portion of bread as his only solid food. One thing he observed, which contributed among others to his general flow of health, and to the establishment of his constitution,—and that was, his invariable attention to a strict command of his father, that he should run round the Charter-house garden, which was of considerable extent, three times every morning.

In 1719, when his father was hesitating in what situation he should place Charles, his brother Samuel writes thus concerning John: “My brother Jack, I can faithfully assure you, gives you no manner of discouragement from breeding your third son a scholar.” Two or three months afterwards he mentions him again, in a letter to his father: “Jack is with me, and a brave boy, learning Hebrew as fast as he can.”

He was now sixteen, and the next year was elected to Christ Church, Oxford. Here he pursued his studies with great advantage, I believe under the direction of Dr. Wigan, a gentleman eminent for his classical knowledge. Mr. Wesley's natural temper in his youth was gay and sprightly, with a turn for wit and humour. When he was about twenty-one years of age, "he appeared," as Mr. Badcock has observed, "the very sensible and acute collegian—a young fellow of the finest classical taste, of the most liberal and manly sentiments."* His perfect knowledge of the classics gave a smooth polish to his wit, and an air of superior elegance to all his compositions. He had already begun to amuse himself occasionally with writing verses, though most of his poetical pieces at this period, were, I believe, either imitations or translations of the Latin. Some time in this year, however, he wrote an imitation of the 65th Psalm, which he sent to his father, who says, "I like your verses on the 65th Psalm, and would not have you bury your talent."

In the summer of this year, his brother, Mr. Samuel Wesley, broke his leg; and, when he was recovering wrote to Mr. John Wesley at Oxford, informing him of his misfortune. His answer is dated the 17th of June, when he was just twenty-one years of age. The letter shows his lively and pleasant manner of writing when young.

"I believe," says he, "I need not use many arguments to show I am sorry for your misfortune, though at the same time I am glad you are in a fair way of recovery. If I had heard of it from any one else, I might probably have pleased you with some impertinent consolations; but the way of your relating it is a sufficient proof, that they are what you don't stand in need of. And indeed, if I understand you rightly, you have more reason to thank God that you did not break both, than to repine because you have broke one leg. You have undoubtedly heard the story of the Dutch seaman, who having broke one of his legs by a fall from the main-mast, instead of condoling himself, thanked God that he had not broke his neck. I scarce know whether your first news vexed me, or your last news pleased me, more: but I can assure you, that though I did not cry for grief at the former, I did for joy at the latter part of your letter. The two things which I most wished for of almost any thing in the world, were to see my mother, and Westminster once again; and to see them both together, was so far above my expectations that I almost looked upon it as next to an impossibility. I have been so very frequently disappointed when I had set my heart on any pleasure, that I will never again depend on any before it comes. However, I shall be obliged to you if you will tell me, as near as you can, how soon my uncle is expected in England,† and my mother in London."

To this letter Dr. Whitehead has appended some amatory lines, which, he says, "afford a specimen of the writer's abilities to give a beautiful and elegant dress to verses intended as RIDICULE." This palliative phrase is contradicted by the lines themselves, which undoubtedly have not the least appearance of being "intended as RIDICULE."

* Westminster Magazine.

† The uncle here mentioned was his mother's only brother. He was in the service of the East India Company; and the public prints having stated, that he was returning home in one of the Company's ships, Mrs. Wesley came to London when the ship arrived, to meet him. But the information was false, and she was disappointed.—*Private Papers*. I shall notice this brother in a subsequent part of these Memoirs.

What the Doctor's motives might have been for granting them a place in his "Life of Mr. Wesley," it is difficult to conjecture; but if, with the greatest stretch of charity, we can suppose it possible for them to have been inserted with an intention to enhance Mr. Wesley's character, few men will venture to call the publication of them either candid or judicious. The sinister purposes to which they are capable of being applied by men of perverse minds, are shown by Mr. Nightingale, in his "Portraiture of Methodism," who, with great injustice, quotes them as a standard of Mr. Wesley's talents for poetry, and a serious drawback on his piety. His reflections upon this juvenile production are, "that Mr. Wesley was not quite that dark, saturnine creature which Archbishop Herring took him to be; and that he was not then so Methodistical, as at a subsequent period of his life." The distress of Mr. Nightingale's own mind, and the compunctious visitings of his conscience for having published these and similar unfounded remarks upon Mr. Wesley and his friends, are well described in the frank and penitent confession which he made in the immediate prospect of death, and which, at his urgent request, my excellent friend Mr. Bunting inserted in "the Wesleyan Methodist Magazine," for November 1823. In alluding to these circumstances, I have no other object in view, than to vindicate Mr. Wesley's memory, and to guard the public against the insinuations which have been artfully conveyed respecting a man, who, even in his unregenerate condition, was remarkable for chaste conversation and correct moral conduct.

On perusing the narrative both of Dr. Whitehead and Mr. Nightingale, the learned reader will at once perceive, that neither of them had enjoyed the advantages of an early classical education, and that they were consequently unacquainted with the course of studies usually pursued at our Universities. Dr. Whitehead, indeed, subsequently took a degree in Medicine at the University of Leyden; but, to obtain a MEDICAL diploma, a student is not required to exhibit that extensive knowledge of classic lore which is indispensable for securing him a degree either in ARTS or DIVINITY. Omitting any allusion to the objectionable passages, which are of occasional occurrence in the ancient Classic Poets of Greece and Rome,—and which are, promiscuously with others, translated into English verse, by the young men in our great public schools and Universities, merely as a trial of skill without adverting to the moral turpitude of some of the sentiments, or to their probable desecrating effect,—it may be observed, that the verses quoted by Dr. Whitehead were a college exercise of this description, and translated by Mr. Wesley from the Latin. Such exercises were more common in those days, and for a century preceding, than they are at present. The youthful and witty translator, it is seen, was then only in his twenty-first year, and had not felt those deep convictions of the sinfulness of his nature which he afterwards endured. The real CHRISTIANITY, or "METHODISM of his subsequent life," therefore, was not in the least implicated in this juvenile effusion. Making no pretensions to purer principles, or to a stricter course of conduct, than his college friends, (to adopt another of Mr. Nightingale's phrases,) at that period Mr. Wesley "thought it no sin to exercise his talents in translating a Poem on *A favourite Flea, Chloe's rosy Cheek,*" &c. But though the verses contained no sentiment of an absolutely immoral complexion,—a favour-

able circumstance, which cannot be offered in excuse for the early sallies of wit of many collegians who have afterwards become as eminent for their piety as for their talents*—Mr. Wesley would, a few years afterwards, have been ashamed at the sight of them; and he certainly would never have supposed, that any man, who could present them to the public as one of his compositions, entertained a proper regard for his character, especially when that individual might, out of a multitude of other choice materials, have easily selected a better and more edifying “specimen of his poetical abilities.”—But the wise designs of God’s Providence, as proved by their results, were, that Mr. Wesley should soon be engaged in more ennobling and salutary studies than are implied in a scrupulous attention to the little prettinesses of poetic expression, and that he should gain brighter and more durable trophies than any which the whole course of human learning could bestow.

Towards the close of this year, Mr. Wesley began to think of entering into Deacon’s Orders; and this led him to reflect on the importance of the ministerial office, the motives of entering into it, and the necessary qualifications for it. On examining the step he intended to take, through all its consequences to himself and others, it appeared of the greatest magnitude, and made so deep an impression on his mind, that he became more serious than usual, and applied himself with more attention to subjects of divinity. Some doubts arising in his mind on the motives which ought to influence a man in taking Holy Orders, he proposed them to his father, with a frankness that does great credit to the integrity of his heart. His father’s answer is dated the 26th of January, 1725. “As to what you mention of entering into Holy Orders, it is indeed a great work, and I am pleased to find you think it so. As to the motives you take notice of, my thoughts are: if it is *no harm*† to desire getting into that office, even as Eli’s sons, ‘*to eat a piece of bread;*’ yet, certainly, a desire and intention to lead a stricter life, and a belief that one should do so, is a better reason: Though this should, by all means, be begun before, or ten to one it will deceive us afterwards. But if a man be unwilling and undesirous to enter into Orders, it is easy to guess whether he can say so much as, with common honesty, that he trusts he is ‘*moved to it by the Holy Ghost.*’ But the principal spring and motive, to which all the former should be only secondary, must certainly be the glory of God, and the service of his Church in the edification of our neighbour. And wo to him who, with any meaner leading view, attempts so sacred a work!” He then mentions the qualifications necessary for Holy Orders, and answers a question which his son asked. “You ask me, which is the best commentary on the Bible? I answer, the Bible itself. For the several Paraphrases and Translations of it in the Polyglott, compared with the Original, and with one another, are, in my opinion, to an honest, devout, industrious, and humble man, infinitely

* If every man, who, in the days of his unbridled boyhood, has written foolish or wicked verses, must ever afterwards be stigmatized for such acts of indiscretion, what will become of the fair fame of the pious Beza, the learned Grotius, the clever Du Moulin, and several others of equal eminence among our own countrymen? One of the able Latin pamphlets of Grotius contains a befitting and penitential apology for himself, in which many of his offending brethren would have heartily united: “How much do I wish, that all those excitements to marriage and to wars had been destroyed! And that sacred poems, and such as have a tendency to inculcate good morals and form correct habits, were the sole productions that remained.”—*Rivet. Apologet. Discussio.*

† I doubt this under the Christian dispensation.

preferable to any comment I ever saw. But Grotius is the best, for the most part, especially on the Old Testament." He then hints to his son, that he thought it too soon for him to take Orders; and encourages him to work and write while he could. "You see," says he, "time has shaken me by the hand; and death is but a little behind him. My eyes and heart are now almost all I have left; and I bless God for them."

His mother wrote to him in February on the same subject, and seemed desirous that he should enter into Orders as soon as possible. "I think," says she, "the sooner you are a Deacon the better, because it may be an inducement to greater application in the study of practical divinity, which, of all other studies, I humbly conceive to be the best for candidates for Orders."—"The alteration of your temper," says she, in the same letter, "has occasioned me much speculation. I, who am apt to be sanguine, hope it may proceed from the operations of God's Holy Spirit, that, by taking off your relish for earthly enjoyments, he may prepare and dispose your mind for a more serious and close application to things of a more sublime and spiritual nature. If it be so, happy are you, if you cherish those dispositions! And now, in good earnest, resolve to make religion the business of your life; for, after all, that is the one thing that, strictly speaking, is necessary: all things besides are comparatively little to the purposes of life. I heartily wish you would now enter upon a strict examination of yourself, that you may know whether you have a reasonable hope of salvation by Jesus Christ. If you have, the satisfaction of knowing it will abundantly reward your pains; if you have not, you will find a more reasonable occasion for tears, than can be met with in a tragedy. This matter deserves great consideration by all, but especially by those designed for the ministry; who ought, above all things, to make their own calling and election sure, lest *after they have preached to others, they themselves should be cast away.*"

He began now to apply himself with diligence to the study of divinity, and became more desirous of entering into Orders. He wrote twice to his father on this subject. His father answered him in March, and informed him, that he had changed his mind, and was then inclined that he should take Orders that summer: "But, in the first place," says he, "if you love yourself or me, pray heartily."

The books which, at this time, had the greatest influence on his mind, were *the Imitation of Christ* by Thomas a Kempis, and Bishop Taylor's *Rules of Holy Living and Dying*. He did not, indeed, implicitly receive every thing they taught; but they roused his attention to the whole spirit of the Christian religion. "He began to see, that true religion is seated in the heart, and that God's law extends to all our thoughts, as well as words and actions.* He was, however, very angry at Kempis for being too strict, though he then read him only in Dean Stanhope's translation."† This was a singular feature in Mr. Wesley's character. Contrary to the disposition of most young men who have been educated in the habits of study, he was diffident of his own judgment; and this disposition is visible through the whole of his life. On this occasion, he consulted his parents, stated his objections to some things in Kempis, and asked their opinion. His letter is dated May 29. "I was lately advised," says he, "to read Thomas a Kempis

* WESLEY'S Works, in 32 volumes, vol. xxvi, p. 274. † Ibid.

over, which I had frequently seen, but never much looked into before. I think he must have been a person of great piety and devotion; but it is my misfortune to differ from him in some of his main points. I cannot think, that when God sent us into the world, he had irreversibly decreed, that we should be perpetually miserable in it. If our taking up the cross imply our bidding adieu to all joy and satisfaction, how is it reconcilable with what Solomon expressly affirms of religion, that *'her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace?'* Another of his tenets is, that all mirth or pleasure is useless, if not sinful, and that nothing is an affliction to a good man—that he ought to thank God even for sending him misery. This, in my opinion, is contrary to God's design in afflicting us; for though he chasteneth those whom he loveth, yet it is in order to humble them. I hope, when you have time, you will give me your thoughts on these subjects, and set me right if I am mistaken."

His mother's letter, in answer to this, is dated June the 8th, in which she says, "I take Kempis to have been an honest, weak man, that had more zeal than knowledge, by his condemning all mirth or pleasure, as sinful or useless, in opposition to so many direct and plain texts of Scripture.* Would you judge of the lawfulness or unlawfulness of pleasure, of the innocence or malignity of actions—take this rule: Whatever weakens your reason, impairs the tenderness of your conscience, obscures your sense of God, or takes off the relish of spiritual things; in short, whatever increases the strength and authority of your body over your mind; that thing is sin to you, however innocent it may be in itself."

His father's letter is dated July 14. "As for Thomas a Kempis," says he, "all the world are apt to strain either on one side or the other; but, for all that, mortification is still an indispensable Christian duty. The world is a Siren, and we must have a care of her: and if the *'young man'* will *'rejoice in his youth,'* yet let him take care that his joys be innocent; and, in order to this, remember, that *'for all these things God will bring him into judgment.'* I have only this to add of my friend and old companion, that, making some grains of allowance, he may be read to great advantage; nay, that it is almost impossible to peruse him seriously without admiring, and I think in some measure imitating his heroic strains of humility, piety, and devotion. But I reckon you have, before this, received your mother's letter, who has leisure to bolt the matter to the bran."

He consulted his mother in another letter, dated June the 18th, on some things which he had met with in Bishop Taylor. "You have so well satisfied me," says he, "as to the tenets of Thomas a Kempis, that I have ventured to trouble you once more on a more dubious subject. I have heard one I take to be a person of good judgment say, that she would advise no one, very young, to read Dr. Taylor on Living and Dying. She added, that he almost put her out of her senses when she was fifteen or sixteen years old; because he seemed to exclude all from being in a way of salvation who did not come up to his rules, some of which are altogether impracticable. A fear of being tedious will make me confine myself to one or two instances, in which I am doubt-

* This is tender, yea, awful ground. Kempis meant the mirth and pleasures of the world.

ful; though several others might be produced of almost equal consequence." He then states, in reference to humility, that the Bishop says, "We must be sure, in some sense or other, to think ourselves the worst in every company where we come." And in treating of repentance he says, "Whether God has forgiven us or no, we know not: therefore be sorrowful for ever having sinned."—"I take the more notice of this last sentence," says Mr. Wesley, "because it seems to contradict his own words in the next section, where he says, that by the Lord's Supper all the members are united to one another, and to Christ the Head. The Holy Ghost confers on us the graces necessary for, and our souls receive the seeds of, an immortal nature.* Now surely these graces are not of so little force as that we cannot perceive whether we have them or not; if we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us, which he will not do unless we are regenerate, certainly we must be sensible of it. If we can never have any certainty of our being in a state of salvation, good reason it is, that every moment should be spent, not in joy, but in fear and trembling; and then undoubtedly, in this life, we are of all men most miserable. God deliver us from such a fearful expectation as this! Humility is undoubtedly necessary to salvation; and if all these things are essential to humility, who can be humble? who can be saved?"

His mother's answer is dated July 21. She observes, that though she had a great deal of business, was infirm, and but slow of understanding, yet it was a great pleasure to correspond with him on religious subjects, and if it might be of the least advantage to him, she should greatly rejoice. She then tells him, that what Dr. Taylor calls humility is not the virtue itself, but the accidental effects of it, which may in some instances, and must in others, be separated from it. She then proceeds to state her own ideas of humility.

"Humility is the mean between pride, or an overvaluing ourselves, on one side, and a base abject temper, on the other. It consists in a *habitual disposition* to think meanly of ourselves; which disposition is wrought in us by a true knowledge of God; his supreme essential glory; his absolute immense perfection of being; and a just sense of our dependance upon him, and past offences against him; together with a consciousness of our present infirmities and frailties," &c, &c.

It is evident, that Dr. Taylor's work had not only affected Mr. Wesley's heart, but engaged him in the earnest pursuit of farther knowledge. He therefore answered his mother's letter on the 29th of July; and both this letter and the answer to it are worthy of being preserved; the one as a specimen of his manner of reasoning at this early period of life; and the other, as it affords some excellent practical observations. They are too long to be inserted here; I shall therefore only present the reader with an extract from each.

"You have much obliged me," says he, "by your thoughts on Dr. Taylor, especially with respect to humility, which is a point he does not seem to me sufficiently to clear. As to absolute humility, consisting in a mean opinion of ourselves, considered with respect to God alone, I can readily join with his opinion. But I am more uncertain as

* So the pious Bishop was, in some sense, an advocate for Sacramental Justification!—the great error of the present day. It is not likely, however, that he held it in the same way in which it is now maintained.

to comparative, if I may so term it; and think some plausible reasons may be alleged to show, it is not in our power, and consequently not a virtue, to think ourselves the worst in every company.

“We have so invincible an attachment to truth already perceived, that it is impossible for us to disbelieve it. A distinct perception commands our assent, and the will is under a moral necessity of yielding to it. It is not, therefore, in every case, a matter of choice, whether we will believe ourselves worse than our neighbour, or not; since we may distinctly perceive the truth of this proposition, *He is worse than I*; and then the judgment is not free. One, for instance, who is in company with a freethinker, or other person signally debauched in faith and practice, cannot avoid knowing himself to be the better of the two;—these propositions extorting our assent: *An Atheist is worse than a believer. A man who endeavours to please God is better than he who defies Him.*

“If a true knowledge of God be necessary to absolute humility, a true knowledge of our neighbour should be necessary to comparative. But to judge one’s self the worst of all men, implies a want of such knowledge. No knowledge can be, where there is not certain evidence; which we have not, whether we compare ourselves with our acquaintance, or with strangers. In the one case, we have only imperfect evidence, unless we can see through the heart: in the other we have none at all.

“Again, this kind of humility can never be well-pleasing to God, since it does not flow from faith, without which it is impossible to please Him. Faith is a species of belief, and belief is defined ‘an assent to a proposition upon reasonable grounds.’ Without rational grounds there is therefore no belief, and consequently no faith.

“That we can never be so certain of the pardon of our sins as to be assured they will never rise up against us, I firmly believe. We know that they will infallibly do so, if ever we apostatize; and I am not satisfied what evidence there can be of our final perseverance, till we have finished our course. But I am persuaded, we may know if we are now in a state of salvation, since that is expressly promised in the Holy Scriptures to our sincere endeavours, and we are surely able to judge of our own sincerity.*

“As I understand faith to be an assent to any truth upon rational grounds, I do not think it possible, without perjury, to swear I believe any thing, unless I have rational grounds for my persuasion. Now that which contradicts reason, cannot be said to stand on rational grounds; and such, undoubtedly, is every proposition which is incompatible with the Divine Justice or Mercy. I can therefore never say, I believe such a proposition; since it is impossible to assent upon reasonable evidence, where it is not in being.

“What then shall I say of Predestination? An everlasting purpose of God to deliver some from damnation, does, I suppose, exclude all from that deliverance who are not chosen. And if it was inevitably decreed from eternity, that such a determinate part of mankind should be saved, and none beside them, a vast majority of the world were only born to eternal death, without so much as a possibility of avoiding it. How is this consistent with either the Divine Justice or Mercy? Is it merciful to ordain a creature to everlasting misery? Is it just to punish man for

* He saw *the blessing*, even at this time, but not *the way to attain it*.

crimes which he could not but commit? That God should be the author of sin and injustice, which must, I think, be the consequence of maintaining this opinion, is a contradiction to the clearest ideas we have of the Divine Nature and Perfections.

"I call faith, 'an assent upon rational grounds;' because I hold Divine Testimony to be the most reasonable of all evidence whatever. Faith must necessarily, at length, be resolved into reason. God is true; therefore, what he says is true: He hath said this; therefore, this is true. When any one can bring me more reasonable propositions than these, I am ready to assent to them: till then, it will be highly unreasonable to change my opinion."

Men would be apt to think, that such an intellect, so improved, and so disposed, would be *easily* led into all "*the truth as it is in Jesus.*" But the contrary will be seen in these memoirs. To bring such a mind to the simplicity of faith—to make it willing to lose its all and to find all in Christ, is indeed to remove a mountain! But when brought to this, how mighty do we see that mind in operation! how steadfast and unmoveable in all its actings!

We see, in this letter, how seriously Mr. Wesley had taken up the study of divinity; and it is pleasing to observe, how early he adopted the opinion of General Redemption, which he so uniformly held, and so ably defended in the subsequent part of his life, without ever departing from *evangelical* truth.

His mother's letter is dated August the 18th: "You say, that I have obliged you by sending my thoughts of humility, and yet you do not seem to regard them in the least; but still dwell on that single point in Dr. Taylor, of thinking ourselves the worst in every company; though the necessity of thinking so, is not inferred from my definition. I shall answer your arguments, after I have observed, that we differ in our notions of the virtue itself. You will have it consist in thinking meanly of ourselves; I, in a habitual disposition to think meanly of ourselves; which I take to be more comprehensive, because it extends to all the cases wherein that virtue can be exercised, either in relation to God, ourselves, or our neighbour, and renders your distinction of absolute and comparative humility perfectly needless.

"We may, in many instances, think very meanly of ourselves without being humble; nay, sometimes our very pride will lead us to condemn ourselves; as when we have said or done any thing that lessens that esteem of men which we earnestly covet. As to what you call absolute humility, with respect to God, what great matter is there in it? Had we only a mere speculative knowledge of that awful Being, and only considered Him as the Creator and Sovereign Lord of the universe; yet, since that first notion of him implies that he is a God of absolute and infinite perfection and glory, we cannot contemplate that glory, or conceive him present, without the most exquisite diminution of ourselves before him.*

* But this is not the humility of a sinner. An angel may be, and no doubt is, thus abased before God. But a sinner is a *condemned* creature; the sentence of death is upon him, and if he is truly convinced of sin, he acknowledges, "'Tis just the sentence should take place." A man cannot be *justified*, unless he is *thus* humbled. He cannot pass from death unto life, but by the consciousness of his guilt, and by pleading the Lord of Life, who died for him.—See Mr. Wesley's Sermon on Matt. v, 3, 4.

"The other part of your definition I cannot approve, because I think all those comparisons are rather the effects of pride than of humility.

"Though truth is the object of the understanding; and all truths, as such, agree in one common excellence, yet there are some truths which are comparatively of so small value, because of little use, that it is no matter whether we know them or not. Among these I rank the right answer to your question, whether our neighbour or we be worse. Of what importance can this inquiry be to us? Comparisons in these cases are very odious, and do most certainly proceed from some bad principle in those who make them. So far should we be from reasoning upon the case, that we ought not to permit ourselves to entertain such thoughts; but if they ever intrude, to reject them with abhorrence.

"Supposing that, in some cases, the truth of that proposition, *My neighbour is worse than I*, be ever so evident, yet what does it avail? Since two persons, in different respects, may be better and worse than each other. There is nothing plainer than that a free-thinker, as a free-thinker, and an Atheist, as an Atheist, is worse in that respect than a believer, as a believer. But if that believer's practice does not correspond to his faith, he is worse than an infidel.

"If we are not obliged to think ourselves the worst in every company, I am perfectly sure, that a man sincerely humble will be afraid to think himself the best in any. And though it should be his lot (for it can never be his choice) to fall into the company of notorious sinners; '*who makes thee to differ?*' or '*what hast thou that thou hast not received?*'* is sufficient, if well considered, to humble us, and silence all aspiring thoughts and self-applause; and may instruct us to ascribe our preservation from enormous offences to the sovereign grace of God, and not to our own natural purity or strength.

"You are somewhat mistaken in your notions of faith. All faith is an assent, but all assent is not faith. Some truths are self-evident, and we assent to them because they are so. Others, after a regular and formal process of reason, by way of deduction from some self-evident principle, gain our assent. This is not properly faith, but science. Some, again, we assent to, not because they are self-evident, or because we have attained the knowledge of them in a regular method, by a train of arguments; but because they have been revealed to us, either by God or man, and these are the proper objects of faith. The true measure of faith is, the authority of the revealer, the weight of which always holds proportion to our conviction of his ability and integrity. Divine faith is an assent to whatever God has revealed to us, because he has revealed it."†

It was impossible for Mr. Wesley to correspond with such a parent, and on such subjects, without being improved; and the effect of his present inquiries was deep and lasting. In reading Kempis, he tells us, that he had frequently much sensible comfort, such as he was an utter stranger to before. And the chapter in Dr. Taylor *on purity of intention*, convinced him of the necessity of being holy in heart, as well as

* According to the Gospel, '*there is no difference*' naturally before God. "*All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.*" (Rom. iii, 21.) The mighty difference is made by FAITH.

† The remaining part of this Letter on Predestination is inserted in the Arminian Magazine, vol. i, page 36, though with an error in the date.—How far may we go in the knowledge of the doctrine of faith, without having living faith!

regular in his outward deportment. Meeting likewise with a religious friend about this time, which he never had before, he began to alter the whole form of his conversation, and to set in earnest upon a *new life*. He communicated every week. He watched against all sin, whether in word or deed; and began to aim at, and pray for, inward holiness.

Having now determined to devote himself wholly to God, his letters to his parents carried a savour of religion, which before they had wanted; this made his father say to him in a letter of August the 2d, "If you be but what you write, you and I shall be happy, and you will much alleviate my misfortune." He soon found that his son was not double-minded. The time of his Ordination now drew near. His father wrote to him on this subject, in a letter dated September the 7th, in which he says, "God fit you for your great work! Fast, watch, and pray; believe, love, endure, and be happy; towards which you shall never want the most ardent prayers of your affectionate father." In preparing for his Ordination, he found some scruples on his mind respecting the damnatory clauses in the Athanasian Creed;* which he proposed to his father, who afterwards gave him his opinion upon it. Having prepared himself with the most conscientious care for the ministerial office, he was ordained Deacon on Sunday the 19th of this month, by Dr. Potter, then Bishop of Oxford.

Mr. Wesley's Ordination supplied him with an additional motive to prosecute the study of Divinity; which he did, by directing his inquiries into the evidences and reasonableness of the Christian Religion. He wrote to his mother on this subject November the 3d, who, in her answer, dated the 10th, encourages him to persevere in such investigations without any fear of being injured by them. "I highly approve," says she, "of your care to search into the grounds and reasons of our most holy religion; which you may do, if your intention be pure, and yet retain the integrity of your faith. Nay, the more you study on that subject, the more reason you will find to depend on the veracity of God; inasmuch as your perception of him will be clearer, and you will more plainly discover the congruity there is between the ordinances and precepts of the gospel, and right reason.† Nor is it a hard matter to prove, that the whole system of Christianity is founded thereon."

But Mr. Wesley did not employ all his time in these studies. His private Diary shows how diligent he was in the study of the Classics, and other books in different branches of science, and in the performance of his academical exercises. The time also drew near when it was expected, that the election of a Fellow of Lincoln College would take place; with a view to which his friends had been exerting themselves in his favour all the summer.‡ When Dr. Morley, the Rector, was spoken to on the subject, he said, "I will inquire into Mr. Wesley's character." He did so, and gave him leave to stand a candidate. He afterwards became his friend in that business, and used all the influence he had in his favour. His father in a letter of July says, "I waited on

* See his Sermon on the Trinity.

† If by *right reason* be meant, the reason of God, or the reasoning of the Eternal Mind, (if we may so speak of Him who reasons not,) Christianity is certainly founded thereon. But to the reason of *fallen man*, it is "*foolishness*:" and a man "*who would be wise, must thus become a fool*." Neither the admirable mother, nor her admirable son, was as yet thus wise.

‡ His father mentions it in his letter of the 26th of January. of this year.

Dr. Morley, and found him more civil than ever. I will write to the Bishop of Lincoln again, and to your brother Samuel the next post. Study hard lest your opponents beat you." In another letter, speaking of Dr. Morley, he says, "You are infinitely obliged to that generous man."

Mr. Wesley's uncommon seriousness, however, was against him; and he did not escape the banter and ridicule of his adversaries at Lincoln College on this occasion. In reference to this, his father observes in a letter of August: "As for the Gentlemen Candidates you write of—does any body think, that the devil has no agents left? It is a very callow virtue, sure, that cannot bear being laughed at. I think our Captain and Master endured something more for us, before he entered into glory: and unless we follow his steps, in vain do we hope to share that glory with him. Nor shall any who sincerely endeavour to serve him, either by turning others to righteousness, or keeping them steadfast in it, lose their reward."—And in his letter of October the 19th, he exhorts him to bear patiently what was said of him at Lincoln: "But be sure," says he, "never to return the like treatment to your enemy. You and I have hitherto done the best we could in that affair; do you continue to do the same, and rest the whole with Providence."

His mother writes to him on this occasion more in the way of encouragement and caution: "If it be," says she, "a weak virtue that cannot bear being laughed at, I am sure it is a strong and well-confirmed virtue that can bear the test of a brisk buffoonery. I doubt too many people, though well inclined, have yet made shipwreck of faith and a good conscience, merely because they could not bear raillery. Some young persons have a natural excess of bashfulness; others are so tender of what they call honour, that they cannot endure to be made a jest of.—I would therefore advise those who are in the beginning of a Christian course, to shun the company of profane wits, as they would the plague; and never to contract an intimacy with any, but such as have a good sense of religion."

But notwithstanding the warm opposition which his opponents made against him, Mr. Wesley's general good character for learning and diligence, gave such firmness and zeal to his friends, that on Thursday, March the 17th, 1726, he was elected Fellow of Lincoln College.* His father very emphatically expresses his satisfaction on this occasion, in a letter of the 1st of April.—"I have both yours, since your election; in both, you express yourself as becometh you. What will be my own fate before the summer be over, God knows; *sed passi graviora*—Wherever I am, my Jack is Fellow of Lincoln."—His mother, in a letter of March 30, tells him, in her usual strain of piety, "I think myself obliged to return great thanks to Almighty God, for giving you good success at Lincoln. Let whoever He pleased be the instrument, to Him, and to Him alone, the glory appertains."

The Monday following his election, being March 21, he wrote to his brother Samuel,† expressing his gratitude for the assistance he had given him in that affair. With this letter he sent two or three copies of

* Private Diary.

† This letter, and the verses which accompanied it, were inserted some years ago, by Mr. Badcock, in the Westminster Magazine. The letter is there without a date, which I have taken from Mr. John Wesley's Diary. Mr. Badcock tells the public, that he had a variety of curious papers by him, which show Mr. Wesley in a light which perhaps he had forgot, &c.—I shall have occasion to mention this circumstance in another place.

verses, which seem, by what he says of them, to have been written at an early period. "I have not yet," says he, "been able to meet with one or two gentlemen, from whom I am in hopes of getting two or three copies of verses. The most tolerable of my own, if any such there were, you probably received from Leyburn. Some of those I had besides, I have sent here; and shall be very glad if they are capable of being so corrected, as to be of any service to you."—He sent three specimens of his poetry with this letter: the two following I shall insert; which considered as hasty productions—as mere amusements—and sent in their rough state, I think every good judge will pronounce to be excellent.

HORACE, LIB. I, ODE XXII.

INTEGRITY needs no defence;
'The man who trusts to innocence*
Nor wants the darts Numidians throw,
Nor arrows of the Parthian bow.

Secure o'er Lybia's sandy seas,
Or hoary Caucasus he strays,
O'er regions scarcely known to fame,
Wash'd by Hydaspes' fabled stream.

While void of cares, of nought afraid,
Late in the Sabine woods I stray'd;
On Sylvia's lips, while pleas'd I sung,
How love and soft persuasion hung!

A rav'nous wolf, intent on food,
Rush'd from the covert of the wood;
Yet dared not violate the grove
Secured by innocence and love;

Nor Mauritania's sultry plain
So large a savage does contain;
Nor e'er so huge a monster treads
Warlike Apulia's beechen shades.

Place me where no revolving sun
Does e'er his radiant circle run;
Where clouds and damps alone appear,
And poison the unwholesome year:

Place me in that effulgent day
Beneath the sun's directer ray;
No change from its fix'd place shall move
The basis of my lasting love.

* Horace, with his usual vanity, lays claim to innocence. If, however, we understand it as spoken of that *evangelical* innocence which comes by faith, how admirably true is the declaration!

I cannot here refrain from presenting to the classical reader an anecdote communicated to me by the late Rev. B. Collins (afterwards Bury) of Bath. He was on a visit to the Rev. Mr. Pentecross of Wallingford; and when in company with that gentleman, and several ministers of the Gospel, he gave them an account of the famous Abbé (afterwards Cardinal) Maury's book on the Eloquence of the Pulpit; wherein the Abbé maintains, that the only way in which we can expect the Gospel to be received with respect by the world, is by cultivating the great talent of elocution. Mr. Pentecross remained silent during the discussion; but, on being asked his opinion, repeated from this Ode, in the original,

Integer vitæ, scelerisque purus
Non eget *Mauri*—

Perhaps there is not extant a better Latin pun. It also forcibly showed his opinion, that the power and purity of the Gospel did not need such meretricious ornament. 1 Cor. i, 17, 18.

TO A GENTLEMAN, ON THE DEATH OF HIS FATHER.

In Imitation of Horace, lib. i, ode xxiv.

Quis desiderio sit Pudor, &c.

WHAT shame shall stop our flowing tears?

What end shall our just sorrows know?

Since fate, relentless to our prayers,

Has given the long destructive blow!

Ye Muses, strike the sounding string,

In plaintive strains his loss deplore;

And teach an artless voice to sing

The great, the bounteous, now no more!

For him the wise and good shall mourn,

While late records his fame declare;

And, oft as rolling years return,

Shall pay his tomb a grateful tear.

Ah! what avails their complaints to thee?

Ah! what avails his fame declared?

Thou blam'st, alas! the just decree,

Whence virtue meets its just reward.

Though sweeter sounds adorn'd thy tongue

Than Thracian Orpheus *whilom** play'd,

When list'ning to the morning song,

Each tree bow'd down its leafy head.

Never! ah, never from the gloom

Of unrelenting Pluto's sway,

Could the thin shade again resume

Its ancient tenement of clay.

Indulgent patience, heaven-born guest!

Thy healing wings around display;

Thou gently calm'st the stormy breast,

And driv'st the tyrant grief away.

Corroding care and eating pain,

By just degrees thy influence own;

And lovely, lasting peace again

Resumes her long-deserted throne.

His parents now invited him to spend some time with them in the country. Accordingly he left Oxford in April, and staid the whole summer at Epworth and Wroote. During this time he usually read prayers and preached twice on the Lord's day, and in various ways assisted his father as occasion required. But he still pursued his studies, had frequent opportunities of conversing with his parents on subjects highly interesting and instructive, and kept a regular diary of what passed. He often takes notice of the particular subjects discussed in their various conversations, and mentions the practical observations his parents made, and sometimes adds his own. Among others, were the following: how to increase our faith, our hope, and our love of God: prudence, simplicity, sincerity, pride, vanity; wit, humour, fancy, courtesy, and general usefulness. His parents made such observations as reflection and long experience had suggested to them, and he carefully minuted down such rules and maxims as appeared to him important.

Mr. Wesley returned to Oxford on the 21st of September, and resumed his usual course of studies. His literary character was now established in the University: he was acknowledged by all parties to be a man of talents, and an excellent critic in the learned languages. His compositions were distinguished by an elegant simplicity of style,

* I am sorry this poor quaint word should find its way into lines so serious and so beautiful. Mr. Wesley would not have *published* it with that blemish.

and justness of thought, that strongly marked his classical taste. His skill in Logic, or the art of reasoning, was universally known and admired. The high opinion that was entertained of him, in these respects, was soon publicly expressed, by choosing him Greek Lecturer and Moderator of the Classes, on the 7th of November; though he had only been elected Fellow of the College in March, was little more than twenty-three years of age, and had not yet proceeded Master of Arts.

It has already appeared, that Mr. Wesley's poetical talents were considerable: but they now assumed a more serious air. His paraphrase on the first eighteen verses of the 104th Psalm, is a more finished piece than any thing he had written before. He began to write it on the 19th of August this year, when at Epworth; and it well deserves to be printed with accuracy. The original manuscript is now before me.

PARAPHRASE ON PSALM CIV.

Verse 1

UPBORNE aloft on vent'rous wing,
While, spurning earthly themes, I soar
Through paths untrod before,
What God, what Seraph shall I sing?
Whom but THEE should I proclaim,
Author of this wond'rous frame?

Eternal, uncreated Lord,
Enshrined in glory's radiant blaze!
At whose prolific voice, whose potent word,
Commanded, NOTHING swift retired, and WORLDS began their race.

Thou, brooding o'er the realms of night,
Th' unbottom'd infinite abyss,
Badest the deep her rage surcease,
And said'st, *Let there be light!*
Etherial light thy call obey'd,
Glad she left her native shade,
Through the wide void her living waters past;
Darkness turn'd his murmuring head,
Resign'd the reins, and trembling fled;
The crystal waves roll'd on, and fill'd the ambient waste.

3

In light, effulgent robe, array'd,
Thou left'st the beauteous realms of day;
The golden towers inclined their head,
As their Sovereign took his way.

3, 4

The all-encircling bounds, (a shining train
Minist'ring flames around him flew,)
Through the vast profound he drew,
When lo! sequacious to his fruitful hand,
Heaven o'er th' uncolour'd void her azure curtain threw.

Lo! marching o'er the empty space,
The fluid stores in order rise,
With adamantine chains of liquid glass,
To bind the new-born fabric of the skies.

3

Downward th' Almighty Builder rode:
Old Chaos groan'd beneath the God:
Sable clouds his pompous car;
Harness'd winds before him ran,
Proud to wear their Maker's chain,
And told, with hoarse-resounding voice, his coming from afar.

5

Embryon earth the signal knew,
And rear'd from night's dark womb her infant head,
Though yet prevailing waves her hills o'erspread,
And stain'd their sickly face with pallid hue.

6

7

But when loud thunders the pursuit began,
Back the affrighted spoilers ran:

8

In vain aspiring hills opposed their race;

- O'er hills and vales with equal haste,
 The flying squadrons past,
 Till safe within the walls of their appointed place .
 9 There, firmly fix'd, their sure enclosures stand,
 Unconquerable bound of ever-during sand !
 10 HE spake ! From the tall mountain's wounded side,
 Fresh springs rolled down their silver tide ;
 O'er the glad vales the shining wanderers stray,
 Soft Murmuring as they flow,
 11 While in their cooling wave inclining low,
 The untaught natives of the field their parching thirst allay.
 12 High-seated on the dancing sprays,
 Chequering with varied light their parent streams,
 The feather'd quires attune their artless lays,
 Safe from the dreaded heat of solar beams.
- Genial showers at his command,
 Pour plenty o'er the barren land :
 Labouring with parent throes,
 14 See ! the teeming hills disclose
 A new birth ; see the cheerful green,
 Transitory, pleasing scene,
 O'er the smiling landscape glow,
 And gladden all the vale below.
 15 Along the mountain's craggy brow,
 Amiably dreadful now !
 See the clasping vine disspread
 Her gently rising, verdant head !
 See the purple grape appear,
 Kind relief of human care !
- Instinct with circling life, thy skill
 16 Uprear'd the olive's loaded bough ;
 What time, on Lebanon's proud hill,
 Slow rose the stately cedar's brow.
 Nor less rejoice the lowly plains,
 Of useful corn the fertile bed,
 Than when the lordly cedar reigns,
 A beauteous, but a barren shade.
- 17 While in his arms the painted train,
 Warbling to the vocal grove,
 Sweetly tell their pleasing pain,
 Willing slaves to genial love ;
- 18 While the wild-goats, an active throng,
 From rock to rock light-bounding fly,
 Jehovah's praise in solemn song
 Shall echo through the vaulted sky.

Mr. Wesley was now more desirous than ever of improving his time to the best advantage. As he had not yet taken his Degree of Master of Arts, the whole of his time was not at his own disposal ; but those portions of it which were, he carefully spent in pursuit of such knowledge as promised to be beneficial to himself, and would enable him to benefit others : he never indulged himself in an idle useless curiosity, which is the common fault of most young men in the conduct of their studies. He expresses his sentiments on this head, in a letter to his mother, of January, 1727. " I am shortly to take my Master's Degree. As I shall from that time be less interrupted by business not of my own choosing, I have drawn up for myself a scheme of studies from which I do not intend, for some years at least, to vary.—I am perfectly come over to your opinion, that there are many truths it is not worth while to know. Curiosity indeed might be a sufficient plea for our laying out some time upon them, if we had half a dozen centuries of life to come ;*

* When Mr. Wesley was upwards of eighty, he said to me, after he had travelled from Portsmouth to Cobham, in Surrey, which he reached before 1 o'clock :—" We should lose no time,—we have not, like the Patriarchs, 700 or 800 years to play with."

but methinks it is great ill-husbandry to spend a considerable part of the small pittance now allowed us, in what makes us neither a quick nor a sure return.

"Two days ago I was reading a dispute between those celebrated masters of controversy, Bishop Atterbury and Bishop Hoadly; but must own I was so injudicious as to break off in the middle. I could not conceive, that the dignity of the end was at all proportioned to the difficulty of attaining it. And I thought the labour of twenty or thirty hours, if I was sure of succeeding, which I was not, would be but ill rewarded by that important piece of knowledge, whether Bishop Hoadly had misunderstood Bishop Atterbury or not?"

The following paragraph, in the same letter, will show the reader how diligent he had long been in improving the occasions which occurred, of impressing a sense of religion on the minds of his companions, and of his soft and obliging manner of doing it. "About a year and a half ago," says he, "I stole out of company at eight in the evening, with a young gentleman with whom I was intimate. As we took a turn in an aisle of St. Mary's Church, in expectation of a young lady's funeral, with whom we were both acquainted, I asked him, if he really thought himself my friend? and if he did, why he would not do me all the good he could? He began to protest,—in which I cut him short, by desiring him to oblige me in an instance, which he could not deny to be in his own power: to let me have the pleasure of making him a whole Christian, to which I knew he was at least half persuaded already. That he could not do me a greater kindness, as both of us would be fully convinced when we came to follow that young woman.*

"He turned exceedingly serious, and kept something of that disposition ever since. Yesterday was a fortnight, he died of a consumption. I saw him three days before he died; and, on the Sunday following, did him the last good office I could here, by preaching his funeral sermon; which was his desire when living."

Mr. Wesley proceeded Master of Arts on the 14th[†] of February,† and acquired considerable reputation in his disputation for his Degree; on which account his mother congratulates him in a letter of the fourteenth of March.—On the 19th he writes thus to her: "One advantage, at least, my Degree has given me; I am now at liberty, and shall be in a great measure for some time, to choose my own employment. And as I believe I know my own deficiencies best, and which of them are most necessary to be supplied; I hope my time will turn to somewhat better account, than when it was not so much in my own disposal."—He had already fixed the plan of his studies; but how to obtain a more practical knowledge of God, and a more entire conformity to his will, in the temper of his mind and in all his actions, was a point not so easily determined. He thought, however, that the company to which he was necessarily exposed at Oxford, was a hinderance to his progress in religion, and that a greater seclusion from the world would be advantageous

* It was, however, reserved for Peter Boehler to make him "a whole Christian," by preaching to him what St. Paul calls *the foolishness of God*.

† Private Diary.

† He informed me that he delivered three Lectures on that occasion—one on Natural Philosophy, *De Anima Brutorum*,—another on Moral Philosophy, *De Julio Cesare*, and a third on Religion, *De Amore Dei*. What a pity these should be lost! At least they are lost to me.

to him in this respect. He expresses the thoughts he then had of this matter, in the same letter of the 19th of March. "The conversation of one or two persons, whom you may have heard me speak of, (I hope never without gratitude,) first took off my relish for most other pleasures, so far that I despised them in comparison of that. I have since proceeded a step farther; to slight them absolutely. And I am so little at present in love with even company, the most elegant entertainment next to books; that, unless the persons have a religious turn of thought, I am much better pleased without them. I think it is the settled temper of my soul, that I should prefer, at least for some time, such a retirement, as would seclude me from all the world, to the station I am now in. Not that this is by any means unpleasant to me; but I imagine it would be more improving, to be in a place where I might confirm or implant in my mind what habits I would, without interruption, before the flexibility of youth be over.

"A school in Yorkshire was proposed to me lately, on which I shall think more, when it appears whether I may have it or not. A good salary is annexed to it. But what has made me wish for it most, is the frightful description, as they call it, which some gentlemen who know the place, gave me of it yesterday. 'It lies in a little vale, so pent up between two hills, that it is scarcely accessible on any side; so that you can expect little company from without, and within there is none at all.' I should therefore be entirely at liberty to converse with company of my own choosing, whom for that reason I would bring with me; and company equally agreeable, wherever I fixed, could not put me to less expense.

The sun that walks his airy way
To cheer the world, and bring the day;
The moon that shines with borrow'd light,
The stars that gild the gloomy night;
All of these, and all I see,
Should be sung, and sung by me:
These praise their Maker as they can,
But want, and ask the tongue of man.

"I am full of business; but have found a way to write, without taking any time from that. It is but rising an hour sooner in the morning, and going into company an hour later in the evening; both which may be done without any inconvenience." The school however was disposed of in some other way; at which his mother was well pleased. "I am not sorry," says she, "that you have missed the school; that way of life would not agree with your constitution; and, I hope, God has better work for you to do."

Mr. Wesley saw, that a desultory method of study was not the way to accurate knowledge; and therefore he had, some time before he took his Master's Degree, laid down a plan which he now closely pursued; and he never suffered himself to deviate from the rule he had prescribed. Thus, his hours of study, on Mondays and Tuesdays, were devoted to the Greek and Roman classics, historians, and poets.—Wednesdays, to Logic and Ethics.—Thursdays, to Hebrew and Arabic.—Fridays, to Metaphysics and Natural Philosophy.—Saturdays, to Oratory and Poetry, chiefly composing.—Sundays, to Divinity.—In the intermediate hours, between these more fixed studies, he perfected himself in the French language, which he had begun to learn two or

three years before ; he also read a great variety of modern authors in almost every department of science. His method was this : he first read an author regularly through ; then in the second reading, transcribed into his collections such passages as he thought important, either for the information they contained, or the beauty of expression. This method considerably increased his stock of knowledge, and gave him a familiar acquaintance with the authors he had read.

It has been doubted by some persons, whether the Mathematics entered into Mr. Wesley's plan of studies at the University. But among the authors mentioned in his diary, are found Euclid, Keil, S'Gravesande, Sir Isaac Newton, &c ; and he seems to have studied them with great attention.—He sometimes amused himself with experiments in Optics. He has, however, told all the world, that he found, by experience, *he* could not pursue these studies *to any perfection*, (though others might,) without injury to his soul : and he told me, that the chief good to be derived from mathematical studies, was their tendency to induce a habit of close thinking.

It has been before observed, that his father had two livings. He now became less able to attend to the duties of his station, than formerly ; especially as it was difficult, and sometimes dangerous in the winter, to pass between Epworth and Wroote : And it was not easy to procure an assistant to his mind, in that remote corner of the kingdom. He was therefore desirous, that his son, Mr. John Wesley, should come into the country, and reside chiefly at Wroote, as his curate. Mr. Wesley complied with his father's request, who thus expresses himself in a letter of June :—" I do not think, that I have thanked you enough for your kind and dutiful letter of the 14th instant.—When you come hither, your head-quarters will, I believe, for the most part be at Wroote, and mine at Epworth ; though sometimes making a change."—Accordingly, he left Oxford on the 4th of August ; and coming to London, spent some days with his brother Samuel, and then proceeded on his journey to take upon him his appointed charge.—In this part of Lincolnshire, the ague is endemic, and in October he was seized with it ; at the same time he was called to Oxford, probably to oblige Dr. Morley, the Rector of Lincoln College, on some election business. This gentleman had rendered such services to Mr. Wesley, in his election to Lincoln, that he used to say, " I can refuse Dr. Morley nothing." In the present instance, his gratitude overcame all objections against travelling on horseback, through wet and cold, with an ague upon him. He reached Oxford on the 16th, and left it again on the 25th ; travelling in the same manner back to Wroote, though often very ill on the road. He now continued in the country for some time, still pursuing the same plan of study, as far as the nature of his situation would permit.

The following letter, written by one of the Fellows of his own College, who, it seems, had been a good deal absent, and knew little of him, except what he had learned from the report of those who had been acquainted with him, will show us his general character at Oxford.

" Coll. Linc., December 28th, 1727.

" SIR,—Yesterday I had the satisfaction of receiving your kind and obliging letter, whereby you have given me a singular instance of that

goodness and civility which is essential to your character ; and strongly confirmed to me the many encomiums which are given you in this respect, by all who have the happiness to know you. This makes me infinitely desirous of your acquaintance. And when I consider those shining qualities which I hear daily mentioned in your praise, I cannot but lament the great misfortune we all suffer, in the absence of so agreeable a person from the College. But I please myself with the thoughts of seeing you here on Chapter-day, and of the happiness we shall have in your company in the summer. In the meantime, I return you my most sincere thanks for this favour ; and assure you, that, if it should ever lie in my power to serve you, no one will be more ready to do it, than,

“ SIR,

“ Your most obliged and most humble servant,

“ LEW. FENTON.”

Mr. Wesley continued in the country till July 1728, when he returned by way of London, to Oxford, where he arrived on the 27th of this month, with a view to obtain Priest's Orders. No reason is assigned, why he was not ordained Priest sooner : it is evident, however, that he had never applied for it, probably on account of his age.—On Sunday, the 22d of September, he was ordained Priest, by Dr. Potter, Bishop of Oxford, who had ordained him Deacon in 1725.

October 1, he set out for Lincolnshire, and did not again visit Oxford till the 16th of June, 1729. About the middle of the August following, he returned to his charge at Wroote, where he continued till he received the following letter from Dr. Morley, the Rector of his College, dated the 21st of October : “ At a meeting of the Society, just before I left College, to consider of the proper method to preserve discipline and good government ; among several things agreed on, it was, in the opinion of all that were present, judged necessary that the junior Fellows, who should be chosen Moderators, shall in person attend the duties of their office, if they do not prevail with some of the Fellows to officiate for them. We all thought it would be a great hardship on Mr. Fenton, to call him from a perpetual Curacy or Donative ; yet this we must have done, had not Mr. Hutchins been so kind to him and us, as to free us from the uneasiness of doing a hard thing, by engaging to supply his place in the hall for the present year. Mr. Robinson would as willingly supply yours, but the serving of two Cures about fourteen miles distant from Oxford, and ten at least as bad as the worst of your roads in the Isle, makes it, he says, impossible to discharge the duty constantly. We hope it may be as much for your advantage to reside at College as where you are, if you take pupils, or can get a Curacy in the neighbourhood of Oxon. Your father may certainly have another Curate, though not so much to his satisfaction : yet we are persuaded, that this will not move him to hinder your return to College, since the interest of College, and obligation to Statute require it.”—In consequence of this letter, he quitted his father's Curacy at Wroote, and, on the 22d of November, came to reside at Oxford.

CHAPTER II.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE OF THE REV. CHARLES WESLEY, A. M., AND OF HIS BROTHER JOHN, IN CONTINUATION, UNTIL THEIR MISSION TO GEORGIA.

LEAVING Mr. John Wesley, now a resident at Oxford, I proceed to give an account of his brother in the flesh, and in the Lord.

Mr. CHARLES WESLEY was born December 18th, 1708, Old Style, several weeks before his time, at Epworth in Lincolnshire ; being about five years younger than his brother John, and about sixteen younger than Samuel.

He appeared dead, rather than alive, when he was born. He did not cry, nor open his eyes, and was kept wrapt up in soft wool until the time when he should have been born according to the usual course of nature ; and then he opened his eyes and cried.

He received the first rudiments of learning at home, under the pious care of his mother, as all the other children did. In 1716 he was sent to Westminster School, and placed under the care of his eldest brother Samuel Wesley, a High Churchman, who educated him in his own principles. He was exceedingly sprightly and active ; very apt to learn, but arch and unlucky, though not ill-natured.

When he had been some years at school, Mr. R. Wesley, a gentleman of large fortune in Ireland, wrote to his father, and asked if he had any son named Charles ; if so, he would make him his heir. Accordingly a gentleman in London brought money for his education several years. But one year another gentleman called, probably Mr. Wesley himself, talked largely with him, and asked if he was willing to go with him to Ireland. Mr. Charles desired to write to his father, who answered immediately, and referred it to his own choice. He chose to stay in England. Mr. W. then found and adopted another Charles Wesley, who was the late Earl of Mornington, ancestor of the present Marquis Wellesley and the Duke of Wellington. "A fair escape," says Mr. John Wesley, from whose short account of his brother I have taken this anecdote. Mr. John Wesley wrote this short account a few months before his death, intending to publish it. It remained among his MSS.

From this time, Mr. Charles Wesley depended chiefly upon his brother Samuel, till 1721, when he was admitted a scholar of St. Peter's College, Westminster.* He was now a King's scholar ; and as he advanced in age and learning, he acted dramas, and at length became Captain of the School. In 1726 he was elected to Christ Church, Oxford,† at which time his brother was Fellow of Lincoln College. Mr. John Wesley gives the following account of him, after he came to Oxford : "He pursued his studies diligently, and led a regular harmless life ; but if I spoke to him about religion, he would warmly answer, 'What, would you have me to be a saint all at once?' and would hear

* WELCH's List of Scholars of St. Peter's College, Westminster, as they were elected to Christ Church College, Oxford, and Trinity College, Cambridge, p. 105.

† Ibid. 110.

no more.* I was then near three years my father's Curate. During most of this time, he continued much the same; but in the year 1729, I observed, his letters grew much more serious, and when I returned to Oxford, in November that year, I found him in great earnestness to save his soul."

Mr. Charles Wesley gives the following account of himself for the first year or two after he went to Oxford.† "My first year at the College I lost in diversions; the next, I set myself to study. Diligence led me into serious thinking: I went to the weekly sacrament, and persuaded two or three young students to accompany me, and to observe the method of study prescribed by the statutes of the University. This gained me the harmless name of Methodist. In half a year (after this) my brother left his Curacy at Epworth, and came to our assistance. We then proceeded regularly in our studies, and in doing what good we could to the bodies and souls of men."

In the year 1728, in the twentieth year of his age, he began to apply more closely to study, to be more serious in his general deportment than usual, and to write a diary, in which he intended to register daily the state of his mind and the actions of the day. He knew that his brother Mr. John Wesley, had kept such a diary for several years, and was able to give him instructions how to proceed. He therefore wrote to him in January 1729, as follows: "I would willingly write a diary of my actions, but what particulars am I to take notice of? Am I to give my thoughts and words, as well as deeds, a place in it? Am I to mark all the good and ill I do; and what besides? Must I not take account of my progress in learning, as well as religion? What cipher can I make use of? If you would direct me to the same, or like method to your own, I would gladly follow it; for I am fully convinced of the usefulness of such an undertaking. I shall be at a stand till I hear from you.

"God has thought fit, it may be, to increase my weariness, to deny me at present your company and assistance. It is through Him strengthening me, I trust to maintain my ground till we meet. And I hope, that, neither before nor after that time, I shall relapse into my former state of insensibility. It is through your means, I firmly believe, that God will establish what he has begun in me; and there is no one person I would so willingly have to be the instrument of good to me as you. It is owing, in great measure, to somebody's prayers, (my mother's most likely,) that I am come to think as I do; for I cannot tell myself, how or when I awoke out of my lethargy—only that it was not long after you went away."

The enemies of the Christian Revelation were become so bold, at this time, in their attempts to propagate their principles in the University, as to rouse the attention of the Vice-Chancellor; who, with the consent of the Heads of Houses and Proctors, issued the following *programma*, or edict, which was fixed up in most of the halls of the University:

"WHEREAS there is too much reason to believe, that some members of the University have of late been in danger of being corrupted by ill-designing persons, who have not only entertained wicked and blasphemous notions, contrary to the truth of the Christian religion; but have

* He was odd, eccentric, and what is called *absent*, in a high degree. Mr. John Wesley told me, that he always dreaded his visiting him, notwithstanding their great love to each other,—knowing well the derangement of books and papers that would probably ensue.

† In his letter to Dr. Chandler.

endeavoured to instil the same ill principles into others : and the more effectually to propagate their infidelity, have applied their poison to the unguarded inexperience of less-informed minds, where they thought it might operate with better success ; carefully concealing their impious tenets from those whose riper judgment, and more wary conduct, might discover their false reasoning, and disappoint the intended progress of their infidelity. And whereas, therefore, it is more especially necessary at this time, to guard the youth of this place against these wicked advocates for pretended human reason against Divine revelation, and to enable them the better to defend their religion, and to expose the pride and impiety of those who endeavour to undermine it ; Mr. Vice-Chancellor, with the consent of the Heads of Houses and Proctors, has thought fit to recommend it, as a matter of the utmost consequence, to the several tutors of each College and Hall in the University, that they discharge their duty by a double diligence, in informing their respective pupils in their Christian duty, as also in explaining to them the articles of religion which they profess, and are often called upon to subscribe, and in recommending to them the frequent and careful reading of the Scriptures, and such other books as may serve more effectually to promote Christianity, sound principles, and orthodox faith. And, farther, Mr. Vice-Chancellor, with the same consent, does hereby forbid the said youth the reading of such books as may tend to the weakening of their faith, the subverting of the authority of the Scripture, and the introducing of Deism, profaneness, and irreligion in their stead.”—The Dean of Christ Church was so much a friend to infidelity, that he would not suffer this *programma* to be put up in the Hall of his College. But the Lord was about to take the matter into his own hand. At the very time when the friends of infidelity were making so strong an effort to propagate their principles in this celebrated seminary of learning, God was preparing some young men to plant a religious society in the same place, which should spread its branches throughout the world !

In the course of the following summer, Mr. Charles Wesley became more and more serious, and his zeal for God began to manifest itself in exertions to do good beyond the common round of religious duties. He endeavoured to awaken an attention to religion in the minds of some of the students, and was soon successful in one or two instances. This appears from the following letter, which he wrote to his brother John in May, 1729 :

“ Providence has at present put it into my power to do some good. I have a modest, humble, well-disposed youth lives next me ; and have been, thank God, somewhat instrumental in keeping him so. He had got into vile hands, and is now broke loose. He durst not receive the sacrament but at the usual times, for fear of being laughed at. By convincing him of the duty of frequent communicating, I have prevailed on both of us to receive once a week.

“ I earnestly long for, and desire the blessing, God is about to send me in you. I am sensible *this* is my day of grace ; and that, upon my employing the time before our meeting and next parting, will in great measure depend my condition for eternity.”

In November, 1729, Mr. John Wesley left his Curacy, and came to reside wholly at Oxford. The beginning of the society then formed was small, and it appeared contemptible to those around ; but events

have shown, that it was big with consequences of the utmost importance to the happiness of millions. So little do men know beforehand of the designs of Providence!

About this time Mr. Charles Wesley began to take pupils. On this occasion his father wrote to him as follows, in a letter dated January 1730, when Charles had just passed the 21st year of his age: "I had your last, and you may easily guess whether I were not well pleased with it, both on your account and my own. You have a double advantage by your pupils, which will soon bring you more, if you will improve it, as I firmly hope you will, by taking the utmost care to form their minds to piety as well as learning. As for yourself, between logic, grammar, and mathematics, be idle if you can. I give my blessing to the Bishop for having tied you a little faster, by obliging you to rub up your Arabic: and a fixed and constant method will make the whole both pleasing and delightful to you. But, for all that, you must find time every day for walking, which you know you may do with advantage to your pupils; and a little more robust exercise, now and then, will do you no harm. You are now launched fairly, Charles; hold up your head, and swim like a man; and when you cuff the wave beneath you, say to it, much as another hero did,

*CAROLUM vehis, et CAROLI fortunam.**

But always keep your eye fixed above the pole-star: and so God send you a good voyage through the troublesome sea of life! which is the hearty prayer of your loving father."

Mr. Charles Wesley and his brother John had been always united in affection; they were now united in their pursuit of learning, their views of religion, and their endeavours to do good. A Mr. Morgan, then a student also, was to them as another brother; and, united together, they were as a threefold cord, which is not easily broken. Charles had much more fire and openness of temper than his brother; but he was not less cautious in this respect. If any doubts arose in his mind; or if any practice, which he thought proper and commendable, seemed likely to give great offence to others, he asked the advice of those who were older and wiser than himself, how he ought to proceed. In a letter which he wrote to his father in June 1731, he says, "On Whitsunday the whole College received the sacrament, except the *servitors*, (for we are too well bred to communicate with *them*, though in the body and blood of Christ,) to whom it was administered the next day; on which I was present at church, but with the Canons left the sacrament to those for whom alone it was prepared. What I would beg to be resolved in is, whether or no my being assured I should give infinite scandal by staying, could sufficiently justify me in turning my back on God's ordinance? It is a question my future conduct is much concerned in, and I shall therefore earnestly wait for your decision." We see here what a view he had of the sin of turning away from the ordinance of God!

Mr. Charles Wesley proceeded Master of Arts in the usual course, and thought only of spending all his days at Oxford as a tutor; for he "exceedingly dreaded entering into Holy Orders."† But, in 1735, a

* "Thou carriest Charles, and Charles's fortune."—Spoken originally of Cæsar.

† His letter to Dr. Chandler.

new scene opened before him and his pious brother, which had not been contemplated by either of them, but was manifestly marked out by the providence of Him "*who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.*"

We have seen Mr. John Wesley rising into notice and esteem on account of his literary talents, yet still in the humble situation of curate to his father, which he now quitted at the call of the chief men of his college. In consequence of that order, he entered upon a new situation: he obtained pupils, and became a tutor. He presided also in the Hall as Moderator in the disputations, which were held six times a week; and always regarded this last appointment as a very gracious providence: it gave him a complete knowledge of that important branch of learning, by which he was afterwards enabled, during his whole life, to defend the truth against all opponents. "For several years," says he himself, "I was Moderator in the disputations which were held six times a week at Lincoln College in Oxford. I could not avoid acquiring hereby some degree of expertness in arguing; and especially in discerning and pointing out well-covered and plausible fallacies. I have since found abundant reason to praise God for giving me this honest art. By this, when men have hedged me in, by what they called demonstrations, I have been many times able to dash them in pieces; in spite of all its covers, to touch the very point where the fallacy lay, and it flew open in a moment."*

He was now fully employed between his public offices and his pupils. Of the latter he took the greatest care, accounting himself not only responsible for them to their parents and the community, but to God. He laboured not only to make them scholars, but Christians also, and to that end wrote a form of prayers for them (which is still extant) for every day in the week.

His own address to the Tutors of the University, will clearly evince the spirit in which he acted.

"Ye venerable men," says he, "who are more especially called to form the tender minds of youth, to dispel thence the shades of ignorance and error, and train them up to be wise unto salvation: are you filled with the Holy Ghost? With all those fruits of the Spirit, which your important office so indispensibly requires? Is your heart whole with God? Full of love and zeal to set up his kingdom on earth? Do you continually remind those under your care, that the one rational end of all our studies, is to know, love, and serve the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent? Do you inculcate upon them, day by day, that love alone never faileth? (Whereas, '*whether there be tongues, they shall fail,*'—or philosophical '*knowledge, it shall vanish away*:') and that without love, all learning is but splendid ignorance, pompous folly, vexation of spirit? Has all you teach an actual tendency to the love of God, and all mankind for his sake? Have you an eye to this end in whatsoever you prescribe, touching the kind, the manner; and the measure of their studies: desiring and labouring, that wherever the lot of these young soldiers of Christ is cast, they may be so many burning and shining lights, adorning the gospel of Christ in all things? And permit me to ask, do you put forth all your strength in the vast

* His masterly refutation of the Pelagian system of Dr. Taylor is an admirable proof of this.—See his Works, vol. 17, p. 79.

work you have undertaken? Do you labour herein with all your might? Exerting every faculty of your soul? Using every talent which God hath lent you, and that to the uttermost of your power? Let it not be said, that I speak here, as if all under your care were intended to be clergymen. Not so: I only speak as if they were all intended to be Christians.”*

Mr. Wesley’s labours as a tutor, were not in vain. The late Rev. Mr. Hervey, author of the “Meditations,” &c, was one of his pupils, and thus speaks of him with reference to the advantages he had received under his tuition at Oxford, in a letter dated Oxon, September 2, 1736.

“As for me, I am still a most weak, corrupt creature. But, blessed be the unmerited mercy of God, and thanks be to your never-to-be-forgotten example, ‘that I am what I am.’”

And again,

“Do you, dear sir, put up your prayers, and oh! let the mighty God set to his seal, that it may be unto me according to my heart’s desire. Then will I invite you, (*my father*, shall I call you, or *my friend*! For indeed you have been *both* unto me,) to meet me among the spirits of just men made perfect: since I am not like to see your face in the flesh any more for ever!† Then will I bid you welcome, yea, I will tell of your love, before the universal assembly, at the tremendous tribunal.”

In the postscript he adds,

“I heartily thank you, as for all other favours, so especially for teaching me Hebrew. I have cultivated, (according to your advice,) this study, and am (blessed be God, the giver of knowledge,) somewhat improved in this language.”

In another letter, dated Weston, near Northampton, December 30, 1747, he observes, “Assure yourself, dear sir, that I can never forget that tender-hearted and generous Fellow of Lincoln, who condescended to take such compassionate notice of a poor under-graduate: whom almost every body condemned; and no man cared for his soul.”

Mr. Wesley’s own account of his religious views and impressions while at Oxford, is so worthy of observation, that I give it without any alteration.

“In the year 1725, being in the twenty-third year of my age, I met with Bishop Taylor’s ‘Rules and Exercises of Holy Living and Dying.’ In reading several parts of this book, I was exceedingly affected with that part in particular which relates to *purity of intention*. Instantly I resolved to dedicate all my life to God: all my thoughts, and words, and actions: being thoroughly convinced, there was no medium: but that every part of my life, (not some only,) must either be a sacrifice to God, or to myself, that is, in effect, to the devil.

“In the year 1726, I met with Kempis’s ‘Christian Pattern.’ The nature and extent of inward religion, the religion of the heart, now appeared to me in a stronger light than ever it had done before. I saw, that giving even all my life to God, (supposing it possible to do this and go no farther,) would profit me nothing, unless I gave my heart, yea, all my heart, to him. I saw that ‘simplicity of intention and purity of affection,’ one design in all we speak or do, and one desire, ruling all our tempers, are indeed ‘the wings of the soul,’ without which she can never ascend to the mount of God.

* His Works, vol. i, p. 86.

† Mr. Wesley was at this time in Georgia.

"A year or two after, Mr. Law's 'Christian Perfection,' and 'Serious Call,' were put into my hands. These convinced me, more than ever, of the absolute impossibility of being half a Christian. And I determined, through his grace, (of the absolute necessity of which I was deeply sensible,) to be all devoted to God, to give him all my soul, my body, and my substance.

"In the year 1729, I began not only to read, but to study the Bible, as the one, the only standard of truth, and the only model of pure religion. Hence I saw, in a clearer and clearer light, the indispensable necessity of having the mind which was in Christ, and of walking as Christ also walked; even of having, not some part only, but all the mind which was in him, and of walking as he walked, not only in many or in most respects, but in all things. And this was the light, wherein at this time I generally considered religion, as a uniform following of Christ, an entire inward and outward conformity to our Master. Nor was I afraid of any thing more, than of bending this rule to the experience of myself, or of other men: of allowing myself in any the least disconformity to our grand Exemplar."*

About this time a serious man, whom he had travelled many miles to see, said to him, "Sir, you wish to serve God and go to heaven. Remember that you cannot serve him alone. You must therefore find companions, or make them; the Bible knows nothing of solitary religion." He never forgot this. Therefore, on his return to the University, he first spoke to his brother, Mr. Charles Wesley, and afterwards to Mr. Morgan, Mr. Hervey, Mr. Whitefield, and others. When they first began to meet, they read Divinity on the Sunday evenings, and on other nights the Greek and Latin Classics. The summer following, they began to visit the prisoners in the castle, and the sick poor in the town.

Their meetings now began to be more directly religious: they read and considered the Greek Testament on the week evenings, and conversed closely and deeply on the things of God. They now likewise observed the Fasts of the ancient Church every Wednesday and Friday, and communicated once a week. "We were now," says Mr. Wesley, "about fifteen in number, *'all of one heart and of one mind.'*"

The spirit of this little association cannot be exemplified more fully, than by giving at large the scheme of self-examination which was agreed upon and used by them.

LOVE OF GOD AND SIMPLICITY: MEANS OF WHICH ARE PRAYER AND
MEDITATION.

1. Have I been simple and recollected in every thing I said or did? Have I (1.) been *simple* in every thing, i. e. looked upon God, as my Good, my Pattern, my One Desire, my Disposer, Parent of Good; acted wholly for him; bounded my views with the present action or hour? (2.) *Recollected*? i. e. Has this simple view been distinct and uninterrupted? Have I done any thing without a previous perception of its being the will of God? Or without a perception of its being an exercise or a means of the virtue of the day? Have I said any thing without it?

* His Works, vol. xxiv, p. 4, &c.

2. Have I prayed with fervour? At going in and out of church? In the church? Morning and evening in private? Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, with my friends? At rising? Before lying down? On Saturday noon? All the time I was engaged in exterior work? In private? Before I went into the place of public or private prayer, for help therein? Have I, wherever I was, gone to church, morning and evening, unless for necessary mercy? And spent from one hour to three in private? Have I in private prayer frequently stopt short, and observed what fervour? Have I repeated it over and over, till I adverted to every word? Have I at the beginning of every prayer or paragraph owned, I cannot pray? Have I paused before I concluded in his name, and adverted to my Saviour now interceding for me at the right hand of God, and offering up these prayers?

3. Have I daily used ejaculations? i. e. Have I every hour prayed for humility, faith, hope, love, and the particular virtue of the day? Considered, with whom I was the last hour, what I did, and how? With regard to recollection, love of man, humility, self-denial, resignation, and thankfulness? Considered the next hour in the same respects, offered all I do to my Redeemer, begged his assistance in every particular, and commended my soul to his keeping? Have I done this deliberately, (not in haste,) seriously, (not doing any thing else the while,) and fervently as I could?

4. Have I duly prayed for the virtue of the day? i. e. Have I prayed for it at going out and coming in? Deliberately, seriously, fervently?

5. Have I used a collect at nine, twelve, and three? And grace before and after eating? (aloud at my own room,) deliberately, seriously, fervently?

6. Have I duly meditated? Every day, unless for necessary mercy?
 (1.) From six, &c. to prayers? (2.) From four to five, (What was particular in the providence of this day?) How ought the virtue of the day to have been exerted upon it? How did it fall short? (Here faults.)
 (3.) On Sunday from six to seven, with Kempis? From three to four, on redemption, or God's attributes? Wednesday and Friday from twelve to one, on the Passion? After ending a book, on what I had marked in it?

LOVE OF MAN.

1st. Have I been zealous to do, and active in doing, good? i. e.
 (1.) Have I embraced every probable opportunity of doing good, and preventing, removing or lessening evil?

(2.) Have I pursued it with my might?

(3.) Have I thought any thing too dear to part with, to serve my neighbour?

(4.) Have I spent an hour at least, every day, in speaking to some one or other?

(5.) Have I given any one up, till he expressly renounced me?

(6.) Have I, before I spoke to any, learned, as far as I could, his temper, way of thinking, past life, and peculiar hinderances, internal and external? Fixed the point to be aimed at? Then the means to it?

(7.) Have I, in speaking, proposed the motives, then the difficulties, then balanced them, then exhorted him to consider both calmly and deeply, and to pray earnestly for help?

(8.) Have I, in speaking to a stranger, explained what religion is not, (not negative, not external,) and what it is, (a recovery of the image of God,) searched at what step in it he stops, and what makes him stop there? Exhorted and directed him?

(9.) Have I persuaded all I could, to attend public prayers, sermons, and sacraments? And, in general, to obey the laws of the Church Universal, the Church of England, the State, the University, and their respective colleges?

(10.) Have I, when taxed with any act of obedience, avowed it, and turned the attack with sweetness and firmness?

(11.) Have I disputed upon any practical point, unless it was to be practised just then?

(12.) Have I, in disputing, (1.) desired my opponent, to define the terms of the question: to limit it: what he grants, what denies: (2.) Delayed speaking my opinion; let him explain and prove his: then insinuated and pressed objections?

(13.) Have I, after every visit, asked him who went with me, Did I say any thing wrong?

(14.) Have I, when any one asked advice, directed and exhorted him with all my power?

2dly. Have I rejoiced with and for my neighbour in virtue or pleasure? Grieved with him in pain, for him in sin?

3dly. Have I received his infirmities with pity, not anger?

4thly. Have I thought or spoke unkindly of or to him? Have I revealed any evil of any one, unless it was necessary to some particular good I had in view? Have I then done it with all the tenderness of phrase and manner, consistent with that end? Have I any way appeared to approve them that did otherwise?

5thly. Has good will been, and appeared to be, the spring of all my actions towards others?

6thly. Have I duly used intercession? (1.) Before, (2.) after speaking to any? (3.) For my friends on Sunday? (4.) For my pupils on Monday? (5.) For those who have particularly desired it, on Wednesday and Friday? (6.) For the family in which I am, every day?"

We may here see the great sincerity and earnestness of Mr. Wesley and his friends. But the darkness of their minds, as to Gospel truths, is very evident to those who are favoured with clear and evangelical views.

He was now a mere *worker for life*, (though evidently expecting the assistance of the Holy Spirit,) and consequently his mind was kept in a state of perplexity, not rightly understanding the doctrine of justification; which he either confounded with sanctification, or thought a man must be sanctified before he can be justified. This notion hindered him from perceiving, that to justify, in the language of St. Paul, is to pardon a repenting and believing sinner, as an act of grace; not for the sake of any previous holiness in him, but through Jesus Christ alone. This plan which the Gospel proposes as the only way of reconciling sinners to God—of making them holy in heart and life, and of giving them a sure hope, full of immortality,—he had yet to learn. And it was a painful lesson, as unveiling his true condition in the sight of God.

It appears from the account I have given of Mr. Charles Wesley, that for more than two years before this time he had studied very hard, and,

through his brother's advice and influence, was become, by the blessing of God, deeply serious; that during the last summer he had received the sacrament weekly, and had prevailed on two or three young men to do the same; and that these gentlemen had occasionally met together, for the purpose of assisting and encouraging each other in their duty, and of regulating their employments by certain rules. Mr. John Wesley was now with them, "and the exact regularity of their lives as well as studies," says he, "occasioned a young gentleman of Christ Church to say, 'Here is a new set of *Methodists* sprung up;' alluding to some ancient physicians who were so called. The name was new and quaint; so it took immediately, and the Methodists were known all over the University." His own account is as follows:—

"In November 1729, four young gentlemen of Oxford, Mr. John Wesley, Fellow of Lincoln College; Mr. Charles Wesley, Student of Christ Church; Mr. Morgan, Commoner of Christ Church; and Mr. Kirkham, of Merton College; began to spend some evenings in a week together, in reading chiefly the Greek Testament. The next year, two or three of Mr. John Wesley's pupils desired the liberty of meeting with them: and afterwards one of Mr. Charles Wesley's pupils. It was in 1732, that Mr. Ingham of Queen's College, and Mr. Broughton of Exeter, were added to their number. To these, in April, was joined Mr. Clayton of Brazen-Nose, with two or three of his pupils. About the same time, Mr. James Hervey was permitted to meet with them, and afterwards Mr. Whitefield."*

These young gentlemen continued their meetings for some time, without any other views than their own benefit. But, in the summer of 1730, Mr. Morgan called at the jail, to see a man who was condemned for killing his wife; and told them, that, from the conversation he had with one of the debtors, he verily believed it would do much good if any one would be at the pains of now and then speaking with them. Having mentioned this several times, Mr. Wesley and his brother Charles went with him on the 24th of August to the Castle, and were so well satisfied with their visit, that they determined to go thither once or twice a week. They had not done this long, before Mr. Morgan, who seems to have led the way in acts of charity and benevolence to others, desired Mr. Wesley to go with him to see a poor woman in the town who was sick. When they began to reflect on the benefit which this might confer on the poor, they thought it would be well worth while to spend two or three hours in the week in this species of charity, especially if the Minister of the parish, in which such person was, did not object to it. But as this practice was quite new, and had an appearance of irregularity, on which account it might give offence, Mr. Wesley did not choose to proceed any farther without advice. He wrote to his father, who was remarkably attached to regularity and church order, stating what they had hitherto done, and what their design was; begging to have his opinion, whether they had already gone too far? Whether they should stand still where they were, or go forward?

His father's answer is dated September 21, in which he says, "As to your own designs and employments, what can I say less of them than *Valde probo*?† and that I have the highest reason to bless God that he has given me two sons together at Oxford, to whom he has

* Wesley's Works, vol. xv, p. 375. † I highly approve.

given grace and courage to turn the war against the world and the devil, which is the best way to conquer them. They have but one enemy more to combat with,—the flesh ; which if they take care to subdue by fasting and prayer, there will be no more for them to do, but to proceed steadily in the same course, and expect the crown which fadeth not away. You have reason to bless God, as I do, that you have so fast a friend as Mr. Morgan, who, I see, in the most difficult service, is ready to break the ice for you.

“ I am afraid lest the main objection you make against your going on in the business of the prisoners, may secretly proceed from flesh and blood. For ‘ *who can harm you if you are followers of that which is so good?* ’ and which will be one of the marks by which the Shepherd of Israel will know his sheep at the last day. Though, if it were possible for you to suffer a little in the cause, you would have a confessor’s reward. You own that none but such as are out of their senses would be prejudiced against you for acting in this manner.—Go on then, in God’s name, in the path to which your Saviour has directed you, and that track wherein your father has gone before you. For when I was an under-graduate, I visited those in the Castle there, and reflect on it with great satisfaction to this day. Walk as prudently as you can, though not fearfully ; and my heart and prayers are with you.

“ Your first regular step is to consult with him, if any such there be, who has a jurisdiction over the prisoners ; and the next is, to obtain the direction and approbation of your Bishop. This is Monday morning, at which time I shall never forget you.—Accordingly, to Him who is every where, I now heartily commit you.”

This advice confirmed them in their benevolent purposes, and animated them with zeal in the execution. They carefully attended, however, to their father’s prudential directions ; and Mr. Wesley immediately consulted Mr. Gerard, the Bishop of Oxford’s Chaplain, who likewise attended the prisoners, when any were condemned to die. Mr. Gerard commended the design, and said he would answer for the Bishop’s approbation, to whom he would take the first opportunity of mentioning it. The Bishop being consulted, not only gave his permission, but was highly pleased with the undertaking.

The opposition however increased. The men of wit in Christ Church entered the lists against them, and, between mirth and anger, made a great number of reflections upon the *Sacramentarians*, as they were pleased to call them. Their allies of Merton thought both this title and that of *Methodists*, too decent, as implying something commendable ; they therefore changed it, and honoured them with the title of the *Holy Club*. But most of these being persons of well-known characters, they made no proselytes from the Sacrament, till a gentleman, eminent for learning and well esteemed for piety, joining them, told his nephew, that if he dared to go to the weekly communion any longer, he would turn him out of doors. This argument had no success ; the young gentleman communicated next week. The uncle now became more violent, and shook his nephew by the throat, to convince him more effectually, that receiving the sacrament every week was founded in error : but this argument appearing to the young gentleman to have no weight in it, he continued his usual practice. The uncle now changed the mode of attack, and, like a true agent of Satan, by a

soft obliging manner melted down the young gentleman's resolution of being so strictly religious; and from this time he began to absent himself, five Sundays out of six, from the sacrament. This success gave the opposition new strength; and one of the Seniors of the College consulting with the Doctor, they prevailed with two other young gentlemen to promise that they would only communicate three times a year.

The opposition now becoming more serious, by some persons of influence taking so decided a part against them, the two Mr. Wesleys wrote to their father again, stating their situation, and asking farther advice. His answer, which is dated December 1, now lies before me.

"This day I received both yours; and this evening, in the course of our reading, I thought I found an answer that would be more proper than any I myself could dictate; though, since it will not be easily translated, I send it in the original. Πολλή μοι Καυχῆσις ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν. Πεπληρωμαι τῇ παρακλησί. Ὑπερπερισσέυομαι τῇ χάρι.* What would you be? Would you be angels? I question whether a mortal can arrive to a greater degree of perfection than steadily to do good; and, for that very reason, patiently and meekly to suffer evil. For my part, on the present view of your actions and designs, my daily prayers are, that God would keep you humble: and then I am sure that if you continue to '*suffer for righteousness' sake*,' though it be but in a lower degree, the Spirit of God and of glory shall in some good measure rest upon you. And you cannot but feel such a satisfaction in your own minds, as you would not part with for all the world. Be never weary of well doing; never look back, for you know the prize and the crown are before you: though I can scarce think so meanly of you, as that you should be discouraged with the '*crackling of thorns under a pot*.' Be not high minded, but fear. Preserve an equal temper of mind under whatever treatment you meet with, from a not very just or well natured world. Bear no more sail than is necessary, but steer steady. The less you value yourselves for these unfashionable duties, (as there is no such thing as works of supererogation,) the more all good and wise men will value you, if they see your works are all of a piece; or, which is infinitely more, He, by whom actions and intentions are weighed, will both accept, esteem, and reward you.

"I hear my son John has the honour of being styled the '*Father of the Holy Club*:' if it be so, I am sure I must be the Grandfather of it; and I need not say, that I had rather any of my sons should be so dignified and distinguished, than to have the title of HIS HOLINESS."

In the same letter he advises them to use great mildness towards their persecutors, but at the same time to avoid a mean or sneaking behaviour, and rather to show an open manly firmness, which is highly becoming in a mind conscious of acting well.

In answer to this, Mr. John Wesley wrote to his father, December 11. He says, "We all return you our sincere thanks for your timely and necessary advice; and should be exceedingly glad if it were as easy to follow it, as it is impossible not to approve it. That, doubtless, is the very point we have to gain, before any other can be managed successfully, to have an habitual lively sense of our being only instruments in

* 2 Cor. vii, 4. Great is my glorying of you. I am filled with comfort. I am exceedingly joyful.

His hand, who can do all things either with or without any instrument.* But how to fix this sense in us, is the great question.—We hope you and all our friends will continue to intercede for us, to Him with whom all things are possible.—To-morrow night I expect to be in company with the gentleman who did us the honour to take the first notice of our little society. I have terrible reasons to think he is as slenderly provided with humanity, as with sense and learning. However, I must not let slip this opportunity, because he is at present in some distress, occasioned by his being obliged to dispute in the Schools on Monday, though he is not furnished with such arguments as he wants. I intend, if he has not procured them before, to help him to some arguments, that I may at least remove that prejudice from him,—that ‘we are friends to none but those who are as queer as ourselves.’”

Under the encouragement of his father’s letter, they continued to meet together as usual, and to confirm one another in their pious resolutions. They still communicated once a week, and visited the prisoners, and some poor families in the town when they were sick; and, that they might have wherewith to relieve their distress, they abridged themselves of all the superfluities, and of many of the conveniencies, of life. They took every opportunity of conversing with their acquaintance in the most useful manner to awaken them to a sense of religion; but, the outcry daily increasing, they proposed, both to their friends and opponents the following questions:

I. Whether it does not concern all men of all conditions, to imitate Him, as much as they can, “who went about doing good?”

Whether all Christians are not concerned in that command, “While we have time, let us do good to all men?”

Whether we shall not be more happy hereafter, the more good we do now?

Whether we can be happy at all hereafter, unless we have, according to our power, fed the hungry, clothed the naked, visited those that are sick and in prison, and made all these actions subservient to a higher purpose, even the saving of souls from death?

Whether it be not our bounden duty always to remember, that He did more for us than we can do for Him, who assures us, “*Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me?*”

II. Whether upon these considerations, we may not try to do good to our acquaintance? Particularly, whether we may not try to convince them of the necessity of being Christians?

Whether of the consequent necessity of being scholars?

Whether of the necessity of method and industry in order to either learning or virtue?

Whether we may not try to persuade them to confirm and increase their industry, by communicating as often as they can?

Whether we may not mention to them the Authors whom we conceive to have wrote best on those subjects?

Whether we may not assist them as we are able, from time to time, to form resolutions upon what they read in those Authors, and to execute them with steadiness and perseverance?

* He maintained this “habitual sense” to the last moment of his life.

III. Whether, upon the considerations above mentioned, we may not try to do good to those that are hungry, naked, or sick? In particular, whether, if we know any necessitous family, we may not give them a little food, clothes, or physic, as they want?

Whether we may not give them, if they can read, a Bible, Common-prayer Book, or Whole Duty of Man?

Whether we may not, now and then, inquire how they have used them; explain what they do not understand, and enforce what they do?

Whether we may not enforce upon them, more especially, the necessity of private prayer, and of frequenting the Church and Sacrament?

Whether we may not contribute what little we are able, towards having their children clothed and taught to read?

Whether we may not take care that they be taught their Catechism, and short prayers for morning and evening?

IV. *Lastly.* Whether, upon the considerations above mentioned, we may not try to do good to those that are in prison? In particular, whether we may not release such well-disposed persons as remain in prison for small sums?

Whether we may not lend smaller sums to those that are of any trade, that they may procure themselves tools and materials to work with?

Whether we may not give to them, who appear to want it most, a little money, or clothes, or physic?

Whether we may not supply as many as are serious enough to read, with a Bible and Whole Duty of Man?

Whether we may not, as we have opportunity, explain and enforce these upon them, especially with respect to public and private prayer, and the blessed Sacrament?

It was impossible for any person, who had any religion or humanity left, to answer these questions in the negative, however averse he might be to practise the duties proposed in them. No one attempted it; but several, when they understood their plan and designs, increased their little stock of money for the prisoners and the poor, by subscribing something quarterly to it; so that the more persons they consulted, the more they were themselves confirmed in the belief that they were acting right, and more determined to pursue their plan, notwithstanding the ridicule which increased fast upon them during the winter.

It appears from the questions here proposed, which relate to the students, that Mr. Wesley was not inattentive to their progress in learning, while he endeavoured to make them religious. His regular method of study, his diligence, and great care to make his pupils thoroughly understand every thing they read, were admirably adapted to make them scholars also.

This year, 1731, the two brothers began the practice of conversing together in Latin, whenever they were alone, chiefly with a view of acquiring a facility in expressing themselves in this language, on all occasions, with perspicuity, energy, and elegance. This practice they continued for nearly sixty years; and with such success, that, if their style did not equal, it certainly, on some subjects, approached nearer to, the best models of conversation in the Augustan age, than many of the learned have thought it possible to attain.

In the beginning of the year 1731, a meeting was held by several of the Seniors of the College, to consult on the speediest way to stop the progress of *enthusiasm* in it. Mr. Wesley and his friends did not learn what was the result of this very pious consultation; but it was soon publicly reported, that Dr. — and the Censors were going to blow up the *Godly Club*. This was now their common title; though they were sometimes dignified with that of the *Enthusiasts*, or the *Reforming Club*. As new difficulties arose, Mr. Wesley lost no opportunity of consulting his friends. He now wrote to his brother Samuel, at Westminster; whose answer is dated April—"I designed," says he, "to have written by Mr. Bateman, to whom I read part of your last letter, concerning the execrable consultation, in order to stop the progress of religion, by giving it a false name. He lifted up his eyes and hands, and protested he could not have believed such a thing. He gave Mr. Morgan a very good character; and said, he should always think himself obliged to him, for the pains he took in reclaiming a young pupil of his, who was just got into ill company, and upon the brink of destruction. I do not like your being called a *club*; that name is really calculated to do mischief. But the other charge of *enthusiasm* can weigh with none, but such as drink away their senses, or never had any: for surely activity in social duties, and a strict attendance on the ordained means of grace, are the strongest guards imaginable against it. I called on Dr. Terry, to desire him to subscribe to *Job*, but did not meet with him at home. In two or three days, *O rem ridiculam et jocosam!* he did me the favour to call upon me. I said, 'I hope my two brothers have still good characters at Oxford.' He answered, he believed they were studious and sober. When he was got down stairs, he turned about, and said, 'I think I have heard your brothers are exemplary, and take great pains to instil good principles into young people.' I told him, and you may guess I told him the truth, 'I was very glad to hear such a character of them, *especially from him.*'"—From the last words, it is pretty plain, that Dr. Terry was an avowed opposer of Mr. Wesley and his friends, though he was constrained to bear testimony to the goodness of their characters: but whether he was the grave gentleman, who so piously took his nephew by the throat, to convert him to his own way of thinking and acting, and who consulted with the censors how to stop the progress of religion among them, is not certain.

In the midst of such opposition, Mr. Wesley thought it prudent to take every method in his power to prevent the good that was in them from being evil spoken of; and with this view, and to obtain farther advice, he wrote in May to the Rev. Mr. Hoole,* an aged clergyman in his father's neighbourhood, of known wisdom and integrity. Part of his answer runs thus:† "As to my own sense of the matter, I confess I cannot but heartily approve of that serious and religious turn of mind that prompts you and your associates to those pious and charitable offices; and can have no notion of that man's religion, or concern for the honour of the University, that opposes you, as far as your design respects the Colleges. I should be loath to send a son of mine to any seminary, where his conversation with virtuous young men, whose professed design of meeting together at proper times was to assist each other in forming

* Private Diary.

† Wesley's Works, vol. xxvi, p. 99.

good resolutions, and encouraging one another to execute them with constancy and steadiness, was inconsistent with any received maxims or rules of life among the members.”

On the 18th of April, Mr. Wesley, in company with his brother, set out on foot for Epworth; for they now saved every penny they could, to give it to the poor. They returned to Oxford on the 12th of May; and, on the 11th of June he wrote to his father, giving him a very discouraging account of their little society. With respect to their walk, he observes, that it was not so pleasant to Oxford as from it, though in one respect more useful: “For it let us see,” says he, “that four or five and twenty miles is an easy and safe day’s journey in hot weather as well as cold. We have made another discovery too, which may be of some service; that it is easy to read as we walk ten or twelve miles; and that it neither makes us faint, nor gives us any other symptom of weariness, more than the mere walking without reading at all.

“Since our return, our little company that used to meet us on a Sunday evening, is shrunk into almost none at all. Mr. Morgan is sick at Holt; Mr. Boyce is at his father’s house at Barton; Mr. Kirkham must very shortly leave Oxford, to be his uncle’s curate; and a young gentleman of Christ Church, who used to make a fourth, either afraid or ashamed, or both, is returned to the ways of the world, and studiously shuns our company. However, the poor at the Castle have still the Gospel preached to them, and some of their temporal wants supplied, our little fund rather increasing than diminishing. Nor have we yet been forced to discharge any of the children which Mr. Morgan left to our care: though I wish they too do not find the want of him; I am sure some of their parents will.

“Some, however, give us a better prospect; John Whitelamb in particular.* I believe, with this, you will receive some account from himself how his time is employed. He reads one English, one Latin, and one Greek book alternately; and never meddles with a new one in any of the languages till he has ended the old one. If he goes on as he has begun, I dare take upon me to say, that, by the time he has been here four or five years, there will not be such a one, of his standing, in Lincoln College, perhaps not in the University of Oxford.”

But notwithstanding their little company was thus scattered, they still pursued their design of doing as much good as possible, with the same diligence and zeal as before. Some of their friends, however, began to think that they carried matters too far, and laid unnecessary burdens on themselves. This subject Mr. Wesley mentions in a letter to his mother, of the same date with that to his father mentioned above, giving her at the same time some account of the effects of their journey.

“The motion and sun together,” says he, “in our last hundred and fifty miles’ walk, so thoroughly carried off all our superfluous humours, that we continue perfectly in health, though it is here a very sickly season. And Mr. Kirkham assures us, on the word of a priest and a physician, that if we will but take the same medicine once or twice a year, we shall never need any other to keep us from the gout. When we were with him, we touched two or three times upon a nice subject, but did not come to any full conclusion. The point debated was, what is the meaning of being *righteous over much*, or by the more

* He afterwards married one of Mr. Wesley’s sisters.

common phrase of, being too strict in religion? and what danger there was of any of us falling into that extreme?

“All the ways of being too righteous or too strict which we could think of, were these: either the carrying some one particular virtue to so great a height, as to make it clash with some others. or, the laying too much stress on the instituted means of grace, to the neglect of the weightier matters of the law; or, the multiplying prudential means upon ourselves so far, and binding ourselves to the observance of them so strictly, as to obstruct the end we aimed at by them, either by hindering our advance in heavenly affections in general, or by retarding our progress in some particular virtue. Our opponents seemed to think my brother and I [were] in some danger of being too strict in this last sense; of laying burdens on ourselves too heavy to be borne, and consequently too heavy to be of any use to us.

“It is easy to observe, that almost every one thinks that rule totally needless, which he does not need himself; and as to the Christian spirit itself, almost every one calls that degree of it which he does not himself aim at, enthusiasm. If therefore we plead for either, (not as if we thought the former absolutely needful, neither as if we had attained the latter,) it is no great wonder that they who are not for us in practice should be against us. If you who are a less prejudiced judge, have perceived us faulty in this matter, too superstitious or enthusiastic, or whatever it is to be called; we earnestly desire to be speedily informed of our error, that we may no longer spend our strength on that which profiteth not. Or whatever there may be on the other hand, in which you have observed us to be too remiss, that likewise we desire to know as soon as possible. This is a subject which we would understand with as much accuracy as possible; it being hard to say which is of the worse consequence,—the being too strict, the really carrying things too far, the wearying ourselves and spending our strength in burdens that are unnecessary,—or the being frightened by those terrible words, from what, if not directly necessary, would at least be useful.”

This letter was followed by another, written in November to his brother Samuel, on the same subject, and discovers his sentiments more at large. It seems Mr. Samuel Wesley had suggested to him, that in his general seriousness, and in one or two other points of behaviour, he carried matters too far. In answer to these remarks of his brother, he says, “Considering the other changes that I remember in myself, I shall not at all wonder if the time comes, when we differ as little in our conclusions as we do now in our premises. In most, we seem to agree already; especially as to rising early, not keeping much company, and sitting by a fire, which I always do, if any one in the room does, whether at home or abroad. But these are the very things about which others will never agree with me. Had I given up these, or but one of them, rising early, which implies going to bed early, (though I never am sleepy now,) and keeping so little company, not one man in ten of those who are offended at me, as it is, would ever open their mouth against any of the other particulars. For the sake of these, those are mentioned; the root of the matter lies here. Would I but employ a third of my money, and about half my time, as other folks do, smaller matters would be easily overlooked. But I think ‘*Nil tanti est.*’* As to my hair, I

* Nothing is of so much importance.

am much more sure, that what this enables me to do, is according to the Scripture, than I am that the length of it is contrary to it.*

"I have often thought of a saying of Dr. Hayward's when he examined me for Priest's Orders; 'Do you know what you are about? You are bidding defiance to all mankind. He that would live a Christian Priest, ought to know, that, whether his hand be against every man or no, he must expect every man's hand should be against him.' It is not strange that every man's hand, who is not a Christian, should be against him that endeavours to be so. But is it not hard, that even those who are with us should be against us; that a man's enemies, in some degree, should be those of the same household of faith? Yet so it is. From the time that a man sets himself to this business, very many, even of those who travel the same road, many of those who are before as well as behind him, will lay stumblingblocks in his way. One blames him for not going fast enough, another for having made no greater progress; another for going too far, which perhaps, strange as it is, is the more common charge of the two. For this comes from all people of all sorts; not only infidels, not only half Christians, but some of the best of men are very apt to make this reflection, 'He lays unnecessary burdens upon himself; he is too precise; he does what God has nowhere required to be done.' True, he has not required it of those who are perfect; and even as to those who are not, all men are not required to use all means; but every man is required to use those which he finds most useful to himself. And who can tell better than himself, whether he finds them so or no? *Who knoweth the things of a man better than the spirit of a man that is in him?*

"This being a point of no common concern, I desire to explain myself upon it once for all, and to tell you, freely and clearly, those general positions on which I ground all those practices, for which, as you would have seen had you read that paper through, I am generally accused of singularity. (1.) As to the end of my being; I lay it down for a rule, that I cannot be too happy, or therefore too holy; and thence infer that the more steadily I keep my eye upon the prize of our high calling, and the more of my thoughts and words and actions are directly pointed at the attainment of it, the better. (2.) As to the instituted means of attaining it, I likewise lay it down for a rule, that I am to use them every time I may. (3.) As to prudential means, I believe this rule holds of things indifferent in themselves: whatever I know to do me hurt, that to me is not indifferent, but resolutely to be abstained from: whatever I know to do me good, that to me is not indifferent, but resolutely to be embraced.

"But it will be said, I am whimsical. True, and what then? If by whimsical be meant simply *singular*, I own it; if *singular without any reason*, I deny it with both my hands, and am ready to give a reason, to any that asks me, of every custom wherein I differ from the world. I grant, in many single actions I differ unreasonably from others, but not

* Mr. Wesley wore his hair remarkably long and flowing on his shoulders. As he was often indisposed, his mother thought it injured his health, and was very desirous that he should have it taken off; "I verily believe," says she in a letter, "you will never have any good state of health, while you keep your hair." He objected against parting with his hair, because it would occasion some increase of his expenses, which he could not afford, without giving less to the poor. His brother Samuel took a middle way, and advised him to have his hair cut shorter; and this advice he followed.

wilfully; no, I shall extremely thank any one who will teach me how to help it.

“As to my being formal; if by that be meant that I am not easy and unaffected enough in my carriage, it is very true; but how shall I help it?—If by formal be meant that I am serious, this too is very true; but why should I help it? Mirth, I grant, is very fit for you; but does it follow that it is fit for me? Are the same tempers, any more than the same words and actions, fit for all circumstances? If you are to rejoice evermore, because you have put your enemies to flight, am I to do the same while they continually assault me? You are very glad, because you are ‘*passed from death to life*’; well, but let him be afraid who knows not whether he is to live or die. Whether this be my condition or no, who can tell better than myself? Him who can, whoever he be, I allow to be a proper judge, whether I do well to be generally as serious as I can.”

December 11, Mr. Samuel Wesley answered this letter, and felt himself a little hurt at some expressions in it. There was indeed a delicate irony in it, which he must have felt, and the force of which he endeavoured to ward off. Some time afterwards the subject of seriousness was again renewed, and several letters passed between them. At first they seemed to differ in opinion; but when each had explained himself, they were more agreed. Mr. Samuel Wesley closes the debate in the following words: “To the best of my memory your character was but little in my thoughts, and my own not at all, in my late letters. I never designed to justify myself; perhaps my laughter is particularly blameable, as my temper is serious, severe, and melancholy.—Thus ends our notable dispute, or rather we have had none at all. For you are only against excessive laughter, which I was never for; and only for seriousness, which I was never against. There is a time to weep, and a time to laugh. And now methinks each of us may say to the other as Dick does to Matt—

‘That people lived and died I knew,
An hour ago, as well as you.’”

About this time their father came up to London, and from thence took an excursion to Oxford, to see what his sons were doing, and in what spirit and temper of mind they were. On his return to London he wrote a few lines to Mrs. Wesley, January 5th, in which he says: “I had yours on New-year’s day, on which I returned in one day from Oxford, not very well; but well paid both for my expense and labour, by the shining piety of our two sons, of whom I shall write soon more at large.” This gives the fullest evidence, that the father did not then think his sons were carrying matters too far.

When Mr. Wesley first set out in this religious course of life, he was fully convinced that he did not possess that state of mind which the Gospel describes as the privilege of true believers in Christ; but he expected that the practice of every duty to the utmost of his power would lead him into this state of mind, and give him peace and joy in God. This effect did not follow; he was often dull, languid, and unaffected in the use of the most solemn ordinances. This both distressed and perplexed him, so that he seemed at a loss which way to proceed, to obtain the happiness and security he wanted. He was now “*bringing forth fruit meet for repentance*,” and so far he was right.

But he thought he had the faith of the Gospel ; in this he was deceived. We shall see him convinced of unbelief, and bitterly lamenting the delusion. He looked for *righteousness, peace, and joy*, without being *justified*. In this state of perplexity, he wrote to his mother on the 28th of February ; and after mentioning Mr. Morgan's situation, he observes : " One consideration is enough to make me assent to his and your judgment concerning the holy sacrament ; which is, that we cannot allow Christ's human nature to be present in it, without allowing either CON- OR TRANS-SUBSTANTIATION. But that his Divinity is so united to us then, as he never is but to worthy receivers, I firmly believe, though the manner of that union is utterly a mystery to me.

" That none but worthy receivers should find this effect, is not strange to me ; when I observe, how small effect many means of improvement have upon an unprepared mind. Mr. Morgan and my brother were affected as they ought, by the observations you made on that glorious subject ; but though my understanding approved what was excellent, yet my heart did not feel it. Why was this, but because it was pre-engaged by those affections with which wisdom will not dwell ? because the animal mind cannot relish those truths which are spiritually discerned. Yet I have those writings which the Good Spirit gave to that end !* I have many of those which he hath since assisted his servants to give us : I have retirement to apply these to my own soul daily ; I have means both of public and private prayer ; and, above all, of partaking in that sacrament once a week. What shall I do, to make all these blessings effectual, to gain from them that mind which was also in Christ Jesus ?

" To all who give signs of their not being strangers to it, I propose this question—and why not to you rather than any ? Shall I quite break off my pursuit of all learning, but what immediately tends to practice ? I once desired to make a fair show in languages and philosophy : but it is past ; there is a more excellent way, and if I cannot attain to any progress in the one, without throwing up all thoughts of the other, why, fare it well ! Yet a little while and we shall all be equal in knowledge, if we are in virtue.

" You say, ' you have renounced the world.' And what have I been doing all this time ? What have I done, ever since I was born ? Why, I have been plunging myself into it more and more. It is enough : ' *Awake thou that sleepest.*' Is there not ' *one Lord, one Spirit, one hope of our calling ?*' One way of attaining that hope ? Then I am to renounce the world, as well as you. That is the very thing I want to do ; to draw off my affections from this world, and fix them on a better. But how ? What is the surest and the shortest way ? Is it not to be humble ?† Surely this is a large step in the way. But the question recurs, how am I to do this ? To own the necessity of it, is not to be humble. In many things you have interceded for me and prevailed. Who knows but in this too you may be successful ? If you can spare me only that little part of Thursday evening, which you formerly bestowed

* Warburton contended that there was no Holy Spirit now, as given to man, except those writings ; and so it was left to the *carnal mind, which is enmity against God*, to apply them !

† Neither the mother nor the son seem to have had any notion of their want of the proper Christian faith.

upon me in another manner, I doubt not but it would be as useful now for correcting my heart, as it was then for forming my judgment.

“ When I observe how fast life flies away, and how slow improvement comes, I think one can never be too much afraid of dying before one has learned to live: I mean, even in the course of nature. For were I sure that ‘ the silver cord should not be violently loosed ;’ that ‘ the wheel should not be broken at the cistern,’ till it was quite worn away by its own motion ; yet what a time would this give me for such a work ! A moment to transact the business of eternity ! What are forty years in comparison of this ? So that were I sure of what never man yet was sure of, how little would it alter the case ? How justly still might I cry out,

“ Downward I hasten to my destined place ;
There none obtain thy aid, none sing thy praise !
Soon shall I lie in death’s deep ocean drown’d ;
Is mercy there, is sweet forgiveness found ?

“ O save me yet, while on the brink I stand ;
Rebuke these storms, and set me safe on land.
O make my longings and thy mercy sure !
Thou art the God of power.”

This letter shows an ardent mind, wholly occupied in pursuit of a saving knowledge of God ; but embarrassed and perplexed, not knowing which way to turn, and yet willing to sacrifice the dearest object in life to obtain the end in view.

Mr. Morgan had now been ill more than twelve months ; and was so greatly reduced, that he became a burden to himself, and totally useless to others. In this stage of his disease, his understanding sometimes appeared deranged ; he became more changeable in his temper than usual, and inconsistent in his conversation. But this was purely the effect of his disease ; not the least symptom of the kind having ever appeared, till long after his health had declined.

His father, being fully informed of the state of his health, wrote to him in March, and told him, that he should no longer be limited in his expenses to any fixed allowance, and that such sums as were necessary for his health should be immediately remitted to him ; but strongly insisted, that no part of it should be given away, and that he should lay it out in recreation, medicine, and such other matters as might be necessary for the recovery and support of his health. He then says, “ You cannot conceive what a noise that ridiculous Society in which you are engaged, has made here. Besides the particulars of the great follies of it at Oxford, which to my great concern I have often heard repeated, it gave me sensible trouble to hear, that you were noted for going into the villages about Holt ; calling their children together, and teaching them their prayers and catechism, and giving them a shilling at your departure. I could not but advise with a wise, pious, and learned clergyman : he told me, that he has known the worst of consequences follow from such blind zeal ; and plainly satisfied me, that it was a thorough mistake of true piety and religion. I proposed writing to some prudent and good man at Oxford to reason with you on these points, and to convince you that you were in a wrong way. He said, in a generous mind, as he took yours to be, the admonition and advice of a father would make a deeper impression than all the exhortations of others. He concluded, that you were young as yet, and that your judgment was

not come to its maturity ; but as soon as your judgment improved, and on the advice of a true friend, you would see the error of your way, and think, as he does, that you may walk uprightly and safely, without endeavouring to outdo all the good bishops, clergy, and other pious and good men of the present and past ages : which God Almighty give you grace and sense to understand aright !” What a genuine picture of *the religion of the world* !

In the month of April, Mr. Samuel Wesley visited Oxford, and spent a few days there ; no doubt with a view chiefly to satisfy himself, on the spot, of the truth or falsehood of the various accounts that were given him of his two brothers. When he returned to London, he wrote a hasty poetical epistle to his brother Charles, in which he has clearly expressed his opinion of their conduct, and the views he had formed of their opponents. The latter part of it refers to the unhappy situation of Mr. Morgan.

APRIL 20, 1732.

THOUGH neither are o'erstock'd with precious time,
If I can write it, you may read my rhyme ;
And find an hour to answer, I suppose,
In verse harmonious or in humble prose ;
What I, when late at Oxford could not say,
My friends so numerous, and so short my stay.

Let useless questions first aside be thrown,
Which all men may reply to, or that none :
As whether Doctors doubt the D— will die ;
Or F—— still retains his courtesy ?
Or J——n dies daily in conceit,
Dies without death, and walks without his feet ?
What time the library completes its shell ?
What hand revives the discipline of *Fell* ?
What house for learning shall rewards prepare ;
Which orators and poets justly share,
And see a second Atterbury there ?

Say, does your Christian purpose still proceed,
T' assist in ev'ry shape the wretches' need ?
To free the prisoner from his anxious jail,
When friends forsake him, and relations fail ?
Or yet with nobler charity conspire
To snatch the guilty from eternal fire ?
Has your small squadron firm in trial stood,
Without preciseness, singularly good ?
Safe march they on 'twixt dangerous extremes,
Of mad profaneness and enthusiasts' dreams,
Constant in prayer, while God approves their pains,
His Spirit cheers them and his blood sustains ?
Unmoved by pride or anger, can they bear
The foolish laughter, or the envious sneer ?
No wonder, wicked men blaspheme their care,
The devil always dreads offensive war ;
Where heavenly zeal the sons of night pursues,
Likely to gain, and certain not to lose ;
The sleeping conscience wakes by dangers near,
And pours the light in, they so greatly fear.

But hold, perhaps this dry religious toil
May damp the genius, and the scholar spoil.
Perhaps facetious foes to meddling fools
Shine in the class, and sparkle in the schools ;
Your arts excel, your eloquence outgo,
And soar like Virgil, or like Tully flow ;
Have brightest turns, and deepest learning shown,
And proved your wit mistaken by their own.

If not—the wights should moderately rail,
Whose total merit, summ'd from fair detail,
Is, saunt'ring, sleep, and smoke, and wine, and ale,

How contraries may meet without design !
And *pretty gentlemen* and *bigots* join !
A pert young rake observes, with saucy airs,
“That none can know the world who say their prayers ;”
And Rome in middle ages used to grant,
The most devout were still most ignorant.
So, when old bloody Noll our ruin wrought,
Was ignorance the best devotion thought ;
His crop-hair'd saints all marks of sense deface,
And preach, that learning is a foe to grace ;
English was spoke in schools, and Latin ceased,
They quite reform'd the language of the beast.

One or two questions more before I end,
That much concern a brother and a friend.
Does John seem bent beyond his strength to go,
To his frail carcass literally foe ?
Lavish of health, as if in haste to die,
And shorten time, t' ensure eternity ?
Does Morgan weakly think his time mis-spent ?
Of his best actions can he now repent ?
Others, their sins with reason just deplore,
The guilt remaining when the pleasure's o'er ;
Since the foundations of the world were laid,
Shall he for virtue first himself upbraid ?
Shall he, what most men to their sins deny,
Show pains for alms, remorse for piety ?
Can he the Sacred Eucharist decline ?
What Clement poisons here the bread and wine ?
Or does his sad disease possess him whole,
And taint alike his body and his soul ?
If to renounce his graces he decree,
O ! that he could transfer the stock to me !
Alas ! enough what mortal e'er can do,
For Him who made him and redeemed him too ?
Zeal may to man beyond desert be show'd,
No supererogation stands to God.

As the persons united in the Society at Oxford were all zealous members of the Church of England, by the advice of Mr. Clayton, who had now joined them, they added, to their former practices, a regular observance of the fast of the church ; the general neglect of which, they thought, was by no means a sufficient excuse for neglecting them.

Being in London, in the month of July, Mr. Wesley went down to Putney, to pay Mr. Law a visit, which was the introduction to a personal acquaintance with each other. Mr. Wesley occasionally repeated his visits, and a friendly correspondence followed, which lasted several years. From this time, he began to read the *Theologia Germanica*, and other mystic writers, of which I shall afterwards have occasion to take some notice. But neither the writings, nor the man, ever showed him his want of faith. They were not calculated to do so, as we shall see in the sequel.

He also now became known to many pious and respectable individuals in London, and heartily approved of the conduct of those well-disposed persons, who associated together to carry on a plan of suppressing vice, and spreading religion and virtue among the people ; and, on the 3d of August was admitted into “ the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge.”

Mr. Wesley, and those associated with him, now suffered the entire loss of Mr. Morgan. He left Oxford on the 5th of June, and died in

Dublin on the 26th of August. That this is the true time of his death, is evident from a letter from his father to Mr. Charles Wesley, dated September the 5th. He says, "From the intimacy which I understood to have been contracted between you and my dear son, I make no doubt but you must have some concern upon you at the reading the account of his death, as I have the greatest in writing it. His distemper threw him into a fever, of which he died the 26th past, about four in the morning. This is the soonest that I could attempt writing any thing about him, since my affliction was consummated.—You see, I make very free with you; but the candour and generosity for which I have heard you commended, embolden me to it; and I shall, I hope, find some opportunities to make amends, and beg you will, upon all occasions, let me know when I can be serviceable to you in this kingdom."

During the course of this summer, Mr. Wesley made two journeys to Epworth. In these excursions, he often went considerably out of his way, to spend a night, and sometimes two or three, with a friend; most frequently with the parents or relations of some of his pupils. In the first journey, while he was standing on the garden wall at a friend's house, it fell flat under him; but he escaped unhurt. His second journey was in order to meet his brother Samuel, &c, at Epworth, and that the whole family might once more assemble together, before their final separation by death. This meeting must have been very affecting; for as their father was growing infirm, and his son Samuel was now going to reside wholly at Tiverton, in Devon, it was not probable they would ever see each other again. Mr. Wesley returned to Oxford on the 23d of September; and as soon as it was known there that Mr. Morgan was dead, a report was propagated, that the rigorous fasting he had imposed on himself, by the advice of Mr. John and Mr. Charles Wesley, had hastened his death. As this report was highly prejudicial to their character, and might hinder their usefulness; and as it was probable it would reach the father, and might afflict him, and prejudice him more deeply against his son's conduct, and the persons with whom he had been connected; Mr. Wesley thought it best to write to him, and state the matter as it really was. His letter is dated the 18th of October, this year.* "The occasion," says he, "of giving you this trouble is of a very extraordinary nature. On Sunday last I was informed, as no doubt you will be ere long, that my brother and I had killed your son;—that the rigorous fasting which he had imposed upon himself, by our advice, had increased his illness and hastened his death. Now, though, considering it in itself, *it is a very small thing with me to be judged of man's judgment*; yet, as the being thought guilty of so mischievous an imprudence might make me less able to do the work I came into the world for, I am obliged to clear myself of it, by observing to you, as I have done to others, that your son left off fasting about a year and a half since, and that it is not yet half a year since I began to practise it.

"I must not let this opportunity slip of doing my part towards giving

* In the printed copies of this letter the date is 1730. But in a manuscript, in Mr. Charles Wesley's handwriting, the date is 1732, which is the true date of it, as appears from Mr. Morgan's account of his son's death. The true date may be collected from the letter itself, compared with Mr. John Wesley's Short History of Methodism, which fixes the time when they became acquainted with Mr. Clayton.

you a juster notion of some other particulars, relating both to him and myself, which have been industriously misrepresented to you.

"In March last he received a letter from you, which not being able to read, he desired me to read to him: several of the expressions I perfectly remember, and shall do till I too am called hence.—In one practice for which you blamed your son, I am only concerned as a friend, not as a partner. Your own account of it was, *in effect*, this: 'He frequently went into poor people's houses about Holt, called their children together, and instructed them in their duty to God, their neighbour, and themselves. He likewise explained to them the necessity of private as well as public prayer, and provided them with such forms as were best suited to their several capacities; and being well apprised how the success of his endeavours depended on their good will towards him, he sometimes distributed among them a little of that money which he had saved from gaming and other fashionable expenses of the place.'—This is the first charge against him, and I will refer it to your own judgment, whether it be fitter to have a place in the catalogue of his faults, or of those virtues for which he is now *numbered among the sons of God*?

"If all the persons concerned in 'that ridiculous society, whose follies you have so often heard repeated,' could but give such a proof of their deserving the glorious title which was once bestowed upon them, they would be contented that their *lives too should be counted madness, and their end thought to be without honour*. But the truth is, their title to holiness stands upon much less stable foundations, as you will easily perceive when you know the ground of this wonderful outcry, which it seems England itself is not wide enough to contain."

He then gives Mr. Morgan a short history of their little society; informing him what their practices were, and of their care to consult wise, learned, and pious clergymen, in every step they had taken, in the manner described above. He subjoins, "As for the names of Methodists, Supererogation-men, and so on, with which some of our neighbours are pleased to compliment us, we do not conceive ourselves to be under any obligation to regard them, much less to take them for arguments. To the law and to the testimony we appeal, whereby we ought to be judged. If by these it can be proved we are in an error, we will immediately and gladly retract it: if not, *we have not so learned Christ*, as to renounce any part of his service, though men should say all manner of evil against us, with more judgment and as little truth as hitherto.—Your son already stands before the judgment-seat of Him who judges righteous judgment; at the brightness of whose presence the clouds remove; his eyes are open, and he sees clearly whether it was 'blind zeal and a thorough mistake of true religion that hurried him on in the error of his way,' or whether he acted like a faithful and wise servant, who from a just sense that his time was short, made haste to finish his work before his Lord's coming, that, when *laid in the balance*, he might not be found wanting."

This well-timed letter, containing a simple narrative of facts, fully satisfied Mr. Morgan. His answer, which is dated November 25, shows him to have been a man of moderation and a friend to piety. It is as follows: "Your favour of the 20th past was delayed in its passage, I believe, by contrary winds, or it had not been so long unanswered. I

give entire credit to every thing and every fact you relate. It was ill-judged of my poor son to take to fasting, with regard to his health, of which I knew nothing, or I should have advised him against it. He was inclined to piety and virtue from his infancy. I must own, I was much concerned at the strange accounts which were spread here, of some extraordinary practices of a religious society in which he had engaged at Oxford, (which, you may be sure, lost nothing in the carriage,) lest, through his youth and immaturity of judgment, he might be hurried into zeal and enthusiastic notions, that would prove pernicious. But now, indeed, that piety and holiness of life which he practised affords me some comfort in the midst of my affliction for the loss of him; having full assurance of his being for ever happy. The good account you are pleased to give of your own and your friends' conduct, in point of duty and religious offices, and the zealous approbation of them by the good old gentleman your father, signified in a manner and style becoming the best of men, reconciles and recommends that method of life to me, and makes me almost wish that I were one among you. I am very much obliged to you for the great pains you have been at, in transcribing so long and so particular an account for my perusal, and shall be always ready to vindicate you from any calumny or aspersion that I shall hear cast upon you. I am much obliged for your and your brother's great civilities and assistances to my dearest son. I thank the author of those lines you sent me, for the regard he has shown to his memory. If ever I can be serviceable to any of you in this kingdom, I beg you will let me know."—This correspondence continued some time between Mr. Wesley and Mr. Morgan;* and the year following, Mr. Morgan sent his only surviving son to Oxford, and placed him under Mr. Wesley's care. This was the strongest proof he could possibly give, that he approved of his conduct.

The character of that lamented young gentleman, the elder of Mr. Morgan's sons, is well drawn up by Mr. Samuel Wesley, jun., in the following poetic tribute to his memory:—

ELEGIAC VERSES ON THE DEATH OF MR. MORGAN.

"We fools counted his life madness."

If aught beneath them happy souls attend,
 Let Morgan hear the triumph of a friend,
 And hear well pleased. Let libertines so gay,
 With careless indolence despise the lay:
 Let critic wits, and fools for laughter born,
 Their verdict pass with supercilious scorn:
 Let jovial crowds, by wine their senses drown'd,
 Stammer out censure in their frantic round:
 Let yawning sluggards famt dislike display,
 Who, while they trust to-morrow, lose to-day:
 Let such as these the sacred strains condemn;
 For 't is true glory to be hiss'd by them.

Wise in his prime, he waited not for noon,
 Convinced that mortal never lived too soon.
 As if foreboding here his little stay,
 He made his morning bear the heat of day:
 Fix'd, while unfading glory he pursues,
 No ill to hazard, and no good to lose.
 No fair occasion glides unheeded by;
 Snatching the golden moments as they fly,
 He by few fleeting hours ensures eternity.

* Their Letters are now before me.

Friendship's warm beams his artless breast inspire,
 And tend'rest reverence for a much-loved sire.
 He dared for heaven this flatt'ring world forego.
 Ardent to teach as diligent to know
 Unwarp'd by sensual views or vulgar aims,
 By idle riches, or by idler names;
 Fearful of sin in every close disguise,
 Unmoved by threat'ning or by glozing lies.
 Seldom, indeed, the wicked came so far,
 Forced by his piety to defensive war;
 Whose zeal for other men's salvation shown,
 Beyond the reach of hell secured his own:
 Gladd'ning the poor, where'er his steps he turn'd.
 Where pined the orphan, or the widow'mourn'd;
 Where prisoners sighed beneath guilt's horrid stain,
 The worst confinement and the heaviest chain,
 Where death's sad shade the uninstructed sight
 Veiled with thick darkness in the land of light.
 Our Saviour thus fulfilled his great design,
 (If human we may liken to divine.)
 Heal'd each disease that bodies frail endure,
 And preach'd th' unhop'd-for Gospel to the poor.

To means of grace the last respect he show'd,
 Nor sought new paths, as wiser than his God:
 Their sacred strength preserved him from extremes
 Of empty outside, or enthusiast dreams.

He knew, that works our faith must here employ,
 And that 't is heaven's great business to enjoy.
 Fix'd on that heaven he death's approaches saw,
 Nor vainly murmur'd at our nature's law;
 Repined not that his youth so soon should go,
 Nor grieved for fleeting pleasures here below.
 Of sharpest anguish scorning to complain,
 He fills with mirth the intervals of pain:
 Not only unappall'd, but joyful, sees
 The dark cold passage that must lead to peace:
 Strong with immortal bloom, secure to rise,
 The tears for ever banish'd from his eyes.

Who now regrets, his early youth would spend
 The life so nobly that so soon should end?
 Who blames the stripling for performing more
 Than doctors grave and prelates of threescore?
 Who now esteems his fervour indiscreet,
 His prayers too frequent, or his alms too great?
 Who thinks, where blest he reigns beyond the sky,
 His crown too radiant, or his throne too high?
 Who, but the fiend who once his course withstood,
 And whispered,—“Stay till fifty to be good!”
 Sure, if believed, t' obtain his hellish aim,
 Adjourning to the time that never came!

The young gentleman mentioned above was then the only son of Mr. Morgan, and of a very different disposition from his deceased brother. His father seems to have been what is usually called “a very good sort of a man.” In the correspondence that took place between them, he informs Mr. Charles Wesley, that it was three years and a quarter since his son left school, “being then fit for the University, and at least as good a scholar as his brother was when he went to Oxford.” He observes, “I then purchased an office for him in the Law; but I fear he has read very little of Greek or Latin since that time, and that he has forgotten a great deal of what he had learned at school; but I don't think his parts very bad. He was nineteen years of age last July, and is very lusty of his age. I believe he is five feet ten inches high. He has been somewhat gay, and gone to plays and balls, but addicted to no vice. He has often wished rather to be put forward in his learning,

than to stick to an office, in which I am now inclined to indulge him. If it be advisable to put him in this new way of life, you may be sure I can think of no other for his tutor but yourself.”—Mr. Charles Wesley, thinking the young man would be safer with his brother John, consigned him to his care, with which arrangement Mr. Morgan was well satisfied.

The young gentleman had, however, very naturally, other views than those of his careful and benevolent father. He desired that he might be entered a Gentleman Commoner of Lincoln, under Mr. John Wesley, in order that, as he expressed himself to his father, he “might have a little superiority among his cotemporaries, and not be slighted or despised by them;” promising to “be as conformable to all the rules and discipline of the College as if he were a Servitor. With this request also his father complied.

Appearing now in the Gentlemen Commoners’ room, as Mr. Morgan’s heir, he became an object of attraction to his gay associates. He brought a favourite greyhound with him, which he introduced also into the College,—a pretty plain indication how much he wished to conform to the rules. But all would not do. It was soon known that he was Mr. Wesley’s pupil, and the name of *Methodist* was fastened upon him. He became very uneasy at this; and after some time, made known his situation to his father, in a long letter, and in terms as dolorous and as queer as Bishop Lavington himself could have done, if he had been then a Fresh-man. He concluded with desiring rather to return to his office, than to suffer what he did from his companions, by being Mr. Wesley’s pupil. His tutor having discovered this, immediately wrote the following letter to Mr. Morgan :

“January 14th, 1734.

“SIR,—Going yesterday into your son’s room, I providentially cast my eyes upon a paper that lay upon the table, and contrary to my custom, read a line or two of it, which soon determined me to read the rest. It was a copy of his last letter to you; whereby, by the signal blessing of God, I came to the knowledge of his real sentiments, both with regard to myself and to several other points of the highest importance.

“In the account he gives of me, and those friends who are as my own soul, are some things TRUE:—as, that we may imagine it is our bounden duty to spend our whole lives in the service of Him that gave them, or in other words, ‘*whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, to do all to the glory of God;*’ that we endeavour, as we are able, to relieve the poor by buying books and other necessaries for them; that some of us read prayers at the prison once a day; that I administer the Sacrament once a month, and preach there as often as I am not engaged elsewhere; that we sit together five evenings in a week; and that we observe, as far as our health will permit, the fasts of the Church. Some things are FALSE, but taken upon trust, so that I hope Mr. Morgan believed them true: as that we almost starve ourselves; that one of us had like lately to have lost his life, by too great abstinence; that we endeavour to reform notorious whores, and to lay spirits in haunted houses; that we all rise every day at five o’clock; and that I am President of the Society. As strange as it may appear, that one present upon the spot should so far vary from the truth in his relation, I can easily account, not only for his mistake, but for his designed misrep-

sentation too. The company he is almost daily with, (from whom indeed I should have divided him, had not your letters, coming in the article of time, tied my hands,) abundantly accounts for the former; as his desire to lessen your regard for me, and thereby obviate the force of any future complaint, which he foresaw I might some time hence have occasion to make to you, does for the latter: and indeed I am not without apprehension, that some such occasion may shortly come. I need not describe that apprehension to you. Is there not a cause? Is he not surrounded, even in this recess, with those who are often more pernicious than open libertines?—men who retain something of outward decency, and nothing else; who seriously idle away the whole day, and reputably revel till midnight, and if not drunken themselves, yet encouraging and applauding those that are so; who have no more of the form than of the power of godliness, and though they do pretty often drop in at the public prayers, coming after the most solemn part of them is over, yet expressly disown any obligation to attend them. It is true, they have not yet laughed your son out of all his diligence; but how long it will be before they have, God knows. They zealously endeavour it at all convenient opportunities; and temporal views are as unable to support him under such an attack as his slender notions of religion are; of which, he often says, he thinks he shall have enough, if he constantly says his prayers at home, and in the chapel. As to my advice on this or any other head, they had secured him pretty well before; and your authority added to theirs has supplied him with armour of proof against it.

“I now beg to know what you would have me do? Shall I sit still, and let him swim down the stream? Or shall I plunge in, bound, as I am, hand and foot, and oppose myself to his company, his inclinations, and his father? Why, you say, I am to incite him to live a sober, virtuous, and religious life. Nay, but first let us agree what religion is. I take religion to be, not the bare saying over so many prayers, morning and evening, in public or in private; not any thing superadded now and then to a careless or worldly life; but a constant ruling habit of soul; a renewal of our minds in the image of God; a recovery of the Divine likeness; a still increasing conformity of heart and life to the pattern of our most Holy Redeemer. But if this be religion, if this be the way to life which our blessed Lord hath marked out for us, how can any one, while he keeps close to this way, be charged with running into extremes? It is true, there is no going out of it, either to the right hand or to the left, without running into an extreme; and to prevent this, the wisdom of the church has, in all ages, appointed guides for the unexperienced, lest they should wander into by-paths, and seek death in the error of their life. But while he is in the right way, what fear is there of your son’s going too fast in it? I appeal to your own experience. Have you observed any such disposition in him, as gives you ground to suspect he will love God too well, or keep himself too ‘*unspotted from the world*’? Or has his past life been such, as that you have just reason to apprehend the remainder of it should too much resemble that of our blessed Master? I will go farther. Have you remarked, in the various scenes you have gone through, that youth in general is apt to run into the extreme of piety? Is it to *this* excess that the fervour of their blood and the impetuosity of their passions, hurry them? But we may not stop here. Is there any fear, is there any possibility, that any son of

Adam, of whatever age or degree, should too faithfully do the will of his Creator, or too exactly tread in the steps of his Redeemer? Suppose the time now come when you feel within yourself, that the silver cord of life is loosed, that the dust is returning to the earth as it was, and the spirit unto God who gave it. The snares of death overtake you. Nothing but pain is on the one hand, eternity on the other. The tears of the friends that surround your bed, bear witness with the pangs of your own heart, that it has few pulses more to beat before you launch out into the sea without a shore; before the soul shall part from the quivering lips, and stand naked before the judgment-seat of God. Will you then be content with having served God according to the custom of the place you was in? Will you regret your having been, even from your youth, more pure and holy than the rest of mankind? Will you complain to the ministering spirits who receive your new-born soul, that you have been over zealous in the love of your Master? Ask not me, a poor, fallible, sinful mortal, never safe either from the snares of ill example or the treachery of my own heart; but ask *them*, ask Him who died to make you and me and your son zealous of good works,—whether you may be excused for your solicitude, your too successful solicitude, to prevent his falling into this extreme? How needless has he made that solicitude already! But, I spare you. The good God be merciful to us both! Think not, sir, that interest occasions the concern I show: I abhor the thought. From the moment my brother told me, *‘Mr. Morgan will be safer with you than me; I have desired him to be sent to you,’*—I determined (though I never mentioned it to him,) to restore to him whatsoever is paid me upon Mr. Morgan’s account; it is, with regard to me, an accursed thing. There shall no such cleave unto me. I have sufficient motives, without this, to assist your son, so long as he will accept my assistance. He is the brother of my dear friend, the son of one that was my friend till great names warped him from his purpose; and, what is infinitely more, the creature of my God, and the redeemed and fellow-heir of my Saviour.

“That neither the cares of the world, nor the fair speeches and venerable titles of any who set up their rest therein, may prevent our attaining our better inheritance, is the earnest prayer of,

“SIR,

“Your most obliged,

“And most obedient Servant;

“JOHN WESLEY.

“RICHARD MORGAN, Esq., &c.”

I have inserted this letter, (which was never before published,) because it exhibits a true guide of youth, in a most striking light of devoted faithfulness; and because it may haply teach some, who sigh for the conversion of *the world*, while they strangely neglect *those who are round about them*, and are their special charge, how awfully they mistake the way of God! “*He who knew what was in man*,” and who cannot err, has said, “*He that is faithful in little, is faithful also in much.*” How gloriously this was realized, in the vast labour and great success of this devoted servant of Christ, will be seen, though very imperfectly, in these Memoirs. It is evident, that not the son only, but the infatuated, though well-meaning father, occupied Mr. Wesley’s affec-

tionate heart. What effect this earnest expostulation had on both, we know not fully; but it will be seen *in that day*. The Lord was about to lead his great and prepared instrument out of the shallows of individual and vexatious effort, into a wide field of labour, and into a harvest of souls, that shall only be fully known when "*the reapers are the angels*."

On the 1st of January, 1733, Mr. Wesley preached at St. Mary's, Oxford, before the University, on "*The Circumcision of the Heart*," Romans ii, 29. In this discourse, which is printed in the second volume of his Sermons, he explained with great clearness, and energy of language, his views of the Christian Salvation to be attained in this life; from which he never varied, in any material point, to the day of his death. He was indeed, at this time, almost wholly ignorant of the Gospel method of *attaining* this salvation; but he sought it with his whole heart, according to the knowledge he then had, and was willing to sacrifice the dearest thing he possessed in the world, for the attainment of it. The truth is, he was, like Saul of Tarsus, "*alive without the law*." He was not yet "*slain by the commandment*," and therefore did not come to God in his true character. He who "*justifieth only the ungodly*," could not therefore justify him: the faith which he had at that time could not be *imputed to him for righteousness*, and hence he had not "*peace and joy in believing*."

His father was now in a bad state of health, and seemed declining apace. On this account he set out on horseback for Epworth, in the beginning of January. As he was passing over the bridge beyond Daventry, his horse fell over it with him; but he again escaped unhurt! For these interpositions of Providence, Mr. Wesley did not fail to give the tribute of praise and thanksgiving to his Divine Deliverer.

The state of his father's health induced his parents to turn their thoughts to the means of obtaining the Living of Epworth for him, in case of his father's demise. This was mentioned to him when he was with them, but he seems to have then but little attended to it. After his return to Oxford, in February, he wrote to his mother on the subject. "You observed," says he, "when I was with you, that I was very indifferent as to the having or not having the Living of Epworth. I was indeed utterly unable to determine either way; and that for this reason: I know, if I could stand my ground here, and approve myself a faithful minister of our blessed Jesus, by honour and dishonour, through evil report and good report; then there would not be a place under the heaven like this, for improvement in every good work. But whether I can stem the torrent which I saw then, but see now much more, rolling down from all sides upon me,—that I knew not. It is true, there is One who can yet either command the great water-flood that it shall not come nigh me, '*or make a way for his redeemed to pass through*.' But then something must be done on my part: and should He give me, even that most equitable condition, '*According to thy faith be it unto thee*,' yet how shall I fulfil it? Why He will look to that too;—my father and you helping together with your prayers, that our faith fail us not."

In May, he set out again for Epworth, and took Manchester in his way, to see his friend Mr. Clayton, who had now left Oxford. From thence he proceeded to Epworth, and returned to Manchester on Saturday the 2d of June. The next day he preached three times, once at the Old Church, again in Salford, and at St. Anne's. When he reached

Oxford, he perceived the bad effects of his absence upon his pupils, and the members of their little Society. He now found himself surrounded with enemies triumphing over him, and friends deserting him; he saw the fruits of his labours in danger of being blasted before they had attained maturity. But he stood firm as a rock; and being conscious of his own integrity, and that he had nothing in view but to serve God "*in righteousness and true holiness*," and to benefit his neighbour, he viewed his situation without emotion. He wrote to his father in the simplicity and fulness of his heart; and this letter shows the man, and his manner of viewing difficulties, infinitely better than any description which another can give of him. It is dated the 13th of June.

"The effects of my last journey, I believe, will make me more cautious of staying any time from Oxford for the future; at least till I have no pupils to take care of, which probably will be within a year or two. One of my young gentlemen told me at my return, that he was more and more afraid of singularity; another, that he had read an excellent piece of Mr. Locke's, which had convinced him of the mischief of regarding authority. Both of them agreed, that the observing of Wednesday as a fast was an unnecessary singularity; the Catholic Church (that is, the majority of it) having long since repealed, by contrary custom, the injunction she formerly gave concerning it. A third, who could not yield to this argument, has been convinced by a fever, and Dr. Frewin. Our seven and twenty communicants at St. Mary's, were on Monday shrunk to five; and the day before, the last of Mr. Clayton's pupils, who continued with us, informed me, that he did not design to meet us any more.

"My ill success, as they call it, seems to be what has frightened every one away from a falling house. On Sunday I was considering the matter a little more nearly; and imagined, that all the ill consequences of my singularity were reducible to three—diminution of fortune, loss of friends, and of reputation.—As to my FORTUNE, I well know, though perhaps others do not, that I could not have borne a larger than I have: and as for that most plausible excuse for desiring it, 'While I have so little I cannot do the good I would;' I ask, can you do the good God would have you do? It is enough! Look no farther.—For FRIENDS, they were either trifling or serious: if triflers, fare them well; a noble escape: if serious, those who are more serious are left, whom the others would rather have opposed than forwarded in the service they have done, and still do us. If it be said, 'But these may leave you too; for they are no firmer than the others were.' First, I doubt that fact; but next, suppose they should, we hope then they would only teach us a nobler and harder lesson, than any they have done hitherto; '*It is better to trust in the Lord, than to put any confidence in man.*'—And as for REPUTATION, though it be a glorious instrument of advancing our Master's service, yet there is a better than that, *a clean heart, a single eye*, a soul full of God! A fair exchange, if by the loss of reputation we can purchase the lowest degree of purity of heart! We beg my mother and you would not cease to work together with us, that, whatever we lose, we may gain this; and that having tasted of this good gift, we may count all things else but dung and dross in comparison of it."

Mr. Wesley now redoubled his diligence with his pupils, that they might recover the ground which they had lost. But as he had been

blamed for singularity, both by friends and enemies, and many had thought that he too rigorously imposed some particular practices upon others; he informed his mother what the singularity was, which chiefly gave offence at Oxford, and explained the methods he used with his pupils, to instruct them in the 'things of God.' This letter is dated August the 17th. "The thing," says he, "that gives offence here is, the being singular with regard to time, expense, and company. This is evident beyond exception, from the case of Mr. Smith, one of our Fellows; who no sooner began to husband his time, to retrench unnecessary expenses, and to avoid his irreligious acquaintance, but he was set upon, by not only all those acquaintance, but many others too, as if he had entered into a conspiracy to cut all their throats: though to this day he has not advised any single person, unless in a word or two and by accident, to act as he did in any of those instances.

"It is true indeed, that 'the devil hates offensive war most,' and that whoever tries to rescue more than his own soul from his hands, will have more enemies, and meet with greater opposition, than if he was content with *having his own life for a prey*. That I try to do this, is likewise certain: but I cannot say whether I 'rigorously impose any observances on others,' till I know what that phrase means. What I do, is this: when I am intrusted with a person who is first to understand and practise, and then to teach, the law of Christ, I endeavour by an intermixture of reading and conversation, to show him what that law is; that is, to renounce all insubordinate love of the world, and to love and obey God with all his strength. When he appears seriously sensible of this, I propose to him the means God hath commanded him to use, in order to that end; and, a week or a month or a year after, as the state of his soul seems to require it, the several prudential means recommended by wise and good men.* As to the times, order, measure, and manner, wherein these are to be proposed, I depend upon the Holy Spirit to direct me, in and by my own experience and reflection, joined to the advices of my religious friends here and elsewhere. Only two rules it is my principle to observe in all cases: First, to begin, continue and end all my advices in the spirit of meekness; as knowing that *the wrath or severity of man worketh not the righteousness of God*: and Secondly, to add to meekness long-suffering; in pursuance of a rule which I fixt long since, 'never to give up any one till I have tried him, at least, ten years;'—how long hath God had pity on thee?

"If the wise and good will believe those falsehoods which the bad invent, because I endeavour to save myself and my friends from them, then I shall lose my reputation, even among them, for (though not perhaps good, yet) the best actions I ever did in my life. This is the very case. I try to act as my Lord commands: ill men say all manner of evil of me, and good men believe them. There is a way, and there is but one, of making my peace; God forbid I should ever take it. I have as many pupils as I need, and as many friends: when more are better for me, I shall have more. If I have no more pupils after these are gone from me, I shall then be glad of a Curacy near you: if I have, I shall take it as a signal that I am to remain here. Whether here or there,

* He did not yet feel the want of living faith, and consequently did not inculcate it upon others. The method described above is Mr. Law's plan,—or at least the best part of it. Mr. Wesley was still toiling in that fire.

my desire is, to know and feel that I am nothing, that I have nothing, and that I can do nothing. For whenever I am empty of myself, then know I of a surety, that neither friends nor foes, nor any creature, can hinder me from being '*filled with all the fulness of God.*' Let not my father's, or your prayers, be ever slack in behalf of your affectionate son."

On the 21st of September, 1734, Mr. Wesley began the practice of reading as he travelled on horseback; and this practice he continued for nearly forty years, till his advanced age obliged him to travel in a carriage. His frequent journeys, often on foot as well as on horseback, and the great and constant labour of preaching, reading, visiting, &c, wherever he was, with hard study and a very abstemious diet, had now very much affected his health. His strength was greatly reduced, and he had frequent returns of spitting of blood. In the night of the 16th of July, he had a return of it in such quantity as waked him out of sleep. The sudden and unexpected manner of its coming on, with the solemnity of the night season, made eternity seem near. He cried to God, "O! prepare me for thy coming, and come when thou wilt."* His friends began to be alarmed for his safety, and his mother wrote two or three letters, blaming him for the general neglect of his health. He now took the advice of a physician; and by proper care, and a prudent management of his daily exercise, he gradually recovered his strength.

The whole force of Mr. Wesley's mind was now bent to religious subjects. In reflecting on the progress of the soul towards an entire conformity to the will of God and a fitness for heaven, he observed, that there are certain states of mind which are more strongly marked than others, and that these states ascertain our progress with some degree of certainty.† He wrote to his mother on this subject. She answered him in a letter of January: "You are entirely in the right in what you say in the second paragraph of your letter. The different degrees of virtue and piety are different states of soul, which must be passed through gradually;—for, in all matters of religion, if there be not an internal sense in the hearer corresponding to the sense in the mind of the speaker, what is said will have no effect: this I have often experienced; yet sometimes it falls out, that while a zealous Christian is discoursing on spiritual subjects, the blessed Spirit of God will give such light to the minds of those who hear him, as dispels their native darkness, and enables them to apprehend those spiritual things, of which before they had no discernment."—In this letter she addresses a pupil of Mr. Wesley's who appears to have despised religion.

"Tell him from me," says she, "I am as good as my word: I daily pray for him; and beg of him, if he have the least regard for his soul or have yet any remaining sense of religion in his mind, to shake off all acquaintance with the profane and irregular; for it is the free-thinker and sensualist, not the despised Methodist, who will be ashamed and confounded when summoned to appear before the face of that Almighty Judge, whose Godhead they have blasphemed, and whose offered mercy they despised and ludicrously rejected. The pleasures of sin are but for a short uncertain time, but eternity hath no end. Therefore, one

* Private Diary.

† Yes; he might learn from St. John's first Epistle, that there is first, being in Christ, by faith; secondly, abiding in him, by constant faith; thirdly, dwelling in him, by faith made perfect, and working by love. All this he had yet to learn.

would think, that few arguments might serve to convince a man, who has not lost his senses, that it is of the last importance for us to be very serious in improving the present time, and acquainting ourselves with God while it is called *to-day*; lest, being disqualified for his blissful presence, our future existence be inexpressibly miserable."

The health of Mr. Wesley's father, as it has been stated before, had been declining for several years, and he now seemed approaching towards the close of life. The old gentleman, conscious of his situation, and desirous that the living of Ephworth might remain in the family, wrote to his son John, requesting him to apply for the next presentation. We have already seen, that, when the subject was mentioned the year before, he hesitated, and could not determine one way or the other. But he was now determined not to accept of the living, if he could obtain it; and stated to his father some reasons for refusing to comply with his request. His father and his brother Samuel were disappointed; and both attacked him, with every argument they could possibly bring to bear upon him. He acted on the defensive only, and maintained his ground. But the mode of attack, and of his defence, will give us the best view of his principles and disposition of mind at this time.

His father's letter is dated November 20th, and runs as follows:—"Your state of the question, and only argument, is, 'The question is not, whether I could do more good to others, *there* or *here*; but whether I could do more good to myself; seeing wherever I can be most holy myself, there I can most promote holiness in others. But I can improve myself more at Oxford than at any other place.'

"To this answer—1. It is not dear self, but the glory of God, and the different degrees of promoting it, which should be our main consideration and direction in any course of life. Witness St. Paul and Moses.

"2. Supposing you could be more holy yourself at Oxford, how does it follow that you could more promote holiness in others, *there* than *elsewhere*? Have you found many instances of it after so many years' hard pains and labour? Farther, I dare say you are more modest and just than to say, there are no holier men than you at Oxford; and yet it is possible they may not have promoted holiness more than you have done; as I doubt not, but you might have done it much more, had you taken the right method: for, there is a particular turn of mind for these matters; great prudence as well as great fervour.

"3. I cannot allow austerity, or fasting, considered by themselves, to be proper acts of holiness, nor am I for a solitary life. God made us for a social life; we are not to bury our talents; we are to let our light shine before men, and that not barely through the chinks of a bushel, for fear the wind should blow it out. The design of lighting it was, that it might give light to all that went into the house of God. And to this, academical studies are only preparatory.

"4. You are sensible what figures those make, who stay in the University till they are superannuated. I cannot think drowsiness promotes holiness. How commonly do they drone away their life, either in a College, or in a country parsonage, where they can only give God the snuffs of them, having nothing of life or vigour left to make them useful in the world.

"5. We are not to fix our eye on one single point of duty, but to

take in the complicated view of all the circumstances in every state of life that offers. Thus, in the case before us, put all the circumstances together:—If you are not indifferent whether the labours of an aged father, for above forty years in God's vineyard, be lost, and the fences of it trodden down and destroyed;—if you consider that Mr. M. must, in all probability, succeed me, if you do not;—and that the prospect of that mighty Nimrod's coming hither shocks my soul, and is in a fair way of bringing down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave;—if you have any care for our family, which must be dismally shattered as soon as I am dropped;—if you reflect on the dear love and longing which this poor people have for you, whereby you will be enabled to do God the more service, and the plenteousness of the harvest, consisting of near two thousand souls, whereas you have not many more scholars in the University:—you may perhaps alter your mind, and bend your will to His, who has promised, if in all our ways we acknowledge him, he will direct our paths."

The old gentleman wrote also to his son Samuel on the subject, who warmly took part with his father, and wrote to his brother at Oxford, in December, 1734. "Yesterday," says he, "I received a letter from my father, wherein he tells me, you are unalterably resolved not to accept of a certain living if you could get it. After this declaration, I believe no one can move your mind, but Him who made it. I shall not draw the saw of controversy; and, therefore, though I judge every proposition flatly false, except that of your being assured, yet I shall allow every word, and have nevertheless this to say against your conclusions.—1. I see your love to yourself; but your love to your neighbour I do not see.—2. You are not at liberty to resolve against undertaking a cure of souls. You are solemnly engaged to do it, before God, and his highpriest, and his church. Are you not ordained? Did you not deliberately and openly promise to instruct, to teach, to admonish, to exhort those committed to your charge? Did you equivocate then, with so vile a reservation, as to purpose in your heart that you never would have any so committed? It is not a College, it is not a University, it is the *order of the Church*, according to which you were called. Let Charles, if he is silly enough, vow never to leave Oxford, and therefore avoid orders. Your faith is already plighted to the contrary; *you have put your hand to the plough,—to that plough.*"—This is strong language; but would any one believe, that he had himself declined the living, which his father pressed him to seek some time before this, and not upon such strong grounds,—Mr. S. Wesley only preferring his academical studies and employments? Such, however, was the fact. He chiefly felt for the family, who, he feared, would be put to great inconvenience, if the living were not retained. Mr. John Wesley, however, kept himself within his fortress, and answered his brother Samuel with caution. His letter is dated January 15th, 1735, and having explained himself at some length to his father, he sent a copy of that letter to his brother. He observes in the remarks which accompany it,

"Had not my brother Charles desired it might be otherwise, I should have sent you only an extract of the following letter. But, if you will be at the pains, you will soon reduce the argument of it to two or three points: which, if to be answered at all, will be easily answered. By it you may observe, my present purpose is founded on my present weak-

ness: But it is not, indeed, probable, that my father should live till that weakness is removed.

"Your second argument I had no occasion to mention before. To it I answer, that I do not, nor ever did, resolve against undertaking a cure of souls. There are four cures belonging to our College, and consistent with a Fellowship: I do not know but I may take one of them at Michaelmas. Not that I am clearly assured that I should be false to my engagement, were I only to instruct and exhort the pupils committed to my charge. But of that I should think more."

Though the letter to his father is long, yet it contains such a distinct view of his manner of thinking and reasoning, and of the energy of his language, at this period, that it cannot, with propriety, be omitted.

"DEAR SIR,—1st. The authority of a parent, and the call of Providence, are things of so sacred a nature, that a question in which these are any ways concerned, deserves the most serious consideration. I am, therefore, greatly obliged to you for the pains you have taken to set ours in a clear light; which I now intend to consider more at large, with the utmost attention of which I am capable. And I shall the more cheerfully do it, as being assured of your joining with me in earnestly imploring His guidance, who will not suffer those that bend their wills to his, to seek death in the error of their life.

"2d. I entirely agree, that 'the glory of God, and the different degrees of promoting it, are to be our sole consideration and direction in the choice of any course of life;' and, consequently, that it must wholly turn upon this single point, whether I am to prefer a College life, or that of a rector of a parish. I do not say the glory of God is to be my *first*, or my *principal* consideration, but my *only one*; since all that are not implied in this, are absolutely of no weight: in presence of this, they all vanish away, they are less than the small dust of the balance.

"3d. And, indeed, till all other considerations were set aside, I could never come to any clear determination; till my eye was single, my whole mind was full of darkness. Every consideration distinct from this, threw a shadow over all the objects I had in view, and was such a cloud as no light could penetrate. Whereas, so long as I can keep my eye single, and steadily fixed on the glory of God, I have no more doubt of the way wherein I should go, than of the shining of the sun at noonday.

"4th. That course of life tends most to the glory of God, wherein we can most promote holiness in ourselves and others. I say in ourselves and others, as being fully persuaded that these can never be put asunder. For how is it possible, that the good God should make our interest inconsistent with our neighbour's, that he should make our being in one state best for ourselves, and our being in another best for the church? This would be making a strange schism in his body; such as surely never was from the beginning of the world. And if not, then whatever state is best on either of these accounts, is so on the other likewise. If it be best for others, then it is so for us; if for us, then for them.

"5th. However, when two ways of life are proposed, I should choose to begin with that part of the question, which of these have I rational ground to believe will conduce most to my own improvement? And that, not only because it is every physician's concern to heal himself

first, but because it seems we may judge with more ease, and perhaps certainty too, in which state we can most promote holiness in ourselves, than in which we can in others.

“6th. By holiness, I mean, not fasting, or bodily austerity, or any other external means of improvement; but the inward temper to which all these are subservient, a renewal of the soul in the image of God. I mean a complex habit of lowliness, meekness, purity, faith, hope, and the love of God and man. And I therefore believe, that, in the state wherein I am, I can most promote this holiness in myself, because I now enjoy several advantages, which are almost peculiar to it.

“7th. The first of these, is daily converse with my friends. I know no other place under heaven where I can have always at hand half a dozen persons nearly of my own judgment, and engaged in the same studies; persons who are awakened into a full and lively conviction, that they have only one work to do upon earth; who are in some measure enlightened so as to see, though at a distance, what that one work is, viz. the recovery of that single intention and pure affection which were in Christ Jesus; who, in order to this, have, according to their power, renounced themselves, and wholly and absolutely devoted themselves to God; and who, suitably thereto, deny themselves, and take up their cross daily. To have such a number of such friends constantly watching over my soul, and, according to the variety of occasions, administering reproof, advice, or exhortation, with all plainness, and all gentleness, is a blessing I have not yet found any Christians to enjoy in any other part of the kingdom. And such a blessing it is, so conducive, if faithfully used, to the increase of all holiness, as I defy any one to know the full value of, till he receives his full measure of glory.

“8th. Another invaluable blessing, which I enjoy here in a greater degree than I could any where else, is retirement. I have not only as much, but as little company as I please. I have no such thing as a trifling visitant, except about an hour in a month, when I invite some of the Fellows to breakfast. Unless at that one time, no one ever takes it into his head to set foot within my door, except he has some business of importance to communicate to me, or I to him. And even then, as soon as he has despatched his business, he immediately takes his leave.

“9th. Both these blessings, the continual presence of *useful*, and uninterrupted freedom from *trifling* acquaintance, are exceedingly endeared to me, whenever I have spent but one week out of this place. The far greatest part of the conversation I meet with abroad, even among those whom I believe to be real Christians, turns on points that are absolutely wide of my purpose, that no way forward me in the business of life. Now, though they may have time to spare, I have none; it is absolutely necessary for such a one as me to follow, with all possible care and vigilance, that excellent advice of Mr. Herbert,—

Still let thy mind be bent, still plotting where,
And when, and how, the business may be done.

And this, I bless God, I can in some measure do, so long as I avoid that bane of piety, the company of *good sort of men*, lukewarm Christians, (as they are called,) persons that have a great concern for, but no sense of religion. But these undermine insensibly all my resolutions, and quite steal from me the little fervour I have; and I never come from among these *Saints of the world*, (as J. Valdesso calls them,)

faint, dissipated, and shorn of all my strength, but I say, 'God deliver me from a half Christian!'

"10th. Freedom from care, I take to be the next greatest advantage to freedom from useless, and therefore hurtful company. And this, too, I enjoy in greater perfection here, than I can ever expect to do any where else. I hear of such a thing as *the cares of this world*, and I read of them, but I know them not. My income is ready for me on so many stated days; and all I have to do is, to count and carry it home. The grand article of my expense is food, and this, too, is provided without any care of mine. I have nothing to do, but at such an hour to take and eat what is prepared for me. My laundress, barber, &c, are always ready at quarter-day, so I have no trouble on account of those expenses. And for what I occasionally need, I can be supplied from time to time without any expense of thought. Now, to convince me what a help to holiness this is, (were not my experience abundantly sufficient,) I should need no better authority than St. Paul's: '*I would have you be without carefulness. This I speak for your own profit, that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction. Happy is he that careth only for the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord.*' He may be holy both in body and spirit, after the Apostle's judgment; and I think that he had the Spirit of God.

"11th. To quicken me in making a thankful and diligent use of all the other advantages of this place, I have the opportunity of public prayer twice a day, and of weekly communicating. It would be easy to mention many more, and likewise to show many disadvantages, which a person of greater courage and skill than me, could scarce separate from a country life. But whatever one of experience and resolution might do, I am very sensible I should not be able to turn aside one of the thousand temptations that would immediately rush upon me. I could not stand my ground, no not for one month, against intemperance in sleeping, eating, and drinking; against irregularity in study; against a general lukewarmness in my affections, and remissness in my actions; against softness and self-indulgence, directly opposite to that discipline and hardship which become a soldier of Jesus Christ. And then, when my spirit was thus dissolved, I should be an easy prey to whatever impertinent company came in my way. Then would the cares of the world, and the desire of other things, roll back with a full tide upon me. It would be no wonder, if, *while I preached to others, I myself should be a castaway*. I cannot therefore but observe, that the question does not relate barely to degrees of perfection, but to the very essence and being of it. *Agitur de vitâ et sanguine Turni*.* The point is, whether I shall, or shall not, work out my salvation, whether I shall serve Christ or Belial.

"12. What still heightens my fear of this untried state, is, that when I am once entered into it, be the inconveniences of it found more or less—*vestigia nulla retrorsum*—'when I am there, there I must stay.' If this way of life should ever prove less advantageous, I have almost continual opportunities of quitting it; but whatever difficulties occur in that, whether foreseen or unforeseen, there is no returning, any more than from the grave. When I have once launched out into that unknown

* "My life, my blood is at stake!"

sea, there is no recovering my harbour ; I must on, among whatever whirlpools, or rocks, or sands, though all the waves and storms go over me.

“ 13th. Thus much as to myself. But you justly observe, that we are not to consider ourselves alone ; since God made us all for a social life, to which academical studies are only preparatory. I allow, too, that he will take an exact account of every talent ; which he has lent us, not to bury them, but to employ every mite we have received, in diffusing holiness all around us. I cannot deny, that every follower of Christ is, in his proportion, the light of the world ; but whoever is such can no more be concealed than the sun in the midst of heaven ; that, being set as a light in a dark place, his shining out must be the more conspicuous ; that, to this very end was his light given, that it might shine at least to all that look towards him ; and, indeed, that there is one only way of hiding it, which is, to put it out. Neither can I deny, that it is the indispensable duty of every Christian to impart both light and heat to all who are willing to receive it. I am obliged likewise, unless I lie against the truth, to grant, that there is not so contemptible an animal upon earth, as one that drones away life, without ever labouring to promote the glory of God, and the good of men ; and that, whether he be young or old, learned or unlearned, in a college or out of it. Yet, granting the superlative degree of contempt to be on all accounts due to a college-drone ; a wretch that hath received ten talents, and yet employs none : that is not only promised a reward by his gracious Master, but is paid beforehand for his work by his generous Founder, and yet works not at all ; allowing all this, and whatever else can be said, (for I own it is impossible to say enough,) against the drowsy ingratitude, the lazy perjury, of those who are commonly called harmless or good sort of men, (a fair proportion of whom, I must to our shame confess, are to be found in colleges,) allowing this, I say, I do not apprehend it will conclude against a college life in general. For the abuse of it does not destroy the use : though there are some here who are the lumber of the creation, it does not follow, that others may not be of more service to the world in this station, than they could in any other.

“ 14th. That I in particular could, might, it seems, be inferred from what has been proved already, viz. That I could be holier here myself than any where else, if I faithfully used the blessings I enjoy ; for to prove, that the holier any man is himself, the more shall he promote holiness in others, there needs no more than this one *postulatum*, ‘ The help which is done on earth, God does it himself.’ If so, if God be the sole agent in healing souls, and man only the instrument in his hand, there can no doubt be made, but that the more holy a man is, he will make use of him the more : because he is more willing to be so used ; because the more pure he is, he is the fitter instrument for the God of purity ; because he will pray more, and more earnestly, that he may be employed, and that his service may tend to his Master’s glory ; because all his prayers, both for employment, and success therein, will the more surely pierce the clouds ; because the more his heart is enlarged, the wider sphere he may act in without careflessness or distraction ; and, lastly, because the more his heart is renewed in the image of God, the more God can renew it in others by him, without destroying him by pride or vanity.

“ 15th. But for the proof of every one of these weighty truths, experience is worth a thousand reasons. I see, I feel them every day. Sometimes I cannot do good to others, because I am unwilling to do it; shame or pain is in the way; and I do not desire to serve God at so dear a rate. Sometimes I cannot do the good I desire to do, because I am in other respects too unholy. I know within myself, were I fit to be so employed, God would employ me in this work. But my heart is too unclean for such mighty works to be wrought by my hands. Sometimes I cannot accomplish the good I am employed in, because I do not pray more, and more fervently; and sometimes even when I do pray, and that instantly, because I am not worthy that my prayer should be heard. Sometimes I dare not attempt to assist my neighbour, because I know the narrowness of my heart, that it cannot attend to many things, without utter confusion, and dissipation of thought. And a thousand times have I been mercifully withheld from success in the things I have attempted; because were one so proud and vain enabled to gain others, he would lose his own soul.

“ 16th. From all this I conclude, that where I am most holy myself, there I could most promote holiness in others; and consequently, that I could more promote it here, than in any place under heaven. But I have likewise other reasons besides this to think so; and the first is the plenteousness of the harvest. Here is indeed a large scene of various action. Here is room for charity in all its forms. There is scarce any way of doing good to our fellow creatures, for which here is not daily occasion. I can now only touch upon the several heads. Here are poor families to be relieved; here are children to be educated; here are workhouses, wherein both young and old want, and gladly receive, the word of exhortation; here are prisons to be visited, wherein alone is a complication of all human wants; and lastly, here are the schools of the prophets; here are tender minds to be formed and strengthened, and babes in Christ to be instructed, and perfected in all useful learning. Of these in particular we must observe, that he who gains only one, does thereby as much service to the world as he could do in a parish in his whole life, for his name is *Legion*; in him are contained all those who shall be converted by him. He is not a single drop of the dew of heaven; but ‘*a river to make glad the city of God.*’

“ 17th. But Epworth is yet a larger sphere of action than this; there I should have the care of two thousand souls. Two thousand souls! I see not how any man living can take care of a hundred.* At least, I could not; I know too well *quid valeant humeri*.† Because the weight I have already upon me is almost more than I am able to bear, ought I to increase it ten fold?

————— Imponere Pelio Ossam
Scilicet, atque Osse frondosum involvere Olympum ?‡

Would this be the way to help either myself or my brethren up to heaven? Nay, but the mountains I reared would only crush my own soul, and so make me utterly useless to others.

“ 18th. I need not but just glance upon several other reasons, why I am more likely to be useful here than any where else. As, because

* How greatly did God enlarge his heart, as well as his labours, in process of time.

† How much I can bear.

‡ To heap mountains upon mountains, like the fabled giants, in order to scale Heaven.

I have the joint advice of many friends in any difficulty, and their joint encouragement in any dangers : because the good Bishop and Vice Chancellor are at hand to supply (as need is) their want of experience : because we have the eyes of multitudes upon us, who, even without designing it, perform the most substantial office of friendship, apprising us where we have already fallen, and guarding us from falling again : lastly, because we have here a constant fund, (which I believe this year will amount to near eighty pounds,) to supply the bodily wants of the poor, and thereby prepare their souls to receive instruction.

“ 19th. If it be said, that the love of the people at Epworth balances all these advantages here ; I ask, how long it will last ? Only till I come to tell them plainly that their deeds are evil, and to make a particular application of that general sentence, to say to each, ‘ *Thou art the man !* ’ Alas, sir, do I not know, what love they had for you at first ? And how have they used you since ? Why, just as every one will be used, whose business it is to bring light to them that love to sit in darkness.

“ 20th. Notwithstanding, therefore, their present prejudice in my favour, I cannot quit my first conclusion, that I am not likely to do that good any where, not even at Epworth, which I may do at Oxford. And yet one terrible objection lies in the way : ‘ Have you found it so in fact ? What have you done there in so many years ? Nay, have not the very attempts to do good, for want either of a particular turn of mind for the business you engaged in, or of prudence to direct you in the right method of doing it, not only been unsuccessful, but brought such contempt upon you, as has in great measure disqualified you for any future success ? And are there not men in Oxford who are not only better and holier than you, but who have preserved their reputation, who, being universally esteemed, are every way fitter to promote the glory of God in that place ? ’

“ 21st. I am not careful to answer in this matter. It is not my part to say whether God has done any good by my hands ; whether I have a particular turn of mind for this or not ; or whether the want of success, in my past attempts, was owing to want of prudence, to ignorance of the right method of acting, or to some other cause. But the latter part of the objection, ‘ that he who is despised can do no good, that without reputation a man cannot be useful in the world,’ being the strong-hold of all the unbelieving, the vainglorious, and the cowardly Christians, (so called,) I will, by the grace of God, see what reason that has, thus continually, to exalt itself against the knowledge of Christ.

“ 22d. With regard to contempt then, (under which term I include all the passions that border upon it, as hatred, envy, &c, and all the fruits that flow from them, such as calumny, reproach, and persecution in any of its forms,) my first position, in defiance of worldly wisdom, is this, ‘ Every true Christian is contemned wherever he lives, by all who are not so, and who know him to be such, i. e. in effect, by all with whom he converses ; since it is impossible for light not to shine.’ This position I prove both from the example of our Lord, and from his express assertions. FIRST. From his example : If the disciple is not above his Master, nor the servant above his Lord, then, as our Master was despised and rejected of men, so will every one of his true disciples. But the disciple is not above his Master, and therefore the consequence

will not fail him a hair's breadth. **SECONDLY.** From his own express assertions of this consequence. '*If they have called the master of the house BEELZEBUB, how much more them of his household?*' Matthew x, 25. Remember (ye that would fain forget or evade it) the word that I said unto you, *The servant is not greater than his Lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you.*' And as for that vain hope, that this belongs only to the first followers of Christ, hear ye him! '*All these things will they do to you, because they know not Him that sent me.*' And again, '*Because ye are not of the world, therefore the world hateth you.*' John xvi, 20. Both the persons who are hated, and the persons who hate them, and the cause of their hating them, are here clearly determined. The *hated* are all that are not of this world, that are born again in the knowledge and love of God; the *haters* are all that are of this world, that know not God, so as to love him with all their strength; the cause of their hatred is, the entire irreconcilable differences between their desires, judgments, and affections; because these know not God, and those are determined to know and pursue nothing besides Him; because these esteem and love the world, and those count it dung and dross, and singly desire that love of Christ.

"23d. My next position is this, '*Until he be thus contemned, no man is in a state of salvation.*' And this is no more than a plain inference from the former: for if all that are not of the world are therefore contemned by those that are, then till a man is so contemned, he is of the world, i. e. out of a state of salvation. Nor is it possible for the trimmers between God and the world, for all the dodgers in religion, to elude this consequence, which God has established, and not man, unless they could prove that a man may be of the world, i. e. void both of the knowledge and love of God, and yet be in a state of salvation. I must therefore, with or without leave of these, keep close to my Saviour's judgment, and maintain, that contempt is a part of that cross which every man must bear if he will follow him; that it is the badge of his discipleship, the stamp of his profession, the constant seal of his calling; insomuch that, though a man may be despised without being saved, yet he cannot be saved without being despised.

"24th. I should not spend any more words about this great truth, but that it seems at present quite voted out of the world; the masters in Israel, learned men, men of renown, seem absolutely to have forgotten it; nay, censure those who have not forgotten the words of their Lord, as setters forth of strange doctrines. And hence it is commonly asked, '*How can these things be?*' How can contempt be necessary to salvation? I answer,—as it is a necessary means of purifying souls for heaven; as it is a blessed instrument of cleansing them from pride, which else would turn their very graces into poison; as it is a glorious antidote against vanity, which would otherwise pollute and destroy all their labours; as it is an excellent medicine to heal the anger and impatience of spirit, apt to insinuate into their best employments; and in a word, as it is one of the choicest remedies in the whole magazine of God against love of the world, in which whosoever liveth is counted dead before him.

"25th. And hence (as a full answer to the preceding objection) I infer one position more. '*That our being contemned is absolutely necessary to our doing good in the world.*' If not to our doing some

good, (for God may work by Judas,) yet to our doing so much as we otherwise should. For since God will employ those instruments most, who are fittest to be employed; since the holier a man is, the fitter instrument he is for the God of holiness; and since contempt is so glorious a means of advancing holiness in him that is exercised thereby, nay, since no man can be holy at all without it;—who can keep off the consequence, that the being contemned is absolutely necessary to a Christian's doing his full measure of good in the world? *'Where then is the scribe? Where is the wise? Where is the disputer of this world?'* Where is the replier against God, with his sage maxims? *'He that is despised can do no good in the world; to be useful, a man must be esteemed; to advance the glory of God, you must have a fair reputation.'* Saith the world so? But what saith the Scripture? Why, that God hath laughed all this heathen wisdom to scorn. It saith that twelve despised followers of a despised Master, all of whom were of no reputation, who were esteemed as the filth and offscouring of the world, did more good in it than all the tribes of Israel. It saith, that the despised Master of these despised followers left a standing direction to us, and to our children, *'Blessed are ye, (not accursed with the heavy curse of doing no good, of being useless in the world,) when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil of you falsely for my name's sake. Rejoice, and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven.'*

“26th. These are part of my reasons for choosing to abide (till I am better informed) in the station wherein God has placed me. As for the flock committed to your care, whom for many years you have diligently fed with the sincere milk of the word, I trust in God your labour shall not be in vain, either to yourself or them. Many of them the Great Shepherd has by your hand delivered from the hand of the destroyer, some of whom are already entered into peace, and some remain unto this day. For yourself, I doubt not, but when your warfare is accomplished, when you are made perfect through sufferings, you shall come to your grave, not with sorrow, but as a ripe shock of corn, full of years and victories. And he that took care of the poor sheep before you was born, will not forget them when you are dead.”

Mr. Wesley having sent a copy of this letter to his brother Samuel, he replied to it, February 8, 1735. He tells him, “Charles was in the right, to desire I might have your whole letter: Though you have stated the point, so as to take away the question, at least all possibility of differing about it, if it be only this, whether you are to serve Christ or Belial? I see no end of writing now, but merely complying with your desire of having my thoughts upon it; which I here give in short, and I think almost in full, though I pass over strictures on less matters.

“1. Your friends, retirement, frequent ordinances, and freedom from care, are great blessings. All, except the last, you may expect, in a lower degree, elsewhere. Sure, all your labours are not come to this, that more is absolutely necessary for you, for the very being of *your* Christian life, than for the salvation of all the parish priests in England. It is very strange!

“2. To the question, ‘What good have you done at Oxford?’ you are not careful to answer: How comes it then you are so very careful

about the good you might do at Epworth? *The help that is done on earth, He doth it himself*, is a full solution of that terrible difficulty.

"3. The impossibility of return, the certainty of being disliked by them that now cry you up, and the small comparative good my father has done, are good prudential reasons; but, I think, can hardly extend to conscience. 'You can leave Oxford when you will:' Not surely to such advantage. 'You have a probability of doing good there:' Will that good be wholly undone if you leave it? Why should you not leaven another lump?

"4. What you say of contempt is nothing to the purpose; for if you will go to Epworth, I will answer for it, you shall in a competent time, be despised as much as your heart can wish. In your doctrine, you argue from a particular to a general. 'To be useful, a man must be esteemed,' is as certain as any proposition in Euclid; and I defy all mankind to produce one instance of directly doing spiritual good without it, in the whole book of God.*

"5. 'God who provided for the flock before, will do it after, my father.' May He not suffer them to be, what they once were, almost heathens? And may not that be prevented by your ministry? It could never enter into my head, that you could refuse on any other ground than a general resolution against the cure of souls. I shall give no positive reason for it, till my first is *answered*. The order of the Church stakes you down, and, the more you struggle, will hold the faster. If there be such a thing as truth, I insist upon it you must, when opportunity offers, either perform that promise, or repent of it: *Utrum mavis?*"†

To this letter Mr. John Wesley replied on the 13th of the same month. "Neither you nor I," says he, "have any time to spare; so I must be short as I can.

"There are two questions between us, one relating to being good, the other to doing good. With regard to the former: 1. You allow, I enjoy more of friends, retirement, freedom from care, and Divine ordinances, than I could do elsewhere; and I add, (1) I feel all this to be but just enough. (2) I have always found less than this to be too little for me; and therefore, (3) Whatever others do, I could not throw up any part of it, without manifest hazard to my salvation.

"2. As to the latter, I am not careful to answer, 'What good I have done at Oxford;' because I cannot think of it without the utmost danger. I am careful what good I may do at Epworth, (1) Because I can think of it without any danger at all; (2) Because I cannot, as matters now stand, avoid thinking of it without sin.

"3. Another can supply my place at Epworth, better than at Oxford; and the good done here, is of a far more diffusive nature. It is a more extensive benefit to sweeten the fountain, than to do the same to particular streams.

"4. To the objection, 'You are despised at Oxford, therefore you can do no good there;' I answer, (1) A Christian will be despised any where.—(2) No one is a Christian till he is despised.—(3) His being despised will not hinder his doing good, but much further it, by making

* This is true in part. A minister of Christ will, yea must be esteemed by those who receive 'the truth in the love of it,' by his instrumentality. But it is as certain, that he will be despised by those who do not so receive it.

† Which do you prefer?

him a better Christian. Without contradicting any of these propositions, I allow, that every one to whom you do good directly, must esteem you, first or last.—N. B. A man may despise you for one thing, hate you for another, and envy you for a third.

“5. ‘God may suffer Epworth to be worse than before. But *I may not* attempt to prevent it, with so great hazard to my own soul. Your last argument is either *ignoratio elenchi*,* or implies these two propositions: ‘(1) You resolve against any parochial cure of souls.—(2) The Priest who does not undertake the first parochial cure that offers, is perjured.’—Let us add a third: ‘The Tutor who, being in Orders, never accepts of a parish, is perjured;’ and then I deny all three.”

This letter Mr. Samuel Wesley answered thus, paragraph by paragraph.—“1. You say, you have but just enough. Had ever any man on earth more?—‘You have experienced less to be insufficient.’ Not in the course of the priesthood to which you are called. In that way, I am persuaded, though ‘*he that gathereth much can have nothing over*,’ yet ‘*he that gathereth little, can have no lack*.’—2. ‘There is danger in thinking of the good you have done, but not of what you may do.’ Vain-glory lies both ways:—‘But the latter was your duty.’ So was the former; without you can compare two things without thinking of one of them.—3. ‘The good done at Oxford is more diffusive.’ It is not *that good* you have promised. You deceive yourself, if you imagine you do not here think of *what you have done*.—‘Your want may be better supplied at Epworth;’ not if my father is right in his successions.—4. ‘A Christian will be despised every where; no one is a Christian till he is so; it will further his doing good.’ If universal propositions, I deny them all. Esteem goes before the good done, as well as follows it.—‘A man may both despise and envy.’ True; he may have a hot and a cold fit of an ague. Contempt in general, is no more incompatible with, than necessary to, benefiting others.—5. See the first and third.—6. I said plainly, I thought you had made a general resolution: As to taking the first offer, I supposed the opportunity a proper one; and declare now my judgment, should you live never so long, in the ordinary course of Providence, you can never meet another *so proper*.—‘An ordained Tutor, who accepts not a cure, is perjured;’ alter the term into, ‘Who resolves not to accept;’ and I will maintain it, unless you prove either of these two: (1) ‘There is no such obligation at taking Orders.’ (2) ‘This obligation is dispensed with.’ Both which I utterly deny.”

Mr. John Wesley now thought it time to close the debate. His letter is dated the 4th of March. He observes to his brother, “I had rather dispute with you, if I must dispute, than with any man living; because it may be done with so little expense of time and words. The question is now brought to one point, and the whole argument will lie in one single syllogism. ‘Neither hope of doing greater good, nor fear of any evil, ought to deter you from what you have engaged yourself to do: but you have engaged yourself to undertake the cure of a parish: Therefore, neither that hope nor that fear ought to deter you from it.’ The only doubt which remains is, whether I have so engaged myself or not? You think I did at my ordination, ‘before God and his Highpriest.’ I think, I did not. However, I own I am not the proper judge of the oath I then took; it being certain, and allowed by all, ‘*Verbis, in quæ quis jurejurando*

* Mistaking the question.

adigitur, sensum genuinum, ut et obligationi Sacramenti modum ac mensuram, præstitui a mente non præstantis sed exigentis juramentum.—‘That the true sense of the words of an oath, and the mode and extent of its obligation, are not to be determined by him who takes it, but by him who requires it.’ Therefore it is not I, but the Highpriest of God, before whom I contracted that engagement, who is to judge of the nature and extent of it.

“Accordingly, the post after I received yours, I referred it entirely to him, proposing this single question to him, Whether I had, at my ordination, engaged myself to undertake the cure of a parish or no? His answer runs in these words: ‘It doth not seem to me, that at your ordination you engaged yourself to undertake the cure of any parish, provided you can, as a clergyman, better serve God and his church in your present or some other station.’—Now that I can, as a clergyman, better serve God and his Church in my present station, I have all reasonable evidence.”

The late Dr. Priestley, upon a view of Mr. John Wesley’s refusal to apply for the living of Epworth, and of his invincible resolution in every thing which appeared to him to concern religion, has declared, “he wanted only *rational principles* of religion, to be one of the first of human characters.” Had he had *only* what the Doctor calls *rational principles of religion*, he might have gone the usual rounds of parochial duty at Epworth, and, it may be, might have succeeded to what is termed a *better living*. But, however he might in that case have been admired as a scholar and a man, he certainly never would have been ranked with the Reformers or Apostles; nor would the present, not to say “future generations, rise up,” as the Doctor says they will, “and call him blessed.”

CHAPTER III.

MR. WESLEY’S MISSION TO AMERICA, IN WHICH HE WAS ACCOMPANIED BY HIS BROTHER CHARLES.

IN the midst of the debate described in the last Chapter, Mr. Wesley wrote to his mother, without taking the least notice of it; nor do I find that she wrote to him on that subject. She had approved of her eldest son’s refusal to apply for the living, as we shall see hereafter, and could not therefore join in pressing it on her second son. His letter is on the subject of Christian Liberty, concerning which he wished to have his mother’s opinion. He says, “I have had a great deal of conversation lately on the subject of Christian Liberty, and should be glad of your thoughts, as to the several notions of it which good men entertain. I perceive different persons take it in at least six different senses.—1. For liberty from wilful sin in opposition to the bondage of natural corruption.—2. For liberty as to rites and points of discipline. So Mr. Whiston says, ‘Though the *stations* were instituted by the Apostles, yet the liberty of the Christian law dispenses with them on extraordinary occasions.’—3. For liberty from denying ourselves in little things; for trifles,

it is commonly thought, we may indulge in safely, because Christ has made us free. This notion, I a little doubt, is not sound.—4. For liberty from fear, or a filial freedom from fear on account of his past sins ; for he believes in Christ, and hope frees him from fear of losing his present labour, or of being a castaway hereafter.—5. Christian Liberty is taken by some, for a freedom from restraint, as to sleep or food. So they would say, your drinking but one glass of wine, or my rising at a fixed hour, was contrary to Christian Liberty.—Lastly, it is taken for freedom from rules : If by this be meant, making our rules yield to extraordinary occasions, well ; if the having no rules at all, this liberty is as yet too high for me ; I cannot attain unto it.”

Mr. Wesley had now separated himself from all the world, and of course was intent on “*the wisdom from above.*” His speculations are remarkable for brevity, order, and clearness,—a consequence of that “*single eye*” which he possessed. But the promise made to all such inquirers, was not yet fulfilled in the evangelical sense. He did not yet feel his need of it, but was making the best use of the old stock. Christian Liberty has been much treated of, and often by those who were ignorant of its whole nature. In the last century, a Jesuit wrote largely upon it, professing to solve doubts, and give relief to afflicted consciences. The whole of his discourse may be judged of by one particular : If any person doubted whether any action amounted to mortal sin, and his Confessor could not give him satisfaction, he was to consult four Doctors of Divinity. If they should agree, that it did not amount thereto, he might dismiss all fear ! A witty writer replied, and entitled his answer, “*The Art of Chicanery with respect to God ;*”—that is, the Art of outwitting God ! Mr. Wesley was happily free from those *depths of Satan* : but he was not yet competent to discuss the subject of Christian Liberty : For 1. He was not then *justified*,—consequently not free from the guilt of sin. He could not therefore judge of the “*glorious liberty of the children of God,*” which he ably stated afterwards in several of his sermons.—2. He had no clear conception of that “*unction of the Holy One,*” whereby we are to “*know all things*” necessary for our walk with God.—“*Walk in the Spirit,*”—and “*Walk in the light, as He is in the light,*” were precepts as yet too high for him. He had not passed the “*strait gate,*” and could scarcely estimate the privileges of the “*narrow way.*” But the day of liberty drew near,—liberty from the guilt, the power, and the nature of sin ; liberty to do the whole will of Him that called him, without the shackles of unnecessary scruples, or unprofitable reasonings.

Mr. Wesley’s father died in April, 1735, and the living of Epworth was given away in May ; so that he now considered himself as settled at Oxford, without any risk of being farther molested in his quiet retreat. But a new scene of action was soon proposed to him, of which he had not before the least conception. The trustees of the new colony of Georgia were greatly in want of proper persons to send thither, to preach the Gospel, not only to the colony, but to the Indians. They fixed their eyes upon Mr. John Wesley and some of his friends, as the most proper persons, on account of the regularity of their behaviour, their abstemious way of living, and their readiness to endure hardships. On the 28th of August, being in London, he met with his friend Dr. Burton, for whom he had a great esteem ; and the next day was introduced to

Mr. Oglethorpe, where the matter was proposed to him, and strongly urged upon him by such arguments as they thought most likely to dispose his mind to accept of the proposal. It does not appear, that Mr. Wesley gave them any positive answer. He thought it best to take the opinion of his friends. Accordingly he wrote to his brother Samuel, and visited Mr. Law, and in three or four days, set out for Manchester, to consult Mr. Clayton, Mr. Byrom, and several others whose judgment he respected. From thence he went to Epworth, and laid the matter before his mother. Her answer, as he related it to me, was worthy of the mother and the son: "Had I twenty sons, I should rejoice that they were all so employed, though I should never see them more." His eldest sister also consented to his acceptance of the proposal. His brother Samuel did the same. Mr. Wesley still hesitated; and on the 8th of September, Dr. Burton wrote to him, pressing him to a compliance. His letter is directed to Manchester, and franked by Mr. Oglethorpe.

"September 8, 1735. C. C. C. Oxon.

"DEAR SIR,—I had it in commission to wait upon you at Oxford, whither by this time I imagined you might be arrived. Your short conference with Mr. Oglethorpe has raised the hopes of many good persons, that you and yours would join in an undertaking, which cannot be better executed than by such instruments. I have thought again of the matter, and upon the result of the whole, cannot help again recommending the undertaking to your choice: and the more so, since in our inquiries, there appears such an unfitness in the generality of people. That state of ease, luxury, levity, and inadvertency, observable in most of the plausible and popular Doctors, are disqualifications in a Christian teacher, and would lead us to look for a different set of people. The more men are inured to contempt of ornaments and conveniences of life, to serious thoughts and bodily austerities, the fitter they are for a state which more properly represents our Christian pilgrimage. And if, upon consideration of the matter, you think yourselves (as you must do, at least amidst such a scarcity of proper persons) the fit instruments for so good a work, you will be ready to embrace this opportunity of doing good; which is not in vain offered to you.—Be pleased to write a line signifying your thoughts to me, or Mr. Oglethorpe; and if by advice I can be assisting to you, you may command my best, best services.

"Yours affectionately,

"JOHN BURTON.

"P. S. Mr. Horn telling me, he heard you were at Manchester, I presume you are with Mr. Clayton, deliberating about this affair."

Mr. Wesley now consented to go to Georgia, and Dr. Burton wrote to him again on the 18th of the same month, as follows: "It was with no small pleasure, that I heard your resolution on the point under consideration. I am persuaded, that an opportunity is offered of doing much good in an affair, for the conducting of which we can find but few proper instruments. Your undertaking adds greater credit to our proceedings; and the propagation of religion will be the distinguishing honour of our colony. This has ever in like cases, been the *desideratum*: a defect seemingly lamented, but scarce ever remedied. With greater satisfaction, therefore, we enjoy your readiness to undertake the work. When

it is known that good men are thus employed, the pious and charitable will be the more encouraged to promote the work. You have too much steadiness of mind, to be disturbed by the light scoffs of the idle and profane. Let me put a matter to be considered by your brother Charles. Would it not be more advisable that he were in Orders?"

On the 28th of the same month, a few days before Mr. Oglethorpe intended to sail, Dr. Burton wrote again to Mr. Wesley, giving him advice on several points respecting his future situation. Among other things he observes,—“Under the influence of Mr. Oglethorpe, giving weight to your endeavours, much may be effected under the present circumstances. The apostolical manner of preaching from house to house, will, through God’s grace, be effectual to turn many to righteousness. The people are babes in the progress of their Christian life, to be fed with milk instead of strong meat; and the wise householder will bring, out of his stores, food proportioned to the necessities of his family. The circumstances of your present Christian pilgrimage will furnish the most affecting subjects of discourse; and what arises *pro re natâ*, will have greater influence than a laboured discourse on a subject in which men think themselves not so immediately concerned. With regard to your behaviour and manner of address, that must be determined according to the different circumstances of persons, &c. But you will always in the use of means, consider the great end, and therefore your applications will of course vary. You will keep in view the pattern of that Gospel preacher St. Paul, who became all things to all men, that he might gain some. Here is a nice trial of Christian prudence: Accordingly, in every case you would distinguish between what is essential, and what is merely circumstantial to Christianity; between what is indispensable, and what is variable; between what is of Divine and what is of human authority. I mention this, because men are apt to deceive themselves in such cases, and we see the traditions and ordinances of men frequently insisted on with more rigour than the commandments of God, to which they are subordinate. Singularities of less importance are often espoused with more zeal, than the weighty matters of God’s law. As in all points we love ourselves, so especially in our hypotheses. Where a man has, as it were, a property in a notion, he is most industrious to improve it, and that in proportion to the labour of thought he has bestowed upon it; and as its value rises in imagination, we are in proportion more unwilling to give it up, and dwell upon it more pertinaciously, than upon considerations of general necessity and use. This is a flattering mistake, against which we should guard ourselves. I hope to see you at Gravesend, if possible. I write in haste what occurs to my thoughts:—*disce, docendus adhuc, quæ censet amicus*.* May God prosper your endeavours for the propagation of his Gospel!"

Mr. Charles Wesley at this time resided at Oxford, and when his brother consented to Dr. Burton’s proposal, he also declared his willingness to accompany him in this new and untried path, which promised nothing except what they ardently desired,—a more complete deliverance from the world. This design, respecting Charles, his brother Samuel vehemently opposed, but in vain. Mr. Charles engaged himself as secretary to Mr. Oglethorpe, and also as secretary for Indian affairs. A little before they left England, Dr. Burton suggested, as the reader will have

* “Yet bear what thy unskilful friend can say.” CREECH.

seen, that it might be well if Mr. Charles Wesley were also ordained before he left this country. Mr. John Wesley overruled his brother's inclination in this thing also, and he was ordained Deacon by Dr. Potter, Bishop of Oxford; and the Sunday following, Priest by Dr. Gibson, Bishop of London.*

Mr. Wesley now prepared for his voyage to America. While he was abroad, Mr. Gambold,† who had been intimately acquainted with him at Oxford, wrote some account of his proceedings there, and endeavoured to delineate his character. He sent it to one of Mr. Wesley's relations; and I shall conclude this chapter with the following abstract from it. It properly closes the account of the academical career of the two brothers.

"About the middle of March, 1730, I became acquainted with Mr. Charles Wesley, of Christ Church. I had been for two years before in deep melancholy;—so it pleased God to disappoint and break a proud spirit, and to embitter the world to me as I was inclining to relish its vanities. During this time, I had no friend to whom I could open my mind; no man did care for my soul, or none at least understood her paths. The learned endeavoured to give me right notions, and the friendly to divert me. One day an old acquaintance entertained me with some reflections on the whimsical Mr. Charles Wesley; his preciseness, and pious extravagancies. Upon hearing this, I suspected he might be a good Christian. I therefore went to his room, and without ceremony desired the benefit of his conversation. I had so large a share of it afterwards, that hardly a day passed, while I was at College, but we were together once, if not oftener.

"After some time he introduced me to his brother John, of Lincoln College: 'For he is somewhat older,' said he, 'than I am, and can resolve your doubts better.' I never observed any person have a more real deference for another, than he had for his brother; which is the more remarkable, because such near relations, being equals by birth, and conscious to each other of all the little familiar passages of their lives, commonly stand too close to see the ground there may be for such submission. Indeed he followed his brother entirely; could I describe one of them I should describe both. I shall therefore say no more of Charles, but that he was a man formed for friendship; who by his cheerfulness and vivacity would refresh his friend's heart: With attentive consideration, he would enter into, and settle all his concerns as far as he was able: He would do any thing for him, great or small, and, by a habit of mutual openness and freedom, would leave no room for misunderstanding.

"The Wesleys were already talked of for some religious practices, which were first occasioned by Mr. Morgan of Christ Church. He was a young man of an excellent disposition. He took all opportunities to make his companions in love with a good life; to create in them a reverence for the public worship; to tell them of their faults with a sweetness and simplicity that disarmed the worst tempers. He delighted much in works of charity; he kept several children at school; and, when he found beggars in the street, would bring them into his

* Mr. C. Wesley's letter to Dr. Chandler.

† After some years, Mr. Gambold left the Church of England, joined the Moravians, merely, as he had stated, for the benefit of retirement and Christian friendship, and became one of their bishops.

chambers, and talk to them. From these combined friends began a little society. Mr. John Wesley was the chief manager, for which he was very fit; for he had not only more learning and experience than the rest, but he was blest with such activity as to be always gaining ground, and such steadiness that he lost none. What proposals he made to any, were sure to alarm them, because he was so much in earnest; nor could they afterwards slight them, because they saw him always the same. What supported this uniform vigour was, the care he took to consider well every affair before he engaged in it; making all his decisions in the fear of God, without passion, humour, or self-confidence. For though he had naturally a very clear apprehension, yet his exact prudence depended more on his humility and singleness of heart. He had, I think, something of authority in his countenance, yet he never assumed any thing to himself above his companions; any of them might speak their mind, and their words were as strictly regarded by him as his words were by them.

“ Their undertaking included these several particulars: To converse with young students; to visit the prisons; to instruct some poor families; to take care of a school and a parish workhouse. They took great pains with the younger members of the University, to rescue them from bad company, and encourage them in a sober studious life. They would get them to breakfast, and over a dish of tea endeavour to fasten some good hint upon them. They would bring them acquainted with other well-disposed young men, give them assistance in the difficult parts of their learning, and watch over them with the greatest tenderness.

“ Some or other of them went to the Castle every day, and another most commonly to Bocardo. Whoever went to the Castle, was to read in the chapel to as many prisoners as would attend, and to talk apart to the man or men whom he had taken particularly in charge. When a new prisoner came, their conversation with him for four or five times was close and searching.—If any one was under sentence of death, or appeared to have some intentions of a new life, they came every day to his assistance, and partook in the conflict and suspense of those who should be found able or not able, to lay hold on salvation. In order to release those who were confined for small debts, and to purchase books and other necessities, they raised a little fund, to which many of their acquaintance contributed quarterly. They had prayers at the Castle most Wednesdays and Fridays, a sermon on Sunday, and the sacrament once a month.

“ When they undertook any poor family, they saw them at least once a week; sometimes gave them money, admonished them of their vices, read to them, and examined their children. The school was, I think, of Mr. Wesley’s own setting up; however, he paid the mistress, and clothed some, if not all the children. When they went thither, they inquired how each child behaved, saw their work, heard them read and say their prayers, or catechism, and explained part of it. In the same manner they taught the children in the workhouse, and read to the old people as they did to the prisoners.

“ They seldom took any notice of the accusations brought against them for their charitable employments; but if they did make any reply, it was commonly such a plain and simple one, as if there was nothing

more in the case, but that they had just heard such doctrines of their Saviour, and had believed and done accordingly. Sometimes they would ask such questions as the following: 'Shall we be more happy in another life, the more virtuous we are in this? Are we the more virtuous, the more intensely we love God and man? Is love, of all habits, the more intense, the more we exercise it? Is either helping, or trying to help, man for God's sake, an exercise of love to God or man? Particularly, is feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the sick, or prisoners, an exercise of love to God or man? Is endeavouring to teach the ignorant, to admonish sinners, to encourage the good, to comfort the afflicted, and reconcile enemies, an exercise of love to God or man? Shall we be more happy in another life, if we do the former of these things, and try to do the latter; or if we do not the one, nor try to do the other?'

"I could say a great deal of his private piety; how it was nourished by a continual recourse to God; and preserved by a strict watchfulness in beating down pride, and reducing the craftiness and impetuosity of nature to a child-like simplicity; and in a good degree crowned with divine love, and victory over the whole set of earthly passions. He thought prayer to be more his business than any thing else; and I have seen him come out of his closet with a serenity of countenance that was next to shining; it discovered what he had been doing, and gave me double hope of receiving wise directions, in the matter about which I came to consult him. In all his motions he attended to the will of God. He had neither the presumption, nor the leisure, to anticipate things whose season was not now; and would show some uneasiness whenever any of us, by impertinent speculations, were shifting off the appointed improvement of the present minute. By being always cheerful, but never triumphing, he so husbanded the secret consolations which God gave him, that they seldom left him, and never but in a state of strong and long-suffering faith. Thus, the repose and satisfaction of the mind being otherwise secured, there was in him no idle cravings, no chagrin or fickleness of spirit, nothing but the genuine wants of the body to be relieved by outward accommodations and refreshments. When he was just come home from a long journey, and had been in different companies, he resumed his usual employments, as if he had never left them; no dissipation of thought appeared, no alteration of taste; much less was he discomposed by any slanders or affronts; he was only afraid lest he should grow proud of this conformity to his Master. In short, he used many endeavours to be religious, but none to seem so: With a zeal always upon the stretch, and a most transparent sincerity, he addicted himself to every good word and work.

"Because he required such a regulation of our studies, as might devote them all to God, he has been accused as one that discouraged learning. Far from that: For the first thing he struck at, in young men, was that indolence which will not submit to close thinking. He earnestly recommended to them a method and order in all their actions. The morning hour of devotion was from five to six, and the same in the evening. On the point of early rising, he told them, the well-spending of the day would depend. For some years past, he and his friends have read the New Testament together in the evenings; and after every por-

tion of it, having heard the conjectures the rest had to offer, he made his own observations on the phrase, design, and difficult places ; and one or two wrote these down from his mouth.

“ If any one could have provoked him, I should ; for I was very slow in coming into their measures, and very remiss in doing my part. I frequently contradicted his assertions ; or, which is much the same, distinguished upon them. I hardly ever submitted to his advice at the time he gave it, though I relented afterwards. One time he was in fear I had taken up notions that were not safe, and pursued my spiritual improvement in an erroneous, because inactive, way ; so he came over and staid with me near a week. He condoled with me the encumbrances of my constitution, heard all I had to say, and endeavoured to pick out my meaning, and yielded to me as far as he could. I never saw more humility in him than at this time.

“ Mr. Wesley had not only friends at Oxford to assist him, but a great many correspondents. He set apart one day at least in the week, to write letters, (and he was no slow composer,) in which, without levity or affectation, but with plainness and fervour, he gave his advice in particular cases, and vindicated the strict original sense of the Gospel precepts.

“ He is now gone to Georgia as a Missionary, where there is ignorance that aspires after Divine wisdom, but no false learning that is got above it. He is, I confess, still living ; and I know that an advantageous character is more decently bestowed on the deceased. But, besides that his condition is very like that of the dead, being unconcerned in all we say, I am not making any attempt on the opinion of the public, but only studying a private edification. A family picture of him, his relations may be allowed to keep by them. And this is the idea of Mr. Wesley, which I cherish for the service of my own soul, and which I take the liberty likewise to deposite with you.”

THE LIFE
OF
THE REV. JOHN WESLEY.

BOOK THE THIRD.

CHAPTER I.

HIS MISSION TO AMERICA.

MR. HAMPSON, in his Memoirs of Mr. Wesley, expresses no small surprise, when he comes to treat of his mission to Georgia, at what appears to him a strange and unaccountable change of mind in one who had just before evinced such unshaken firmness. "We imagined," says he, "that nothing less than stern necessity could have induced him to quit his beloved retirement." Had he enjoyed any intimacy with Mr. Wesley, he would have been able easily to account for it.

We have seen how deeply Mr. Wesley's mind was impressed with religious sentiments; and that he had devoted himself entirely to God. It has appeared also from his own words, how exceedingly painful to him was all commerce with the world; and that he had deeply imbibed even that undue love of retirement, which all good men have felt, more or less, from the Egyptian Hermits of the second century, down to the elegant and pious Cowley. But this was not all. He was at that time an admirer of the Mystic Writers; and though he had not embraced the peculiar sentiments of those who were grossly unscriptural, (from the time that he was *homo unius libri*, as he terms it himself, "a man of one book," valuing none comparatively but the Bible,) yet he still believed that many of the Mystics were, to use his own words, "the best explainers of the Gospel of Christ, chiefly because they taught the necessity of crucifixion to the world." And every one knows, as he has remarked, how continually those that are supposed to be the purest of them, cry out, "To the desert! to the desert!" What wonder then, if, at this time, when having only attained to what St. Paul calls "the Spirit of bondage unto fear,"—when every company, and almost every person, discomposed his mind,—when he found all his senses ready to betray him into sin, upon every exercise of them,—and when all within him, as well as every creature with whom he conversed, tended to extort that cry, "*O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me?*"—what wonder, I say, that he should accede to a proposal, which seemed at one stroke to cut him off from both the smiling and the frowning world, and to enable him to be "dead to the world" and "crucified with Christ,"—blessings which he *then* thought could be only thus secured. This is the account which he himself has given of his views and motives at that period. It will appear therefore, that his consent to go as a Missionary to Georgia only mani-

tested a continuation and higher exercise of that determined resolution of being separate from the world, which he had evinced in his refusal to solicit the living of Epworth. But that he did not hastily agree to leave his pupils, friends, and country, is to be inferred from his own Journals, and has been fully explained to me by himself in several conversations.

Before I enter upon the narrative of his voyage and mission, it will be needful to state a few particulars. We have already seen his full determination, evinced in many instances, to be not almost, but altogether a Christian. His predilection also in favour of those writers who explain the gospel in a way of ascetic mortification, has been mentioned. A mind like his, impressed from his childhood with the fear of God, and a body unsubdued by sloth, intemperance, or even delicacy of any kind, admirably fitted him to bear all the severities, into which his sentiments naturally led him. Thus prepared "to tread the world beneath his feet," he issued from the retirement of a College, to embrace whatever he might meet with in the new and untried scenes which lay before him.

That he was, as every real minister of Christ is, in some sense and degree, "led into the wilderness to be tempted," will appear in the following sheets : And indeed he always considered his American Mission in that point of view. Speaking, in one of his Appeals, of his ministry in Georgia, he adds,—“where God humbled me, and proved me, and showed me what was in my heart.”

But he was not suffered to depart without many remonstrances from his friends. One, who he knew did not believe the Christian revelation, said to him, “What is this, Sir? Are you turned Quixotte too? Will nothing serve you, but to encounter windmills?” He calmly replied, “Sir, if the Bible be not true, I am as very a fool and madman as you can conceive. But if it be of God, I am sober-minded. For he has declared, ‘*There is no man that hath left house, or friends, or brethren, for the kingdom of God’s sake, who shall not receive manifold more in the present time, and in the world to come everlasting life.*’”

To a friend who expostulated with him, he wrote his reasons at large. The substance of them has already been given ; but the following letter, in which the whole question is detailed in order, exhibits his views in so strong a light, that I cannot withhold it from the serious reader. It has never before been published.

“October 10th, 1735.

“DEAR SIR,—I have been hitherto unwilling to mention the grounds of my design of embarking for Georgia, for two reasons,—one, because they were such as I know few men would judge to be of any weight ;—the other, because I was afraid of making favourable judges think of me above what they ought to think : And what a snare this must be to my own soul, I know by dear-bought experience.

“But, on farther reflection, I am convinced, that I ought to speak the truth with all boldness, even though it should appear foolishness to the world, as it has done from the beginning ; and that whatever danger there is in doing the will of God, he will support me under it. In his name, therefore, and trusting in his defence, I shall plainly declare the thing as it is.

"My chief motive to which all the rest are subordinate, is, the hope of saving my own soul. I hope to learn the true sense of the Gospel of Christ, by preaching it to the heathen. They have no comments, to construe away the text ; no vain philosophy, to corrupt it ; no luxurious, sensual, covetous, ambitious expounders, to soften its unpleasing truths, to reconcile earthly-mindedness and faith, the Spirit of Christ and the spirit of the world. They have no party, no interest to serve, and are therefore fit to receive the Gospel in its simplicity. They are as little children, humble, willing to learn, and eager to do the will of God ; and consequently they shall know of every doctrine I preach, whether it be of God. By these, therefore, I hope to learn the purity of that faith which was once delivered to the saints ; the genuine sense and full extent of those laws which none can understand who mind earthly things.

"A right faith will, I trust, by the mercy of God, open the way for a right practice ; especially when most of those temptations are removed which here so easily beset me. Towards mortifying *the desire of the flesh*, the desire of sensual pleasures, it will be no small thing to be able, without fear of giving offence, to live on water and the fruits of the earth. This simplicity of food will, I trust, be a blessed means, both of preventing my seeking that happiness in meats and drinks, which God designed should be found only in faith, and love, and joy in the Holy Ghost ; and will assist me to attain such purity of thought, as suits a candidate for the state wherein they are as the Angels of God in heaven.

"Neither is it a small thing, to be delivered from so many occasions, as now surround me, of indulging *the desire of the eye*. They here compass me in on every side ; but an Indian hut affords no food for curiosity, no gratification of the desire of grand, or new, or pretty things :—Though, indeed, the cedars which God has planted round it, may so gratify the eye, as to better the heart, by lifting it to Him whose name alone is excellent, and his praise above heaven and earth.

"If by '*the pride of life*' we understand the pomp and show of the world, that has no place in the wilds of America. If it mean pride in general, this, alas ! has a place every where : Yet there are very uncommon helps against it, not only by the deep humility of the poor heathens, fully sensible of their want of an instructor ; but that happy contempt which cannot fail to attend all who sincerely endeavour to instruct them, and which, continually increasing, will surely make them in the end as the filth and offscouring of the world. Add to this, that nothing so convinces us of our own impotence, as a zealous attempt to convert our neighbour ; nor, indeed, till he does all he can for God, will any man feel that he can do nothing.

"Farther, a sin which easily besets me, is, unfaithfulness to God in the use of speech. I know that this is a talent intrusted to me by my Lord, to be used, as all others, only for his glory. I know that all conversation which is not seasoned with salt, and designed at least to administer grace to the hearers, is expressly forbid by the Apostle, as '*corrupt communication*,' and as '*grieving the Holy Spirit of God* ;' yet I am almost continually betrayed into it, by the example of others striking in with my own bad heart. But, I hope from the moment I leave the English shore, under the acknowledged character of a teacher sent from God, there shall be no word heard from my lips but what properly flows

from that character : As my tongue is a devoted thing, I hope from the first hour of this new era to use it only as such, that all who hear me may know of a truth, the words I speak are not mine, but His that sent me.

“ The same faithfulness I hope to show, through His grace, in dispensing the rest of my Master’s goods, if it please Him to send me to those who, like his first followers, have all things common. What a guard is here against that root of evil, the love of money, and all the vile attractions that spring from it ! One in this glorious state, and perhaps none but he, may see the height and depth of the privilege of the first Christians, *‘as poor, yet making many rich ; as having nothing, yet possessing all things.’*

“ I then hope to know what it is, to love my neighbour as myself, and to feel the powers of that second motive to visit the Heathens, even the desire to impart to them, what I have received, a saving knowledge of the Gospel of Christ ; but this I dare not think on yet. It is not for me, who have been a grievous sinner from my youth up, and am yet laden with foolish and hurtful desires, to expect God should work so great things by my hands ; but I am assured, if I be once converted myself, he will then employ me, both to strengthen my brethren, and to preach his name to the Gentiles, that the very ends of the earth may see the salvation of our God.

“ But you will perhaps ask, Cannot you save your own soul in England, as well as in Georgia ? I answer, No : neither can I hope to attain the same degree of holiness here, which I may there ; neither, if I stay here, knowing this, can I reasonably hope to attain any degree of holiness at all : For whoever, when two ways of life are proposed, prefers that which he is convinced in his own mind is less pleasing to God, and less conducive to the perfection of his soul, has no reason from the Gospel of Christ to hope that he shall ever please God at all, or receive from Him that grace whereby alone he can attain any degree of Christian perfection.

“ To the other motive, the hope of doing more good in America, it is commonly objected, that there are heathens enough in practice, if not theory, at home : Why then should you go to those in America ? Why ? for a very plain reason ;—because these heathens have Moses and the Prophets, and those have not ;—because these who have the Gospel, trample upon it, and those who have it not earnestly call for it ; *therefore, seeing these judge themselves unworthy of eternal life, lo, I turn to the Gentiles.*’

“ If you object farther, the losses I must sustain in leaving my native country, I ask, Loss of what ? of any thing I desire to keep ? No ; I shall still have food to eat, and raiment to put on,—enough of such food as I choose to eat, and such raiment as I desire to put on,—and if any man have a desire of other things, or of more food than he can eat, or more raiment than he can put on, let him know that the greatest blessing that can possibly befall him, is to be cut off from all occasions of gratifying those desires, which, unless speedily rooted out, will drown his soul in everlasting perdition.

“ But what shall we say to the loss of parents, brethren, sisters, nay, of the friends which are as my own soul, of those who have so often lifted up my hands that hung down, and strengthened my feeble knees, by

whom God hath often enlightened my understanding, and warmed and enlarged my heart? What shall we say?—why, that if you add the loss of life to the rest, so much the greater is the gain. For though *the grass withereth and the flower fadeth, the word of our God shall stand for ever*: Saying, that when human instruments are removed, He the Lord will answer us by his own self. And the general answer which he hath already given us, to all questions of this nature, is, ‘*Verily, I say unto you, there is no man that hath left father, or mother, or lands, for my sake, but shall receive an hundred fold now in this time, with persecutions, and in the world to come eternal life.*’”

We have here a full account of Mr. Wesley’s views at this time, and of the religious system which he had adopted, in order 1. to “*make his own calling and election sure,*” and 2. “*to spend and be spent*” for the good of mankind, and especially of the heathen, to whose service he was now devoted. It may, however, be thought, that the advantages which he proposed to *himself* in teaching the Indians could never be realized; as that plan seemed to be giving up learning, in order to be more benefited by ignorance. But that Gospel which was given especially for the *poor*, and which has always been accounted “*foolishness*” by the *wise*, has, in truth, this peculiarity in it:—it considers men merely as sinners, and as such it proclaims deliverance to them.

Nor are these views peculiar to those who have studied in the same school. A very sensible and pious writer of the present day, treating on the same subject, thus confirms the views of the Founder of Methodism: “It introduces,” says he, “a more pure, simple, apostolic mode of preaching the Gospel. The situation of a Missionary, retired from the scene of debate and controversy, (so common to those who have long known the Gospel in its history,) who has continually before his eyes the objects which presented themselves to the attention of the Apostles, is favourable to an emancipation from prejudice of every sort, and to the acquisition of just and enlarged conceptions of Christianity.”* This was what Mr. Wesley meant, on this point, in the statement given above.

Previous to his embarking for America, Mr. Wesley wrote to his brother Samuel at Tiverton. His letter is dated October the 15th. In it he informs his brother, that he had presented his father’s Commentary on Job to the Queen, and had received from her many good words and smiles. He then declares his sentiments concerning the usual method of teaching boys in schools by means of the Heathen Poets. “The uncertainty,” says he, “of having another opportunity to tell you my thoughts in this life, obliges me to tell you what I have often thought, and that in as few and plain words as I can. Elegance of style is not to be weighed against purity of heart; purity from ‘*the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life.*’ Therefore, whatever has a tendency to impair that purity, is not to be tolerated, much less recommended, for the sake of that elegance. But of this sort are most of the Classics usually read in our great schools; many of them, (besides Ovid, Virgil’s *Æneid*, and Terence’s *Eunuch*,) tending to inflame the lusts of the flesh, and more to feed the lust of the eye, and the pride of life. I beseech you therefore, ‘*by the mercies of God,*’ who would have us ‘*holy as He is holy,*’ that you banish all such poison from your school, and that you

* HALL’s Address to Eustace Carey.

introduce in their place such Christian authors as will work together* with you in building up your flock in the knowledge and love of God; for assure yourself, dear brother, you are even now called to the converting of heathen as well as I.

“So many souls [as you have pupils] are committed to your care by God, to be prepared for a happy eternity. You are to instruct them not only in the beggarly elements of Greek and Latin, but much more in the Gospel. You are to labour with all your might to convince them, that Christianity is not a negation, or an external thing, but a new heart,—a mind conformed to that of Christ; ‘*faith working by love.*’”

It should be noted that what Mr. Wesley here condemns is the reading and explaining of the Heathen poets *indiscriminately*; but that he would not have condemned a *selection* from them, is evident from his having, at a subsequent period, made and published such a selection for his own school at Kingswood. Mr. Wesley was not singular in this opinion. Dr. Whitehead has well observed, “The most learned and pious men in the Christian church, have, in all ages, thus spoken before him. Nay, the heathen moralists themselves deliver the same sentiments concerning their own poets. ‘Plato banished the poets from his imaginary commonwealth, and did not think them proper to be put into the hands of youth without great precaution; to prevent the dangers which might arise from them. Cicero* approves of his conduct, and supposing with him, that *poetry contributes only to the corruption of manners, to enervate the mind, and strengthen the false prejudices consequent on a bad education, and ill examples*, he seems astonished that the instruction of children should begin with them, and the study of them be called by the name of LEARNING and a LIBERAL EDUCATION.’”†

* Videsne poetæ quid mali afferant?—Ita sunt dulces, ut non legantur modo, sed etiam ediscantur. Sic ad malam domesticam disciplinam, vitamque umbratilem et delicatam, cum accesserunt etiam poetæ, nervos virtutis elidunt. Rectè igitur à Platone educuntur ex eâ civitate quam finxit ille, cum mores optimos et optimum reip. statum quæreretur. At vero nos, docti scilicet à Græciâ, hæc et à pueritiâ legimus et didicimus. Hanc eruditionem liberalem et doctrinam putamus!—Tusc. Quæst. lib. ii.

† The Jews prohibited the tutors of their children from instructing them in pagan literature. “Maledictus esto,” says the Gemara, “quisque filium suum sapientiam Græcicam edocet.—*Let him be accursed, whoever teaches his son Greek literature.*” The primitive Fathers of the church were divided in their opinions on this subject. Some forbade Christians to read any of the Heathen writers, on account of their bad tendency, both as to principles and morals. The Apostolical Constitutions, as they are called, speak in this strain, “Ab omnibus Gentilium libris absterne.—*Abstain from all books of the Gentiles.* And though these Constitutions are not *Apostolical*, yet it is allowed, on all hands, that they are *very* ancient. Cotelerius in a note on this passage, has shown the different sentiments of many of the Fathers; and it is probable that a majority of them were of opinion, the Heathen writers might be read with advantage, under certain restrictions and regulations. Basil the great has an oration, showing, “*Quomodo ex scriptis Gentilium utilitatem capere debeamus.*—*How we ought to reap advantage from the writings of the Gentiles.*” The most learned and pious among the moderns have very universally condemned the practice of *indiscriminately* reading the writings of the Heathens. On this subject Erasmus complains in one of his letters, “Pro Christianis reddamur Pagani.—*Instead of Christians we are made Pagans.*” And again, “Animadverto,” says he “juvenes aliquot, quos nobis remittit Italia, præcipue Roma, nonnihil adflatos hoc veneno.—*I observe some youths, returned from Italy, especially from Rome, infected with this poison.*”—Buddæi Isagoge, par. i, p. 147. Buddæus himself observes, after giving the opinions of several others, “Singulari utique hic opus esse circumspeditione, negari nequit; cum facile contingat, ut qui ethnicorum scriptis toti veluti immerguntur, ethnicum, plane, alienumque a religione Christianâ, inde referant animum.—*It cannot be denied, that there is here need of singular circumspection, as it easily happens, that they who are, as it were, wholly immersed in the writings of the heathens, return from them with a heathenish mind, alienated from the Christian religion.*”

Mr. Southey seems offended with Mr. Wesley's expression,—“The beggarly elements of Greek and Latin.”—But St. Paul uses the same words, even concerning the Ceremonial Law of Moses, when compared with the purity and power of the Gospel.

On Tuesday, October 14, 1735, Mr. Wesley and his brother Charles set off from London for Gravesend, accompanied by Mr. Ingham, and Mr. Delamotte, in order to embark for Georgia. "Our end," says he "in leaving our native country, was, not to avoid want, (God having given us plenty of temporal blessings,) nor to gain the dung and dross of riches and honour; but singly this, to save our souls, to live wholly to the glory of God." Accordingly the two following days, which they spent partly on board, and partly on shore, they employed in exhorting one another "*to shake off every weight, and to run with patience the race set before them!*" There were six and twenty Germans on board, members of the Moravian Church. Mr. Wesley was much struck with their Christian deportment, and immediately set himself to learn the German language in order to converse with them. The Moravian Bishop also, and two others of his society, began to learn English, for the laudable purpose, there is reason to believe, of enjoying Christian fellowship with those who so manifestly appeared to be walking in the same way. Mr. Wesley now began to preach *extempore*, which afterward became his constant practice.

They sometimes visited General Oglethorpe, who was the Governor of Georgia, and with whom they sailed, in his cabin. Upon one of those occasions, as Mr. Wesley informed me, the officers, and certain gentlemen who had been invited, took some liberties with the clergymen, not relishing their gravity. The General was roused at this, and, in a manner not to be misunderstood, cried out, "What do you mean, Sirs? Do you take these gentlemen for tithe-pig parsons? They are gentlemen of learning and respectability. They are my friends; and whoever offers any affront to them, insults me." From this time they were treated with great respect by all the passengers.

"Believing," says Mr. Wesley, "the denying ourselves in the smallest instance, might, by the blessing of God, be helpful to us, we wholly left off the use of flesh and wine, and confined ourselves to vegetable food, chiefly rice and biscuit." "We now," continues he, "began to be a little regular. Our common way of living was this. From four in the morning till five, we were engaged in private prayer. From five to seven, we read the Bible together, carefully comparing it (that we might not lean to our own understandings) with the writings of the earliest ages. At seven we breakfasted. At eight were the public prayers. From nine to twelve, I usually learned German, and Mr. Delamotte, Greek. My brother wrote sermons, and Mr. Ingham instructed the children. At twelve we assembled together, to give an account to each other of what we had done since our last meeting, and what we designed to do before our next. About one we dined. The time from dinner to four, we spent in reading to those of whom each of us had taken charge, or in speaking to them severally, as need required. At four were the evening prayers; when either the second Lesson was explained, (as it always was in the morning,) or the children were catechised and instructed before the congregation. From five to six, we again used private prayer. From six to seven, I read in my cabin to two or three of the passengers, (of whom there were about eighty English on board,) and each of my brethren to a few more in theirs. At seven I joined with the Germans in their public service; while Mr. Ingham was reading between the decks, to as many as desired to hear. At eight we met

again, to exhort and instruct one another. Between nine and ten we went to bed, where neither the roaring of the sea, nor the motion of the ship, could take away the refreshing sleep which God gave us."

I have given this account at large, as a specimen of his exactness in redeeming the time. Those who have not been intimately acquainted with Mr. Wesley, will be surprised at my declaring,—what I am persuaded is the truth,—that it would be difficult to fix upon a single day, in the fifty-three years which followed, that was not divided with as great precision. The employments might vary; but not the exact attention to the filling up of every hour!

That the time he spent with the passengers was not wholly lost upon them, we also learn from several passages in his Journals. Many were deeply awakened; others were instructed in the first principles of the Christian religion, who were before entirely ignorant; and some, who had lived for years in a constant neglect of the public ordinances of the Gospel, were prevailed upon to attend them by the indefatigable labours of himself and his coadjutors.

But though his eye was single; though his life was not only harmless but exemplary; though he gave all his goods to feed the poor, and sacrificed ease and honour, and every other temporal gratification, that he might follow Christ; yet it is certain, he was still very little acquainted with true experimental religion. This the Lord now began to show him, First, by the fear of death, which, notwithstanding all his efforts, brought him into bondage, whenever danger was apparent. "At those times," he remarks, "I plainly felt I was unfit, because I was unwilling to die;"* and, Secondly, the lively and victorious faith, which he evidently perceived in some of his fellow passengers, still more convinced him, that he possessed not the saving power of religion.

Speaking of the Germans, he remarks, "I had long before observed the great seriousness of their behaviour. Of their humility they have given a continual proof, by performing those servile offices for the other passengers, which none of the English would undertake; for which they desired, and would receive, no pay, saying, 'It was good for their proud hearts,' and 'Their loving Saviour had done more for them.' And every day had given them occasion of showing a meekness, which no injury could move. If they were pushed, struck, or thrown down, they rose again and went away; but no complaint was found in their mouth. There was now an opportunity of trying, whether they were delivered from the spirit of fear, as well as from that of pride, anger, and revenge. In the midst of the Psalm wherewith their service began, the sea broke over, split the mainsail in pieces, covered the ship, and poured in between the decks, as if the great deep had already swallowed us up. A terrible screaming began among the English. The Germans calmly sung on. I asked one of them afterwards, 'Was you not afraid?' He answered, 'I thank God, no.' I asked, 'But were not your women and children afraid?' He replied mildly, 'No, our women and children are not afraid to die.'"

A circumstance occurred in the course of his voyage, which is not unworthy of notice. Mr. Wesley, hearing an unusual noise in the cabin of General Oglethorpe, stepped in to inquire the cause: on which the

* Mr. Southey, however, would have us believe, that this fear of death arose merely from the state of his stomach!

General immediately addressed him, "Mr. Wesley, you must excuse me, I have met with a provocation too great for man to bear. You know, the only wine I drink, is Cyprus wine, as it agrees with me the best of any. I therefore provided myself with several dozens of it, and this villain Grimaldi, (his Italian servant, who was present, and almost dead with fear,) has drunk nearly the whole of it. But I will be revenged. He shall be tied hand and foot, and carried to the man of war. (He alluded to a ship of war which sailed with them.) The rascal should have taken care how he used me so, for I never forgive."—"Then, I hope, sir, (said Mr. Wesley, looking calmly at him,) you never sin." The General was quite confounded at the reproof; and, after a pause, putting his hand into his pocket, he took out a bunch of keys, which he threw at Grimaldi, saying, "There, villain! take my keys, and behave better for the future."

At this time the Colony of Georgia had been founded only three years. The British Government had encouraged it as a defence for the southern provinces against the Spaniards; but it had been projected by men of enlarged benevolence, as a means of providing for those who were poor at home. Twenty-one persons were incorporated as trustees for twenty-one years, with power, during that time, to appoint all the officers, and regulate all the concerns of the colony. They were authorized also to collect subscriptions, for fitting out and supporting the colonists till they could clear the lands. The trustees contributed money, not less liberally than time and labour. The Bank subscribed largely, and Parliament voted Ten Thousand Pounds. The first expedition consisted of a hundred and sixteen settlers. General James Oglethorpe, one of the trustees, embarked with them; an active, enterprising, and zealous man. He is said to have taken with him Sir Walter Raleigh's original Journals, and to have been guided by them in the choice of a situation for his settlement. This account is confirmed by the Indians: Their forefathers, they said, had held a conference with a warrior, who came over the great waters; and they pointed out a funeral barrow, under which the chief who had conferred with him was buried, by his own desire, in the spot where the conference was held. It should seem that Raleigh had impressed him with an extraordinary respect for his character.

The country belonged to the Creek Indians. They were computed at this time to amount to about 25,000 souls, war and disease having greatly reduced their numbers. An Indian woman, who had married a trader from Carolina, acted as interpreter between her countrymen and the English. Fifty chiefs and elders from the eight tribes of the Creeks were deputed to confer with Oglethorpe, and treat about an alliance. In the name of these confederated tribes, Weccachumpa, the Long Chief, informed the British adventurers, what was the extent of country which they claimed as their inheritance. He acknowledged the superiority of the white men to the red; he said, they were persuaded, that the Great Power, who dwelt in heaven and all around, (and he threw his hands abroad and prolonged his articulation as he spake,) had sent the English there for their good; and therefore, they were welcome to all the land which the Creeks did not use themselves.

Tomo-chachi, to whose tribe this part of the country belonged, then

presented the General with a buffalo skin, adorned on the inside with the head and feathers of an eagle. The eagle, he said, signified speed, and the buffalo strength. Like the eagle, the English flew over the great waters to the uttermost parts of the earth; and like the buffalo, they were so strong that nothing could withstand them. The feathers of the eagle, he said, were soft, and signified love; the skin of the buffalo was warm, and signified protection; therefore he hoped the English would love and protect the little family of the Creeks. The alliance was soon completed: And the general then presented to each of their Micoes, or Kings, a shirt, a laced coat, and a laced hat; to each of their warriors a gun, with some smaller presents to their attendants.

General Oglethorpe returned to England the following year, bringing with him Tomo-chachi, Sinawki his wife, and Tooanahowi his son, with seven other Indians. They were presented to George II, at Kensington Palace, where the Micoe offered to the King a calumet or token of peace, and addressed him in the following characteristic oration: "This day I see the majesty of your face, the greatness of your house, and the number of your people. I am come in my old days, though I cannot expect to see any advantage to myself: I am come for the good of the children of all the nations of the Upper and Lower Creeks, that they may be instructed in the knowledge of the English. These are feathers of the eagle, which is the swiftest of birds, and which flieth round our nations. These feathers in our hand are a sign of peace, and have been carried from town to town there. We have brought them over, to leave them with you, O great King, as a token of everlasting peace. O great King, whatever words you shall say unto me, I will faithfully tell them to all the kings of the Creek nations." The orator addressed the Queen also in these words: "I am glad to see this day, and to have the opportunity of seeing the Mother of this great people. As our people are joined with your Majesty's, we humbly hope to find you the common protectress of us and all our children."

The Indians had no reason to complain of their reception in England. A weekly allowance of twenty pounds was assigned them; and they were entertained by several persons of distinction. Liberal presents were made them; and when they embarked for their own country, they were carried in one of the king's carriages to Gravesend. A number of Saltzburghers, expelled by their own government on account of their religion, went over with them. A large party of Highlanders followed in the year ensuing, and the prospects of the colony were so promising that Parliament granted a supply of twenty-six thousand pounds. Mr. Oglethorpe, with Mr. Wesley, his brother, and their friends, sailed at the time already mentioned, with about three hundred passengers, in two ships.

Thursday, February 5, 1736, they arrived in Savannah river, in Georgia, and about eight the next morning landed on a small uninhabited island. General Oglethorpe led them to a rising ground, where they kneeled down to give thanks. He then took boat for Savannah. When the rest of the people came on shore, they also joined together in prayer. Upon this occasion Mr. Wesley observes, that the second lesson, Mark vi, seemed to him peculiarly suitable.

On February the 7th, the General returned with Mr. Spangenberg,

one of the Pastors of the Germans. The same piety, which Mr. Wesley had observed in those on board the ship, was also visible in this gentleman. "I therefore," says he, "asked his advice with regard to my own conduct. He said, 'My brother, I must first ask you one or two questions. Have you the witness in yourself? Does the Spirit of God bear witness with your spirit, that you are a child of God?' I was surprised, and knew not what to answer. He observed it, and asked, 'Do you know Jesus Christ?' I paused, and said, 'I know he is the Saviour of the world.' 'True,' replied he: 'But do you know he has saved you?' I answered, 'I hope he has died to save me.' He only added, 'Do you know yourself?' I said, 'I do.' But I fear they were vain words."—David's sling was here more than a match for Saul's armour, though both were used in the same cause. Mr. Wesley was certainly not proud of his superior attainments, and he knew how little they availed in the things of God. But he did not yet know what would avail. He was taken out of his depth by the first question! We see here how the "*babe in Christ who knew the Father*," even "*the least in the kingdom of God*," was greater than the wise and learned disciple of the great modern John Baptist, Mr. Law.

The house in which they were to reside not being ready, they took up their lodging with the Germans. "We had now," says Mr. Wesley, "an opportunity, day by day, of observing their whole behaviour. For we were in one room with them from morning to night, unless for the little time I spent in walking. They were always employed, always cheerful themselves, and in good humour with one another. They had put away all anger, and strife, and wrath, and bitterness, and clamour, and evil speaking. They walked worthy of the vocation wherewith they were called, and adorned the Gospel of our Lord in all things."

He proceeds, "Saturday, Feb. 28. They met to consult concerning the affairs of their church; Mr. Spangenberg being shortly to go to Pennsylvania, and Bishop Nitschman to return to Germany. After several hours spent in conference and prayer, they proceeded to the election and ordination of a Bishop. The great simplicity, as well as solemnity of the whole, almost made me forget the seventeen hundred years between, and imagine myself in one of those assemblies, where form and state were not, but Paul the tent-maker, or Peter the fisherman, presided, yet with *the demonstration of the Spirit and power*."

Sunday, March 7, Mr. Wesley entered on his ministry at Savannah, by preaching on the epistle for the day, being the xiiith of the first of Corinthians. In the second lesson, Luke xviii, was our Lord's prediction of the treatment which he himself, (and consequently his followers,) was to meet with from the world; and his gracious promise to those who are content, *Nudi nudum Christum sequi*.* "*Verily I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house, or parent, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come, everlasting life.*"

"Yet," says he, "notwithstanding the plain declarations of our Lord, notwithstanding my own repeated experience, notwithstanding the experience of all the sincere followers of Christ, whom I have ever talked with, read, or heard of; nay, and the reason of the thing, evincing it to

* Nakedly to follow a naked Christ.

a demonstration, that all who love not the light must hate him who is continually labouring to pour it in upon them;—I do here bear witness against myself, that when I saw the number of people crowding into the church, the deep attention with which they received the word, and the seriousness that afterwards sat on all their faces; I could scarce refrain from giving the lie to experience, and reason, and Scripture, all together. I could hardly believe that the greater, the far greater part of this attentive, serious people, would hereafter trample under foot that word, and say all manner of evil falsely of Him that spake it. O, who can believe what his heart abhors? Jesus, Master, have mercy on us! Let us love thy cross! Then shall we believe, *‘If we suffer with Thee, we shall also reign with Thee!’*”

Mr. Charles Wesley proceeded to Frederica, Mr. Oglethorpe chiefly residing there. His brother remained at Savannah,—both waiting for an opportunity of preaching to the Indians. On March the 9th, he landed on Simon’s Island, near Frederica, and, as he informs us in his Journal, his spirit immediately revived. “No sooner,” says he, “did I enter on my ministry than God gave me a new heart;* so true is that saying of Bishop Hall, ‘The calling of God never leaves a man unchanged; neither did God ever employ any in his service whom he did not enable for the work.’” The first person that saluted him on his landing, was his friend Mr. Ingham: “Never,” says he, “did I more rejoice to see him; especially when he told me the treatment he met with for vindicating the Lord’s Day.” In the afternoon he began to converse with his parishioners, without which he well knew that general instructions would be of little use. But, he observes, “with what trembling should I call them mine!” In the evening he read prayers in the open air, at which Mr. Oglethorpe was present. The lesson seemed remarkably adapted to his situation, and he felt the power of it;—*continue instant in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving; withal praying also for us, that God would open a door of utterance to speak the mystery of Christ, that I might make it manifest as I ought to speak.*”

Some of the women who came out with them now began to be jealous of each other, and to raise animosities and divisions in the Colony. The serious and religious deportment of Mr. C. Wesley, his constant presence, and his frequent reproofs of their licentious behaviour, soon made him an object of hatred; and plans were laid to ruin him with Mr. Oglethorpe, or to take him off by violence. These plans opened by degrees. March 11th, at ten in the morning, he began the full service to about a dozen women whom he got together, intending to continue it, and only to read some of the prayers to the men, in the morning before they went to work. He also expounded the second lesson. After the service, he met Mrs. H.’s maid, in great distress at the treatment which she said she received from her mistress. He prevailed on the poor girl, who seemed almost ready to destroy herself, to accompany him to Mrs. H., whom he besought to forgive her, but in vain. Her rage was quite ungovernable. Soon after, he met with Mr. Tackner, the husband of another of those daughters of violence, who he observes, made him full amends: He was in a most excellent spirit, resolved not to contend with his wife, but with himself, in “*putting off*

* An anticipation of the faith which he afterwards received.

the old man, and putting on the new." This was the first taste which he had of the spirit of the new settlers who had sailed with him from England. We shall see it more abundantly in the sequel.

In the evening he received the first harsh word from Mr. Oglethorpe, when he asked for something for a poor woman. The next day he received a rougher answer in a matter which deserved still greater encouragement. "I know not," says he, "how to account for his increasing coldness." His *encouragement*, he observes, was the same in speaking with Mrs. W., whom he found "all storm and tempest; so wilful, so untractable, so fierce, that he could not bear to stay near her." This evening Mr. Oglethorpe was with the men under arms, in expectation of an enemy, but in the same ill humour with Mr. C. Wesley. "I staid," says he, "as long as I could, however unsafe, within the wind of such commotion; but at last the hurricane of his passion drove me away."

Mr. C. Wesley's situation was now truly alarming; not only as it regarded his usefulness, but his safety. Many persons lost all decency in their behaviour towards him; and Mr. Oglethorpe's treatment of him showed, that he had received impressions to his disadvantage: at the same time he was totally ignorant of his accusers, and of what he was accused. Conscious, however, of his own innocence, he trusted in God, and considered his sufferings as a part of the portion of "*those who will live godly in Christ Jesus.*"—Sunday, March 14th, he read prayers, and preached under a great tree, to about twenty people, among whom was Mr. Oglethorpe. "In the Epistle," says he, "I was plainly shown what I ought to be, and what I ought to expect. *Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed; but in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of Christ; in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings;*" &c. At night he found himself exceedingly faint; but had no better bed to lie down upon than the ground; on which he says, "I slept very comfortably before a great fire, and waked next morning perfectly well."

He spent March 16th wholly in writing letters for Mr. Oglethorpe. He had now been six days at Frederica; and observes, "I would not spend six days more in the same manner for all Georgia." Nothing, certainly, but a determination to do and suffer the whole will of God, could make such a place tolerable for such a man for one day.

March 18, Mr. Oglethorpe set out with the Indians to hunt the buffalo upon the main, and to see the utmost limits of what they claimed.—This day Mrs. W. discovered to Mr. Wesley "the whole mystery of iniquity:" This will appear in its proper place. He went to his myrtle grove, and while he was repeating, "I will thank thee, for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation," a gun was fired from the other part of the bushes. Providentially he had the moment before, turned from that end of the walk where the shot entered, and heard it pass close by him. This was, apparently, a design upon his life.

A circumstance now took place, which soon brought on an explanation between Mr. Oglethorpe and Mr. C. Wesley. The General had, more than once, given orders, that no one should shoot on a Sunday; and a man had been confined in the guardroom for it. In the midst of the sermon, on Sunday the 21st, a gun was fired: The constable ran

out, and found it was the Doctor, and told him it was contrary to orders, and he must go with him to the officer. The Doctor's passion kindled: "What!" said he, "don't you know that I am not to be looked upon as a common fellow?" The constable not knowing what to do, went back, and, after consulting with the officer, returned with two sentinels, and took the Doctor to the guard-room. His wife then charged and fired a gun, and ran thither like a mad woman, and said she had shot, and would be confined too. She cursed and swore in the utmost transport of rage, threatening to kill the first man that should come near her; but at last she was persuaded to go away. In the afternoon she fell upon Mr. C. Wesley in the street, with the greatest bitterness and scurrility; saying he was the cause of her husband's confinement, but she would be revenged, &c. He replied, that he pitied her but defied all that she or the devil could do; and he hoped she would soon be of a better mind. "In my evening hour of retirement," says he, "I resigned myself to God, in prayer for conformity to a suffering Saviour." "At night," he tells us, "I was forced to exchange my usual bed, the ground, for a chest; being almost speechless with a violent cold."

Mr. Oglethorpe was now expected to return from his excursion with the Indians; and such was the violence of the party formed against Mr. C. Wesley, that the Doctor sent his wife to arm herself from the case of instruments, and forcibly to make her way to speak to the General first on his landing, and even to stab any person who should oppose her. "I was encouraged," says Mr. Wesley, "from the lesson, '*God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power.—Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord,*'" &c.

Of the occurrences connected with Mr. Oglethorpe's return, Mr. C. Wesley gives the following statement:—"March 24th, I was enabled to pray earnestly for my enemies, particularly for Mr. Oglethorpe, whom I now looked upon as the chief of them; I then gave myself up entirely to God's disposal, desiring that I might not now want power to pray, when I most of all needed it. Mr. Ingham then came and read the 37th Psalm, a glorious exhortation to patience, and confidence in God.—When notice was given us of Mr. Oglethorpe's landing, Mr. H., Mr. Ingham, and I, were sent for. We found him in his tent, with the people round it, and Mr. and Mrs. H. within. After a short hearing, the officers were reprimanded, and the prisoners were dismissed. At going out, Mrs. H. modestly told me, she had something more to say against me, but she would take another opportunity.—I only answered, 'You know, madam, it is impossible for me to fear you.' When they were gone, Mr. Oglethorpe said he was convinced and glad that I had no hand in all this. I told him, that I had something to impart of the last importance when he was at leisure. He took no notice, but read his letters, and I walked away with Mr. Ingham, who was utterly astonished. The issue is just what I expected.—I was struck with these words in the evening lesson: '*Thou, therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus: Remember that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead, according to my gospel, wherein I suffer trouble as an evil-doer, even unto bonds, but the word of God is not bound, therefore I endure all things for the elect's sake. It is a faithful saying: for if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: if we suffer, we shall also reign with him.*'

“Thursday, March 25.—At half past seven, Mr. Oglethorpe called me out of my hut: I looked up to God, and went. He charged me with mutiny and sedition; and with stirring up the people to leave the colony. Accordingly, he said, they had a meeting last night, and sent to him this morning, desiring leave to go; that their speaker had informed against them, and against me, the spring of all; that the men were such as constantly came to prayers, therefore I must have instigated them; that he should not scruple shooting half a dozen of them at once; but that he had, out of kindness, first spoken to me. My answer was, ‘I desire, sir, that you would have no regard to my friends, or the love you had for me, if any thing of this charge be made out against me. I know nothing of their meeting or designs. Of those you have mentioned, not one comes to prayers or sacrament. I never invited any one to leave the colony. I desire to answer accusers face to face.’ He said, my accuser was Mr. Lawley, whom he would bring, if I would wait here. I added, ‘Mr. Lawley is a man who has declared, *that he knows no reason for keeping fair with any one, but a design to get all he can by him; but there was nothing to be got by the poor Parson.*’ I asked whether he was not assured, that there were men enough in Frederica, who would say or swear any thing against any man, if he were in disgrace? Whether, if he himself was removed, or succeeded ill, the whole stream of the people would not be turned against him? And even this Lawley, who was of all others, the most violent in condemning the prisoners, and justifying the officers? I observed, this was like the old cry, *‘Away with the Christians to the lions!’* I mentioned R. and his wife scandalizing my brother and me, and vowing revenge against us both, threatening me yesterday even in his presence. I asked, what satisfaction or redress was due to my character? What good I could do in my parish, if cut off by calumnies from ever seeing one half of it? I ended with assuring him, that I had made, and should still make it my business, to promote peace among all.

“When Mr. Oglethorpe returned with Lawley, he observed the place was too public: I offered to take him to my usual walk in the woods. In the way, it came into my mind to say to Mr. Oglethorpe, ‘Show only the least disinclination to find me guilty, and you shall see what a turn it will give to the accusation.’ He took the hint, and insisted on Lawley to make good his charge. He began with the quarrel in general, but did not show himself angry with me, or desirous to find me to blame. Lawley, who appeared full of guilt and fear, upon this dropped his accusation, or rather shrunk it into my forcing the people to prayers. I replied, ‘The people themselves would acquit me of that;’ and as to the quarrel of the officers, I appealed to the officers themselves for the truth of my assertion, that I had no hand at all in it. I professed my desire and resolution of promoting peace and obedience. Here Mr. Oglethorpe spoke of reconciling matters; bidding Lawley tell the people, that he would not so much as ask who they were, if they were but quiet for the future. ‘I hope,’ added he, ‘they will be so; and Mr. Wesley here hopes so too.’ ‘Yes,’ says Lawley, ‘I really believe it of Mr. Wesley: I had always a great respect for him.’ I turned, and said to Mr. Oglethorpe, ‘Did I not tell you it would be so?’ He replied to Lawley, ‘Yes, you had always very great respect for Mr. Wesley! You told me he was a stirrer up of sedition, and at the bottom of all this dis-

turbance!’ With this gentle reproof he dismissed him; and I thanked Mr. Oglethorpe, for having first spoken to me of the things of which I was accused, begging he would always do so, which he promised. I walked with him to Mrs. H.’s door; she came out aghast to see me with him. He there left me, ‘*and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.*’”

Mr. C. Wesley continues: “I went to my hut, where I found Mr. Ingham: He said, this was but the beginning of sorrows. ‘*Not as I will, but as thou wilt.*’ About noon, in the midst of a storm of thunder and lightning, I read the 28th Psalm, and found it gloriously suited to my circumstances. I never felt the Scriptures as now. I now find them all written for my instruction or comfort.* At the same time I felt great joy in the expectation of our Saviour’s thus coming to judgment; when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed, and God shall make *my innocency as clear as the light, and my just dealing as the noon-day.* After spending an hour at the camp, in singing such Psalms as suited the occasion, I went to bed in the hut, which was thoroughly wet with to-day’s rain.

“March 26.—*My soul is always in my hand, therefore will I not forget thy law.* This morning, early, Mr. Oglethorpe called me out to tell me of Mrs. Lawley’s miscarriage, by being denied access to the Doctor for bleeding. He seemed very angry, and to charge me with it; saying, he should be the tyrant if he passed by such intolerable injuries. I answered, that I knew nothing of the matter, and it was hard that it should be imputed to me; that, from the first, Hermsdorff told the Doctor, he might visit any patients that he pleased, but the Doctor would not visit any. I denied, that I had the least hand in the business, as Hermsdorff himself had declared; and yet I must be charged with all the mischief! ‘How else can it be,’ said he, ‘that there is no love, no meekness, no true religion among the people; but, instead of this, mere formal prayers?’ I said, ‘As to that, I can answer for them, that they have no more of the form of godliness, than the power; for I have seldom more than six at the public service.’ He asked, ‘But what would an unbeliever say to your raising these disorders?’ I answered, ‘If I had raised them, he might say there is nothing in religion; but what would that signify to those who had experienced it? They would not say so.’ He said, ‘The people were full of dread and confusion; that it was much more easy to govern a thousand than sixty persons; that he durst not leave them before they were settled.’ I asked him, ‘Whether he would have me altogether forbear to converse with my parishioners?’ To this I could get no answer. I went on to observe, that the reason why I did not interpose for or against the Doctor, was his having, at the beginning, charged me with his confinement. I said, ‘I have talked less with my parishioners these five days past, than I had done in any one afternoon before. I have shunned appearing in public, lest my advice should be asked; or lest, if I heard others talking, my silence should be deciphered into advice. But one argument of my innocence I can give, which will convince even you of it. I know, my life is in your hands; and you know, that were you to frown upon me, and give the least intimation that it would be agreeable to you, the generality of this wretched people would say or swear any thing.’ To

* So every man will find them, who walks according to them.

this he agreed, and owned the case was so with them all. 'You see,' said I, 'that my safety depends on your single opinion of me. Must I not therefore be mad, if, in such a situation, I should provoke you, by disturbing the public peace? Innocence, I know, is not the least protection, but my sure trust is in God.' Here company interrupted us, and I left him. I was no longer careful for the event, after reading those words in the morning lesson, '*Thou shalt not follow me now, but thou shalt follow me afterward.*' Amen: When thou pleasest: Thy time is best."

In the midst of the storm, Mr. C. Wesley wrote thus to his brother. His calmness and moderation are strikingly evident in this letter.

FREDERICA, *March 27th, 1736.*

"DEAR BROTHER,—I received your letter and box. My last to you was opened, the contents being publicly proclaimed by those who were so ungenerous as to intercept it. I have not yet complained to Mr. Oglethorpe. Though I trust I shall never either write or speak what I will not justify both to God and man; yet I would not have the secrets of my soul revealed to every one. For their sakes, therefore as well as for my own, I shall write no more, and desire you will not. Nor will you have occasion, as you visit us so soon. I hope your coming may be of use to many.

"Mr. Oglethorpe gave me an exceeding necessary piece of advice for you: 'Beware of hypocrites, in particular of log-house converts.' They consider you as favoured by Mr. Oglethorpe, and will therefore put on the form of religion, to please, not God, but you. To this I shall only add, give no temporal encouragement whatever to any seeming converts, else they will follow you for the sake of the loaves. Convince them thus, that it can never be worth their while to be hypocrites. Stay till you are in disgrace, in persecution, by the heathen, by your own countrymen; till you are accounted the offscouring of all things, (as you must infallibly be, if God is true,) and then see who will follow you. I.*

"God, you believe, has much work to do in America. I believe so too, and begin to enter into the designs which he has over me. I see why he brought me hither; and hope ere long to say with Ignatius, 'It is now that I BEGIN to be a disciple of Christ.' God direct you to pray for me.—Adieu."

What a superiority to all the machinations of his ungodly persecutors does this letter exhibit! "Calm on tumult's wheel!" See the power that God gives to *sincerity*!—for, as yet, he had not the faith of the Gospel.

On the evening of the day when Mr. Charles Wesley wrote this letter, a thought came into his mind to send Mr. Ingham for his brother. Mr. Ingham was at first much averse to leave him in his trials, but at length was persuaded to go to Savannah; and Mr. John Wesley set out from thence on the 4th of April.† I shall continue my extracts from Mr. Charles's narrative.

"Sunday, March 28th.—I went to the storehouse, our tabernacle at present, to hearken what the Lord God would say concerning both

* His way of writing, as also of speaking, was always very short and sententious.

† See Mr. Wesley's Journal, vol. xxvi of his Works, pp. 127, 128.

myself and the congregation. I was struck with the first lesson, Joseph and Potiphar's wife. The second was still more animating: '*If the world hate you, ye know it hated me before it hated you; if ye were of the world, the world would love its own.*' After prayers, poor Mr. Davison staid behind to take his leave of Mr. Ingham. He burst into tears, and said, 'One good man is leaving us already; I foresee nothing but desolation. Must my poor children be brought up like these savages?*' We endeavoured to comfort him, by showing him his calling. At ten o'clock Mr. Ingham preached an alarming sermon on the Day of Judgment. In my walk at noon, I was full of heaviness; I complained to God, that I had no friend but Him, and even in Him could find no comfort. Immediately I received power to pray; then, opening my Bible, I read as follows: '*Hearken unto me, ye that seek the Lord; look unto the rock from whence you were hewn: Fear not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their reviling. Awake, awake, flee away; who art thou, that thou shouldst be afraid of a man that shall die, and hast feared continually every day, because of the fury of the oppressor? And where is the fury of the oppressor?*' After reading this, it is no wonder that I found myself renewed in confidence. While Mr. Ingham waited for the boat, I took a turn with Mr. Horton: He fully convinced me of the true character of Mrs. H.;—in the highest degree ungrateful, &c. &c. I then hastened to the water-side, where I found Mr. Ingham just put off. O! happy, happy friend! *Abiit, erupit, evasit*:† but wo is me that I am still constrained to dwell in Meshech. I languished to bear him company, followed him with my eye till out of sight, and then sunk into deeper dejection of spirit than I had known before.

"March 29.—I was revived with those words of our Lord; '*These things have I spoken unto you, that you should not be offended. They shall put you out of their synagogues; yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you shall think that he doeth God service,*' &c. Knowing when I left England, that I was to live with Mr. Oglethorpe, I brought nothing with me but my clothes and books. This morning, asking a servant for something I wanted, I think a tea-kettle, he told me, that Mr. Oglethorpe had given orders that no one should use his things. I answered, 'That order, I suppose, did not extend to me?'—'Yes, Sir,' said he, 'you were excepted by name.' Thanks be to God, that it is not yet made capital to give me a morsel of bread!

"March 30.—Having lain hitherto on the ground, in a corner of Mr. Reed's hut, and hearing some boards were to be disposed of, I attempted in vain to get some of them to lie upon; they were given to all besides, the minister of Frederica only must be *αφρητωρ, αδερμιος, ανεσιος*.‡ Yet, are we not hereunto called—*αστατειν, κακοπαθειν*?§ Even the Son of Man had not where to lay his head. I find the Scriptures an inexhaustible fund of comfort. '*Is my hand shortened at all that I cannot save, or have I no power to deliver? Behold, the Lord God will help me: who is he that shall condemn me?*'

"March 31.—I begin now to be abused and slighted into an opinion

* He meant the good Christians who came with them from England.

† He is gone; he has broken loose; he has escaped.

‡ To be destitute of a habitation, and treated as an enemy to society, and as an unjust person.

§ To have no certain dwelling-place; to suffer afflictions.—1 Cor. iv, 11; 2 Tim. iv, 5.

of my own considerableness. I could not be more trampled upon, were I a fallen Minister of State. The people have found out, that I am in disgrace, and all the cry is, *Curramus præcipites, et, dum jacet in ripâ, calcemus Cæsaris hostem*.* My few well-wishers are afraid to speak to me ; some have turned out of the way to avoid me ; others have desired, that I would not take it ill if they seemed not to know me when we should meet. The servant that used to wash my linen, sent it back unwashed. It was great cause of triumph that I was forbid the use of Mr. Oglethorpe's things ; which, in effect, debarred me of most of the conveniences, if not the necessities, of life. I sometimes pitied them, and sometimes diverted myself with the odd expressions of their contempt ; but I found the benefit of having undergone a much lower degree of obloquy at Oxford.

"April 1.—In the midst of morning service, a poor scout boat-man was brought in, who was almost killed by the bursting of a cannon. I found him senseless and dying, and all I could do, was to pray for him, and try by his example to awaken his two companions. He languished till the next day and then died.—Hitherto I have been borne up by a spirit not my own : but exhausted nature sinks at last. It is amazing she has held out so long. My outward hardships and inward conflicts ; the bitterness of reproach from the only man I wished to please, at last have worn down my boasted courage. Accordingly this afternoon I was forced by a friendly fever to take my bed. My sickness, I knew, could not be of long continuance, as I was in want of every help and convenience ; it must either soon leave me, or release me from farther sufferings. In the evening Mr. Hird and Mr. Robinson called to see me, and offered me all the assistance in their power. I thanked them, but desired they would not prejudice themselves by taking this notice of me. At that instant we were alarmed with a cry of the Spaniards being come ; we heard many guns fired, and saw the people fly in great consternation to the fort. I felt not the least disturbance or surprise ; bid the women not fear, for God was with us. In a few minutes, news was brought, that it was only a contrivance of Mr. Oglethorpe's to try the people. My charitable visitants then left me, and soon returned with some gruel, which threw me into a sweat.

"The next morning, April 2, they ventured to call again : At night, when my fever was somewhat abated, I was led out to bury the scout boat-man, and envied him his quiet grave.

"April 3.—I found nature endeavoured to throw off the disease by excessive sweating : I therefore drank whatever the women brought me.

"April 4.—My flux returned ; but notwithstanding this, I was obliged to go abroad, and preach and administer the sacrament. My sermon, on '*Keep innocency and take heed to the thing that is right, for this shall bring a man peace at the last*,' was deciphered into a satire against Mrs. H.—At night I got an old bedstead to sleep upon, being that on which the scout boat-man had died.

"April 6.—I found myself so faint and weak, that it was with difficulty I got through the prayers. Mr. Davison, my good Samaritan, would often call or send his wife to attend me ; and to their care, under God, I

* "Let us run quickly ; and while he is down, let us trample on the enemy of Cæsar." These words were spoken originally of Sejanus, the fallen minister of Tiberius the Roman Emperor.

owe my life. To-day Mr. Oglethorpe gave away my bedstead from under me, and refused to spare one of the carpenters to mend me up another.

“April 10.—Mr. Reed waked me with the news, that my brother and Mr. Delamotte were on their way to Frederica. I found the encouragement I sought, in the Scripture for the day, Psalm lii. ‘*Why boastest thou thyself, thou tyrant, that thou canst do mischief? whereas the goodness of God endureth yet daily. Thy tongue imagineth wickedness, and with lies thou cuttest like a sharp razor,*’ &c.—At six my brother and Mr. Delamotte landed, when my strength was so exhausted, that I could not have read prayers once more. He helped me into the woods, for there was no talking among a people of spies and ruffians; nor even in the woods, unless in an unknown tongue.* And yet Mr. Oglethorpe received my brother with abundant kindness! I began my account of all that had passed, and continued it till prayers. It would be needless to mention all the Scriptures, which, for so many days, have been adapted to my circumstances. But I cannot pass by the lesson for this evening, Heb. xi.—I was ashamed of having well nigh sunk under my sufferings, when I beheld the conflicts of those triumphant sufferers of *whom the world was not worthy.*

“April 11.—What words could more support our confidence, than the following, out of the Psalms for the day? ‘*Be merciful unto me, O God, for man goeth about to devour me. He is daily fighting and troubling me. Mine enemies be daily in hand to swallow me up, for they be many that fight against me. I will put my trust in God, and will not fear what flesh can do unto me. They daily mistake my words,*’ &c. The next Psalm was equally animating,—‘*Be merciful unto me, O God, for my soul trusteth in thee; and under the shadow of thy wings shall be my refuge, till this tyranny be overpast. I will call unto the most high God, even unto the God that shall perform the cause that I have in hand. My soul is among lions; and I lie even among the children of men that are set on fire, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword,*’ &c. I just recovered strength enough to consecrate at the Sacrament; my brother performed the rest. We then went out of the reach of informers; and I proceeded in my account, being fully persuaded of the truth of Mrs. W.’s information against Mr. Oglethorpe, Mrs. H., and herself. At noon my brother repeated to me his last conference with Mrs. W., in confirmation of all she had ever told me. Of this affair more will hereafter be related.

“April 17th.—My brother and Mr. Delamotte set out in an open boat for Savannah. I preached in the afternoon on ‘*He that now goeth on his way weeping and beareth good seed, shall doubtless come again with joy, and bring his sheaves with him.*’

“Easter-eve, April 24.—I was sent for at ten by Mr. Oglethorpe. He began, ‘Mr. Wesley, you know what has passed between us. I took some pains to satisfy your brother about the reports concerning me, but in vain; he here renews his suspicions in writing. I did desire to convince him, because I had an esteem for him; and he is just as considerable to me as my esteem makes him. I could clear up all; but it matters not; you will soon see the reason of my actions. I am now going to death; you will see me no more. Take this ring, and carry

* They conversed in Latin.

it from me to Mr. V. If there be a friend to be depended on, he is one. His interest is next to Sir Robert's; whatever you ask, within his power, he will do for you, your brother, and family. I have expected death for some days. These letters show, that the Spaniards have long been seducing our allies, and intend to cut us off at a blow. I fall by my friends, on whom I depended to send their promised succours. But death is nothing to me;* I will pursue all my designs, and to Him I recommend them and you.' He then gave me a diamond ring; I took it, and said, *If postremum fato quod te alloquor; hoc est,*† hear what you will quickly know to be a truth as soon as you are entered on a separate state: this ring I shall never make any use of for myself: I have no worldly hopes, I have renounced the world. Life is bitterness to me—I came hither to lay it down. You have been deceived as well as I. I protest my innocence of the crimes I am charged with, and think myself now at liberty to tell you what I thought never to have uttered."—It is probable that he then unfolded to Mr. Oglethorpe the whole plot, as Mrs. W. had discovered it to him.

"When I had finished this relation," proceeds Mr. C. Wesley, "he seemed entirely changed: full of his old love and confidence in me. After some expressions of kindness, I asked him, Are you now satisfied?—He replied, 'Yes, entirely.'—Why then, Sir, I desire nothing more on earth, and care not how soon I follow you.—He added, how much he desired the conversion of the heathen, and believed my brother intended for it.—But I believe, said I, it will never be under your patronage; for then men would account for it, without taking God into the account. He replied, 'I believe so too.'—He then embraced and kissed me with the most cordial affection. I attended him to the scout boat, where he waited some minutes for his sword. They brought a mourning-sword the first and a second time; at last they gave him his own, which had been his father's. 'With this sword,' said he, 'I was never yet unsuccessful.' When the boat put off, I ran into the woods to see my last of him. Seeing me and two others run after him he stopped the boat, and asked if we wanted any thing. Capt. Mackintosh, whom he left commander, desired his last orders. I then said, God is with you; go forth, *Christo duce, et auspice Christo*. 'You have,' said he, 'some verses of mine: you there see my thoughts of success.' The boat then carried him out of sight. I interceded for him, that God would save him from death, and wash away all his sins.

"April 29.—About half past eight, I went down to the bluff, to see a boat that was coming up. At nine it arrived, with Mr. Oglethorpe. I blessed God for still holding his soul in life. In the evening we took a walk together, and he informed me more particularly of our past danger. Three large ships and four smaller, had been seen for three weeks together at the mouth of the river; but the wind continuing against them, they were hindered from making a descent until they could stay no longer. I gave him back his ring, and said, I need not, indeed I cannot, Sir, tell you how joyfully and thankfully I return this.—'When I gave it you,' said he, 'I never expected to receive it again, but thought it would be of service to your brother and you. I had many omens of my death; but God has been pleased to preserve a life which was never valuable to

* Poor empty boast! † If this be the last time I am allowed to speak to you.

me ; and yet, in the continuance of it, I thank God, I can rejoice.' He appeared full of tenderness to me ; and passed on to observe the strangeness of his deliverance, when betrayed on all sides, without human support and utterly helpless. He condemned himself for his late anger, which he imputed to want of time for consideration. I longed, Sir, said I, to see you once more, that I might tell you some things before we finally parted. But then I considered that if you died, you would know them all in a moment.—' I know not,' said he, ' whether separate spirits regard our little concerns : If they do, it is as men regard the follies of their childhood ; or, as I my late passionateness.' " Could these words be uttered by any man of understanding who believed the Christian Revelation ?

" April 30, I had some farther talk with him ; he ordered me every thing he could think I wanted ; and promised to have a house built for me immediately. He was just the same to me he formerly had been."

Mrs. H. and Mrs. W. were women of very loose morals ; they had come from England in the ship with Mr. Oglethorpe, and while at sea, Mrs. W. seemed to be under some religious impressions, but soon lost them on shore. The character of Mrs. H. was well known in England ; Mr. Charles Wesley was informed by Mr. Hird, that Mr. Oglethorpe declared he would rather give a hundred pounds than take her in the ship. Though Mr. C. Wesley knew this, and the whole of her character, yet he never upbraided her with it, but patiently endured her revilings. His innocence appears on the very face of their proceedings ; and hence Mr. Oglethorpe, when undeceived, attributed his own conduct to a want of time for consideration.

Mr. C. Wesley, being now more at ease from his persecutors, gradually regained his strength ; and on the 11th of May he was sufficiently recovered to expound the lesson.—On the 12th the morning lesson was respecting Elisha when surrounded with the host at Dothan. " It is our privilege as Christians," Mr. C. Wesley observes, " to apply those words to ourselves, '*There be more that be for us, than those that be against us.*' God spoke to us yet plainer in the second lesson.—'*Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves ; be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves.—But beware of men, for they will deliver you up, and ye shall be brought before Governors and Kings for my name's sake ; and ye shall be hated of all men ; but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.—The disciple is not above his Master ; fear ye not, therefore, for there is nothing covered which shall not be revealed, and hid which shall not be made known.*' " In explaining this, he adds, " I dwelt on that blessed topic of consolation to the innocent, that however he may suffer here, he will shortly be cleared at God's righteous bar, where the accuser and the accused shall meet face to face, and the guilty person acquit him whom he unjustly charged, and take back the wickedness to himself. Poor Mrs. W., who was just over against me, could not stand it, but first turned her back, and then retired behind the congregation." No one would have rejoiced more in her repentance and conversion to God, than Mr. C. Wesley.

May 13, Mr. Oglethorpe being gone to the southward, Mr. Charles Wesley set out for Savannah, whither the Indian traders were coming down to meet him in order to take out their licenses. On the 16th, he

reached Thunderbolt at six in the evening, and from thence walked to Savannah,* which is about five miles. His brother, Mr. Ingham, and Mr. Delamotte were surprised at his unexpected visit; but, it being late, each retired to his corner of the room, and "without the help of a bed," says Mr. Charles, "we slept soundly till the morning."—On the 19th, Mr. John Wesley set out for Frederica, and Mr. Charles took charge of Savannah in his absence. "The hardest duty," said he, "imposed on me, was, expounding the lesson morning and evening to *one hundred* hearers. I was surprised at my own confidence, and acknowledged it was not my own." The day was usually divided between visiting his parishioners, considering the lesson, and conversing with Mr. Ingham, Delamotte, &c. On the 22d he first met the Traders, at Mr. Causton's, and continued to meet some or other of them every day for several weeks.

May 31. Mr. Oglethorpe being returned from the southward, and come to Savannah, he this day held a court. "We went," says Mr. C. Wesley, "and heard his speech to the people; in the close of which he said, 'If any one here has been abused, or oppressed, by any man, in, or out of office, he has free and full liberty of complaining: Let him deliver in his complaints in writing at my house; I will read them all over by myself, and do every particular man justice.' At eight in the evening I waited upon him, and found the three Magistrates with him, who seemed much alarmed by his speech:—'*they hoped he would not discourage government.*'—He dismissed them." We have here a curious specimen of the notions which the Magistrates of Savannah had of government.

"On the 21st of July," says Mr. Charles, "I heard by my brother, who was then with Mr. Oglethorpe, at Savannah, that I was to set sail for England in a few days." This was not merely on account of his health, which was now a little recovered: He was to carry despatches from Mr. Oglethorpe, to the Trustees of Georgia, to the Board of Trade, and probably to Government. The next day, July 22, he got all the licenses signed by Mr. Oglethorpe, and countersigned them himself, "and so," says he, "I entirely washed my hands of the Traders." This seems to have been a business which he cordially disliked, and thinking the present a favourable opportunity of escaping from his disagreeable situation, he wrote a letter to Mr. Oglethorpe on the 25th, resigning his office of Secretary. In the evening Mr. Oglethorpe took him aside, and asked whether the sum of all he had said in the letter was not contained in the following line, which he showed him,

Magis apta Tuis, tua dona relinquo.

Sir, to yourself your slighted gifts I leave,
Less fit for me to take than you to give.

"Sir," said Mr. C. Wesley, "I do not wish to lose your esteem, but I cannot lose my soul to preserve it."—He answered, "I am satisfied of your regard for me; and your argument drawn from the heart is unanswerable: Yet I would desire you not to let the Trustees know your resolution of resigning. There are many hungry fellows ready to catch at the office, and in my absence [from England] I cannot put in one of my own choosing. Perhaps they may send me a bad man; and how far such a one may influence the Traders, and obstruct the reception

* This accords with Mr. John Wesley's Journal. See his Works, vol. 26, p. 130.

of the Gospel among the heathen, you know.—I shall be in England before you hear of it, and then you may either put in a deputy or resign.”

July 26.—Mr. C. Wesley set out for Charleston on his way to England. Thus far his brother accompanied him; and they arrived there on the 31st of July.* He now found his desires renewed to recover the image of God; and at the Sacrament was encouraged in an unusual manner, to hope for pardon, and to strive against sin.

In every place where he came, Mr. C. Wesley was attentive to the things which passed round about him. We cannot therefore wonder that the wretched situation of the Negroes should attract his notice. The following instance of depravity is truly shocking. “I had observed much, and heard more,” says he, “of the cruelty of masters towards their Negroes: but now I received an authentic account of some horrid instances thereof. I saw myself, that the giving a slave to a child of its own age, to tyrannize over, to abuse and beat it out of sport, was a common practice: Nor is it strange, that, being thus trained up in cruelty, they should afterwards arrive at such a perfection in it.”

“Another much applauded punishment,” says Mr. C. Wesley, “is, drawing the teeth of their slaves. It is universally known, that Colonel L—— cut off the legs of a poor negro, and that he kills several of them every year by his barbarities.

“It were endless to recount all the shocking instances of diabolical cruelty, which these men, as they call themselves, daily practise upon their fellow creatures, and that upon the most trivial occasions—I shall only mention one more, related to me by an eye witness. Mr. ——, a dancing-master in Charleston, whipt a female slave so long, that she fell down at his feet, in appearance dead: When by the help of a physician, she was so far recovered as to show some signs of life, he repeated the whipping with equal rigour, and concluded the punishment with dropping scalding wax upon her flesh. These horrid cruelties are the less to be wondered at, because the law itself, in effect, countenances and allows them to kill their slaves, by the ridiculous penalty appointed for it. The penalty is about seven pounds sterling, one half of which is usually remitted if the criminal inform against himself.”

Had the two Mr. Wesleys been now living, how greatly would they have rejoiced, and praised God, for the total abolition of the British Slave-Trade, and for the humane measures lately proposed in our Parliament, and sanctioned by Government, with a view to the mitigation and *gradual* extinction of the state of slavery itself, in our West Indian Colonies.†

While Mr. C. Wesley stayed at Charleston, his bloody flux and fever hung upon him, and rather increased. Notwithstanding this, he was determined to go in the first ship that sailed for England. His friends endeavoured to dissuade him from it, both because the ship was very leaky, and the Captain, a mere beast of a man, was almost continually

* This account, also agrees with Mr. John Wesley's Journal. See vol. 26, of his Works p. 145.

† We might add, that had the Messrs. Wesley lived to witness the emancipation of the slaves in some of the States in which they were formerly held in bondage, the meliorating of their condition in consequence of the influence of Christianity upon the hearts of both masters and slaves, in others of the States where slavery still exists, together with the fact that the Government of the United States have not only abolished the African slave trade, but declared it to be *piracy*, and punishable as such, they certainly would have had additional cause of joy.

drunken. But he was deaf to their advice. "The public business," says he, "that hurried me to England, being of that importance, that as their Secretary I could not answer to the Trustees for Georgia, the loss of a day." Accordingly he engaged his passage on board the London Galley, which left Charleston on the 16th of August. But they soon found that the Captain, while on shore, had neglected every thing to which he ought to have attended. The vessel was too leaky to bear the voyage: and the Captain, drinking nothing scarcely but gin, had never troubled his head about taking in a sufficient quantity of water; so that, on the 26th, they were obliged to be reduced to short allowance. Meeting afterwards with stormy weather, the leak became alarming; and their difficulties increased so fast upon them, that they were obliged to steer for Boston in New-England, where they arrived, with much difficulty and danger, on the 24th of September.

Mr. C. Wesley was soon known at Boston, and met with a hospitable reception among the Ministers, both of the town and neighbourhood. Having experienced much difficulty at Frederica, to prevent his letters to his brother from being read by others, he learned Byrom's Short-hand, and now for the first time wrote to his brother in those characters. He tells him, "If you are as desirous as I am of a correspondence, you must set upon Byrom's Short-hand immediately." Mr. John Wesley did so, and their correspondence was afterwards carried on chiefly in it.

The following letter was evidently written in a hurry, probably in the midst of company. A part of it is in Latin, which, as it shows the facility with which he wrote in this language, and also discovers something of the turn of his mind, I shall transcribe below.* The substance of it I give in English.

"BOSTON, October 5, 1736.

"I am wearied with this hospitable people,—they so vex and tease me with their civilities. They do not suffer me to be alone. The clergy, who come from the country on a visit, drag me along with them when they return.† I am constrained to take a view of this New-England, more pleasant even than the old. I cannot help exclaiming O! happy country, that cherishes neither flies,‡ nor crocodiles,§ nor inform-

* "Tædet me populi hujusce φιλοξενον, ita me urbanitate suâ divexant et persequuntur. Non patiuntur me esse solum. E rure veniunt invisentes Clerici; me revertentes in rurem trahunt. Cogor hanc Angliam contemplari, etiam antiquâ amœniorem; et nequeo non exclamare, O fortunata regio, nec muscas alens, nec crocodilos, nec delatores! Sub fine hujus hebdomadis navem certissime conscendimus, duplicato sumptu patriam empturi. Carolinensium nemo viatica suppeditavit; et hic itidem nil nisi cum pretio. Pessime me habet quod cogor moram hanc emere, magnumque pretium digressionis solvere.

† "Morbus meus, aëre hoc saluberrimo semel fugatus, iterum rediit. Suadent amici omnes, ut medicum consulem; sed 'Funera non possum tam pretiosa pati.'"

‡ Of Mr. C. Wesley's sincerity, any more than of his brother's, there can be no question. But he was still under "*the spirit of bondage*," and consequently not much at ease either with others or himself. This accounts for his being so vexed with the kindness of his new friends. It might be rather troublesome; but the spirit of love, the offspring of Gospel faith, would have easily borne it, and returned love for love. "Love is a present for a mighty king." HERBERT.

§ When Mr. C. Wesley was at Frederica, the sand-flies were one night so exceedingly troublesome, that he was obliged to rise at one o'clock, and smoke them out of his hut. He tells us, that the whole town was risen in the same way.

¶ He means that species of crocodile called the alligator. When at Savannah, he and Mr. Delamotte used to bathe in the Savannah river, between four and five o'clock in the morning, before the alligators were stirring, but they heard them snoring all round them. One morning Mr. Delamotte was in great danger; an alligator rose just behind him, and pursued him to the land, whither he escaped with difficulty.

ers. About the end of this week, we shall certainly go on board the ship, having to pay a second time for our passage. None of those from Carolina supplied me with provisions, and here also nothing is to be had without money. It vexes me to be obliged to purchase this delay, and to pay a great price for my departure.

"My disorder, once removed by this most salubrious air, has again returned. All my friends advise me to consult a physician, but I cannot afford so expensive a funeral."

Mr. C. Wesley did not go on board as he expected, the ship being detained some time longer. During his stay here, his disorder returned with violence, and reduced him to a state of very great weakness. On the 15th of October he wrote to his brother, and continued his letter in a kind of journal to the 25th, when he went on board the ship, and sailed for England. His account is as follows :

"I should be glad for your sake to give a satisfactory account of myself, but that you must never expect from me.—It is fine talking while we have youth and health on our side ; but sickness would spoil your boasting as well as mine. I am now glad of a warm bed ; but must soon betake myself to my board again.

"Though I am apt to think that I shall at length arrive in England to deliver what I am intrusted with, yet do I not expect, or wish for a long life. How strong must the principle of self-preservation be, which can make such a wretch as I am willing to live at all !—or rather unwilling to die ; for I know no greater pleasure in life, than in considering that it cannot last for ever.

——The temptations past
No more shall vex me ; every grief I feel
Shortens the destined number ; every pulse
Beats a sharp moment of the pain away,
And the last stroke will come. By swift degrees
Time sweeps me off, and I shall soon arrive
At life's sweet period : O ! Celestial point
That ends this mortal story.——

"To-day completes my three weeks' unnecessary stay at Boston. To-morrow the ship falls down. I am just now much worse than ever ; but nothing less than death shall hinder me from embarking.

"October 18.—The ship that carries me, must meet with endless delays : it is well if it sails this week. I have lived so long in honours and indulgences, that I have almost forgotten whereunto I am called ; being strongly urged to set up my rest here. But I will lean no longer upon men ; nor again put myself into the power of any of my own merciless species, by either expecting their kindness or desiring their esteem.

"October 21.—I am worried on all sides by the solicitations of my friends, to defer my winter voyage till I have recovered a little strength. Mr. ——, I am apt to think, would allow me to wait a fortnight for the next ship ; but then if I recover, my stay will be thought unnecessary. I must die to prove myself sick, and I can do no more at sea. I am therefore determined to be carried on board to-morrow, and leave the event to God.

"October 25.—The ship fell down as was expected, but a contrary wind prevented me from following till now. At present, I am something better : on board the *Hannah*, Captain Corney ; in the state-room, which they have forced upon me. I have not strength for more. Adieu."

On the 27th, Mr. C. Wesley had so far recovered his strength that he was able to read prayers. The next day the Captain informed him, that a storm was approaching. In the evening it came on with dreadful violence, and raged all night.

On the 29th in the morning, they shipped so prodigious a sea, that it washed away their sheep, half of their hogs, and drowned most of their fowl. The ship was heavily laden, and the sea streamed in so plentifully at the sides, that it was as much as four men could do, by continual pumping, to keep her above water. "I rose and lay down by turns," adds Mr. C. Wesley, "but could remain in no posture long. I strove vehemently to pray, but in vain; I still persisted in striving, but without effect. I prayed for power to pray,* for faith in Jesus Christ; continually repeated his name, till I felt the virtue of it at last, and knew that I abode under the shadow of the Almighty."

At three in the afternoon the storm was at the height; at four, the ship made so much water, that the Captain, finding it otherwise impossible to save her from sinking, cut down the mizzenmast. "In this dreadful moment," says Mr. C. Wesley, "I bless God I found the comfort of hope; and such joy in finding I could hope, as the world can neither give nor take away. I had that conviction of the power of God present with me, overbalancing my strongest passion, fear, and raising me above what I am by nature, as surpassed all rational evidence, and gave me a taste of the Divine goodness." He at that time again anticipated the power and sweetness of Christian faith; no uncommon thing with those who mourn for it. See this subject well illustrated in Mr. John Wesley's Sermon on "The Spirit of bondage, and of adoption."

On the 30th, the storm abated; and "On Sunday the 31st," he observes, "my first business was, (may it be the business of all my days!) to offer up the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. We all joined in thanks for our deliverance most of the day."

They soon met with another storm, but not so violent as the former; and continuing their voyage, with some intervening difficulties and dangers, till the third of December, the ship arrived opposite Deal, and the passengers came safe on shore. "I kneeled down," says Mr. C. Wesley, "and blessed the hand that had conducted me through such inextricable mazes, and desired I might give up my country again, whenever God should require it."—A state of mind very different from that of many who have been called to labour for the Lord! "*Est istuc navigare?*" &c, says the soft Erasmus, (the Atticus of the Reformation, who strove to keep well with all parties,) "*Are these things the lot of those who sail?*" God forbid," he continues, "that I should ever think of encountering them!"—No, it was more easy and honourable for that eminent scholar to raise a laugh at the expense of the Papacy; and, at the same time, to insinuate blame against the zealous REFORMERS, by whom the Lord was exposing "*the Man of Sin,*" and giving life to the world.

* He means with confidence and comfort.

CHAPTER II.

CONTINUATION OF MR. WESLEY'S MISSION TO AMERICA.

LEAVING Mr. Charles Wesley safe in his native land, we shall now proceed to his brother Mr. John Wesley.

On the 18th of March, 1736, he wrote to his mother as follows ; “ I doubt not but you are already informed of the many blessings which God gave us in our passage ; as my brother Wesley must, before now, have received a particular account of the circumstances of our voyage ; which he would not fail to transmit to you by the first opportunity.

“ We are likely to stay here some months. The place is pleasant beyond imagination ; and, by all I can learn, exceeding healthful,—even in summer, for those who are not intemperate. It has pleased God that I have not had a moment's illness of any kind since I set my foot upon the Continent : nor do I know any more than one of my seven hundred parishioners, who is sick at this time. Many of them indeed, are, I believe, very angry already : for a gentleman, no longer ago than last night, made a ball ; but the public prayers happening to begin about the same time, the church was full, and the ball-room so empty that the entertainment could not go forward.

“ I should be heartily glad, if any poor and religious men or women of Epworth, or Wroote, would come over to me. And so would Mr. Oglethorpe too : He would give them land enough, and provisions gratis, till they could live on the produce of it. I was fully determined to have wrote to my dear Emmy* to-day ; but time will not permit. O hope ye still in God ! for ye shall yet give him thanks, who is the help of your countenance, and your God ! Renounce the world ; deny yourselves ; bear your cross with Christ, and reign with him ! My brother Hooper too, has a constant place in our prayers. May the good God give him the same zeal for holiness which he has given to a young gentleman of Rotterdam, who was with me last night. Pray for us, and especially for, dear Mother,

“ Your dutiful and affectionate Son,

“ JOHN WESLEY.”

Mr. Wesley being now informed of the opposition which his brother Charles met with at Frederica, on the 22d of March, 1736, wrote to him the following letter,—“ How different are the ways wherein we are led, yet I hope towards the same end ! I have hitherto no opposition at all : all is smooth, and fair, and promising. Many seem to be awakened : all are full of respect and commendation. We cannot see any cloud gathering. But this calm cannot last ; storms must come hither too : and let them come, when we are ready to meet them.

“ It is strange so many of our friends should still trust in God ! I hope indeed, that, whoever may turn to the world, Mr. Tackner and Betty, with Mr. Hird's family, and Mr. Burk, will zealously aim at the prize of their high calling. These especially I exhort, by the mercies of God, that they be not weary of well-doing, but that they labour more

* His eldest sister Emilia.

and more to be meek and lowly, and daily to advance in the knowledge and love of God. I hope too Mr. Weston, Mr. Moore, Mr. Allen, and Mr. White, as well as Mr. Ward and his wife, continue in the same wise resolutions. I must not forget Mr. Reed, and Mr. Daubry, both of whom I left fully determined to shake off every weight, and with all their might to pursue the one thing needful.

“*Conciones omnes meas jamnunc habes, præter istas quas misi. Aliqua in pyxide sunt (de quâ ne verbum scribis) unâ cum bibliis in quarto. Liber de disciplinâ, quam celerrime potes, remittendus est. Quanta est concordia fratrum: Tui volo et fratris B.?* ‘You have now all my Sermons, besides those which I have sent. Some are in the box (of which you say not a word,) together with the Bible in quarto. The book on discipline must be sent back as soon as possible. How great is the concord of brethren! I mean of thee and brother B.’

“You are not, I think at liberty, *ερεψέσθαι εἰς τὰ ἔθνη, εὗς οἱ συμφυλεται σὲ ἀπωθῶσι σε—to turn to the Gentiles, till your own countrymen shall cast you out.* If that period come soon, so much the better: only, in the mean while, reprove and exhort with all authority, even though all men should despise thee. *Ἀποβησθαι σοὶ εἰς μαρτυριον, ‘It shall turn to thee for a testimony.’**

“I conjure you, spare no time, no address or pains, to learn the true cause *τῆς παλαιᾶς οἰκίας τῆς φίλης μς,† ‘of the former distress of my friend.’* I much doubt you are in the right. *Μὴ γενοίτο ἵνα ἔσω παλιν ἀμαρτανή. Γρηγορεὶ φυλάσσε, ὡς μαλίστω δύνῃ. Γράψε μοι, πῶς με δεῖ γραφεῖν πρὸς αὐτήν. ‘God forbid, that she should again, in like manner, miss the mark. Watch over her; keep her, as much as possible. Write to me, how I ought to write to her.’*

“If Mr. Ingham were here, I would try to see you. But omit no opportunity of writing. *Κινδυνεύω πᾶσαν ὥραν. ‘I stand in jeopardy every hour.’—‘Let us be strong and very courageous; for the Lord our God is with us: and there is no counsel or might against him!’”*

Mr. Charles Wesley took the hint his brother gave him, and on the 28th, sent Mr. Ingham to Savannah. April 4th, Mr. Wesley set out for Frederica, in a pettiawga, a sort of flat-bottomed barge, and the following evening they anchored near Skidoway island, where the water at flood was twelve or fourteen feet deep. Mr. Wesley wrapped himself up in a large cloak, and laid down on the quarter-deck: but in the course of the night he rolled out of his cloak, and fell into the sea, so fast asleep that he knew not where he was, till his mouth was full of water. He swam round to a boat, and got out without any more injury than that of wetting his clothes. This instance gives us a lively view of his fortitude and presence of mind in the midst of surprise and danger.

Mr. Wesley left Frederica, and arrived again at Savannah on the 20th. The next day he wrote to his brother; and, among other things, observes, “I still extremely pity poor Mrs. Hawkins: but what can I do more, till God show me who it is that continually exasperates her against me? Then I may perhaps be of some service to her. There is surely some one who does not play us fair: But I marvel not at the matter. He that is higher than the highest regardeth; and there is that is mightier than they. Yet a little while and God will declare who is sincere.

* See the same phrase, Luke chap. xxi, 13. † See a similar construction of *παλαί*, 2 Pet. chap. i, 9.

† See a similar construction of *παλαί*,

'Tarry thou the Lord's leisure and be strong, and he shall comfort thy heart."

On the same day he wrote to Mr. Oglethorpe, and told him, "Savannah never was so dear to me as now. I believe, knowing by whom I send, I may write as well as speak freely. I found so little either of the form or power of religion at Frederica, that I am sincerely glad I am removed from it. Surely, never was any place, no not London itself, freer from one vice, I mean hypocrisy.

*O curvæ in terris animæ, et cœlestium inanes !**

'Jesus Master, have mercy upon them !'—There is none of those who did run well, whom I pity more than Mrs. Hawkins ; her treating me in such a manner would indeed have little affected me, had my own interests only been concerned. I have been used to be betrayed, scorned, and insulted, by those I had most laboured to serve. But when I reflect on her condition, my heart bleeds for her.—Yet with Thee nothing is impossible !

"With regard to one who ought to be dearer to me than her, I cannot but say, that the more I think of it the more convinced I am, that no one, without a virtual renouncing of the faith, can abstain from the public as well as the private worship of God.† All the prayers usually read morning and evening, at Frederica and here, put together, do not last seven minutes. These cannot be termed long prayers : No Christian assembly ever used shorter : Neither have they any repetitions in them at all. If I did not speak thus plainly to you, which I fear no one else in England or America will do, I should by no means be worthy to call myself, Sir,

Yours, &c,

"JOHN WESLEY."

There subsisted, at this time, a dispute between the gentlemen of Carolina and Georgia, respecting the right of trading with the Indians. The dispute was brought into Westminster Hall, and agitated on both sides with great animosity. Mr. Wesley on the 23d of July delivered his opinion on the subject in a letter to Mr. Hutcheson. He observes, "By what I have seen during my short stay here, I am convinced that I have long been under a great mistake, in thinking no circumstances could make it the duty of a Christian Priest to do any thing else but preach the Gospel. On the contrary, I am now satisfied, that there is a possible case wherein a part of his time ought to be employed in what less directly conduces to the glory of God, and peace and good will among men. And such a case, I believe, is that which now occurs ; there being several things which cannot so effectually be done without me ; and which, though not directly belonging to my ministry, yet are by consequence of the highest concern to the success of it. It is from this conviction that I have taken some pains to inquire into the great controversy now subsisting between Carolina and Georgia ; and in examining and weighing the letters wrote, and the arguments urged, on both sides of the question. And I cannot but think that the whole affair might be clearly stated in a few words. A Charter was passed a few years since, establishing the bounds of this province, and empowering the trustees therein named to prepare laws, which, when ratified by the King

* O grovelling souls, bent to the earth, and void of heavenly good !

† This was a broad hint, as Mr. Wesley used to say, to the General himself.

in Council, should be of force within those bounds. The trustees have prepared a law, which has been so ratified, for the regulation of the Indian trade, requiring that none should trade with the Indians who are within this province, till he is so licensed as therein specified. Notwithstanding this law, the governing part of Carolina have asserted both in conversation, in writing, and in the public newspapers, that it is lawful for any one not so licensed, to trade with the Creek, Cherokee, or Chicasaw Indians : They have passed an ordinance, not only asserting the same, but enacting that men and money shall be raised to support such traders ; and in fact they have themselves licensed and sent up such traders both to the Creek and Chicasaw Indians.

" This is the plain matter of fact : Now as to the matter of right, when twenty more reams of paper have been spent upon it, I cannot but think it must come to this short issue at last : 1. Are the Creeks, Cherokees, and Chicasaws, within the bounds of Georgia or no ? 2. Is an Act of the King in Council, in pursuance of an Act of Parliament, of any force within these bounds, or not ? That all other inquiries are absolutely foreign to the question, a very little consideration will show. As to the former of these, the Georgian Charter, compared with any map of these parts which I have ever seen, determines it : The latter I never heard made a question of, but in the neighbourhood of Carolina.

" Mr. Johnson's brother has been with us some days. I have been twice in company with him at Mr. Oglethorpe's : and I hope there are in Carolina, though the present proceeding would almost make one doubt it, many such gentlemen as he seems to be : men of good nature, good manners, and understanding. I hope God will repay you sevenfold for the kindness you have shown to my poor mother, and in her to, Sir,

" Your most obliged, most obedient servant,

" JOHN WESLEY."

At the same time he wrote to Mr. Vernon on the same subject. " As short a time," says he, " as I have for writing, I could not pardon myself, if I did not spend some part of it in acknowledging the continuance of your goodness to my mother ; which indeed neither she, nor I, can ever lose the sense of.

" The behaviour of the people of Carolina finds much conversation for this place. I dare not say, whether they want honesty or logic most : It is plain, a very little of the latter, added to the former, would show how utterly foreign to the point in question all their voluminous defences are. Here is an Act of the King in Council, passed in pursuance of an Act of Parliament, forbidding unlicensed persons to trade with the Indians in Georgia. Nothing therefore can justify them in sending unlicensed traders to the Creek, Cherokee, and Chicasaw Indians, but the proving either that this Act is of no force, or that those Indians are not in Georgia. Why then are these questions so little considered by them, and others so largely discussed ? I fear for a very plain, though not a very honest reason ; that is, to puzzle the cause.* I sincerely wish you all

* The words of the old poet may be recollected here—

" Bell, book, and candle, shall not drive me back,
When gold and silver bid me to go on."

Alter it to King, Council, Senate, shall not, &c.

happiness in time and in eternity, and am, Sir, &c.”—It appears from these letters, that his mother was partly supported by the trustees.

Not finding any door open for the prosecution of the grand design which induced him to visit America,—the conversion of the Indians,—he and Mr. Delamotte considered, in what manner they might be most useful to the little flock under their care. And they agreed, 1. To advise the most serious among them, to form themselves into a sort of little Society, and to meet once or twice a week, in order to improve, instruct, and exhort one another. 2. To select, out of these, a smaller number for a more intimate union with each other, which might be forwarded partly by their conversing singly with each, and partly by inviting them all together to their house; and this accordingly they determined to do every Sunday in the afternoon.

Their general method of private instruction was as follows: Mr. Delamotte taught between thirty and forty children to read, write and cast accounts. Before school in the morning, and after school in the afternoon, he catechised the lowest class, and endeavoured to fix something of what was said in their understandings as well as in their memories. In the evening he instructed the larger children. On Saturday in the afternoon Mr. Wesley catechised them all: The same he did on Sunday before the evening service. And in the church, immediately after the second lesson, a select number of them having repeated the catechism and being examined in some part of it, he endeavoured to explain at large, and to enforce that part, both on them and the congregation.

Some time after the evening service, as many of the parishioners as desired it, met at Mr. Wesley's house, (as they did also on Wednesday evening,) and spent about an hour in prayer, singing, and mutual exhortation. A smaller number (mostly those who designed to communicate the next day) met there on Saturday evening; and a few of these came to him on the other evenings, and passed half an hour in the same employment.

He had now another proof of the power of gospel faith. One of the Moravians being ill of a consumption, he informed Bishop Nitschman of it. “He will soon be well,” said he, “he is ready for the Bridegroom.” Calling to see him afterwards, and asking how he did, “My departure (said he) I hope is at hand.” Mr. Wesley then asked, “Are you troubled at that?” He replied, “O no; to depart and to be with Christ, is far better. I desire no more of this bad world. My hope and my joy and my love are there.” The next time he saw him, the poor man said, “I desire nothing more, than for God to forgive my many and great sins. I would be humble. I would be the humblest creature living. My heart is humble and broken for my sins. Tell me, teach me, what I shall do to please God. I would fain do whatever is his will.” Mr. Wesley said, “It is his will, you should suffer.” He answered, “Then I *will* suffer. I will gladly suffer whatever pleases Him.” The next day, finding him weaker, he asked, “Do you still desire to die?” he said, “Yes; but I dare not pray for it, for I fear I should displease my heavenly Father. His will be done. Let Him work his will, in my life, or in my death.”

But concerning himself, Mr. Wesley observes, “This evening we had such a storm of thunder and lightning, as I never saw before even

in Georgia. This voice of God, too, told me I was not fit to die ; since I was afraid, rather than desirous of it ! O when shall I wish to be dissolved and to be with Christ ? When I love him with all my heart."

Some time before this, a few of the Indians had made him a visit, and seemed desirous of hearing *the great word*, as they called the preaching of the Gospel. About twenty of them were now at Savannah. Five of the principal of them came to him with an interpreter ; and the following interesting conversation passed between themf.

Q. Do you believe there is One above, who is over all things ?

Paustoobee, one of their Chiefs, answered, We believe there are four beloved things above ; the clouds, the sun, the clear sky, and He that lives in the clear sky.

Q. Do you believe, there is but One that lives in the clear sky ?

A. We believe there are two with him ; Three in all.

Q. Do you think, he made the sun and the other beloved things ?

A. We cannot tell. Who hath seen ?

Q. Do you think he made you ?

A. We think, he made all men at first.

Q. How did he make them at first ?

A. Out of the ground.

Q. Do you believe he loves you ?

A. I do not know ; I cannot see him.

Q. But has he not often saved your life ?

A. He has. Many bullets have gone on this side, and many on that side, but he would never let them hurt me. And many bullets have gone into these young men, and yet they are alive !*

Q. Then, cannot he save you from your enemies now ?

A. Yes ; but we know not if he will. We have now so many enemies round about us, that I think of nothing but death. And if I am to die, I shall die, and I will die like a man. But if he will have me to live, I shall live. Though I had ever so many enemies, he can destroy them all.

Q. How do you know that ?

A. From what I have seen. When our enemies came against us before, then the beloved clouds came for us. And often much rain, and sometimes hail, has come upon them, and that in a very hot day. And I saw when many French and Choctaws and other nations came against one of our towns : And the ground made a noise under them, and the Beloved Ones in the air behind them : And they were afraid and went away, and left their meat and drink and their guns. I tell no lie. All these saw it too.

Q. Have you heard such noises at other times ?

A. Yes, often : Before and after almost every battle.

Q. What sort of noises were they ?

A. Like the noise of drums and guns and shouting.

Q. Have you heard any such lately ?

A. Yes : Four days after our last battle with the French.

Q. Then you heard nothing before it ?

A. The night before, I dreamed I heard many drums up there, and many trumpets there, and much stamping of feet and shouting. Till

* We see this Indian, like the heathen mentioned in Acts xxviii, believed in a Particular Providence, which many, even of the learned, affect to despise.

then I thought we should all die. But then I thought the Beloved Ones were come to help us. And the next day I heard above a hundred guns go off, before the fight began. And I said, "When the sun is there, the Beloved Ones will help us, and we shall conquer our enemies." And we did so.

Q. Do you often think and talk of the Beloved Ones ?

A. We think of them always, wherever we are. We talk of them and to them, at home and abroad ; in peace, in war, before and after we fight ; and, indeed, whenever and wherever we meet together.

Q. Where do you think your souls go after death ?

A. We believe the souls of red men walk up and down near the place where they died, or where their bodies lie. For we have often heard cries and noises near the place, where any prisoners had been burnt.

Q. Where do the souls of white men go after death ?

A. We cannot tell. We have not seen.

Q. Our belief is, that the souls of bad men only walk up and down ; but the souls of good men go up.

A. I believe so too. But I told you the talk of the nation.

Mr. ANDREWS, the Interpreter. They said at the burying, (which Mr. Wesley had attended shortly before,) "They knew what you was doing. You was speaking to the Beloved Ones above, to take up the soul of the young woman."

Q. We have a Book that tells us many things of the Beloved Ones above. Would you be glad to know them ?

A. We have no time now but to fight. If we should ever be at peace, we should be glad to know.

Q. Do you expect ever to know what the white men know ?

Mr. ANDREWS. They told Mr. Oglethorpe, They believed "the time will come when the red and white men will be one."

Q. What do the French teach you ?

A. The *French Black Kings** never go out. We see you go about. We like that. That is good.

Q. How came your nation by the knowledge they have ?

A. As soon as ever the ground was sound, and fit to stand upon, it came to us, and has been with us ever since. But we are young men. Our old men know more. But all of them do not know. There are but a few, whom the Beloved One chooses from a child, and is in them, and takes care of them, and teaches them. They know these things, and our old men practise, therefore they know ; but I do not practise, therefore I know little.

He was now in hopes that a door was opened, for going up immediately to the Choctaws, the least *polished*, i. e. the least corrupted, of all the Indian nations. But upon his informing the General of their design, he objected, not only the danger of being intercepted or killed by the French there, but much more, the inexpediency of leaving Savannah destitute of a minister. These objections he related to his friends in the evening, who were all of opinion, "That they ought not to go yet."

Thursday, July 1. The Indians had an audience, and another on Saturday, when Chicali, their head man, dined with the General. "After dinner," says Mr. Wesley, "I asked the gray-headed old man, what

* So they called the Priests.

he thought he was made for? He said, 'He that is above knows what he made us for. We know nothing. We are in the dark. But white men know much. And yet white men build great houses, as if they were to live for ever. But white men cannot live for ever. In a little time white men will be dust as well as I.' I told him, 'If red men will learn the good Book, they may know as much as white men. But neither we nor you can understand that book, unless we are taught by Him that is above; and he will not teach, unless you avoid what you already know is not good.' He answered, 'I believe that he will not teach us, while our hearts are not white. And our men do what they know is not good; they kill their own children. And our women do what they know is not good; they kill the child before it is born. Therefore, He that is above does not send us the good Book.'"

The opinion of Mr. Wesley concerning the gods whom the poor American heathens worshipped, is worthy of our notice. "Meeting," says he, "with a Frenchman of New-Orleans on the Mississippi, who had lived several months among the Chicasaws, he gave us a full and particular account of many things which had been variously related. And hence we could not but remark, what is the Religion of Nature, properly so called, or, that religion which flows from natural reason, unassisted by revelation; and that, even in those who have the knowledge of many truths, and who converse with their Beloved Ones day and night. But too plainly does it appear by the fruits, that *the gods of these heathens too are but devils.*

"The substance of his account was this: Some years past the Chicasaws and French were friends. The French were then mingled with the Nautchee Indians, whom they used as slaves, till the Nautchees made a general rising, and took many of the French prisoners. But soon after, a French army set upon them, killed many, and carried away the rest. Among those that were killed were some Chicasaws, whose death the Chicasaw nation resented; and soon after, as a French boat was going through their country, they fired into it, and killed all the men but two. The French resolved on revenge, and orders were given for many Indians, and several parties of white men, to rendezvous on the 26th of March, 1736, near one of the Chicasaw towns. The first party, consisting of fifty men, came thither some days before the time. They stayed there till the 24th, but none came to join them. On the 25th, they were attacked by two hundred Chicasaws. The French attempted to force their way through them. Five or six and twenty did so; the rest were taken prisoners. The prisoners were sent two or three to a town to be burnt. Only the commanding officer, and one or two more, were put to death on the place of the engagement.

"I, and one more," said the Frenchman, "were saved by the warrior who took us. The manner of burning the rest was, holding lighted canes to their arms and legs, and several parts of their bodies, for some time, and then for a while taking them away. They likewise stuck burning pieces of wood into their flesh all round, in which condition they kept them from morning till evening. But they commonly beat them before they burn them. I saw the priest, that was with us, carried to be burnt; and, from head to foot, he was as black as your coat, with the blows which they had given him."

Mr. Wesley asked him, what was their manner of life. He said,

“They do nothing but eat and drink and smoke from morning till night, and, in a manner, from night till morning. For they rise at any hour of the night when they awake; and, after eating and drinking as much as they can, go to sleep again.” “See,” exclaims Mr. Wesley, after reciting these particulars, “*The Religion of Nature truly delineated.*”*

After Mr. Charles Wesley had left Frederica, and gone to England, in the latter end of July, Mr. Wesley often visited that place; where he met with the most violent opposition, and the most illiberal abuse. He still, however, persevered in his endeavours to do them good; and, on the 13th of October, set out from Savannah, once more to visit them. He arrived at Frederica on the morning of the 16th, and met Mr. Hird on the Bluff, who gave him a melancholy account of the state of things there. The public service had been discontinued, and from that time every thing was grown worse and worse.—“Even poor Miss Sophy,”† says he, “was scarce the shadow of what she was when I left her. I endeavoured to convince her of it, but in vain; and to put it effectually out of my power so to do, she was resolved to return to England immediately. I was at first a little surprised; but I soon recollected my spirits, and remembered my calling. ‘Greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world.’

Non me, qui cætera, vincet
Impetus; at rapido contrarius evehar orbi.‡

“I began with earnestly crying to God to maintain his own cause; and then began reading to a few who came to my house in the evenings, one of Ephrem Syrus’s exhortations, as I did every night after, and by the blessing of God, not without effect. My next step was, to divert Miss Sophy from the fatal resolution of going to England. After several fruitless attempts, I at length prevailed; nor was it long before she recovered the ground she had lost.”—So it appeared to Mr. Wesley who dared not “*think evil.*” 1 Cor. xiii, 5.

“October 23.—Mr. Oglethorpe returned from the southward. I was in the fort with Mr. Horton, when he came. He ran to Mr. Horton, kissed him, and expressed much kindness to him, but took no notice of me good or bad, any more than if I had not been in the room. I was not surprised, having long expected it. When I mentioned it to Miss Sophy, she said; ‘Sir, you encouraged me in my greatest trials; be not discouraged yourself. Fear nothing; if Mr. Oglethorpe will not, God will help you.’

“October 25.—I took boat for Savannah, with Miss Sophy, and came thither, after, a slow and dangerous, but not a tedious passage, on Sunday the 31st.”§

Few would perhaps expect that a person so abundant in labours, would entertain such an opinion of himself as he expresses in a letter to a friend. “How to attain to the being crucified with Christ, I find not; being in a condition I neither desired, nor expected in America,—in ease, and honour, and abundance. A strange school for him who has but one business, Γυμναζειν σεαυτον προς ευσεβειαν.”|| He thought mortification

* This is an allusion to *an infidel publication* of that day which was so entitled.

† We shall soon see more respecting this lady.

‡ That force shall not overcome me, which overcomes all things else;

But I shall mount in a direction contrary to the rapid world.

§ See also his printed Journal, in his Works, vol. xxvi, p. 150.

|| “To exercise himself unto godliness.”

would, of course, produce sanctification, (a common error of the Mystics,) and therefore he dreaded every thing contrary to it.

Alas ! few, we doubt, would have envied the condition in which he was placed. The inconveniences and dangers which he embraced, that he might preach the Gospel, and do good of every kind, to all that would receive it at his hands : the exposing of himself to every change of season, and inclemency of weather, in the prosecution of his work, were conditions, to which few but himself would have submitted. He frequently slept on the ground, as he journeyed through the woods, covered with the nightly dews, and with his clothes and hair frozen by the morning to the earth. He sometimes waded through swamps, or swam over rivers, and then travelled till his clothes were dry. His health in the mean time, strange as it may seem, was almost uninterrupted. Much may be laid to the account of his "iron body," as his brother Samuel terms it ; but we think every pious mind will rather impute both his health and preservation to Him who "*numbers the hairs of our head,*" and whose guardian care is especially over those, who aim to "*walk worthy of him unto all pleasing.*"

But the honour and respect he then enjoyed, small as they must have been, soon drew to an end. He now began to experience more fully than ever, the truth of that Scripture, "*If any man will live godly in Christ Jesus, he shall suffer persecution.*" Previous to the present period, some dislike began to appear in several persons to his rigid attachment to all the parts of the rubric of the Church of England. High Church principles, as they are termed, continually influenced his conduct ; an instance of which was, his refusal to admit one of the holiest men in the province to the Lord's Supper, (though he earnestly desired it,) because he was a Dissenter, unless he would submit to be re-baptized ! But this appeared to him as his duty ; and in that case, till God taught him better, it was vain to attempt to move him. Reflecting on this zeal at a future period, he remarks, "Have I not been finely beaten with my own staff?"

All things at this period grew more and more unfavourable to his continuance in America. Observing a coldness in the behaviour of a friend, he asked him the reason. He answered, "I like nothing you do : all your sermons are satires upon particular persons. Therefore I will never hear you more. And all the people are of my mind. For we will not hear ourselves abused."

"Besides, they say, they are Protestants. But as for you, they cannot tell what religion you are of. They never heard of such a religion before. They do not know what to make of it. And then, your private behaviour.—All the quarrels that have been here since you came, have been owing to you. Indeed, there is neither man nor woman in the town who minds a word you say. And so you may preach long enough : but nobody will come to hear you."

The dread of reproof seems now to have ripened to aversion, when an event took place, which ultimately obliged him to leave America. There is a silence observed in Mr. Wesley's Journal in respect to some parts of this event, which it is possible, has caused even friendly readers to hesitate concerning the propriety of his conduct ; or at least concerning that propriety which they might be led to expect from so great a character. But what has hitherto been defective, I am happy in being

able to supply. The actors in this scene, are now, we may hope, in a better world; the last of them died a very few years before Mr. Wesley. I am not therefore bound, as Mr. Wesley thought himself, when he published the account, to let a veil be thrown over this transaction; but rather to let "*his innocency appear as the light, and his just dealing as the noonday.*"

General Oglethorpe was, what is called, an excellent judge of human nature. He was also a man of courage and enterprise. He had enlarged views of what might be done, with proper instruments, on the wide continent of America. He had heard much of Mr. Wesley before he engaged himself as a Missionary, having been intimate with his eldest brother. But he saw, during the voyage, that the half was not told him. He saw a man of great ability, a man superior to every thing that usually captivates human nature. He saw a man, as he thought, fit for his purpose. But Mr. Wesley's religion, or as he termed it, his enthusiasm, the General lamented, as standing in the way. On their arrival, therefore, in Georgia, he resolved to try if that obstacle was not to be surmounted.

Miss Sophy,* the lady already mentioned, was niece to Mrs. Causton, the wife of Mr. Causton the store-keeper, and chief magistrate of Savannah, in which station he was placed by the General. In this lady, who had an improved understanding, and elegant person and manners, General Oglethorpe thought he had found a proper bait for this "soaring religionist." And as some of the greatest men that are recorded even in the oracles of God, have fallen by this snare, he had some ground to hope for success. But, in order to this, it was absolutely needful to detain him for some considerable time at Savannah. Whenever, therefore, he mentioned his uneasiness at being obstructed in his main design, that of preaching to the Indians, he was answered, "You cannot leave Savannah without a minister." "To this, indeed," observes Mr. Wesley, "my plain answer was, I know not that I am under any obligation to the contrary. I never promised to stay here one month. I openly declared both before, at, and ever since my coming hither, that I neither would nor could take charge of the English any longer than till I could go among the Indians. If it was said, 'But did not the Trustees of Georgia appoint you to be minister of Savannah?' I replied, They did; but it was not done by my solicitation; it was done without either my desire or knowledge. Therefore I cannot conceive that appointment to lay me under any obligation of continuing here, any longer than till a door is opened to the heathens; and this I expressly declared, at the time I consented to accept that appointment."

Miss Sophy had been some time before introduced to him as a sincere inquirer after the way of eternal life. Some time after he observed, that she took every possible opportunity of being in his company. She also desired a greater intimacy, but modesty veiled her real motive under a request, that he would assist her in attaining a perfect knowledge of the French tongue.

After some time the General called upon him, and requested him to dine with him; adding, "Mr. Wesley, there are some here who have a wrong idea of your abstemiousness. They think that you hold the

* Her name was not Causton. Mr. Wesley told me her name, but I cannot recollect it.

eating of animal food, and drinking wine, to be unlawful. I beg that you will convince them of the contrary." He resolved to do so. At table he took a little of both, but a fever was the consequence, which confined him for five days.

Now was the time to try if indeed "his heart was made of pene-trable stuff." Notwithstanding an extreme reluctance on his part, (who would hardly suffer even Mr. Delamotte to do any thing for him,) the young lady attended him night and day. She even consulted the General what dress would be most agreeable to Mr. Wesley, and therefore came always dressed in white, "*simplex munditiis*," as Horace said of his mistress, neatly, simply elegant. Those who have known Mr. Wesley, will forestal our judgment here : They well know what impression all this was likely to make. He was indeed, as our great poet observes,

—Of a constant, loving, noble nature ;
That thinks men honest, if they seem but so.

How then must this appearance of strong affection, from a woman of sense and elegance, nay, and as it should seem, of piety too, affect him ! Especially considering, (it is his own account,) that he had never before familiarly conversed with any woman, except his near relations. I hardly need to add, that, upon his recovery, he entertained his fair pupil with more than usual complacency.

But Mr. Delamotte had not learned, (to use a common expression of Mr. Wesley's) to "defy suspicion." He thought he saw

Semblance of worth, not substance.

He therefore embraced an opportunity of expostulating with Mr. Wesley ; and asked him, if he designed to marry Miss Sophy ? At the same time he set forth, in a strong light, her art and his simplicity. Though pleased with the attention of his fair friend, Mr. Wesley had not allowed himself to determine upon marriage ;* Mr. Delamotte's question therefore not a little puzzled him. He waived an answer at that time ; and perceiving the prejudice of Mr. Delamotte's mind against the lady, he called on Bishop Nitschman, and consulted him.—His answer was short. "Marriage," said he, "you know, is not unlawful. Whether it is now expedient for you, and whether this lady is a proper wife for you, ought to be maturely weighed." Finding his perplexity increase, he determined to propose his doubts to the elders of the Moravian Church. When he entered into the house, where they were met together, he found Mr. Delamotte sitting among them. On his proposing the business, the Bishop replied, "We have considered your case. Will you abide by our decision ?" He answered, after some hesitation, "I will." "Then," said the Bishop, "we advise you to proceed no farther in this business." He replied, "The will of the Lord be done !" From this time, he behaved with the greatest caution towards her, and avoided every thing that tended to continue the intimacy, though he easily perceived what pain this change in his conduct gave her, as it did also to himself.

Soon after this, one of those ladies already mentioned in this narrative, came to him, and related, under a promise of secrecy, what I have

* Dr. Whitehead affirms, "he did intend to marry her, and was not a little pained when she broke off the connexion." I know that she ultimately broke it off ; but I know also that he did not at any time determine on marriage. I had the whole account from himself ; and I do not know that he ever told it to any other person.

now declared concerning the hitherto mysterious part of this event ; adding these words, " Sir, I had no rest till I resolved to tell you the whole affair. I have myself been urged to that behaviour towards you, which I am now ashamed to mention."

During the voyage from England, Mrs. W., already noted, was extremely ill with sea-sickness, so that Mr. Oglethorpe gave her the use of his cabin and bed, which Mr. Samuel Wesley mentions in one of his letters as an act of great kindness. One morning she issued from her retirement in a state of apparent distraction. Mr. J. Wesley, who had taken much pains to impress her mind with religious truth, strove to calm the tempest in her soul, and exhorted her to pray. She exclaimed, " Pray ! I cannot pray : God has cast me off." He replied, " Madam, you must pray." She again cried out, " I cannot pray ! I cannot pray ! I am lost." When we consider what companions the pious brothers had in their voyage, and the characters of those who were chiefly to form the infant colony, can we wonder at any thing that happened ?

She prefaced the communication which she afterwards made to Mr. Wesley with observing, " Sir, it is said, a woman cannot keep the secret of another.—It is strange, however, that I cannot keep my own ; but I really cannot." It is no wonder that the General should say to Mr. C. Wesley, that " he had taken pains to satisfy his brother, but in vain." Mr. Wesley knew too much, and had a mind too well disposed, to be easily satisfied. But he still hoped for his friend, knowing the state of his mind, and the impossibility of his having power over sin while in that state. He also informed me, (and the record is before me in his MSS.,) that one of those ladies, (I am not sure which,) desired a private interview with him ; and, after accusing him of having betrayed her, she attempted to stab him with a pair of long sharp scissors which she had concealed. But he caught her wrist, and after a great struggle, prevented her design.

Mr. Wesley kept his word, and cautiously avoided and concealed every thing, which could bring any inconvenience on this unhappy woman. He could not however behave to the General as he had formerly done. One day he dropped some expressions which made the General change his colour, and discover much agitation of mind. However, on recovering himself, he replied, in a very significant manner, " You observed yesterday the company of Indians that came into the town. The fellow that marched at their head, with his face marked with red paint, will shoot any man in this colony for a bottle of rum !" Mr. Wesley did not think it proper to reply : but, to show how little he regarded the menace, he took a book out of his pocket, and beginning to read, walked slowly towards his own house.

The next morning as he was reading with his back to the window, he suddenly found his light obstructed ; and turning round, he perceived the Indian standing at the window.* He immediately stepped to the door, invited him to walk in, and spread before him the best food that the house afforded. And as he had learned some words of the Indian language, he cheerfully requested him to eat. The Indian for some time surveyed him from head to foot with great attention ; then throwing down his gun, he seized him in his arms, and kissed him with the greatest eagerness. He then ate heartily, and departed after ano-

* The Indian was evidently sent to intimidate him.

ther warm embrace, and with every appearance of the highest satisfaction.

The General soon after this sailed for Europe. But one of the last charges which he gave, and that in the presence of several persons, was, "Causton, whatever you do, take heed, if you regard my favour, that you do not quarrel with Mr. Wesley."*

The wound which Mr. Wesley had received still festered in his mind. He remarks in his Journal, Feb. 5, 1737: "One of the most remarkable dispensations of Providence towards me, which I have yet known, began to show itself this day. For many days after, I could not at all judge which way the scale would turn; nor was it fully determined till March 4th, on which day God commanded me to pull out my right eye; and by his grace I determined so to do: But being slack in the execution, on Saturday, March 12, God being very merciful to me, my friend performed what I could not.†

"I have often thought, one of the most difficult commands that ever was given, was that given to Ezekiel concerning his wife. But the difficulty of obeying such a direction, appeared to me now more than ever before. When, considering the character I bore, I could not but perceive, that the word of the Lord was come to me likewise, saying, '*Son of man, behold I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke; yet neither shalt thou mourn, nor weep, neither shall thy tears run down.*'"

Feb. 24. It was agreed that Mr. Ingham should sail for England, and endeavour, if it should please God, to bring over some of their friends to strengthen their hands in his work. By him Mr. Wesley wrote to Mr. Oglethorpe; and this letter shows both his zeal and entire openness of heart, in pursuing and inculcating, without fear, what he deemed most excellent. It is as follows: "Sir, you apprehended strong opposition before you went hence; and, unless we are misinformed, you have found it. Yesterday morning, I read a letter from London, wherein it was asserted, that Sir Robert had turned against you; that the Parliament was resolved to make a severe scrutiny into all that has been transacted here; that the cry of the nation ran the same way; and that even the Trustees were so far from acknowledging the service you have done, that they had protested your bills, and charged you with misapplying the moneys you had received, and with gross mismanagement of the power wherewith you was intrusted.—Whether these things are so, or no, I know not; for it is ill depending on a single evidence. But this I know, that if your scheme was drawn (which I shall not easily believe) from that first-born of hell, Nicholas Machiavel,‡ as sure as

* Many years after this, General Oglethorpe met Mr. Wesley at the house of his brother Charles in London. And as soon as he entered the room, the General, in the presence of a very numerous company, advanced, and bowing down, kissed his hand.

† This relates to Miss Sophy's being addressed by a Mr. Williamson, to whom she was afterwards married.

‡ Nicholas Machiavel was born of a distinguished family at Florence. Of all his writings, a political treatise entitled the "Prince," has made the greatest noise in the world. Mr. Wesley speaks thus of it: If all the other doctrines of devils which have been committed to writing since letters were in the world, were collected together in one volume, it would fall short of this: And that should a prince form himself by this book, so calmly recommending hypocrisy, treachery, lying, robbery, oppression, adultery, whoredom, and murder of all kinds; Domitian or Nero would be an angel of light compared with that man." The world is not agreed as to the motive of this work; some thinking he meant to recommend tyrannical maxims; others, that he only delineated them to excite abhorrence. Harrington considers Machiavel as a superior genius, and as the most excellent writer on politics and government that ever appeared. Some have said, his greatest fault was, that he told the

there is a God that governs the earth, he will confound both it and you. If, on the contrary, (as I shall hope, till strong proof appear,) your heart was right before God; that it was your real design to promote the glory of God, by promoting peace and love among men; let not your heart be troubled: the God whom you serve is able to deliver you. Perhaps in some things you have shown you are but a man: Perhaps I myself may have a little to complain of: But O what a train of benefits have I received, to lay in the balance against it! I bless God that ever you was born. I acknowledge his exceeding mercy, in casting me into your hands. I own your generous kindness all the time we were at sea: I am indebted to you for a thousand favours here: Why then, the least I can say is, though all men should revile you, yet, (if God shall strengthen me,) will not I: Yea, were it not for the poor creatures, whom you have as yet but half redeemed from their complicated misery, I could almost wish that you were forsaken of all; that you might clearly see the difference between *men of honour*, and those who are, in the very lowest rank, the followers of Christ Jesus.

“O! where is the God of Elijah? Stir up thy strength and come and help him! If the desire of his heart be to thy name, let all his enemies flee before him! Art Thou not He who hast made him a father to the fatherless, a mighty deliverer to the oppressed! Hast Thou not given him to be feet to the lame, hands to the helpless, eyes to the blind? Hath he ever withheld his bread from the hungry, or hid his soul from his own flesh? Then, whatever thou withholdest from him, O thou Lover of men, satisfy his soul with thy likeness; renew his heart in the whole image of thy Christ; purge his spirit from self-will, pride, vanity, and fill it with faith and love, gentleness and long-suffering. Let no guile ever be found in his mouth; no injustice in his hands!—And among all your labours of love, it becomes me earnestly to entreat Him, that He will not forget those you have gone through for,

“SIR,

“Your obliged and obedient servant,

“JOHN WESLEY.”

The attentive reader will see in this letter the spirit of the man, whose *“love many waters could not quench,”* and who **never** forgot the smallest benefit. His whole eventful life was of this complexion.

By Mr. Ingham, he also wrote to Dr. Bray’s associates, who had sent a parochial library to Savannah.* It was expected of the ministers who received these libraries, that they should send an account to their benefactors, of the method they used in catechising the children, and instructing the youth of their respective parishes. That part of his letter was as follows;—“Our general method of catechising is this; a young gentleman who came with me, teaches between thirty and forty children,

world what bad princes did, not what they ought to do; and that his principles, though daily condemned, are daily put in practice. It has also been said, that he took his political maxims from the government of the Popes. One thing is however clear, that he wrote utterly without, and indeed against God. He died in 1530.

* Dr. Thomas Bray was born at Marton, in Shropshire, in the year 1656, and educated at Oxford. He was at length presented to the vicarage of Over-Whitacre, in Warwickshire; and in 1690, to the rectory of Sheldon, where he composed his Catechetical Lectures, which procured him such reputation, that Dr. Compton, Bishop of London, selected him as a proper person to model the infant church of Maryland; and for that purpose he was invested with the office of Commissary.

to read, write, and cast accounts. Before school in the morning, and after school in the afternoon, he catechises the lowest class, and endeavours to fix something of what was said in their understandings as well as in their memories. In the evening he instructs the larger children. On Saturday in the afternoon, I catechise them all. The same I do on Sunday before the evening service : And in the church immediately after the second lesson, a select number of them having repeated the catechism, and been examined in some part of it, I endeavour to explain at large, and enforce that part, both on them and the congregation.

"Some time after the evening service, as many of my parishioners as desire it, meet at my house, (as they do also on Wednesday evening,) and spend about an hour in prayer, singing, and mutual exhortation. A smaller number, mostly those who design to communicate the next day, meet here on Saturday evening ; and a few of these come to me on the other evenings, and pass half an hour in the same employment."

March 4.—Mr. Wesley wrote to the Trustees for Georgia, giving them an account of his expenses from March 1, 1736, to March 1, 1737, which, deducting extraordinary expenses, for repairing the parsonage-house, journeys to Frederica, &c, amounted for himself and Mr. Delamotte, to forty-four pounds four shillings and four pence. At the same time he accepted of the fifty pounds a year, sent by the Society for his maintenance, which, however, was in a manner forced upon him, as he had formed a resolution not to accept of it, saying his Fellowship was sufficient for him.* On this occasion his brother Samuel expostulated with him, and showed him, that, by refusing it, he might injure those who should come after him : And if he did not want it for himself, he might give it away in such a manner as he thought proper. He at length yielded to the solicitations of the Society, and the advice of his friends.

This day, it appears, the intimacy between Mr. Wesley and Miss Sophy, was finally broken off; and he refers to this circumstance in the following paragraph in his printed Journal : "From the direction I received from God this day, touching an affair of the last importance, I cannot but observe, as I have done many times before, the entire mistake of many good men, who assert, 'that God will not answer your prayer unless your heart be wholly resigned to his will.' My heart was not wholly resigned to his will ; therefore I durst not depend on my own judgment : And for this very reason, I cried to him the more earnestly, to supply what was wanting in me. And I know, and am assured, that he heard my voice, and did send forth his light and his truth."

He proceeds in his private Journal, in reference to the same affair. "March 7.—When I walked with Mr. Causton to his country-lot, I plainly felt, that had God given me such a retirement, with the companion I desired, I should have forgot the work for which I was born, and have set up my rest in this world. March 8.—Miss Sophy engaged herself to Mr. Williamson,—and on Saturday, the 12th, they were married at Purrysburgh : This being the day which completed the year from my first speaking to her. What thou doest, O God, I know not now ; but I shall know hereafter." He wrote on this occasion to his

* He thought differently afterwards. He did not think that either Mr. Fletcher, or Mr. Perronet, did well in not claiming their dues, as it tended to injure their successors. This also I know from himself.

brother Samuel, who tells him in his answer, "I am sorry you are disappointed in one match, because you are very unlikely to find another." He felt much; but I must repeat, that he never did allow himself to *determine* on marriage. If he had, he would not have referred the question to the Moravian Brethren. He fully told me his mind, and added, "If I had been allowed to follow my own inclinations, it is highly probable you would never have seen me. The Lord ordered it better." It was not long, however, before he saw sufficient cause to be thankful, that Providence had not permitted him to choose for himself. He had frequent occasions of discovering, that Mrs. Williamson was not that strictly religious character which he had supposed. On one of these occasions, near three months after her marriage, he writes thus, "God has showed me yet more of the greatness of my deliverance, by opening to me a new and unexpected scene of Miss Sophy's dissimulation. O never give me over to my own heart's desires; nor let me follow my own imaginations!" The trial through which Mr. Wesley now passed, gave him a more perfect knowledge of his own heart, and of human nature in general, than he had before acquired. He still pursued his labours with unremitting diligence, and observed the greatest punctuality in answering the letters from his friends.

March 29, 1737.—He wrote to Mrs. Chapman, a religious acquaintance in England, with whom he held a correspondence. This letter will fully show his views of the happy religion of Christ. "True friendship," says he, "is doubtless stronger than death, else yours could never have subsisted still, in spite of all opposition, and even after thousands of miles are interposed between us. In the last proof you gave of it, there are a few things which I think it lies on me to mention: As to the rest, my brother is the proper person to clear them up, as I suppose he has done long ago.

"You seem to apprehend, that I believe religion to be inconsistent with cheerfulness, and with a sociable friendly temper. So far from it, that I am convinced, as true religion or holiness cannot be without cheerfulness, so steady cheerfulness, on the other hand, cannot be without holiness or true religion. And I am equally convinced, that religion has nothing sour, austere, unsociable, unfriendly in it: but on the contrary, implies the most winning sweetness, the most amiable softness* and gentleness. Are you for having as much cheerfulness as you can? So am I. Do you endeavour to keep alive your taste for all the truly innocent pleasures of life? So do I likewise. Do you refuse no pleasure, but what is a hinderance to some greater good, or has a tendency to some evil? It is my very rule: And I know no other, by which a sincere reasonable Christian can be guided. In particular, I pursue this rule in eating, which I seldom do without much pleasure. And this I know is the will of God concerning me; that I should enjoy every pleasure, that leads to my taking pleasure in him; and in such a measure as most leads to it. I know that, as to every action which is naturally pleasing, it is his will that it should be so: Therefore in taking that pleasure so far as it tends to this end, (of taking pleasure in God,) I do his will. Though therefore that pleasure be in some sense distinct

* Softness is an equivocal term: But Mr. Wesley does not here mean effeminacy, which the Christian religion forbids, and which he always discouraged both by his words and actions. He uses the word as equivalent with *benignity*.

from the love of God, yet is the taking of it by no means distinct from his will. No; you say yourself, 'It is his will I should take it.' And here indeed is the hinge of the question, which I had once occasion to state in a letter to you; and more largely in a sermon on the love of God. If you will read over those, I believe you will find, you differ from Mr. Law and me, in words only. You say, the pleasures you plead for are distinct from the love of God, as the cause from the effect. Why then they tend to it; and those which are only thus distinct from it, no one excepts against. The whole of what he affirms, and that not on the authority of men, but from the words and example of God incarnate, is, there is one thing needful, to do the will of God, and his will is our sanctification; our renewal in the image of God, in faith and love, in all holiness and happiness. On this we are to fix our single eye, at all times, and in all places: For so did our Lord. This one thing we are to do; for so did our fellow servant Paul, after his example, '*Whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, we are to do all to the glory of God.*' In other words, we are to do nothing but what, directly or indirectly, leads to our holiness, which is his glory; and to do every such thing with this design, and in such a measure as may most promote it.

"I am not mad, my dear friend, for asserting these to be the words of truth and soberness; neither are any of those, either in England or here, who have hitherto attempted to follow me. I am and must be an example to my flock; not indeed, in my prudential rules, but, in some measure, (if giving God the glory, I may dare to say so,) in my spirit, and life, and conversation. Yet all of them are, in your sense of the word, unlearned, and most of them of low understanding; and still not one of them has been as yet entangled in any case of conscience, which was not solved.* And as to the nice distinctions you speak of, it is you, my friend, it is the wise, the learned, the disputers of this world, who are lost in them, and bewildered more and more, the more they strive to extricate themselves. We have no need of nice distinctions, for I exhort all—dispute with none. I feed my brethren in Christ, as he giveth me power, with the pure unmixed milk of his word. And those who are as little children receive it, not as the word of man, but as the word of God. Some grow thereby, and advance apace in peace and holiness: They grieve, it is true, for those who did run well, but are now turned back; and they fear for themselves, lest they also be tempted; yet, through the mercy of God, they despair not, but have still a good hope that they shall endure to the end. Not that this hope has any resemblance to enthusiasm, which is a hope to attain the end without the means; this they know is impossible, and therefore ground their hope on a constant careful use of all the means. And, if they keep in this way, with lowliness, patience, and meekness of resignation, they cannot carry the principle of pressing towards perfection too far. O may you and I carry it far enough! Be fervent in spirit! Rejoice evermore! Pray without ceasing! In every thing give thanks! Do every thing in the name of the Lord Jesus! Abound more and more in all

* Small knowledge they had, and needed no more:

Not many could read, but all could adore:

No aid from the college or school they received;

Content with His knowledge in whom they believed.

CHARLES WESLEY on the *Primitive Christians*.

holiness, and in zeal for every good word and work!"—This was the Christian perfection which Mr. Wesley preached from first to last; but he attained to clearer views of the *way* of obtaining it—viz. by *faith*. All the particular graces above mentioned are the *fruits of faith made perfect, and working by love*.

Before Mr. Wesley left Frederica, in January, 1737, where his brother had suffered so much, and where the opposition of some ill-minded and desperate persons rose to a degree of violence hardly credible, so that his life was in danger several times; the worst constructions, which malignity itself could invent, were put upon his actions, and reported as facts. It even seems, that the giving away his own private income in acts of charity, was construed into embezzlement of the society's money. Mr. Wesley did not doubt but men capable of such baseness would represent the matter in this light to the Trustees. He, therefore, wrote to them on the subject, and received the following answer from Dr. Burton; which, as it shows the confidence the Trustees had in his uprightness and integrity, and their approbation of his conduct, I shall insert.

“GEORGIA OFFICE, June 15th, 1737.

“DEAR SIR,—I communicated your letter to the board this morning. We are surprised at your apprehensions of being charged with the imputation of having embezzled any public or private moneys. I cannot learn any ground for even suspicion of any thing of this kind. We never heard of any accusation; but, on the contrary, are persuaded both of your frugality and honesty. We beg you not to give weight to reports or private insinuations. The Trustees have a high esteem of your good services, and, on all occasions will give farther encouragement; and would not have the express mention of the fifty pounds, (in lieu of the same sum, formerly advanced by the *Society for Propagation*,) so understood, as not to admit of enlargement upon proper occasions. I am ordered by all the members present to acquaint you of this, and to give you assurance of their approbation of your conduct, and readiness to assist you. The V. Prov. of Eton has given you ten pounds, for your private use, and doing works of charity. I have desired Mr. Oglethorpe to convey this to you in a private way. Mr. Whitefield will shortly, and by the next convenient opportunity, go over to Georgia. There are three hundred acres granted to the church in Frederica. Be not discouraged by any hasty insinuations; but hope the best while many labour for the best. In good time, matters will bear a better face. God strengthen your hands, and give efficacy to your honest endeavours! In a former letter I spoke my mind at large to you concerning many particulars. I am, in much haste at present,

“Your affectionate friend,

“J. BURTON.

“P. S. My Lord Egmont gives his respects and kind wishes, and begs you not to be discouraged.

Mr. Causton, the chief magistrate of Savannah, had hitherto not only shown a decent civility towards Mr. Wesley, but even a friendly regard for him. This regard seemed to have increased during a fever he had in the end of June, in which Mr. Wesley attended him every day.

But, about this time, he saw it to be his duty to mention to Mrs. Wil-

Williamson those things which he thought reprobable in her behaviour. At this, she appeared extremely angry, saying, she did not expect such usage from him. He consulted his friend Mr. Spangenberg, on this occasion, to whom he engaged that, God being his helper, he would behave to all, rich or poor, friends or enemies, without respect of persons.

August 7.—Mr. Wesley, having spoken to her in vain, repelled Mrs. Williamson from the holy communion, for the reasons specified in his letter of the 5th of July, as well as for not giving him notice of her design to communicate, after having discontinued it for some time. On the 9th, a warrant having been issued and served upon him, he was carried before the Recorder and Magistrates. Mr. Williamson's charge was—1. That Mr. Wesley had defamed his wife. 2. That he had causelessly repelled her from the holy communion.—The first charge Mr. Wesley denied; and the second being purely ecclesiastical, he would not acknowledge the magistrates' power to interrogate him concerning it. He was told, that he must, however, appear at the next Court holden for Savannah. In the mean time, Mr. Causton, having now become Mr. Wesley's bitter enemy, required him to assign his reasons in writing for repelling his niece. This he accordingly did, by producing the following letter, written to Mrs. Williamson; "At Mr. Causton's request I write once more. The rules whereby I proceed are these: *So many as intend to partake of the holy communion, shall signify their names to the Curate, at least some time the day before.* This you did not do.

"And if any of these have done any wrong to his neighbour by word or deed, so that the congregation be thereby offended, the Curate shall advertise him, that in any wise he presume not to come to the Lord's table, until he hath openly declared himself to have truly repented."

"If you offer yourself at the Lord's table on Sunday, I will advertise you, as I have done more than once, wherein you have done wrong; and when you have openly declared yourself to have truly repented, I will administer to you the mysteries of God."

On the 12th of August and the following days, Mr. Causton read to as many as he conveniently could, all the letters Mr. Wesley had written to himself or Miss Sophy from the beginning of their acquaintance; not, indeed, throughout, but selecting certain passages, which might, being detached from the rest, and aided by a comment which he supplied, make an impression to Mr. Wesley's disadvantage.—While Mr. Causton was thus employed, the rest of the family were assiduous in their endeavours to convince all to whom they spake, that Mr. Wesley had repelled Mrs. Williamson from the communion out of revenge, because she had refused to marry him. "I sat still at home," says Mr. Wesley, "and, I thank God, easy, having committed my cause to Him; and remembering his word, '*Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.*' I was at first afraid, that those who were weak in the faith would be turned out of the way, at least so far as to neglect the public worship, by attending which they were likely to suffer in their temporal concerns. But I feared where no fear was: God took care of this likewise, insomuch that on Sunday, the 14th, more were present at the morning prayers, than had been for some months before. Many of them observed those words in the first lesson, '*Set Naboth on*

high among the people; and set two men, sons of Belial, before him, to bear witness against him.' No less remarkable were those in the evening lesson, 'I hate him, for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil.' O may I ever be able to say with Micaiah, 'What the Lord saith unto me that will I speak;' and that, though I too should be put into prison, and fed there 'with bread of affliction and with water of affliction.' "

August 16. At the request of several of the communicants, he drew up a short relation of the case, and read it after the evening prayers in the open congregation. And this evening, as Mr. Wesley supposed, Mrs. Williamson was prevailed upon to swear to, and sign, a paper containing many assertions and insinuations injurious to his character.—During the whole of this week, Mr. Causton was employed in preparing those who were to form the Grand Jury at the next Court-day. He was talking with some or other of them day and night: His table was free to all: Old misunderstandings were forgotten, and nothing was too much to be done for them or promised to them. Monday, the 22d, the Court was formed, and forty-four Jurors were sworn in, instead of fifteen, to be a Grand Jury to find the bills. This was done by Mr. Causton, who hereby showed his skill in the management of a controversy like this. He knew well, that numbers would add weight to every thing they transacted, and induce them to take bolder steps, than a few would venture upon. To this Grand Jury he gave a long and earnest charge, *to beware of spiritual tyranny, and to oppose the new illegal authority, which was usurped over their consciences.* Mrs. Williamson's affidavit was read; and he then delivered to them a paper, entitled "A List of Grievances, presented by the Grand Jury for Savannah, this — day of August, 1737." In the afternoon Mrs. Williamson was examined, who acknowledged that she had no objections to make against Mr. Wesley's conduct before her marriage. The next day Mr. and afterward Mrs. Causton were also examined. The latter confessed, that it was by her request Mr. Wesley had written to Mrs. Williamson on the 5th of July; and Mr. Causton declared, that if Mr. Wesley had asked his consent to have married his niece, he should not have refused it.* —The Grand Jury continued to examine these ecclesiastical grievances, which occasioned warm debates, till Thursday; when Mr. Causton, being informed they were entered on matters beyond his instructions, went to them, and behaved in such a manner, that he turned forty-two out of the forty-four into a fixed resolution to inquire into his whole behaviour: They immediately entered on that business, and continued examining witnesses all day on Friday. On Saturday, Mr. Causton finding all his efforts to stop them ineffectual, adjourned the Court till Thursday, the 1st of September, and spared no pains, in the mean time, to bring them to another mind.

September 1.—Mr. Causton so far prevailed, that the majority of the Grand Jury returned the list of grievances to the Court, (in some particulars altered,) under the form of two presentments, containing ten bills, only two of which related to the affair of Mrs. Williamson; and only one of these was cognizable by that Court, the rest being merely ecclesiastical.

September 2.—Mr. Wesley addressed the Court to this effect: "As

* But the attachment never came to that.

to nine of the ten indictments against me, I know this Court can take no cognizance of them; they being matters of an ecclesiastical nature, and this not an ecclesiastical Court. But the tenth, concerning my speaking and writing to Mrs. Williamson, is of a secular nature; and this, therefore, I desire may be tried here, where the facts complained of were committed." Little answer was made, and that purely evasive.

In the afternoon he moved the Court again, for an immediate trial at Savannah; adding, "That those who are offended may clearly see whether I have done any wrong to any one; or whether I have not rather deserved the thanks of Mrs. Williamson, Mr. Causton, and of the whole family." Mr. Causton's answer was full of civility and respect. He observed, "Perhaps things would not have been carried so far, had you not said, you believed if Mr. Causton appeared, the people would tear him in pieces; not so much out of love to you, as out of hatred to him for his abominable practices."

It is hardly possible to believe that Mr. Wesley spoke thus. He had views of religion that would not suffer him to do so. But we too often find in disputes, that the constructions of others on what has been said, are reported as the very words which have been spoken. Mr. Causton sufficiently discovered the motives that influenced his conduct in this business.

Twelve of the grand jurors now drew up a protest against the proceedings of the majority, to be immediately sent to the Trustees in England. In this paper they gave such clear and satisfactory reasons, under every bill, for their dissent from the majority, as effectually did away all just ground of complaint against Mr. Wesley, on the subjects of the prosecution;—but as Mr. and Mrs. Williamson intended to proceed to England in the first ship that should sail, some of Mr. Wesley's friends thought he ought to go likewise; chiefly to prevent or remove the bad impressions, which misrepresentations and ill-natured report might make on the Trustees and others, interested in the welfare of the colony. But, September 10th, he observes, "I laid aside the thoughts of going to England; thinking it more suitable to my calling, still to commit my cause to God, and not to be in haste to justify myself: only, *'to be always ready to give to any one that should ask me, a reason of the hope that is in me.'*"

Very different, however, were the spirit and the proceedings of the magistrates of Savannah. They sent the affidavit they had procured, and the two presentments of the grand jury, to be inserted in the newspapers in different parts of America. The only purpose this could answer was, to injure Mr. Wesley in the opinion of a large body of people, who could not easily come at a true knowledge of the case. That these advertisements might make a deeper impression on the minds of the multitude, the pomp of legal form was preserved; the following words being added at the end of each bill, "CONTRARY TO THE PEACE OF OUR SOVEREIGN LORD THE KING, HIS CROWN AND DIGNITY." Persons of discernment saw through the artifice, and in the end of September, Mr. Wesley received a letter from a gentleman of considerable station and learning in Charleston, in which are the following observations. "I am much concerned at some reports and papers concerning you from Georgia. The papers contain some affidavits made against you by one Mrs. Williamson; and a parcel of stuff

called presentments of you by the grand jury, for matters chiefly of your mere office as a clergyman. Has our Sovereign Lord the King given the temporal courts in Georgia ecclesiastical jurisdiction? If he has not, then sure I am, that, whatever your failings in your office may be, a grand jury's presentments of them, being repugnant to the fundamental laws and constitution of England, is a plain 'breach of his peace,' and an open insult on 'his Crown and Dignity;' for which they themselves ought to be presented, if they have not incurred a *premunire*.* The presentments, (a sad pack of nonsense,) I have seen; but not the affidavits. They were both designed to have been published in our Gazette, but our friends here have hitherto prevented it.—I shall be glad to have some light from yourself into these matters, and wherewith to oppose the reports industriously spread here to your disadvantage; meantime, I remain, your most obedient humble servant,

"S. GARDEN."

Mr. Wesley also received some consolatory letters from those of his friends, to whom he had represented his situation. A letter of this kind, from Dr. Cutler, a clergyman at Boston, contains some thoughts not very commonly to be met with; and I think it, therefore, worthy of a place here. It is dated the twenty-second of October. "I am sorry, sir," says he, "for the clouds hanging over your mind respecting your undertaking and situation; but hope God will give a happy increase to that good seed you have planted and watered, according to his will. The best of men, in all ages, have failed in the success of their labour; and there will ever be found too many enemies to the cross of Christ; for earth will not be heaven. This reminds us of that happy place, where we shall not see and be grieved for transgressors; and where, for our well-meant labours, our judgment is with the Lord, and our reward with our God. And you well know, sir, that, under the saddest appearances, we may have some share in the consolations which God gave Elijah; and may trust in him, that there is some wickedness we repress or prevent; some goodness by our means, weak and unworthy as we are, beginning and increasing in the hearts of men, at present; perhaps like a grain of mustard-seed, that in God's time may put forth, and spread, and flourish: and that if the world seems not the better for us, it might be worse without us. Our low opinion of ourselves is a preparative to these successes; and so the modest and great Apostle found it.

"No doubt, sir, you have temptations where you are, nor is there any retreat from them; they hint to us the care we must take, and the promises we must apply to; and '*blessed is the man that endureth temptation.*'"

"I rejoice in the good character you give, which I believe you well bestow, of Mr. Whitefield, who is coming to you—but I question not but his labours will be better joined with, than supersede yours; and even his, and all our sufficiency and efficiency is of God.

"It is the least we can do to pray for one another; and if God will hear me, a great sinner, it will strengthen your interest in him. I recommend myself to a share in your prayers, for his pardon, acceptance, and assistance; and beg that my family may not be forgotten by you."

Mr. Wesley, in the midst of this storm, kept up by the arts of his

* To incur a *premunire*, is to be liable to imprisonment and loss of goods.

avowed enemies, without a shilling in his pocket, and three thousand miles from home, possessed his soul in peace, and pursued his labours with the same unremitting diligence, as if he had enjoyed the greatest tranquillity and ease.

October 30.—He gives us an account of his labours on the Lord's day. "The English service lasted from five till half an hour past six. The Italian (with a few Vaudois,) began at nine. The second service for the English, including the sermon and the holy Communion, continued from half an hour past ten, till about half an hour past twelve. The French service began at one. At two I catechised the children. About three began the English service. After this was ended, I joined with as many as my large room would hold, in reading prayer and singing. And about six the service of the Germans began; at which I was glad to be present, not as a teacher, but as a learner."

November 1.—He received a temporary relief from his pressing wants. "Col. Stephens," says he, "arrived, by whom I received a benefaction of ten pounds sterling;* after having been for several months without one shilling in the house, but not without peace, health, and contentment."

November 3.—He attended the court holden on that day; and again at the court held on the twenty-third; urging an immediate hearing of his case, that he might have an opportunity of answering the charges alleged against him. But this the magistrates refused, and at the same time countenanced every report to his disadvantage; whether it were a mere invention, or founded on a malicious construction of any thing he did or said. Mr. Wesley perceiving that he had not the most distant prospect of obtaining justice, that he was in a place where those in power were combined together to oppress him, and could any day procure evidence, (as experience had shown,) of words he had never spoken, and of actions he had never done; being disappointed too, in the primary object of his mission, preaching to the Indians; he consulted with his friends what he ought to do; who were of opinion with him, that by these circumstances Providence did now call him to leave Savannah. The next day he called on Mr. Causton, and told him he designed to set out for England immediately. Nov. 24, he put up the following advertisement in the great square, and quietly prepared for his journey.

"Whereas John Wesley designs shortly to set out for England,
This is to desire those who have borrowed any books of him, to
return them as soon as they conveniently can, to

"JOHN WESLEY."

This indeed was an event which the magistrates most ardently wished to take place, and to which all their proceedings had been directed. It is no objection to this opinion, that they published an order to prohibit him from leaving the province. It is manifest, that they had no intention of bringing the matter to a fair hearing, and of giving it a legal decision. They knew well, that the evidence was so strong in Mr. Wesley's favour, that they could not even invent a plausible pretence for giving the cause against him. But to give it in his favour would have been cause of rejoicing to him and his friends, and they had no way of

* Probably the ten pounds mentioned in Dr. Burton's letter, the 15th of June.

preventing this, but by delaying the trial as long as possible. On the other hand, they easily foresaw, that if by cutting off all prospect of terminating the affair, and multiplying false and injurious reports concerning him every day, they might weary out his patience, and induce him to quit the province of his own accord, the triumph would be left to his enemies; and he, leaving the province pending a prosecution against him, and in opposition to a prohibition of the magistrates, would make his conduct and character suspected among all those who did not know the circumstances of the case. Finding him now determined to sail for England, they had an opportunity of giving their plan its full effect.

Mr. Wesley intended to set out about noon, the tide then serving; but about ten o'clock the magistrates sent for him, and told him he should not go out of the province, till he had entered into recognizance to appear at the court, and answer the allegations laid against him. Mr. Wesley replied, that he had appeared at six courts successively, and had openly desired a trial, but was refused it. They said that he must however give security to appear again. He asked what security? After a long consultation together, they agreed upon a kind of bond, that he should appear at Savannah, when required, under a penalty of fifty pounds. But the recorder added, you must likewise give bail to answer Mr. Williamson's action of one thousand pounds damages. "I then began," says Mr. Wesley, "to see into their design, of spinning out time and doing nothing; and so told him plainly, Sir, I will sign neither the one bond nor the other; you know your business, and I know mine."

Finding him quite determined, the magistrates saw their plan was secure, and that they might safely keep up appearances in their own favour, without danger of disappointment. In the afternoon, therefore, they published an order, requiring all officers to prevent his going out of the province, and forbidding any person to assist him so to do. The day was now far spent: After evening prayers, therefore, the tide again serving, Mr. Wesley left Savannah, in company with three other persons, no one attempting to hinder him. There can be no doubt but the magistrates were heartily glad to get rid of a man, whose whole manner of life was a constant reproof of their licentiousness, and whose words were as arrows sticking fast in them.

Mr. Wesley's constant rule, from which he could not swerve with a pure conscience, was, to ascertain that line of conduct which duty required him to pursue as a Christian and a minister of the Gospel, and then steadily to walk in it, regardless of consequences. And there is every evidence which the case will admit, that he acted in this conscientious manner towards Mrs. Williamson. It does not appear, that any one ever charged him with repelling her from the Holy Communion out of revenge, because she would not marry him, except her relations, who now thought it necessary to injure his reputation as much as possible, to cover themselves from reproach. But this charge not only wants positive proof; it is even destitute of probability. It was about five months after her marriage when this circumstance happened, during the former part of which time he had frequently administered the sacrament to her, without showing any symptoms of resentment: And about three months after her marriage, he saw such things in her conduct, (noted in his private Journal, *which was never printed*,) as induced him to bless God for his deliverance in not marrying her.

In his pastoral character, Mr. Wesley acted by one rule towards all the communicants, remembering that word of St. James,—*If ye have respect of persons, ye commit sin.* If any one had discontinued his attendance at the Lord's table, he required him to signify his name some time the day before he intended to communicate again : And if any one had done wrong to his neighbour, so that the congregation was thereby offended, he required him openly to declare that he had repented. This rule the order of the Church of England required him to observe, and he acted by it invariably in all cases, whether the persons were rich or poor, friends or enemies. Mrs. Williamson did not conform to this established order, which must have been well known to all the communicants in so small a place. Mr. Wesley was, therefore, reduced to this alternative, either to break an order he held sacred, in her favour, and thereby incur the censure of a blameable partiality for her, after being married to another ; or to repel her from the Holy Communion. Censure was inevitable, whichever way he had acted, considering the malice of her relatives. Having well considered the matter, therefore, he determined to follow the rule he had always observed, and to leave the consequences to God.

Mr. Wesley enjoyed a wonderful state of health while in America. His constitution seemed to improve under the hardships he endured, which appeared sufficient to have weakened or destroyed the strongest man. Three hundred acres having been set apart at Savannah for glebe land, he took from it what he thought sufficient for a good garden, and here he frequently worked with his own hands. He continued his custom of eating little, of sleeping less, and of leaving not a moment of his time unemployed. He exposed himself with the utmost indifference to every change of season, and to all kinds of weather. On one of these occasions he concludes, that any person might undergo the same hardship without injury, if his constitution were not impaired by the softness of a genteel education. Dr. Whitehead observes upon this : " In all Mr. Wesley's writings, I do not know such a flagrant instance of false reasoning as this. Contrary to all the rules of logic, he draws a general conclusion from particular premises ;—but who is, at all times, in full possession of the powers of his own mind ?" Whatever becomes of the *opinion*, which I would not dispute with a Doctor, the logic is good, for the premises are not *particular*. All those whose constitutions are not thus hurt, are included. Mr. Wesley, therefore, as a logician, does not need the Doctor's apology.

Mr. Wesley and his three companions suffered great hardships in travelling from Purrysburg to Port Royal. Not being able to procure a guide, they set out an hour before sunrise without one. The consequence was, they lost their way ; and wandered in the woods till evening, without any food but part of a gingerbread cake divided among them, and without a drop of water. At night two of the company dug with their hands about three feet deep, and found water with which they were refreshed. They lay down together on the ground, (in December,) " And I, at least," says Mr. Wesley, " slept till near six in the morning." They rose, took the rest of the gingerbread cake, and wandered on till between one and two o'clock, before they came to any house, or obtained any farther refreshment.—December 6, after many difficulties and delays, they came to Port Royal, and the next day walked to Beaufort,

on the opposite side of the island. Here Mr. Jones, the minister of the place, invited Mr. Wesley to his house, and gave him, as he acknowledges, a lively idea of the old English hospitality. Mr. Wesley adds, in his private Journal, "Yet observing the elegance, and more than neatness of every thing about him, I could not but sigh to myself, and say, *Hæu delicatum discipulum duri Magistri!*"* Perhaps this remark was more in the Mystic than in the Christian style; and, to adopt the language which Mr. Wesley sometimes used, he was severely reprov'd for it, shortly after, being almost refused the necessaries of life.

On the 9th, Mr. Delamotte having come to him, they took boat for Charleston; but the wind being contrary, and provisions falling short, they were oblig'd on the 11th to land at a plantation to get some refreshment. The people were unwilling to let them have any: At length, however, they gave them some bad potatoes, "of which," says Mr. Wesley, "they plainly told us we robbed the swine."—The wind continued contrary, and they in want of every thing; till about noon, on the 12th, having reached John's Island, they desired a Mr. G. to let them have a little meat or drink of any sort, either with or without price. With much difficulty, he tells us, they obtained some potatoes, and liberty to roast them in a fire his negroes had made at a distance from the house.

Mr. Wesley proceeds: "Early on Tuesday, December 13th, we came to Charleston, where I expected trials of a quite different nature and more dangerous: contempt and hunger being easy to be borne; but who can bear respect and fulness of bread?"† On the 16th, he parted from his faithful friend, Mr. Delamotte, from whom he had been but a few days separate since their departure from England. On the 22d, he took his leave of America, after having preached the Gospel, as he observes, in Savannah, "not as he ought, but as he was able, for one year and nearly nine months."

"Such was the leave," says Mr. Hampson, "which our Missionary," (how respectful in a man who owed, under God, his all to him!) "took of America." I scruple not to say, (and I think that every reader who candidly considers the whole account, will say,) such was the treatment that a man of God received from those, whose best interests he endeavoured to promote! But though "*clouds and darkness are around his throne*," who governs the world, "*yet righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his seat*." Such a burning and shining light was not to be hidden in the then uncultivated wilds of Georgia. He who had sold all for God and his truth, and who was fitted to defend that truth against all the deceivableness of the carnal mind, with all its additional weapons of vain philosophy, or worldly prudence, was called to act in a very different sphere. And though permitted by the only wise God our Saviour, to be "*sifted as wheat*," and tried in the furnace of adversity, he was preserved and brought forth as gold, which

"Returns more pure, and brings forth all its weight."

Divine Providence was about to lead him into a field of action in which every gift that God had given him, was tried to the uttermost, and "*was found unto praise, and honour, and glory*."

* Alas, for the delicate disciple of a Master that endured all hardness!

† Those who have *faith*, and who abide therein.

CHAPTER III.

MR. WESLEY'S RETURN TO ENGLAND, AND ATTAINING, WITH HIS BROTHER, THE TRUE CHRISTIAN FAITH.

IN the beginning of the following May, Mr. Whitefield arrived at Savannah, where he found some serious persons, the fruits of Mr. Wesley's ministry, glad to receive him. He had now an opportunity of inquiring upon the spot, into the circumstances of the late disputes, and bears testimony to the ill usage Mr. Wesley had received; but adds, he thought it most prudent not to repeat grievances.* When he was at Charleston, Mr. Garden acquainted him with the ill treatment Mr. Wesley had met with, and assured him, that, were the same arbitrary proceedings to commence against him, he would defend him with life and fortune.† These testimonies, of persons so respectable, and capable of knowing all the circumstances of the affair, coincide with the general tendency of the statement above given; and, with candid persons, must do away all suspicions, with regard to the integrity of Mr. Wesley's conduct.

During his voyage to England, Mr. Wesley entered into a close and severe examination of himself, and recorded the result with the greatest openness. January 8, 1738, in the fulness of his heart he writes thus: "By the most infallible of proofs, inward feeling,‡ I am convinced 1. Of unbelief; having no such faith in Christ, as will prevent my heart from being troubled.—2. Of pride, throughout my life past. inasmuch as I thought I had, what I find I have not. 3. Of gross irrecollection; inasmuch as, in a storm I cry to God every moment, in a calm, not. 4. Of levity and luxuriancy of spirit,—appearing by my speaking words not tending to edify; but most, by my manner of speaking of my enemies.—Lord, save, or I perish! Save me, 1. By such a faith as implies peace in life and death. 2. By such humility, as may fill my heart from this hour for ever with a piercing uninterrupted sense, *Nihil est quod hactenus feci*, that *hitherto I have done nothing*. 3. By such a recollection as may enable me to cry to thee, every moment. 4. By steadiness, seriousness, *σεμνοτητα*, *sobriety of spirit*, avoiding as fire, every word that tendeth not to edify, and never speaking of any who oppose me, or sin against God, without all my own sins set in array before my face."§

January 13.—They had a thorough storm.—On the 24th, being about 160 leagues from the Land's-end, he observes, his mind was full of thought, and he wrote as follows: "I went to America to convert the Indians; but oh! who shall convert me? Who is he that will deliver me from this evil heart of unbelief? I have a fair summer religion; I can talk well, nay, and believe myself while no danger is near: But let

* ROBERTS'S Narrative of the Life of Mr. George Whitefield, page 56. † Ibid. page 58.

‡ While Mr. Wesley afterwards contended with the world for the faith, this expression was brought forward by his opponents to prove, in their way, that Mr. Wesley set inward feeling above Scripture, reason, and all evidence! By "inward feeling" he evidently means consciousness. How, otherwise, could he be convinced of *his own particular state*?

§ He now more deeply than ever felt the want of faith, even when he was conscious that he had not wickedly departed from his God.

death look me in the face, and my spirit is troubled. Nor can I say,
'To die is gain!'

"I have a sin of fear, that when I've spun
 My last thread, I shall perish on the shore!"

"I think verily if the Gospel be true, I am safe—I now believe the Gospel is true. *'I show my faith by my works,'* by staking my all upon it. I would do so again and again a thousand times, if the choice were still to make. Whoever sees me, sees I would be a Christian. Therefore *'are my ways not like other men's ways.'* Therefore I have been, I am, I am content to be, *'a by-word, a proverb of reproach.'* But in a storm I think, What, if the gospel be not true; then thou art of all men most foolish,—O who will deliver me from this fear of death! What shall I do? Where shall I fly from it?" The next day, Jan. 25, he took a review of his religious principles on a few important points; and in a private paper wrote as follows:

"1. For many years I have been tossed about by various winds of doctrine. I asked long ago, *'What must I do to be saved?'* The Scripture answered, *'keep the commandments,'* believe, hope, love: follow after these tempers till thou hast fully attained, that is, till death; by all those outward works and means which God hath appointed; by walking as Christ walked.

"2. I was early warned against laying, as the Papists do, too much stress on outward works, or on a faith without works; which, as it does not include, so it will never lead to true hope or charity. Nor am I sensible, that to this hour I have laid too much stress on either; having from the very beginning valued both faith, and the means of grace, and good works, not on their own account, but, as believing God, who had appointed them, would by them bring me in due time to the mind that was in Christ.

"3. But before God's time was come, I fell among some Lutheran and Calvinist authors, whose confused and indigested accounts magnified faith to such an amazing size, that it quite hid all the rest of the commandments. I did not then see, that this was the natural effect of their overgrown fear of Popery: Being so terrified with the cry of merit and good works, that they plunged at once into the other extreme. In this labyrinth I was utterly lost; not being able to find out what the error was; nor yet to reconcile this uncouth hypothesis, either with Scripture or common sense.

"4. The English writers, such as Bishop Beveridge, Bishop Taylor, and Mr. Nelson, a little relieved me from these well-meaning, wrong-headed Germans. Their accounts of Christianity, I could easily see to be, in the main, consistent both with reason and Scripture. Only when they interpreted Scripture in different ways, I was often much at a loss. And again, there was one thing much insisted on in Scripture, the unity of the church, which none of them, I thought, clearly explained, or strongly inculcated.

"5. But it was not long before Providence brought me to those, who showed me a sure rule of interpreting Scripture; viz. *Consensus Veterum: 'Quod ab omnibus, quod ubique, quod semper creditum.'** At the same time they sufficiently insisted upon a due regard to the one church,

* The general consent of antiquity: That which was believed in every place, by all the Churches, and at all times.

at all times, and in all places. Nor was it long before I bent the bow too far the other way: (1.) By making antiquity a co-ordinate, rather than sub-ordinate, rule with Scripture. (2.) By admitting several doubtful writings, as undoubted evidences of antiquity. (3.) By extending antiquity too far, even to the middle or end of the fourth century. (4.) By believing more practices to have been universal in the ancient church, than ever were so. (5.) By not considering, that the Decrees of one Provincial Synod could bind only that Province; and that the Decrees of a general Synod, only those provinces whose representatives met therein. (6.) By not considering, that the most of those Decrees were adapted to particular times and occasions; and consequently, when those occasions ceased, must cease to bind even those provinces.

"6. These considerations insensibly stole upon me, as I grew acquainted with the Mystic writers; whose noble descriptions of union with God, and internal religion, made every thing else appear mean, flat, and insipid. But in truth they made good works appear so too; yea, and faith itself, and what not? These gave me an entire new view of religion; nothing like any I had before. But alas! it was nothing like that religion which Christ and his apostles lived and taught. I had a plenary dispensation from all the commands of God: the form ran thus, 'Love is all; all the commands beside, are only means of love: You must choose those which you feel are means to you, and use them as long as they are so.' Thus were all the bands burst at once. And though I could never fully come into this, nor contentedly omit what God enjoined; yet, I know not how, I fluctuated between obedience and disobedience. I had no heart, no vigour, no zeal in obeying; continually doubting whether I was right or wrong, and never out of perplexities and entanglements. Nor can I at this hour give a distinct account, how, or when, I came a little back towards the right way: Only my present sense is this—all the other enemies of Christianity are triflers: The Mystics are the most dangerous of its enemies. They stab it in the vitals; and its most serious professors are most likely to fall by them. May I praise Him who hath snatched me out of this fire likewise, by warning all others, that it is set on fire of hell."

The censure Mr. Wesley has here passed on the Mystic writers, is too severe, as he afterwards acknowledged. What the moderate Mystics have said on the union of the soul with God, is in general excellent, and better said by them, than by most other writers. But they do not sufficiently insist on the atonement and mediation of Christ, as the only foundation of a sinner's union with God. Nor do they in general hold the scriptural method of attaining it. The sincere, therefore, are always in bondage.—Those that are not so, "*trust in themselves that they are righteous, and despise others.*"

January 29, 1738.—They once more saw English land: And Feb. 1, Mr. Wesley landed at Deal; where he was informed Mr. Whitefield had sailed the day before for Georgia. He read prayers, and explained a portion of Scripture to a large company at the inn; and, on the third, arrived safe in London.

Previous to his arrival in England, he entered more fully into a close examination of himself, and "*searched out his spirit*" in the light which those late remarkable providences afforded him. The Lord had now given him abundant means of self-knowledge, and they were not lost

upon him. He more than ever felt what he had subscribed to at his ordination, that he was "far gone from original righteousness," and "*had fallen short of the glory of God,*" that glorious image of God, in which man was at first created. He had felt much of this in the late trials through which he passed. He had weighed himself in the balance of the sanctuary, the word of God; and had attentively marked the lively victorious faith of more experienced Christians. "And now," says he, "it is upwards of two years since I left my native country, in order to teach the Georgia Indians the nature of Christianity; but what have I learned myself in the mean time? Why, (what I least of all suspected,) that I, who went to America to convert others, was never converted myself. '*I am not mad,*' though I thus speak: but '*speak the words of truth and soberness;*' if haply some of those who still dream may awake, and see, that as I am, so are they.

"Are they read in philosophy? So was I. In ancient or modern tongues? So was I also. Are they versed in the science of divinity? I too have studied it many years. Can they talk fluently upon spiritual things? The very same I could do. Are they plenteous in alms? Behold, I give all my goods to feed the poor.

"Do they give of their labour as well as their substance? I have laboured more abundantly than they all. Are they willing to suffer for their brethren? I have thrown up my friends, reputation, ease, country; I have put my life in my hand, wandering into strange lands; I have given my body to be devoured by the deep, parched up with heat, consumed by toil and weariness, or whatsoever God shall please to bring upon me. But does all this, (be it more or less, it matters not,) make me acceptable to God? Does all I ever did or can know, say, give, do, or suffer, justify me in his sight? Yea, or the constant use of all the means of grace? (which nevertheless is meet, right, and our bounden duty,) or that I know nothing of myself, that I am as touching outward, moral righteousness blameless? Or, (to come closer yet,) the having a rational conviction of all the truths of Christianity? Does all this give a claim to the holy, heavenly, divine character of a Christian? By no means. If the oracles of God are true, if we are still to abide by '*the law and the testimony;*' all these things, though when ennobled by faith in Christ, they are holy, and just, and good, yet without it are '*dung and dross.*'

"This then have I learned in the ends of the earth, that I am '*fallen short of the glory of God;*' that my whole heart is '*altogether corrupt and abominable,*' and consequently my whole life, (seeing it cannot be, that '*an evil tree*' should '*bring forth good fruit;*') that my own works, my own sufferings, my own righteousness, are so far from reconciling me to an offended God, so far from making any atonement for the least of those sins, which '*are more in number than the hairs of my head,*' that the most specious of them need an atonement themselves, or they cannot abide his righteous judgment; that having the sentence of death in my heart, and having nothing in or of myself, to plead, I have no hope, but that of being justified freely, '*through the redemption that is in Jesus;*' I have no hope, but that if I seek I shall find the Christ, and '*be found in him, not having my own righteousness, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.*'

"If it be said, that I have faith, (for many such things have I heard,

from many miserable comforters,) I answer, so have the devils,—*a sort of faith*; but still they are strangers to the covenant of promise. So the apostles had even at Cana in Galilee, when Jesus first ‘*manifested forth his glory*’; even then they, in a sort, ‘*believed on him*’; but they had not then ‘*the faith that overcometh the world*.’ The faith I want is, ‘*a sure trust and confidence in God, that, through the merits of Christ, my sins are forgiven, and I reconciled to the favour of God*.’ I want that faith which St. Paul recommends to all the world, especially in his Epistle to the Romans: That faith which enables every one that hath it to cry out, ‘*I live not; but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me*.’ I want that faith which none has, without knowing that he hath it, (though many imagine they have it, who have it not,) for whosoever hath it, is ‘*freed from sin, the whole body of sin, is destroyed*’ in him: He is freed from fear, ‘*having peace with God through Christ, and rejoicing in hope of the glory of God*.’ And he is freed from doubt, ‘*having the love of God shed abroad in his heart, through the Holy Ghost which is given unto him; which Spirit itself beareth witness with his spirit, that he is a child of God*.’”

He observes, however, “Many reasons I have to bless God—for my having been carried into that strange land, contrary to all my preceding resolutions. Hereby I trust he hath, in some measure, ‘*humbléd me, and proved me, and shown me what was in my heart*.’ Hereby I have been taught to ‘*beware of men*.’—Hereby God has given me to know many of his servants, particularly those of the church of *Hernhuth*. Hereby my passage is open to the writings of holy men, in the German, Spanish, and Italian tongues. All in Georgia have heard the word of God: Some have believed and began to run well. A few steps have been taken towards publishing the glad tidings both to the African and American heathens. Many children have learned *how they ought to serve God*, and to be useful to their neighbour. And those whom it most concerns, have an opportunity of knowing the state of their infant colony, and laying a firmer foundation of peace and happiness to many generations.”

After waiting on General Oglethorpe, and on the Trustees of Georgia, he was invited to preach in several of the churches. He now began to be popular, appearing in a new character, as a Missionary lately returned from preaching the Gospel to the Indians in America. The churches where he preached, were crowded. This soon produced a complaint, that there was no room “for the best in the parish;” and that objection, united to the offence which was given by his plain heart-searching sermons, produced in each place at last the following repulsion, “Sir, you must preach here no more.”

That Mr. Wesley had not the true Christian faith, is manifest; for he had not that deliverance from the fear of death, nor victory over all sin, which are the fruits of that faith. He does not seem to have had any immediate reference to that faith which he afterwards experienced and taught; for as yet he did not understand it. When the first Journal, in which this is said, was printed in his works, in 1774, he doubted whether the severe sentence he here pronounced upon himself, was just. He then believed, that when he went to America, he had the faith of a *servant*, though not of a *son*. Though he was far from being singular

in making this distinction, yet the propriety of it has been doubted, and sometimes even denied.

The distinction is founded on what the Apostle has said, Rom. viii, 15, and farther illustrated and confirmed, Gal. iv, 1—7. Mr. Wesley observes in a note on Rom. viii, 15, that “ ‘ *The Spirit of bondage*’ here seems directly to mean, those operations of the Holy Spirit, by which the soul, on its first conviction, feels itself in bondage to sin, to the world, to Satan, and obnoxious to the wrath of God.” He has printed a sermon on the same text, in which he explains it in the same way. He was not singular in this interpretation, as might easily be shown from respectable authority. And all sound Christian experience proves that the distinction is well founded. “ *By the law*” only “ *is the*” true “ *knowledge of sin* ;” and without it those who admit the Christian revelation, are either Pharisees or Antinomians. But the sincere take Christ’s “ *yoke upon them*,” as Mr. Wesley did ; and to them Christ “ *gives rest*. *The spirit of life in Christ Jesus makes them free from the law of sin and death*.” To stop short of this liberty is, alas ! too common : especially where religion so prevails as to become reputable. Mr. Wesley observes, in his Sermon on “ *The spirit of bondage and adoption*,” that the generality of those who are highly esteemed by men, live and die in that bondage. The devoted brothers were not content thus to live ; and hence, in the “ *spirit of adoption*” to which they attained, they became “ *the savour of life*” to millions.

Mr. C. Wesley, to whom I now return, had been absent from England upwards of thirteen months. During this time he had passed through an uncommon series of difficulties. In his distress, the Scriptures became more precious than ever before : He felt a power in them, which nothing creaturely can convey ; and saw a beauty, which criticism never discovered. He was thus prepared to attend to the powerful, yet simple, way of salvation by faith, which the pride of man hath always rejected.

When he arrived in London, his friends received him with inexpressible joy ; a report having been spread, that the ship, in which he came home, had been seen to sink at sea. One lady he found, when he called upon her, who was reading an account of his death. After delivering his letters, he waited on his friend Mr. Charles Rivington, in St. Paul’s churchyard. Here he met with letters and a Journal from his brother in Georgia, which informed him of what had taken place soon after he left it. Before he quitted America, Mr. Charles Wesley had written a letter to his brother John, in which he had expressed his sentiments of some particular persons with freedom : but by way of caution, had pointed out two individuals by two Greek words. This letter Mr. John Wesley dropped, and it fell into the hands of those who were enemies to both of them. This was sure to raise great disturbance, among a people so irritable and so revengeful as the Georgians were at that time. Mr. Charles had happily escaped out of their reach, and the storm fell with a double violence on his brother.* The Journal which he now received from Mr. Rivington, informed him of the particulars. “ I read it,” says Mr. Charles, “ without either surprise or impatience. The dropping of my fatal letter, I hope, will con-

* This was eight or nine months previous to the persecution he suffered on account of Mrs. Williamson.

vince him of what I never could, his own great carelessness; and the sufferings which it has brought upon him, *may show him* his blindness. His simplicity in telling what and who were meant by the two Greek words was out-doing his own out-doings. Surely all this will be sufficient to teach him a little of the wisdom of the serpent, of which he seems so entirely void."

It appears from Mr. Charles Wesley's Journal, that most of the Trustees for Georgia were Dissenters. They have given us, however, an unequivocal proof, that the Dissenters, at this time, possessed great liberality of sentiment, or they would not have approved of the nomination of the two Mr. Wesleys, men avowedly of very High Church principles, to go and preach the Gospel in Georgia; especially as their father had been so public an opposer of the Dissenting interest.

December 7.—One of these Trustees having called on Mr. C. Wesley, the latter observes, "We had much discourse of Georgia, and of my brother's persecution among that stiff-necked people. He seems a truly pious humble Christian, full of zeal for God and love to man." Mr. Charles Wesley was then a rigid Churchman: It is, therefore, pleasing to find this testimony of his candid judgment of a Dissenter. It is not what opinion a man holds, but what spirit he is of, that is the great question.

Mr. Oglethorpe sailed for England on the 26th of November, and arrived in London on the 7th of January, 1737. Mr. Charles Wesley waited upon him the next day, and the most cordial friendship continued from that time between them till his death.

About the middle of January, Count Zinzendorff arrived in England. One principal object of this visit seems to have been, to get the Moravian Church and the Church of England in Georgia, acknowledged as one Church. The Count had been informed of the piety and zeal of the two brothers; and, on the 19th, a few days after his arrival, he sent for Mr. Charles Wesley, who was received by the Count with all possible affection. Here he became acquainted with the object of the Count's visit to this country. From him he went to the Bishop of Oxford, who received him with equal kindness, and desired him to call as often as he could, without ceremony or farther invitation. They had much talk of the state of religion among the Moravians, and of the object of the Count's visit; and the Bishop acknowledged, that the Moravian Bishops had the true succession. Here we see a reason of the two brothers' willingness to join the Moravians.

On the 26th, being near Twickenham, on a visit to Dr. Hales, who was one of the Trustees for Georgia, Mr. C. Wesley, the next day, took a walk to see Mr. Pope's house and gardens; "justly," he observes, "called a burlesque on human greatness." He adds, "I was sensibly affected with the plain Latin sentence on the obelisk, in memory of his mother.—*Ah Editha, Matrum optima, Mulierum amantissima, vale!*"* How far superior to the most laboured elegy which he, or Prior himself, could have composed!"—I mention this as one proof of his fine classical taste.

As Georgia was supposed to be under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of London, Mr. C. Wesley took an early opportunity of waiting on his Lordship with the Count's proposition: But the Bishop refused to med-

* *Ah Editha, the best of mothers, the most loving of women, farewell!*

dle in that business. He waited again on the Bishop of Oxford, and informed him, the Bishop of London declined having any thing to do with Georgia, alleging, that it belonged to the Archbishop to unite the Moravians with the English Church. He replied that it was the Bishop of London's proper office. "He bid me," adds Mr. Wesley, "assure the Count, we should acknowledge the Moravians as our brethren, and one Church with us." The Count seemed resolved to carry his people from Georgia, if they might not be permitted to preach to the Indians. He was also very desirous to take Mr. Charles Wesley with him into Germany.

In August, Mr. C. Wesley was requested to carry up the Address, from the University of Oxford, to his Majesty. Accordingly, on the 26th, he waited on the King with the Address, at Hampton Court, accompanied with a few friends. They were graciously received; and the Archbishop told him, he was glad to see him there. They kissed their Majesties' hands, and were invited to dinner. Mr. Wesley left the dinner and the company, and hasted back to town. The next day, he waited on his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, and dined at St. James's. So we see he was still an honourable man. But he was not satisfied with his present state. On the 31st of August, he consulted Mr. Law; the sum of whose advice was, "Renounce yourself, and be not impatient." This was very good advice, in order to *wait for faith*; but very bad, if to rest without it. In the beginning of September, he consulted him again, and asked several questions, to which Mr. Law gave the following answers: "Q. With what comment shall I read the Scriptures? A. None.—Q. What do you think of one who dies unrenewed while endeavouring after it? A. It neither concerns you to ask,* nor me to answer.—Q. Shall I write once more to such a person? A. No.—Q. But I am persuaded it will do him good? A. Sir, I have told you my opinion.—Q. Shall I write to you? A. Nothing I can either speak or write will do you any good."—Certainly not. He had attained to all that Mr. Law knew, and fully practised it.

To oblige Mr. Oglethorpe, Mr. C. Wesley still held his office of Secretary, and had even formed a resolution to return to Georgia. About the middle of October, he was informed at the office, that he must sail in three weeks. His mother vehemently protested against his going back to America; but this did not alter his resolution.

In the beginning of February, 1738, about the time Mr. John Wesley returned from Georgia, Peter Boehler arrived in England. He soon became acquainted with the two brothers, and, on the 20th of this month, prevailed with Mr. Charles Wesley to assist him in learning English. He was now at Oxford, and Boehler soon entered into some close conversation with him, and with some scholars who were serious, and who could converse in Latin. He pressed upon them the necessity of Gospel faith: He showed them, that many who had been awakened had fallen asleep again, for want of attaining to it. He spoke much of the necessity of prayer and faith, but none of them seemed to understand him.

Mr. Charles Wesley was, immediately after this, taken ill of a pleu-

* Mr. C. Wesley found, that he was not renewed, and thought he might die while endeavouring after it. The question, therefore, was to him of serious importance. The right answer would have been, "He cannot die in that state, for God will not *quench the smoking flax*. He must fall from it, or he must attain the faith of the Gospel."

rising. On the 24th, the pain became so violent as to threaten sudden death. While in this state, Boehler came to his bedside. "I asked him," adds Mr. C. Wesley, "to pray for me. He seemed unwilling at first; but, beginning faintly, he raised his voice by degrees, and prayed for my recovery with strange confidence. Then he took me by the hand and calmly said, 'You will not die now.' I thought within myself, I cannot hold out in this pain till morning. He said, 'Do you hope to be saved?' I answered, Yes.—'For what reason do you hope to be saved?' Because I have used my best endeavours to serve God.—He shook his head and said no more. I thought him very uncharitable, saying in my heart, What! are not my endeavours a sufficient ground of hope? Would he rob me of my endeavours? I have nothing else to trust to." We see here how far he still was from the faith of the Gospel; but it seems to have been one of the last efforts of self-righteousness. The disease soon abated.

As Mr. C. Wesley still retained his office, and his intention of returning to Georgia with Mr. Oglethorpe, he was called upon to embark before he was perfectly recovered; but the physicians absolutely forbade him to attempt the voyage. His friends also advised him to stay at Oxford, where, being Senior Master in his College, he might gain preferment. His brother urged the same advice, and, in compliance with it, he wrote to Mr. Oglethorpe on the 3d of April, resigning his office of Secretary. Mr. Oglethorpe was unwilling to lose him, having had ample proof of his integrity and ability, and wrote in answer, that if he would keep his place, it should be supplied by a Deputy until he could follow. But he now seems to have finally relinquished his intention of going back to America.

Mr. John Wesley had now also become acquainted with Peter Boehler. On the 7th of February, ("a day," he observes in his Journal, "much to be remembered,") he met that gentleman and two other teachers of the Moravian Church. He had supposed, that a strict and self-denying regard to the duties which he owed to God and man, would produce in him the true Christian faith. In this he was painfully disappointed. He told me, that, together with *those fruits meet for repentance*, he had given himself a fortnight to root out of his heart each of the spiritual evils which he discovered therein,—pride, anger, self-will, &c; but found, at the end of the prescribed time, that his enemy still retained possession, and seemed even to increase in strength. He well noted this in his sermon before the University, on *Salvation by faith*. "Can you empty the great deep, drop by drop?" &c. No: our present salvation depends much more on what we *receive*, than on what we *do*. He now began to feel something of this poverty of spirit.

Mr. Wesley had observed at sea and in America, that many of the Moravian brethren enjoyed a peace and a comfort in their minds, to which he was a stranger. He was now, therefore, prepared to hear what those messengers of God had to say on the nature of faith, and on the way of obtaining it. But, though he was a sincere inquirer after truth, and therefore said both to God and man, "What I know not, teach thou me," yet in a point of such importance he would—

Not to man, but God submit:

And, therefore, he made continual objections which caused his friend to reply more than once, *Mi frater, mi frater, excoquenda est ista tua phi-*

Isosophia : " My brother, my brother, that philosophy of yours must be purged away ! " The reproach which he formerly endured at Oxford now again revived ; and even as he walked through the squares of the Colleges, he was mocked and laughed at. Upon one of those occasions, as Mr. Wesley informed me, the stranger perceiving that Mr. Wesley was troubled at it, chiefly for his sake, said with a smile, "*Mi frater, non adhæret vestibus* : My brother, it does not even stick to our clothes."

He now went to see his brother Samuel and some other friends, and afterwards took a longer journey. At this time, he renewed and wrote down the following resolutions, with respect to his own behaviour.

1. To use absolute openness and unreserve with all he should converse with.

2. To labour after continual seriousness, not willingly indulging himself in any the least levity of behaviour, or in laughter, no, not for a moment.

3. To speak no word which did not tend to the glory of God ; in particular, not a tittle of worldly things. " Others may," said he, " nay, must. But what is that to me ? " And

4. To take no pleasure which did not tend to the glory of God ; thanking God every moment for all he took, and therefore rejecting every sort and degree of it, which he felt he could not so thank him *in* and *for*.

His brother Charles being dangerously ill, as already mentioned, he returned to Oxford. Here he again conversed largely with Peter Boehler, and " by him," said he, " in the hand of the great God, I was clearly convinced of the want of that faith, whereby alone we are saved."

Immediately he felt an inclination to leave off preaching. " How," thought he, " can I preach to others, who have not faith myself ? " He asked his friend, whether he should leave it off or not. " By no means," said he, " preach faith *till* you have it ; and then, *because* you have it, you *will* preach faith."

But a difficulty still remained : How is this faith given ? He had now no objection to what his friend said of the *nature* of Christian faith ; that it is, (to use the words of the Church of England,) *a sure trust and confidence which a man hath in God, that, through the merits of Christ, his sins are forgiven, and he reconciled to the favour of God*. " Neither," said he, " could I deny either the happiness or holiness which he described, as fruits of this living faith. Those passages of Scripture, '*The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God* : ' and '*He that believeth hath the witness in himself*,' fully convinced me of the former : as '*Whatsoever is born of God doth not commit sin* ; ' and '*Whosoever believeth is born of God*,' did of the latter. But I could not comprehend what he spoke of an *instantaneous work*. I could not understand how this faith should be given in a moment ; how a man could *at once* be thus turned from darkness to light,—from sin and misery to righteousness and joy in the Holy Ghost. I searched the Scriptures again, touching this very thing, particularly the Acts of the Apostles : but, to my utter astonishment, found scarce any instances there of other than *instantaneous* conversions : scarce any other so slow as that of St. Paul, who was three days in the pangs of the new birth. I had but *one* retreat left, viz. '*Thus, I grant, God wrought in the first ages of Christianity ; but the times are changed. What reason have I to believe he works in the same manner now ?* '"

"But," proceeds he, "I was beat out of this retreat too, by the concurring evidence of several living witnesses; who testified God had thus wrought in themselves; giving them, in a moment, such a faith in the blood of his Son, as translated them out of darkness into light, out of sin and fear into holiness and happiness. Here ended my disputing. I could now only cry out, '*Lord, help thou my unbelief!*'"

He proceeds, "I asked P. Boehler again, Whether I ought not to refrain from teaching others? He said, 'No; do not hide in the earth the talent God hath given you.' Accordingly I spoke clearly and fully at Blendon to Mr. Delamotte's family, of the nature and fruits of Christian faith. Mr. Broughton and my brother were there. Mr. Broughton's great objection was, 'He could never think that I had not faith, who had done and suffered such things.' My brother was very angry, and told me, 'I did not know what mischief I had done by talking thus.' And indeed it did please God then to kindle a fire, which I trust shall never be extinguished."

He now declared every where "*the faith as it is in Jesus*:" "a strange doctrine," says he, "which some, who did not care to contradict it, (for indeed how could they without denying both the Bible and the Church of England?) yet knew not what to make of. But some who were thoroughly bruised by sin, willingly heard, and received it gladly."

His friend Boehler soon after sailed for America. Upon this occasion, he remarks, in the fulness of his heart, "O what a work hath God begun since his coming into England! such a one as shall never come to an end, till heaven and earth shall pass away!" There were now, indeed, several witnesses to the truth, which he had spoken, whose testimony mightily encouraged others to come to the throne of grace, that they also might "*be partakers of like precious faith*."

His mind being now fully impressed with Gospel truth, Mr. Wesley mourned over those who were still ignorantly seeking to be *justified by the works of the law*. He felt particularly for his friend and adviser Mr. Law, under a painful sense of the state of that great and good man, so far removed from the blessedness of faith. He therefore thought it his duty to press upon him those truths which now occupied his whole soul. His letter, Mr. Law's reply, and Mr. Wesley's rejoinder, are highly characteristic of the men. The simplicity, earnestness, and strength of the "*babe in Christ*," form a striking contrast to the stateliness of the pious *disciple of John*. Mr. Wesley's first letter is dated May the 14th, 1738. These letters have been printed incorrectly. The originals now lie before me in his own hand.

"May 14th, 1738.

"REVEREND SIR,—It is in obedience to what I think to be the call of God, that I, who have the sentence of death in my own soul, take upon me to write to you, of whom I have often desired to learn the first elements of the Gospel of CHRIST."

"If you are born of God, you will approve of the design, though it may be but weakly executed. If not, I shall grieve for you, not for myself. For as I seek not the praise of men, so neither regard I the contempt either of you or of any other.

"For two years, (more especially,) I have been preaching after the model of your two practical treatises: and all that heard, have allowed,

that the law is great, wonderful, and holy. But no sooner did they attempt to fulfil it, but they found that it is too high for man, and that, by doing '*the works of the law, shall no flesh living be justified.*'

"To remedy this, I exhorted them, and stirred up myself to pray earnestly for the Grace of God, and to use all the other means of obtaining that Grace, which the all-wise God hath appointed. But still, both they and I were more and more convinced,—that this is a law by which a man cannot live : The law in our members continually warring against it, and bringing us into deeper captivity to the law of sin.

"Under this heavy yoke I might have groaned till death, had not a holy man, to whom God lately directed me, upon my complaining thereof, answered at once, 'Believe, and thou shalt be saved. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ with all thy heart, and nothing shall be impossible to thee. This faith indeed, as well as the salvation it brings, is the free gift of God. But seek, and thou shalt find. Strip thyself naked of thy own works, and thy own righteousness, and fly to him, For whosoever cometh unto him, he will in nowise cast out.'

"Now, Sir, suffer me to ask, how will you answer it to our common Lord, that you never gave me this advice ? Did you never read the Acts of the Apostles, or the answer of Paul to him who said, '*What must I do to be saved ?*' Or are you wiser than he ? Why did I scarce ever hear you name the name of Christ ? Never, so as to ground any thing upon *faith in his blood*. Who is this who is laying another foundation ? Is not Christ then the first as well as the last ? If you say, you advised these things, because you knew that I had faith already : Verily you knew nothing of me : You discerned not my spirit at all. I know that I had not faith, unless the faith of a devil, the faith of Judas, that speculative, notional, airy shadow, which lives in the head, not in the heart. But what is this to the living, justifying Faith in the Blood of Jesus ? The faith that cleanseth from sin : That gives us to have free access to the Father. To *rejoice in hope of the glory of God* ; To have the *love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost* which dwelleth in us : and the *Spirit itself bearing witness with our spirit that we are the children of God*.

"I beseech you, Sir, by the mercies of God, to consider deeply and impartially, whether the true reason of your never pressing this upon me, was not this, That you had it not yourself ? Whether that man of God was not in the right, who gave this account of a late interview he had with you ? 'I began speaking to him of faith in Christ : He was silent. Then he began to speak of mystical matters. I spake to him of faith in Christ again : He was silent. Then he began to speak of mystical matters again. I saw his state at once.' And a very dangerous one, in his judgment, whom I know to have the Spirit of God.

"Once more, Sir, let me beg you to consider, whether your extreme roughness, and morose and sour behaviour, at least on many occasions, can possibly be the fruit of a living faith in Christ ?* If not, may the God of peace and love fill up what is yet wanting in you !

"I am, Reverend Sir, your humble servant,

"JOHN WESLEY.

"To the Reverend William Law."

* I once asked Mrs. Hall, who knew Mr. Law, concerning his appearance and manner. "Sir," said she, "he was like his name,—the very picture of the *Law*. He had a severe and solemn, but not a happy look."

MR. LAW'S ANSWER.

“ May 19th, 1738.

“ REVEREND SIR,—Yours I received yesterday. As you have written that letter in obedience to a divine call, and in conjunction with another extraordinary good young man, whom you know to have the Spirit of God ; so I assure you, that, considering your letter in that view, I neither desire nor dare to make the smallest defence of myself. If a messenger from God should represent me as a monster of iniquity, that had corrupted all that had conversed with me, &c, I should lay my hand upon my mouth, and with my eyes shut, submit myself to the divine justice. And as you lay claim to this character, as a messenger sent from God to lay my sins before my face, and have not executed this message, till a divine man, highly favoured of God, had passed sentence upon me, so I assure you, that I have not the least inclination to distrust or question your mission, nor the smallest repugnance to own, receive, reverence, and submit myself to you both, in these exalted characters. May God vouchsafe his favours to you both, and his mercies to me, according to his own good pleasure !

“ This is the whole of my answer to your letter, considered in that light in which you represent it ; as written in obedience to a divine call, and the message of it ratified by a person whom you know to have the Spirit of God.

“ But now, upon supposition, that you had here only acted by that ordinary light which is common to good and sober minds, I should remark upon your letter as follows :—How you may have been two years preaching the doctrine of the two Practical Discourses, or how you may have tired yourself and your hearers to no purpose, is what I cannot say much to. A holy man, you say, taught you thus : ‘ *Believe, and thou shalt be saved : Believe in the Lord Jesus with all thy heart, and nothing shall be impossible to thee : Strip thyself naked of thy own works, and thy own righteousness, and fly to him : For every one that cometh to him, he will in nowise cast out.*’

“ I am to suppose, that, till this time of your lately meeting with this holy man, you had not been taught this doctrine ; and that, for want of it, you might have groaned under a certain heavy yoke to your death. Did you not, above two years ago, give a new translation of *Thomas à Kempis* ? Will you call Thomas to account, and to answer it to God, as you do me, for not teaching you that doctrine ? Or will you say, that you took upon you to restore the true sense of that divine writer, and to instruct others how they might best profit by reading him, before you had so much as a literal knowledge of the most plain, open, and repeated doctrine contained in his book ? You cannot but remember what value I always expressed for *Kempis*, and how much I recommended it to your meditation.

“ You have had a great many conversations with me, and I dare say, that you never was with me for half an hour without my being large upon that very doctrine, of which you make me totally silent and ignorant.

“ As an undeniable proof of this, you must remember, that the second time I saw you, and when your brother was with you, I put into your hands the little book of the German Theology, and said all that I could in recommendation of the doctrine contained in it. If that book does not plainly lead you to Jesus Christ, I am content to

know as little of Christianity as you are pleased to believe ; or if you are for stripping yourself naked of your own works, or your own righteousness, farther than that book directs, I had rather you was taught that doctrine by any one else than by me. Above a year ago I published a book against the *Plain Account of the Sacrament*, &c. You may, perhaps, be too much prejudiced against me to read it, but as you have made yourself a judge of the state of my heart, and of my knowledge in Christ, you ought to have seen that book, to help you to make a right judgment of my sentiments. What I have there written, I judged to be well timed after my former discourses ; governed through all that I have written and done by these two common, fundamental, unchangeable maxims of our Lord, '*Without me ye can do nothing : If any man will come after me, or be my disciple, let him take up his cross and follow me.*' If you are for separating the doctrine of the cross, from faith in Christ, or following him, you have numbers and names enough on your side, but not me. The conversation I have had with you is past and gone, and you have it in your power to represent it as you please ; but the facts I have appealed to, must continue facts, and prove all that for which I appeal to them. You say, '*Why did I scarce ever hear you name the name of Christ ? Never, so as to ground any thing upon faith in his blood ? If,*' you say, '*you advised other things as preparatory to this, if you advised them, because you knew I had faith already ; verily you knew nothing of me, you discerned not my spirit at all : I know that I had not faith, unless the faith of a devil, the faith of Judas, that speculative notional, airy shadow, which lives in the head and not in the heart.*'

"Did you never hear any thing of this from me ? How far I may have discerned your spirit, or the spirit of others that have conversed with me, may, perhaps, be more a secret to you than you imagine ; but I claim nothing on that head. But granting you to be right, in the account of your own faith, how am I chargeable with it ? Have either I or any of my writings, any tendency to fill your head full of '*airy shadows* ?

"Here I am to suppose, that after you had been some time meditating upon an author, that of all others leads us the most directly to a real, living faith in Jesus Christ ; after you had judged yourself such a master of his sentiments and doctrines, as to be able to publish them to the world, with directions and instructions concerning such experimental divinity ; that years after you have done this, you had only the faith of a devil, or Judas, an empty notion in your head ; and that you was in this state through ignorance that there was any better to be sought after, and that you was in this ignorance, because, in my conversation I never directed or called you to this true faith.

"But, Sir, as Kempis and I have both of us had your acquaintance and conversation, so pray let the fault be divided betwixt us ; and I shall be content to have it said, that I left you in as much ignorance of this faith, as he did, or that you learnt no more of it by conversing with me, than with him. If you had only this faith till some weeks ago, let me advise you not to be too hasty in believing, that because you have changed your language or expressions, you have changed your faith. The head can as easily amuse itself with a *living and justifying faith in the blood of Jesus*, as with any other notion ; and the heart, which you suppose

to be a place of security, as being the seat of self-love, is more deceitful than the head.

“I must now transcribe a long passage in your letter, because not a word of it ought to be omitted. It is thus, ‘*I beseech you, by the mercies of God, to consider deeply and impartially, whether the true reason of your never calling me to this, was not, that you had it not yourself? Whether that man of God was not in the right, who gave this account : I began to speak to him of faith in Christ : He was silent. Then he began to speak of mystical matters. I spoke of faith in Christ again : He was silent. Then he spoke of mystical matters again :—I SAW HIS STATE AT ONCE. And a very dangerous one in his judgment ; whom I know to have the Spirit of God.*’

“This man of God, whom I can willingly believe to be as divine as you represent him to be, and whose conversation left a good impression on my mind, was accidentally presented to me in Somerset Gardens, as the acquaintance of an author I was inquiring after, and whose book was then in my hands. I was not half an hour with him in that public place, nor had any intention, at that time, of saying any thing to him, but upon the matter above mentioned. In discourse of that kind, he took occasion, as he says, to speak of faith in Christ. I was silent, except in approbation of what he said. But that I then began to speak of mystical matters, is as false as any thing that can be said of me : For I spoke not one single word of any doctrine of religion, either mystical or not. Or if I had spoke of mystical matters, would that have been a receding from the subject he was upon ? Is not faith in Jesus Christ the very sum and substance of what is meant by mystical religion ? He said very little to me on faith ; but, for aught I know, there might be, what he calls, a first and second time, in what he said to me. But that I, a second time, began to speak to him of mystical matters, is a second great falsity. I leave you now to judge of his SEEING MY DANGEROUS STATE AT ONCE.

“As this falsity lies among us three, I suppose you will not think it proper, that either of you should have any share in it, it being fitter to be ascribed to that state you have provided for me. I am content that you should do with it according to your pleasure.

“Your last paragraph, concerning my sour rough behaviour and obscurity of conversation on the most important subjects, as inconsistent with Scripture and the fruits of a living faith, in Christ, I leave in its full force. Whatever you can say of me of that kind, without hurting yourself, will be always well received by me.

“I am your real friend and well-wisher,

“W. LAW.”

Mr. Wesley returned the following answer.

“May 30, 1738.

“REVEREND SIR,—I sincerely thank you for a favour I did not expect, and presume to trouble you once more.

“How I have preached all my life ;—how, qualified or unqualified, I was to correct a translation of Kempis, and to translate a preface to it ; whether I have now, or how long I have had a living faith ; whether Peter Boehler spoke truth in what he said, when two others were present beside me :—are circumstances, on which the main question

does not turn, which is this and no other : ‘ Whether you ever advised me, or directed me to books that did advise me, to seek first a living faith in the blood of Christ, and that thereby alone I could be justified.’

“ You appeal to three facts, to prove that you did. 1st. That you put into my hands ‘ Theologia Germanica.’ 2d. That you published an answer to ‘ The Plain Account of the Sacrament.’ And 3d. That you are governed through all that you have written and done by these two fundamental maxims of our Lord, ‘ *Without me ye can do nothing,*’ and ‘ *If any man will come after me, let him take up his cross and follow me.*’

“ The facts I allow, but not the consequence. In ‘ Theologia Germanica,’ I remember something of Christ our Pattern, but nothing express of Christ our Atonement. The answer to ‘ The Plain Account of the Sacrament’ I believe to be an excellent book, but not so as to affect the main question. Those two maxims may imply, but do not express, the thing itself : viz. ‘ *He is our propitiation, through faith in his blood.*’

“ But how are you ‘ chargeable with my not having had this faith ?’ If, as you intimate, that you discerned my spirit, then you are chargeable thus : 1. You did not tell me plainly I had it not. 2. You never once advised me to seek or to pray for it. 3. Your advice to me was only proper for such as had faith already : advices which led me farther from it, the closer I adhered to them. 4. You recommended books to me, which had no tendency to this faith, but a direct one to destroy good works.

“ However, ‘ Let the fault be divided,’ you say, ‘ between me and Kempis.’ No : If I understood Kempis wrong, it was your part, who discerned my spirit, and saw my mistake, to have explained him, and to have set me right.

“ I ask pardon, Sir, if I have said any thing inconsistent with the obligations I owe you, and the respect I bear to your character.

“ I am, Reverend Sir,

“ Your most obedient servant,

“ J. WESLEY.”

Thus he found Mr. Law’s refined legal system as great a hinderance to the reception of the faith, as he afterwards found his brother Samuel’s self-confidence and High Church principles.

The serious reader will have observed, that, in his inquiries after truth, Mr. Wesley was ever impressed with that sentiment which he uttered in one of his letters to his brother,—“ *Agitur de vitâ et sanguine Turni,*—it is not a little thing, *it is for my life.*” Accordingly, as a member of the Church of England, he considered himself bound to observe all the ordinances of that church, even to the keeping of Lent, according to the declaration of the Apostle, “ *If a man be circumcised,*” if he be thus admitted, “ *he is bound to keep the whole law,*” of that church which thus admits him : And when he took Mr. Law for his guide, believing that he taught the real doctrine of that church in its original purity, he zealously pursued the path pointed out by him, in all its self-denying precepts. When, therefore, he discovered, that the way laid down by that eminent man differed from the church, and especially from the Holy Scriptures, the same earnestness of spirit led him to testify against it. The Scriptures plainly hold out, to every sinner who attends to the voice of God, a present salvation from the guilt, the power, and the nature of sin, and an entire reconciliation with God, who is himself declared to be pre-

viously "*reconciled, through the Son of his love.*" But no such *previous reconciliation*, no such *present aid*, was taught by his contemplative friend; no such encouragement, no such present quickening power and love, were held out to those who groaned under guilt, or felt the chains of sin. A letter now before me, dated Lincoln College, Oxon., June the 26th, 1734, details Mr. Law's plan, and shows its inefficiency in a striking light. Mr. Law, we see, in his answer to Mr. Wesley's expository letter, could give, with full sincerity I doubt not, an imposing view of his own system: but Mr. Wesley was now convinced, that it was not the system of our *reconciled God*. It recommended itself in a way of contrast to the worldly spirit, and therefore was well calculated to *convince of sin*; but it could go no farther. This Mr. Wesley proved, not by theory, but by its total failure in application. But, at the time he wrote this letter, he knew no better way; yet that he did not give himself up to the *quietism* of the Mystic life, is strikingly evident. This letter represents him as mourning over a sinner, who had felt his condition, but who was discouraged by the *task-master*, who fretted the wound without having any effectual *medicine to heal the sickness*.

"**REVEREND SIR,**—I must earnestly beg your immediate advice in a case of the greatest importance. Above two years since, I was intrusted with a young gentleman of good sense, and even generous temper, and pretty good learning. Religion he had heard little of; but Mr. Jackson's *Practice of Devotion*, your two Treatises, and Thomas à Kempis, by the blessing of God, awakened him, by degrees, to a true notion and serious practice of it. In this he continued sensibly improving till last Lent: At the beginning of which, I advised him to do as he had done the year before, viz. to obey the order of the Church, by using such a sort and measure of abstinence as his health permitted, and his spiritual wants required. He said, 'he did not think his health would permit to use that abstinence which he did the year before.' And notwithstanding my reply, that his athletic habit could be in no danger by only abstaining from flesh, and using moderately some less pleasing food, he persisted in his resolution of not altering his food at all. A little before Easter, perceiving he had much contracted the time he had till then set apart for religious reading, I asked him whether he was not himself convinced, that he spent too much time in reading secular authors. He answered, 'he was convinced any time was too much; and that he should be a better Christian, if he never read them at all.' I then pressed him earnestly to pray for strength, according to that conviction; and he resolved to try for a week. When that was expired, he said his desire of classical reading was not inflamed, but a little abated: Upon which, I begged him to repeat his resolution for a week or two longer. He said, 'It signified nothing, for he could never part with the classics entirely.' I desired him to read that which you say in the '*Christian Perfection*,' on reading vain authors. He readily agreed to every word of it, but still, in his practice denied it; though appearing in most other particulars, a humble, active, zealous Christian. On Tuesday, April 3d, being one of the days the statutes require us to communicate at St. Mary's, I called upon him just before church, being to set out for Lincolnshire as soon as the service was over. I asked whether he still halted between two opinions; and, after exhorting him as I could to

renounce himself, and serve his Master with simplicity, I left him. He did not communicate that day. On my return, May the 21st, I immediately inquired what state he was in, and found he had never communicated since, which he used to do weekly; that he had left off rising early, visiting the poor, and almost all religious reading, and entirely given himself up to secular. When I asked him why he had left off the holy eucharist, he said fairly, 'because to partake of it implied a fresh promise to renounce himself entirely, and to please God alone, and he did not design to do so.' I asked, whether he was well convinced he ought to do so. He said, 'Yes.' Whether he wished he could design it. He answered, 'No; he did not *desire it*.'

"From time to time, particularly a few days ago, I wished him to tell me upon what he grounded his hope of salvation? He replied, after some pause,—'that Christ died for all men, but if none were saved by him without performing the conditions, his death would not avail one in a thousand, which was inconsistent with the goodness of God.' But this answer, and every part of it, he soon gave up, adding with the utmost seriousness, that 'he cared not whether it was true or no: He was very happy at present, and he desired nothing farther.'

"This morning I again asked him, what he thought of his own state? He said, 'he thought nothing about it.' I desired to know, whether he could, if he considered it ever so little, expect to be saved by the terms of the Christian covenant? He answered, 'he did not consider it at all:'. Nor did all I could say in the least move him. He assented to all, but was affected with nothing. He grants, with all composure, that he is not in a salvable state, and shows no degree of concern, while he owns he cannot find mercy.

"I am now entirely at a loss what step to take: Pray he cannot, or wont. When I lent him several prayers, he returned them unused, saying '*he does not desire to be otherwise than he is, and why should he pray for it*.' I do not seem so much as to understand his distemper.* It appears to me quite incomprehensible. Much less can I tell what remedies are proper for it. I therefore beseech you, Sir, by the mercies of God, that you would not be slack, according to the ability He shall give, to advise and pray for him, and am,

"Reverend Sir, your most obliged servant,

"JOHN WESLEY.

"*Lincoln College, Oxon.*

"*June 26, 1734.*"

I wish I could close this interesting scene by stating the result of this earnest application; but there is no record of it, at least none come to my hands.

About this time he began to pray extempore. March 27, 1738, Mr. Kinchin went with him to the Castle, where, after reading prayers and preaching on, "*It is appointed for men once to die*," "We prayed," says he, "with the condemned man, first in several forms of prayer, and then in such words as were given us in that hour. He kneeled down in much heaviness and confusion, having '*no rest in his bones by reason of his sins*.' After a space he rose up, and eagerly said, '*I am now ready to die. I know Christ has taken away my sins, and there is no*

* How well he understood it! How well he could prescribe for it afterwards.

more condemnation for me.' The same composed cheerfulness he showed when he was carried to execution : And in his last moments was the same, enjoying a perfect peace, in confidence that he was '*accepted in the Beloved.*'"

Mr. Wesley again observes, that on Saturday, April 1, being at Mr. Foxe's society, he found his heart so full, that he could not confine himself to the forms of prayer they were accustomed to use there. "Neither," says he, "do I propose to be confined to them any more ; but to pray indifferently, with a form or without, as I may find suitable to particular occasions."—When God gives the spirit of prayer, deliverance is near.

April 24, Mr. C. Wesley being much recovered from an attack of illness, he was able to take a ride to Blendon, where he met with his brother and Mr. Broughton. The next day, April 25th, Mrs. Delamotte, his brother, Mr. Broughton, and himself being met in their little chapel, they fell into a dispute whether conversion was gradual or instantaneous. Mr. John Wesley very positively contended for the latter, and his assertions appeared to Mr. Charles shocking ; especially when he mentioned some late instances of gross sinners being converted in a moment. Mrs. Delamotte left the room abruptly ; "I staid," adds Charles, "and insisted that a man need not know when he first had faith." His brother's obstinacy, as he calls it, in maintaining the contrary opinion, at length drove him out of the room. Mr. Broughton kept his ground, not being quite so much offended as Mr. Charles Wesley. He and Mrs. Delamotte fled from the *robber* who would divest them of their Pharisaic robes.

Mr. Wesley and Mr. Broughton having returned to London, Mr. C. Wesley began to read Haliburton's life. It produced in him great humiliation, self-abasement, and a sense of his want of that faith which brings "*righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*" But these effects soon passed away as a morning cloud. A degree of conviction, however, that possibly he might be wrong, had taken hold of his mind, and continued to make him uneasy. This uneasiness was increased by a return of his disorder on the 28th, when he arrived in London. Here Peter Boehler visited him again, and prayed with him. Mr. Charles Wesley now thought it was his duty to consider Boehler's doctrine, and to examine himself whether he was in the faith ; and if not, never to rest till he had attained it. Still, however, there was a secret wish within his heart that this new doctrine, as he then thought it, might not be true ; and hence arose a joy when he imagined he had found an argument against it. This argument was from his own experience, and he deemed it unanswerable. Having received benefit by bleeding, he attended the sacrament on the first of May, and felt a degree of peace in receiving it. "Now," said he to himself, "I have demonstration against the Moravian doctrine, viz. that a man cannot have peace without assurance of his pardon. I now have peace, yet cannot say of a surety that my sins are forgiven." His triumph was very short ; His peace immediately left him, and he sunk into greater doubts and distress than before. He now began to be convinced, that he had not that faith which puts the true believer in possession of the benefits and privileges of the Gospel. For some days following, he had a faint desire to attain it, and prayed for it. He then began to speak of the necessity of this faith to his friends ;

and he determined not to rest till he had the happy experience of it in himself.

Soon afterwards Mr. Broughton called upon him at the house of Mr. Bray. The subject was presently introduced. Mr. Broughton said, "As for you, Mr. Bray, I hope you are still in your senses, and not run mad after a faith that must be felt." He continued contradicting this doctrine of faith, till he roused Mr. C. Wesley to defend it, and to confess his want of faith. "God help you, poor man!" said Mr. Broughton, "if I could think that you have not faith, I am sure it would drive me to despair."* Mr. C. Wesley then assured him, he was as certain that "he had not the faith of the gospel, as he was that he hoped for it, and for salvation."

Mr. Broughton was a man of learning, had been a member of their little society at Oxford, and was well disposed to religion. Yet he strangely thought that he could not place the absurdity of their notion in a stronger light, than by saying, this faith must be felt. As if it were possible for a man to believe a proposition, whatever it may be, and not be conscious that he believes it: Or to have doubts, and be totally unconscious and ignorant of them!

Mr. Charles Wesley now saw that the Gospel promises to man a knowledge of God as "*reconciled in Christ Jesus*," which he had not attained; and he became more and more earnest in pursuit of it. On the 12th of May, he waked in the morning, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, "*even the righteousness which is of God by faith*." He read Isaiah, and saw, that unto him also were the promises made. He now spent the whole of his time in discoursing on faith, either with those who had it, or with those who sought it; and in reading the Scriptures and prayer.

On this day Mr. Wesley observes, that he was much affected at the sight of old Mr. Ainsworth; a man of great learning, and nearly eighty years of age. "Like old Simeon, he was waiting to see the Lord's salvation, that he might die in peace. His tears, his vehemency, and child-like simplicity, showed him upon the entrance of the kingdom of heaven." Mr. Ainsworth seems to have been fully convinced of the true doctrines of the Gospel, and to have joined himself to this little company who were endeavouring to know and serve God as the Gospel directs. Mr. Wesley mentions him afterwards, with great admiration of his simplicity and child-like disposition. We are indebted to him for the best Latin and English Dictionary extant. He died in 1743.

May 17th, Mr. C. Wesley first saw "*LUTHER on the Galatians*," which Mr. Holland had accidentally met with. They immediately began to read him: "And my friend," adds Mr. C. Wesley, "was so affected in hearing him read, that he breathed sighs and groans unutterable. I also marvelled that we were so soon and entirely removed from him that called us into the grace of Christ, unto another Gospel. Who would believe, that our Church had been founded on this important article of justification by faith alone?† I am astonished I should ever think this a new doctrine; especially while our Articles and Homilies stand unre-

* Yes, to a despair of being saved without it. That despair must precede the gift; but it is as far from what the world calls despair, as hell is from heaven.

† Mr. C. Wesley did not then see the nature of Antinomianism in that work,—the infernal shadow that has ever followed the true faith. Of this, Luther was not himself conscious when he wrote that book.

pealed, and the key of knowledge is not yet taken away. From this time I endeavoured to ground as many of our friends as came to see me, in this fundamental truth,—*Salvation by faith alone*—not an idle and dead faith, but a faith which works by love, and is incessantly productive of all good works, and all holiness.”

May the 19th, a Mrs. Turner called upon him, who professed faith in Christ. Mr. C. Wesley asked her several questions; to which she returned the following answers. Has God bestowed faith upon you? “Yes, he has.”—Why, have you peace with God? “Yes, perfect peace.” And do you love Christ above all things? “I do, above all things.”—Then you are willing to die. “I am, and would be glad to die this moment; for I know that all my sins are blotted out; the handwriting that was against me, is taken out of the way, and nailed to the cross. He has saved me by his death; he has washed me in his blood; I have peace in him, and rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.”—Mr. C. Wesley adds, “Her answers were so full to these and the most searching questions I could ask, that I had no doubt of her having received the atonement; and waited for it myself with more assured hope, feeling an anticipation of joy through the account she gave.” Mr. Charles Wesley was an accurate discernor of spirits, in the ordinary sense of that expression. The real character of faith must therefore have appeared in this gentlewoman.

Mr. C. Wesley’s knowledge of himself, and conscious want of peace with God, on a foundation that cannot be shaken, furnished him with a key which opened the true meaning of the Scriptures. He saw the gospel contained ample provision for all his wants, and that its operation on the mind is also admirably adapted to the human faculties. He now lost the pride of literature, and sought the kingdom of heaven as a little child: He counted all things as dung and dross in comparison of it; and all his thoughts, his desires, his hopes, and his fears, had some relation to it. He was now brought to the birth. On Whitsunday, May 21st, he waked in hope and expectation of soon attaining the object of his wishes,—the knowledge of God recoaled in Christ Jesus. At nine o’clock his brother and some friends came to him and sung a hymn suited to the day. When they left him, he betook himself to prayer. Soon afterwards a person came and said, in a very solemn manner, “Believe in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, and thou shalt be healed of all thine infirmities.” The words went through his heart, and animated him with confidence. He looked into the Scripture, and read, “*Now, Lord, what is my hope? truly my hope is even in thee.*” He then cast his eyes on these words, “*He hath put a new song into my mouth, even a thanksgiving unto our God; many shall see it and fear, and put their trust in the Lord.*” Afterwards he opened upon Isaiah xl, 1, “*Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God, speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned, for she hath received of the Lord’s hand double for all her sins.*” In reading these passages of Scripture, he was enabled to view Christ as “*set forth to be a propitiation for his sins, through faith in his blood,*” and received, to his unspeakable comfort, that peace and rest in God, which he had so earnestly sought.

The next morning he waked with a sense of the Divine goodness and protection, and rejoiced in reading the 107th Psalm, so nobly descrip-

tive, he observes, of what God had done for his soul.—Yet he had no self-confidence. “This day,” says he, “I had a very humbling view of my own weakness; but was enabled to contemplate ‘*Christ in his power to save, to the uttermost, all those who come unto God by Him.*’” Many evil thoughts were suggested to his mind, but they immediately vanished away. In the afternoon he was greatly strengthened by those words in the 43d of Isaiah, which he saw were spoken to encourage and comfort the true Israel of God, in every age of his church. “*But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: For I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee: and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel thy Saviour.*”

The two brothers were now led to pray according to their wants, and the exercises of their own minds; but they were greatly censured by some persons, particularly by their brother Samuel, when they began this practice. That a form of prayer may be useful, and also proper on some occasions, especially in public worship, we readily grant. But to say, that we shall not ask a favour of God, nor return him thanks; or that we shall hold no intercourse with Him in our public assemblies, but in a set of words dictated to us by others, is an assumption which is not warranted either by Scripture or reason, and it is ill adapted to edification or comfort.

An old friend soon after called on Mr. C. Wesley, under great apprehensions that he was running mad. His fears were not a little increased, when he heard him speak of some instances of the power and goodness of God. His friend told him, that he expected to see rays of light round his head! and said a good deal more in the same strain. Finding, by Mr. C. Wesley’s conversation, that he was past recovery, he begged him to fly from London and took his leave in despair of doing him any good.

May the 23d, he wrote a hymn on his own conversion. Upon showing it to Mr. Bray, a thought was suggested to his mind, that he had done wrong and displeased God. His heart immediately sunk within him; but the shock lasted only for a moment. “I clearly discerned,” says he, “it was a device of the enemy to keep glory from God. It is most usual with him to preach humility, when speaking would endanger his kingdom and do honour to Christ. Least of all, would he have us tell *what God has done for our souls*, so tenderly does he guard us against pride! But God has showed me, that he can defend me from it, while speaking for Him. In his name, therefore, and through his strength, I will perform my vows unto the Lord, of ‘*not hiding his righteousness within my heart.*’”

Mr. John Wesley, although not yet a partaker of it, continued to declare, “*the faith as it is in Jesus*,” which those that were convinced of sin gladly received. A day or two following, he was much confirmed in the truth, by hearing the experience of Mr. Hutchins, of Pembroke College, and Mrs. Fox; “Two living witnesses,” says he, “that God *can* at least, if he *does* not always, give that faith whereof cometh salvation, in a moment, as lightning falling from heaven.”

May 1. They began to form themselves into a religious society, which met in Fetter-lane. This has been called the first Methodist Society in London. Mr. Wesley distinguishes the origin of Methodism into three distinct periods. "The first rise of Methodism," says he, "was in November, 1729, when four of us met together at Oxford: The second was at Savannah, in April 1736, when twenty or thirty persons met at my house: The last was at London, on this day, when forty or fifty of us agreed to meet together every Wednesday evening, in order to free conversation, begun and ended with singing and prayer."* Although he united with the Moravians thus, he still continued a member and minister of the Church. This meeting was merely a religious society, and so agreed perfectly with Methodism.

The Society being thus formed, they agreed, in obedience to the word of God, given by St. James, v, 16,

1. That they would meet together once a week, to "*confess their faults one to another, and pray one for another, that they might be healed.*"

2. That the persons so meeting should be divided into several Bands, or little companies, none of them consisting of fewer than five, or more than ten persons.

3. That every one in order should speak as freely, plainly, and concisely, as he could, the real state of his heart, with his several temptations and deliverances, since the last time of meeting.

4. That all the Bands should have a conference at eight every Wednesday evening, begun and ended with singing and prayer.

5. That any who desired to be admitted into this Society should be asked, What are your reasons for desiring this? Will you be entirely open, using no kind of reserve? Have you any objection to any of our orders? (which may then be read.)

6. That when any new member was proposed, every one present should speak clearly and freely whatever objection he might have to him.

7. That those against whom no reasonable objection appeared, should be, in order for their trial, formed into one or more distinct Bands, and some person agreed on to assist them.

8. That after two months' trial, if no objection then appeared, they should be admitted into the Society.

9. That every fourth Saturday should be observed as a day of general intercession.

10. That on the Sunday seven-night following, there should be a general love-feast, from seven till ten in the evening.

11. That no particular member should be allowed to act in any thing, contrary to any order of the Society; and that if any persons, after being thrice admonished, should not conform thereto, they should no longer be esteemed as members.

About this time he was invited to preach in some of the churches. But, as before, many, (particularly of the chief persons in his congregations,) would not endure his plain, heart-searching discourses. He was soon told at each of these also, "Sir, you must preach here no more."—"So true," says he, "did I find the words of a friend, (viz.

* See his Ecclesiastical History, vol. iv, page 175.

Mr. Gambold,) in a letter to my brother at this time;" which were as follow :

"I have seen upon this occasion, more than ever I could have imagined, how intolerable the doctrine of faith is to the mind of man ; and how peculiarly intolerable to religious men. One may say the most unchristian things, even down to Deism ; the most enthusiastic things, so they proceed but upon mental raptures, lights, and unions ; the most severe things, even the whole rigour of ascetic mortification : And all this will be forgiven. But if you speak of faith in such a manner as makes Christ a Saviour to the utmost, a most universal help and refuge ; in such a manner as takes away glorying, but adds happiness to wretched man ; as discovers a greater pollution in the best of us, than we could before acknowledge, but brings a greater deliverance from it than we could before expect : If any one offers to talk at this rate, he shall be heard with the same abhorrence as if he was going to rob mankind of their salvation, their Mediator, or their hopes of forgiveness. I am persuaded that a Montanist or a Novatian, who from the height of his purity should look down with contempt upon poor sinners, and exclude them from all mercy, would not be thought such an overthrower of the Gospel, as he who should learn, from the Author of it, to be a friend of publicans and sinners, and to sit down upon a level with them as soon as they begin to repent.

"But this is not to be wondered at. For all religious people have such a quantity of righteousness acquired by much painful exercise, and formed at last into current habits ; which is their wealth, both for this world and the next. Now all other schemes of religion are either so com-
plaisant as to tell them they are very rich, and have enough to triumph in : Or else only a little rough, but friendly in the main, by telling them their riches are not yet sufficient ; but, by such arts of self-denial, and mental refinement, they may enlarge the stock. But the doctrine of faith is a downright robber. It takes away all this wealth, and only tells us, it is deposited for us with somebody else, upon whose bounty we must live like mere beggars. Indeed, they that are truly beggars, vile and filthy sinners until very lately, may stoop to live in this dependant condition ; it suits them well enough. But they who have long distinguished themselves from the herd of vicious wretches, or have even gone beyond moral men ; for them to be told that they are either not so well, or but the same needy, impotent, insignificant vessels of mercy with the others : This is more shocking to reason than transubstantiation. For reason had rather resign its pretensions to judge what is bread or flesh, than have this honour wrested from it,—to be the architect of virtue and righteousness. But where am I running ? My design was only to give you warning, that wherever you go, '*this foolishness of preaching*' will alienate hearts from you, and open mouths against you.

"What are you then to do, my dear friend ? I will not exhort you to courage ; we need not talk of that, for nothing that is approaching is evil. I will only mention the prejudice we shall be under, if we seem in the least to lay aside universal charity, and modesty of expression. Though we love some persons more than we did, let us love none less : And the rather, because we cannot say any one is bad, or destitute of Divine grace, for not thinking as we do. Indignation at mankind, is a

temper unsuitable to this cause. If we are at peace with God in Christ, let it soften our demeanour still more, even towards gainsayers.—What has given most offence hitherto, is what perhaps may best be spared: As some people's confident and hasty triumphs in the grace of God; not by way of humble thankfulness to him for looking upon them, or acknowledgment of some peace and strength unknown before, which they hope will be increased to them; but insisting on the completeness of their deliverance already from all sin, and taking to them every apostolical boast in the strongest terms.—Let us speak of every thing in such manner as may convey glory to Christ, without letting it glance on ourselves by the way. Let us profess, when we can with truth, how really the Christian salvation is fulfilled in us, rather than how sublimely.”—These sentiments are still of the highest importance. Mr. Wesley accounted them essential to the success of the Gospel, and to a believer's “*abiding in the faith.*”

He also was now brought to the birth. “*His soul truly waited upon God,*” knowing that “*from him cometh our salvation.*” But so much the more did he “*abhor himself, and repent as in dust and ashes.*” As he now expected, that Christ, given for him, would be manifested in him, he also felt that compunction, that deep self-abasement, which must ever precede true living faith in the Son of God. His state of mind at this time he thus pathetically expresses, in the following letter to a friend:

“O why is it, that so great, so wise, so holy a God, will use such an instrument as me! Lord, ‘*let the dead bury their dead.*’ But wilt thou send the dead to raise the dead? Yea, thou sendest whom thou *wilt* send, and showest mercy by whom thou *wilt* show mercy! Amen! Be it then according to thy will! If thou speak the word, Judas shall cast out devils.—

“I feel what you say, (though not enough,) for I am under the same condemnation. I see that the whole law of God is holy, just and good. I know, every thought, every temper of my soul ought to bear God's image and superscription. But how am I fallen from the glory of God! I feel, that I ‘*am sold under sin.*’ I know, that I too deserve nothing but wrath, being full of all abominations, and having no good thing in me, to atone for them, or to remove the wrath of God. All my works, my righteousness, my prayers, need an atonement for themselves. So that my mouth is stopped. I have nothing to plead. God is holy, I am unholy. God is a consuming fire: I am altogether a sinner, meet to be consumed.

“Yet I hear a voice, (and is it not the voice of God?) saying, ‘*Believe, and thou shalt be saved.*’ He that believeth, is passed from death unto life. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

“O let no one deceive us by vain words, as if we had already attained this faith! By its fruits we shall know. Do we already feel ‘*peace with God,*’ and ‘*joy in the Holy Ghost?*’ Does his ‘*Spirit bear witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God?*’ Alas! with mine he does not. Nor, I fear, with yours. O thou Saviour of men, save us from trusting in any thing but Thee! Draw us after Thee! Let us be

* He was now *poor in spirit*, and therefore *the kingdom of heaven was his*. He was soon put in possession. The Lord could now, in truth, *impute his faith for righteousness*.

emptied of ourselves, and then fill us with ‘*all peace and joy in believing*,’ and let nothing separate us from thy love, in time or in eternity!”

The account which immediately follows, is of such deep importance, that I am constrained to give it entire in his own words. Mr. Wesley’s actual obtaining the true *faith of the Gospel*, is a point of the utmost magnitude, not only with respect to himself, but to others. For it was not till after this, that God was pleased to own him in such a remarkable manner in the salvation of souls, as was evidenced in his future labours.

“What occurred on Wednesday, May 24, I think best to relate at large, after premising what may make it the better understood. Let him that cannot receive it, ask of the Father of lights, that he would give more light to him and me.

“I believe, till I was about ten years old, I had not sinned away that ‘*washing of the Holy Ghost*,’ which was given me in baptism, having been strictly educated and carefully taught, that I could only be saved by universal obedience, by keeping all the commandments of God; in the meaning of which I was diligently instructed. And those instructions, so far as they respected outward duties and sins, I gladly received and often thought of. But all that was said to me of inward obedience, or holiness, I neither understood nor remembered. So that I was indeed as ignorant of the true meaning of the law, as I was of the gospel of Christ.

“The next six or seven years were spent at school; where, outward restraints being removed, I was much more negligent than before, even of outward duties; and almost continually guilty of outward sins, which I knew to be such, though they were not scandalous in the eye of the world. However, I still read the Scriptures, and said my prayers, morning and evening. And what I now hoped to be saved by, was—1. Not being so bad as other people. 2. Having still a kindness for religion. And 3. Reading the Bible, going to Church, and saying my prayers.

“Being removed to the University, for five years I still said my prayers, both in public and in private, and read with the Scriptures several other books of religion, especially comments on the New Testament. Yet I had not, all this while, so much as a notion of inward holiness; nay, went on habitually, and (for the most part) very contentedly, in some or other known sin; indeed, with some intermissions and short struggles, especially before and after the Holy Communion, which I was obliged to receive thrice a year. I cannot well tell what I hoped to be saved by now, when I was continually sinning against that little light I had, unless by those transient fits of what many divines taught me to call *repentance*.

“When I was about twenty-two, my father pressed me to enter into Holy Orders. At the same time the providence of God directing me to Kempis’s Christian Pattern, I began to see, that true religion was seated in the heart, and that God’s law extended to all our thoughts as well as words and actions. I was, however, very angry at Kempis, for being *too strict*, though I read him only in Dean Stanhope’s translation. Yet I had frequently much sensible comfort in reading him, such as I was an utter stranger to before; and meeting likewise with a religious friend, which I had never had till now, I began to alter the whole form of my conversation, and to set in earnest upon a *new life*. I set apart an hour or two a day for religious retirement. I communicated every

week. I watched against all sin, whether in word or deed. I began to aim at and pray for inward holiness. So that now, doing so much, and living so good a life, I doubted not but I was a good Christian.

“ Removing soon after to another College, I executed a resolution, which, I was before convinced, was of the utmost importance, shaking off at once all my trifling acquaintance. I began to see more and more the value of time. I applied myself closer to study. I watched more carefully against actual sins. I advised others to be religious, according to that scheme of religion by which I modelled my own life. But meeting now with Mr. Law’s ‘ Christian Perfection and Serious Call,’ (although I was much offended at many parts of both, yet) they convinced me more than ever of the exceeding height and breadth and depth of the law of God. The light flowed in so mightily upon my soul, that every thing appeared in a new view. I cried to God for help, and resolved not to prolong the time of obeying him, as I had never done before : And, by my continued endeavour to keep his whole law, inward and outward, to the utmost of my power, I was persuaded, that I should be accepted of him, and that I was even then in a state of salvation.

“ In 1730, I began visiting the prisons, assisting the poor and sick in town, and doing what other good I could, by my presence or my little fortune, to the bodies and souls of all men. To this end I abridged myself of all superfluities, and many that are called necessities of life. I soon became a by-word for so doing, and I rejoiced, that my name was cast out as evil. The next spring I began observing the Wednesday and Friday fasts, commonly observed in the ancient Church, taking no food till three in the afternoon. And now I knew not how to go any farther. I diligently strove against all sin. I omitted no sort of self-denial which I thought lawful. I carefully used, both in public and in private, all the means of grace at all opportunities. I omitted no occasion of doing good : I, for that reason, suffered evil : And all this I knew to be nothing, unless as it was directed towards inward holiness. Accordingly this, the image of God, was what I aimed at in all, by doing his will, not my own. Yet when, after continuing some years in this course, I apprehended myself to be near death, I could not find that all this gave me any comfort, or any assurance of acceptance with God. At this I was then not a little surprised, not imagining I had been all this time building on the sand, nor considering that ‘ *other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid by God, even Christ Jesus.*’

“ Soon after, a contemplative man convinced me still more than I was convinced before, that outward works are nothing, being alone ; and, in several conversations, instructed me how to pursue inward holiness, or a union of the soul with God. But even of his instructions, (though I then received them as the words of God,) I cannot but now observe—1. That he spoke so incautiously against *trusting in outward works*, that he discouraged me from *doing* them at all. 2. That he recommended, (as it were, to supply what was wanting in them,) *mental prayer*, and the like exercises, as the most effectual means of purifying the soul and uniting it with God. Now these were, in truth, as much *my own works* as visiting the sick or clothing the naked ; and the *union with God* thus pursued, was as really *my own righteousness* as any I had before pursued, under another name.

"In this *refined* way of trusting to my own works and my own righteousness, (so zealously inculcated by the Mystic writers,) I dragged on heavily, finding no comfort or help therein, till the time of my leaving England. On ship-board, however, I was again active in outward works, where it pleased God, of his free mercy, to give me twenty-six of the Moravian brethren for companions, who endeavoured to show me a more excellent way. But I understood it not at first : I was too learned and too wise . So that it seemed foolishness unto me. And continued preaching and following after and trusting in that righteousness, whereby no flesh can be justified.

"All the time I was at Savannah, I was thus '*beating the air.*' Being ignorant of the righteousness of Christ, which, by a living faith in him, bringing salvation '*to every one that believeth,*' I sought to establish my own righteousness, and so laboured in the fire all my days. I was now properly '*under the law ;*' I knew that the law of God was spiritual ; I consented to it that it was good ; yea, I delighted in it '*after the inner man.*' Yet was I '*carnal, sold under sin.*' Every day was I constrained to cry out, '*What I do, I allow not ; for what I would, I do not ; but what I hate, that I do. To will is, indeed, present with me : but how to perform that which is good, I find not : For the good which I would, I do not ; but the evil which I would not, that I do. I find a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me ; even the law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and still bringing me into captivity to the law of sin.*'*

"In this state I was, indeed, fighting continually, but not conquering. Before, I had willingly served sin ; now, it was unwillingly, but still I served it. I fell and rose, and fell again. Sometimes I was overcome and in heaviness ; sometimes I overcame and was in joy : For as, in the former state, I had some foretastes of the terrors of the law, so had I in this of the comforts of the Gospel. During this whole struggle between nature and grace, (which had now continued above ten years,) I had many remarkable returns to prayer, especially when I was in trouble ; I had many sensible comforts, which, indeed, are no other than short anticipations of the life of faith. But I was still '*under the law,*' not '*under grace,*' the state which most who are called Christians are content to live and die in : For I was only striving with, not freed from sin ; neither had I '*the witness of the Spirit with my spirit,*' and, indeed, could not ; for '*I sought it not by faith, but,*' as it were, '*by the works of the law.*'

"In my return to England, January, 1738, being in imminent danger of death, and very uneasy on that account, I was strongly convinced, that the cause of that uneasiness was unbelief, and that the gaining a true living faith was the *one thing needful* for me. But still I fixed not this faith on its right object : I meant only faith in God, not faith in or through Christ. Again, I knew not that I was wholly void of this faith, but only thought I had not enough of it. So that, when Peter Boehler, whom God prepared for me as soon as I came to London, affirmed of true faith in Christ, which is but one, that it had those two fruits inseparably attending it '*Dominion over sin, and constant peace from a sense of forgiveness,*' I was quite amazed, and looked upon it as a new Gospel. If this was so, it was clear I had not faith. But I was not willing to be

* Rom. vii.

convinced of this : Therefore, I disputed with all my might, and laboured to prove, that faith might be where these were not, especially where the sense of forgiveness was not : For all the Scriptures relating to this, I had been long since taught to construe away, and to call all Presbyterians who spoke otherwise.* Besides, I well saw no one could, in the nature of things, have such a sense of forgiveness and not feel it : But I felt it not. If then there was no faith without this, all my pretensions to faith dropped at once.

“ When I met Peter Boehler again, he consented to put the dispute upon the issue which I desired, viz. Scripture and experience. I first consulted the Scripture. But when I set aside the glosses of men, and simply considered the words of God, comparing them together, endeavouring to illustrate the obscure by the plainer passages, I found they all made against me, and was forced to retreat to my last hold, ‘ that experience would never agree with the *literal interpretation* of those Scriptures ; nor could I, therefore, allow it to be true, till I found some living witnesses of it.’ He replied, ‘ He could show me such at any time ; if I desired it, the next day.’ And, accordingly, the next day he came again with three others, all of whom testified of their own personal experience, that a true living faith in Christ is inseparable from a sense of pardon for all past, and freedom from all present sins. They added with one mouth, that this faith was the gift, the free gift of God, and that he would surely bestow it upon every soul, who earnestly and perseveringly sought it. I was now thoroughly convinced : and, by the grace of God, I resolved to seek it unto the end,—1. By absolutely renouncing all dependance, in whole or in part, upon my own works or righteousness, on which I had really grounded my hope of salvation, though I knew it not, from my youth up. 2. By adding to the constant use of all the other means of grace, continual prayer for this very thing, justifying, saving faith, a full reliance on the blood of Christ shed for me ; a trust in him as *my* Christ, as *my* sole justification, sanctification, and redemption.

“ I continued thus to seek it (though with strange indifference, dullness, and coolness, and unusually frequent relapses into sin,) till Wednesday, May 24. I think it was about five this morning, that I opened my Testament on those words, Τα μεγαλα ημων και τιμια επαγγελματα δεδωρηται, να δια τωτων γενησθε θειας κοινωνοι φυσεως. ‘ *There are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature,*’ 2 Pet. i, 4. Just as I went out, I opened it again on these words, ‘ *Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.*’ In the afternoon, I was asked to go to St. Paul’s. The Anthem was, ‘ Out of the deep have I called unto thee, O Lord : Lord, hear my voice. O let thine ears consider well the voice of my complaint. If thou, Lord, wilt be extreme to mark what is done amiss, O Lord, who may abide it ? But there is mercy with thee, therefore thou shalt be feared. O Israel, trust in the Lord ; for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption : And He shall redeem Israel from all his sins.’

“ In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate-street, where one was reading Luther’s Preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the

* See the note in page 59.

change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, *I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation; and an assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.*"

"His soul now magnified the Lord, and his spirit rejoiced in God his Saviour.—Because he was a son, God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into his heart, crying, Abba Father: The Spirit itself bearing witness with his spirit, that he was a child of God.—The love of God was shed abroad in his heart, by the Holy Ghost given unto him.—And he rejoiced in God, by whom he had now received the atonement."

Now that he was a child of God, he brought forth *'the fruit of the Spirit.'* As soon as he was thus enabled to love God, he loved every child of man. "Immediately," says he, "I began to pray with all my might for those who had in a more especial manner despitefully used me and persecuted me!" And in this thankful, loving, happy frame of mind he continued, believing in God, and zealous of good works.

His heart was now enlarged to declare, as he never had before, the lovingkindness of the Lord. "*It was his meat and drink, to do his holy and acceptable will.—The word of God dwelt richly in him,*" and was in his mouth as "*a sharp twoedged sword*" to the wicked; but to those who felt the anguish of a "*wounded spirit,*" who had "*turned at God's reproof,*" he was "*an able Minister of the New Testament, holding forth the word of life,*" that they also might "*rejoice in God their Saviour.*"

But he also experienced what it was to be weak in this faith, a little child according to St. John, as well as afterwards to "*be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might.*" He was often in heaviness through manifold temptations. Sometimes fear came suddenly upon him; fear, that he had deceived himself, and stopped short of that grace of God for which he had sought. At other times, letters which he received from injudicious persons concerning the New Birth, and the fruits of Christian Faith, exceedingly troubled him. Few helped, and many strove (most of them ignorantly) to hinder him: to cause him to cast "*away that confidence which hath great recompense of reward.*" But the Lord, who had "*brought him up out of the horrible pit*" of guilt and unbelief, suffered not his tender new-born spirit to faint before him. He often lifted up his head with joy, and girded him with strength.

Under these various exercises of mind, he determined to retire for a short time to Germany. "I had fully purposed," says he, "before I left Georgia, so to do, if it should please God to bring me back to Europe. And I now clearly saw the time was come. My weak mind could not bear to be thus sawn asunder. And I hoped the conversing with those holy men, who were themselves living witnesses of the full power of faith, and yet able to bear with those that are weak, would be a means, under God, of so establishing my soul, that I might '*go on from faith to faith, and from strength to strength.*'"

Accordingly, having taken leave of his mother, he embarked at Gravesend, accompanied by Mr. Ingham, and on Thursday morning, June 15th, landed at Rotterdam.

On his journey through Holland and Germany he conversed with, and was hospitably entertained by many, who were happy partakers of the faith of the Gospel; especially at Marienbourn, where he first conversed

with Count Zinzendorf, Count de Solmes, and other eminent persons ; and with a large company of witnesses of the power of true religion. From this place he wrote a letter to his brother Samuel, of which the following is an extract :—

“ God has given me at length the desire of my heart. I am with a church whose conversation is in heaven, in whom is the mind that was in Christ, and who so walk as he walked. As they have all *one Lord* and *one faith*, so they are all partakers of *one spirit*, the spirit of meekness and love, which uniformly and continually animates all their conversation. O how high and holy a thing Christianity is ! And how widely distant from that—I know not what—which is so called, though it neither purifies the heart nor renews the life, after the image of our blessed Redeemer !”

In their way to Hernhuth, he and his company were stopped at the city of Weymar a considerable time, and were at last brought before Frederick, afterwards King of Prussia, then Prince Royal, as Mr. Wesley was informed. The Prince among other inquiries asked him, “ What are you going so far as Hernhuth for ?” Mr. Wesley answered, “ To see the place where the Christians live.” The Prince then looked hard at them, and let them go.

On Tuesday the first of August, they arrived at Hernhuth, a settlement of the Moravians, in Upper Lusatia. The inhabitants of this place were, at least in the general, truly pious persons, who came there from many parts of Europe, to escape the pollutions of the world, and live wholly to God. No immorality was allowed among them : and every thing that tended to genuine religion was introduced, and earnestly enforced. In this place Mr. Wesley conversed with several persons, that were deeply experienced in the ways of God. He also heard some of them preach, and was thereby abundantly strengthened in the grace of God. He speaks particularly of the benefit he received by the conversation of Michael Linner the chief Elder of the church, and Christian David, who was under God, the first planter of it. Of the latter he thus speaks :—

“ Four times I enjoyed the blessing of hearing him preach, during the few days I spent here ; and every time he chose the very subject which I should have desired, had I spoken to him before. Thrice he described the state of those who are ‘ *weak in faith*,’ who are justified, but have not yet a new clean heart ; who have received forgiveness through the blood of Christ, but have not received the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. This state he explained once, from ‘ *Blessed are the poor in spirit : for theirs is the kingdom of heaven* :’ when he showed at large from various Scriptures, that many are children of God and heirs of the promises, long before their hearts are softened by holy mourning, before they are comforted by the *abiding witness of the Spirit*, melting their souls into all gentleness and meekness ; and much more, before they are renewed in all that ‘ *righteousness*’ which they ‘ *hungered and thirsted after*,’ before they are ‘ *pure in heart*’ from all self and sin, and ‘ *merciful as their Father which is in heaven is merciful*.’

“ A second time he pointed out this state from those words, ‘ *Who shall deliver me from the body of this death !—I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.—There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.*’ Hence also he at large both proved the

existence, and showed the nature of that intermediate state, which most experience 'between that *'bondage'* which is described in the 7th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, and the full *'glorious liberty of the children of God,'* described in the eighth chapter, and in many other parts of Scripture.

"This he yet again explained from the Scriptures which describe the state the apostles were in, from our Lord's death, (and indeed for some time before,) till the descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost. They were then *'clean,'* as Christ himself had borne them witness *'by the word which he had spoken unto them.'* They then *'had faith,'* otherwise he could not have prayed for them, that their *'faith'* might *'not fail.'* Yet they were not properly *'converted,'* they were not *'delivered from'* the spirit of fear; they had not *'new hearts,'* neither had they [fully] received *'the gift of the Holy Ghost.'*

"The fourth sermon which he preached, concerning the ground of our faith, made such an impression upon me, that when I went home, I could not but write down the substance of it, which was as follows:—

"The word of reconciliation which the Apostles preached, as the foundation of all they taught, was that *'we are reconciled to God, not by our own works, nor by our own righteousness, but wholly and solely by the blood of Christ.'*

"But you will say, Must I not grieve and mourn for my sins? Must I not humble myself before God? Is not this just and right? And must I not first do this before I can expect God to be reconciled to me? I answer, it is just and right. You must be humbled before God. You must have a broken and contrite heart. But then observe, this is not your own work. Do you grieve that you are a sinner? This is the work of the Holy Ghost. Are you contrite? Are you humbled before God? Do you indeed mourn, and is your heart broken within you? All this worketh the self same Spirit.

"Observe again, this is not the foundation. It is not this by which you are justified. This is not the righteousness, this is no part of the righteousness, by which you are reconciled unto God. You grieve for your sins. You are deeply humbled. Your heart is broken. Well. But all this is nothing to your justification. The remission of your sins is not owing to this cause, either in whole or in part. Nay, observe farther, that it may hinder justification, that is, if you build any thing upon it; if you think, I must be so or so contrite: I must grieve *more,* before I can be justified. Understand this well. To think you must be *more* contrite, *more* humble, *more* grieved, *more* sensible of the weight of sin, before you can be justified; is, to lay your contrition, your grief, your humiliation for the foundation of your being justified; at least for a part of the foundation. Therefore, it hinders your justification; and a hinderance it is which must be removed, before you can lay the right foundation. The right foundation is, not *your* contrition, (though that is not *your own,*) not *your* righteousness, nothing of *your own,* nothing that is wrought in you by the Holy Ghost; but it is something *without you,* viz. the righteousness and the blood of Christ.

"For this is the word, *'To him that believeth on God that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.'* See ye not, that nothing *'in us'* is the foundation? There is no connexion between God and the ungodly. There is no tie to unite them. They are altogether

separate from each other. They have nothing in common. There is nothing less or more in the ungodly, to join them to God. Works, righteousness, contrition? No. Ungodliness only. This then do, if you will lay a right foundation: Go straight to Christ with all your ungodliness. Tell him, 'Thou whose eyes are as a flame of fire searching my heart, seest that I am ungodly. I plead nothing else. I do not say I am humble or contrite; but I am ungodly. Therefore bring me to him that justifieth the ungodly. Let thy blood be the propitiation for me. For there is nothing in me but ungodliness.'

"Here is a mystery. Here the wise men of the world are lost, are taken in their own craftiness. This the learned of the world cannot comprehend. It is foolishness unto them: sin is the only thing which divides men from God. Sin, (*let him that heareth understand,*) is the only thing which unites them to God, that is, the only thing which moves the Lamb of God to have compassion upon, and, by his blood, to give them access to the Father.

"This is the '*word of reconciliation*' which we preach. This is the foundation which never can be moved. By faith we are built upon this foundation; and this faith also is *the gift of God*. It is his free gift, which he now and ever giveth to every one that is willing to receive it. And when they have received this gift of God, then their hearts will melt for sorrow that they have offended him. But this gift of God lives in the heart, not in the head. The faith of the head, learned from men or books, is nothing worth. It brings neither remission of sins, nor peace with God. Labour then to believe with your whole heart. So shall you have redemption through the blood of Christ. So shall you be cleansed from all sin. So shall ye go on from strength to strength, being renewed day by day in righteousness and all true holiness."

Mr. Wesley was also much strengthened by the religious experience of several holy men, with whom he conversed during his stay in this truly Christian place. One of these, Arvid Gradin, gave him, at his request, a definition in writing of the *πληροφορία πίστεως*, "*the full assurance of faith*," in the following words, "*Requies in sanguine Christi; firma fiducia in Deum, et persuasio de gratiâ divinâ; tranquillitas mentis summa, alque serenitas et pax; cum absentia omnis desiderii carnalis et cessatione peccatorum etiam internorum.*" He added, (testifying at the same time it was his own experience,) "*Verbo, cor quod antea instar maris turbulenti agitabatur, in summâ fuit requie, instar maris sereni et tranquillî.*—Repose in the blood of Christ: a firm confidence in God, and persuasion of his favour: serene peace and steadfast tranquillity of mind, with a deliverance from fleshly (unholy) desire, and from every outward and inward sin. In a word, the heart which before was tossed like a troubled sea, was still and quiet, and in a sweet calm."

This was the first account Mr. Wesley had heard from any living man "*as his own experience*," of what he had before learned from the oracles of God. And as, by the former testimonies, he was encouraged to hold fast the beginning of his confidence, so by this he was stimulated to press forward after all the privileges of his high calling, that his joy might be full.

"Gladly," says he, "would I have spent my life here, but my Master calling me to labour in another part of his vineyard, on Monday, August 14th, 1738, I was constrained to take my leave of this happy

place." On his departure he makes this reflection, "O when shall *this* Christianity cover the earth, '*as the waters cover the sea?*'" After visiting Professor Franck at Halle, (son of the great Professor Franck,) and viewing the schools at Jena, founded by Buddæus, he arrived at Rotterdam, where he took ship and sailed for England. He was now strengthened to do and suffer whatever the wise and holy God, whom he "*served with his spirit in the Gospel of his Son,*" should permit to come upon him in the prosecution of his great design—of spending his life in testifying the Gospel of the grace of God.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PROGRESS AND LABOURS OF THE BROTHERS, IN MAINTAINING THE FAITH OF THE GOSPEL.

WHILE Mr. John Wesley was seeking spiritual strength among the believers in Germany, his brother Charles was maintaining "*the good fight of faith*" among the formalists and unbelievers at home. He had obtained satisfactory evidence that he was a pardoned sinner, accepted of God in Christ Jesus, and quickened by his Spirit. He enjoyed constant peace, was extremely watchful over the motions of his own heart, and had a degree of strength to resist temptation, and to do the will of God, which he had not found before his justification. But he felt no great emotion of mind or transport of joy in any of the means of grace. He now intended to receive the sacrament, and was fearful lest he should be as flat and comfortless in this ordinance as formerly: He received it without any very sensible effect on his mind more than usual, but with this difference from his former state, that he found himself, after it was over, calm and satisfied with the goodness of God to his soul, and free from doubt, fear, or scruple of his interest in Christ. In this way he was early taught by experience, not to place too much confidence in any of those sudden and transient impressions, which are often made on the mind, in public or private acts of devotion. The life of faith was now become more natural to him, and his heart was kept in peace, stayed upon God, and watching unto prayer. The Lord was now also evidently teaching him the deep lessons contained in the first Epistle of St. John, concerning little children, young men, and fathers; lessons wholly unknown to those who have not this faith.

May 28, 1738, he observes that he rose in great heaviness, which neither private nor joint prayer with others could remove. At last he betook himself to intercession for his relations, and was greatly enlarged therein, particularly for a most profligate sinner. He spent the remainder of the morning with James Hutton in prayer, singing, and rejoicing. In the afternoon his brother came, having arrived from Germany; and, after prayer for success on their ministry, Mr. John Wesley set out, intending to go to Tiverton, and Mr. Charles began writing his first sermon after his conversion, "*In the name of Christ his prophet.*" A severe exercise of faith and patience soon followed. June 1st, he found his mind so exceedingly dull and heavy, that he had scarcely any power to pray. This state increased upon him for several days, till at length he became unconscious of any comfort, or of any impression of good

upon his mind in the means of grace. He was averse to prayer, and though he had recovered strength sufficient to go to church, yet he almost resolved not to go at all. When he did go, the prayers and sacrament were a grievous burden to him : instead of a fruitful field, he found the whole service a dreary barren wilderness, destitute of comfort and profit. He felt what he calls, "a cowardly desire of death," to escape from his present painful feelings. He began to examine himself, and to inquire wherein his present state differed from the state he was in before he professed faith. He soon found there was a difference in the following particulars : He observed, the present darkness was not like the former ; there was no *guilt* in it ; he was persuaded, therefore, that God would remove it in his own time ; and he was confident of the love and mercy of God to him in Christ Jesus. The former state was night, the present only a cloudy day : at length the cloud dispersed, and the Sun of righteousness again shone with brightness on his soul. This was a most instructive exercise : It showed him his own utter helplessness in the work of his salvation. He found by experience, that *he* could not produce comfort, or any religious affection in himself, even when he most wanted it, and that the work is really the Lord's ; and that, therefore, whenever these affections were experienced by others under his ministry, the work was also the Lord's, and he only the mean humble instrument in his hand. Thus God prepared him for great usefulness, and guarded him against pride.

June 7th, Dr. Byrom* called upon him. Mr. C. Wesley had a hard struggle with his bashfulness before he could prevail on himself to speak freely to the Doctor on the things of God. At length he gave him a simple relation of his own experience : This brought on a full explanation of the doctrine of faith, which Dr. Byrom received with wonderful readiness. This was similar to the case of the celebrated Dr. Cheyne, who, hearing a young woman relate her own experience, cried out, "O my God ! I have been studying Divinity many years, and now the boys and girls know more of it than I do !"—"Why then," said Mr. J. Wesley, when he related the anecdote, "let the boys and girls praise God !"

Mr. C. Wesley having recovered strength, began to move about among his friends. He went to Blendon and to some other places in the country, and found, that the more he laboured in the work of the ministry, the more his joy and happiness in God increased. In his journey he met with the Rev. Mr. Piers ; and, on the 9th of this month, in riding to Bexley, spake to him of his own experience, with great simplicity, but with confidence. He found Mr. Piers ready to receive the faith. The greatest part of the day was spent in the same manner. Mr. Bray, who was with Mr. C. Wesley, related the dealings of God

* John Byrom, an ingenious poet of Manchester, was born in 1691. His first poetical Essay appeared in the Spectator, No. 603, beginning, "My time, O ye Muses, was happily spent ;" which, with two humorous letters on dreams, are to be found in the eighth volume. He was admitted a member of the Royal Society in 1724. Having originally entertained thoughts of practising physic, he received the appellation of Doctor, by which he was always known ; but reducing himself to narrow circumstances by a precipitate marriage, he supported himself by teaching a new method of short-hand, of his own invention, until an estate devolved to him by the death of an elder brother. He was a man of a ready lively wit, of which he gave many humorous specimens, whenever a favourable opportunity tempted him to indulge his disposition. He died in 1763 ; and a collection of his Miscellaneous Poems was printed at Manchester, in two volumes, octavo, 1773.

with his own soul, and showed what great things God had done for their friends in London. Mr. Piers listened with eager attention to all that was said, made not the least objection, but confessed that these were things which he had never experienced. They then walked and sung, and prayed in the garden: He was greatly affected, and testified his full conviction of the truth, and desire of finding Christ. "But," said he, "I must first prepare myself by long exercise of prayer and good works." What a mixture! He saw "*men as trees walking.*"

The day before Mr. C. Wesley and Mr. Bray arrived at Blendon, Mr. Piers had been led to read the Homily on Justification, by which he was convinced, that in him, "*by nature, dwelt no good thing.*" This prepared him to receive what these messengers of peace related concerning their own experience. He now saw, that all the thoughts of his heart were evil, and that continually, forasmuch as "*whatsoever is not of faith is sin.*"

June 10, Mr. Piers became earnest for present salvation; he prayed to God for comfort, and was encouraged by reading Luke v, 23: "*Whether is it easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee, or to say, Rise up and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he said unto the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go unto thine house,*" &c. Mr. C. Wesley and Mr. Bray now conversed with him on the power of Christ to save, and then prayed with him; they afterwards read the 65th Psalm, and were animated with hope in reading,—"*Thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come. Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and receivest unto thyself; he shall dwell in thy courts, and shall be satisfied with the plenteousness of thy house, even of thy holy temple. Thou shalt show us wonderful things in thy righteousness, O God of our salvation! Thou art the hope of all the ends of the earth,*" &c. In the continuance of these exercises alternately, of conversing, reading, and praying together, Mr. Piers received power to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and had "*peace and joy in believing.*"

The next day Mr. Piers preached on death; and in hearing him, Mr. C. Wesley observes, "I found great joy in feeling myself willing, or rather desirous to die."—This, however, did not now proceed from impatience, or a fear of the afflictions and sufferings of life, but from a clear evidence of his acceptance in the Beloved. After sermon they went to the house of Mr. Piers, and joined in prayer for a poor woman in deep despair:* Then going down to her, Mr. C. Wesley asked whether she thought God was love, and not anger, as Satan would persuade her? He showed her the gospel plan of salvation; a plan founded in mercy and love to lost perishing sinners. She received what he said with all imaginable eagerness. When they had continued some time together in prayer for her, she rose up a new creature, strongly and explicitly declaring her faith in the blood of Christ, and full persuasion that she was accepted in him.

Mr. C. Wesley remained weak in body, but grew stronger daily in faith, and more zealous for God and the salvation of men, great power accompanying his exhortations and prayers. On the evening of this day, after family prayer, he expounded the lesson, and one of the ser-

* Rather in deep conviction, and having only heard a legal ministry, as the event fully showed.

vants testified her faith in Christ and peace with God. A short time afterwards, the gardener was made a happy partaker of the same blessing. Mr. Piers also began to see the fruit of his ministerial labours. Being sent for to visit a dying woman in despair, because she "had done so little good, and so much evil;" he declared to her the glad tidings of salvation by grace, and showed her, that if she could sincerely repent and receive Christ by a living faith, God would pardon her sins and receive her graciously. This opened to her view a solid ground of comfort; she gladly renounced all confidence in herself, to trust in Jesus Christ, and she expressed her faith in him by a calm, cheerful, triumphant expectation of death. Her fears and agonies were at an end; "*being justified by faith, she had peace with God,*" and only entered farther into her rest, by dying a few hours after. The spectators of this awfully joyful scene, were melted into tears, while she calmly passed into the heavenly Canaan, and brought up a good report of her faithful pastor, who under Christ saved her soul from death.

The next day, June the 14th, Mr. C. Wesley returned to London. He staid there only two days, and then returned with T. Delamotte to Blendon, and from thence to Bexley. Here his complaints returned upon him, and he was obliged to keep his bed. "Desires of death," says he, "often rose in me, which I laboured to check, not daring to form any wish concerning it." His pains abated; and on the 21st, I find him complaining, that several days had elapsed and he had done nothing for God; so earnestly did he desire to be incessantly labouring in the work of the ministry.

In this excursion, Mr. C. Wesley was very successful in doing good; but he met with strong opposition to the doctrine of justification by faith alone, from William Delamotte, whom he calls his scholar, and from Mrs. Delamotte, who was still more violent against it than her son; both were zealous defenders of the merit of good works. Mr. Delamotte supposed, that if men were justified by faith alone, without any regard to works, then sinners obtaining this justification and dying soon after, would be equal in heaven with those who had laboured many years in doing good and serving God. "But," said he, "it would be unjust in God to make sinners equal with us, who have laboured many years." The Jews of old reasoned in a similar manner concerning the reception of the Gentiles into the gospel church, on the same conditions, and to the same privileges with themselves. This disposition is beautifully described, and gently reprov'd, in the parable of the prodigal son. Mr. Delamotte's conclusion, however, does not follow from the doctrine of justification by faith. As all men have sinned, so all men must be justified, or pardoned, as an act of mere grace or favour. Our state in heaven will be regulated by a different rule. All who are saved will not be treated as equal: "*Every man will be rewarded according to his works,*" that is, according to his improvement in practical holiness, on Gospel principles.

Mr. Delamotte, however, thought his conclusion good, and was animated with zeal against this new faith, as it was then commonly called. He collected his strong reasons against it, and filled two sheets of paper with them: But in searching the Scripture for passages to strengthen his arguments, he met with Titus, iii, 5: "*Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he hath saved*

us." This passage of Scripture cut him to the heart,—destroyed all confidence in the specious reasoning he had used on this subject, and convinced him he was wrong. He burned his papers, and began to seek in earnest that faith which he had before opposed.

June the 30th, Mr. C. Wesley received from him the following letter.

"DEAR SIR,—God hath heard your prayers. Yesterday about twelve, he put his *fiat* to the desires of his distressed servant; and, glory be to Him, I have enjoyed the fruits of his holy Spirit ever since. The only uneasiness I feel, is, want of thankfulness and love for so unspeakable a gift. But I am confident of this also, that the same gracious hand which hath communicated, will communicate even unto the end. O my dear friend, I am free indeed! I agonised some time between darkness and light; but God was greater than my heart, and burst the cloud, and broke down the partition wall, and opened to me the door of faith."

Upon Mr. John Wesley's arrival in London, it was his desire to preach in a church, rather than any other place. But this he seldom could do. The same obstructions were in the way that had before shut the doors of so many churches against him. Rather, the offence was now increased: The people flocked to hear him more than ever. Present salvation by faith, which he now preached every where with zeal, though a principal doctrine of the Church of England, was little understood and less approved. But as he had the will, so the providence of God gave him the means of testifying the Gospel. His own little society was now increased to thirty-two persons; and many other religious communities, in various parts of the town, received him gladly. Newgate was not yet shut against him. He made excursions into the country also, visited Oxford, and preached to the prisoners in the castle. Being thus, to use St. Paul's words, "*instant in season, and out of season*;" embracing every opportunity that offered, of publicly declaring the truth and of enforcing it also, in every company, and to every individual with whom he conversed; it could not be, but many reports would be spread concerning him, in every place. The effect, as of old, was "*some said, He is a good man; and others said, Nay, but he deceiveth the people: And the multitude was divided.*"

The points he chiefly insisted on, were four: FIRST, That orthodoxy, (or right opinions,) is, at best, but a very slender part of religion, if it can be allowed to be any part of it at all: That neither does religion consist in *negatives*, in bare harmlessness of any kind: nor merely in *externals*, doing good, or using the means of grace, in works of piety, (so called,) or of charity: That it is nothing short of, or different from, "*the mind that was in Christ*," the image of God stamped upon the heart, inward righteousness attended with "*the peace of God*," and "*joy in the Holy Ghost*."—SECONDLY, That the only way under heaven to this religion, is, to "*repent and believe the Gospel*," or (as the Apostle words it) "*repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ*."—THIRDLY, That by this faith, "*he that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is imputed for righteousness*:" He is "*justified freely by his grace, through the redemption which is in Jesus Christ*."—And, LASTLY, That, "*being justified by faith*," we taste of the heaven to which we are going: we are holy and happy: we tread down sin and fear, and "*sit in heavenly places with Christ Jesus*."

Many of those who heard this, began to cry out, that he brought strange things to their ears ; that this was a doctrine which they never heard before, or at least, never regarded. “ *They searched the Scriptures, whether these things were so ;*” and acknowledged “ *the truth as it is in Jesus.*” Their hearts also were influenced, as well as their understandings, and they determined to follow “ *Jesus Christ, and him crucified.*”

But while Mr. Wesley thus strove to be a worker together with God, to

Catch the brands out of the fire,
To snatch them from the verge of hell,

he did not neglect himself. Receiving a letter from a friend concerning the marks of true conversion, he determined more closely to “ *examine himself, whether he was in the faith.*”

“The surest test,” says he, “whereby we can examine ourselves, whether we be indeed in the faith, is that given by St. Paul : ‘ *If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things are passed away. Behold, all things are become new.*’

“FIRST.—His judgments are new : His judgment of himself, of happiness, and of holiness.

“He judges himself to be altogether fallen short of the glorious image of God. To have no good thing abiding in him ; but all that is corrupt and abominable : In a word, to be wholly ‘ *earthly, sensual, and devilish ;*’ a motly mixture of beast and devil.

“Thus, by the grace of God in Christ, I judge of myself. Therefore I am, in this respect, a new creature.

“Again. His judgment concerning happiness is new. He would as soon expect to dig it out of the earth, as to find it in riches, honour, pleasure, (so called,) or, indeed, in the enjoyment of any creature. He knows there can be no happiness on earth, but in the enjoyment of God, and in the foretaste of those ‘ *rivers of pleasure which flow at his right hand for evermore.*’

“Thus, by the grace of God in Christ, I judge of happiness. Therefore I am, in this respect, a new creature.

“Yet, again. His judgment concerning holiness is new. He no longer judges it to be an outward thing ;—to consist either in doing no harm, in doing good, or in using the ordinances of God. He sees it is the life of God in the soul ; the image of God fresh stamped on the heart ; an entire renewal of the mind in every temper and thought, after the likeness of Him that created it.

“Thus, by the grace of God in Christ, I judge of holiness. Therefore I am, in this respect, a new creature.

“SECONDLY.—His designs are new. It is the design of his life, not to heap up treasures upon earth, not to gain the praise of men, not to indulge the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eye, or the pride of life ; but to regain the image of God ; to have the life of God again planted in his soul ; and to be renewed after his likeness, in righteousness and all true holiness.

“This, by the grace of God in Christ, is the design of my life. Therefore I am, in this respect, a new creature.

“THIRDLY.—His desires are new, and, indeed, the whole train of his passions and inclinations. They are no longer fixed on earthly

things. They are now set on the things of heaven. His love, and joy, and hope ; his sorrow, and fear, have all respect to things above. They all point heavenward. Where his treasure is, there is his heart also.

"I dare not say, I am a new creature in this respect. For other desires often arise in my heart. But they do not reign. I put them all under my feet, '*through Christ which strengtheneth me.*' Therefore I believe he is creating me anew in this also ; and that he has begun, though not finished, his work.

"FOURTHLY.—His conversation is new. It is always '*seasoned with salt, and fit to minister grace to the hearers.*'

"So is mine, by the grace of God in Christ. Therefore, in this respect, I am a new creature.

"FIFTHLY.—His actions are new. The tenour of his life singly points at the glory of God. All his substance and time are devoted thereto. '*Whether he eats or drinks, or whatever he does,*' it either springs from, or leads to, the love of God and man.

"Such, by the grace of God in Christ, is the tenour of my life. Therefore, in this respect, I am a new creature."

Hearing that Mr. Whitefield was returned from Georgia, he hastened to London to meet him, and they once more took sweet counsel together. A few other clergymen now united with them, being convinced that the *New Doctrine*, vulgarly called *Methodism*, was indeed the old doctrine of the Bible, and of the Church of England.

An instance of the fervency of this little band of Christian soldiers, will not perhaps be displeasing. Being assembled together with several others on the 1st of January, 1738, they continued in prayer till the night was far spent. "About three in the morning," says he, "the power of God came mightily upon us, insomuch that many cried out for exceeding joy, and many fell to the ground. As soon as we were recovered a little from that awe and amazement at the presence of his majesty, we broke out with one voice '*We praise thee, O God ; we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord.*'"

To awaken a drowsy, careless world, sunk in sin and sensuality, the Lord at this time was pleased to work in an extraordinary manner. In several places, while Mr. Wesley was expounding the Scriptures, many persons trembled and fell down before him. Some cried aloud, and others appeared convulsed as in the agonies of death. Many of these were afterwards eminent possessors of the holiness and happiness of religion : and declared, that they had at the time above mentioned such a deep sense of the dreadful nature of sin, and of the just wages of it, that they were constrained to cry aloud for the disquietude of their heart. In others the change which the Scripture speaks of, as evidencing a true conversion, was not so apparent : While in some, neither godly sorrow for sin, peace or joy in believing, nor any real change of heart and life, followed the impressions which were then made upon them.

Mr. Wesley at this time maturely compared these appearances of things with the word of God, and especially with the work of the Spirit of God on the souls of men as described in the word. He thereby clearly saw, that every religious pang, much less enthusiastic conceit, must not be taken for true conversion. At the same time, he perceived, from several passages both of the Old and New Testament, that the

operations of the Spirit of God have occasionally produced such lively and powerful actings of the passions of fear, sorrow, joy, and love, as must necessarily have caused at the time considerable agitations of the body. He also knew that several of the Fathers of the church in the three first centuries, spoke often of such a work among the people.*

Nor was he ignorant, that in our own land, since the Reformation, when the violations of the laws of God, the atonement of Christ, and the remission of sins have been preached with "*the demonstration of the Spirit and of power*," such impressions have been made thereby, in innumerable instances, that even the body seemed to fail before them.†

Yet it is certain, that throughout the whole of his life he wished that all things should be done, even in the opinion of men, decently and in order. But he had one only design, which was to bring men to that knowledge and love of God, which makes them holy and happy: Useful in their lives, and peaceful in their death. He therefore thankfully acquiesced in every means which the Lord was pleased to use for the accomplishment of this great end. And when he saw those extraordinary effects accompanied by a godly sorrow for sin, and earnest desires to be delivered from it; when he saw men deeply convinced of the want of a Saviour, and this conviction followed by humble loving faith in the Son of God, enabling them to walk worthy of the Lord who had called them to his kingdom and glory, he therein rejoiced. Nor could the imprudent zeal of a few, or the noise and confusion which sometimes attended this extraordinary work, cause him to relax in his efforts to turn men "*from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God*."

The reasoning of a writer of that day, by no means prejudiced in his favour, is well worthy of consideration. "What influence," says he, "sudden and sharp awakenings may have upon the body, I pretend not to explain. But I make no question Satan, so far as he gets power, may exert himself on such occasions, partly to hinder the good work in the persons who are thus touched with the sharp arrows of conviction, and partly to disparage the work of God, as if it tended to lead people to distraction."

About this time he wrote several letters to his friends on the continent, giving them an account of the work of God in England. That to Count Zinzendorf, and to the Moravian Church, I shall insert, as I shall have to speak of both hereafter.

"TO COUNT ZINZENDORF, at *Marienborn*.

"May our gracious Lord, who counteth whatsoever is done to the least of his brethren, as done to himself, return seven-fold to you and the Countess, and to all the brethren, the kindnesses you did to us! It would have been a great satisfaction to me, if I could have spent more time with the Christians who love one another. But that could not be now; my Master having called me to work in another part of his vine-

* The words of the great John Chrysostom are remarkable. Comment on Romans viii, 15. "Ye have received the Spirit of adoption, by which we cry, Abba, Father!"—"This is the first word we utter," says he, "*μετα τας θανατας ωδινας κεινας, και τον ξενον παραδ οζον λοχουματων νομον*: after those amazing throes (or birth-pangs,) and that strange and wonderful manner of bringing forth."

† The instance of that learned, laborious, and successful minister of the Church of England, Mr. Bolton, is well known. He was awakened by the preaching of the celebrated Mr. Perkins in the University of Cambridge; and was affected with such terrors, as caused him to throw himself on the ground, and roar with inexpressible anguish; yea, sometimes he lay pale and senseless like one that was dead.

yard. Nor did I return hither at all before the time: For though a great door and effectual had been opened, the adversaries had laid so many stumbling-blocks before it, that the weak were daily turned out of the way. Numberless misunderstandings had arisen, by means of which the way of truth was much blasphemed: And thence had sprung anger, clamour, bitterness, evil-speaking, envyings, strifes, railings, evil-surmises; whereby the enemy had gained such an advantage over the little flock, that *'of the rest durst no man join himself to them.'*

"But it has now pleased our blessed Master to remove, in great measure, these rocks of offence. The word of the Lord again runs and is glorified; and his work goes on and prospers. Great multitudes are every where awakened, and cry out, *'What must we do to be saved?'* Many of them see, that there is only one name under heaven whereby they can be saved: And more and more of those who seek it, find salvation in his name: And these are of one heart and one soul. They all love one another, and are knit together in one body, and one spirit, as in one faith, and one hope of their calling. The love and zeal of our brethren in Holland and Germany, particularly at Hernhuth, has stirred up many among us, who will not be comforted till they also partake of the great and precious promises. I hope, if God permit, to see them at least once more, were it only to give them the fruit of my love, the speaking freely on a few things which I did not approve, perhaps because I did not understand them. May our merciful Lord give you a right judgment in all things, and make you to abound more and more in all lowliness and meekness, in all simplicity and godly sincerity, in all watchfulness and seriousness: In a word, in all faith and love particularly to those that are without; till you are merciful as your Father which is in heaven is merciful! I desire your constant and earnest prayers, that he would vouchsafe me a portion of the same spirit."*

"To the Church of God which is in Hernhuth, JOHN WESLEY, an unworthy Presbyter of the Church of God in England, wisheth all grace and peace in our Lord Jesus Christ. October 14, 1738.

"Glory be to God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for his unspeakable gift! for giving me to be an eyewitness of your faith, and love, and holy conversation in Christ Jesus. I have borne testimony thereof with all plainness of speech, in many parts of Germany, and thanks have been given to God by many on your behalf.

"We are endeavouring here also, by the grace which is given us, to be followers of you, as ye are of Christ. Fourteen were added to us since our return, so that we have now eight bands of men, consisting of fifty-six persons, all of whom seek for salvation only in the blood of Christ. As yet we have only two small bands of women, the one of three, the other of five persons. But here are many others who only wait till we have leisure to instruct them, how they may most effectually build up one another in the faith and love of Him who gave himself for them.

"Though my brother and I are not permitted to preach in most of

* Mr. Southey relates a foolish story, from Mr. Hampson, about the Count, "who," he says, "considered Mr. Wesley as his pupil, ordering him to dig in his garden, and taking him from his work, without a coat, to visit a German Count, saying, 'You must be simple, my brother.'" I am confident there is no truth at all in the story. The Count was a gentleman, and would not act so, neither did he consider Mr. Wesley as his pupil; and Mr. Wesley understood Christian simplicity, and propriety, too well to suffer himself to be so treated.

the churches in London, yet, thanks be to God, there are others left, wherein we have liberty to speak the truth as it is in Jesus. Likewise every evening, and on set evenings in the week at two several places, we publish the word of reconciliation, sometimes to twenty or thirty, sometimes to fifty or sixty, sometimes to three or four hundred persons, met together to hear it. We begin and end all our meetings with singing and prayer: And we know that our Lord heareth our prayer, having more than once or twice, (and this was not done in a corner,) received our petitions in that very hour.

“Nor hath he left himself without other witnesses of his grace and truth. Ten ministers I know now in England, who lay the right foundation, ‘*The blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin.*’ Over and above whom, I have found one Anabaptist, and one, if not two, of the teachers among the Presbyterians here, who, I hope, love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and teach the way of God in truth.

“O cease not ye, that are highly favoured, to beseech our Lord that he would be with us even to the end; to remove that which is displeasing in his sight, to support that which is weak among us, to give us the whole mind that was in him, and teach us to walk even as he walked! And may the very God of peace fill up what is wanting in your faith, and build you up more and more in all lowliness of mind, in all plainness of speech, in all zeal and watchfulness; that he may present you to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that ye may be holy and unblameable in the day of his appearing.”

The progress of Mr. C. Wesley, previous to this time, remains to be noted. We have seen that he had been diligent in his Master’s service, though as yet he had not been able to preach. On Sunday, July 2d, 1738, he observes, “Being to preach this morning, for the first time, I received strength for the work of the ministry. The whole service at Basingshaw Church was wonderfully animating, especially the Gospel, concerning the miraculous draught of fishes. I preached salvation by faith to a deeply attentive audience, and afterwards gave the cup. Observing a woman full of reverence, I asked her if she had forgiveness of sins? She answered with great sweetness and humility, ‘Yes, I know it now, that I have forgiveness.’” Nothing short of this could now satisfy him as a guide of souls.

“I preached again at London-Wall, without fear or weariness. As I was going into the church, a woman caught hold of my hand and blessed me most heartily, telling me she had received forgiveness of sins while I was preaching in the morning.” In the evening they held a meeting for prayer, when two other persons found peace with God.

July 10th, Mr. C. Wesley was requested by the Rev. Mr. Sparks, to go to Newgate: he went and preached to the ten malefactors under sentence of death. But he observes, it was with a heavy heart. “My old prejudices,” says he, “against the possibility of a deathbed repentance, still hung upon me, and I could hardly hope there was mercy for those whose time was so short.” But in the midst of his languid discourse, as he calls it, his mind acquired a sudden confidence in the mercy of God, and he promised them all pardon in the name of Jesus Christ, if they would even then, as at the last hour, repent and believe the gospel. He adds, “I did believe they would accept the proffered

mercy, and could not help telling them, I had no doubt but God would give me every soul of them." See here the faith that gave those ministers of Christ such a harvest of souls among those who were *dead in sin*! He preached to them again the next day, with earnestness, from the second lesson, when two or three began to be deeply affected.

This day Mr. C. Wesley received a letter from Mr. William Delamotte, giving an account of his mother. "I cannot hold my peace," says he; "the mercies of God come so abundantly on our unworthy family, that I am not able to declare them. Yet as they are his blessings through your ministry, I must inform you of them, as they will strengthen your hands, and prove helpers of your joy.—Great then, I believe, was the struggle in my mother, between nature and grace; but God, who knoweth the very heart and reins, hath searched her out. Her spirit is become as that of a little child. She is converted, and Christ hath spoken peace to her soul. This change was begun in her the morning you left us, (the 8th,) though she concealed it from you. The next morning when she waked the following words of Scripture were present to her mind: '*Either what woman, having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one of them, doth not light a candle and sweep the house diligently till she find it?*' She rose immediately, took up Bishop Taylor, and opened on a place which so strongly asserted this living faith, that she was fully convinced. But the enemy preached humility to her that she could not deserve [deserve pardon!] so great a gift. God however, still pursued, and she could not long forbear to communicate the emotion of her soul to me. We prayed, read, and conversed for an hour. The Lord made use of a mean instrument to convince her of her ignorance of the word of God. Throughout that day, she was more and more enlightened by the truth, till at length she broke out, 'Where have I been? I know nothing; I see nothing; my mind is all darkness; how have I opposed the Scripture!' She was tempted to think, she was labouring after something that was not to be attained; but Christ did not suffer her to fall; she flew to him in prayer and singing, and continued agonizing all the evening. The next morning, when reading in her closet, she received reconciliation and peace. She could not contain the joy attending it; nor forbear imparting to her friends and neighbours that *she had found the piece which she had lost*. Satan in vain attempted to shake her; she felt in herself,

Faith's assurance, Hope's increase,
All the confidence of Love."

Mr. Sparks asked him if he would preach at St. Helen's. He agreed to supply Mr. Broughton's place, who was at Oxford, "arming our friends," says Mr. C. Wesley, "against the faith." He adds, "I preached faith in Christ to a vast congregation, with great boldness, adding much extempore." Mr. C. Wesley proposed the doctrines of the gospel with clearness, and illustrated them with great strength, from the Scriptures, in which he was mighty. After this sermon, Mrs. Hind, with whom Mr. Broughton lodged, sent for Mr. C. Wesley, and acknowledged her agreement with the doctrine he had preached; she wished him to come and talk with Mr. Broughton, who, she thought, must himself agree to it.

The next day, July 12th, he preached at Newgate to the condemned felons. He visited one of them in his cell, sick of a fever, a poor

Black, who had robbed his master. "I told him," says Mr. C. Wesley, "of one who came down from heaven to save lost sinners, and him in particular: I described the sufferings of the Son of God; his sorrows, agony, and death. He listened with all the signs of eager astonishment. The tears trickled down his cheeks, while he cried, 'What? was it for me? Did the Son of God suffer all this for so poor a creature as me?' I left him waiting for the salvation of God.

"July 13th.—I read prayers and preached at Newgate, and administered the sacrament to our friends and five of the felons. I was much affected and assisted in prayer for them with comfort and confidence.

"July 14th.—I received the sacrament from the Ordinary, and spake strongly to the poor malefactors, and to the sick Negro in the condemned hole: I was moved by his sorrow and earnest desire of Christ Jesus.

"The next day, July 15th, I preached there again, with an enlarged heart; and rejoiced with my poor Black, who now believes that the Son of God loves *him*, and gave himself for *him*.

"July 17th.—I preached at Newgate on death, which the malefactors must suffer, the day after to-morrow. Mr. Sparks assisted in giving the sacrament, and another clergyman was present. Newington asked me to go in the coach with him. At one o'clock I was with the Black in his cell, when more of the malefactors came to us. I found great help and power in prayer for them. One of them rose all in a sweat, with the agitation of his mind, and professed faith in Christ. I found myself overwhelmed with the love of Christ to sinners. The Negro was quite happy, and another criminal in an excellent temper. I talked with one more, concerning faith in Christ; he was greatly moved. The Lord, I trust, will help his unbelief also."—The clergymen now left them, and Mr. Wesley, with several others, joined in fervent prayer and thanksgiving at Mr. Bray's. At six in the evening, he returned to the prisoners, with Mr. Bray. They talked chiefly with Hudson and Newington. They prayed with them, and both seemed deeply affected. Newington declared, that he had some time before felt inexpressible joy and love in prayer, but was much troubled at its being so soon withdrawn.

Mr. C. Wesley goes on: "July 18th, the Ordinary read prayers and preached; I administered the sacrament to the Black and eight more; having first instructed them in the nature of it. One of them told me in the cells, that whenever he offered to pray, or had a serious thought, something came and hindered him, and that it was almost continually with him. After we had prayed for him, he rose amazingly comforted; full of joy and love; so that we could not doubt, but he had received the atonement." In the evening, Mr. C. Wesley and Mr. Bray were locked in the cells. "We wrestled," says he, "in mighty prayer: All the criminals were present, and cheerful. The soldier, in particular, found his comfort and joy increase every moment. Another from the time he communicated, has been in perfect peace. Joy was visible in all their faces. We sang,

Behold the Saviour of mankind
Nail'd to the shameful tree;
How vast the love that him inclined,
To bleed and die for thee!

It was one of the most triumphant hours I have ever known. Yet, on July 19th, I rose very heavy and backward to visit them for the last time. At six in the morning, I prayed and sung with them altogether.

The Ordinary would read prayers ; and he preached, but alas ! most miserably." Mr. Sparks and Mr. Broughton were present ; the latter of whom administered the sacrament, and then prayed ; Mr. C. Wesley prayed after him. At half past nine o'clock their irons were knocked off, their hands tied, and they prepared for the solemn journey and the fatal hour. The clergymen went in a coach, and about eleven the criminals arrived at Tyburn. Mr. C. Wesley, Mr. Sparks, and Mr. Broughton got upon the cart with them ; the Ordinary endeavoured to follow, but the poor prisoners begged that he would not, and the mob kept him down. They were all cheerful ; full of comfort, peace, and triumph ; firmly persuaded that Christ had died for them,—had taken away their sins, and waited to receive them into paradise. None showed any natural terror or death ; no fear or crying. " I never saw," says Mr. C. Wesley, " such calm triumph, such incredible indifference to dying. We sang several hymns ; particularly,

A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,
 Into thy hands I fall ;
 Be thou my life, my righteousness,
 My Jesus, and my all.

I took leave of each in particular. Mr. Broughton bid them not to be surprised when the cart should draw away. They cheerfully replied, they should not. We left them, going to meet their Lord. They were turned off exactly at twelve o'clock ; not one struggled for life. I spoke a few suitable words to the crowd, and returned full of peace and confidence of our friends' happiness."—The whole of this awful scene must have appeared very extraordinary in that day. Blessed be God, the sight of penitent culprits has been common since that time.

Mr. C. Wesley, by the daily exercise of preaching, expounding, exhorting, and praying with the people, had now acquired some degree of boldness in public speaking ; the great and leading doctrines of the Gospel were become familiar to his mind, and expression flowed naturally and easily, in conversing on them. He preached at Islington, October 15th, and added to his notes a good deal *extempore*. On Friday, the 20th, seeing few people present at St. Antholin's, he thought of preaching *extempore*. " I was afraid," says he, " yet ventured, trusting in the promise, '*Lo ! I am with you always.*' " I spoke on justification, from the third chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, for three quarters of an hour, without hesitation. Glory be to God, who keepeth his promise for ever."

About this time, previously to his brother's going to Bristol, they waited on Dr. Gibson, the Bishop of London, to answer the complaints which he had heard alleged against them, respecting their preaching an *absolute assurance of salvation*. Some of the Bishop's words were, " If by assurance you mean an inward persuasion, whereby a man is conscious in himself, after examining his life by the law of God, and weighing his own sincerity, that he is in a state of salvation, and acceptable to God, I do not see how any good Christian can be without such an assurance."—They answered, " We do contend for this ;* but we have been charged with Antinomianism, because we preach *justification by faith alone*. Can any one preach otherwise who agrees with our Church

* Certainly they did. All *believers* in their walk with God must thus examine themselves. But no man was ever *justified* thus : This would be justification by works, which is impossible to a sinner.

and the Scriptures?"—"But," said the Bishop, "there is a very heavy charge brought against us Bishops, in consequence of your having re-baptized an adult, and alleged the Archbishop's authority for doing it."—Mr. John Wesley answered, that he had expressly declared the contrary, and acquitted the Archbishop from having any hand in the matter; but added, "If a person, dissatisfied with Lay-Baptism, should desire Episcopal, I should think it my duty to administer it, after having acquainted the Bishop, according to the Canon."—"Well," said the Bishop, "I am against it myself, when any one has had baptism among the Dissenters."—The Bishop here showed more liberality than some in our day. Mr. Charles Wesley adds, "My brother inquired whether his reading in a religious society made it a conventicle? His Lordship warily referred us to the laws: but, on urging the question, 'Are religious societies conventicles?' he answered, 'No; I think not: however, you can read the acts and laws as well as I; I determine nothing.' We hoped his Lordship would not, henceforward, receive an accusation against a Presbyterian, but at the mouth of two or three witnesses. He said, 'No, by no means; and you may have free access to me at all times.' We thanked him and took our leave."

Tuesday, November 14th, Mr. Charles Wesley had another conference with the Bishop of London, without his brother. "I have used your Lordship's permission," said he, "to wait upon you. A woman desires me to baptize her, not being satisfied with her baptism by a Dissenter. She says, sure and unsure is not the same. He immediately took fire and interrupted me: 'I wholly disapprove of it; it is irregular.'" "My Lord," said Mr. C. Wesley, "I did not expect your approbation; I only came in obedience to give you notice of my intention. 'It is irregular; I never receive any such information, but from the minister.'—My Lord, your rubric does not so much as require the minister to give you notice, but any discreet person. I have the minister's leave.—'Who gave you authority to baptize?'—Your Lordship, and I shall exercise it in any part of the known world.—'Are you a licensed curate?'—I have the leave of the proper minister.—'But, do you not know, that no man can exercise parochial duty in London, without my leave? It is only *sub silentio*.'—But you know, many do take that *permission* for authority, and you yourself allow it.—'It is one thing to connive, and another to approve; I have power to inhibit you.'—Does your Lordship exert that power? Do you now inhibit me?'—'O why will you push matters to an extreme? I do not inhibit you.'—Why then, my Lord, according to your own concession, you permit or authorize me.—'I have power to punish and to forbear.'—To punish! That seems to imply that I have done something worthy of punishment; I should be glad to know, that I may answer. Does your Lordship charge me with any crime?'—'No, no, I charge you with no crime.'—Do you then dispense with my giving you notice of any Baptisms in future?'—'I neither dispense, nor not dispense.' He censured *Lawrence on Lay-Baptism*, and blamed my brother's sermon, as inclining to Antinomianism.* I charged Archbishop Tillotson with denying the faith; he allowed it, and owned they ran into one extreme to avoid another. He concluded the conference with 'Well Sir, you knew my judgment before, and you know it now: Good morning to you.'"

* *Salvation by faith.* Eph. ii, 8, Preached before the University.

Mr. C. Wesley now clearly saw, that a faithful discharge of his duty would expose him to many hardships and dangers ; and though he generally had great confidence in God, yet he was fully sensible of his weakness, and that he must be supported in his work by a power not his own. On the 25th of November, at Oxford, he experienced great depression of mind. "I felt," says he, "a pining desire to die, foreseeing the infinite dangers and troubles of life." But, as he was daily engaged in the exercise of some part or other of his ministerial office, "*the times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord*" frequently returned upon him ; his strength was renewed, and he was again enabled to go on his way rejoicing.

Mr. Whitefield was at this time at Oxford, and was earnest with Mr. C. Wesley to accept a College Living. This shows that no plan of Itinerant preaching was yet thought of: Had any such plan been in agitation among them, it is very certain Mr. Whitefield would not have urged this advice on Mr. C. Wesley, whom he loved as a brother, and whose labours he highly esteemed.

December the 11th, Mr. C. Wesley left Oxford, and coming to Wickham in the evening, took up his lodgings with a Mr. Hollis, to whom, I suppose, he had been recommended without sufficient caution. "He entertained me," adds Mr. Wesley, "with his French Prophets, who, in his account, are equal, if not superior, to the Prophets of the Old Testament. While we were undressing, he fell into violent agitations, and gabbled like a turkey-cock. I was frightened, and began exorcising him with 'Thou deaf and dumb devil,' &c. He soon recovered from his fit of inspiration. I prayed and went to bed, not half liking my bed-fellow ; nor did I sleep very sound with Satan so near me." He escaped, however, without harm, and came safe to London the next day, where he heard a glorious account of the success of the Gospel at Islington, (where Mr. Stonehouse was minister,) some of the fierce opposers being converted.

January 5th, 1739, Mr. Wesley gives us another convincing proof, that no plan of becoming *Itinerants*, was yet formed. He says, "My brother, Mr. Seward, Hall, Whitefield, Ingham, Kinchin, and Hutchins, all set upon me to settle at Oxford."—But he could not agree to their proposal, without being more fully satisfied that it was the order of Providence. This advice, however, and a similar instance above mentioned, plainly show, that their views at present extended no farther than to preach the Gospel in the Churches, wherever they had opportunity.

About this time some persons, being greatly affected under the public service, fell into violent convulsive motions, accompanied with loud and dismal cries. This gave great offence to many, and occasioned disputes. Mr. Charles Wesley mentions this circumstance in his Journal on the 10th of January. "At the Society," says he, "we had some discourse about agitations ; no sign of grace, in my humble opinion." Certainly, not an infallible sign. But conviction for sin, and the process of conversion by the grace of God, may greatly agitate a weak frame.

February 21st, Mr. C. Wesley and his brother thought it prudent to wait on Dr. Potter, then Archbishop of Canterbury, to prevent any ill impression which the various false reports of their proceedings might produce on his mind. "He showed us," says Mr. C. Wesley, "great

affection: Spoke mildly of Mr. Whitefield; cautioned us to give no more umbrage than was necessary for our defence; to forbear exceptionable phrases; to keep to the doctrines of the Church.—We told him, we expected persecution would abide by the Church till her Articles and Homilies were repealed.—He assured us, he knew of no design, in the Governors of the Church, to innovate; and neither should there be any innovation while he lived. He avowed justification by faith alone; and signified his gladness to see us, as often as we pleased.” The Archbishop also warned them, as Mr. John Wesley informed me, to preach and enforce only the essentials of religion. “Other things,” said he, “time and the providence of God only can cure.” Mr. Wesley never forgot this.

“From him,” continues Mr. Wesley, “we went to the Bishop of London; who denied that he had condemned us, or even heard much concerning us. He said Mr. Whitefield’s Journal was tainted with enthusiasm, though he himself was a pious well-meaning youth. He warned us against Antinomianism, and dismissed us kindly.

“March 28th.—We strove to dissuade my brother from going to Bristol, to which he was pressingly invited, from an unaccountable fear that it would prove fatal to him. He offered himself willingly to whatever the Lord should appoint. The next day he set out, recommended by us to the grace of God. He left a blessing behind him. I desired to die with him.”

THE LIFE
OF
THE REV. JOHN WESLEY.

BOOK THE FOURTH.

CHAPTER I.

THE CAUSES WHICH LED TO THE INTRODUCTION OF ITINERANCY AND
FIELD-PREACHING.—THE STATE OF THE NATION AT THAT TIME,
WITH RESPECT TO RELIGION.

WE are now come to the period when those devoted servants of God were called to follow Him, in a new and untried way, the way of Itinerancy. To give the reader a view of that which led to the adoption of this strange way of being more entirely conformed to the Son of God, it will be needful to state some particulars. It has been well observed by Mr. Watson, an able apologist of Mr. Wesley, and of Methodism, "That it would be difficult to fix upon a more interesting spectacle than that which is presented in the progress of the mind of Mr. Wesley, through all its deep and serious agitations, doubts, difficulties, hopes, and fears, from his earliest religious awakenings, to the moment when he found that steadfast peace which never afterwards forsook him, but gave serenity to his countenance, and cheerfulness to his heart, to the last moment of a prolonged life. These great considerations must force themselves upon all but the lightest minds, when the history of a heart so impressed and influenced is candidly and honestly laid open. Many persons have been the subjects of these inward conflicts, but they have been seldom brought forth from the recesses of the hearts which they have so variously agitated. It is, however, an important truth, allowed by that people who call that eminent servant of God, their Father in the Gospel, that all such accounts are to be carefully subordinated to the Holy Scriptures; but they often prove instructive and invaluable comments upon them."

Mr. Wesley has made this full disclosure, and it is the true key, not to his theological system only, but also to his public conduct. The range of his inquiry in his search after truth, and after that happiness which he knew, from the Holy Scriptures, was only to be found in God, is truly astonishing. His appointment to be a Fellow of Lincoln College, which, according to its foundation, was instituted "to educate and support ministers who should pull down all heresies, and establish the Catholic faith," seems strikingly appropriate to such a character. In this great and comprehensive inquiry, one great principle fixed itself in his mind,—"*Without holiness NO MAN shall see the Lord.*" The love of God, by the power of the Holy Ghost, through the Divine atonement,

is the true and only principle of this holiness ; and with this love, the love of the world, (which is as natural to fallen man as breathing,) is totally incompatible. We have seen his efforts to conquer, and even root out this love, while surrounded by those things which naturally feed it ; and we have seen, that even those great efforts were incompetent to the task. The wilds of America offered a refuge from this hitherto unconquerable evil ; and he hoped, in the sincerity of his heart, that such an abandonment would prove its destruction. But he found the truth of the old heathen's remark, "*Cælum non animam mutant, qui trans mare currunt.*"* And like the Fathers, who retired into the desert, he was forced to lament, "Alas ! I have left all the world, but I find I have brought my old heart with me."

But a mind so sincere could not be forsaken. The Lord led him, while making this sacrifice, into the company of some who had found the true way of overcoming this evil disease,—not by forcing it out of the soul, and thus vainly attempting to form a vacuum in the spirit of man, but by "*bringing in the love of God, as having first loved us,*"—the spirit of health, peace, and victory, purchased for us by the Divine atonement of the Son of God, and to be now received in "*that new and living way,*" the "*way of faith.*" Decision of character must be allowed him, even by superficial observers. Even while groaning under the spirit of bondage, he could say with the Apostle, "*I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound ; every where and in every thing I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, to abound and to suffer need.*" How much more, when "*delivered out of the horrible pit,*" and with "*his feet set upon the rock, and his goings established,*" he could say,

"I nothing want beneath, above,
Happy, happy in thy love"

It could not be that such a faith, "*the faith of God's elect, the faith that overcometh the world, and that worketh by love,*" could look upon the perishing children of men, but "*with the bowels of Jesus Christ, the author of that faith.*" The word of the Lord was as a fire within him, and "*the love of Christ, constrained him, while he*" also "*thus judged, That if One died for all, then were all dead, and that He died for all, that all who live should not live unto themselves, but to Him who died for them and rose again.*"

Mr. Southey has indulged what might be called a sneer at the supposition, that eminent men, in the various religious communities, were raised up by a special providence. But even when, in any given case, the fruits and effects have not warranted the supposition,—still what a small mistake is this, when compared with that cold, and, in many cases, that infidel philosophy, that would exclude the Governor of the world from the care of his creatures : or represent the Divine Redeemer, *upon whose shoulders is that government*, as set down indeed on the eternal throne, after "*having trod the wine-press of the wrath of God*" in our behalf,—yet, like the God of Epicurus, the idol of man's slothful imagination, no longer concerned for the souls of men, "*which he had purchased with his own blood !*"—Or that would, like Warburton, represent the Divine Spirit, as having given us a book containing perfectly "*the truth as it is in Jesus ;*" yet leaving the application of that truth to the fallen spirit of man ;—to "*that carnal mind which is enmity against God, which*

* They change their climate, not their mind, who pass over the sea.

is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Such readers of the lives of such men of God, may indeed judge that truth which shall judge them; but others will joyfully adore the wisdom and love of Him who has never "*left himself without witness*;" who still "*draws us with the cords of love, and with the bands of a man*;" who did not suffer such a burning and a shining light to be hid in the wilds of Georgia; who said to his servants, thus prepared, "*Behold I have set before you an open door, and no man shall shut it.*" This word has stood the test of more than fourscore years, and its fruits testify its origin. This door the Lord had given him eyes to see, and also a heart to encounter all the bars and fences which enclosed and surrounded it. The eyes and heart with which he contemplated the work thus set before him, with its attendant dangers, will be best seen and appreciated, by giving the account in his own words. In his "*Appeal to men of Reason and Religion*," while contending for the truth against almost the whole nation, he thus speaks:

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

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

"This love we believe to be the medicine of life, the neverfailing remedy for all the evils of a disordered world, for all the miseries and vices of men. Wherever this is, there are virtue and happiness, going hand in hand. There is humbleness of mind, gentleness, longsuffering, the whole image of God, and at the same time, a peace that passeth all understanding, and joy unspeakable and full of glory.

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

"This religion we long to see established in the world, a religion of '*love, and joy, and peace*,' having its seat in the heart, in the inmost soul, but ever showing itself, by its fruits, continually springing forth, not only in all innocence, (for '*love worketh no ill to his neighbour*,') but likewise in every kind of beneficence, spreading virtue and happiness all around it.

"This religion we have been following after for many years, as many know, if they would testify: But all this time, seeking wisdom, we found it not; we were spending our strength in vain. And being now under full

conviction of this, we declare it to all mankind : For we desire not that others should wander out of the way, as we have done before them ; but rather that they may profit by our loss, that they go (though we did not, having no man to guide us,) the straight way to the religion of love, even *by faith*.

“ Now faith (supposing the Scripture to be of God,) is *πραγματων ελεγχος* & *βλεπομενων*, the *demonstrative evidence of things unseen*, the supernatural evidence of things invisible, not perceivable by eyes of flesh, or by any of our natural senses or faculties. Faith is that Divine evidence, whereby the spiritual man discerneth God, and the things of God. It is with regard to the spiritual world, what sense is with regard to the natural. It is the spiritual sensation of every soul that is ‘*born of God*.’

“ Perhaps you have not considered it in this view ; I will then explain it a little farther.

“ Faith, according to the Scriptural account, is the eye of the new-born soul. Hereby every true believer in God, ‘*seeth Him who is invisible*.’ Hereby, (in a more particular manner, since life and immortality have been brought to light by the Gospel,) he ‘*seeth the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ* ;’ and, ‘*beholdeth what manner of love it is, which the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we (who are born of the Spirit,) should be called the sons of God*.’

“ It is the ear of the soul, whereby a sinner ‘*hears the voice of the Son of God and lives* ;’ even that voice which alone wakes the dead, ‘*Son, thy sins are forgiven thee*.’

“ It is, (if I may be allowed the expression,) the palate of the soul : For hereby the believer ‘*tastes the good word of God*,’ and ‘*the powers of the world to come* ;’ and hereby he both tastes and sees that God is gracious, yea and merciful to him a sinner.

“ It is the feeling of the soul, whereby a believer perceives, through ‘*the power of the Highest overshadowing him*,’ both the existence, and the presence of Him, in whom ‘*he lives, and moves, and has his being* ;’ and indeed, the whole invisible world, the entire system of things eternal. And hereby in particular he feels ‘*the love of God shed abroad in his heart*.’

“ ‘*By this faith we are saved*’ from all uneasiness of mind, from the anguish of a wounded spirit, from discontent, from fear, and sorrow of heart, and from that inexpressible listlessness, and weariness, both of the world and of ourselves, under which we had so helplessly laboured for many years ; especially when we were out of the hurry of the world, and sunk into calm reflection. In this we find that love of God, and of all mankind, which we had elsewhere sought in vain. This, we know and feel, and therefore cannot but declare, saves every one that partakes of it, both from sin and misery, from every unhappy and every unholy temper.

Soft peace she brings wherever she arrives,
She builds our quiet as she forms our lives ;
Lays the rough paths of peevish nature even,
And opens in each breast a little heaven.

If you ask, ‘*Why then have not all men this faith ? All at least who conceive it to be so happy a thing ? Why do they not believe immediately ?*

“ We answer, (on the Scripture hypothesis) ‘ *It is the gift of God.*’ No man is able to work it in himself. It is a work of Omnipotence. It requires no less power thus to quicken a dead soul, than to raise a body that lies in the grave. It is a new creation, and none can create a soul anew but He who at first created the heavens and the earth.

“ May not your own experience teach you this ? Can you give yourself this faith ? Is it now in your power to see, or hear, or taste, or feel God ? Have you already, or can you raise in yourself any perception of God, or of an invisible world ? I suppose you do not deny that there is an invisible world : you will not charge it in poor old *Hesiod*, to Christian prejudice of education, when he says, in those well-known words,

Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth
Unseen, whether we wake, or if we sleep.

Now is there any power in your soul, whereby you discern either these, or Him that created them ? Or can all your wisdom and strength open an intercourse between yourself and the world of spirits ? Is it in your power to burst the veil that is on your heart, and let in the light of eternity ? You know it is not. You not only do not, but cannot (by your own strength,) thus believe. The more you labour so to do, the more you will be convinced ‘ *it is the gift of God.*’

“ It is the gift of God, which he bestows not on those who are worthy of his favour, not on such who are previously holy, and so fit to be crowned with all the blessings of his goodness : But on the ungodly and unholy ; on those who till that hour were fit only for everlasting destruction ; those in whom was *no good thing*, and whose only plea was ‘ *God be merciful to me a sinner.*’ No merit, no goodness in man precedes the forgiving love of God. His pardoning mercy supposes nothing in us, but a sense of mere sin and misery ; and to all who see, and feel, and own their wants, and their utter inability to remove them, God freely gives Faith, for the sake of *Him in whom he is always well pleased.*

“ We grant nothing is more unreasonable, than to imagine that such mighty effects as these can be wrought by that poor, empty, insignificant thing, which the world calls FAITH, and you among them. But supposing there be such a faith on the earth, as that which the Apostle speaks of, such an intercourse between God and the soul, what is too hard for such a faith ? You yourselves may conceive, that ‘ *all things are possible to him that thus believeth :*’ To him that thus walks with God, that is now a citizen of heaven, an inhabitant of eternity. If therefore you will contend with us, you must change the ground of your attack. You must flatly deny, there is any faith upon earth ; but perhaps this you might think too large a step. You cannot do this without a secret condemnation in your own breast. O that you would at length cry to God for that heavenly gift ! whereby alone this truly reasonable religion, this beneficent love of God and man can be planted in your heart.”

It could not be expected, that a minister of Christ thus impressed, and who had known what it was to pass from “ *the death of sin to a life of righteousness,*” would ultimately bury himself in the recesses of a College, or be satisfied with the mere rounds of parochial duty. Beholding *the world lying in the wicked one*, and knowing that he possessed, by the free grace and mercy of God, a medicine for its every wound, he could not refrain from inviting all men to taste its healing power. “ *Comprehending now, with all saints, the height and depth, the length and*

breadth, of the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge," he would be constrained to proclaim that mercy which he felt to the perishing sons of men. Indeed, no man who knows what true religion is, but must see, if there be any truth in the doctrine of providential interposition, that such a man was designed by the Head of the Church to fill a larger sphere than the parish of Epworth, or any similar situation.

To judge of Mr. Wesley's conduct, we must consider, not the state of the Church of England, or of the nation, in the present day, in which the meliorating effects of Methodism are so manifest; and of which the zealous activity of the Evangelical Clergy, (who, with all their attention to order, cannot wholly escape the opprobrium which Mr. Wesley submitted to bear,) is a full proof; but rather the awful state of the Church and the nation, when his public life commenced, of which he has himself given a fearful description in his "*Appeals to Men of Reason and Religion.*" But Mr. Southey is here an unexceptionable witness, and his statement renders it unnecessary to go to other authorities. He does not, indeed, feel like the man of God; but it is plain the humiliating picture has affected even him, while he traces, in his ninth chapter, the decay of piety in the church, especially from the time of the Restoration. He quotes the excellent Archbishop Leighton, who described the church as a fair carcass without a spirit: In doctrine, in worship, and in the main part of its government, he thought it the best constituted of any national church in the world, but one of the most corrupt in its administration. Bishop Burnet confirms this testimony, and declares that "the Clergy in his time had less authority, and were under more contempt, than those of any church in Europe; for they were much more remiss in their labours, and the least severe in their lives." We have this awful portrait heightened by a reference also to the importation of "a fashion for the speculative impiety of France,"—of "a shallow philosophy of home growth,"—of "the schools of dissent becoming schools of unbelief,"—of the neglect of *religious* education among the higher classes,—of the greater part of the nation being "totally uneducated,"—of their being "Christians but in name, and, for the most part, in a state of heathen, or worse than heathen, ignorance." This was the state in which the two Wesleys and their coadjutors found the church and the nation. The great evil from which all the rest flowed, was the almost total extinction of the doctrines of the Reformation in the pulpit, and in the opinions both of the Clergy and Laity; so that when they were preached by those men of God, not only on the authority of the Scriptures, but on that of the formularies of the church itself, they were regarded as absurd and dangerous novelties. The clergy were generally grossly ignorant of theology, though there were some splendid exceptions. Many of the clergy, who had made Divinity their study, were notoriously inclined to heterodoxy, respecting the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith. There was something of Ultra-Calvinism, and much of frigid unevangelical Arminianism. Natural religion, so called, was the great subject of study, (when theology was studied at all,) and it was even made the test and standard of revealed truth. The doctrine of the *opus operatum* of the Papists as to sacraments, (lately revived, and too much sanctioned in the church,) was the faith of the divines of the older school; and a refined system of ethics, unconnected with Christian motives, and disjointed from the vital principles

of religion in the heart, the favourite theory of the modern. The great body of the clergy neither knew nor cared about systems of any kind; and in a vast number of instances, they were immoral,—often grossly so. The populace in the large towns were ignorant and profligate; the inhabitants of villages added, to ignorance and profligacy, brutish and barbarous manners. A more striking instance of the rapid decay of religious light and influence in a country, scarcely occurs than in ours, from the Restoration till the rise of Methodism. It affected not only the church, but the dissenting sects in no ordinary degree. The Presbyterians had commenced their downward course through Arianism to Socinianism; and those who still held the doctrines of Calvin, had, in too many instances, fallen into the fatal errors of Antinomianism. There were exceptions, but this was the general state of religion and morals in the country when the Messrs. Wesley, Whitefield, and a few kindred spirits, went forth to sacrifice ease, reputation, and even life itself, if necessary, to produce a reformation.

We have seen how richly furnished the minds of those men were for the work which lay before them. They had the usual advantages of learning: but this was not their chief qualification. They had proved religion till it had become their happiness. They were chosen from the world, and possessed of a righteousness truly divine. They saw from the holy Scriptures, that this happiness was purchased for all men, and promised to all who should *believe* for it. *But how should they believe for that of which they did not hear?* A necessity was thus laid upon them to *preach it to all men*: and they awfully felt, that their own perseverance depended on their declaring it to others. Every parish minister, *thus called*, must act in his parish as the Messrs. Wesley now began to act in every part of the British empire, or he cannot keep the life of God. They still cleaved to the Church which they truly loved; but being shut out generally from her pulpits, they had no alternative but to become, what has been called, irregular. Their hearts bowed to the opprobrium. Here then began

Their race of glory and their race of shame.

And here we see the man, who, while he was a pupil of the pious Law, could not see how any man could take charge of one hundred souls, had now a heart to declare, that “he looked upon all the world as his parish!” He knew and felt, that He who had quickened his dead soul, *could of the stones raise up children to himself*. They went forth, therefore, in his name, and God confirmed the word with signs following.

Upon the necessity of some great exertion to reclaim the nation, and upon the fruits and effects of Mr. Wesley’s labours, Mr. Southey is again an undeniable witness. The most urgent representations, the most convincing arguments, he observes, would have been disregarded in that age. The great struggle of infidelity had not yet commenced; and it was not then foreseen that the very foundations of civil society would be shaken, because governments had neglected their most awful and important duty. But the present consequences of this neglect were obvious and glaring, in the rudeness of the peasantry, the brutality of the town populace, and the general deadness to religion all over the land. Trusting in the Lord, these men of God, who had first cared for their own souls, went forth, and every trial tended to strengthen and confirm them,—that they were, indeed, doing the will of God, and that the work

was truly His. Sinners were converted, drunkards were reclaimed, the penitent who came in despair was sent away in hope, and often with "*peace and joy in believing.*" These effects Mr. Southey farther observes, were public and undeniable; and looking forward in exulting faith, Mr. Wesley doubted not that a general reformation would be accomplished, and also the fulfilment of those prophecies which assure us that '*the kingdom of God our Father shall come, and his will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*' How the Lord would bring this about, he knew not. He did not dare to speculate or contrive: it would have been contrary to the faith he had received. His only care was, never to go beyond the plain duty of the day, or depart in any wise from the word of Him whom he served. All minor considerations were swallowed up in this—God, he believed, had called him to the work, and He would provide for its accomplishment.

CHAPTER II.

INTRODUCTION OF FIELD-PREACHING—DIFFERENCE WITH THE MORAVIANS, AND SEPARATION FROM THEM—FORMATION OF A DISTINCT SOCIETY—THE RULES.

I NOW proceed to detail the particulars of the call (which Mr. Wesley received through Mr. Whitefield) to Bristol, which was followed by such remarkable consequences. It appears that Mr. Wesley himself complied with this invitation with great reluctance; and not till he had used every means he could, to know what was the will of the Lord concerning him. His brother Charles, we have seen, was extremely averse to his going there, which seems to have been one cause of his hesitation. Another he himself has often mentioned. He thought much at this time, of death: and as his constitution seemed to him not likely to support itself long under the great and continual labours he was engaged in, he judged it probable that his course was nearly finished. At this time, those fine lines of his friend Mr. Gambold were almost continually in his mind:

Ere long when Sov'reign wisdom wills,
My soul an unknown path shall tread,
And strangely leave, who strangely fills
This frame, and waft me to the dead.
O what is death? 'Tis life's last shore,
Where vanities are vain no more:
Where all pursuits their goal obtain,
And life is all retouched again:
Where, in their bright results, shall rise
Thoughts, virtues, friendships, griefs, and joys.

He did not, therefore, dare to waste a moment, or undertake any employment which he had reason to believe was not agreeable to the will of God. He was, however, at last prevailed on to go, and for this he had cause to praise the Wise Disposer of all things.

Mr. Whitefield had, a little before, begun to preach in the fields and highways near Bristol; the religious societies, raised up on Dr. Horneck's plan, which first received him, not being able to provide room for a tenth part of the people that crowded to hear him; he, therefore, pressed Mr. Wesley to come and help him. When he arrived, he also began to expound in one of the society-rooms. But being encouraged

by considering the example of our Lord, who preached upon a mountain, and having no place that could contain the multitudes that flocked together, "I submitted," says he, "to be yet more vile, and proclaimed in the highways the glad tidings of salvation, speaking from a little eminence in a ground adjoining to the city, to about three thousand people. The Scripture on which I spoke was this: [Is it possible any one should be ignorant that it is fulfilled in every true minister of Christ?] *'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor. He hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted; to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind; to set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.'*"

It appears that his adopting this way of preaching the Gospel to the poor was not of choice. "When," says he, "I was told I must preach no more in this, and this, and another church, so much the more those who could not hear me there, flocked together when I was at any of the societies; where I spoke more or less, though with much inconvenience, to as many as the room I was in would contain. But after a time, finding those rooms could not contain a tenth part of the people that were earnest to hear, I determined to do the same thing in England, which I had often done in a warmer climate; namely, when the house would not contain the congregation, to preach in the open air. This I accordingly did, first in Bristol, where the society rooms were exceeding small; and at Kingswood, where we had no room at all; afterwards in or near London.

"And I cannot say, I have ever seen a more awful sight, than when on Rose-Green, or on the top of Hanham-Mount, some thousands of people were joined together in solemn waiting upon God, while

They stood, and under open air adored
The God who made both air, earth, heaven, and sky.

And whether they were listening to his word, with attention still as night; or were lifting up their voice in praise, as the sound of many waters: Many a time have I been constrained to say in my heart, *'How dreadful is this place! This also is no other than the house of God! This is the gate of heaven!'*

"Be pleased to observe, 1. That I was forbidden, as by a general consent, to preach in any church, (though not by any judicial sentence,) *for preaching such doctrine.* This was the open avowed cause; there was at that time no other, either real or pretended, except that the people crowded so. 2. That I had no desire or design to preach in the open air, till after this prohibition. 3. That when I did, as it was no matter of choice, so neither of premeditation. There was no scheme at all previously formed, which was to be supported thereby; nor had I any other end in view than this, to save as many souls as I could. 4. *Field-preaching* was, therefore, a sudden *expedient*, a thing submitted to, rather than chosen; and, therefore, submitted to because I thought preaching even *thus* better than *not* preaching at all: FIRST, in regard to my own soul, because *'a dispensation of the Gospel being committed to me,'* I did not dare *'not to preach the gospel.'* SECONDLY, in regard to the souls of others, whom I every where saw, *'seeking death in the error of their life.'*"

He still continued to expound in the society-rooms; but it was in the

open air that the Lord chiefly wrought by his ministry. Many thousands now attended the word. In the suburbs of Bristol, at Bath, in Kingswood, on Hanham-Mount and Rose-Green, many who had set all laws, human and divine, at defiance, and were utterly without God in the world, now fell before the Majesty of heaven, and joyfully acknowledged that "*a prophet was sent among them.*" Cries and tears on every hand frequently drowned his voice, while many exclaimed, in the bitterness of their soul, "*What shall I do to be saved?*" Not a few of these were soon, (and frequently while he was declaring the willingness of Christ to receive them,) "*filled with peace and joy in believing,*" and evidenced that the work was really of God, by holy, happy, and unblamable walking before him. Blasphemies were now turned to praise; and the voice of joy and gladness was found, where wickedness and misery reigned before.

A few here also, in the first instance, and then a greater number, agreed to meet together to edify and strengthen each other, according to the example of the Society in London. Some of these were desirous of building a room large enough to contain not only the Society, but such also as might desire to be present with them when the Scripture was expounded. And on Saturday, the 12th of May, 1739, the first stone was laid with the voice of praise and thanksgiving.

As this was the first preaching-house that was erected, Mr. Wesley has been particular in the relation of some circumstances concerning it. "I had not at first," says he, "the least apprehension or design of being personally engaged, either in the expense of this work, or in the direction of it; having appointed eleven feoffees, on whom, I supposed, these burdens would fall of course. But I quickly found my mistake: First, with regard to the expense; for the whole undertaking must have stood still, had not I immediately taken upon myself the payment of all the workmen; so that before I knew where I was, I had contracted a debt of more than a hundred and fifty pounds; and this I was to discharge how I could, the subscriptions of both Societies not amounting to one quarter of the sum. And, as to the direction of the work, I presently received letters from my friends in London, Mr. Whitefield in particular, backed with a message by one just come from thence, that neither he nor they would have any thing to do with the building, neither contribute any thing towards it, unless I would instantly discharge all feoffees, and do every thing in my own name. Many reasons they gave for this; but one was enough, viz. 'That such feoffees would always have it in their power to control me, and if I preached not as they liked, to turn me out of the room I had built.' I accordingly yielded to their advice, and calling all the feoffees together, cancelled (no man opposing) the instruments made before, and took the whole management into my own hands. Money, it is true, I had not, nor any human prospect or probability of procuring it. But I knew '*the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof,*' and in his name set out, nothing doubting."

His ordinary employment, in public, was now as follows: Every morning he read prayers and preached at Newgate. Every evening he expounded a portion of Scripture, at one or more of the Society-rooms. On Monday, in the afternoon, he preached abroad near Bristol; on Tuesday at Bath and Two Mile-Hill alternately. On Wednesday at Baptist Mills. Every other Thursday near Pensford. Every other

Friday in another part of Kingswood. On Saturday in the afternoon and Sunday morning in the Bowling-green, which lies near the middle of the city. On Sunday at eleven near Hanham-Mount. At two at Clifton, and at five on Rose-Green. "And hitherto," says he, "*as my day is, so my strength hath been.*"

In the city, in the suburbs, and in Newgate, sinners were daily humbled under the mighty hand of God, and made, by his grace, new creatures in Christ Jesus. Beside the general blessing which accompanied his labours, the Lord gave special "*times of refreshing from his presence.*" "Seeing," observes Mr. Wesley, "many of the rich at Clifton church, my heart was much pained for them, and I was earnestly desirous that they also might '*enter into the kingdom of heaven.*' But full as I was I knew not where to begin, in warning them to flee from the wrath to come, till my Testament opened on these words, '*I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*' In applying which, my soul was so enlarged, that methought I could have cried out, (in another sense than poor vain Archimedes,) 'Give me where to stand, and I will shake the earth.' God's sending forth lightning with the rain, did not hinder about fifteen hundred from staying at Rose-Green. Our Scripture was, '*It is the glorious God that maketh the thunder. The voice of the Lord is mighty in operation; the voice of the Lord is a glorious voice.*' In the evening, I spoke to three whose souls were all storm and tempest, and immediately there was a great calm."

Mr. Wesley at first knew not how he ought to judge of these extraordinary things; but when he found, that most of the persons so affected, held fast their confidence, and walked worthy of their Christian calling, "*adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things,*" he could not deny that there was a real genuine work of grace upon their minds. He did not, however, consider agitations, visions, or dreams, as any certain evidence of a true conversion to God; but as adventitious or accidental circumstances, which, from various causes, might, or might not, attend it; and this view of them he thought perfectly consistent with Scripture. The gentle manner in which under these views, he spake of them, was generally misunderstood, raised up several adversaries, and made the good that was really done, be evil spoken of. He gave a particular account, from time to time, of the things that happened, to such ministers as he thought sincerely desired the increase of God's kingdom, and had some experience of it. Mr. Ralph Erskine, an eminent minister in Scotland, was very favourable in his judgment of these adventitious circumstances: and says, "I desire to bless my Lord, for the great and good news your letter bears, about the Lord's turning many souls '*from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.*' and that such '*a great and effectual door is opened*' among you as the '*many adversaries*' cannot shut. As to the outward manner you speak of, wherein most of them were affected who were cut to the heart by the sword of the Spirit, no wonder this was at first surprising to you, since they are, indeed, so very rare, that have been thus pricked and wounded. Yet some of the instances you give seem to be exemplified in the outward manner, wherein Paul and the jailer were at first affected; as also Peter's hearers, Acts ii. However, the merciful issue of the conflicts in the conversion of the persons thus affected, is the main thing.

“All the outward appearances of people’s being affected *among us*, may be reduced to these two sorts : one is, hearing with a close, silent attention, with gravity and greediness, discovered by fixed looks, weeping eyes, and sorrowful or joyful countenances : Another sort is, when they lift up their voice aloud, some more depressedly, and others more highly ; and at times the whole multitude in a flood of tears, all as it were crying out at once, till their voice be ready to drown the minister’s, that he can scarce be heard for the weeping noise that surrounds him. —The influence on some of these, like a land-flood, dries up ; we hear of no change wrought. But on others it appears in the fruits of righteousness, and the tract of a holy conversation.” It appears from this letter, that Mr. Wesley was not the only Gospel minister, whose discourses were, at certain times, attended with uncommon effects on the minds of the hearers.

Mr. Samuel Wesley, however, judged much more unfavourably of the outward circumstances attending his brother’s preaching ; and even denied the assurance of the pardon of sin, which the people professed to experience. A correspondence took place on these subjects, between him and Mr. John Wesley, a part of which has already been published by Dr. Priestley, in his collection of *Original Letters by the Rev. John Wesley, &c.* But it is necessary to give a more complete view of it.

This correspondence commenced in the latter end of the year 1738, but I have referred the account of it to this place, that I might give the whole of it together. The first letter on this controversy, which has been preserved, was written by Mr. John Wesley, and dated the 30th of October. He observes to his brother Samuel, “That you will always receive kindly, what is so intended, I doubt not. With regard to my own character, and my doctrine likewise, I shall answer you very plainly. By a Christian, I mean one who so believes in Christ, as that *‘sin hath no more dominion over him ;’* and in this obvious sense of the word, I was not a Christian till May the 24th, last past. For till then sin had the dominion over me, although I fought with it continually ; but surely from that time to this, it hath not ; such is the free grace of God in Christ. What sins they were, which till then reigned over me, and from which by the grace of God, I am now free, I am ready to declare on the house-top, if it may be for the glory of God.

“If you ask by what means I am made free, (though not perfect, neither infallibly sure of my *perseverance*,) I answer, by faith in Christ ; by such a sort or degree of faith, as I had not till that day. Some measure of this faith, which bringeth salvation, or victory over sin, and which implies peace and trust in God through Christ, I do now enjoy by his free mercy ; though in very deed, it is in me but as a grain of mustard-seed : for the πληροφορία της πίστεως,* [the full assurance of that faith,] *the seal of the Spirit, the love of God shed abroad in my heart, and producing joy in the Holy Ghost ;* joy which no man taketh away ; joy unspeakable and full of glory ; *this* witness of the Spirit I have not, but I patiently wait for it, I know many who have already received it ; more than one or two, in the very hour we were praying for it. And having seen and spoken with a cloud of witnesses abroad, as well as in my own country, I cannot doubt but that believers who wait and pray for it, will

* We may observe here, that Mr. Wesley distinguishes, throughout this letter, (as he did ever after,) faith, and the full assurance of faith,—such an assurance as removes all doubt and fear, respecting our justification.

find these Scriptures fulfilled in themselves. My hope is that they will be fulfilled in me; I build on Christ the Rock of ages: on his sure mercies described in his word; and on his promises, all which I know are yea, and amen. Those who have not yet received joy in the Holy Ghost, the love of God, and the *plerophory* of faith (any, or all of which, I take to be the witness of the Spirit with our spirit, that we are the sons of God,) I believe to be Christians in that imperfect sense wherein I call myself such: and I exhort them to pray, that God would give them also, *'To rejoice in hope of the glory of God,'* and to feel his *'love shed abroad in their hearts, by the Holy Ghost which is given unto them.'*

"On men I build not, neither on Matilda Chipman's word, whom I have not talked with five minutes in my life; nor on any thing peculiar in the weak, well-meant relation of William Hervey, who yet is a serious, humble, active Christian. But have you built nothing on these? Yes: I find them more or less, in almost every letter you have written on the subject. Yet were all that has been said on visions, dreams, and balls of fire, to be fairly proposed in syllogisms, I believe it would not prove a jot more on one, than on the other side of the question.

"O brother, would to God you would leave disputing concerning the things which you know not,—if indeed you know them not,—and beg of God to fill up what is wanting in you. Why should not you also seek till you receive, *'that peace of God which passeth understanding?'* Who shall hinder you, notwithstanding the manifold temptations, *'from rejoicing with joy unspeakable, by reason of glory!'* Amen! Lord Jesus! May you and all who are near of kin to you, if you have it not already, feel his love shed abroad in your hearts, by his Spirit which dwelleth in you, and be *sealed with the Holy Spirit of Promise, which is the earnest of your inheritance.*"

November 15.—Mr. Samuel Wesley answered, "I have many remarks to make on your letter, but do not care to fight in the dark, or run my head against a stone wall. You need fear no controversy with me, unless you hold it worth while to remove these three doubts.—1. Whether you will own, or disown in terms, the necessity of a sensible information from God of pardon? If you disown it, the matter is over as to *you*: if you own it, then,—2. Whether you will not think me distracted, to oppose you with the most infallible of all proofs, inward feeling in yourself, and positive evidence in your friends, while I myself produce neither.—3. Whether you will release me from the horns of your dilemma, that I must either talk without knowledge like a fool, or against it like a knave? I conceive neither part strikes—for a man may reasonably argue against what he never felt, and may honestly deny what he has felt, to be necessary to others.

"You build nothing on tales, but I do. I see what is manifestly built upon them; if you disclaim it, and warn poor shallow pates of their folly and danger, so much the better.* They are counted signs or tokens, means or conveyances, proofs or evidences, of the sensible information, &c, calculated to turn fools into madmen, and put them, without a jest, into the condition of Oliver's porter. When I hear visions, &c, reproved, discouraged, and ceased among the new brother-

* See here the family faith, which was in truth the faith of the best part of the nation, maintained by the elder brother; the faith of the Gospel maintained by the younger. Paul against Gamaliel!

hood, I shall then say no more of them; but till then, I will use my utmost strength which God shall give me, to expose these bad branches of a bad root.

“Such doctrine as encourages, and abets, spiritual fire-balls, apparitions of the Father, &c, &c, is delusive and dangerous: But the sensible information, &c, is such: *Ergo*.—I mention not this to enter into any dispute with you, for you seem to disapprove, though not expressly disclaim them; but to convince you I am not out of my way, though encountering of wind-mills.”

Mr. Samuel Wesley was not always a fair disputant. On this question he changes the term *witness*, and substitutes for it, *sensible information*; by which he seems to mean, something visible to the sight or existing in the fancy, and then indeed visions, &c, were connected with the question; and he reasons on this supposition. But this was a mere sophism, of which Mr. J. Wesley would probably have taken notice, had he been writing to a stranger, or had he foreseen that any one would print the letters after his death. November 30.—He replied to his brother Samuel, and tells him, “I believe every Christian, who has not yet received it, ought to pray for ‘*the witness of God’s Spirit with his spirit, that he is a child of God!*’ In being a child of God, the pardon of his sins is included: therefore I believe the Spirit of God will witness this also. That this witness is from God, the very terms imply; and this witness I believe is necessary for my salvation. How far invincible ignorance may excuse others, I know not.

“But this, you say, is delusive and dangerous, ‘Because it encourages and abets idle visions and dreams.’ It ‘encourages’—True; accidentally, but not essentially. And that it does this accidentally, or that weak minds may pervert it to an ill use, is no reasonable objection against it: for so they may pervert every truth in the oracles of God; more especially that dangerous doctrine of Joel, cited by St. Peter: ‘*It shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.*’ Such visions indeed, as you mention, are given up; does it follow, that visions and dreams in general are bad branches of a bad root? God forbid. This would prove more than you desire.”

December 13.—Mr. Samuel Wesley again wrote to his brother. He now discussed the matter a little more soberly, and kept more closely to the point in debate. He says, “That you were not a Christian before May, in your sense, any one may allow: But have you ever since continued sinless?—‘Sin has not the dominion!’—Do you then never fall? Or, do you mean no more, than that you are free from presumptuous sins? If the former, I deny it; if the latter, who disputes? Your misapplication of the witness of the Spirit is so thoroughly cleared by Bishop Bull, that I shall not hold a candle to the sun. What portion of love, joy, &c, God may please to bestow on Christians, is in his hand, not ours.* Those texts you quote, no more prove them generally necessary, in what you call your imperfect state, than, ‘*Rejoice in the Lord always,*’ contradicts,—‘*Blessed are they that mourn.*’—I had much more to say, but it will keep, if ever it should be proper.”

In the beginning of the present year, 1739, Mr. J. Wesley replied to

* But the record that *He will thus bestow*, is in our hands, that we may BELIEVE.

his brother. A part of this letter only is preserved. In what remains, he tells him, "I think Bishop Bull's sermon on the witness of the Spirit, (*against the witness of the Spirit* it should rather be entitled,) is full of gross perversions of Scripture; and manifest contradictions both to Scripture and experience. I find more persons, day by day, who experience a clear evidence of their being in a state of salvation. But I never said, this continues equally clear in all, as long as they continue in a state of salvation. Some indeed have testified, and the whole tenour of their life made their testimony unexceptionable, that, from that hour they have felt no agonies at all, no anxious fears, no sense of dereliction. Others have.

"But I much fear, we begin our dispute at the wrong end. I fear you *dissent* from the fundamental articles of the Church of England. I know Bishop Bull does.—I doubt you do not hold '*justification by faith alone*.' If not, neither do you hold what our Articles teach concerning the extent and guilt of original sin: Neither do you feel yourself a lost sinner; and if we begin not here, we are building on the sand.* O may the God of love, if my sister or you are otherwise minded, reveal even this unto you."

MR. SAMUEL WESLEY'S REPLY.

"Tiverton, March 26, 1739.

"DEAR JACK,—I might as well have wrote immediately after your last, as now, for any new information that I expected from my mother; and I might as well let it alone at present, for any effect it will have, farther than showing you, I neither despise you on the one hand, nor am angry with you on the other. I am persuaded you will hardly see me face to face in this world, though somewhat nearer than Count Zinzendorf. Charles has at last told me in terms—He believes no more of dreams and visions than I do.† Had you said so, I believe I should hardly have spent any time upon them; though I find others credit them, whatever you may do.—You make two degrees or kinds of assurance: that neither of them are necessary to a state of salvation, I prove thus:—

"I. Because multitudes *are saved* without either.‡ These are of three sorts, 1. All infants baptized, who die before actual sin. 2. All persons of a melancholy and gloomy constitution; who, without a miracle, cannot be changed. 3. All penitents, who live a good life after their recovery, and yet never attain to their first state.

"II. The lowest assurance is an impression from God, who is infallible, that heaven shall be actually enjoyed by the person to whom it is made.§ How is this consistent with fears of miscarriage; with deep sorrow, and going on the way weeping? How can any doubt, after such certificate? If they can, then here is an assurance whereby the person who has it is not *sure*.||

"III. If this be essential to a state of salvation, it is utterly impossi-

* This is "the Analogy of Faith." None of these doctrines can stand separate from the others. Mr. Samuel Wesley, no doubt, held them all *doctrinally*; but, it is evident, he did not hold them in the Scriptural way: There was no *ελεγχος*, no *evidence* in his faith. Hebrews xi; 1. He had no *sense* of his death through *Adam*, nor of his life through *Christ*.

† He believed as much of them as his brother John did. Neither *placed any dependance* on them; but Charles was naturally much more timid than his brother.

‡ How did he *know* that? § No. The point is, am I *now* a child of God?

|| This is a common sophism. Mr. Hampson and Mr. Southey both use it.

ble any should fall from that state *finally*; since, how can any thing be more fixed, than what Truth and Power has said he will perform? Unless you will say of the matter here, as I observed of the person, that there may be assurance wherein the thing itself is not certain. We join in love.

“I am your affectionate friend and brother,
“S. WESLEY.”

April 4.—Mr. John Wesley replied from Bristol. “I rejoice greatly,” says he, “at the temper with which you now write, and trust there is not only mildness, but love in your heart. If so, you shall know of this doctrine, whether it be of God; though perhaps not by my ministry.

“To this hour you have pursued an *ignoratio elenchi* [a mistake of the question.] Your assurance and mine are as different as light from darkness. I mean an assurance that I am *now* in a state of salvation; you an assurance that I shall *persevere* therein. The very definition of the term cuts off your second and third observation. As to the first I would take notice; 1. No kind of assurance, that I know, either of faith or repentance, is essential to their salvation who die infants. 2. I believe, God is ready to give all true penitents, who fly to his grace in Christ, a fuller sense of pardon than they had before they fell. I know this to be true of several: Whether these are exempt cases, I know not. 3. Persons that were of a melancholy and gloomy constitution, even to some degree of madness, I have known in a moment, (let it be called a miracle, I quarrel not,) brought into a state of firm lasting peace and joy.

“My dear brother, the whole question turns chiefly, if not wholly, on matter of fact. You deny that God does now work these effects; at least, that he works them in such a manner. I affirm both, because I have heard those facts with my ears, and seen them with my eyes. I have seen, as far as it can be seen, very many persons changed in a moment, from the spirit of horror, fear, and despair, to the spirit of hope, joy, peace; and from sinful desires, 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, eye or ear witness. I know several persons in whom this great change from the power of Satan unto God, was wrought either in sleep, or during a strong representation to the eye of their minds, of Christ, either on the cross, or in glory. This is the fact. Let any judge of it as they please. But that such a change was then wrought, appears, not from their shedding tears only, or sighing, or singing psalms, but from the whole tenour of their life, till then many ways wicked; from that time holy, just, and good.

“I will show you him that was a lion till then, and is now a lamb; he that was a drunkard, but now exemplarily sober; the whoremonger that was, who now abhors the very lusts of the flesh. These are my living arguments, for what I assert, that God now, as aforetime, gives, *remission of sins, and the gift of the Holy Ghost.*”

April 16.—Mr. Samuel Wesley rejoined: “I find brevity has made me obscure. I argue against assurance in your, or any sense, as part of the gospel covenant; because many are saved *without it*,* you own you cannot deny exempt cases, which is giving up the dispute.† Your

* Where is the proof? † No; it only allowed that there were difficulties in some cases.

assurance, being a clear impression of God upon the soul, I say *must be perpetual*—must be *irreversible*.* Else it is not assurance from God, infallible and omnipotent. You say the cross is strongly represented to the eye of the mind. Do these words signify in plain English, *the fancy*? *Inward eyes, ears, and feelings*, are nothing to *other people*.† I am heartily sorry such alloy should be found among such piety.”

We now see this controversy reduced to two points; *assurance* itself, and the manner of receiving it. Mr. John Wesley still maintained his former positions, and, May 10th, told his brother, “The Gospel promises to you and me, and to our children, and to all that are afar off, even as many of those whom the Lord our God shall call, and who are not disobedient to the heavenly vision, ‘*The witness of God’s Spirit with their spirit, that they are the children of God* :’ that they are *now*, at this hour, all accepted in the Beloved : But it witnesses *not*, that they *always* shall be. It is an assurance of *present* salvation only ; therefore, not necessarily perpetual, neither irreversible.

“I am one of many witnesses of this matter of fact, that God does now make good this his promise daily, very frequently during a representation, (how made I know not, but not to the outward eye,) of Christ, either hanging on the cross, or standing on the right hand of God. This I know to be of God, *because* from that hour the person so affected is a new creature, both as to his inward tempers and outward life. ‘*Old things are passed away ; and all things become new.*’”

Mr. Wesley did not remember, that after this time he received any letter from his brother. But there is one in Dr. Priestley’s collection, signed Samuel Wesley, and addressed to his brother John ; in which he tells him, “You yourself doubted at first, and inquired and examined about the ecstasies ; the matter, therefore, is not so plain as motion to a man walking. But I have my own reason, as well as your own authority, against the exceeding clearness of divine interposition there. Your followers fall into agonies. I confess it. They are freed from them, after you have prayed over them. Granted. They say it is God’s doing. I own they say so.—Dear brother, where is your ocular demonstration? Where, indeed, the rational proof? Their living well afterwards may be a probable and sufficient argument, that they believe themselves ; but it goes no farther.” What other proof could be given? Or what other proof ought to be required, when the doctrine is Scriptural?

Upon a review of the whole of this controversy, we may safely pronounce, that the doctrine of assurance is in no respect invalidated, or rendered doubtful by any thing Mr. Samuel Wesley has said against it. But it is observable in the course of this dispute, that his mind was much softened towards his brother ; and the opposition he at first made against the doctrine, and manner of proceeding, became less violent. In the last letter he wrote, he says not a word against assurance, though he does against the *manner* in which it was said persons had received it.‡ We may hope, therefore, that he was convinced, and no longer opposed the doctrine itself, when properly explained and guarded. At the bottom of the last letter but one, he addressed his brother in these words, “Το λοιπον, ἀδελφω, προσευχέσθων περὶ ἡμῶν, κ. τ. λ. *Finally, brethren,*

* Perhaps so, in Calvin’s Theory ; but God is a *Judge* as well as a *Sovereign*.

† No, not to people that are not *born again* : but that is their fault.

‡ Mr. Wesley believed those persons, if the *fruits of righteousness* were manifest. The law of love, that *thinketh no evil*, required that he should believe them.

pray ye both for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you."* See 2 Thess. iii, 1. A strange address this, if he believed his two brothers were preaching false and dangerous doctrines! He seems to have thought more favourably of their doctrines and methods of proceeding, when he wrote these words, than he did when they first set out. After persevering fifty years, through all kinds of difficulty and obloquy, the two brothers extorted from the public the same favourable opinion.

Some years after this period, Mr. Wesley expressed his opinion more fully concerning those agitations, &c, which attended the conviction of sin under his sermons this summer at Bristol. He supposes, it is easy to account for them either on principles of reason, or Scripture. "First," says he, "on principles of reason. For how easy is it to suppose, that a strong, lively, and sudden apprehension of the heinousness of sin, the wrath of God, and the bitter pains of eternal death, should affect the body as well as the soul, during the present laws of vital union; should interrupt or disturb the ordinary circulations, and put nature out of its course! Yea, we may question, whether while this union subsists, it be possible for the mind to be affected in so violent a degree, without some or other of those bodily symptoms following?"

"It is likewise easy to account for these things on principles of Scripture. For when we take a view of them in this light, we are to add, to the consideration of natural causes, the agency of those spirits who still '*excel in strength*,' and as far as they have leave from God, will not fail to torment whom they cannot destroy; to *tear those that are coming to Christ*. It is also remarkable, that there is plain Scripture precedent of every symptom which has lately appeared. So that we cannot allow even the conviction attended with these to be *madness*, without giving up both reason and Scripture."[†]

After eight or nine days' absence, in which he came to London, Mr. Wesley returned to Bristol, and continued his labours with increasing success. He was now attacked by friends as well as enemies, for his irregularity. To a friend,[‡] who had expostulated with him on this subject, he wrote his thoughts in a letter, of which the following is an extract: "As to your advice that I should settle in College, I have no business there, having now no office, and no pupils. And whether the other branch of your proposal be expedient, viz. to accept of a cure of souls, it will be time enough to consider when one is offered to me. But in the mean time, you think, I ought to be still; because otherwise I should invade another's office.—You accordingly ask, How it is 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 the wicked, confirm the virtuous. Man forbids me to

* He uses the dual number. † Wesley's Works, in xxxii Vols. Vol. xiv, p. 323.

‡ The late Rev. James Hervey, who had been his pupil, and was the author of *Theron and Aspasio. Meditations*, &c. &c.

do this, in another's parish; that is, in effect, not 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 wo is me if I preach not the Gospel.'* But where shall I preach it, upon the principles you mention?—Not in any of the Christian parts, at least, of the inhabitable earth. For all these are, after a sort, divided into parishes.—Suffer me 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 according to the plain direction of his word, *'as I have opportunity, doing good to all men.'* And his providence clearly concurs with his word: which has disengaged me from all things else, that I 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 towards 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 the 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.'*” No man, however, lamented that awful way of breaking the ninth commandment more than Mr. Wesley.

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. Latimer, 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 first 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 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, as will appear in the review of his writings.

His mother now began to attend his ministry, being convinced that he spoke the words of truth and soberness. 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 deeply prejudiced against his brother's preaching and conduct, laments with great surprise, 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 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. I shall have occasion to speak more of this excellent woman.

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, 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 wicked-

ness to inward goodness : An entire change of our inmost nature from the image of the 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.”

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 sinners ; but many of the Pharisees also have believed on him ; of the righteous that seemed to need 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 farther manifestation of his work, to cause his power to be known, and to awaken the attention of a drowsy world.”

About the middle of August, Mr. Wesley had a conversation with the Bishop of Bristol, on “ *Justification by faith alone* ;” a part of which has been preserved. The original is now before me, in his own hand.

BISHOP. Why, Sir, our faith itself is a good work, it is a virtuous temper of mind.

MR. WESLEY. My Lord, whatever faith is, our church asserts, we are justified by faith alone. But how it can be called a good work, I see not : It is the gift of God ; and a gift that pre-supposes nothing in us, but sin and misery.

B. How, Sir ! Then you make God a tyrannical Being, if he justifies some without any goodness in them preceding, and does not justify all. If these are not justified on account of some moral goodness in them, why are not those justified too ?

W. Because, my Lord, they ‘ *resist his Spirit* ;’ because ‘ *they will not come to him that they may have life* ;’ because they suffer him not to

‘*work in them both to will and to do.*’ They cannot be *saved*, because they will not *believe*.

B. Sir, what do you mean by faith?

W. My Lord, by justifying faith I mean, a conviction wrought in a man by the Holy Ghost, that Christ hath loved *him*, and given himself for *him*, and that, through Christ, *his* sins are forgiven.*

B. I believe some good men have this, but not all. But how do you prove this to be the justifying faith taught by our church?

W. My Lord, from her Homily on Salvation, where she describes it thus; “*A sure trust and confidence which a man hath in God, that through the merits of Christ his sins are forgiven, and he reconciled to the favour of God.*”

B. Why, Sir, this is quite another thing.

W. My Lord, I conceive it to be the very same.

B. Mr. Wesley, I will deal plainly with you. I once thought you, and Mr. Whitefield, well-meaning men; but I cannot think so now. For I have heard more of you: matters of fact, Sir. And Mr. Whitefield says in his journal, “There are promises still to be fulfilled in me.” Sir, the pretending to extraordinary revelations and gifts of the Holy Ghost, is a horrid thing, a very horrid thing!

W. My Lord, for what Mr. Whitefield says, Mr. Whitefield, and not I, is accountable. I pretend to no *extraordinary* revelations, or gifts of the Holy Ghost: None but what every Christian may receive, and ought to expect and pray for. But I do not wonder your Lordship has heard facts asserted, which, if true, would prove the contrary: Nor do I wonder, that your Lordship, believing them true, should alter the opinion you once had of me. A quarter of an hour I spent with your Lordship before, and about an hour now: And perhaps you have never conversed one other hour with any one who spake in my favour. But how many with those who spake on the other side! So that your Lordship could not but think as you do.—But pray, my Lord, what are those facts you have heard?

B. I hear you administer the sacrament in your societies.

W. My Lord, I never did yet, and I believe never shall.

B. I hear too, that many people fall into fits in your societies, and that you pray over them.

W. I do so, my Lord, when any show by strong cries and tears, that their soul is in deep anguish; I frequently pray to God to deliver them from it, and our prayer is often heard in that hour.

B. Very extraordinary indeed! Well, Sir, since you ask my advice, I will give it you very freely. You have no business here. You are not commissioned to preach in this diocess. Therefore, I advise you to go hence.

W. My Lord, my business on earth is, to do what good I can. Wherever, therefore, I think I can do most good, there must I stay, so long as I think so. At present I think I can do most good here; therefore here I stay. As to my preaching here, a dispensation of the Gospel is committed to me, and wo is me if I preach not the Gospel, wherever I am in the habitable world. Your Lordship knows, being

* This is the definition in the *Homily*, but Mr. Wesley thought more Scripturally afterwards. It should be,—“and that his sins are atoned for by Christ;” which atonement cannot be *truly* pleaded in vain. It would appear from the *Homily*, that the faith *whereby* we are justified, is justification itself.

ordained a Priest by the commission I then received, I am a Priest of the church universal: And being ordained as Fellow of a College, I was not limited to any particular cure, but have an indeterminate commission to preach the word of God in any part of the Church of England. I do not therefore conceive, that, in preaching here by this commission, I break any human law. When I am convinced I do, then it will be time to ask, ‘Shall I obey God or man?’ But if I should be convinced in the meanwhile, that I could advance the glory of God, and the salvation of souls in any other place, more than in Bristol; in that hour, by God’s help, I will go hence; which till then I may not do.”

Religion now made a rapid progress; societies were formed in many places, and even at a considerable distance. The labourers as yet were few; but, believing they were engaged in the cause of God against ignorance and profaneness, which overspread the land, they were indefatigable, scarcely giving themselves any rest day or night. The effects of their preaching made much noise, which at length roused some of the sleeping watchmen of Israel; not indeed to inquire after the truth, and amend their ways, but to crush these irregular proceedings, that they might quietly sleep again. These opponents, however, had more zeal against Methodism, than knowledge of it. They attacked it with nothing but idle stories, misrepresentations of facts, and gross falsehoods. They retailed these from the pulpits, and published them from the press, with little regard to *moderation*, *charity*, or even *decency*. A pious and moderate clergyman, perceiving that such attacks could do no good to their cause, published a few rules to direct the assailants in their future attempts to stop the increasing innovations, in a discourse concerning enthusiasm, or religious delusion. “A minister of our church,” says he, “who may look upon it as his duty to warn his parishioners, or an author who may think it necessary to caution his readers, against *such preachers*, or their doctrine, (that is, enthusiastic preachers, such as he took the Methodist preachers to be,) ought to be very careful to act with a Christian Spirit, and to advance nothing but with *temper*, *charity*, and *truth*. Perhaps the following rules may be proper to be observed by them.

“1. Not to *blame* persons, for doing that now which Scripture records holy men of old to have practised; lest had they lived in those times, they should have condemned them also.

“2. Not to censure men in holy orders, for teaching the same doctrines which are taught in the *Scriptures*, and by *our church*; lest they should ignorantly *censure* what they profess to *defend*.

“3. Not to censure any professed members of our church, who live good lives, for resorting to religious assemblies in private houses, to perform in society acts of divine worship; when the same seems to have been practised by the primitive Christians; and when, alas! there are so many parishes, where a person, *piously* disposed, has no opportunity of joining in the public service of our church, more than one hour and a half in a week.”—We may add, and no church which will contain one fourth, perhaps not one tenth of the inhabitants.

“4. Not to condemn those who are constant attendants on the communion and service of our church, if they sometimes use *other prayers* in private assemblies: Since the best divines of our church have composed and published many prayers, that have not the sanction of public

authority ; which implies a general consent, that our church has not made provision for every private occasion.

“ 5. Not to establish the power of *working miracles*, as the great criterion of a Divine mission ; when Scripture teaches us, that the agreement of doctrines with truth, as taught in those Scriptures, is the only infallible rule.

“ 6. Not to drive any away from our church, by opprobriously calling them Dissenters, or treating them as such, so long as they keep to her communion.

“ 7. Not lightly to take up with silly stories that may be propagated to the discredit of persons of a general good character.

“ I do not lay down,” says he, “ these *negative rules* so much for the sake of any persons whom the unobservance of them would immediately injure, as for our church and her professed defenders. For churchmen, however *well-meaning*, would lay themselves open to censure, and might do her *irretrievable damage* by a behaviour contrary to them.”

Mr. Wesley often wished that they, who either preached or wrote against him, would seriously attend to these rules ; but these rules were too candid and liberal for the common herd of opposers. Some attacked him with arguments wretchedly misapplied ; others with ridicule, as the more easy method. Among the latter were some even of his own family. His eldest sister Emily had always been accustomed to correspond with him, and being some years older than he, and of a strong understanding, had taken great liberty in expressing approbation or disapprobation of any part of his conduct. She wrote to him about this time in a very ill temper, abused the Methodists as bad people, and told him she understood he could work miracles, cast out devils, &c ; that she had the devil of poverty in her pocket, and should be much obliged if he would cast him out.—Mr. Wesley knew in whom he had believed, and in the midst of abuse poured out upon him by friends and enemies, went on his way as if he heard not.

After a short visit to London, he again returned to Bristol. October 15.—Upon a pressing invitation he set out for Wales. The churches were here also shut against him, as in England, and he preached in private houses, or in the open air to a willing people.—“ I have seen,” says he, “ no part of England so pleasant for sixty or seventy miles together, as those parts of Wales I have been in : and most of the inhabitants are indeed ‘*ripe for the Gospel*.’ I mean, if the expression seems strange, they are *earnestly desirous* of being instructed in it ; and as *utterly ignorant* of it they are, as any Creek or Cherokee Indians. I do not mean they are ignorant of the name of Christ : many of them can say both the Lord’s Prayer and the Belief. Nay, and some, all the Catechism : But take them out of the road of what they have learned by rote, and they know no more, (nine or ten of those with whom I conversed,) either of Gospel salvation, or of that faith whereby alone we can be saved, than Chicali, or Tomo Chachi. Now what spirit is he of, who had rather these poor creatures should perish for lack of knowledge, than that they should be saved, even by the exhortations of Howell Harris, or an itinerant preacher !” The word did not fall to the ground. Many, however, ‘*repented and believed the Gospel*.’ And some united together to strengthen each others’ hands in God, and to provoke one another to love and to good works.

During this time, Mr. C. Wesley, having also got rid of his scruples of preaching out of a church, united with his brother in *seeking* as well as *saving* the lost. The fence being thus removed, the usual consequences appeared. He observes, Mr. Shaw began to disturb their little society, by insisting, that there is no Priesthood in the Christian Church ; and that he himself had as good a right to baptize and administer the sacrament as any other man. It appears by his claiming a right in this way to baptize, &c, that he was a layman ; and it must be acknowledged, that Christian Ministers, considered as an order in the church, are nowhere, in the New Testament, *called* Priests ; yet they were certainly set apart by due authority, to that ministry, nor were any others ever allowed to act thus. “ I tried in vain,” says Mr. C. Wesley, “ to check Mr. Shaw in his wild rambling talk against a Christian Priesthood. At last I told him I would oppose him to the utmost, and either he or I must quit the society. In expounding I warned them strongly against schism,* into which Mr. Shaw’s notions must necessarily lead them. The society were all for my brother’s immediate return.—April 19th, I found Mr. Stonehouse exactly right, (that is in his notions on the Priesthood,) and warned Messrs. Vaughan and Brookmans against Shaw’s pestilent errors. I spoke strongly at the Savoy Society, in behalf of the Church of England.”

April 24th, Mr. Whitefield preached at Fetter-lane ; being returned from Bristol, where he had first preached in the open air, and thus opened the way more fully to an Itinerant ministry ; but of which none of them before seem to have entertained the least conception. It seems that Howell Harris came to London with him ; “ a man,” says Mr. C. Wesley, “ after my own heart.”—Mr. Whitefield related the dismal effects of Shaw’s doctrine at Oxford. Both he and Howell Harris insisted on Shaw’s expulsion from the society. April 26th, Mr. Whitefield preached in Islington churchyard : The numerous audience could not have been more affected within the walls. Saturday the 28th, he preached out again. After him Mr. Bowers got up to speak. “ I conjured him not,” says Mr. Charles Wesley, “ but he beat me down, and followed his impulse. I carried many away with me.” This last circumstance is the more worthy of notice, as it is, so far as I can find, the first instance of a layman attempting to preach. It must be observed, however, that it was not with approbation, but by violence. Mr. C. Wesley observes, that he and Mr. Whitefield declared against it. The necessity of it was not yet apparent. There seems to have been no call for it.

May 25th, Mr. Clagget having invited Mr. C. Wesley to Broad-oaks, he went thither, and preached to four or five hundred attentive hearers. May 29th, “ A farmer,” says he, “ invited me to preach in his field. I did so to about five hundred, on ‘ *Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*’ On the 31st, a Quaker sent me a pressing invitation to preach at Thackstead. I scrupled preaching in another’s parish, till I had been refused the church. Many Quakers, and near seven hundred others, attended, while I declared in the highways, *the Scripture hath concluded all under sin.*”

* The true Scriptural meaning of the word schisms is here intimated ; not a separation from a church or society, but a division *in* such a society ; and such a division as destroys or hinders brotherly love.

June 6th, two or three, who had embraced the opinions of Shaw, declared themselves no longer members of the Church of England. "Now," says Mr. C. Wesley, "am I clear of them. By renouncing the church, they have discharged me." About this time the French Prophets raised some disturbance in the society, and gained several proselytes, who warmly defended them. June 12th, two of them were present at a meeting, and occasioned much disputing. At length Mr. C. Wesley asked, "Who is on God's side? Who for the old Prophets rather than the new? Let them follow me. They followed me into the preaching-room. I expounded the lesson; several gave an account of their conversion; dear brother Bowers confessed his errors, and we rejoiced and triumphed in the name of the Lord our God."

June 19th, Mr. C. Wesley was at Lambeth with the Archbishop, who treated him with much severity. His grace declared he would not dispute; nor would he, AS YET, proceed to excommunication. It does not appear that the Archbishop condemned the doctrines Mr. Wesley preached, but the manner of preaching them: It was irregular, and this was judged a cause sufficient for condemning him. Regularity is undoubtedly necessary in the government both of Church and state. But when a system of rules and orders, *purely human*, is so established for the government of the church, as to be made *perpetual*, whatever the state of the people may be, it must, in many cases, become injurious rather than useful. A minister of Christ may be so circumstanced, that regularity would obstruct rather than promote his usefulness. Irregularity then becomes his duty, the end to be attained being infinitely more important than any prudential rules. If this be not allowed, we hearken to man rather than to God.

Mr. C. Wesley bore the Archbishop's reproof with great firmness, while in his presence; but, after leaving him, he fell into great heaviness, and for several days suffered a severe inward conflict. He at length perceived that it arose from the fear of man. Mr. Whitefield urged him to preach in the fields the next Sunday, knowing that by this step, he would be forced to fight his way forward in the true work of the ministry. This advice he followed. June 24th, "I prayed," says he, "and went forth in the *name of Jesus Christ*. I found near a thousand helpless sinners waiting for the word in Moorfields. I invited them in my Master's words as well as name; '*Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*' The Lord was with me, even me, the meanest of his messengers, according to his promise. At St. Paul's the psalms, lessons, &c, for the day, put new life into me, and so did the sacrament. My load was gone, and with it all my doubts and scruples. God shone on my path, and I knew this was his will concerning me. I then walked to Kennington Common, and cried to multitudes upon multitudes, '*Repent ye and believe the Gospel.*' The Lord was my strength, and my mouth, and my wisdom. O that all would therefore praise the Lord for his goodness!" He thus hearkened to "*the Bishop of our souls*," and had his reward.

June 29th, Mr. C. Wesley was at Wickham, in his way to Oxford. "Here," says he "I heard of much disturbance, occasioned by Bowers' preaching in the streets."* The next day he reached Oxford and wait-

* It is strange that Mr. C. Wesley, or any of his clerical brethren, should think, that the fire which burned in *their* souls would not also burn in those who had *like precious faith*!

ed on the Dean, who spoke with unusual severity against field-preaching, and of Mr. Whitefield who first introduced it. July 1st, he preached a sermon on Justification, before the University, with great boldness. All were very attentive.—July 2d, Mr. Gambold came to him, who had been with the Vice-Chancellor, and well received. “I waited,” says Mr. Wesley, “on the Vice-Chancellor, at his own desire. I gave him a full account of the Methodists, which he approved, but objected to the irregularity of doing good in other men’s parishes. He charged Mr. Whitefield with breach of promise, appealed to the Dean and appointed a second meeting there. All were against my sermon, as liable to be misunderstood.*—July 3d, Mr. Bowers had been laid hold of, for preaching in Oxford. To-day the Beadle brought him to me. I talked to him closely; he had nothing to reply, but promised to do so no more, and thereby obtained his liberty. At night I had another conference with the Dean, who cited Mr. Whitefield to judgment.† I said ‘Mr. Dean, he shall be ready to answer the citation.’ He used the utmost address to bring me off from preaching abroad, from expounding in houses, and from singing psalms. He denied justification by faith and all vital religion.”—It is plain, such men could not be obeyed by any servant of Christ, but at the peril of his soul.

July 4th, Mr. C. Wesley returned to London. On the 8th, he preached to near ten thousand hearers, by computation, in Moorfields, and the same day at Kennington Common. His labours now daily increased upon him: and his success, in bringing great numbers from darkness to light, and in rousing the minds of vast multitudes to a serious inquiry after religion, was beyond any thing we can, at present, easily conceive. Yet he was far from being elated, as a hypocrite would certainly have been, but felt the full force of the temptations which arose from the success of his ministry.—July 22d, he says, “Never, till now, did I know the strength of temptation and energy of sin. Who, that consults only the quiet of his own mind, would covet great success? I live in a continual storm; my soul is always in my hand; the enemy thrusts sore at me that I may fall, and a worse enemy than the devil is my own heart. *Miror quemquam prædicatorem salvavi.*§ The only remedy for these painful and oftentimes weakening feelings, is an increase of faith. The Lord permits the attack, to show us the weakness of our faith.” August 7th, he continues, “I preached repentance and faith at Plaistow, and at night expounded, in a private house, on Lazarus dead and raised. The next day, called on Thomas Keen, a mild and candid Quaker. Preached at Marybone;—too well pleased with my success, which brought upon me strong temptations. August 10th, I gave Mr. Whitefield some account both of my labours and conflicts.”

“DEAR GEORGE,—I forgot to mention the most material occurrence at Plaistow; namely, that a Clergyman was there convinced of sin. He stood under me, and appeared, throughout my discourse, under the greatest perturbation of mind. In our return, we were much delighted with an old spiritual Quaker, who is clear in justification. Friend Keen

* Very likely it might, for it is totally contrary to the wisdom of this world. It is published in the first volume of Mr. Wesley’s Sermons.

† I suppose for some breach of order. § I wonder any preacher of the Gospel is saved.

seems to have experience, and is right in the foundation.—I cannot preach out on the week-days, for the expense of coach-hire ; nor can I accept of dear Mr. Steward's offer, to which I should be less backward, would he follow my advice ; but while he is so lavish of his Lord's goods, I cannot consent that his ruin should in any degree *seem* to be under my hand. I am continually tempted to leave off preaching, and hide myself like J. Hutchins. I should then be free from temptation, and have leisure to attend to my own improvement.* God continues to work by me, but not in me, that I perceive. Do not reckon upon me, my brother, in the work God is doing ; for I cannot expect that he should long employ one, who is ever longing and murmuring to be discharged."

"To-day," says Mr. C. Wesley, "I took J. Bray to Mr. Law, who resolved all his experience into fits, or natural affection ; and desired him to take no notice of his comforts, which he had better be without, than have. He blamed Mr. Whitefield's Journal, and way of proceeding ; said, he had had great hopes that the Methodists would have been dispersed by little and little, into livings, and have leavened the whole lump. I told him my experience ; then, said he, I am far below you, (if you are right,) not worthy to wipe your shoes. He agreed to our notion of faith, but would have it, that all men held it. He was fully against the laymen's expounding, as the very worst thing both for themselves and others. I told him he was my schoolmaster to bring me to Christ ; but the reason why I did not come sooner to Christ, was, I sought to be sanctified before I was justified. I disclaimed all expectation of becoming some GREAT ONE. Among other things he said, 'Were I so talked of, as Mr. Whitefield is, I should run away, and hide myself entirely.'—I answered, You might, but God would bring you back, like Jonah.—He told me, joy in the Holy Ghost was the most dangerous thing God could give.—I replied, But cannot God guard his own gifts ? He often disclaimed advising us, seeing we had the Spirit of God ; but mended on our hands, and at last came almost quite over to us."—This good man lived in the element of the Seventh of the Romans ; but could not stand against those who lived in the Eighth, while its truths were maintained *in love*.

August 12th, He observes, "I received great power to explain the good *Samaritan* : Communicated at St. Paul's, as I do every Sunday ; Convinced multitudes at Kennington-Common, from '*Such were some of you, but ye are washed,*' &c. And before the day was past, felt my own sinfulness so great, that I wished I had never been born."—Thus God hides pride from man ; thus He prevents great gifts from destroying the possessor of them ; and thus He shows them the necessity of *going on to perfection*.

August 13, Mr. C. Wesley wrote to Mr. Seward as follows : "I preached yesterday to more than ten thousand hearers. I am so buffeted both before and after, that were I not forcibly detained, I should fly from every human face. If God does make a way for me to escape, I shall not easily be brought back again. I cannot love advertising ; it looks like sounding a trumpet. I hope our brother Hutchins will

* He might have *leisure*, but would *improvement* follow ? Not unless the Lord gave him that leisure. There was some Pharisaism, some self-dependance, in this sentiment.

come forth at last, and throw away my mantle of reserve, which he seems to have taken up."—It seems by this, that he did not wish that others should give up the work.

Mr. Whitefield was now on the point of returning to America, and on the 15th of August Mr. C. Wesley wrote to him. "Let not Cosart's opinion of your Letter to the Bishop, weaken your hands. *Abundans cautio nocet*.* It is the Moravian infirmity. To-morrow I set out for Bristol. I pray you may all have a good voyage, and that many poor souls may be added to the church by your ministry, before we meet again. Meet again, I am confident we shall, perhaps both here and in America. The will of the Lord be done, with us and by us, in time and in eternity!"

That mystery of iniquity which had appeared before, now ripened apace. The Society which had been formed in London, soon after Mr. J. Wesley's 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 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 the Moravian minister, 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 Boehler 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*

* "Too much caution is hurtful." Some persons perhaps may think, that neither Mr. Whitefield, nor any of them, stood in need of this admonition; of this, however, we are not very proper judges at this distance of time. It is evident, that on many occasions they did use much caution. Mr. C. Wesley speaks as though he had some thoughts of going again to America, and he mentions such intentions in several places; but they never came to any thing fixed and determined. He could hardly bear the appearance of a warring against that Church which he loved: Hence he often wished to flee into the wilderness.

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, I believe there is *a degree of justifying 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 Boehler 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 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 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 unsettled 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 unsettled 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 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, 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 Mr. Wesley. 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 who 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 to 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 spoken, he withdrew, as did eighteen or nineteen of the Society.

Some time after this, Count Zinzendorf, who arrived in England after the commencement of the dispute, having desired an interview with Mr. Wesley, he met the Count by appointment in Gray's-Inn Walks, on Thursday, the 3d day of September, 1741. Mr. Wesley observes, — 'The most material part of our conversation, (which I dare not conceal) was as follows.' I have subjoined a literal translation.

Z. Cur religionem tuam mutâsti?

W. Nescio me religionem meam mutâsse. Cur id sentis? Quis hoc tibi retulit?

Z. Planè tu. Id ex epistolâ tuâ ad nos video. Ibi, religione, quam apud nos professus es, relictâ, novam profiteris.

W. Quî sic? Non intelligo.

Z. Imò, istic dicis, verè Christianos non esse miseros peccatores. Falsissimum. Optimi hominum ad mortem usque miserabilissimi sunt peccatores. Siqui aliud dicunt, vel penitùs impostores sunt, vel diabolicè seducti. Nostros fratres meliora docentes impugnâsti. Et pacem volentibus, eam denegâsti.

W. Nondum intelligo quid velis.

Z. Ego, cum ex Georgiâ ad me scripsisti, te dilexi plurimum. Tum corde simplicem te agnovi. Iterum scripsisti. Agnovi corde simplicem, sed turbatis ideis. Ad nos venisti. Ideæ tuæ tum magis turbatæ erant et confusæ. In Angliam redîsti. Aliquandiu post, audiivi fratres nostros tecum pugnare. Spangenbergium misi ad pacem inter vos conciliandam. Scripsit mihi, fratres tibi injuriam intulisse. Rescripsi, ne pergerent, sed et veniam à te peterent. Spangenberg scripsit iterum, eos petiisse: Sed te gloriari de iis, pacem nolle. Jam adveniens, idem audio.

W. Res in eo cardine minimè vertitur. Fratres tui (verum hoc) me malè tractârunt. Postea veniam petierunt. Respondi, id supervacaneum; me nunquam iis succensusse: Sed vereri, 1. Ne falsa docerent. 2. Ne pravè viverent.

Ista unica, est, et fuit, inter nos quæstio.

Z. Apertiùs loquaris.

W. Veritus sum, ne falsa docerent, 1. De fine fidei nostræ (in hâc vitâ) scil. Christianâ perfectione. 2. De mediis gratiæ, sic ab Ecclesiâ nostrâ dictis.

Z. Nullam inhærentem perfectionem in hâc vitâ agnosco. Est hic error errorum. Eum per totum orbem igne et gladio persequor, conculco, ad internectionem do. Christus est sola perfectio nostra. Qui perfectionem inhærentem sequitur, Christum denegat.

W. Ego verò credo, Spiritum Christi operari perfectionem in verè Christianis.

Z. Nullimodo. Omnis nostra perfectio est in Christo. Omnis Christiana perfectio est, fides in sanguine Christi. Est tota Christiana

Perfectio, imputata, non inhærens. Perfecti sumus in Christo, in nobismet nunquam perfecti.

W. Pugnamus, opinor, de verbis. Nonne omnis verè credens sanctus est?

Z. Maximè. Sed sanctus in Christo, non in se.

W. Sed, nonne sanctè vivit?

Z. Imò, sanctè in omnibus vivit.

W. Nonne, et cor sanctum habet?

Z. Certissimè.

W. Nonne, ex consequenti, sanctus est *in se*?

Z. Non, non. In Christo tantùm. Non sanctus *in se*. Nullam, omnino, habet sanctitatem *in se*.

W. Nonne habet in corde suo amorem Dei et proximi, quin et totam imaginem Dei?

Z. Habet. Sed hæc sunt sanctitas legalis, non evangelica. Sanctitas evangelica est fides.

W. Omnino lis est de verbis. Concedis, credentis cor totum esse sanctum et vitam totam: Eum amare Deum toto corde, eique servire totis viribus. Nihil ultrà peto. Nil aliud volo per perfectio vel sanctitas Christiana.

Z. Sed hæc non est sanctitas ejus. Non magis sanctus est, si magis amat; neque minùs sanctus, si minùs amat.

W. Quid? Nonne credens, dum crescit in amore, crescit pariter in sanctitate?

Z. Nequaquam. Eo momento quo justificatur, sanctificatur penitùs. Exin, neque magis sanctus est, neque minùs sanctus, ad mortem usque.

W. Nonne igitur pater in Christo sanctior est infante recens nato?

Z. Non. Sanctificatio totalis ac justificatio in eodem sunt instanti; et neutra recipit magis aut minùs.

W. Nonne verò credens crescit indies amore Dei? Num perfectus est amore simulac justificatur?

Z. Est. Non unquam crescit in amore Dei. Totalitèr amat eo momento, sicut totalitèr sanctificatur.

W. Quid itaque vult Apostolus Paulus, per *Renovamur de die in diem*?

Z. Dicam. Plumbum si in aurum mutetur, est aurum primo die, et secundo, et tertio. Et sic renovatur de die in diem. Sed nunquam est magis aurum, quàm primo die.

W. Putavi, crescendo esse in gratià!

Z. Certè. Sed non in sanctitate. Simulac justificatur quis, Pater, Filius, et Spiritus Sanctus habitant in ipsius corde. Et cor ejus eo momento æquè purum est ac unquam erit. Infans in Christo tam purus corde est quàm Pater in Christo. Nulla est decrepantia.

W. Nonne justificati erant Apostoli ante Christi mortem?

Z. Erant.

W. Nonne vero sanctiores erant post diem Pentecostes, quàm ante Christi mortem?

Z. Neutiquam.

W. Nonne eo die impleti sunt Spiritu Sancto?

Z. Erant. Sed istud donum Spiritùs, sanctitatem ipsorum non respexit. Fuit donum miraculorum tantùm.

W. Fortasse te non capio. Nonne nos ipsos abnegantes, magis magisque mundo morimur, ac Deo vivimus ?

Z. Abnegationem omnem respuimus, conculcamus. Facimus credentes omne quod volumus et nihil ultrà. Mortificationem omnem ridemus. Nulla purificatio præcedit perfectum amorem.

W. Quæ dixisti, Deo adjuvante, perpendam.

Translation.

Z. Why have you changed your religion ?

W. I do not know that I have changed my religion. Why do you think so ? Who has reported this to you ?

Z. Plainly, yourself. I see it from your epistle to us. There, having departed from the religion which you professed among us, you have held out a new one.

W. How so ? I do not understand you.

Z. Nay, you say there, that Christians are not miserable sinners : This is most false. The best of men are most miserable sinners, even unto death. If any speak otherwise, they are either manifest impostors, or diabolically seduced. Our Brethren, who taught better things, you have opposed : and when they desired peace, you have refused it.

W. I do not yet understand what you aim at.

Z. When you wrote to me from Georgia, I loved you very much. I perceived that you were simple in heart. You wrote again : I saw, that you were still simple in heart, but troubled in your ideas. You came to us : Your ideas were then still more troubled and confused. You returned to England. A little after, I heard that our Brethren were contending with you. I sent Spangenberg, to make peace between you. He wrote to me, that the Brethren had injured you. I wrote again, that they should not pursue the strife, but desire forgiveness of you. Spangenberg wrote again, that they had desired this, but that you, glorying over them, had refused peace. Now that I am come, I hear the same thing.

W. The matter does not at all turn on this point. Your Brethren, it is true, did not use me well. Afterwards they desired forgiveness. I answered,—that was superfluous, that I had never been offended with them ; but I feared, 1. Lest they should teach falsely. 2. Lest they should live wickedly. This is, and was, the only question between us.

Z. Speak more fully [on that question.]

W. I feared lest they should teach falsely ; 1. Concerning the end of our faith in this life, to wit, Christian Perfection. 2. Concerning the means of grace, so termed by our church.

Z. I acknowledge no inherent perfection in this life. This is the error of errors. I pursue it through the world with fire and sword. I trample upon it : I devote it to utter destruction. Christ is our sole perfection. Whoever follows inherent perfection, denies Christ.

W. But, I believe, that the Spirit of Christ works this perfection in true Christians.

Z. By no means. All our perfection is in Christ. All Christian Perfection is, Faith in the blood of Christ. Our whole Christian Perfection is imputed, not inherent. We are perfect in Christ : In ourselves we are never perfect.

W. I think we strive about words. Is not every true believer holy?

Z. Highly so. But he is holy in Christ, not in himself.

W. But does he not live holy?

Z. Yes, he lives holy in all things.

W. And has he not a holy heart?

Z. Most certainly.

W. And is he not consequently holy *in himself*?

Z. No, no. In Christ only. He is not holy in himself: He hath no holiness at all in himself.

W. Hath he not the *love of God*, and his neighbour, in his heart? Yea, and the whole image of God?

Z. He hath. But these constitute legal holiness, not evangelical. Evangelical holiness is Faith.

W. The dispute is altogether about words. You grant that a believer is altogether holy in heart, and life: that he loves God with all his heart and serves him with all his powers. I desire nothing more. I mean nothing else [by the term] PERFECTION, or CHRISTIAN HOLINESS.

Z. But this is not his holiness. He is not more holy if he loves more, or less holy, if he loves less.

W. What! Does not every believer, while he increases in love, increase equally in holiness?

Z. Not at all. In the moment he is justified, he is sanctified wholly. From that time he is neither more nor less holy, even unto death.

W. Is not therefore a father in Christ holier than a new-born babe?

Z. No. Our whole justification, and sanctification, are in the same instant, and he receives neither more nor less.

W. Does not a true believer increase in love to God daily? Is he *perfected in love* when he is justified?

Z. He is. He never can increase in the love of God. He loves altogether in that moment, as he is sanctified wholly.

W. What therefore does the Apostle Paul mean by, '*We are renewed day by day*'?

Z. I will tell you. Lead, if it should be changed into gold, is gold the first day, and the second day, and the third: And so it is renewed day by day; but it never is more gold than in the first day.

W. I thought that we should grow in grace!

Z. Certainly; but not in holiness. Whenever any one is justified, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, dwell in his heart; and from that moment his heart is as pure as it ever will be. A babe in Christ is as pure in heart as a father in Christ. There is no difference.

W. Were not the Apostles justified before the death of Christ?

Z. They were.

W. But were they not more holy after the day of Pentecost, than before Christ's death?

Z. By no means.

W. Were they not on that day *filled with the Holy Ghost*?

Z. They were. But that gift of the Spirit did not respect their holiness. It was the gift of miracles only.

W. Perhaps I do not comprehend your meaning. Do we not, while we deny ourselves, die more and more to the world, and live to God?

Z. We reject all self-denial. We trample upon it. We do, as Be-

lievers, whatsoever we will, and nothing more. We laugh at all mortification. No purification precedes perfect love.

W. What you have said I will thoroughly weigh, God being my helper.

The Count, and those connected with him, were, I believe, the only persons who held the Antinomian Doctrine without the aid of Absolute Predestination; but it cannot stand without that support. Only the supposed *absolute* decrees can, with any face, be brought forward to oppose and make void the openly declared will of God.

Mr. Southey has given to his readers a part of the above conversation. He speaks tenderly of the Count, and of that Gospel which *flesh and blood had revealed unto him*. He supposes the Count meant better than he expressed himself; and this too is our hope, as it was Mr. Wesley's. The doctrine laid down, however, is equally absurd and dangerous; though in some of the particulars, it illustrates what Mr. Wesley declared in one of the first Conferences, that "Antinomianism comes often within a hair's breadth of the truth of the Gospel," though it certainly never can unite with it. Mr. Southey seems to blame Mr. Wesley for publishing the conversation; and also for publishing it in Latin. Mr. Wesley often suppressed what he had noted in his Journal, when he came to publish it, which was always three years after it was written. But considering the Count's prominent character and influence, and his own former connexion with the Moravians, he could not, (as indeed he intimates,) suppress a statement of doctrines, which he thought so dangerous both to the Count's people and to his own. His publishing it in the language in which it was spoken, is an instance at once of fairness and of tenderness. He knew that several of the Moravians could read it in that language; and that it would be read by the learned in his own church, who were jealous of him respecting those doctrines, and had even imputed them to him. At the same time, he wished to spare the Count with the commonalty. He was always careful how he taught the sheep to butt.

When Mr. Stonehouse, (afterwards Sir James,) the Rector of Islington, read the conversation, he observed, as Mr. Wesley informed me, "The Count is a clever fellow; but the genius of Methodism is too strong for him." It was so; not because of the superior cleverness of its Founder, or of his helpers, but because it was *a work of God*.

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 doorkeeper 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 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) from the beginning of his acquaintance with Peter Boehler, 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 Foundry, 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 ever was perhaps drawn up in so small a compass, and have been the rules by which, since that time, the whole Connexion has been governed, I think it my 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 shown by its fruits. It is therefore expected of all who con-

* Peter Boehler, several years after, in a private letter to Mr. Wesley, denied that *Molther* ever held the opinions imputed to him. From a review of the facts, it appears probable that *Molther's* jealousy of Mr. Wesley's ability and influence occasioned his pertinacity in those opinions.

tinue 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 :

Drunkenness, *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 cross 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.*”

III. 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 ; 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.

CHAPTER III.

DISPUTE RESPECTING ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION—PARTIAL SEPARATION OF MR. WHITEFIELD—RECEIVING LAY-HELPERS—PROGRESS OF ITINERANCY—THE POWER OF RELIGION MANIFESTED IN THE HAPPY DEATH OF SEVERAL MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY.

MR. WESLEY 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 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, on 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 held 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 Mr. Wesley, 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 left. "Ah, poor Ahithophel!" 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 connexion. Mr. Wesley mourned over this young man in such a manner, as evinced that he held him in high esteem. There is reason to believe, that Mr. Cennick was afterwards convinced of his mistake, and lived many years an active and successful Minister of the Gospel.

The contention which had arisen still continuing, Mr. Wesley printed a sermon against the Calvinistic notion of Predestination, and sent a copy to Commissary Garden, at Charlestown, where Mr. Whitefield met with it. He had already embraced that opinion; and though the subject was treated in that sermon in a general way, without naming or pointing at any individual, yet he found himself hurt that Mr. Wesley should bring forward the controversy, and publicly oppose an opinion which he believed to be agreeable to the word of God. On his passage to England he wrote to Mr. Charles Wesley, February 1, 1741, expostulating with him and his brother on the subject. He says, "My dear, dear brethren, why did you throw out the bone of contention? Why did you print that

* There, all your labour's lost!

sermon against predestination? Why did you, in particular, my dear brother Charles, affix your hymn, and join in putting out your late hymnbook? How can you say, you will not dispute with me about election, and yet print such hymns, and your brother send his sermon over against election,* to Mr. Garden, and others in America? Do not you think, my dear brethren, I must be as much concerned for truth, or what I think truth, as you? God is my judge, I always was, and hope I always shall be, desirous that you may be preferred before me. But I must preach the gospel of Christ; and that I cannot *now* do, without speaking of election.”—He then tells Mr. Charles, that, in Christmas week, he had written an answer to his brother’s sermon, “which,” says he, “is now printing at Charlestown; another copy I have sent to Boston; and another I now bring with me, to print in London. If it occasion a strangeness between us, it shall not be my fault. There is nothing in my answer exciting to it, that I know of. O my dear brethren, my heart almost bleeds within me! Methinks I could be willing to tarry here on the waters for ever, rather than come to England to oppose you.”

Dr. Whitehead has observed upon this dispute, that “controversy between good men is commonly on some speculative opinion, while they are perfectly at unison on the *essential points* of religion, and the duties of morality: And the controversy almost always injures the Christian temper much more than it promotes the interests of speculative truth.” This is not, however, a necessary consequence. Our Lord was a controversialist. Without controversy, we had been all Heathens or Papists at this day. On this occasion, however, a separation took place between Mr. Wesley and Mr. Whitefield, so far as to have different places of worship; and some warm expressions dropped from each. But their good opinion of each other’s integrity and usefulness, founded on long and intimate acquaintance, could not be injured by such a difference of sentiment: and their mutual affection was only obscured by a cloud for a season.

Mr. Whitefield was the first who visited the colliers of Kingswood: He formed the design of building the school there, and began to make collections for the purpose. But his calls to America would not permit him to prosecute the design, which he therefore transferred to Mr. Wesley. Being now less friendly than before, Mr. Whitefield was more disposed to find fault with little things, and to misconstrue the bare appearances of others. He wrote a list of things which he thought improperly managed. In April Mr. Wesley returned him a long answer, part of which is as follows:—

“Would you have me deal plainly with you, my brother? I believe you would: Then, by the grace of God, I will.

“Of many things I find you are not rightly informed; of others you speak what you have not well weighed.

“The Society-room at Bristol, you say, is adorned. How? Why, with a piece of green cloth nailed to the desk; two sconces for eight candles each, in the middle; and—nay, I know no more. Now, which of these can be spared I know not; nor would I desire either more adorning or less.

* *All this* was consistent. It was not disputing with *him*, but maintaining the truth. Mr. Wesley never opposed the Scriptural doctrine of the election of *believers* to eternal life. He only opposed Mr. Calvin’s notion of it, which he believed to be unscriptural and dangerous.

"But, 'lodgings are made for me or my brother.' That is, in plain English, there is a little room by the school, where I speak to the persons who come to me; and a garret, in which a bed is placed for me. And do you grudge me this? Is this the voice of my brother, my son Whitefield?"

"You say farther, 'that the children at Bristol are clothed as well as taught.' I am sorry for it; for the cloth is not paid for yet, and was bought without my consent or knowledge. But those of Kingswood have been neglected. This is not so, notwithstanding the heavy debt which lay upon it. One master and one mistress have been in the house, ever since it was capable of receiving them. A second master has been placed there some months since: and I have long been seeking for two proper mistresses; so that as much has been done as matters stand, if not more, than I can answer to God or man.

"Hitherto, then, there is no ground, for the heavy charge of perverting your design for the poor colliers. Two years since, your design was to build them a school, that their children also might be taught to fear the Lord. To this end, you collected some money more than once; how much I cannot say till I have my papers. But this I know, it was not near one half of what has been expended on the work. 'This design you then recommended to me, and I pursued it with all my might, through such a train of difficulties as, I will be bold to say, you have not yet met with in your life. For many months, I collected money wherever I was, and began building, though I had not then a quarter of the money requisite to finish. However, taking all the debt upon myself, the creditors were willing to stay; and then it was that I took possession of it in my own name; that is, when the foundation was laid; and I immediately made my will, fixing my brother and you to succeed me therein.

"But it is a poor case, that you and I should be talking thus. Indeed, these things ought not to be. It lay in your power to have prevented all, and yet to have borne testimony to what you call 'the truth.' If you had disliked my sermon, you might have printed another on the same text, and have answered my proofs, without mentioning my name; This had been fair and friendly.

"You rank all the maintainers of *Universal Redemption* with Socinians themselves. Alas! my brother, do you not know even this, that the Socinians allow no redemption at all? That Socinus himself speaks thus, *Tota Redemptio nostra per Christum metaphora*?* And says expressly, 'Christ did not die as a ransom for any, but only as an example for all mankind?' How easy were it for me to hit many other palpable blots, in that which you call an 'answer to my sermon!' And how above measure contemptible would you then appear to all impartial men, either of sense or learning? But I spare you; mine hand shall not be upon you: The Lord be judge between me and thee! The general tenour both of my public and private exhortations, when I touch thereon at all, as even my enemies know if they would testify, is '*Spare the young man, even Absalom, for my sake.*'"

Dr. Whitehead remarks upon this letter also: "Perhaps, Mr. Wesley, in consequence of his age and learning, assumed, in this letter, a greater superiority over Mr. Whitefield than was prudent or becoming."

* The whole of our Redemption by Christ is a metaphor.

No, not between fellow labourers and intimate friends, in a private letter: And perhaps Dr. W., holding this opinion, ought not to have published it. It was not possible, however, that the controversy could long abate the ardent affection which each had for the other. In the latter end of the following year, Mr. Whitefield wrote to him as follows: "I long to hear from you, and write this, hoping to have an answer. I rejoice to hear the Lord blesses your labours. May you be blessed in bringing souls to Christ more and more! I believe we shall go on best when we only preach the simple Gospel, and do not interfere with each other's plan. Our Lord exceedingly blesses us at the Tabernacle. I doubt not but he deals in the same bountiful manner with you. I was at your letter-day* on Monday. Brother Charles has been pleased to come and see me twice. Behold what a happy thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! That the whole Christian world may all become of one heart and one mind; and that *we*, in particular, though differing in judgment, may be examples of mutual, fervent, undissembled affection, is the hearty prayer of, Reverend and dear Sir, your most affectionate, though most unworthy younger brother in the kingdom and patience of Jesus."—We see here the true Christian spirit between those who differ only in opinion.

Mr. Wesley's answer to this letter, I believe, is lost; but it appears from one Mr. Whitefield wrote to him about a fortnight after, that he had answered it in the same spirit of peace and brotherly love. "I thank you," says Mr. Whitefield, "for your kind answer to my last. Had it come a few hours sooner, I should have read some part of it among our other letters. Dear Sir, who would be troubled with a party spirit? May our Lord make all his children free from it indeed!"

From this time, their mutual regard and friendly intercourse suffered no interruption till Mr. Whitefield's death; who says, in his last will, written with his own hand about six months before he died, "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."†—When the news of Mr. Whitefield's death reached London, Mr. Keen, one of his executors, recollecting he had often said to him, "If you should die abroad, whom shall we get to preach your funeral sermon? Must it be your old friend, the Rev. Mr. John Wesley?"—And having constantly received for answer, "He is the man," Mr. Keen accordingly waited on Mr. Wesley, and engaged him to preach it; which he did, and bore ample testimony to the undissembled piety, the ardent zeal, and the extensive usefulness, of his much-loved and honoured friend.‡

I cannot give so complete an idea of the earnest desire of Mr. Wesley to continue his Christian union 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:

* An evening set apart for reading letters concerning the work of God in various parts.

† See Robert's Life of Whitefield, p. 256. ‡ Ibid. p. 230. Mr. Whitefield died in Sept. 1770.

“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 St. 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, thus eminently styled ‘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 styled ‘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 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 passed away ; old things*’ in me ‘*are become new.*’

“And I do not deny,

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

Mr. Wesley told me, that, *at the time he wrote this*, he believed, (with Macarius, a writer of the fourth century,) that all who are perfected in love, 1 John iv, were thus elect. But he afterwards doubted of this.—I believe all that can be safely held on the doctrine of the Divine Predestination, is contained in these propositions; so rare a talent had Mr. Wesley of speaking much in few words!

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, at first, he 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 Mr. Wesley, “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 those persons who had just begun to serve God, into their particular 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 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 in all manner of ways.

“The event was, that some were wearied out, and so turned back to the 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 could they do in 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, Mr. Wesley 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, one of the first-fruits of his ministry at Bristol. 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 farther than he had 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 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 to 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 show him still greater things than these. An honest man, a mason, of 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; and 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 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 learnt 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.

After Mr. Wesley had separated from the Moravians, some who had been his friends, left him, and became more closely united to that people; and even his brother Charles was, at this time, wavering. On this occasion, Mr. Wesley sent him the following letter, dated London, April 21, 1741: “I am settling,” says he, “the regular method of visiting the sick here: Eight or ten have offered themselves for the work, who are likely to have full employment; for more and more are taken ill every day. Our Lord will thoroughly purge his floor.

“I rejoice in your speaking your mind freely. O let our love be without dissimulation.—I am not clear that brother Maxfield should not expound at Greyhound-lane; nor can I, as yet, do without him. Our clergymen have increased full as much as the laymen; and that the Moravians are other than laymen, I know not.

“As yet I dare, in no wise, join with the Moravians;—1. Because their whole scheme is *mystical*, not *Scriptural*,—refined, in every point above what is written, immeasurably beyond the plain doctrines of the Gospel. 2. Because there is darkness and closeness in all their behaviour, and guile in almost all their words. 3. Because they not only do not practise, but utterly despise and deny self-denial and the daily cross. 4. Because they, upon principle, conform to the world, in wearing gold or costly apparel. 5. Because they extend Christian liberty in this and in many other respects, beyond what is warranted by holy writ. 6. Because they are, by no means, zealous of good works: or, at least, only

to their own people. And, lastly, because they make inward religion swallow up outward in general. For these reasons chiefly I will rather, God being my helper, stand quite alone, than join with them : I mean, till I have full assurance that they will spread none of these errors among the little flock committed to my charge.

“ O ! my brother, my soul is grieved for you : The poison is in you : Fair words have stolen away your heart. ‘ No English man or woman is like the Moravians ! ’ So the matter is come to a fair issue. Five of us did still stand together, a few months since ; but two are gone to the right hand, (Hutchins and Cennick,) and two more to the left, (Mr. Hall and you.) Lord, if it be thy Gospel which I preach, arise and maintain thine own cause ! ”—It was well for the Reformation that Melancthon had Luther with him, to correct the softness of his spirit.

Mr. Maxfield was now regularly employed in the work. He was remarkably useful, and excited the astonishment of those who heard him. The late Countess Dowager of Huntingdon was, at this time and for many years after, exceedingly attached to Mr. Wesley, and very frequently wrote to him. She heard Mr. Maxfield expound, and in a letter to Mr. Wesley, speaks thus of him : “ I never mentioned to you that I have seen Maxfield. He is one of the greatest instances of God’s peculiar favour that I know. He has raised from the stones, one to sit among the princes of his people. He is my astonishment. How is God’s power shown in weakness ! You can have no idea what an attachment I have to him. He is highly favoured of the Lord. The first time I made him expound, expecting little from him, I sat over against him, and thought what a power of God must be with him, to make me give any attention to him. But before he had gone over one fifth part, any one that had seen me would have thought I had been made of wood or stone, so quite immoveable I both felt and looked. His power in prayer is very extraordinary. To deal plainly, I could either talk or write for an hour about him.—The society goes on well here. Live assured of the most faithful and sincere friendship of your unworthy sister in Christ Jesus.”

Mr. Wesley’s letter to his brother Charles, seems to have thoroughly roused him. Accordingly on August 16th, having shaken off his depression, he entered fully on the Itinerant plan. He rode to Wickham, and being denied the church, would have preached in a private house ; but Mr. Bowers having been there preaching in the streets, had raised great opposition, and effectually shut the door against him. The next day he went to Oxford, and the day following reached Evesham. After being here two or three days, he wrote to his brother as follows :

“ DEAR BROTHER,—We left the brethren at Oxford much edified, and two gowns-men thoroughly awakened. On Saturday afternoon God brought us hither : Mr. Seward being from home, there was no admission for us, his wife being an opposer, and having refused to see Mr. Whitefield before me. At seven in the evening Mr. Seward found us at the inn, and took us home. At eight I expounded in the school room, which holds about two hundred persons. On Sunday morning I preached from George Whitefield’s pulpit, *the wall*, on, ‘ *Repent ye, and believe the Gospel.* ’ The notice being short, we had only a few hundreds, but such as those described in the Morning Lesson, ‘ *These were*

more noble than those of *Thessalonica*, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind.' In the evening I showed, to near two thousand hearers, their Saviour in the good Samaritan. Once more God strengthened me at nine, to open the new Covenant, at the school-house, which was crowded with deeply attentive sinners."

He goes on. "August 20th, I spoke from Acts ii, 37, to two or three hundred market people, and soldiers, all as orderly and decent as could be desired. I now heard that the mayor had come down on Sunday, to take a view of us. Soon after an officer struck a countryman in the face without any provocation. A serious woman besought the poor man, not to resist evil, as the other only wanted to make a riot. He took patiently several repeated blows, telling the officer, he might beat him as long as he pleased.*

"To-day Mr. Seward's cousin told us of a young lady, who was here on a visit, and had been deeply affected on Sunday night under the word, seeing and feeling her need of the Physician, and earnestly desired me to pray for her. After dinner I spoke with her. She burst into tears, and told us she had come hither thoughtless, dead in pleasures and sin, and fully resolved against ever being a Methodist: That she was first alarmed about her own state, by seeing us so happy and full of love; had gone to the society, but was not thoroughly awakened to a knowledge of herself, till the word came home to her soul: That all the following night she had been in an agony of distress; could not pray, could not bear our singing, nor have any rest in her spirit. We betook ourselves to prayer for her; she received forgiveness and triumphed in the Lord her God.

"August 23d.—By ten last night, we reached Gloucester, through many dangers and difficulties. In mounting my horse I fell over him, and sprained my hand; riding in the dark I bruised my foot; we lost our way as often as we could; there were only two horses between three of us: When we had got to Gloucester, we were turned back from a friend's house, on account of his wife's sickness; and my voice and strength were quite gone. To-day they are in some measure restored. At night I with difficulty got into the crowded Society, where I preached the Law and the Gospel, which they received with all readiness. Three clergymen were present. Some without attempted to make a disturbance, but in vain.

"August 25th.—Before I went into the streets and highways, I sent, according to my custom, to borrow the use of the church. The minister, being one of the better disposed, sent back a civil message; 'that he would be glad to drink a glass of wine with me, but durst not lend me his pulpit for fifty guineas.' Mr. Whitefield,† however, durst lend me his field, which did just as well. For near an hour and a half, God gave me voice and strength to exhort about two thousand sinners to repent and believe the Gospel. Being invited to Painswick, I waited upon the Lord, and renewed my strength. We found near a thousand persons gathered in the street. I discoursed from, '*God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself*.' I besought them earnestly to be reconciled, and the rebels seemed inclined to lay down their arms. A young Presbyterian teacher cleaved to us."

* This was very wrong, he ought to suffer patiently, but not to encourage the evil.

† Brother of the Rev. Mr. George Whitefield.

On returning to Gloucester, Mr. C. Wesley received an invitation from F. Drummond; he dined with her, and several of the friends; particularly he mentions—"Josiah Martin, a spiritual man," says he, "as far as I can discern. My heart was enlarged, and knit to them in love." Going in the evening to preach in the field, Mrs. Kirkman, an old and intimate acquaintance, whose son had been with him and his brother at Oxford, put herself in his way; and addressed him, with, "What, Mr. Wesley, is it you I see? Is it possible that you, who can preach at Christ-Church, St. Mary's, &c, should come hither after a mob!" He gave her a short answer, and went to his mob, or to put it in the phrase of the Pharisees, to '*this people who know not the law and are accursed.*' Thousands heard him gladly, while he explained the blessings and privileges of the Gospel, and exhorted all to come to Christ as lost sinners, that they might enjoy them. The more ignorant and wicked the common people were at this time, the greater were the charity and kindness of those, who in the face of all dangers, endeavoured to instruct them in their duty to God and man, and by this means reform their manners.

At this period, the education of the labouring poor was almost wholly neglected. The public discourses of the regular clergy had no influence upon this class of people. Many of them never went to church, and most of those who did, neither understood, nor felt themselves interested in what the preachers delivered from the pulpit. "*Darkness covered the land, and gross darkness the people.*" Nor was there any prospect of doing them good except by some extraordinary method of proceeding, as their ignorance and vicious habits placed them beyond the reach of any salutary influence from the ordinary means of improvement appointed by the government.

Dr. Whitehead observes, "Viewing *Itinerant* preaching in this light, we see its importance, and must acknowledge that the authors of it deserve great praise: especially as they introduced it by their own example, under great difficulties and hardships. Their prospects in life, from their learning, their abilities, and their rank in society, were all sacrificed to the plan of Itinerancy. They had every thing to lose by it; reputation, health, and the esteem of their friends; and nothing in this world to gain, but great bodily fatigue, ill usage from the mob, and general contempt: And as only three persons united together at first in the plan, they could not expect to form any extensive or permanent establishment. It is very evident from their writings, that these three servants of God did not look forward to any distant consequences of their proceedings: They contented themselves with doing as much good as possible in the way which opened before them; and they truly laboured also for their own continuance in the faith, knowing that unfaithfulness to their calling would impair, and in the issue destroy it."

Mr. C. Wesley pursued his plan, and on the 26th of August, 1739, was at Painswick. The Minister was so obliging as to lend him his pulpit. But the church would not hold the people; it was supposed there were two thousand persons in the churchyard. He therefore stood at a window, which was taken down, and preached to the congregation within the walls, and without. They listened with eager attention, while he explained, "*God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son,*" &c.

"In the afternoon," says he, "I preached again to a Kennington congregation. It was the most beautiful sight I ever beheld. The people filled the gradually rising area, which was shut up on three sides by a vast hill. On the top and bottom of this hill, was a great row of trees. In this Amphitheatre the people stood deeply attentive, while I called upon them in Christ's words, '*Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*' The tears of many testified, that they were ready to enter into that rest. It was with difficulty we made our way through this most loving people, and returned amidst their prayers and blessings to Ebly, where I expounded the Second Lesson for two hours."

A good old Baptist had invited Mr. C. Wesley to preach at Stanley, in his way to Bristol. Accordingly, on the 27th, he rode thither through the rain, and preached to about a thousand attentive hearers: They were so much affected by the sermon, that he appointed them to meet him again in the evening. We see with pleasure, that many persons among the various denominations of Dissenters showed a friendly disposition, and countenanced his proceedings. They discovered a stronger attachment to the essential doctrines of the Gospel, than to the peculiarities of their several opinions and modes of worship. The Dissenters in general, however, kept at a distance, being afraid for the Dissenting interest.

Mr. C. Wesley arrived in Bristol August 28th; and his brother having set out for London, on the 31st he entered on his ministry at Weaver's Hall. "I began," says he, "by expounding Isaiah with great freedom. They were melted into tears all around, and again when the bands met to keep the Church-fast. We were all of one heart and of one mind, I forgot the contradiction wherewith they grieved my soul in London, and could not forbear saying, '*It is good for me to be here.*'"

September 4th, He preached again at Kingswood to some thousands, colliers chiefly, and held out the promises from Isaiah xxxv: "*The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose.*" He adds, "I triumphed in the mercy of God to these poor outcasts, (for '*he hath called them a people who were not a people,*') and in the accomplishment of that Scripture, '*Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped; then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.*' How gladly do the poor receive the Gospel! We hardly knew how to part."

September 5th, Mr. C. Wesley says, "I was much discouraged by a discovery of the disorderly walking of some, who have given the adversary occasion, to blaspheme. I am a poor creature upon such occasions, being soon cast down. Yet I went and talked to them, and God filled me with such love to their souls, as I have not known before. They could not stand before it. Some trembled exceedingly; the others gave us great cause to hope for them."

September 11th, He rode with two friends to Bradford, near Bath, and preached to about a thousand persons, who seemed deeply affected. On the 15th he says, "Having been provoked to speak unadvisedly with my lips, I preached on the Bowling-Green in great weak-

ness,* on ‘*Lazarus, come forth!*’ I was surprised that any good should be done. But God quickens others by those who are dead themselves. A man came to me and declared he had now received the Spirit of life; and so did a woman at the same time, which she openly declared at Weaver’s Hall. We had great power among us while I displayed the believer’s privileges from the eighth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans.—On the 16th, I met between thirty and forty colliers, with their wives, at Mr. Willis’s, and administered the sacrament to them; but found no comfort myself, in that or any other ordinance. I always find strength for the work of the ministry; but when my work is over, my bodily and spiritual strength both leave me. I can pray for others, not for myself. God, by me, strengthens the weak hands, and confirms the feeble knees; yet am I as a man in whom is no strength. I am weary and faint in my mind, continually longing to be discharged.”—Soon after, however, he found power to pray for himself, and confessed it was good for him to be in desertion. He was greatly strengthened and comforted, by opening his Bible on Isaiah liv, 7, 8: “*For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.*” He saw the rod, and submitted to the correction.

The Lord encouraged him also by Sarah Pearce declaring, that “she first received comfort on hearing me explain the fifth chapter of the Romans. She had the witness of her own spirit, that all the marks I mentioned were upon her; and the Spirit of God, with his testimony, put it beyond the possibility of a doubt. Some of her words were—‘I was extremely bigoted against my brethren the Dissenters, but am now enlarged towards them and all mankind, in an inexpressible manner. I do not depend upon a start of comfort, but find it increase ever since it began. I perceive a great change in myself, and expect a greater. I feel a divine attraction in my soul to heavenly things. I was once so afraid of death that I durst not sleep, but now I do not fear it at all. I desire nothing on earth: I fear nothing but sin. God suffers me to be strongly tempted; but I know, where he gives faith he will try it.’—See here the true assurance of faith! How consistent! An humble, not doubting faith: A filial, not servile, fear of offending. I desire not *such* an assurance as blots out these Scriptures, ‘*Be not high-minded, but fear: Work out your salvation with fear and trembling,*’ &c. God keep me in constant fear, lest that, by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

“I spoke plainly to the women-bands of their unadvisedness, their want of love, and not bearing one another’s burdens. We found an immediate effect. Some were convinced they had thought too highly of themselves; and that their first love, like their first joy, was only a foretaste of that temper which continually rules in a new heart.” They had not been attentive to that command, “*Go on to perfection.*”

Though there had been no riots, nor any open persecution of the Methodists in Bristol, yet many individuals suffered considerably. “Every

* Men in general would think, that, where there was so much boldness, there would be little tenderness of conscience. We see the contrary. Indeed, tenderness of conscience was at the bottom of the whole work. They feared to grieve the Holy Spirit of God by giving way to the fear of man.

Sunday," says Mr. C. Wesley, "damnation is denounced by some of the clergy against all who hear us ; for we are Papists, Jesuits, seducers, and bringers-in of the Pretender. The clergy murmur aloud at the number of communicants, and threaten to repel them. Yet will not the world bear that we should talk of persecution : No ; for the world now is *Christian!* and the offence of the cross has ceased. Alas ! what would they do farther ? Some lose their bread ; some their habitations : One suffers stripes, another confinement ; yet we must not call this persecution ! Doubtless, they will find some other name for it, when they shall think they do God service by killing us. It is always the lamb that troubles the water."

October 8th, Mr. C. Wesley preached at the Brick-yard. A Mr. Williams, from Kidderminster, who had written to him some time before to go down thither, was present, and much edified and strengthened by the sermon. "I know not," says Mr. C. Wesley, "of what denomination he is, nor is it material ; for he has the mind which was in Christ."

Mr. C. Wesley's sermon, when last at Bradford, had been misunderstood or misrepresented. It was reported that he was a high Calvinist, and great pains had been taken to represent him as such. His brother, Mr. John Wesley, coming to Bristol this evening, it was the opinion of both that he ought to preach again at Bradford, and declare his sentiments openly on this point. The next day, October the 9th, they went to Bradford, where Mr. Charles Wesley preached to a congregation of about two thousand people. Mr. John Wesley prayed first, when Mr. Charles began abruptly, "*If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for US ALL, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things!*" He spake with great boldness and freedom for an hour and a half, holding forth Christ a Saviour for all men. He flattered himself that he had done so much injury to Satan's kingdom, by beating down sin, that he says, "I believe he will no more slander me with being a Predestinarian."

"October 15th, I waited, with my brother, on a Minister about baptizing some of his parishioners. He complained heavily of the multitudes of our communicants, who came to his church, and produced the Canon against *strangers*. He could not admit as a reason for their coming to his church, that they had no sacrament at their own. I offered my assistance to lessen his trouble, but he declined it. He told us, there were hundreds of new communicants last Sunday. We bless God for *this cause* of offence, and pray it may never be removed."

"October 19th, I read part of Mr. Law on Regeneration to our Society. How promising the beginning, and how lame the conclusion ! Christianity, he rightly tells us, is a recovery of the Divine image ; and a Christian is a fallen spirit restored and re-instated in Paradise ; a living mirror of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. After this, he supposes it *possible* for him to be insensible of such a change ; to be happy and holy, translated into Eden, renewed in the likeness of God, and *not to know it*. Nay, we are not to expect, nor bid others expect, any such consciousness, if we listen to him. What wretched inconsistency !" — If a man knows it not, how can he manifest the *fruits* of such a renewal?

When Mr. Wesley baptized adults, professing faith in Christ, he chose to do it by trine immersion, if the persons would submit to it, judging this

to be the Apostolic method of baptizing.* October 26th, he says, "I baptized Mr. Wiggington in the river, by Baptist-Mills, and went on my way rejoicing to French-Hay.—October 27th, I took occasion to show the degeneracy of our modern Pharisees. Their predecessors fasted twice a week; but they maintain their character for holiness at a cheaper rate. In reverence for the Church, some keep their public day on Friday: None regard it, though enjoined as a Fast. Their neglect is equally notorious in regard to prayer and the Sacrament. And yet these men cry out, 'THE CHURCH, THE CHURCH!' when they themselves will not hear the Church, but despise her authority, trample upon her orders, teach contrary to her Articles and Homilies, and break her Canons, even every man of those who of late pretend to enforce their observance.

"October 13th, I wrote to the Bishop of Bristol as follows :

"MY LORD,—Several persons have applied to me for Baptism.† It has pleased God to make me instrumental in their conversion. This has given them such a prejudice for me, that they desire to be received into the Church by my ministry. They choose likewise to be baptized by immersion, and have engaged me to give your Lordship notice, as the Church requires."

"November 2d, I received a summons from Oxford, to *respond* in Divinity Disputations; which, together with other concurrent providences, is a plain call to that place."—His brother met him there. They left Oxford on the 15th of November, and, taking Bristol in their way, they arrived at Tiverton on the 21st, a few days after the funeral of their brother Samuel. Having preached at Exeter during their short stay in these parts, they returned to Bristol on the 28th of the same month.

March 14th, 1740, Mr. C. Wesley visited Gloucester, in company with Thomas Maxfield, who travelled with him most part of this year. The next day he went to Bengeworth, in hopes of seeing his old friend, Mr. Benjamin Seward. But here he met with a disappointment. Mr. Seward had been ill of a fever. His relations, taking advantage of his situation, had intercepted all his letters: They called his fever madness; and now, when he was recovering, placed his servants over him, to prevent any Methodist from coming to him. His brother, Mr. Henry Seward, came to Mr. C. Wesley, and gave him plenty of abuse, calling him scoundrel, rascal, pickpocket, &c. Mr. Wesley made little reply, but ordered notice to be given, that he would preach next day, March 16th, at the usual place, which was near Mr. Seward's house. The brother came to him, to dissuade him from attempting it, telling him that four constables were ordered to apprehend him, if he came near his brother's wall. Mr. C. Wesley, however, was not to be deterred from his purpose by such threatenings; and, when the time of preaching drew near, walked forward towards the place. In his way thither, a Mayor's officer met him, and desired he would go with him to the Mayor. Mr. C. Wesley answered, that he would first wait on his Lord, and then on the Mayor, whom he revered for the sake of his office.

* The Apostolic mode varied, according to circumstances. This is clear from the Acts of the Apostles.

† He mentioned the names of seven persons.

Mr. H. Seward now met him with threatenings and revilings. Mr. C. Wesley began singing, "Shall I for fear of feeble man," &c. This enraged Mr. Henry, who ran about raving like a madman, and quickly got some fellows, fit for his purpose. These laid hold on Mr. C. Wesley, who asked, by what authority they did it? Where was their warrant? Let them show that, and he would save them the trouble of using violence.—They said they had no warrant, but he should not preach there; and dragged him away amidst the cries of the people. Mr. Henry Seward cried out, "Take him away, and duck him!" "I broke out," says Mr. C. Wesley, "into singing, with Thomas Maxfield, and suffered them to carry me whither they pleased. At the bridge in the lane they left me. Then I stood out of the Liberty of the Corporation, and gave out,

Angel of God, whate'er betide,
Thy summons I obey! &c.

Some hundreds followed whom they could not hinder from hearing me, on, 'If God be for us, who can be against us?' Never did I feel so much what I spoke, and the word did not return empty.

"I then waited on Mr. Mayor, the poor sincere ones following me, trembling. He was a little warm at my not coming before. I gave him the reason, and added, that I knew of no law of God or man which I had transgressed; but, if there was any such law, I desired no favour. He said, he should not have denied me leave to preach, even in his own yard; but Mr. H. Seward and the apothecary had assured him, it would quite cast his brother down again. I answered, it would tend to restore him. Here a clergyman spoke much—and nothing. As far as I could pick out his meaning, he grumbled that Mr. Whitefield had spoken against the clergy in his Journal. I told him, if he were a carnal, worldly-minded clergyman, I also might do what he would call railing, I might warn God's people to *beware of false prophets*. I did not say, because I did not know, that he was one of those shepherds who fed themselves, not their flock; but if he was, I was sorry for him, and must leave that sentence of Chrysostom with him, 'Hell is paved with the skulls of Christian Priests.' I turned from him, and asked the Mayor, whether he approved of the treatment I had met with? He said, By no means; and if I complained, he would bind the men over to answer it at the sessions. I told him, I did not complain, neither would I prosecute them, as they well knew. I assured him, that I waited on him, not from interest, for I wanted nothing; not from fear, for I had done no wrong; but from true respect, and to show him that I believed, '*the powers that be, are ordained of God.*'"

March 17th, Mr. C. Wesley preached again, when a troop poured in upon him and the quiet congregation, and made much disturbance. "I enjoyed," says he, "a sweet calm within, even while I preached the Gospel with much contention. These slighter conflicts must fit me for greater." The next day, before preaching, he received a message from the minister, informing him, that, if he did not immediately quit the town, Mr. H. Seward could easily raise a mob, and then he must look to himself. Mr. Canning, and others of his friends, dissuaded him from going to the Society; for his enemies were determined to do him a mischief, which they thought he should avoid, by going out of the way for awhile. But Mr. C. Wesley was not intimidated by threatenings. He adds, "I

went and set upon the opposers. I bid them to rejoice and glory, for now they had terrified me; I was really afraid to leave Evesham: I durst no more do it, than forsake my Captain, or deny my Master, while any one of them opened his mouth against the truth. No man answered a word, or offered to disturb me in my following exhortation. I received great comfort from those words in the first lesson, ‘*Then the men of the city said unto Joash, bring out thy son, that he may die, because he hath cast down the altar of Baal. And Joash said unto all that stood against him, Will ye plead for Baal? If he be a god, let him plead for himself, because one hath cast down his altar.*’ In the afternoon, there was none to plead for him, or to molest me in the work of God, while I showed God’s method of saving souls: ‘*For he maketh sore and bindeth up; he woundeth and his hand maketh whole.*’ The tears that were shed gave comfortable evidence that I had not laboured in vain.”

Mr. C. Wesley went from hence to Westcot, Idbury, and Oxford, where he laboured with his usual success. He then returned to Evesham, saw his friend Mr. Benjamin Seward, and preached without molestation.—April 3d, he arrived in London, and preached at the Foundry, on, “*The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*” He observes, “My heart was enlarged in prayer for the Infant Society.”

May 2d, Mr. C. Wesley received the following letter :

“MY REVEREND FATHER IN CHRIST,—I first received the gift of faith after I had seen myself a lost sinner, bound with a thousand chains, and dropping into hell. Then I heard his voice, ‘*Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee.*’ I saw the Son of God loved me, and gave himself for me. I thought I saw him at the right hand of the Father, making intercession for me. I went on in great joy for four months. Then pride crept in, and I thought the work was finished, when it was but just begun. There I rested, and, in a little time, fell into doubts and fears, whether my sins were really forgiven me, till I plunged myself into the depth of misery. I could not pray, neither had I any desire to do it, or to read the Word. Then did I see my own evil heart, and feel my helplessness, so that I could not so much as think a good thought. My love was turned into hatred, passion, envy, &c. I felt a thousand hells my due, and cried out in bitter anguish of Spirit, ‘*Save, Lord, or I perish.*’ In my last extremity, I saw my Saviour full of grace and truth for me, and heard his voice again, whispering, ‘*Peace, be still.*’ My peace returned, and greater sweetness of love than I ever knew before. Now my joy is calm and solid,—my heart drawn out to the Lord continually. I know that my Redeemer liveth for me: He is my strength and my rock, and will carry on his work in my soul to the day of redemption. Dear Sir, I have spoken the state of my heart as before the Lord. I beg your prayers, that I may go on from strength to strength, from conquering to conquer, till death is swallowed up in victory.
G. MURRAY.”

I shall have occasion to note this letter, and the writer of it, hereafter.

May 8th, Howell Harris being in town, Mr. C. Wesley observes: “He declared his experience before the Society. O what a flame was

kindled ! No man speaks in my hearing as this man speaketh. What a nursing father God has sent us ! He has, indeed, learned of the good Shepherd to carry the lambs in his bosom. Such love, such power, such simplicity, was irresistible." At this meeting, Howell Harris invited all lost sinners, justified, or not justified, to the Lord's Table. "I would not," said he, "for ten thousand worlds, be the man who should keep any from it. There I first found him myself : That is the place of meeting." "He went on," adds Mr. Wesley, "in the power of the Most High. God called forth his witnesses : Several declared they had *found* Christ in the ordinances."—The doctrine newly broached was, that no person had a right to come who was not *justified* : A Pharisaic and mischievous refinement ! Not one of those to whom our Lord administered it, was justified in the *Christian* sense of that word. To be "*justified by his blood*," (Romans v, 9,) was one of *those things of God*, which our Lord told them "*they were not yet able to bear*," John xvi, 12—14. They could only be taught it by the Holy Ghost, who thus "*glorified the Son*."

June 17th, Mr. Wesley says, "We had an extraordinary meeting of the Society, increased from eighteen to three hundred. I took my leave of them with hearty prayer." The next day he set out for Bristol, where he arrived on the 21st, having called at Oxford on his way thither. "My first greeting at Kingswood," says he, "was by a daughter of one of our colliers. In the evening was at the Malt-Room, and addressed myself to those in the wilderness. O what simplicity is in this child-like people ! A spirit of contrition and love ran through them. Here the seed has fallen upon good ground."

"Sunday, June 22d, I went [again] to learn Christ among our colliers, and drank into their spirit. We rejoiced for the consolation. O that some of our London brethren would but come to school to Kingswood ! These *are* what they of London *pretend* to be. God knows their poverty ; but they are rich, and daily entering into his rest. They do not hold it necessary to deny weak faith, in order to get strong. Their souls truly wait upon God in his ordinances. Ye many masters, come learn Christ of these outcasts ; for know, that *except ye be converted*, and *become like these little children*, *ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven*. I met several of those whom I had baptized, and found them growing in grace."

"June 30. I now spent a week at Oxford to little purpose, but that of obedience to man, for the Lord's sake. In the Hall, I read my two Lectures on the cxxxth Psalm, preaching repentance towards God and faith in Christ Jesus. But learned Gallio cared for none of these things."

July 16th.—Being returned to Bristol, he observes, "While I was meeting the Bands, my mouth was opened to reprove, rebuke, and exhort, in words not my own. All trembled before the presence of God. I was forced to cut off a rotten member : but felt such love and pity at the time, as humbled me into the dust. It was, as if one criminal was executing another. We betook ourselves to fervent prayer for him, and the Society. The spirit of prayer was poured out upon us, and we returned to the Lord, with weeping and mourning."—See here the true *Apostolical* Spirit of Church Discipline.

Many of the colliers, who had been abandoned to every kind of wick-

edness, even to a proverb, were now become pious, and zealous for the things of God. A great number of these, at this time, came to the churches in Bristol on the Lord's day, for the benefit of the sacrament. But most of the Bristol ministers repelled them from the table, because they did not belong to their parishes. Setting religion aside, common humanity would have taught them to rejoice in so remarkable a reformation among these wretched people. But these watchmen of Israel did not choose to have any increase of trouble. Can we wonder that the Methodists had such great success in preaching the Gospel to the middling and lower orders of the people, when such as these had in that day the care of most of the parishes in England? The case is now, thank God, greatly altered.

"July 27.—I heard a miserable sermon," says Mr. C. Wesley, "at Temple-Church, recommending religion as the most likely way to raise a fortune. After sermon, proclamation was made, that all should depart who were not of the parish. While the shepherd was driving away the lambs, I staid, suspecting nothing, till the clerk came to me and said, 'Mr. Beacher bids you go away, for he will not give you the sacrament.' I went to the vestry door, and mildly desired Mr. Beacher to admit me. He asked, 'Are you of this parish?' I answered, Sir, you see that I am a clergyman. Then dropping his first pretence, he charged me with rebellion, in expounding the Scripture without authority; and said in express words, 'I repel you from the sacrament.' I replied, I cite you to answer this, before JESUS CHRIST, at the day of judgment. This enraged him above measure; he called out, '*Here, take away this man.*' The constables had been ordered to attend, I suppose, lest the colliers should take the sacrament by force! but I saved them the trouble of taking away '*this man,*' and quietly retired."—These things are but poor evidences, that the Bristol ministers were at that time the true successors of the apostles!

In August, Mr. C. Wesley had a very dangerous fever. It was reported, and published in the papers, that he was dead. Upon his recovery, he observes, "I found myself after this gracious visitation, more desirous and able to pray; more afraid of sin; more earnestly longing for deliverance, and the fulness of Christian salvation."—Soon afterwards two or three of the Society died, in the triumph of faith, and full assurance of hope; which strengthened the hands and comforted the hearts of those who were left behind.

September 22d, Mr. C. Wesley was informed that the colliers had risen;* and riding out from Bristol, he met about a thousand of them at Lawrence-Hill. The occasion of their rising was, the dearness of corn. He went up to an eminence, and began to talk to them. Many seemed inclined to go back with him to the school, which some of the most desperate perceiving, they rushed violently upon the others, beating, tearing, and driving them every way from Mr. C. Wesley. He adds, "I rode up to a ruffian, who was striking one of our colliers,† and prayed him rather to strike me. He answered, 'No, not for all the world,' and was quite overcome. I turned upon another, who struck my horse, and he also sunk into a lamb. Wherever I turned, Satan's cause lost ground, so that they were obliged to make one general

* A common thing in that day among that lawless people. † He means a collier, who was in the Methodist Society.

assault, and the violent colliers forced the quiet ones into the town. I seized one of the tallest, and earnestly besought him to follow me: 'Yes,' he said, 'that he would, all the world over.' I pressed about six into Christ's service. We met several parties, and stopped and exhorted them to follow us: and gleaning some from every company, we increased as we marched on, singing to the school. From one till three o'clock, we spent in prayer, that evil might be prevented, and the lion chained. Then news was brought us, that the colliers were returned in peace. They had walked quietly into the city, without sticks or the least violence. A few of the better sort of them went to the mayor, and told their grievance; then they all returned as they came, without noise or disturbance. All who saw it were amazed. Nothing could more clearly have shown the change wrought among them, than *this conduct on such an occasion*.

"I found afterwards, that all our colliers to a man, had been forced away. Having learned of Christ not to resist evil, they *went a mile* with those who compelled them,* rather than free themselves by violence. One man the rioters dragged out of his sickbed, and threw into the Fish Ponds. Near twenty of Mr. Willis's men they had prevailed on, by threatening to fill up their pits, and bury them alive, if they did not come up and bear them company."†

November 6th.—He set out for Wales. Here, vain disputings and janglings about absolute predestination, had done much harm in several societies; even Howell Harris, embracing this doctrine, had been greatly estranged from his friend. Any doctrine comes poorly recommended to us, when it almost uniformly diminishes Christian love and friendship. That the diminution of Christian love was on the part of H. Harris, is evident from the following letter, which Mr. Wesley sent him from Cardiff, on the 10th of November.

"MY DEAREST FRIEND AND BROTHER,—In the name of Jesus Christ, I beseech you, if you have his glory and the good of souls at heart, to come immediately to meet me here. I trust we shall never be *two*, in time or eternity. O! my brother, I am grieved that Satan should get a moment's advantage over us; and am ready to lay my neck under your feet for Christ's sake. If your heart be as my heart, hasten, in the name of our dear Lord, to your second self."—This letter shows a mind susceptible of the strongest attachments of friendship, and does Mr. C. Wesley great honour. Howell Harris, however, did not come to him till the 18th, when he was at Lantrissant, and preparing to leave Wales. Mr. C. Wesley adds, "All misunderstanding vanished at the sight of each other, and our hearts were knit together as at the beginning. Before the Society met, several persons were with me, desiring that as I had now got him, I would reprove him openly. Some wanted me to preach against lay-preaching; some against predestination, &c. In my discourse, a gentleman, who had come thither on purpose, interrupted me by desiring I would now speak to Mr. Harris, since I was sent for to disprove his errors. I quashed all farther importunity by declaring, 'I am unwilling to speak of my brother Harris,

* Mathew v, 41.

† This was a common practice among these ungodly men. At those risings, they suffered none to stay at home. Whether they would act or not, they must go with them.

because when I begin, I know not where to leave off, and should say so much good of him, as some of you could not bear.’”

During the sermon on the following Sunday, while Mr. C. Wesley was describing the state of the Pharisee, a physician of the place found himself hurt, and got up and walked out of the church. On the Tuesday following, being unusually heated with wine, and urged on by a company of players determined on mischief, he came to the house where the people were assembled, to demand satisfaction for the injury he supposed that he had received. He struck Mr. C. Wesley and several of the women with his cane, and raged like a madman, till the men forced him out of the room, and shut the door. Soon after, it was broken open by a justice of the peace, and the bailiff, or head magistrate. “The latter began expostulating with me,” says Mr. Wesley, “upon the affront offered the Doctor. He said, as it was a public injury, I ought to make him a public satisfaction. I answered, Mr. Bailiff, I honour you for your office sake; but were you, or his Majesty King George, among my hearers, I should tell you both, that you are by nature sinners, *or children of wrath, even as others*. In the church while preaching, I have no superior but God, and shall not ask man leave to tell him of his sins. As a ruler, it is your duty to be “*a terror to evil doers, but a praise to them that do well*.” Upon thus speaking to him, he became exceedingly civil, assured me of his good-will, and that he had come to prevent me from being insulted, and no one should touch a hair of my head.

“While we were talking, the Doctor made another attempt to break in and get at me, but the two justices and others, with much trouble, got him away; and we continued our triumph in the name of the Lord our God. *The shout of a King was among us*. We sang unconcerned, though the players had beset the house, were armed, and threatened to burn it. The ground of their quarrel with me was, that the preaching of the Gospel had starved them. We prayed and sang with great tranquillity till one in the morning; then I lay down till three. I rose again and was scarcely got into the room, [where he was to preach at five,] when they discovered a player just by me, who had stolen in unobserved. They seized him, and F. Farley wrested a sword from him. There was no need of drawing it, for the point and blade were stript of the scabbard, about a hand’s breadth. Great was our rejoicing within, and the uproar of the players without. My female advisers were by no means for my venturing out, but wished me to defer my journey. I preferred Mr. Wells’s advice, of going with him through the midst of our enemies. We called on the poor creature they had secured. On sight of me he cried out, “Indeed, Mr. Wesley, I did not intend to do you any harm.” That, I answered, was best known to God and his own heart; but I told him that my principle was to return good for evil, and therefore desired he might be released; and with Mr. Wells walked down to the water-side, no man forbidding me.”—The next day, November the 20th, he arrived safe in Bristol.

He goes on. “November 30th, I gave the sacrament to our sister Taylor, dying in triumph. Here is another witness to the truth of the Gospel we preach. Commend me to a religion, upon which I can trust my soul while entering into eternity.

"December 2d, I preached on the threefold office of Christ, at Kingswood, and never with greater power. It constrained even the Separatists (the Calvinists) to own, that God was with us of a truth. I rode back in a glorious storm of thunder, lightning, and rain; my spirit rejoicing in hope of the glory of God. He opened my mouth again in the Society, and I spoke in much grief, of our desolate mother, the Church of England. My heart yearns towards her, when I think upon her ruins; and it pitieth me to see her in the dust.

"December 5th, I was much refreshed in spirit among some of my friends the Quakers, by a writer of theirs, who strongly insists on the perfect death unto sin, and life unto righteousness, which every Christian experiences. Death must precede life, and condemnation justification. This he as clearly teaches as any of our first Reformers."

December 24th, Mr. C. Wesley set out, with Thomas Maxfield, for London, where they arrived the next day. On the 27th, he says, "Six or seven hundred of us met from eleven o'clock till one, to praise God with the voice of joy and thanksgiving. He hath done great things for us already; but we shall see greater things than these.—I dined at the house of a Dissenter, who was armed cap-a-pee with her faith of adherence, brimful of the Five Points, and going on to the perfection described in Romans the Seventh! On the 28th, I earnestly warned the Bands not to fancy they had new hearts before they had seen the deceitfulness of the old; not to think they would ever be above the necessity of prayer; not to yield for one moment to the spirit of judging. Mr. Aspersal told me strange things, and I fear true, of some new creatures *of their own making*, who have been caught in gross lies."

April 4th, 1741. Mr. C. Wesley set out for Bristol, and arrived there in safety the next day.—April 7th, he says, "I prayed by one, supposed to be at the point of death. He rejoiced to meet the king of terrors; and appeared so sweetly resigned, so ready for the Bridegroom, that I longed to change places with him.—April 11th, Found a dying sinner rejoicing in God her Saviour. At sight of me, she cried out, 'O how loving is God to me! But he is loving to every man; he loves every soul as well * as he loves mine.' Many like words she uttered in triumphant faith, and witnessed in death the universal love of Jesus Christ.—April 12th, To-day he called forth another of his dying witnesses. The young woman, whom, at my last visit, I left in utter despair, this morning broke out into the following expressions: 'I see, I see it now, that Jesus Christ died for me; and for all the world.' Some of her words to me were, 'Death stares me in the face, but I fear him not, he cannot hurt me.' And again, 'Death may shake his dart in vain; God is love, pure love, love to every man!' The next I saw, was our brother S——.

With joyful eyes, and looks Divine,
Smiling and pleased in death.

April 13th, I gave the sacrament to the Bands of Kingswood, not of Bristol; in obedience, as I told them, to the Church of England, which requires a weekly sacrament at every Cathedral. But as they had it not there, and as, on this particular Sunday, they were refused it, at Temple-Church, (I myself, with many of them, having been repelled,)

* Not so well; but as really. The Lord certainly loves *believers* as he does not love those who *will not have him to rule over them*.

I therefore administered it to them in our school ; and had we wanted a house, would justify doing it in the midst of the wood. I strongly urged the duty of receiving it, as often as they could be admitted to the Churches. Such a sacrament I never was present at before. We received the sure pledges of our Saviour's dying love ; and were filled with all joy and peace in believing."—This, it seems, was the beginning of the practice of administering the sacrament at Kingswood : But only by Clergymen.

"April 20th, Returning from Baptist-Mills, I heard that our sister Richardson had finished her course.* My soul was filled with strong consolation, and struggled, as it were, to go out after her, as heavenward endeavouring. Jesus, my time is in thy hand : Only let me follow her, as she has followed Thee ! The voice of joy and thanksgiving was in the congregation, while I spake of her death.

"April 22d.—I hastened to the joyful funeral. The New Room was crowded within and without. I spake largely of her whose faith they might safely follow. Great was my glorying and rejoicing over her. She, being dead, yet spake in words of faith and love, which ought to be had in remembrance. We were, in a measure, partakers of her joy, '*a joy unspeakable and full of glory.*' The whole society followed her to the grave, through all the city. Satan raged exceedingly in his children, who threw dirt and stones at us. After the burial, we joined in the following hymn,

Come let us, who in Christ believe,
With Saints and Angels join, &c.

"May 1st.—I visited a sister dying in the Lord : Then two others, one mourning after, the other rejoicing in, God her Saviour. I was now informed that another of our sisters, E. Smith, is gone home in triumph. She witnessed a good confession of the universal Saviour, and gave up her spirit with these words, '*I go to my heavenly Father !*'

"May 4.—I rejoiced over our sister Hooper. The outward man decayeth, but the inner man is renewed. For one whole night, she had wrestled with all the powers of darkness ; but having done all, she stood unshaken. From henceforth she was kept in perfect peace, and that wicked one touched her not.—I saw her again in great bodily weakness, but strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. I spoke with her physician, who said he had little hope of her recovery ; 'Only,' added he, 'she has no dread upon her spirits, which is generally the worst symptom. Most people die for fear of dying ; but I never met with such people as yours. They are none of them afraid of death ; but calm, and patient, and resigned to the last.'—He had said to her, 'Madam, be not cast down.'—She answered, smiling, 'Sir, I shall never be cast down.'

"May 6th.—Found our sister Hooper just at the haven. She expressed, while able to speak, her fulness of confidence and love ; and her desire to be with Christ. At my next visit, I saw her in the last conflict. The angel of death was come, and there were but a few moments between her and a blessed eternity. We poured out our souls to God, for her, her children, ourselves, the church and ministers, and for all mankind. My soul was tenderly affected for her sufferings, but the joy swallowed up the sorrow. How much then did her consolations

* He wrote a fine hymn upon her death.—See the Funeral Hymns.

abound! The servants of Christ, *comparatively speaking*, suffer nothing. I asked her, whether she was not in great pain? 'Yes,' she answered, 'but in greater joy. I would not be without either.'—But do you not prefer life or death?—She replied, 'All is alike to me; let Christ choose, I have no will of my own.'—Her spirit ascended to God, and we kneeled down and gave God thanks from the ground of our heart. Then we had recourse to the book of comfort, and found it written, '*Let us therefore labour to enter into that rest:*' Even so, come, Lord Jesus! and give us an inheritance among all them that are sanctified.

"May 8th.—We solemnized her funeral,* and rejoiced over her with singing. A great multitude attended her to the grave. There we sang another hymn of triumph. I found myself pressed in spirit to speak to those who contradicted and blasphemed. While I reasoned on death and judgment to come, many trembled; one woman cried out in horrible agony. We returned to the room, and continued our solemn rejoicings, all desiring to be dissolved and to be with Christ."

O how much it is to be lamented, that such a man should ever have preferred *rest*! That he should ever have ceased *going about doing good*.

"May 31st.—Throughout this day, I found my strength increase with my labour. I read, in the society, my account of Hannah Richardson.† She, being dead, yet spake so powerfully to our hearts, that my voice was lost in the sorrowful sighing of such as be in captivity. To several, God showed himself the God of consolation; particularly to two young Welshmen, whom his providence sent hither from Caermarthen. They had heard most dreadful stories of us, *Arminians, Freewillers, Perfectionists, Papists*; which all vanished like smoke, when they came to hear with their own ears. God applied to their hearts the word of his power. I took them to my lodgings, and stocked them with books; then sent them away, recommended to the grace of God, which bringeth salvation to all men.

"June 16th.—I preached in Kingswood, on the dreadful word, 'SELL ALL,' [that is, *Do, and use, all things for God.*] How has the Devil baffled those teachers, who, for fear of setting men upon works, forbear urging this first *universal duty*! If enforcing, Christ's words be to preach works, I hope I shall preach works as long as I live."

July 11th. Mr. C. Wesley preached five times this day; once at Bristol, twice at Kingswood, again at a place called Sawford, and at Bath. He observes, "Satan took it ill to be attacked in his headquarters, that Sodom of our land, Bath. He raged horribly in his children. They went out, and came back again, and mocked, and at last roared, as if each man's name had been Legion. The sincere were melted into tears, and strong desires of salvation."—It is pleasing to reflect on the change which has taken place in Bath, since the time of which Mr. C. Wesley is here speaking. God has raised up many faithful witnesses of his truth, both among the Methodists, and other denominations, who have been ornaments to the Christian profession; and at present the Gospel is preached there without molestation.

* This was a very early interment; but I suppose the state of the body made it necessary.

† This account was printed. See Mr. John Wesley's Works, vol. xiii, page 213.

July 13th. He set out for Cardiff, and on the 15th rode on with Mr. Wells, Mr. Hodges, and others, to Fonmon-Castle. Mr. C. Wesley adds, "Mr. Jones, who had sent for me, received me very courteously. He civilly apologized for the first question, which he asked me as a magistrate: 'Whether I was a Papist? or, whether I was a member of the Established Church of England? He was fully satisfied with my answers; and I found we were cotemporaries at the same college. After dinner he sent to Porthkerry, where, at his desire, Mr. Richards the minister lent me his pulpit. I preached on '*God so loved the world,*' &c. Never hath he given me more convincing words. The flock, and their shepherd, were deeply affected. After sermon, Mr. Richards begged my pardon, for having believed the strange reports circulated concerning me. God had now spoken the contrary to his heart, and to the hearts of his people. I yielded to Mr. Jones's importunity, and agreed to delay my return to Bristol, that I might preach here once more, and spend a night at the Castle."

July 17th. Mr. C. Wesley met Mr. and Mrs. Jones at Mr. Richards's, where he again preached, and in the evening went to the Castle. He adds, "We ate our bread with gladness and singleness of heart, and at seven o'clock I preached to some hundreds in the court-yard. My three brethren, the Rev. Messrs. Richards, Wells, and Hodges, stood in the midst of the people, and kneeled on the ground in prayer, and cried after the Son of David. He breathed into our souls strong desires. O! that he may confirm, increase, and satisfy them. The voice of thanksgiving was heard in this place. Before and after supper, we sang and blessed God with joyful lips. They in the parlour, and kitchen, were continually honouring Him, by offering up praise. I thought it looked like the house of faithful Abraham. The next day, July 18th, I took sweet counsel with Mr. Jones alone. The seed is sown in his heart, and, I trust, will bring forth fruit unto perfection. His wife joined us, and I commended them to the grace of God in earnest prayer, and then went on my way rejoicing."

Mr. C. Wesley now returned to Bristol; and on August the 3d, he preached a funeral sermon for Mrs. Peacock, who died in the Lord most triumphantly. He observes, "She was always praising God for giving her such patience. All her desires were unto the Lord, and she continued calling upon him, in all the confidence of love, till he received her into his more immediate presence. At the sight of her coffin, my soul was moved within me, and struggled as a bird to break its cage. Some relief I found in tears; but still was so overpowered, that, unless God had abated the vehemence of my desires, I could have had no utterance. The whole congregation partook with me in the blessedness of mourning."

His feelings were generally very strong. I have seen him thus moved, when preaching to the condemned malefactors in Newgate, a year or two before he died.

August 6th.—Coming to pray by a poor Welsh woman, she began with me, 'Blessed be God that ever I heard you! Jesus, my Jesus, has heard me on a bed of sickness. He is in my heart; He is my strength; none shall pluck me out of his hands. I cannot leave him, and he will not leave me. O! do not let me ask for death, if thou wouldst have me live. I know thou canst keep me. If thou wouldst

have me live, let me live humbly with thee all my days.'—I sat and heard her sing the new song, till even my hard heart was melted. She glorified the Saviour of the world, who would have all men to be saved. 'I know it,' said she, 'he would not have one sinner lost. Believe, and he will give you all that which he has given me.'—Surely this was the true Gospel of God our Saviour!"

On the 24th of this month Mr. C. Wesley, in company with F. Farley, paid another visit to his friends in Wales, and again in September, staying only a few days each time. Mr. Jones, of Fonmon-Castle, accompanied him in his return from the last visit; being desirous of seeing the wonderful effects of the Gospel among the wild and ignorant colliers of Kingswood. Thither Mr. C. Wesley took him on the 20th of September, and says, "It was a glorious time at the Society, where God called forth his witnesses. Our guest was filled with consolation, and acknowledged that God was with us of a truth. I met the Bands, and strongly urged them to press towards the mark. I read them a letter full of threatenings to take our house by violence. We laughed our enemies to scorn: Faith saw *'the mountain full of horsemen and chariots of fire.'* Our brother from Wales was compelled to bear his testimony, and declare before all what God had done for his soul. He warned us to prepare for the storm, which would surely fall upon us, if the work went on. His artless words were greatly blessed to us all; and our hearts were bowed and warmed by the spirit of love, as the heart of one man.

"September 22d.—Mr. Jones wished to take me to some of his great friends in the city, particularly a counsellor, about the threatened seizure of our school. I feared nothing but trusting to an arm of flesh: Our safety is, to be still. However, at his importunity, I went with him a little way, then turned back, and at last agreed to go with him to Justice C—r, the most forward of our adversaries. He received us courteously. I said, I came to wait upon him in respect to his office, having heard his name mentioned among some who were offended at the good we did to the poor colliers; that I should be sorry to give any just cause of complaint, and was willing to know if any had been made; that many idle reports were spread, as if he should countenance the violence of those who had seized the house of Mr. C——, and now threatened to take away the colliers' school. He said it would make a good workhouse.—I caught hold of the expression, and replied, It is a workhouse already.—'Ay,' said he, 'but what work is done there?'—I answered, We work the works of God, which man cannot hinder.—'But you occasion the increase of the poor.'—Sir, you are misinformed; the reverse of that is true. None of our Society is chargeable to you; even those who were so before they heard us, are not so now; the men who spent all their wages at the alehouse now never go there at all, but keep their money to maintain their families, and have to give to those who want.* Notorious swearers have now only the praises of God in their mouths. The good done among them is indisputable; our worst enemies cannot deny it. No one who hears us continues either to

* When the weekly subscription of a penny was first proposed to the colliers, they were amazed at the smallness of the sum required. One of them cried out, "A penny a week! I'll give twenty shillings." He had that sum at home, which he knew not what to do with, and wished to give it all. They have learned from the gospel the right use of money, to the great comfort of themselves and others.

swear or drink. 'If I thought so,' he hastily replied, (*in eodem luto hæsitans*,*) 'I would come and hear you myself.' I desired he would; and said, the grace of God was as sufficient for him as for our colliers, and who knew but he might be converted among us?

"I gave him to understand that Mr. Jones was in the commission of the peace, who then asked him on what pretence they had seized Mr. C——'s house? He utterly denied having had any hand in it, and said he should not at all concern himself. 'For if what you do, you do for gain, you have your reward: If for the sake of God, he will recompense you. I am of Gamaliel's mind, if this counsel or work be of men, it will come to nought, but if it be of God'—I proceeded, *Ye cannot overthrow it, lest haply ye be found to fight against God: Follow therefore Gamaliel's advice: Take heed to yourselves, refrain from these men, and let them alone.* He seemed determined so to do, and thus, through the blessing of God, we parted friends.

"In the way home I admired the Hand which directs all our paths. In the evening, at Bristol, we found, under the word, that there is none like unto the God of Jeshurun. It was a time of sweet refreshment. Just when I had done, my brother came in from London, as if sent on purpose to be comforted together with us.† He exhorted and prayed with the congregation for another half hour. Then we went to our friend Vigor's; and, for an hour or two longer, our souls were satisfied as with marrow and fatness, while we praised God with joyful lips. Mr. C. Wesley wrote a beautiful Elegy on the death of Mr. Jones. It is printed in his Sacred Poems.

CHAPTER IV.

PROGRESS OF RELIGION—CURIOUS QUERIES CONCERNING THE METHODISTS—ESTABLISHMENT OF THE METHODIST DISCIPLINE—DEATH OF MRS. WESLEY—INTERESTING LETTER, ILLUSTRATIVE OF HER CHARACTER.

WHILE Mr. C. Wesley thus laboured, Mr. J. Wesley proceeded northward to Nottingham, where he preached at the market-place to an immense multitude of people. On his return to London, he read over in the way Luther's Comment on the Epistle to the Galatians. He passes a severe sentence on Luther, for decrying *Reason*, right or wrong, as an enemy to the Gospel of Christ; and for speaking *blasphemously* of Good Works and the Law of God. Dr. Whitehead observes, "The severity of this sentence, perhaps, arose from a misconception of the scope and design of Luther's words."—That Luther sometimes spake incautiously, and even rashly, we may readily admit, and that his words on such occasions, may be easily understood in a sense he did not intend: which was probably the case in the passages to which Mr. Wesley refers. "But," he observes, "some allowance is to be made for Luther's situation, who had to contend against what might be truly

* As if sticking in the same mud.—TERENCE.

† This exactly accords with Mr. John Wesley's printed Journal. See his Works, vol. xxviii, page 5.

called, the CHRISTIAN WORLD.”—And Mr. Wesley made that allowance: See his sermon on *Salvation by Faith* before the University. Luther certainly *leaned*, at least, to Antinomianism at one period of his life, like other excellent men, who have awaked from the Pharisaic delusion.

June 18, 1741.—Being at Oxford, Mr. Wesley inquired concerning the exercises previous to the degree of Bachelor in Divinity. And though he, certainly, was well qualified to pass through the various gradations of academical honours, yet he soon laid aside the thought of proceeding farther in them. Having visited London, he was again at Oxford in the beginning of July; and, on the 6th, being in the College-library, “I took down,” says he, “by mistake, the Works of Episcopus; which opening on an account of the Synod of Dort, I believed it might be useful to read it through. But what a scene is here disclosed? What a pity it is that the *holy* Synod of Trent, and that of Dort, did not sit at the same time! nearly allied as they were, not only as to the *purity of doctrine*, which each of them established, but also as to the *spirit* wherewith they acted,—if the latter did not exceed!”—Perhaps this may by some be thought too severe. That excellent man, Episcopus, would not be considered an unexceptionable judge, had not his account of that Ecclesiastical Convention received ample confirmation from the official despatches to the British Ambassador at the Hague, which were transmitted from Dort, generally twice a week, by two violent Calvinists,—the famous John Hales, of Eton, and Walter Balcanqual; the latter of whom afterwards became more moderate in his sentiments; and the other, an avowed Arminian, and consequently a great sufferer under the Commonwealth. Nothing, therefore, can excuse the violent spirit displayed by that Synod, in its treatment of the cited persons and of the more moderate of its own members, and also in the ecclesiastical Canons which it wished to impose upon the Protestant part of Christendom. The succeeding Remonstrants, indeed, degenerated from the evangelical faith of Arminius: Not a few of them leaned to Pelagianism. This, however, was not the way to overthrow Calvinism: But *the work of God*, since that time, has so illustrated *his word*, as to enable Evangelical Truth to stand without such props.

July 15th, Mr. Wesley reached Bristol, and tells us, he came just in season: “For,” says he, “a spirit of enthusiasm was breaking in upon many, who charged their own *imagination*s on the *word of God*, and that, not *written*, but *impressed on their hearts*. If these *impressions* be received as the rule of action, instead of the *written word*, I know nothing so wicked or absurd but we may fall into, and that without remedy.”—We have here full and satisfactory evidence, that Mr. Wesley paid no regard to impressions or inward feelings, if they did not accord with the written word, by which alone we must judge of them. His belief on this subject was plainly this: 1. Without experience of present salvation from our sins, the Gospel has no saving influence on our hearts. 2. Such experience can have no existence without inward feeling; that is, a consciousness of that salvation. 3. We must judge of the reality of our experience by the *word of God*, to which it will answer, as face answers to face in a glass, if it be of God; otherwise, a mere creature of our own imagination has deceived us.

The following Queries concerning the Methodists were sent, I

apprehend, from Holland or Germany. The answer to each is in Mr. Wesley's handwriting, and the date prefixed is 1741. But it must have been very early in this year, and before the separation of Mr. Wesley and Mr. Whitefield.

Quest. 1. Whether the number of the Methodists is considerable, among the students and learned men?

Answ. The number of the Methodists is not considerable, among the students and learned men.

2. Whether at Oxford, where the Methodists first sprung up, there be still many of them among the scholars?

There are very few of them now left among the scholars at Oxford.

3. Whether they are all of one mind, and whether they have the same principles? Especially,

4. Whether those Methodists, that are still at Oxford, approve of the sentiments and actions of Mr. Whitefield and Messrs. Wesley?

They are all of the same principles with the Church of England, as laid down in her Articles and Homilies: And, 4. Do accordingly approve of the sentiments of Mr. Whitefield and Mr. Wesley, and of their publishing them elsewhere, since they have been shut out of the churches.

5. How they came to revive those doctrines, hitherto neglected by the clergy of the Church of England, of Predestination, the New Birth, and Justification by Faith alone? And,

6. Whether they have had the same from the Moravian brethren?

Predestination is not a doctrine taught by the Methodists.* But they do teach that men must be born again, and that we are saved through faith: And, 6. The latter of these they learned from some of the Moravian brethren; the former, by reading the New Testament.

7. Whether they be orthodox in other doctrinal points, and whether they lead an unblamable Christian life?

They openly challenge all that hear them, to answer those questions, "*Which of you convinceth me of sin?*" or of teaching any doctrine contrary to the Scripture? And the general accusation against them is, that they are "*righteous overmuch.*"

8. Whether they strictly regulate themselves according to the rule and discipline of the Moravian brethren; except that they still keep and observe the outward worship, according to the Church of England?

They do not regulate themselves according to the discipline of the Moravians, but of the English Church.

9. Whether they do any real good among the common people?

Very many of the common people among whom they preach, were profane swearers, and now fear an oath; were gluttons or drunkards, and are now temperate; were whoremongers, and are now chaste; were servants of the devil, and are now servants of God.

10. Why the Bishops do not effectually inhibit them, and hinder their field and street preaching?

The Bishops do not inhibit their field and street preaching: 1. Because there is no law in England against it. 2. Because God does not yet suffer them to do it without law.

* He means *absolute* Predestination.

11. Whether the Archbishop of Canterbury is satisfied with them, as we are told ?

The Archbishop of Canterbury is not satisfied with them ; especially since Mr. Molther, in the name of the Moravian church, told his Grace their disapprobation of them, and, in particular, of their field-preaching.

12. Whether their private assemblies or societies are orderly and edifying ?

Their private assemblies and societies are orderly, and many say they find them edifying.

13. What opinion the Presbyterians, and particularly Dr. Watts, has of them ?

Most of the Presbyterians, and most of all other denominations, are of opinion, much religion hath made them mad.

14. Whether there are any Methodists among the Episcopal clergy of the Church of England ?

Mr. Whitefield, Hutchins, Robson, and the two Messrs. Wesley, and several others, are priests of the Episcopal Church of England.

The openess with which Mr. Wesley answered the queries is striking : It is quite the man ! His mind seems to have been wholly free from any desire to exaggerate or magnify the things of which he spake. Mr. Walker, of Truro, in one of his letters to Mr. Wesley, expressed a fear, lest he should be too careful about the reputation of the Methodists. Mr. Wesley replied, " I am just as careful about their reputation, as about the reputation of Prester John ! " To maintain truth, was his one care. About the work he felt no anxiety.

Mr. Wesley, soon after 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, I shall give the account of his entrance on that work in his own words. He says :—

" 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.'

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

“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 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 highway 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? She replied, ‘I thank God, I know it well; and many here can say the same thing.’”

Mr. Wesley 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 churchyard, 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 11th.—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. Surely he who sent his Spirit to breathe upon them, will hear their cry and help them.

“Saturday 12th.—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 13th.—At six, I preached for the last time in Epworth churchyard, (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 too; and my strength also seemed spent in vain. But now the fruit appeared. There was 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 2d, 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 respectable 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 shown to his, as well as personally to himself."*

On a subsequent visit to Newcastle, where his brother Charles had been preaching some weeks before, with great success, a society was formed. The next morning Mr. Wesley began to preach at five o'clock, a thing unheard of in those parts, till he introduced the practice; which he did every where, if there was any probability that a few persons could be gathered to hear him. On the 18th, he says, "I could not but observe the different manner wherein God is pleased to work in different places. The grace of God flows here, with a wider stream than it did at first either at Bristol, or Kingswood. But it does not sink so deep as it did there. Few are thoroughly convinced of sin, and scarce any can witness, that the Lamb of God has taken away their sins. I

* I have documents before me which abundantly prove this.

never saw," says he, "a work of God in any other place, so evenly and gradually carried on. It continually rises step by step. Not so much seems to be done at any one time, as hath frequently been done at Bristol or London; but something at every time. It is the same with particular souls. I saw none in the triumph of faith, which has been so common in other places. But the believers go on calm and steady. Let God do as seemeth him good."

Dec. 20th.—Having obtained a piece of ground, forty yards in length, to build a house for their meetings and public worship, they laid the first stone of the building. It being computed, that such a house as was proposed, could not be finished under seven hundred pounds, many were positive it would never be finished at all. "I was of another mind," says Mr. Wesley, "nothing doubting, but as it was begun for God's sake, he would provide what was needful for the finishing of it."

Dec. 30th.—He took his leave for the present of Newcastle, and the towns where he preached in the neighbourhood, and came as far as Darlington that night. "What encouragement," says he, "have we to speak for God! At our inn we met an ancient man, who seemed, by his conversation, never to have thought whether he had a soul or not. Before we set out, I spoke a few words concerning his cursing and idle conversation. The man appeared quite broken in pieces. The tears started into his eyes; and he acknowledged, with abundance of thanks, his own guilt, and the goodness of God."

Mr. Wesley informed me, that he had one pound six shillings when he undertook to build the preaching-house at Newcastle, at that time the largest in England. Soon after he began, he received a letter from a pious Quaker, (who had heard of the work at Newcastle,) in the following terms:—"Friend Wesley, I have had a dream concerning thee. I thought I saw thee surrounded with a large flock of sheep, which thou didst not know what to do with. My first thought after I awoke was, that it was thy flock at Newcastle, and that thou hadst no house of worship for them. I have enclosed a note for one hundred pounds, which may help thee to provide a house."—The building rose by supplies received from time to time, like Professor Francke's at Halle, and Mr. Wesley called it by the same name,—“The Orphan House.”

While Mr. Wesley thus went on in the work of the Lord, the spurious works of man sometimes encountered him. Having received a letter pressing him to go without delay into Leicestershire, he set out. "The next afternoon," says he, "I stopped a little at Newport-Pagnell, and then rode on till I overtook a serious man, with whom I immediately fell into conversation. He presently gave me to know what his opinions were; therefore I said nothing to contradict them. But that did not content him; he was quite uneasy to know, 'Whether I held the doctrine of the decrees as he did.' But I told him over and over, we had better keep to practical things, lest we should be angry at one another. And so we did for two miles, till he caught me unawares, and dragged me into the dispute before I knew where I was. He then grew warmer and warmer; told me, I was rotten at heart; and supposed I was of John Wesley's followers. I told him, No, I am John Wesley himself. Upon which he appeared,

*In provisum aspris veluti qui sentibus anguem
Pres sit*

‘*As one who had unwares trodden on a snake :*’ And would gladly have run away outright. But being the better mounted of the two, I kept close to his side, and endeavoured to show him his heart, till we came into the street of Northampton.”

As the various societies now began to walk by rule, and to be trained up in the discipline as well as the doctrine of the Lord, I shall here give a circumstantial 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, I shall 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. Meanwhile 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 *οἱ ἀκροαταί*, ‘*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 account of their names, advised them to watch over each other, and met these *κατηχημένοι*, (*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 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, 1. 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 towards 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 these 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 know not, 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, that 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; 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 proposed, of exhorting, comforting, or reprov'g. 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 face to face. Upon all these considerations it was agreed, that those of each class should meet altogether. 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 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 supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, increased unto the edifying of 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 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.

* The Vigils, or Eves of particular days, mentioned in our book of Common Prayer, were such Watch-nights.

“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 hinderance 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 *Συμβολα*, or *Tesseræ*, as the ancients termed them ; being of just the same force with the *επιστολαι συστατικαι*, *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.

“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 doeth 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. 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 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-Feasts*, (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 con-

* See page 290.

† James v, 16.

‡ Jude 12.

fessed; 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 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 backslidings.

"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 *οι πιστοι, 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, but (as soon as God should call,) "*to depart and to be with Christ.*"

But I must give Mr. Wesley's own account of this affecting 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 bedside. She was in her last conflict, unable to speak, but, I believe, quite sensible. Her look was calm and serene, and her eyes fixed upwards, 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

* Christian fellowship must suffer a severe wound wherever those meetings are discontinued. Mr. Wesley used often to say, "Where there is no band-meeting, there is no Methodism." I shall consider this subject more fully in the second volume.

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 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,
Inured 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.

Some gentlemen have considered this epitaph in the usual style of criticism, and have seemed insensible to its excellence. However qualified such may be to judge of poetry in general, the poetry of Mr. Charles Wesley seems really too high for them. To me, not wholly unacquainted with the art, this epitaph has always appeared inexpressibly beautiful, and highly characteristic. It is *simple, pure, unlaboured*; and has all that elevation, and yet sobriety, of spirit, which, as Christian believers, we expect to find in those who have *“tasted the powers of the world to come.”* Mr. John Wesley, a most excellent judge of poetry, would not have suffered it to pass, if it were not worthy both of the author and the subject. The “plain stone,” too, with the absence of all decoration in the account, is highly in character. *The praise of a Christian is not of man, but of God.* The brothers could not forget this, for they lived in the whole spirit of it. Such were all Mr. Wesley’s accounts of his departed friends and fellow labourers. Those concerning Mr. Fletcher, and his own beloved brother Charles, did not together make up ten lines.

Dr. Clarke, in his Memoirs of the Wesley family, just now published, inserts a letter from Mr. Annesley to his sister, Mrs. Wesley, and adds, “A part only of Mrs. Wesley’s answer to her angry brother is preserved.” I am happy in being able to present to the reader the original letter. It was overlooked, with other valuable papers, in the *distribution* which took place, as already mentioned in the Preface to this work. It is of considerable length; but I shall omit only that part which relates to the *temporal* affairs in dispute, and which Dr. Clarke has already published. Perhaps, a more genuine picture of sanctified affliction was never pre-

sented to the world. It is dated January 20, 1722, to which is added "My birth-day." This letter will illustrate that couplet in the epitaph.

True daughter of affliction she,
Inured to pain and misery.

TO MR. ANNESLEY.

"SIR,—The unhappy differences between you and Mr. Wesley, have prevented my writing for some years, not knowing whether a letter from me would be acceptable, and being unwilling to be troublesome. But feeling life ebb apace, and having a desire to be at peace with all men, especially you, before my exit, I have ventured to send one letter more, hoping you will give yourself the trouble to read it without prejudice.

"I am, I believe, got on the right side of fifty, infirm and weak; yet, old as I am, since I have taken my husband 'for better for worse,' I'll make my residence with him. *'Where he lives will I live, and where he dies will I die, and there will I be buried. God do so unto me and more also, if aught but death part him and me.'* Confinement is nothing to one that, by sickness, is compelled to spend great part of her time in a chamber; and I sometimes think, that, if it were not on account of Mr. Wesley and the children, it would be perfectly indifferent to my soul, whether she ascended to the Supreme Origin of being from a jail or a palace, for God is every where. No walls, or locks, or bars, nor deepest shade, nor closest solitude, excludes his presence; and in what place soever he vouchsafes to manifest himself, that place is heaven! And that man whose heart is penetrated with Divine love, and enjoys the manifestations of God's blissful presence, is happy, let his outward condition be what it will. He is rich, *'as having nothing, yet possessing all things.'* This world, this present state of things, is but for a time. What is now future, will be present, as what is already past once was; and then, as Mr. Pascal observes, a little earth thrown on our cold head will for ever determine our hopes and our condition; nor will it signify much who personated the prince or the beggar, since, with respect to the exterior, all must stand on the same level after death.

"Upon the best observation I could ever make, I am induced to believe, that it is much easier to be contented without riches than with them. It is so natural for a rich man to make his gold his god, (for whatever a person loves most, that thing, be it what it will, he will certainly make his god,) it is so very difficult not to trust in, not to depend on it for support and happiness, that I do not know one rich man in the world with whom I would exchange conditions.

"You say, 'I hope you have recovered your loss by fire long since.' No; and, it is to be doubted, never shall. Mr. Wesley rebuilt his house in less than one year; but nearly thirteen years are elapsed since it was burned, yet it is not half furnished. nor his wife and children half clothed to this day. It is true, that, by the benefactions of his friends, together with what he had himself, he paid the first; but the latter is not paid yet, or, what is much the same, money which was borrowed for clothes and furniture is yet unpaid. You go on, 'My brother's living of three hundred a year, as they tell me—' *They, who?* I wish those that say so were compelled to make it so. It may as truly be said, that his living is ten thousand a year, as three hundred. I have, Sir, formerly laid before you the true state of our affairs. I have told you, that the living

was always let for a hundred and sixty pounds a year : That taxes, poor assessments, sub-rents, tenths, procurations, synodals, &c, took up nearly thirty pounds of that moiety, so that there needs no great skill in arithmetic to compute what remains.

“What we shall, or shall not, need hereafter, God only knows ; but, at present, there hardly ever was a greater co-incidence of unprosperous events in one family than is now in ours. I am rarely in health. Mr. Wesley declines apace. My dear Emily, who, in my present exigences, would exceedingly comfort me, is compelled to go to service in Lincoln, where she is a teacher in a boarding-school. My second daughter, Suky, a pretty woman, and worthy a better fate, when, by your last unkind letters, she perceived, that all her hopes in you were frustrated, rashly threw herself away upon a man, (if a *man* he may be called,) that is little inferior to the apostate angels in wickedness, that is not only her plague, but a constant affliction to the family. O Sir ! O brother ! Happy, thrice happy, are you ! happy is my sister, that buried your children in infancy ! secure from temptation, secure from guilt, secure from want or shame, or loss of friends ! They are safe, beyond the reach of pain or sense of misery ; being gone hence, nothing can touch them farther. Believe me, Sir, it is better to mourn ten children dead, than one living ; and I have buried many : But here I must pause awhile.

“The other children, though wanting neither industry nor capacity for business, we cannot put to any, by reason we have neither money nor friends to assist us in doing it. Nor is there a gentleman’s family near us in which we can place them, unless as common servants ; and that even yourself would not think them fit for, if you saw them, so that they must stay at home while they have a home ; and how long will that be ? —Innumerable are other uneasinesses, too tedious to mention, inso-much that what with my own indisposition, my master’s infirmities, the absence of my eldest, the ruin of my second daughter, and the inconceivable distress of all the rest, I have enough to turn a stronger head than mine. And were it not that God supports, and by His omnipotent goodness often totally suspends, all sense of worldly things, I could not sustain the weight many days, perhaps hours. But even in this low ebb of fortune, I am not without some lucid interval. Unspeakable are the blessings of privacy and leisure !—when the mind emerges from the corrupt animality to which she is united, and by a flight peculiar to her nature, soars beyond the bounds of time and place, in contemplation of the Invisible Supreme, whom she perceives to be her only happiness, her proper centre ! In whom she finds repose inexplicable ! such as the world can neither give nor take away.

“The late Archbishop of York once said to me, (when my master was in Lincoln Castle,) among other things, ‘Tell me,’ says he, ‘Mrs. Wesley, whether you ever really wanted bread.’—My Lord, said I, I will freely own to your Grace, that, strictly speaking, I never did want bread. But then I have had so much care to get it before it was eat, and to pay for it after, as has often made it very unpleasant to me. And I think to have bread on such terms, is the next degree of wretchedness to having none at all.—‘You are certainly in the right,’ replied my Lord, and seemed for awhile very thoughtful. Next morning he made me a handsome present ; nor did he ever repent having done so. On the contrary, I have reason to believe it afforded some comfortable reflections before his exit.

“ You proceed, ‘ When I come home, (Ah ! would to God that might ever be !) if any of your daughters want me, (as I think they will not,) I shall do as God enables me.’—I must answer this with a sigh from the bottom of my heart. Sir, you know the proverb, *While the grass grows, the steed starves*. The passage relating to Annesley, I have formerly replied to. You go on, ‘ Another hinderance is, my brother, I think, is too zealous for the party he fancies in the right, and has unluckily to do with the opposite faction.’—Whether those you employ are factious or not, I shall not determine ; but very sure I am, Mr. Wesley is not so. He is zealous in a good cause, as every one ought to be, but the farthest from being a party-man of any man in the world. My experience hath convinced me, that he is one of those whom, our Saviour saith, are not *so wise in their generation as the children of this world*. And did I not know that Almighty Wisdom hath views and ends in fixing the bounds of our habitation, which are out of our ken, I should think it a thousand pities, that a man of his brightness and rare endowments of learning, and useful knowledge in relation to the Church of God, should be confined to an obscure corner of the country, where his talents are buried, and he is determined to a way of life for which he is not so well qualified as I could wish. It is with pleasure I behold, in my eldest son, an aversion from accepting a small country cure ; since, blessed be God, he has a fair reputation for learning and piety, preaches well, and is capable of doing more good where he is.*

“ I shall not detain you any longer, not so much as to apologize for the tedious length of this letter.

“ I am, Sir, your obliged,

“ And most obedient Servant and Sister,

“ SUSANNA WESLEY.”

It has been asserted that the fortune acquired by Mr. Annesley in India, was lost ; and it is supposed, that he was himself murdered. Of the manner of his death I have no account, but his widow certainly enjoyed a considerable part, if not the whole of his fortune ; for at her death she bequeathed one thousand pounds to Mrs. Wesley, the interest to be paid to her during her life, and at her decease the principal sum to be divided among her children. Miss Kezzy Wesley, in a letter now before me, dated July 1734, informs her brother John of this bequest ; and adds, “ My father has not been very easy ever since he heard of it, because he cannot dispose of it.”† Had it been left to him, I think there cannot be a doubt but he would have paid his debts with it, and published his favourite work on Job.

Mr. Charles Wesley was one day relating to me, seemingly with much pleasure, how useful his father had been when he was confined in Lincoln Castle, as mentioned in Mrs. Wesley’s letter to her brother. “ By his constantly reading prayers and preaching,” said he, “ the whole jail was reformed.” Mrs. Hall, who was present, exclaimed, “ Brother ! how can you speak of these things ?”—He replied in his usual short way, “ If you are ashamed of poverty, you are ashamed of your Master.”

* See pages 124 and 136.

† I think we may safely conclude, that this bequest strengthened Mr. J. Wesley in his refusal to solicit the living of Epworth. We see that his mother was not left in so destitute a condition as some of his Biographers have supposed.

Happy for that family that they had been early taught the necessity of *poverty of spirit*, which alone prepares the human heart to submit to bear the *yoke of Christ*.

It must affect every benevolent mind, that such a family should be all their days thus depressed. But when we consider, that the Lord willed that *the plant of renown*, which was to *give life to the world*, should spring out of a *dry ground*,—from a family brought to deep poverty, we shall not wonder *as though some strange thing happened* to the family of Epworth. It has been common to many whom the Lord has used as his choicest instruments. The venerable head of the family had a presentiment, that his family would become eminent in the land. Mr. John Wesley informed me, that his father often declared, and in those strong terms which were usual with him, “When every creaturely help shall fail, God will undertake for my family; I know he will.” He did so; but how differently from the expectation of this good man! *The work of God*, which made this family so eminent, left them as poor as it found them! Such was the eminent faithfulness of the Lord’s chief instrument in that work!

I have now before me many letters and documents, which abundantly detail the sufferings of the family, especially of the females. But the accounts already published must suffice. My task is of another kind. The views, cares, and vicissitudes of this perishing world, should not be too much mixed with that blessed *work of faith*, which issues in life eternal, and concerning which the most honoured instrument often declared, and even so early as the year 1738, when it had just showed its high origin, “It shall stand while sun and moon endure!”

The accounts which I have given of Mrs. Wesley, are sufficient to discover her genuine character. She had an excellent understanding, and great penetration. Her eye was single: She inquired after truth, and followed it wherever she found it. Hence she became a witness of the truth of Mr. John Wesley’s well-known declaration, recorded (as we shall see) in the Minutes of the first Conference, “All (all Gospel blessings) will follow persevering sincerity.” Her resolution could not be shaken. The smiles and frowns of the world she trod under her feet; but, at the same time, she discovered the greatest caution in admitting any thing as true, which to her appeared novel. In some things she evinced 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 savour and power of religion through this and distant lands.









REV. CHARLES WESLEY A M

1709-1791

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THE LIFE
OF THE
REV. JOHN WESLEY, A. M.
FELLOW OF LINCOLN COLLEGE, OXFORD ;
IN WHICH ARE INCLUDED,
THE LIFE OF HIS BROTHER,
THE REV. CHARLES WESLEY, A. M.
STUDENT OF CHRIST CHURCH ;
AND MEMOIRS OF THEIR FAMILY :

COMPREHENDING AN ACCOUNT OF
The Great Revival of Religion,
IN WHICH THEY WERE THE FIRST AND CHIEF INSTRUMENTS.

BY THE REV. HENRY MOORE,
ONLY SURVIVING TRUSTEE OF MR. WESLEY'S MSS.

According to this time it shall be said, "WHAT HATH GOD WROUGHT!"
NUMBERS xxiii, 23.

"Not by might, nor by power, but by MY SPIRIT," saith the Lord of Hosts.
ZECHARIAH iv, 6.

Venturæque hiemis memores, æstate laborem
Experiuntur, et in medium quæsitæ reponunt.
VIRGILII GEORG.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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THE LIFE
OF
THE REV. JOHN WESLEY, A. M.

BOOK THE FIFTH.

CHAPTER I.

PROGRESS OF RELIGION, WITH THE PERSECUTIONS THAT FOLLOWED.

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 despatched 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 Society 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 shameful 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. It was very confidently stated, in that day, that when the question concerning the persecutions suffered by the Societies at this time, came before the Council, the King declared, that "No man in his dominions should be persecuted on the account of religion, while he sat on the throne." His late Majesty also, and indeed all that dynasty, have acted on the same principle.

A remarkable circumstance, which Mr. Wesley related to me, may throw considerable light on those "orders from above." One of the original Society of Methodists at Oxford, on the departure of its founders from the university, after seeking for others like-minded, at length joined the Society of Quakers, and settled at Kew. Being a man of considerable property, and of exemplary behaviour, he was much respected, and favoured with free permission to walk in the royal gardens. Here he frequently met the King, who conversed freely with him, and with much apparent satisfaction. Upon one of those occasions, his Majesty, knowing that he had been at Oxford, inquired if he knew the Messrs. Wesley, adding, "They make a great noise in the nation." The gentleman replied, "I know them well, King George; and thou mayest be assured, that thou hast not two better men in thy dominions, nor men that love thee better, than John and Charles Wesley." He then proceeded to give some account of their principles and conduct; with which the King seemed much pleased.—When Mr. Wesley had concluded, I said, "We see, Sir, the Lord can bring a tale to the ear of the King."—He replied, with much feeling, "O, I have always found the blessedness of a *single eye*,—of leaving all to Him."

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 likewise 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 upon the whole enjoyed much peace. 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 a horn; men, women, and children were abused in the most shocking manner; being beaten, stoned, covered with mud: Some, even pregnant women, were treated in a manner that cannot be mentioned. In the mean time, their houses were broken 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 I 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 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?' 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 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 towards 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 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 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, overruling 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,) had not a man called out to them, ‘Hold, Tom, hold!’—‘Who is there?’ said Tom. ‘What, honest Munchin? Nay then, let her go!’—So they held their hands, 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 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. 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 added, that ' 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 on 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, (1744,) a Captain Turner, of Bristol, a member of the Methodist Society, landed at St. Ives in Cornwall, and was agreeably surprised to find a few persons who feared God, and constantly met together. They were much refreshed by him, as he was by them. On 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 visited them 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 I shall give his own description of it ; and this, with the account of the persecution at Wednesbury, will afford my 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 without, 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 all together, 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 a 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 water; the sea running close by the back door of the house in which we were.

"I never saw before, no, not at Walsal itself, the hand of God so plainly shown as here. *There* I had some 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?"

In September, 1744, Mr. Wesley received the following letter from Mr. Henry Millard, one of the preachers in Cornwall, giving some account of their difficulties. "The word of God," says he, "has free course here: It runs and is glorified. But the devil rages horribly. Even at St. Ives, we cannot shut the door of John Nance's house to meet the society, but the mob immediately threatens to break it open. And in other places it is worse. I was going to Crowan on Tuesday, and within a quarter of a mile of the place where I was to preach, some met me, and begged me not to go up, saying, 'If you do, there will surely be murder; if there is not already: For many were knocked down before we came away.' By their advice, I turned back to the house where I had left my horse. We had been there but a short time, when many people came in very bloody. But the main cry of the mob was, 'Where is the preacher?' whom they sought for in every part of the house; swearing bitterly, 'If we can but knock him on the head, we shall be satisfied.'

"Not finding me, they said, 'However, we shall catch him on Sunday at Cambourn.' But it was Mr. Westall's* turn to be there. While he was preaching at Mr. Harris's, a tall man came in and pulled him

* Thomas Westall was a simple, upright man, whose word the Lord greatly blessed. Mr. Wesley at first thought, as in the case of Thomas Maxfield, to silence him. But Mrs. Canning, a pious old lady of Evesham, said, "Stop him at your peril! He preaches the truth, and the Lord owns him as truly as he does you or your brother."

down. Mr. Harris demanded his warrant; but he swore, 'Warrant or no warrant, he shall go with me!' So he carried him out to the mob, who took him away to the church town. They kept him there till the Tuesday morning, when the Rev. Dr. Borlase wrote his *mittimus*, by virtue of which he was to be committed to the house of correction at Bodmin, as a vagrant. So they took him as far as Cambourn that night, and the next day to Bodmin."

The Justices who met at the next quarter-sessions in Bodmin, knowing a little more of the laws of God and man, or at least showing more regard for them than Dr. Borlase, declared Mr. Westall's commitment to be contrary to all law, and immediately set him at liberty.

The preachers in the different parts of the kingdom were permitted to *drink of the same cup*, yea, in many instances, they 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 uprightness and impartiality: the consequence of which was, that in many places peace was restored.

Notwithstanding this brutal opposition, Mr. Wesley 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 broken 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.

* A plain, forcible preacher, greatly owned of God, especially to the poor. The late Dr. Hey, of Leeds, used to call upon Dr. Priestley, who then also lived at Leeds, and take him to the Methodist Chapel. On one of those occasions, the preacher happened to be Mr. Mitchell. Dr. Hey, who was rather nice in hearing, was mortified that his philosophical friend should be led to hear so plain a preacher. On their return, however, he ventured to ask the Doctor, what he thought of the sermon. He replied, "that he thought it admirable!" but perceiving his friend's surprise, he added, "Other men *may* do good, Dr. Hey, but that man *must* do good, for he aims at nothing else."

While Mr. Wesley thus, like his Divine Master, *endured the cross, despising the shame*, his brother, Mr. C. Wesley, was called to drink of the same cup. He had laboured in the preceding year in the neighbourhood of Bristol, till the 17th of May, when he set out for the North. He preached at Painswick, and then visited Stroud, Evesham, and several other places; and on the 20th, he observes, "I got once more to our dear colliers at Wednesbury. Here the seed has taken root, and many are added to the church. A Society of more than three hundred, are seeking full redemption in the cleansing blood of Christ. The enemy rages exceedingly against them. A few here have returned railing for railing; but the generality have behaved as the followers of Christ Jesus.

"May 21.—I spent the morning in conference with several who *have received the atonement* under my Brother's ministry. I saw the piece of ground to build a chapel upon, given us by a Dissenter. I walked with many of our brethren to Walsal, singing as we went. We were received with the old complaint, *Behold these that turn the world upside down, are come hither also!* We walked through the town, amidst the noisy greetings of our enemies. I stood on the steps of the Market-House. A host of men came against us; and they lifted up their voice and raged horribly. I preached from these words, *But none of these things move me; neither count I my life dear unto myself so that I might finish my course with joy, &c.* The street was full of fierce Ephesian beasts, (the principal man setting them on,) who roared, and shouted, and threw stones incessantly. At the conclusion, a stream of ruffians was suffered to beat me down from the steps; I rose, and, having given the blessing, was beat down again, and so a third time. When we had returned thanks to the God of our salvation, I then from the steps bid them depart in peace, and walked through the thickest of the rioters. They reviled us, but had no commission to touch a hair of our head.

"May 22.—I preached to between one and two thousand peaceable people, at Birmingham, and again at Wednesbury in the evening. On the 23d, I took my leave in those words, *Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith; and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of heaven.* With many tears, and blessings, they sent me away, recommended to the grace of God.

"May the 26th.—In the afternoon I came to the flock in Sheffield, who are as sheep among wolves; the minister having so stirred up the people, that they are ready to tear the Methodists in pieces. At six o'clock, I went to the Society house, next door to our brother Bennet's. Hell from beneath seemed moved to oppose us. As soon as I was in the desk, with David Taylor, the floods began to lift up their voice. An Officer in the Army contradicted and blasphemed. I took no notice of him, but sang on. The stones flew thick, striking the desk and the people. To save them, and the house from being pulled down, I gave out that I should preach in the street, and look them in the face. The whole army of the aliens followed me. The Captain laid hold on me, and began rioting: I gave him *A word in season, or advice to a Soldier.* I then prayed, particularly for his Majesty King George, and preached the gospel, although with much contention. The stones often struck me

in the face. I prayed for sinners, as servants of their master, the Devil ; upon which the Captain ran at me with great fury, threatening revenge for abusing, as he called it, ' The King his master.' He forced his way through the brethren, drew his sword, and presented it to my breast. I immediately opened my breast, and fixing my eye on his, and smiling in his face, calmly said, ' I fear God and honour the King.' His countenance fell in a moment, he fetched a deep sigh, and putting up his sword, quietly left the place. He had said to one of the company, who afterwards informed me, ' You shall see if I do but hold my sword to his breast, he will faint away.' So perhaps I should, had I only his principles to trust to ; but if at that time I was not afraid, no thanks to my natural courage.—We returned to our brother Bennet's, and gave ourselves up to prayer. The rioters followed, and exceeded in outrage all I have seen before. Those at Moorfields, Cardiff, and Walsal, were lambs to these. As there is no King in Israel, I mean no Magistrate in Sheffield, every man doth as seemeth good in his own eyes."

The mob now formed the design of pulling down the Society house, and set upon their work, while Mr. C. Wesley and the people were praying and praising God within. " It was a glorious time," says he, " with us : Every word of exhortation sunk deep, every prayer was sealed, and many found *the spirit of glory resting upon them.*"*—The next day the house was completely pulled down, not one stone being left upon another : " Nevertheless," said Mr. Wesley to a friend, " *the foundation standeth sure ; and our house, not made with hands, is eternal in the heavens.*"—This day he preached again in the street, somewhat more quietly than before. In the evening the rioters became very noisy again, and threatened to pull down the house where Mr. C. Wesley lodged. He went out to them ; read the Riot Act, and made a suitable exhortation. They soon afterwards separated, and peace was restored.

May 27.—At five in the morning, he took leave of the Society in these words, *Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.* He observes, " Our hearts were knit together, and greatly comforted : we rejoiced in hope of *the glorious appearing of the great God*, who had now delivered us out of the mouth of the lions. David Taylor informed me, that the people of Thorpe, through which we should pass, were exceedingly mad against us. So we found them as we approached the place, and were turning down the lane to Barley-Hall. The ambush rose, and assaulted us with stones, eggs, and dirt. My horse flew from side to side, till he found his way through them. They wounded D. Taylor in the forehead, and the wound bled much. I turned back, and asked, What was the reason why a clergyman could not pass without such treatment ? At first the rioters scattered ; but, their captain rallying them, answered with horrible imprecations and stones. My horse took fright, and turned away with me down a steep hill. The enemy pursued me from afar, and followed shouting. Blessed be God, I received no hurt, only from the eggs and dirt. My clothes indeed abhorred me, and my arm pained me a little from a blow I received at Sheffield."

Notwithstanding this, he spent an hour or two, with some quiet sincere persons, assembled at Barley-Hall. By four o'clock in the after-

* 1 Peter iv, 24.

noon he reached Birstal, a land of rest : Here they had peace in all their borders. Great multitudes were bowed down, by the victorious power of gospel truth. "It was," says Mr. C. Wesley, "a time much to be remembered, for the gracious rain wherewith our God refreshed us."—The next day he preached again, in the morning and at noon, to this child-like people, and again in the afternoon at Ormsby, in his way to Leeds.

May 29, he informs us in his Journal, that, not a year before, he had come to Leeds, and found no man who cared for the things of God : "but," he observes, "a spark has now fallen in this place also, and it will kindle a great flame.* I met the infant Society, about fifty in number, most of them justified, and exhorted them to walk circumspectly. At seven o'clock, I stood before Mr. Shent's door, and cried to thousands, '*Ho ! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters !*' The word took place. They gave diligent heed to it, and seemed a people prepared for the Lord. I went to the great Church, and was showed to the Minister's pew. Five Clergymen were there, who a little confounded me, by making me take place of my elders and betters. They obliged me to help in administering the sacrament. I assisted with eight more Ministers, for whom my soul was much drawn out in prayer. But I dreaded their favour, more than the stones at Sheffield."—He was afraid he should melt in this sunshine.

At two o'clock, he found a vast multitude waiting for the word, and strongly exhorted them to repent and believe the gospel, that their sins might be blotted out. He preached again at Birstal, calling upon '*the poor and maimed, the halt and blind, to come to the great supper.*' He observes, "My Lord disposed many hearts, I doubt not, to accept the invitation. There were several witnesses of the truth, which they have now received in the love of it. I had a blessed parting with the society.

"May 30. My horse threw me, and fell upon me. My companion thought I had broken my neck ; but my leg only was bruised, my hand sprained, and my head stunned, which spoiled me from *making hymns*,† or thinking at all in that way till the next day, when the Lord brought us safe to Newcastle. At seven o'clock I went to the room, which will contain about two thousand persons. We rejoiced for the consolation of our mutual faith.

"June 5. My soul was revived by the poor people at Chowden ; and yet more at Tanfield, where I called to great numbers, '*Behold the Lamb of God,*' &c. At Newcastle I preached in the crowded square, chiefly to the backsliders, whom I besought with tears to be reconciled to God. Surely Jesus looked upon some of them as he looked upon Peter.

"June 6. I had the great comfort of recovering some of those who have drawn back. I trust we shall recover them again for ever. On

* Of the spark which had thus fallen, I am happy to be able to relate the history. The venerable Christopher Hopper, after many years of arduous labour, was preaching at Leeds, a few years after the death of Mr. Wesley. The Conference was then assembled at that place. The Chapels were full, and several Preachers were preaching abroad at the same time. He observed, "Just fifty years ago I opened my commission in a Barber's shop in this town—the shop of William Shent. I had just as many hearers as the shop would contain. There the Lord sowed *the grain of mustard seed* ! Behold what it has come to !" Great was our rejoicing in the Lord !

† He composed his finest Hymns while engaged in those labours, and often on horseback : of this I shall say more hereafter.

the 8th, I spake to the bands separately, and tried their faith. We certainly have been too easy in allowing persons for believers on their own testimony : nay, and even persuading them into a false opinion of themselves. Some souls it is doubtless necessary to encourage ; but it should be done with caution. To tell one in darkness that he has faith, is to keep him in darkness still, or to make him trust in a false light ; a faith that stands in the words of men, not in the power of God.

“ June 16. I set out for Sunderland, with strong aversion to preaching. I dragged myself to about a thousand wild people, and cried, ‘ *O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thy help !* ’ Never have I seen greater attention in any people at their first hearing the word. We rode to Shields, went to church, and the people flocked in crowds after me. The minister spake so low, that he could not be heard in reading prayers ; but I heard him loud enough afterwards, calling to the churchwardens to quiet the disturbance, which none but himself had raised. I fancy he thought I should preach in the church where I stood, like some of the first Quakers. The clerk came to me, bawling out, ‘ It was consecrated ground, and I had no business to preach on it : That I was no minister,’ &c. When he had cried himself out of breath, I whispered in his ear, that I had no intention to preach there. He stumbled however on a good saying, ‘ If you have any word of exhortation to the people, speak to them without.’ I did so, to a huge multitude waiting in the churchyard : many of them very fierce, threatening to drown me, and what not ! I walked through the midst of them, and discoursed in strong awakening words on the jailer’s question, ‘ *What must I do to be saved ?* ’ The churchwardens and others laboured in vain to interrupt me, by throwing dirt, and even money, among the people. Having delivered my message, I rode to the Ferry, crossed it, and met as rough friends on the other side. The mob of North Shields waited to salute me, with the minister at their head. He had got a man with a horn instead of a trumpet, and bid him blow and his companions shout. Others were almost as violent in their approbation. We went through honour and dishonour ; but neither of them hurt us, and by six o’clock, with God’s blessing, we came safe to Newcastle.”

June 19. Mr. C. Wesley took leave of the Society at Newcastle, and on June 24, he arrived at Nottingham ; and adds, “ I found my brother in the market-place,* calling lost sinners to *him who justifieth the ungodly*. He gave notice of my preaching in the evening. At seven, many thousands attended in deep silence. Surely the Lord hath much people in this place ” They began a society here with nine members, and on June the 27th, Mr. C. Wesley set out for London, where he arrived on the evening of the 28th, having visited Oxford in his way thither.—July 3, he says, “ Mr. Hall, poor Moravianized Mr. Hall, met me at the Chapel. I did him honour before the people. I expounded the Gospel, as usual, and strongly avowed my intolerable attachment to the Church of England. Mr. Meriton and Graves assisted at the Sacrament.—July 6, I showed from Romans the 5th, the marks of justification, and overturned the vain confidence of several. I strongly warned them against seducers, and found my heart knit to this people.—July 8, I. Bray came to persuade me, not to preach till the Bishops should bid me. They have not yet forbid me ; but by the grace of God I shall

* See also Mr. John Wesley’s *Works*, vol. xxviii, page 151.

preach the word, in season and out of season, though they and all men forbid me."

July 11.—Mr. C. Wesley left London, and the day following arrived in Bristol. He stayed there only one night, and then set out for Cornwall, and on the 16th, came safe to St. Ives. July 17, he says, "I rose and forgot that I had travelled from Newcastle. I spake with some of this loving simple people, who are as sheep in the midst of wolves. The priests stir up the people, and make their minds evil-affected towards their brethren. Yet the sons of violence are much checked by the Mayor, an honest Presbyterian, whom the Lord hath raised up." He informed Mr. C. Wesley, that the ministers were the principal authors of all the mischief. In their sermons they continually represented Mr. Wesley and the preachers, as Popish emissaries, and urged the enraged multitude to use all means for their suppression. While he was preaching at St. Ives on the 26th, he observes, "All was quiet, the Mayor having deciaired his resolution to swear twenty more constables, and suppress the rioters by force of arms. Their drum he had seized. All the time I was preaching he stood at a little distance to awe the rioters. He has set the whole town against him, by not giving us up to their fury. But he plainly told Mr. Hoblin, the fire-and-faggot minister, that he would not be perjured to gratify any man's malice. He informed us, that he had often heard Mr. Hoblin say, they ought to drive us away by blows, not by arguments."

During the riots he one day observes, "I went to church, and heard that terrible chapter Jeremiah the 7th,—enough, one would think, to make even this hardened people tremble. Never were words more applicable than those, '*Stand in the gate of the Lord's house, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of the Lord, all ye of Judah, that enter in at these gates to worship the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. Trust ye not in lying words, saying, THE TEMPLE OF THE LORD, THE TEMPLE OF THE LORD, THE TEMPLE OF THE LORD, ARE THESE!—Behold ye trust in lying words that cannot profit. Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely—and come and stand before me in this house?*'" &c.—Mr. C. Wesley informed me, that upon one of those occasions, after hearing himself abused in a sermon longer than usual, he remained in his pew when the congregation was dismissed, it being what is called Sacrament-Sunday. The minister, perceiving him, called to the clerk, took him inside the rails, and talked with him for some time. The minister then proceeded with the service. When Mr. C. Wesley approached the table, the parson retreated, and the clerk came forward, and, holding out the large Prayer-book, cried out, "Avaunt, Satan! Avaunt!" Mr. C. Wesley remained for some time, but finding that nothing would quiet the zealous clerk, and that the minister remained stationary at the wall, he retired to his pew, and the service concluded.

His brother having summoned him to London, to confer with the heads of the Moravians and Calvinists, he set out on the 8th of August. "We had," says he, "near three hundred miles to travel in five days. I was willing to undertake the labour for the sake of peace, though the journey was too great for us and our beasts, which we had used almost every day for three months.—August 12. We hardly reached the Foun-

dery by nine at night. Here I heard that the Moravians would not be present at the Conference. Spangenberg indeed said he would, but immediately left England. My brother was come from Newcastle; J. Nelson from Yorkshire; and I from the Land's End, for good purpose!"

October 17. He set out to meet his brother at Nottingham, who had escaped with his life, almost by miracle, out of the hands of the mob at Wednesbury, as before related. On the 21st, Mr. Charles Wesley observes, "My brother came, delivered out of the mouth of the lions! His clothes were dirty and torn.—He looked like a soldier of Christ. The mob of Wednesbury, Darlaston, and Walsal, were permitted to take and carry him about for several hours, with a full intent to murder him: but his work is not yet finished, or he had been now with *the souls under the altar*.—October 24. I had a blessed parting from the Society, and by night came wet and weary to Birmingham. On the 25th, I was much encouraged by the patience of our brethren from Wednesbury. They pressed me to come and preach to them in the midst of the town. It was agreed between my brother and me, that if they asked me I should go. Accordingly we set out in the dark, and came to Francis Ward's, from whence my brother had been carried last Thursday night.* I found the brethren assembled, standing fast in one mind and spirit, in nothing terrified by their adversaries. The word given me for them, was, '*Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit yourselves like men, be strong.*' Jesus was with us in the midst, and covered us with a covering of his Spirit. Never was I before in so primitive an assembly. We sang praises with courage, and could all set our seal to the truth of our Lord's saying, '*Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness' sake.*' We laid us down and slept, and rose up again, for the Lord sustained us. As soon as it was light, I walked down the town and preached boldly. It was a most glorious time! Our souls were satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and we longed for our Lord's coming to '*confess us before his Father, and before his holy Angels.*'—We now understood what it was to '*receive the word in much affliction,*' and yet '*with joy in the Holy Ghost.*'

"I took several new members into the Society; and, among them, the young man whose arm had been broke; and received Munchin, upon trial, the late captain of the mob. He has been constantly under the word, since he rescued my brother. I asked him what he thought of him? 'Think of him,' said he, 'that he is a man of God, and God was on his side, when so many of us could not kill one man.'—We rode through the town unmolested on our way to Birmingham, where I preached. I rode on to Evesham, and found John Nelson preaching, and confirmed his word."—On the 31st, he set out for Wales, and reached Cardiff on the first of November. "The gentlemen," says he, "had threatened great things if I ever came there again. I called in the midst of them, '*Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by,*' &c. The love of God constrained me to speak and them to hear. The word was irresistible. After it, one of the most violent opposers took me by the hand, and pressed me to come and see him. The rest were equally civil, all the time I staid; only one drunkard made some disturbance, and, when sober, sent to ask my pardon.—The voice of praise and thanksgiving was in the Society. Many are grown in grace and in the

* See Mr. John WESLEY'S *Works*, vol. xxviii, page 175.

Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I passed an hour with the wife and daughter of the chief bailiff, who are waiting as little children for the kingdom of God."

He afterwards visited Bristol, Bath, Oxford, and London; till January 30, 1744, when he again set out for the North, recommended to the grace of God by all the brethren. On the first of February, he came to Birmingham. He observes, "A great door is opened in the country, but there are many adversaries." The preacher at Dudley had been cruelly abused by a mob of Papists and Dissenters; the Dissenters being stirred up by Mr. Whiting, their minister. "It is probable," says Mr. C. Wesley, "that he would have been murdered, but for an honest Quaker, who favoured his escape by disguising him in his broad hat and drab-coloured coat." "Staffordshire," he observes, "at present seems the seat of war."

"February 2.—I set out again with brother Webb, for Wednesbury, the field of battle. We met with variety of greetings on the road. I cried in the street, '*Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world!*' Several of our persecutors stood at a distance, but none offered to make the least disturbance. I walked through the blessings and curses of the people, (but the blessings exceeded,) to visit Mr. Egerton's widow. Never have I observed such bitterness as in these opposers.—February 3. I preached, and prayed with the Society, and beat down the fiery self-avenging spirit of resistance, which was rising in some to disgrace, if not to destroy the work of God." Mr. C. Wesley preached within sight of Dudley, and then waited on the friendly Captain Dudley, who had stood in the gap, and kept off persecution at Tippen-Green, while it raged all around. He then returned in peace through the enemy's country.

The rioters now gave notice that they would come on the Tuesday following, and pull down the houses and destroy the goods of the Methodists. "One would think," says Mr. C. Wesley, "there was no king in Israel. There is certainly no magistrate, who will put them to shame in any thing. Mr. Constable offered to make oath, that their lives were in danger; but the Justice refused it, saying that he could do nothing. Others of our complaining brethren met with the same redress, being driven away with revilings. The magistrates do not, like those of old, themselves *tear off their clothes and beat them*; they only stand by and see others do it. One of them told Mr. Jones, 'it was the best thing the mob ever did, so to treat the Methodists; and he himself would give five pounds to drive them out of the country.' Another, when our brother Ward begged his protection, delivered him up to the mercy of the mob, who had half-murdered him before, and throwing his hat round his head, cried, 'Huzza, boys! Well done! Stand up for the Church!'" Mr. C. Wesley adds, "No wonder that the mob, so encouraged, should say there is no law for the Methodists! Accordingly, like outlaws they treat them, breaking their houses, and taking away their goods at pleasure: extorting money from those who have it, and cruelly beating those who have it not.

"February 4.—I spoke with those of our brethren who have this world's goods, and found them entirely resigned to the will of God; all thoughts of resistance, blessed be God, are over. The chief of them said to me, '*Naked came I into the world, and I can but go naked out*

of it.' They are resolved, by the grace of God, to follow my advice, and to suffer all things. Only I wished them to go round again to the Justices and give information of their danger. Mr. Constable said, he had just been with one of them, who redressed him only by bitter reproaches,—that the rest were of the same mind, and could not plead ignorance, because the rioters had the boldness to set up papers inviting all the country to rise with them to destroy the Methodists.—At noon I returned to Birmingham, having continued two days in the lions' den unhurt."

Mr. C. Wesley now set out for Nottingham, where he arrived on the 6th, and found that here, also, the monster persecution was lifting up its destructive head. "Our brethren," says he, "are violently driven from their place of meeting, pelted in the streets, &c, and mocked with vain promises of justice by the very man, who, underhand, encourages the rioters. An honest Quaker has hardly restrained some of our brethren from resisting evil: but henceforth, I hope, they will meekly turn the other cheek."

Mr. C. Wesley and his friends at Nottingham sent a person to Litchfield, to get intelligence of what mischief had been done in Staffordshire, by the rioters in their threatened insurrection. He returned on the ninth, and Mr. C. Wesley gives the following account. "He met our brother Ward, who had fled thither for refuge. The enemy had gone to the length of his chain: all the rabble of the county were gathered together, and laid waste all before them. I received a note from two of the sufferers, whose loss amounts to two hundred pounds. My heart rejoiced in the great grace which was given them; for not one resisted evil; but '*they took joyfully the spoiling of their goods.*' We gave God the glory, that Satan was not suffered to touch their lives: they have lost all besides, and '*rejoice with joy unspeakable.*'"

Mr. C. Wesley now went on to Newcastle, preaching every where, as he had opportunity, till on March the 14th, being at Birstal, a person informed him there of a constable who had a warrant in which his name was mentioned. Mr. C. Wesley sent for him, and found it was, "To summon witnesses to some treasonable words said to be spoken by one *Westley.*" He was just leaving Birstal when this information was given him; but he now determined not to go forward for London as he intended, thinking it better to appear before the Justices at Wakefield, and, as he says, look his enemies in the face. Accordingly, he rode to Wakefield the next morning, and waited on Justice Burton at his inn, with two other Justices, Sir Rowland Wynn, and the Rev. Mr. Zouch. He informed Mr. Burton, that he had seen a warrant of his, summoning witnesses of some treasonable words, said to be spoken by one Westley: that he had put off his journey to London, that he might answer whatever should be laid to his charge.—Mr. Burton replied, he had nothing to say against him, and he might depart.—Mr. C. Wesley answered, "That is not sufficient without clearing my character, and that of many innocent people, whom their enemies are pleased to call Methodists.—'Vindicate them!' said my brother Clergyman, 'that you will find a very hard task.'—I answered, As hard as you may think it, I will engage to prove that all of them, to a man, are true members of the church of England, and loyal subjects of his Majesty King George. I then desired they would administer to me the oaths; and added, I wish, gentlemen, that you could send for every Methodist in England, and give them all

the same opportunity you do me, of declaring their loyalty upon oath.—Justice Burton said, he was informed that we constantly prayed for the Pretender in all our societies, or nocturnal meetings, as Mr. Zouch called them.—I answered, The very reverse is true. We constantly pray for his Majesty King George, by name. Here are such hymns (showing them) as we sing in our societies. Here is a sermon which I preached before the University, and another preached there by my brother. Here are his Appeals and a few more tracts, containing an account of our principles and practices. I then gave them our books, and was bold enough to say, I am as true a Church-of-England man, and as loyal a subject, as any man in the kingdom!—They all cried, that was impossible. But it was not my business to dispute, and as I could not answer till the witnesses appeared, I withdrew without farther delay.

“While I waited at a neighbour’s house, the Constable from Birstal, whose heart the Lord had touched, was brought to me by one of the brethren. He told me he had summoned the principal witness, Mary Castle, on whose information the warrant was granted. She was setting out on horseback, when the news came that I was not gone forward to London, as they expected, but had returned to Wakefield. Hearing this, she turned back, and declared to him that she did not hear the treasonable words herself, but another woman had told her so. Three more witnesses, who were to swear to my words, retracted likewise, and knew nothing of the matter. The fifth, Mr. Woods, an alehouse keeper, is forthcoming, it seems, in the afternoon. I now plainly see what the consequence would have been of not appearing here to look my enemies in the face. Had I gone on my journey, there would have been witnesses enough, and oaths enough, to stir up a persecution against the Methodists. I took the witnesses’ names, and a copy of the warrant, which is as follows :

‘WEST RIDING OF YORKSHIRE.

‘*To the Constable of Birstal, of the said Riding, or Deputy.*

‘THESE are, in his Majesty’s Name, to require and command you to summon Mary Castle, of Birstal aforesaid, and all other such person or persons as you are informed can give any information against one Westley, or any other of the Methodist Preachers, for speaking any treasonable words or exhortations, as praying for the banished, or the Pretender, &c, to appear before me, and other of his Majesty’s Justices of the Peace for the said Riding, at the White Hart in Wakefield, on the 15th of March instant, by ten o’clock in the forenoon, to be examined, and to declare the truth of what they and each of them know touching the premises : and that you likewise make a return hereof, before us, on the same day. Fail not. Given under my hand, the tenth of March, 1744.

E. BURTON.’

“Between two and three o’clock, Mr. Woods came, and started back on seeing me, as if he had trod upon a serpent. One of the brethren took hold of him, and told me he trembled every joint of him. The Justices’ clerk had bid the constable bring Woods to him as soon as ever he came. But notwithstanding the clerk’s instructions, Woods frankly confessed, now he was come, he had nothing to say, and would not have come at all, if they had not forced him.

"I waited at the door till seven in the evening, while they were examining the disaffected. I took public notice of Okerhousen, the Moravian teacher; but not of Mr. Kendrick. When all their business was over, and I had been insulted at their door from eleven in the morning till seven at night, I was sent for and asked, 'What would Mr. Wesley desire?'

"*Wesley.*—I desire nothing but to know what is alleged against me. Justice Burton said, what hope of truth from him? Then addressing himself to me, 'Here are two of your brethren, one so silly it is a shame he should ever set up for a teacher; and the other has a thousand lies and equivocations upon oath. He has not wit enough, or he would make a complete Jesuit.'—I looked round, and said, I see none of my brethren here, but this gentleman, pointing to the Reverend Justice, who looked as if he did not thank me for claiming him.

"*Burton.*—Why, do you not know this man? pointing to Kendrick.

"*Wesley.*—Yes, Sir, very well: for, two years ago, I expelled him from our Society in London, for setting up for a preacher.—To this poor Kendrick assented; which put a stop to farther reflections on the Methodists.—Justice Burton then said, I might depart, for they had nothing against me.

"*Wesley.*—Sir, that will not satisfy me; I cannot depart till my character be fully cleared. It is no trifling matter: even my life is concerned in the charge.

"*Burton.*—I did not summon you to appear.

"*Wesley.*—I was the person meant by *one Westley*, and my supposed words were the occasion of your order, which I read signed with your name.

"*Burton.*—I will not deny my orders; I did send to summon the witnesses.

"*Wesley.*—Yes; and I took down their names from the constable's paper. The principal witness, Mary Castle, was setting out; but, hearing I was here, she turned back, and declared to the constable, she only heard another say, that I should speak treason. Three more of the witnesses recanted for the same reason: and Mr. Woods, who is here, says he has nothing to say, and should not have come, had he not been forced by the minister. Had I not been here, he would have had enough to say; and you would have had witnesses and oaths enough; but I suppose my coming has prevented theirs.—One of the Justices added, 'I suppose so too.' They all seemed fully satisfied, and would have had me to have been so too. But I insisted on their hearing Mr. Woods.

"*Burton.*—Do you desire he may be called as an evidence for you?

"*Wesley.*—I desire he may be heard as an evidence against me, if he has aught to lay to my charge.

"Then Mr. Zouch asked Mr. Woods, what he had to say? What were the words I had spoken? Woods was as backward to speak as they to hear him: but was at last compelled to say, 'I have nothing to say against the gentleman; I only heard him pray, that the Lord would call home his banished ones.'

"*Zouch.*—But were there no words before or after, which pointed to these troublesome times?

“*Woods*.—No : none at all.

“*Wesley*.—It was on February the 12th, before the earliest news of the invasion. But if folly and malice may be interpreters, any words, which any of you, Gentlemen, may speak, may be construed into treason.

“*Zouch*.—It is very true.

“*Wesley*.—Now, Gentlemen, give me leave to explain my own words. I had no thoughts of praying for the Pretender ; but for those who ‘*confess themselves strangers and pilgrims upon earth ; who seek a country,*’ knowing this is not their home. The Scriptures,—yes, Sir, (to the clergyman,) you know that the Scriptures speak of us as captive exiles ; who are ‘*absent from the Lord, while present in the body.*’ We are not at home till we are in heaven.

“*Zouch*.—I thought you would so explain the words, and it is a fair interpretation.

“I asked if they were all satisfied?—They said they were ; and cleared me as fully as I desired.—I then asked them again, to administer to me the oaths.—Mr. Zouch looked on my sermon, and asked who ordained me.—I answered, the Archbishop, and the Bishop of London, in the same week.—He said, with the rest, it was quite unnecessary, since I was a clergyman, and student of Christ Church, and had preached before the University, and taken the oaths before.—Yet I mentioned it again, till they acknowledged in explicit terms, ‘That my loyalty was unquestionable.’ I then presented Sir Rowland and Mr. Zouch, with the ‘Appeal to men of Reason and Religion,’ and took my leave.”

Mr. C. Wesley now returned to Birstal, where he preached, and then departed from Yorkshire. He came to Derby and Nottingham ; at the last of which places, the mob was become outrageous, under the patronage of the Mayor. The Methodists presented a petition to the Judge, as he passed through the town ; and he gave the Mayor a severe reprimand, and encouraged them to apply for relief if they were farther molested. But the Mayor paid no regard to the Judge, any longer than while he was present.

On Friday, August 24, 1744, Mr. John 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

* Mr. C. Wesley came to Oxford on this occasion, where he met his brother, the Rev. Messrs. Piers, Meriton, and others. He observes in his Journal, “My brother bore his testimony before a crowded audience, much increased by the races. Never have I seen a more attentive congregation : They did not suffer a word to slip them. Some of the Heads of Colleges stood up the whole time, and fixed their eyes upon him. If they can endure sound doctrine, like this, he will surely leave a blessing behind him. The Vice-Chancellor sent after him, and desired his notes, which he sealed up and sent immediately.”

person to preach for me. And so they did twice or thrice ; even to the time that I resigned my fellowship.”—They respected his general character, with which they were well acquainted.

Mr. Wesley’s observation respecting the ejection of so many pious and able ministers, is affecting. It was an awful act, and an awful responsibility remains with those who exercised such an authority. But ‘*the Lord reigneth, and the fierceness of man shall turn to his praise.*’ I cannot but think, that the Lord, ‘*who is head over all things to his church,*’ saw that there was no other way of saving the nation from that deluge of Antinomianism which threatened to overwhelm it. How many children of light were thus called to walk in providential darkness ! But he had a better dispensation in store for his people : A dispensation that never did, that never can, disturb the providential government ; which was not given ‘*by might or power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.*’

CHAPTER II.

ACCOUNTS FROM GERMANY OF THE STATE OF RELIGION IN THE
ENGLISH ARMY—THE FIRST CONFERENCES—THE LABOURS OF THE
BROTHERS, AND OF THEIR ASSISTANTS, DURING THE REBELLION IN
SCOTLAND.

THE work of God which it is the design of these volumes to illustrate, shows its true origin, not only in its being declared to be the privilege of *every creature*, but in its being received by “all sorts and conditions of men,” *not in the letter only, but in the Spirit*. It has, indeed, been thought, and by many who are remarkable for the spirituality of their creed, not only that war is contrary to the religion of Christ, but that all who are engaged therein are excluded from its blessings. It is evident, however, that no Prophet, or Apostle, nor their blessed Master, has told us so. He showed his good-will to men thus awfully employed, with as much benignity as to any others. We know that when the Gospel has had its full effect on the human race, it will banish war from the earth. Meantime, all hostility between man and man is totally forbidden : But where is the MAGISTRATE forbidden to go to war ? To deprive him of *his sword* while *the world lieth in wickedness*, seems a bold design ; nor will its being sometimes used unrighteously, excuse the attempt. I am, therefore, happy in being able to present to the reader some proofs, that ‘*the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, can keep the hearts*’ of those who know Him, in the midst of those scenes so revolting not only to pure religion, but also to humanity. A few letters which Mr. Wesley received about this time, from some of the English soldiers in Germany, will illustrate what I have said. The principal instrument of the work therein related was afterwards a preacher in connexion with Mr. Wesley, for several years ; and his life has been published. I shall give those letters together, though written at some distance of time from each other, as they will afford a more complete view of this work of God in the British army.

“REVEREND SIR,—We marched to the camp near Brussels on the 1st 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 [of Artillery,] 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 hired 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.”

* The Duke of Cumberland came one night, wrapt up in his cloak, and staid the whole time. He afterwards gave orders that no person should hinder Haime.

“GHENT, Nov. 12, O. S. 1744.

“REVEREND SIR,—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 strongholds of Satan.

“The 7th 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-wagons. 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 shown 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 alteration in my soul. My eyes overflowed with tears of love. I knew I was through Christ reconciled to God; which inflamed 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 doorkeeper to the least of my Master's servants.

“JOHN EVANS.”*

“October 10, 1745.

“REVEREND SIR,—I shall acquaint you with the Lord's dealings with us since April last. We marched from Ghent to Allost 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 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 towards 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.

“REVEREND 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 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 show 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 him-

* 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.

self. 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, seeking for water. He smiled and said, ‘he had got a sore 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 many difficulties, and it seemed at first that the unity of the body could not be preserved, on account of the clashing interests of the Circuits. But a remedy was soon found out for this threatening evil, viz., 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 familiar among the people, that *The Conference* is always understood to mean 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 minister with him in holy things, might be 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 God, have been derived, not only in the government and union of the whole connexion, but in the preservation and enforcement of purity and holiness among the Preachers ; I shall be necessarily obliged to speak of many things, with which several of my readers are already acquainted. But it is not possible to give a complete view to the world of that great work, in which Mr. Wesley was the principal instrument, without enlarging on so important a branch of it. For which purpose I shall give 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.

LONDON, 25th of June, 1744.

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 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."

CONVERSATION 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 follow:

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;

* Could any work, that was not of God, endure such an ordeal as this? Surely *it is the Lord who maketh men to be thus of one mind in a house!*

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 *Ελεγχος** 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, "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—12; 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, and 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 *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*?

* Conviction or Evidence

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 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. 2. 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. 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.

CONVERSATION 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?

* That is, his *personal* righteousness: This is the great Antinomian error. But the divine atonement, with its glorious concomitants, may be called *his righteousness*; and may be said to be imputed to believers, as it was wrought for guilty man, and by the merit of it only can he be justified.

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 eyelids 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 availeth, 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.

* So near does the road of truth lie to the ditch of error ! But a believer, who abides in the faith, sees and abhors it, 1 John i, 5-7.

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 its effects.

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

CONVERSATION 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. [That is, '*the drawings of love.*' John vi, 44.]

CONVERSATION VI.

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

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.

CONVERSATION VII.

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

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,*' Ch. 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 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, *ἀπο τοῦ πονηροῦ*, "*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*

* At that time our congregations in general 'needed to be taught the first principles of the oracles of God.' It is not so now. They need now to be urged to 'leave these principles of the doctrine of Christ,' and 'to go on to perfection;' and not a few have 'lost their first love,' and turned back to the world, for want of being thus urged.

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 (ἀρνησάμενοι) 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 sware 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 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 draw light, and life, and strength from him, that we may go on, conquering and to conquer.

CONVERSATION 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 of service, towards those who are perishing for lack 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 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 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.

CONVERSATION 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

* This is the special duty, and high privilege, of an Itinerant Preacher among the Methodists. He does not receive support from the Societies because he can preach better than those who are supported by their own labour, but because he is called out from all worldly avocations. Can such a man ever turn to them again, with a pure conscience, excepting only by the *visitation of God*, rendering it impossible for him to continue in his high calling?

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 !

CONVERSATION 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.

CONVERSATION 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 acknowledges, 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 begin every where with showing their hearers, How fallen the *Church and Ministers* are. We begin every where with showing 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.†

* By the *Assistant* was meant the chief preacher in a circuit, who immediately assisted Mr. Wesley in the regulation of the Societies. The preacher who has now the care of the circuit is called, the *Superintendent*.

† Yet even this kind of partial separation was not to extend to a separation from the Church in general.

CONVERSATION 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 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 connexion.

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 preparation; while others have seemed to think they are a distinct race from those to whom they minister.—1. They are received, in common with all other persons, merely as private Members on trial.—2. After a quarter of a year, if they are found walking according to the Gospel, they are admitted as proper members.—3. When the grace and abilities of any members are sufficiently manifest, they are appointed

leaders of classes.—4. If they then appear to be called to more important services, they are employed to exhort occasionally in the smaller congregations.—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 Quarterly-meetings of the circuits to which they belong; secondly, in the District-meeting, and lastly in the Conference; and, if accepted, are appointed to circuits.—7. Their characters and conduct are examined annually in the District-meetings and in the Conference; and, if they continue faithful for four years of trial, they are received into full connexion. At these Conferences also, strict inquiry is made into the conduct of every Itinerant.—The preachers assembled are thus, from their identity of interest with the great body of the people, and their mutual sympathy with the whole, their natural and only entire representatives, in all those affairs to which the Conference directs its cares;—united with the whole Connexion, as that in which they have resolved to live and die; and yet, because of their itinerancy, never so connected with any individual society as to become the organs of those changes and innovations, which in particular places might be often advocated.—Sufficiently dependant to be one with their people; but sufficiently distinct, in order and office, to be the effectual guardians of that which has been committed to their trust, as those who must give the *final* account of their stewardship not to man but to God. By them only can the discipline of the connexion, in its wide extent, be maintained; and the Lord and his people require it at their hands.

Mr. Wesley's great love of exactness and order was now abundantly gratified. In every place where he or the preachers in connexion 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, highly characteristic of the true Gospel of God our Saviour.

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 are 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 connexion 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 farther 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 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 you, 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 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 :

"SIR,—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 entrusted. 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, 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 shown so becoming a zeal, earnestly at heart: And that therefore I am, with warm respect,

"Sir,

"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.

In the year 1745, Mr. C. Wesley confined his labours chiefly to Lon-

don, Bristol, (including the neighbouring places,) and Wales.—He observes, August 1, “We began our conference, with Mr. Hodges, four of our assistants, Herbert Jenkins, and Mr. Gwynne. We continued it five days, and parted in great harmony and love.”—On the 25th, he was in Wales, and Mr. Gwynne sent his servant, to show him the way to Garth; but having some time before sprained his leg, and having taken too much exercise after the accident, he was unable to go; and at length left Wales, without visiting that family. The following is a remarkable instance of his zeal in doing good to the vilest and most wretched of human beings. “October 9.—After preaching at Bath, a woman desired to speak with me. She had been in our Society, but left it through offence, and fell by little and little into the depth of vice and misery. I called Mrs. Naylor to hear her mournful account. She had lived some time in a wicked house, in Avon-street; confessed it was hell to her to see our people pass by to the preaching; but knew not what to do, nor how to escape. We bid her fly for her life, and not once look behind her. Mrs. Naylor kept her with herself till the morning, and then I carried her with us in the coach to London, and delivered her to the care of our sister Davey. Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?”

February 3, 1746, Mr. C. Wesley opened the new Chapel in Wapping, and preached from 1 Cor. xv, 1. ‘*Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand.*’ The next day he wrote to a friend, expressing his apprehensions that God was about to pour out heavy judgments on the nation. He says to his friend, “You allow us one hundred years to fill up the measure of our iniquity; you cannot more laugh at my vain fear, than I at your vain confidence.”—This and the preceding year were times of danger and great national alarm; and religious people are more apprehensive of divine judgments, at such seasons, than other persons. This has been falsely attributed to superstition; but religious persons have a more clear knowledge than others, of the enormity and guilt of national sins; they see more clearly the mercies enjoyed, and know more perfectly the holiness and just anger of God against sin. What might have been the visitation of God, if this revival of true religion had not taken place, may be easily imagined by those who believe his word.

Mr. C. Wesley being at Bristol when he first heard the news of the victory at Culloden, over the rebel army, he observes, “I spoke at night on ‘*He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.*’ We rejoiced unto him with reverence, and thankfully observed the remarkable answer of that petition,

All their strength o’erturn, o’erthrow,
Snap their spears and break their swords:
Let the daring rebels know,
The battle is the Lord’s!*

“Oh! that in this reprieve, before the tide is turned, we may know the time of our visitation.”

* This is one stanza of his noble hymn, written at that awful time.

CHAPTER III.

PROGRESS OF RELIGION, WITH ITS ATTENDANT SUFFERINGS—MR. WESLEY'S EXPOSTULATION WITH THE OPPOSING CLERGY—HIS ADVICE TO THE PEOPLE RESPECTING THEIR PERSECUTORS.

THE Rebellion being now crushed, Mr. C. Wesley proceeded, in 1746, to Cornwall, and was cheered by the steadiness of the flock there in those *troublous times*. The laymen were found useful on this occasion. He observes, "Monday, June 30.—Both sheep and shepherds had been scattered in the late cloudy day of persecution; but the Lord gathered them again, and kept them together by their own brethren; who began to exhort their companions, one or more in every Society. No less than four have sprung up in Gwennup. I talked closely with each, and found no reason to doubt that God had used them thus far. I advised and charged them, not to stretch themselves beyond their line, by speaking out of the Society, or fancying themselves public teachers. If they keep within their bounds, as they promise, they may be useful in the church: And I would to God, that all the Lord's people were prophets like these."—It is highly probable, England would have tasted before this time the horrors of the French Revolution, if it were not for this teaching. The common people were then ripe for any mischief. They are now taught better.

"July 3.—At Lidgeon, I preached Christ crucified, and spake with the classes, who seem much in earnest. Showed above a thousand sinners, at Sithney, the love and compassion of Jesus towards them. Many who came from Helstone, a town of rebels and persecutors, were struck and confessed their sins, and declared they would never more be found fighting against God.—July 6. At Gwennup, near two thousand persons listened to those gracious words which proceeded out of *his* mouth, '*Come unto me, all ye that travel and are heavy laden,*' &c. Half of them were from Redruth, which seems on the point of surrendering to the Prince of Peace. The whole country finds the benefit of the Gospel. Hundreds, who follow not with us, have broken off their sins, and are outwardly reformed; and the persecutors in time past will not now suffer a word to be spoken against this way. Some of those who fell off in the late persecution, desired to be present at the Society."

"At St. Ives, no one offered to make the least disturbance: Indeed, the whole place is outwardly changed in this respect. I walk the streets with astonishment, scarcely believing it is St. Ives. All opposition falls before us, or rather is fallen, and not yet suffered to lift up its head again. This also hath the Lord wrought."

"July 19.—Rode to Sithney, where the word begins to take root. The rebels of Helstone threatened hard—they say all manner of evil of us. Papists we are, that is certain; and are for bringing in the Pretender. Nay, the vulgar are persuaded, that I have brought him with me; and James Waller is the man! But law is to come from London to-night to put us all down, and set a *price* upon my head."—This was an awful opinion to prevail among the fierce tinnors of Cornwall. But

he trusted in God and was protected. He observes, "We had, notwithstanding, a numerous congregation, and several of the persecutors. I declared my commission to '*open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light,*' &c. Many appeared convinced, and caught in the Gospel net."

The next day, being Sunday, Mr. C. Wesley preached again, and near one hundred of the fiercest rioters were present. A short time before, these men had cruelly beaten many, not sparing the women and children. But now, the very men, expecting a disturbance, came to protect Mr. C. Wesley, and said they would lose their lives in his defence. The whole congregation was attentive and quiet.

Thus, under the protection of a particular Providence, of which he had no doubt, Mr. C. Wesley pursued his labours with great diligence, confidence, and success. He had been informed that the people of St. Just, being scattered by persecution, had wandered into the paths of error and sin, and had been confirmed therein by their exhorter. He visited them, and spake with each member of the Society; and adds, "I was amazed to find them just the reverse of what they had been represented. Most of them had kept their first love, even while men were riding over their heads, and while they were passing through fire and water. Their exhorter appears a solid humble Christian, raised up to stand in the gap, and keep the trembling sheep together." The next day he again talked with some of the Society, and says, "I adored the miracle of grace, which has kept these sheep in the midst of wolves. Well may the despisers behold and wonder. Here is a bush burning in the fire, yet not consumed! What have they not done to crush this rising sect; but lo! they prevail nothing! Neither persecutions nor threatening, flattery nor violence, dungeons nor sufferings of various kinds, can conquer them. Many waters cannot quench this little spark which the Lord hath kindled, neither shall the floods of persecution drown it."

The congregations had been large in most places, during his stay in the West of Cornwall; but it being generally known that he was now preparing to leave it, they were greatly increased.—Sunday, August 10, being at Gwennup, he observes, "Nine or ten thousand, by computation, listened with all eagerness, while I '*commended them to God and to the word of his grace.*' For near two hours I was enabled to preach '*repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.*' I broke out, again and again, into prayer and exhortation; believing, not one word would return empty. Seventy years' sufferings would be overpaid, by one such opportunity. Never had we so large an effusion of the Spirit, as in the Society; I could not doubt, at that time, either of their perseverance or my own: And still I am humbly confident, that we shall stand together among '*the multitude which no man can number.*'"

The next day, August 11, being filled with thankfulness to God, for the mercies shown to himself and the people, he wrote a thanksgiving hymn, which begins thus,

All thanks be to God,
Who scatters abroad,
Throughout every place,
By the least of his servants, his savour of grace;
Who the victory gave,
The praise let him have;
For the work he hath done,
All honour and glory to Jesus alone! &c

He now travelled forward to St. Endys, and preached on, '*Repent and believe the Gospel.*' His friends, the Rev. Messrs. Bennet and Tomson, were present. "As I was concluding," says he, "a gentleman rode up to me very fiercely, and bid me come down. We exchanged a few words, and talked together more largely in the house. The poor drunken lawyer went away in as good a humour as he was then capable of. I had more difficulty to get clear of a different antagonist, one Adams, an old enthusiast, who travels through the land, as overseer of all the Ministers."—Happy and wise, no doubt, in his own conceit.

Having received many letters from Mr. Kinsman's family, Mr. Jenkins, and others at Plymouth, importuning him to favour them with another visit on his return, he complied with their request, on the 14th of August; and on the 18th, he took boat at the Dock, accompanied by several friends, to meet a congregation at some distance. He observes, "The rough stormy sea tried our faith. None stirred, or we must have been overset. In two hours, our invisible Pilot brought us safe to land, thankful for our deliverance, humbled for our littleness of faith, and more endeared to each other by our common danger. We found thousands waiting for the word of life. The Lord made it a channel of grace. I spoke and prayed alternately for two hours. The moonlight added to the solemnity. Our eyes overflowed with tears, and our hearts with love! Scarce a soul but was affected with grief or joy. We drank into one spirit, and were persuaded, that '*neither life nor death, things present, nor things to come, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*'"

Mr. C. Wesley continued his labours daily, visiting various places in his way to Bristol, where he arrived on the 28th of August, and came safe to London on the 2d of September. He staid here a fortnight, during which he became acquainted with Mr. Edward Perronet, a sensible, pious, and amiable young man. Sept. 16, they set out, accompanied by several friends, to pay a visit to his father, the Rev. Mr. Perronet, Vicar of Shoreham in Kent; a man of a most artless, childlike spirit, and zealous for the doctrines of the Gospel. But his preaching and godly conversation had, as yet, but little influence on the minds of his people, who opposed the truth with great violence. It is probable, notice had been given, that Mr. C. Wesley would preach in the church. "As soon," says he, "as I began preaching, the wild beasts began roaring, stamping, blaspheming, ringing the bells, and turning the church into a bear-garden. I spoke on for half an hour, though only the nearest could hear. The rioters followed us to Mr. Perronet's house, raging, threatening, and throwing stones. Charles Perronet hung over me, to intercept the blows. They continued their uproar after we got into the house."—Mr. C. Wesley retired for the present from the *beasts of the people*, and returned to London with Mr. E. Perronet.

October the 9th, being appointed as a day of public thanksgiving for national mercies, the Foundery was filled at four in the morning. Mr. C. Wesley preached from those words, '*How shall I give thee up, Ephraim?*' He adds, "Our hearts were melted by the long-suffering love of God; whose power we found disposing us to the true thanksgiving. It was a day of solemn rejoicing. O that from this moment, all our rebellions against God might cease!"

The winter was now approaching, yet Mr. C. Wesley, although in a

poor state of health, determined to take his northern journey. October 10, he tells us, "I set out for Newcastle, with my young companion and friend, E. Perronet, whose heart the Lord hath given me. His family has been kept from us so long by a mistaken notion, that we were against the Church."—He visited the brethren in Staffordshire, and, on the 15th, preached at Tippen Green. After preaching in the evening, a friend invited him to sleep at his house, at no great distance from the place. Soon after they were sat down, the mob beset the house, and, beating at the door, demanded entrance. Mr. Wesley ordered the door to be set open, and the house was immediately filled. "I sat still," says he, "in the midst of them for half an hour. I was a little concerned for E. Perronet, lest such rough treatment, at his first setting out, should daunt him. But he abounded in valour, and was for reasoning with the wild beasts, before they had spent any of their violence. He got a deal of abuse thereby, and not a little dirt, both of which he took very patiently. I had no design to preach; but being called upon by so unexpected a congregation, I rose at last and read, '*When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory.*' While I reasoned with them of judgment to come, they grew calmer by little and little. I then spake to them, one by one, till the Lord had disarmed them all. One who stood out the longest, I held by the hand, and urged the love of Christ crucified, till, in spite of both his natural and diabolical courage, he trembled like a leaf. I was constrained to break out into prayer for him. Our leopards were all become lambs, and very kind we all were at parting. Near midnight the house was clear and quiet. We gave thanks to God for our salvation, and slept in peace."—Such were the conflicts, and such the victories frequently obtained in that day.

October 21. Mr. C. Wesley preached at Dewsbury, where John Nelson had gathered many stray sheep, and formed a Society. The Minister did not condemn them unheard, but talked with them, examined into the doctrine they had been taught, and its effects on their lives. When he found, that as many as had been affected by the preaching, were evidently reformed, and brought to Church and Sacrament, he testified his approbation of the work, and rejoiced that sinners were converted to God. Had all the ministers of the Established Church acted with the same candour, they would have served the Church better, and the work would have been much more extended than we have yet seen it.

October 25. They arrived at Newcastle, where Mr. E. Perronet was immediately taken ill of the small-pox, and had a very narrow escape for his life.—October 31, Mr. Wesley observes, "I rode to Wickham, where the Curate sent his love to me, with a message that he was glad of my coming, and obliged to me for endeavouring to do good among his people, for none wanted it more; and he heartily wished me good luck in the name of the Lord. He came, with another clergyman, and staid both the preaching and the meeting of the Society."

Mr. C. Wesley continued his labours in and about Newcastle till the 27th of November, when he rode to Hexham, at the pressing request of Mr. Wardrobe, a Dissenting Minister, and others. He observes, "I walked directly to the market-place, and called sinners to repentance. A multitude of them stood staring at me, but all quiet. The Lord opened

my mouth, and they drew nearer and nearer ; stole off their hats and listened : None offered to interrupt, but one unfortunate Squire, who could get no one to second him. His servants and the constables hid themselves : One he found, and bid him go and take me down. The poor constable simply answered, ‘ Sir, I cannot have the face to do it, for what harm does he do ? ’ Several Papists attended, and the Church Minister, who had refused me his pulpit with indignation. However, he came to hear with his own ears : I wish all who hang us first, would, like him, try us afterwards.

“ I walked back to Mr. Ord’s, through the people, who acknowledged, ‘ It is the truth, and none can speak against it. ’ A constable followed and told me, ‘ Sir Edward Blacket orders you to *disperse* the town, (*depart*, I suppose, he meant,) and not raise a disturbance here. ’—I sent my respects to Sir Edward, and said, if he would give me leave, I would wait upon him and satisfy him. He soon returned with an answer, ‘ that Sir Edward would have nothing to say to me ; but if I preached again and raised a disturbance, he would put the law in execution against me. ’—I answered, that I was not conscious of breaking any law of God or man ; but if I did, I was ready to suffer the penalty : That, as I had not given notice of preaching again at the Cross, I should not preach again at that place, nor cause a disturbance any where. I charged the constable, a trembling, submissive soul, to assure his worship, that I revered him for his office sake. The only place I could get to preach in was a cockpit, and I expected Satan would come and fight me on his own ground. Squire Roberts, the Justice’s son, laboured hard to raise a mob, for which I was to be answerable ; but the very boys ran away from him, when the poor Squire would have persuaded them to go down to the cockpit and cry fire. I called, in words then first heard in that place, ‘ *Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.* ’ God struck the hard rock, and the waters gushed out. Never have I seen a people more desirous of knowing the truth, at the first hearing. I passed the evening in conference with Mr. Wardrobe. Oh that all our Dissenting Ministers were like-minded, then would all dissensions cease for ever ! ”—See the true catholic spirit of this High Churchman !

“ November 28, at six, we assembled again in our chapel, the cockpit. I imagined myself in the Pantheon, or some Heathen Temple, and almost scrupled preaching there at first ; but we found, ‘ *the earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof.* ’ His presence consecrated the place. Never have I found a greater sense of God, than while we were repeating his own prayer. I set before their eyes, Christ crucified. The rocks were melted, and gracious tears flowed. We knew not how to part. I distributed some books among them, which they received with the utmost eagerness ; begging me to come again, and to send our preachers to them. ”—Does any one ask how Methodism has prospered ? Behold the way !—December 18, he says, “ I waked between three and four, in a temper of mind I have rarely felt on my birth-day. My joy and thankfulness continued the whole day, to my own astonishment. ”—This observation is truly evangelical. He only, to whom ‘ *there is no condemnation, being in Christ Jesus,* ’ can bless the day when he was born !

Towards the end of December, Mr. C. Wesley quitted the North, and began to move southward. January 6, 1747, he came to Grimsby,

where he was saluted by a shouting mob. In the evening he attempted to preach at the room, but the mob was so violent he could not proceed. At length one of the rioters aimed a severe blow at him, which a friend who stood near received. Another of them cried out, "What, you dog, do you strike a Clergyman?" and then fell upon his comrade. Immediately every man's hand was against his fellow: They began fighting and beating one another, till, in a few minutes, the room was cleared of all disturbers; when Mr. C. Wesley preached for half an hour, without farther molestation. On the 9th, at Hainton, he talked separately with the members of the little Society, who were as sheep encompassed with wolves. The Minister of the place had repelled them from the Sacrament, and laboured to stir up the whole town against them. It is probable they would have been worried to death, but for the chief man of the place, a professed Papist, who hindered these good Protestants from destroying their innocent brethren.

Mr. C. Wesley returned to London, which he left on the 23d; and, on the 24th he reached the Devizes in his way to Bristol, in company with Mr. Minton. They soon perceived that the enemies of religion had taken the alarm, and were mustering their forces for the battle. They began by ringing the bells backwards, and running to and fro in the streets, as lions roaring for their prey. The Curate's mob went in quest of Mr. C. Wesley to several places, particularly to Mr. Philips's, where it was expected he would preach. They broke open and ransacked the house; but not finding him there, they marched off to a Mr. Rogers's, where he and several others, being met together, were praying and exhorting one another to continue steadfast in the faith, and through much tribulation to enter the kingdom. The zealous Curate, Mr. Innys, stood with the mob in the street, dancing for joy. "This," says Mr. C. Wesley, "is he, who declared in the pulpit, as well as from house to house, 'That he himself heard me preach blasphemy before the University, and tell my hearers,—*If you do not receive the Holy Ghost while I breathe upon you, ye are all damned!*' He had been about the town several days, stirring up the people, and canvassing the gentry for their vote and interest; but could not raise a mob while my brother was here: The hour of darkness was not then fully come."

Mr. Innys, however, by assiduity, and falsehood boldly asserted as truth, now engaged some of the gentlemen of the town in his party, and prevailed with them to encourage the mob. While they beset the house, where Mr. C. Wesley and the company with him were assembled, he often heard his own name mentioned, with, "Bring him out! Bring him out!" He observes, "The little flock were less afraid than I expected; only one of our sisters fainted away."—It being now dark, the besiegers blocked up the door with a wagon, and set up lights, lest Mr. C. Wesley should escape. One of the company, however, got out unobserved, and with much entreaty prevailed on the Mayor to come down. He came with two constables, and threatened the rioters; but so gently, that no one regarded him. Having torn down the shutters of the shop, and broken the windows, it is wonderful they did not enter the house: But a secret hand seemed to restrain them. After a while, they hurried away to the inn, where the horses were put up, broke open the stable-door, and turned out the beasts. "In the mean time," says Mr. C. Wesley, "we were at a loss what to do; when God put it into the

heart of our next-door neighbour, a Baptist, to take us through a passage into his own house, offer us his bed, and engage for our security. We accepted his kindness, and slept in peace.

“February 25.—A day never to be forgotten! At seven o’clock, I walked quietly to Mrs. Philips’s, and began preaching a little before the time appointed. For three quarters of an hour, I invited a few listening sinners to Christ. Soon after, Satan’s whole army assaulted the house. We sat in a little ground-room, and ordered all the doors to be thrown open. They brought a hand-engine, and began to play into the house. We kept our seats, and they rushed into the passage; just then, Mr. Borough, the constable, came, and seizing the spout of the engine, carried it off. They swore, if he did not deliver it, they would pull down the house. At that time, they might have taken us prisoners; we were close to them, and none to interpose: But they hurried out to fetch the larger engine. In the mean time, we were advised to send for the Mayor; but Mr. Mayor was gone out of town, in the sight of the people, which gave great encouragement to those who were already wrought up to a proper pitch by the Curate, and the gentlemen of the town; particularly Mr. Sutton and Mr. Willy, Dissenters, the two leading men. Mr. Sutton frequently came out to the mob, to keep up their spirits. He sent word to Mrs. Philips, that if she did not turn that fellow out to the mob, he would send them to drag him out. Mr. Willy passed by again and again, assuring the rioters, he would stand by them, and secure them from the law, do what they would.”

The rioters “now therefore began playing the larger engine; which broke the windows, flooded the rooms, and spoiled the goods. We were withdrawn to a small upper room, in the back part of the house; seeing no way to escape their violence, as they seemed under the full power of the old murderer. They first laid hold on the man who kept the society-house, dragged him away, and threw him into the horse-pond.—We gave ourselves unto prayer, believing the Lord would deliver us; how, or when, we saw not; nor any possible way of escaping: We therefore stood still, to see the salvation of God. Every now and then, some or other of our friends would venture to us; but they rather weakened our hands, so that we were forced to stop our ears, and look up. Among the rest, the Mayor’s maid came, and told us, her mistress was in tears about me; and begged me to disguise myself in women’s clothes, and try to make my escape. Her heart had been turned towards us by the conversion of her son, just on the brink of ruin. God laid his hand on the poor prodigal, and, instead of running to sea, he entered the Society.—The rioters, without, continued playing their engine, which diverted them for some time; but their number and fierceness still increased, and the *gentlemen* supplied them with pitchers of ale, as much as they would drink. They were now on the point of breaking in, when Mr. Borough thought of reading the Proclamation: He did so, at the hazard of his life. In less than the hour, of above a thousand wild beasts, none were left, but the guard, our constable, who had applied to Mr. Street, the only Justice in the town; but he would not act. We found there was no help in man, which drove us closer to the Lord; and we prayed, with little intermission, the whole day.”

The mob, however, rallied again, and Mr. C. Wesley observes, “Our enemies, at their return, made their main assault at the back door, swear-

ing horribly, they would have me, if it cost them their lives. Many seeming accidents occurred to prevent their breaking in. The man of the house came home, and, instead of turning me out as they expected, took part with us, and stemmed the tide for some time. They now got a notion, that I had made my escape ; and ran down to the inn, and played the engine there. They forced the inn-keeper to turn out our horses, which he immediately sent to Mr. Clark's ; which drew the rabble and their engine thither. But the resolute old man charged and presented his gun, till they retreated.—Upon their revisiting us, we stood in jeopardy every moment. Such threatenings, curses, and blasphemies, I have never heard. They seemed kept out by a continual miracle. I remembered the Roman Senators, sitting in the Forum, when the Gauls broke in upon them ; but thought there was a fitter posture for Christians, and told my companion they should take us off our knees. We were kept from all hurry and discomposure of spirit, by a Divine Power resting upon us. We prayed and conversed as freely, as if we had been in the midst of our brethren ; and had great confidence that the Lord would either deliver us *from* the danger, or *in* it. In the height of the storm, just when we were falling into the hands of the drunken enraged multitude, Mr. Minton was so little disturbed that he fell fast asleep.

“ They were now close to us on every side, and over our heads untiling the roof. A ruffian cried out, ‘ Here they are, behind the curtain.’ At this time we fully expected their appearance, and retired to the farthest corner of the room ; and I said, ‘ THIS IS THE CRISIS !’ In that moment, Jesus rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. We heard not a breath without, and wondered what was become of them. The silence lasted for three quarters of an hour, before any one came near us ; and we continued in mutual exhortation and prayer, looking for deliverance. I often told my companions, ‘ Now God is at work for us : He is contriving our escape : He can turn these leopards into lambs ; can command the heathen to bring his children on their shoulders, and make our fiercest enemies the instruments of our deliverance.’ About three o’clock, Mr. Clark knocked at the door, and brought with him the persecuting constable. He said, ‘ Sir, if you will promise never to preach here again, the gentlemen and I will engage to bring you safe out of town.’—My answer was, ‘ I shall promise no such thing : Setting aside my office, I will not give up my birthright as an Englishman, of visiting what place I please of his Majesty’s dominions.’—‘ Sir,’ said the constable, ‘ we expect no such promise, that you will never come here again : Only tell me, that it is not your *present* intention, that I may tell the gentlemen, who will then secure your quiet departure.’—I answered, ‘ I cannot come again immediately, because I must return to London a week hence. But, *observe*, I make no promise of not preaching here ; and do not you say, that I do.’

“ He went away with this answer, and we betook ourselves to prayer and thanksgiving. We perceived it was the Lord’s doing, and it was marvellous in our eyes. The hearts of our adversaries were turned. Whether pity for us, or fear for themselves, wrought strongest, God knoweth ; probably the latter : for the mob were wrought up to such a pitch of fury, that their masters dreaded the consequence, and therefore went about appeasing the multitude, and charging them not to touch us in our departure.

“While the constable was gathering his *posse*, we got our things from Mr. Clark’s, and prepared to go forth. The whole multitude were without, expecting us, and saluted us with a general shout. Mr. Minton and I took horse in the face of our enemies, who began clamouring against us; the gentlemen were dispersed among the mob, to bridle them. We rode a slow pace up the street, the whole multitude pouring along on both sides, and attending us with loud acclamations,—such fierceness and diabolical malice I have not before seen in human faces. They ran up to our horses, as if they would swallow us, but did not know which was Wesley. We felt great peace and acquiescence in the honour done us, while the whole town were spectators of our march. When out of sight, we mended our pace, and about seven o’clock came to Wrexall. The news of our danger was got thither before us; but we brought the welcome tidings of our deliverance. We joined in hearty prayer to our Deliverer, singing the hymn beginning with

Worship, and thanks, and blessing,
And strength, ascribe to Jesus, &c.

“February 26.—I preached at Bath, and we rejoiced like men who take spoil. We continued our triumph at Bristol, and reaped the fruit of our labours and sufferings.” He had got among a people who had received the Gospel ‘*not in word only, but in power.*’ He was now therefore in honour; but he passed *through* it also, and was soon called to encounter the storms of dishonour and danger in Ireland.

Mr. J. Wesley knowing that much of this opposition and brutal treatment, was owing to the ignorance and prejudice of many of the clergy; and wishing to remove every ground of offence, he wrote a state of the case to a Friend, which he afterwards published:

“About seven years since, we began preaching inward present salvation, as attainable by faith alone. For preaching this doctrine, we were forbidden to preach in most churches. We then preached in private houses; and when the houses could not contain the people, in the open air. For this, many of the clergy preached or printed against us, as both heretics and schismatics. Persons who were convinced of sin, begged us to advise them more particularly, how to flee from the wrath to come. We desired them, being many, to come at one time, and we would endeavour it. For this, we were represented, both from the pulpit and press, as introducing Popery, and raising sedition: Yea, all manner of evil was said, both of us, and of those who used to assemble with us. Finding that some of these *did* walk disorderly, we desired them not to come to us any more. And some of the others we desired to overlook the rest, that we might know whether they walked worthy of the Gospel. Several of the clergy now stirred up the people, to treat us as outlaws or mad dogs. The people did so, both in Staffordshire, Cornwall, and many other places. And they do so still, wherever they are not restrained by fear of the magistrates.

“Now, what can *we* do, or what can *you*, or our brethren do, towards healing this breach? Desire of *us* any thing which we can do with a safe conscience, and we will do it immediately. Will *you* meet us here? Will you do what we desire of you, so far as you can with a safe conscience?

“1. Do you desire us, To preach another, or to desist from preaching this doctrine? We cannot do this with a safe conscience.

"2. Do you desire us, To desist from preaching *in private houses, or in the open air*? As things are now circumstanced, this would be the same as desiring us not to preach at all.

"3. Do you desire us, Not to advise those who meet together for that purpose? To dissolve our societies? We cannot do this with a safe conscience; for, we apprehend, many souls would be lost thereby.

"4. Do you desire us, To advise them one by one? This is impossible, because of their number.

"5. Do you desire us, To suffer those who walk disorderly, still to mix with the rest? Neither can we do this with a safe conscience; for '*evil communications corrupt good manners.*'

"6. Do you desire us, To discharge those *leaders*, as we term them who overlook the rest? This is, in effect, to suffer the disorderly walkers still to remain with the rest.

"Do you desire us, *lastly*, to behave with tenderness, both to the characters and persons of our brethren the clergy? By the grace of God, we can and will do this; as, indeed, we have done to this day.

"If you ask, What we desire of you to do? we answer, 1. We do not desire any of you, to let us preach in your church, either if you believe us to preach false doctrine, or if you have the least scruple. But we desire any who believes us to preach true doctrine, and has no scruple in the matter, not to be either publicly or privately discouraged from inviting us to preach in his church.

"2. We do not desire, that any who thinks it his duty to preach or print against us, should refrain therefrom. But we desire, that none will do this, till he has calmly considered both sides of the question; and that he would not condemn us unheard, but first read what we say in our own defence.

"3. We do not desire any favour, if either Popery, sedition, or immorality be proved against us. But we desire you would not credit, without proof, any of those senseless tales that pass current with the vulgar; that, if you do not credit them yourselves, you will not relate them to others; yea, that you will discountenance those who still retail them abroad.

"4. We do not desire any preferment, favour, or recommendation, from those that are in power, either in Church or State. But we desire, 1. That if any thing material be laid to our charge, we may be permitted to answer for ourselves.—2. That you would hinder your dependants from stirring up the rabble against us, who are certainly not the proper judges in these matters; and 3. That you would effectually suppress and discountenance all riots and popular insurrections, which evidently strike at the foundation of all government, whether of Church or State.

"Now these things you certainly can do, and that with a safe conscience. Therefore, till these things be done, the continuance of the breach, if there be any, is chargeable on you, and you only."

Soon after the publication of this statement, Mr. Wesley was attacked by his brother-in-law, Mr. Hall, as being inconsistent; professing to continue in the Church, yet allowing some things therein to be *indefensible*. Mr. Wesley replied, "You say, 'that we give up some things as *indefensible*, which yet have the same law and authority, as those we approve; such are many of the laws, customs, and practices of the *ecclesiastical courts.*'—I answer, 1. We allow that *these* laws, customs,

and practices are *indefensible*. 2. That there are Acts of Parliament in *defence* of *them*, as well as of those we approve. But will you show us how it follows, 1. That *those* things, and *these*, stand or fall together? Or, 2. That we cannot *sincerely* plead for the one, while we give up the other?

“Do you not here quite overlook one circumstance, which might be a key to our whole behaviour? Namely, that we no more look upon these filthy abuses which *adhere* to our Church, as *part* of the building; than we look upon any filth which may *adhere* to the walls of Westminster Abbey, as *part* of that structure.

“You think, ‘we practise other things in *contradiction* to the *orders* of the Church;’ and this you judge to be ‘a just exception to our *sincerity*.’ I answer, 1. We will obey all the *laws of the Church*, so far as we can with a safe conscience. 2. We will obey, with the same restriction, the Bishops, as executors of those *laws*. But their *bare will*, we do not profess to obey at all.

“Is field-preaching contrary to any of these *laws*? We think not. Is the allowing lay-preachers? We are not clear that this is contrary to any such law. This therefore (be it right or wrong on other accounts) is no just exception against our sincerity.

“‘The Rules of our Societies,’ you say, ‘is a discipline utterly *forbidden* by the *Bishops*.’ When did any Bishop forbid this? Or, by what *law*? We know not any such law. You add, ‘the *allowing* (for we do not *require*) any to *communicate* at our chapels, is contrary to the *Rubrics*.’ I answer, which rubrics require any to communicate *only* at the parish church? We cannot find them. Consequently, neither is this any just exception against our sincerity.”

At the close of this year, 1745, he makes the following reflections:—
“All this year, the work of God gradually increased in the Southern counties, as well as in the North of England. Many were awakened in a very remarkable manner; many were converted to God. Many were enabled to testify, that ‘*the blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin*.’ Mean time we were, in most places, tolerably quiet, as to popular tumults.” Where any thing of the kind appeared, the magistrates usually interposed, as indeed it was their duty to do. And wherever the peace-officers do their duty, no riot can long subsist. Feeling, however, for the people under his care, lest they should be discouraged, and turned out of the way; or be overcome of the evil, and repay their adversaries in the same spirit: He published a small Tract, intitled, “ADVICE TO THE PEOPLE CALLED METHODISTS,” from which I shall give a short extract.

“By METHODISTS,” says Mr. Wesley, “I mean a people who profess to pursue (in whatsoever measure they have attained) holiness of heart and life, inward and outward conformity in all things to the revealed will of God; who place religion in a uniform resemblance of the Great Object of it; more particularly, in justice, mercy, and truth, or universal love filling the heart, and governing the life. You, to whom I now speak, believe this love of human kind cannot spring but from the love of God; considered not only as your Father, but as the Father of the spirits of all flesh; yea, as the general Parent and Friend of all the families, both of heaven and earth.

“This filial love you suppose to flow only from faith; and that this

faith implies an evidence that God is merciful to me a sinner ; that he is reconciled to me by the death of his Son, and now accepts me for his sake. You accordingly describe the faith of a real Christian, as, 'A sure trust and confidence, (over and above his assent to the Sacred Writings,) which he hath in God, that his sins are forgiven ; and that he is, through the merits of Christ, reconciled to the favour of God.' And you believe, farther, that both this faith and love are wrought in us by the inspiration or influence of the Holy Ghost.

"If you walk by this rule, continually endeavouring to know, and love, and resemble, and obey the great God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the God of love, of pardoning mercy ; and if, lastly, you unite together, to encourage and help each other, in thus working out your salvation, and for that end watch over one another in love, you are they whom I mean by Methodists.

"The FIRST general ADVICE which one who loves your souls would earnestly recommend to every one of you, is, Consider, with deep and frequent attention, the peculiar circumstances wherein you stand.—One of these is, That you are a new people. Your name is new, (at least, as used in a religious sense,) not heard of, till a few years ago, either in our own, or any other nation. Your principles are new, in this respect, that there is no other set of people among us, (and possibly, not in the Christian world,) who hold them all in the same degree and connexion ; who so strenuously and continually insist on the absolute necessity of universal holiness both in heart and life,—of a peaceful, joyous love of God,—of a supernatural evidence of things not seen,—of an inward witness that we are the children of God,—and of the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, in order to any good thought, or word, or work. And perhaps there is no other set of people, (at least, not visibly united together,) who lay so much, and yet no more, stress than you do, on rectitude of opinions, on outward modes of worship, and the use of those ordinances which you acknowledge to be of God ; and yet do not condemn any man upon earth, merely for thinking otherwise than you do,—much less to imagine that God condemns him for this, if he be upright and sincere of heart.

"Your strictness of life, taking the whole of it together, may likewise be accounted new. I mean, your making it a rule to abstain from fashionable diversions ; your plainness of dress ; your manner of dealing in trade ; your exactness in observing the Lord's day ; your scrupulosity as to things that have not paid custom ; your total abstinence from spiritous liquors (unless in cases of extreme necessity ;) your rule, 'not to mention the fault of an absent person, in particular of ministers, or of those in authority,' may justly be termed new. For we do not find any body of people who insist on all these rules together.

"Consider these peculiar circumstances wherein you stand, and you will see the propriety of a SECOND ADVICE I would recommend to you : Do not imagine you can avoid giving offence ; your very name renders this impossible. And as much offence as you give by your name, you will give still more by your principles. You will give offence to the bigots for opinions, modes of worship, and ordinances, by laying no more stress upon them ; to the bigots against them, by laying so much ; to men of form, by insisting so frequently and strongly on the inward power of religion ; to moral men, (so called,) by declaring the absolute neces-

sity of faith, in order to acceptance with God ; to men of reason you will give offence, by talking of inspiration and receiving the Holy Ghost ; to drunkards, sabbath breakers, common swearers, and other open sinners, by refraining from their company, as well as by that disapprobation of their behaviour, which you will be often obliged to express. Either, therefore, you must consent to give up your principles, or your fond hope of pleasing men. What makes even your principles more offensive is, this uniting of yourselves together : Union renders you more conspicuous, placing you more in the eye of men ; and more dreadful to those of a fearful temper ; and more odious to men of zeal, if their zeal be any other than fervent love to God and man. And the offence will sink the deeper, because you are gathered out of so many other congregations ; for the warm men in each will not easily be convinced, that you do not despise either them or their teachers ; nay, will probably imagine, that you utterly condemn them, as though they could not be saved.

“ You cannot but expect, that the offence continually arising from such a variety of provocations, will gradually ripen into hatred, malice, and all other unkind tempers. And as they who are thus affected, will not fail to represent you to others in the same light as you appear to them, sometimes as madmen and fools, sometimes as wicked men, fellows not fit to live upon the earth ; the consequence, humanly speaking, must be, that, together with your reputation, you will lose, 1. The love of your friends, relations, and acquaintances, even those who once loved you the most tenderly ;—2. Your business, for many will employ you no longer, nor ‘ buy of such a one as you are ;’—and, 3. In due time, (unless He who governs the world interpose,) your health, liberty, and life.

“ What farther advice can be given to a person in such a situation ? I cannot but advise you, **THIRDLY**, Consider deeply with yourself, ‘ Is the God whom I serve, able to deliver me ? I am not able to deliver myself out of these difficulties ; much less am I able to bear them. I know not how to give up my reputation, my friends, my substance, my liberty, my life. Can God give me to rejoice in doing this ? And may I depend upon him, that he will ? *Are the hairs of my head all numbered ?* And does he never fail them that trust in him ?’—Weigh this thoroughly ; and if you can trust God with your all, then go on, in the power of his might.

“ I would earnestly advise you, **FOURTHLY**, Keep in the very path wherein you now tread. Let this be your manly, noble, generous religion, equally remote from the meanness of superstition, (which places religion in doing what God hath not enjoined, or abstaining from what he hath not forbidden,) and from the unkindness of bigotry, (which confines our affection to our own party, sect, or opinion.) Above all, stand fast in obedient faith, faith in the God of pardoning mercy, in the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, ‘ *who hath loved you, and given himself for you.*’ Ascribe to Him all the good you find in yourself ; all your peace, and joy, and love ; all your power to do and suffer his will, through the Spirit of the living God. Yet, in the mean time, carefully avoid enthusiasm ; impute not the dreams of men to the all-wise God ; and expect neither light nor power from Him, but in the serious use of all the means he hath ordained.

“ Condemn no man for not thinking as you think. Let every one enjoy the full and free liberty of thinking for himself. Let every man

use his own judgment, since every man must give an account of himself to God. Abhor every approach, in any kind or degree, to the spirit of persecution. If you cannot reason or persuade a man into the truth, never attempt to force him into it. If love will not compel him to come, leave him to God, the Judge of all. Yet, expect not that others will thus deal with you. No : Some will endeavour to fright you out of your principles ; some, to shame you into a more popular religion, to laugh and rally you out of your singularity : But from none of these will you be in so great danger, as from those who assault you with quite different weapons, with softness, good nature, and earnest professions of (perhaps real) good will. Here you are equally concerned, to avoid the very appearance of anger, contempt, or unkindness, and to hold fast the whole truth of God, both in principle and in practice. This, indeed, will be interpreted as unkindness. Your former acquaintance will look upon this, that you will not sin or trifle with them, as a plain proof of your coldness towards them ; and this burden you must be content to bear : But labour to avoid all real unkindness, all disobliging words, or harshness of speech ; all shyness, or strangeness of behaviour : speak to them with all the tenderness and love, and behave with all the sweetness and courtesy you can ; taking care not to give any needless offence to neighbour or stranger, friend or enemy.

“ Perhaps, on this very account, I might advise you FIFTHLY, Not to talk much of what you suffer ; ‘ of the persecution you endured at such a time, and the wickedness of your persecutors.’ Nothing more tends to exasperate them than this : and therefore, although there is a time when these things must be mentioned, yet, it might be a general rule, to do it as seldom as you can with a safe conscience. For, besides its tendency to inflame them, it has the appearance of evil, of ostentation, of magnifying yourselves. It also tends to puff you up with pride, and to make you think yourselves some great ones, as it certainly does to excite or increase in your heart ill-will, and all unkind tempers. It is, at best, loss of time ; for, instead of the wickedness of men, you might be talking of the goodness of God. Would it not be far more profitable for your souls, instead of speaking against them, to pray for them ? To confirm your love towards those unhappy men, whom you believe to be fighting against God, by crying mightily to him in their behalf, that he may open their eyes, and change their hearts ?

“ I have now only to commend you to the care of Him who hath all power in heaven and in earth ; beseeching Him, that, in every circumstance of life, you may stand ‘ firm as the beaten anvil to the stroke :’ desiring nothing on earth, ‘ *accounting all things but dung and dross, that you may win Christ ;*’ and always remembering, ‘ It is the part of a good champion, to be flead alive, and to conquer.’ ”

CHAPTER IV.

MR. WESLEY'S CORRESPONDENCE WITH SOME EMINENT MEN, IN SCOTLAND AND ENGLAND—ROUGH SKETCH CONCERNING JUSTIFYING FAITH—OPENING OF KINGSWOOD SCHOOL.

MR. WESLEY and his brother were now much spoken of in Scotland ; and a few of the most pious ministers there, though differing from the two brothers on some points of doctrine, yet rejoiced in the great revival of practical religion in England, by their means.

Mr. James Robe, Minister of Killisyth, having received from a friend some account of them, wrote as follows :—" I was much pleased with what you wrote to me of the Messrs. Wesley. I rejoice that justification, the imputed righteousness of Jehovah our Righteousness, received by faith alone, and gospel holiness, are the subjects of their sermons ; and the debated points, (various sentiments about which are not inconsistent with saving faith and our acceptance with God,) are laid aside. I embrace fellowship with them, and pray that the Lord of the vineyard may give them success in preaching the faith of Christ, so much needed in England. *'As many as be perfect, let them be thus minded ; and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless whereunto we have attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same things.'* How good would it be for the Christian world, if this were believed, and regarded as the word of God ! When the happy days upon the wing are come, so it will be : And in as far as any have really shared in the late revival, it is so with them in some good measure. I learned something new, as to the exhorters, from the account you gave of them. I look upon them as so many licensed probationers, or useful public teachers ; which is the case of our probationers. It provides me with an answer to objections, besides that of the extraordinary circumstances of the Established Church. I beg you to salute the two brothers for me, much in the Lord. I wrote to my correspondents formerly, upon yours to me from Newcastle, that there were hopes of their joining in our concert for prayer and praise, for the revival of real Christianity. Now I can write that they have acceded ; and I hope we shall expressly remember one another before the throne of grace."

Mr. James Erskine, who frequently in the course of this year (1745,) corresponded with Mr. Wesley, transmitted this part of Mr. Robe's letter to him ; and with a liberality not common to Scotchmen at that time, he asks " Are the points which give the different denominations to Christians, and from whence proceed separate communions, animosities, evil-speakings, surmises, and, at least, coolness of affection, aptness to misconstrue, slowness to think well of others, stiffness in one's own conceits, and over-valuing one's own opinion, &c, &c, are these points, (at least among the far greatest part of Protestants,) as important, as clearly revealed, and as essential, or as closely connected with the essentials of practical Christianity, as the *'loving of one another with a pure heart fervently, and not forsaking,'* much less refusing, *'the*

assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some was, and now of almost all is?"—Every candid man will most certainly answer this question in the negative. And it requires no great degree of discernment to perceive, that the narrow party-spirit which prevails among most denominations of Christians with regard to communion and church fellowship, even where it is acknowledged that the essential doctrines of the gospel are held fast, is one grand hinderance of brotherly love, and of a more general diffusion of real experimental religion.

In the latter end of this year, Mr. Wesley had expressed a desire to be useful to the Scots, and to preach the Gospel in Scotland. His friend Mr. James Erskine wrote to him on the subject, and set before him some of the difficulties he would have to struggle with in the attempt. Mr. Erskine, in his letter, expresses an ardent wish for union and Christian fellowship among all those of different denominations and opinions, who love the Lord Jesus Christ. He reprobates the animosity and bigotry, too prevalent among them, under the specious name of zeal for the truth. He then sets before him some of the difficulties he would meet with in attempting to preach and form societies in Scotland: "You have," says he, "some sentiments and ways of speaking different from the generality, and almost from all the real Christians of the Presbyterian persuasion in Scotland, among whom, from my long acquaintance with my countrymen, I cannot help thinking, are about five in six of the real Christians there. And to my regret, of these worthy people, I fear three out of five are wofully bigoted: A vice too natural to us Scots, from what our countryman, George Buchanan, wrote was our temper—*perfervidum Scotorum ingenium*: '*The vehement temper of the Scots.*' And some of you English have as much of it as any Scot; but it is not so national with you, as among the Scots. You would have the same prejudices to struggle with among the Presbyterians, that Mr. Whitefield had, that is, that you are of the Church of England, and use the Liturgy. And you would have more, because of the difference of sentiment and ways of speaking, as to some doctrines, about which, his opinions and expressions were the same as theirs: And though this might make you more acceptable to most of the Episcopal persuasion, yet your way of speaking of *Christian perfection*, and their regard for what they call church-order and regularity, would make *them* fly from you; for which last, the Presbyterians would not be so offended with you; and your urging so strict holiness in practice would recommend you to the Presbyterians, but I am afraid not to the Episcopalians. And your doctrine of man's utter ruin by the fall, and utter inability to do any thing for his own recovery; and the necessity of regeneration, and an interest in Christ by faith alone, that works by love, and produces holiness in heart and life, &c, would be sweet to the Presbyterians, but not to many of the Episcopalians.

"Mr. Whitefield, in fewer months than one would have thought could have been done in as many years, overcame the prejudices of the far greatest part of the Presbyterians, especially the most religious, only by preaching that faith and holiness you preach; by meddling with no debates, and by the power of the Lord signally accompanying his administrations; awakening, converting, and building up almost wherever he went, in places remote from one another. The same evangelical doctrine, of faith, holiness, regeneration, and divine influence, &c, and such

blessed divine power on your administrations, managed with Christian prudence and simplicity, and that wisdom from above which is profitable to direct, would likewise overcome the strong prejudices against you and your brother.

“But Mr. Whitefield had one other advantage, which you would not have at present. The sermons and other things he had printed, were earnestly read by the Presbyterians, and were to their taste ; as well as his sermons, conversations, and prayers among them. And there is hardly any thing printed by your brother and you, in which I fear they would not find some thought or expression that would stumble and offend them.”—Mr. Wesley, however, did not go to Scotland till some years after this period.

It was in this year also, that Mr. Wesley began a private correspondence with a Clergyman of considerable abilities, and probably of high station, if not the highest, in the church. He concealed his real name, and only said, as he lived at a considerable distance from London, a letter would find him, directed to John Smith, at Mr. Richard Mead’s, the Golden Cross, Cheapside. He introduced himself to Mr. Wesley in a very candid and liberal manner, and preserved candour and good temper through the greatest part of their controversy. He introduces himself thus :

“REVEREND SIR,—The labouring to bring all the world to solid inward vital religion, is a work so truly Christian and laudable, that I shall ever highly esteem those who attempt this great work, even though they should appear to me to be under some errors in doctrine, some mistakes in their conduct, and some excess in their zeal. You may, therefore, expect in me a candid adversary ; a contender for truth, and not for victory ; one who would be glad to convince you of any error which he apprehends himself to have discovered in you ; but who would be abundantly more glad to be convinced of errors in himself. Now, the best way to enable you to set me right wherever I may be wrong, will be by pointing out to you, what I have to object to those works of yours which have fallen into my hands ; and, for order sake, I shall reduce my objections to matter of doctrine, to matter of phraseology, and to matter of fact.”—He then mentions several particulars under the different heads, which he discusses with an open manly freedom, and a good degree of ingenuity and ability. He concludes his first letter thus, “Having now freely told you what I take to be wrong in you, I shall readily and thankfully attend to whatever you shall point out amiss in me. I am desirous to retract and amend whatever is wrong. To your general design of promoting true religion, I am a hearty friend ; nay, to your particular scheme and singularities, I am no enemy. If I come not fully into your scheme, it is not for want of good will, but for want of evidence and conviction that it is true. I pray God to grant me all needful illumination ; and I pray you to tell me what is lacking on my part.”

Mr. Wesley received and considered this letter with the same friendliness, and answered it with the same openness and candour. “I was determined,” says he in his reply, “from the time I received yours, to answer it as soon as I should have opportunity. But it was the longer delayed, because I could not persuade myself to write at all, till I had

leisure to write fully. And this I hope to do now ; though I know you not, not so much as your name. But I take it for granted, you are a person that fears God, and that speaks the real sentiments of his heart. And on this supposition I shall speak without any suspicion or reserve.

“ I am exceedingly obliged by the pains you have taken to point out to me, what you think to be mistakes. It is a truly Christian attempt, an act of brotherly love, which I pray God to repay sevenfold into your bosom. Methinks, I can scarce look upon such a person, on one who is ‘ a contender for truth. and not for victory,’ whatever opinion he may entertain of me, as an adversary at all. For what is friendship, if I am to account him mine enemy who endeavours to open my eyes, or to mend my heart ?” And in the conclusion of his letter, he says, “ Smite me friendly and reprove me : It shall be a precious balm ; it shall not break my head. I am deeply convinced, that I know nothing yet as I ought to know. Fourteen years ago, I said with Mr. Norris,* ‘ I want heat more than light :’ But now I know not which I want most. Perhaps, God will enlighten me by your words. O speak and spare not. At least you will have the thanks and prayers of

“ Your obliged and affectionate servant,

“ JOHN WESLEY.”

Dr. Whitehead observes, “ John Smith, for so we must call him for the sake of distinction, prefaces his second letter in the following manner : ‘ I heartily thank you for your very kind and very handsome letter. I have yielded it that attention which I think it justly deserves ; and am now sat down to give you my thoughts upon it. I shall first most readily take notice of those things wherein I stand corrected, and am gone over to you : And next I shall, with some reluctance, proceed to those in which we seem unfortunately to differ.’—But though he yielded up several things to Mr. Wesley, in whole, or in part, yet he pressed him on one or two points of doctrine ; and I think his objections had afterwards some influence on Mr. Wesley’s mind. There are six on each side, written with ability and spirit. I think Mr. Wesley’s opinions will admit of more illustrations and clearer evidence, than he has given them in this controversy. He himself afterwards stated some points to much greater advantage. I should, therefore, be sorry to see these letters published without occasional remarks, by some person who thoroughly understands the subjects therein discussed.”

* John Norris, the person here mentioned, was born in 1657, at Collingborne-Kingston, in Wiltshire, where his father was then minister. He was a learned divine and Platonic philosopher. He was educated first at Winchester School, and, in 1676, sent to Oxford. In 1680, he was elected Fellow of All Souls, soon after he had taken his degree of Bachelor of Arts. In 1684, he commenced Master of Arts ; and the same year opened a correspondence with that learned mystic divine, Dr. Henry Moore, of Christ’s College in Cambridge. He had also a correspondence with the learned Lady Masham, D. Cudworth’s daughter, and the ingenious Mrs Astel. In 1691, his distinguished merit procured him the rectory of Bemerton, near Sarum. This living, upwards of two hundred pounds a year, was a comfortable provision for his family ; and the easiness of the parochial duty gave him leisure to pursue his favourite studies. He died in 1711. Mr. Norris published two octavo volumes on “ The Theory of the Ideal World ” In this work he opposed Locke, and adorned Malebranche’s opinion, of *seeing all things in God*, with all the advantages of style and perspicuity of expression. His philosophical errors may easily be pardoned, on account of the general excellence of his writings, especially on subjects of practical divinity, which are universally esteemed. Mr. Wesley published extracts from two of his works, “ A Treatise on Christian Prudence,” and “ Reflections on the Conduct of Human Life.” No person can read these without reaping advantage ; and young persons ought to study them with diligence and attention.

I am ready to allow something of this, yet I cannot withhold these letters, (for the recovery of which, I am indebted to my friend Thomas Marriot, Esq.,) from the serious reader. The Archbishop, for such it seems he was, certainly wrote more like a friend, and an inquirer after truth, than any other of Mr. Wesley's opponents; and the ability displayed is considerable. The correspondence being private also, and managed with less carefulness than it would have been, if it had been intended for the public eye, is, I think, an advantage. Neither of the parties appears in his full polemic dress, and hence the characters of the men, as well as the truth contended for, are more clearly illustrated. I shall insert the whole in an Appendix, at the close of this volume. It will give the serious reader a connected view of the principal controversies in which Mr. Wesley was engaged for several years. It is not my intention to make any remarks upon these letters. I am quite willing that the serious reader should draw his own conclusions. Mr. Wesley has often observed, how hard it is to prove any thing to the satisfaction of an *opponent*.

Mr. Wesley continued his labours through the most distant parts of the kingdom during the year 1746. Methodism spread rapidly on every side: The societies flourished, and the people increased in number, and in knowledge and love of the truth. At this period, the preachers were not skilled beyond the first principles of religion, and the practical consequences deducible from them; '*repentance towards God, faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ,*' and the fruits that follow, '*righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*' These were the subjects of their daily discourses, and these truths they knew *in power*. But such was the low state of religious knowledge among the people, that it was absolutely necessary to enforce these *first principles*, and to give them a practical influence on the heart and life, before they were led any farther. In these circumstances, the limited knowledge of the preachers was so far from being an inconvenience, that it was an unspeakable advantage; as it necessarily confined them to those fundamental points of experimental and practical religion, which were best adapted to the state of the people. Ministers of diversified knowledge, but of little experience in the work of the Spirit of God, seldom dwell sufficiently in their sermons on these important points; and hence the preachers were far more successful in awakening sinners to a sense of their dangerous state, and in bringing them to a saving knowledge of Christ. To enforce the necessity of repentance, and of seeking salvation by grace alone through a Redeemer, the preacher would often draw a picture of human nature in such strong and natural colours, that every one who heard him saw his own likeness in it, and was ready to say, '*He hath shown me all that was in my heart!*' The effect was surprising. The people found themselves, under every discourse, emerging out of the thickest darkness into a region of light; the blaze of which, being suddenly poured in upon them, gave exquisite pain at first, but soon showed them the way to peace and consolation. Mr. Wesley foresaw, that as knowledge was increased among the people, it ought to be increased in the same, or even in a greater, proportion among the preachers, otherwise they would become less useful. He, therefore, began to think of a collection of such books in the English language, as might forward their improvement in treating of the various branches

of practical divinity. He seemed conscious, that the plan of his own education, and the prejudices he had early imbibed against the Non-conformists of the last century, had shut him out from the knowledge of many books which possibly might be very useful on this occasion.* This induced him to request Dr. Doddridge, with whom he had a friendly correspondence, to give him a list of such books as he might think proper for the improvement of young preachers.—March 15, 1746, the Doctor wrote to him, apologizing for the delay in complying with his request. “I am quite grieved,” says he, “and ashamed, that any hurry, public or private, should have prevented my answering your very obliging letter from Newcastle; especially as it has a face of disrespect, where I am sure I ought to express the very reverse, if I would do justice either to you, or my own heart. But you have been used to forgive greater injuries.

“I have been reading, (I will not pretend to tell you with what strong emotion,) the fourth edition of your *Further Appeals*: Concerning which, I shall only say, that I have written upon the title-page, ‘*How forcible are right words!*’ I am daily hurried by my printer, to finish the third volume of my *Family Expositor*. And I have, unwillingly, a secular affair on my hands, in consequence of a guardianship, which calls me away from my usual business for some days next week; on which account, I must beg your patience for a little while longer, as to the list of books you desire me to send you. But if God permit, you shall be sure to have it in a few weeks.

“I lately published a Thanksgiving Sermon, for the retreat of the rebels; which, if you think worth calling for, at Mr. Waugh’s, at the Turk’s Head in Gracechurch-street, I shall desire you to accept. I was willing to greet the first openings of mercy; and so much the rather, as I think with Lord Somerville, who first made the reflection in one of his letters, that, had the blow at Falkirk been pursued, our whole army had been destroyed. The wisest and best of men I know, agree to fear: Oh! that they could also agree in their efforts to save! I trust I can call God to record on my soul, that to bring sinners to believe in Christ, and universally to obey him from a principle of grateful love, is the reigning desire of my heart, and has been the main business of my life. But alas, that it is so unsuccessful a labour! Yet, God knows, that could I have foreseen only the tenth part of that little success I seem to have had, I would have preferred the ministry, with ten times the labours and sorrows I have gone through in it, to any other employment or situation in life. I shall not forget Colonel Gardiner’s words, speaking of a much despised and persecuted, but very useful minister, ‘I had rather be that man, than Emperor of the world!’

“But I must conclude. May God, even your own God, continue to increase all his blessings on your head, and labours; and may he sometimes lead you to remember, in your prayers,

“Reverend and dear Sir,

“Your affectionate brother and servant,

“P. DODDRIDGE.

“P. S. I presume, the list you desire is chiefly Theological. Perhaps, my desire of making it too particular has hindered me from setting

* He never saw even the account of his grandfather, John Wesley, by Calamy, till he met it by accident at a friend’s house, some years after he began his Itinerancy.

about it, till I had a leisure time, which I have not yet found. But under the impression your book made upon me, I could not delay writing one post longer. Let me know in one word, how you do, what your success is, and what your apprehensions are. I fear we must have some hot flame to melt us."—The reader will recollect, that this letter was written in the time of the last rebellion, when the nation was thrown into the greatest consternation.

June 18, Dr. Doddridge sent the list of books, which Mr. Wesley had requested,* and the next day wrote to him as follows: "I send this by way of postscript, to thank you for the entertaining account you gave me of that very extraordinary turn which affairs took in the battle of Falkirk. —I perceive our rebel enemies were as confident of victory as possible, just before the action at Culloden, which proved so fatal to them. A friend of mine from thence, brings word, that just as the armies joined, an officer was sent back to make proclamation at the market-cross, at Inverness, that every householder should bake a bushel of bread, that it might be ready to refresh the prince's victorious army on its return; which was required on pain of military execution. The consequence of this was, that our army found much better provision, for their refreshment after the fatigue of that glorious day, than they could otherwise have done. It is not to be wondered, that such a deliverance, after such circumstances as these, should make a strong impression on the mind of ministers and people in general, which I am assured it does. I heartily pray God, the impression may be lasting, and produce that reformation which is so much needed among them as well as among us.

"I shall not be at all surprised, if the next winter should open upon us a much more afflictive scene than the last, if we will not be reformed by such judgments and deliverances as these. Yet I think with you, dear Sir, that God will not make a full end of us. I look upon every sinner converted from the error of his ways, by the power of God working in his Gospel, as a token for good, that we shall not be utterly forsaken.

"I am, dear Sir,
"Most faithfully and affectionately yours,
"P. DODDRIDGE."

In the latter end of December, Mr. Wesley received the following observations in a letter from a friend. No doubt the writer thought them necessary at that time, and they will not be out of season at present. "The knowledge and understanding of the Scriptures of truth," says he, "I take to be of the last importance, and is what real Christians need as much to have their attention awakened unto, as the generality of those who are called by the Christian name need to be taught, that they are dead while they have a name to live.

"The understanding of the true meaning and intent of the Scriptures, is understanding the mind of God in every place. And he who opens that, does more, and, so to speak, gives more opportunity unto the Spirit of God to operate in the heart by his own word, than he who says abundance of serious things which are not contained in the subject (the text) he discourses from. In the other way, a man may preach numbers of

* The letter is too long to be inserted here: It is printed in the first volume of the *Arminian Magazine*. Mr. Wesley used it in compiling his *Christian Library*; a most valuable work, published in fifty volumes duodecimo. It is now reprinting in octavo.

years unto a congregation, and never explain the direct meaning of the Holy Spirit in one Scripture ; meanwhile he is not increasing their knowledge in the word of God. The word of God is that by which the Holy Ghost influences the heart of a believer ; and I cannot think it sufficient for the carrying on of that work, that Christians be taught a few general truths, which possibly by frequent teaching they may acquire some distinct notion of, without ever seeing them in the Scripture in their genuine beauty and dress. And do not all foolish and injudicious clamours about orthodoxy and heresy, arise from this ?

“ I apprehend, the Scriptures contain a more glorious, beautiful, and various display of the eternal God, than the inconceivable variety in nature gives us of this creation, which is his work. And I would have all Christians search the Scriptures, and study God there, with as much assiduity as the naturalists do nature in his material works. What infinite reward of enjoyment would arise from thence ?—It is true, indeed, a head knowledge* of these things is nothing. The Spirit of God must make the heart sensible of all that our understandings can comprehend in revelation. But these are two distinct things which God hath joined together : even as the power of God in raising up Christ from the dead, is one thing to be understood and believed from the Scriptures ; and the quickening of a sinner, is a work actually performed in the heart by the Spirit of Christ, but is inseparable from the faith of the former. This is it which makes the understanding I speak of so necessary ; for, without it, a person shall never be able to judge, by the word of God, of what passes within himself ; for it is the only standard by which ‘ *to try the spirits, and to prove every man’s work.*’

“ Serious people are generally in danger of regarding only what they feel in themselves, when their affections are lively, and they receive great consolation from a belief of the love of God in Christ. They take that for the knowledge of God which is only the effect of it. Consequently they are in hazard of seeking the knowledge of God in their own feelings, and of measuring their knowledge by them ; not attending, that our nourishment is not from within ourselves, but comes from without. It is God’s whole glory displayed in revelation, (by Christ,) communicated by the Holy Ghost, and received by faith, which ought to be the Christian’s daily bread.”

The gentleman who made these observations, had mentioned his thoughts on the subject to Mr. Wesley in conversation, who desired him to put them down in writing more at length, which gave birth to the letter of which the above is an abstract.

Mr. Wesley continued his frequent visits to the most distant parts of the kingdom. No season of the year, no change of weather, could either prevent or retard his journeys. He generally preached two or three times every day, and regulated the societies wherever he came. His whole heart was in the work, and his fixed resolution surmounted every difficulty.

In February, 1747, being in Yorkshire, he met with a clergyman, who told him, some of the preachers had frequently preached in his parish ; and his judgment was, 1. That their preaching had done some good but more harm. Because 2. Those who had attended it, had

* The writer means speculative knowledge. It is a more proper word. Certainly all the knowledge a man has, is in his head. But speculative knowledge affects not the heart.

only turned from one wickedness to another ; they had only exchanged sabbath-breaking, swearing, or drunkenness, for slandering, backbiting, and evil-speaking ; and 3. Those who did not attend it, were provoked hereby to return evil for evil. So that the former were, in effect, no better, the latter worse, than before.

“ The same objection, in substance,” says Mr. Wesley, “ has been made in most other parts of England. It therefore deserves a serious answer, which will equally hold in all places. It is allowed, 1. That our preaching has done some good ; common swearers, sabbath-breakers, drunkards, thieves, fornicators, having been reclaimed from those outward sins. But it is affirmed, 2. That it has done more harm ; the persons so reclaimed only changing one wickedness for another ; and their neighbours being so provoked thereby, as to become worse than they were before.

“ ‘ Those who have left their outward sins,’ you affirm, ‘ have only changed drunkenness or sabbath-breaking, for backbiting, or evil-speaking.’ I answer, if you affirm this of them all, it is notoriously false ; many we can name, who left cursing, swearing, backbiting, drunkenness, and evil-speaking, altogether, and who are, to this day, just as fearful of slandering, as they are of cursing or swearing. And if some are not yet enough aware of this snare of the devil, we may hope they will be ere long. Meantime bless God for what he has done, and pray that he would deliver them from this death also.

“ You affirm farther, ‘ That their neighbours are provoked hereby, to return evil for evil ; and so while the former are no better, the latter are worse than they were before.’

“ I answer, 1. ‘ These are worse than they were before.’ But why ? Because they do fresh ‘ *despite to the Spirit of grace* ;’ because they ‘ *despise that long-suffering*’ love of God which would lead them, as it does their neighbours, to repentance.* And in laying the blame of this on those who will ‘ *no longer run with them to the same excess of riot*,’ they only fulfil the Scriptures, and fill up the measure of their own iniquity.

“ I answer, 2. There is still no proportion at all between the good on the one hand, and the harm on the other : for they who reject the goodness of God, were servants of the devil before ; and they are but servants of the devil still. But they who accept it, are brought from the power of Satan, to serve the living and true God.”

In April, Mr. Wesley, on his return from the North, spent an hour with the same clergyman, and pressed him to make good his assertion, that the preaching of the Methodists had done more harm than good. This he did not choose to pursue ; but enlarged on the harm it might occasion in succeeding generations. Mr. Wesley adds, “ I cannot see the force of this argument. I dare not neglect the doing certain present good for fear of some probable ill consequences in the succeeding century.”—Thanks be to God, those ill consequences have not yet appeared after more than seventy years’ trial. The Lord still owns it to be his work.

June 4.—Mr. Wesley wrote down the following instructions for the stewards of the society in London :

* ‘ *The Publicans and harlots*,’ says our Lord, ‘ *repented at the preaching of John, and ye, when ye saw it, repented not afterward that ye might believe.*’

"1. You are to be men full of the Holy Ghost and of wisdom : that you may do all things in a manner acceptable to God.—2. You are to be present every Tuesday and Thursday morning, in order to transact the temporal affairs of the society.—3. You are to begin and end every meeting with earnest prayer to God, for a blessing on all your undertakings.—4. You are to produce your accounts the first Tuesday in every month, that they may be transcribed into the ledger.—5. You are to take it in turn, month by month, to be chairman. The chairman is to see that all the rules be punctually observed, and immediately to check him who breaks any of them.—6. You are to do nothing without the consent of the minister, either actually had, or reasonably presumed.—7. You are to consider whenever you meet, 'God is here.' Therefore, be serious. Utter no trifling word. Speak as in his presence, and to the glory of his great name.—8. When any thing is debated, let one at once stand up and speak, the rest giving attention. And let him speak just loud enough to be heard, in love and in the spirit of meekness.—9. You are continually to pray and endeavour, that a holy harmony of soul may in all things subsist among you : that, in every step, you may keep the unity of the spirit, in the bond of peace.—10. In all debates, you are to watch over your spirits, avoiding, as fire, all clamour and contention : being '*swift to hear, slow to speak*;' in honour every man preferring another before himself.—11. If you cannot relieve, do not grieve the poor. Give them soft words, if nothing else. Abstain from either sour looks or harsh words. Let them be glad to come, even though they should go empty away. Put yourselves in the place of every poor man ; and deal with him as you would God should deal with you.

"These instructions, we whose names are underwritten, (being the present stewards of the Society in London,) do heartily receive and earnestly desire to conform to. In witness whereof we have set our hands.

"N. B. If any steward shall break any of the preceding rules, after having been thrice admonished by the chairman, (whereof notice is to be immediately given to the minister,) he is no longer steward."*

I have already stated that the controversy with John Smith, so called, had some influence on Mr. Wesley's mind especially in one particular. Hitherto he had expressed his notion of justifying faith, in the words of the Church of England, in her Homily on Salvation : That it is, "A sure trust and confidence which a man hath in God, that his sins are forgiven, and he reconciled to the favour of God." He seems now to have examined the subject more closely, and wrote to his brother Charles, as follows :

"DEAR BROTHER,—Yesterday I was thinking on a *desideratum* among us, a *Genesis Problematica* on justifying faith. A skeleton of it, (which you may fill up, or any one that has leisure,) I have roughly set down.

"Is justifying faith a sense of pardon ? *Negatur.*†

"1. Every one is deeply concerned to understand this question well : but preachers most of all : lest they either make *them* sad *whom*

* All the class money in London. which amounted to several hundred pounds a year, was at that time, and for more than 40 years after, given to the poor, through the hands of these stewards.

† It is denied.

God hath not made sad ; or encourage them to say PEACE where there is no peace.

“Some years ago we heard nothing of justifying faith, or a sense of pardon ; so that when we did hear of them, the theme was quite new to us ; and we might easily, especially in the heat and hurry of controversy, lean too much either to the one hand or to the other.

“2. By *justifying faith* I mean, that faith, which whosoever hath not, is under the wrath and the curse of God. By a *sense of pardon*, I mean a distinct explicit assurance that my sins are forgiven.

“I allow, 1. That there is such an *explicit assurance*. 2. That it is the common privilege of real Christians. 3. That it is the proper Christian faith, which ‘*purifieth the heart*’ and ‘*overcometh the world.*’

“But I cannot allow, that justifying faith is such an assurance, or necessarily connected therewith.

“3. Because, if justifying faith necessarily implies such an explicit assurance of pardon, then every one who has it not, and every one, so long as he has it not, is under the wrath and under the curse of God. But this is a supposition contrary to Scripture, as well as to experience.

“Contrary to Scripture ; to Isaiah 1, 10. ‘*Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light ? let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.*’

“Contrary to Acts x, 34. ‘*Of a truth I perceive, that God is no respecter of persons ; but in every nation he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.*’

“Contrary to experience : for J. R. &c, &c, had peace with God, no fear, no doubt, before they had that sense of pardon. And so have I frequently had.*

“Again. The assertion, ‘that justifying faith is a sense of pardon,’ is contrary to reason : it is flatly absurd. For how can a sense of our having received pardon, be the *condition* of our receiving it ?

“4. If you object, 1. ‘J. T. St. Paul, &c, had this sense :’ I grant they had : but they were justified [or rather had justifying faith] before they had it.—2. ‘We know fifteen hundred persons who have this assurance.’ Perhaps so : but this does not prove, they had not justifying faith till they received it.—3. ‘We have been exceedingly blessed in preaching this doctrine.’ We have been blessed in preaching the great truths of the gospel ; although we tacked to them, in the simplicity of our hearts, a proposition which was not true. 4. ‘But does not our church give this account of justifying faith ? I am sure she does of *saving* or *Christian faith*. I think she does of justifying faith too. But to the law and to the testimony. All men may err : but the word of the Lord shall stand for ever.”

Undoubtedly there are many in the same state in which Cornelius was, in *Christian* lands, who never heard the proper Christian faith declared ; and they are not under the *curse*. But they will be, if they reject that faith, when it is preached to them. If they embrace it, the Holy Ghost, according to the promise, will assuredly bear witness to their *believing* and *pleading* spirits, as he did to the Ethiopian, Acts ix, and to Cornelius, Acts x.

* He means, before he heard of the “proper Christian Faith,” which he did not hear but from the Moravians.

On the 24th of June, 1748, Mr. Wesley 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 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. These were 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 small sums are allowed out of it 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. Many 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 school is now wholly appropriated to the sons of the itinerant preachers. The great increase of the work rendered this absolutely necessary. Another school has been opened in Yorkshire, on the same plan, since the death of Mr. Wesley. The Lord has greatly blessed and prospered both these institutions.

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 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 farther 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 entreating her not to consider it as a concern of hers. But she immediately retired, and brought him the sum he wanted.

THE LIFE
OF
THE REV. JOHN WESLEY, A. M.

BOOK THE SIXTH.

CHAPTER I.

OF THE LABOURS OF MR. WESLEY AND OF HIS BROTHER, MR. CHARLES WESLEY, AND OF THE PREACHERS IN CONNEXION WITH THEM IN IRELAND, WITH THE PERSECUTIONS THAT FOLLOWED—MR. C. WESLEY'S MARRIAGE.

MR. WESLEY evidently 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 I have already noted, 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 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 much 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 which 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.*' I shall 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 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 I ever saw. After sermon, Mr. R. thanked me very affectionately, and desired I would favour him with my company in the morning.

“Monday, the 10th.—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 hath 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.—Soon after this, he pub-

lished 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 themselves 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. C. Wesley, meantime, continued his labours in Bristol, London, and the places adjacent, till August the 24th, when, at the request of his brother, he set out for Ireland, taking with him Mr. Charles Perronet, son of the venerable Vicar of Shoreham, and brother of Mr. Edward Perronet, already mentioned. On the 27th, they reached Mr. Philip's, in Wales; and on the 28th, he observes in his Journal, "Mr. Gwynne came to see me, with two of his family. My soul seemed pleased to take acquaintance with them. We rode to Maisymynis church, where I preached, and Mr. Williams, after me, in Welsh. I preached a fourth time, (the same day,) at Garth. The whole family received us as the messengers of God; and if such we are, they received him that sent us."

August 29th.—Mr. John Wesley, who had just arrived from Ireland, came to them at Garth. On the 30th, Mr. Charles Wesley preached on a tombstone in Bultch churchyard, and again in the afternoon: In the evening he preached at Garth, on the marks of the Messiah, from Matthew xi, 5.—Sept. 3, their friends left them: On the 4th, early in the morning, Mr. C. Wesley and his companions set out for Holyhead, which place they reached the next day at seven in the morning, having travelled on horseback twenty-five hours.—Sunday, September 6, he sent an offer of his assistance to the minister, who was ready to beat the messenger. He preached, however, at the request of some gentlemen, who behaved with great propriety.—September the 9th, they reached Dublin in safety.

Dublin had long been remarkable for a bad police. Frequent robberies, and sometimes murder, were committed in the streets, at an early hour in the evening, with impunity. The Ormond and Liberty mob, (that is, the butchers of Ormond market, and the weavers of the Liberty, a part of Dublin so called,) would sometimes meet, and fight till one or more persons were killed. On one occasion, the mob had beat a constable to death in the street, and hung the body up in triumph! There was no vigour in the Magistrates, and their power was despised. It is no wonder, that the Methodists, at their first coming, were roughly

handled in such a place as this ; but it is wonderful, that they so soon got a firm footing, and passed through their sufferings with so little injury. On Mr. C. Wesley's arrival here, he observes, " The first news we heard was, that the little flock stands fast in the storm of persecution, which arose as soon as my brother left them. The Popish mob broke open their room, and destroyed all before them. Some of them are sent to Newgate ; others bailed. What will be the event we know not, till we see whether the Grand Jury will find the bill."—He afterwards informs us, that the Grand Jury threw out the bill, and thus gave up the Methodists to the fury of a licentious Popish mob. He says, " God has called me to suffer affliction with his people. I began my ministry with, '*Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people,*' &c.—September 10, I met the Society, and the Lord knit our hearts together in love stronger than death. We both wept and rejoiced for the consolation. God hath sent me, I trust, to confirm these souls, and to keep them together in the present distress."

Mr. C. Wesley spent no time in idleness. He was daily employed in preaching, expounding, visiting the people, and praying with them.—September 20, after commending their cause to God, he went forth to the green adjoining to the barracks, believing the Lord would make bare his arm in their defence. He called, in his Master's name and words, '*Come unto me, all ye that are weary,*' &c. The number of hearers was very great, and a religious awe kept down all opposition. He spoke with great freedom to the poor Papists, and, like St. Paul at Athens, quoted their own authors to convince them, particularly Kempis and their Liturgy. None lifted up his voice or hand to oppose ; all listened with strange attention, and many were in tears. They expressed general satisfaction, especially the Papists, who now maintained that he was a good Catholic.

At this early period of the work, the two brothers, and the preachers, suffered great inconveniences at the places where they lodged, even in large towns ; and it was worse in the country Societies. The rooms, also, where they assembled when they could not preach in the open air, began to be much too small for the number of people who attended. This being the present state of things in Dublin, Mr. Charles Wesley purchased a house in that part of the town called Dolphin's barn. The whole ground-floor, which was a weaver's workshop, was forty-two feet long, and twenty-four broad. This was to be turned into a preaching-house, and the preachers were to be accommodated in the rooms over it ; but before he completed the purchase, he wrote to his brother for his opinion on the matter. His letter is dated October 9 ; in which he says, one advantage of the house was, that they could go to it immediately ; and then adds, " I must go there or to some other lodgings, or take my flight ; for here I can stay no longer. A family of squalling children, a landlady just ready to lie in, a maid who has no time to do the least thing for us, are some of our conveniences ! Our two rooms for four people, (six, when J. Healy, and Haughton, come,) allow no opportunity for retirement. Charles and I groan for elbow-room in our press-bed ; our diet answerable to our lodgings ; no one to mend our clothes and stockings ; no money to buy more. I marvel, that we have stood our ground so long in these lamentable circumstances. It is well I could not foresee, while on your side of the water."—October 17, he

observes, "I passed the day at the house we have purchased, in Dolphin's Barn, in writing and meditation. I could almost have set up my rest here : But I must not look for rest on this side eternity."

Mr. C. Wesley continued his labours in Dublin, till February 9, 1748, when he took an excursion into the country. The few preachers who were in Ireland, had already introduced the Gospel into several country towns. Mr. C. Wesley came to Tyrrel's Pass, where he met a large and well disposed congregation. "Few such feasts," says he, "have I had since I left England; it refreshed my body more than meat or drink. God has begun a great work here. The people of Tyrrel's Pass were wicked to a proverb; swearers, drunkards, Sabbath breakers, thieves, &c, from time immemorial. But now the scene is changed; not an oath is heard, nor a drunkard seen among them; *aperto vivitur horto*.* They are turned from darkness to light, and near one hundred are joined in Society."

February 11.—Mr. C. Wesley, J. Healy, and five others, set out for Athlone, where, it is probable, notice had been given of their coming. On the road some persons overtook them, running in great haste, and one horseman riding at full speed. It soon appeared, that the Papists had laid a plan to do them some violent mischief, if not to murder them, at the instigation of their Priest, Father Terril, who had sounded the alarm the Sunday before. They spoke of their designs with so much freedom, that a report of them reached Athlone, and a party of dragoons, being quartered there, were ordered out to meet Mr. C. Wesley and his friends on the road, and to conduct them safe to the town. But of this they were ignorant; and being earlier than was expected, the Papists were not assembled in full force, nor did the dragoons meet them at that distance from the town which was intended. They rode on suspecting nothing, till within about half a mile of Athlone, when, rising up a hill, several persons appeared at the top of it, and bid them turn back. "We thought them in jest," says Mr. C. Wesley, "till the stones flew," one of which knocked Mr. J. Healy off his horse, and laid him senseless on the ground; and it was with great difficulty the Papists were hindered from murdering him. The number of these barbarians was soon greatly increased; and, though the Protestants began to rise upon them, they kept their ground till the dragoons appeared, when they immediately fled. Mr. C. Wesley and his little company, their wounded friend having recovered his senses, were now conducted in safety to Athlone, where the soldiers flocked about them with great affection, and the whole town expressed the greatest indignation at the treatment they had met with. J. Healy was put under the care of a surgeon, and at length recovered of his wounds.

February 15, Mr. C. Wesley returned to Dublin, and continued his labours with great success, the Society being greatly increased, and many testifying publicly, that they had received '*the knowledge of salvation by the remission of their sins*,' under his word.—March 8, his brother, Mr. John Wesley, arrived from England, which gave him a release from his present situation. He did not, however, leave Dublin

* They live in the open garden.

"Christ removes the flaming sword,
Calls us back, from Eden driven!"

till the 20th, when he entered the packet-boat at two o'clock in the afternoon, and by three the next day reached Holyhead : from whence he wrote to his brother as follows :

“ ‘ *Teneo te Italiam !*
Per varios casus, per tot discrimina rerum.’*—

“ In twenty-five hours exactly, as before, the Lord brought us hither. To describe our voyage were *renovare dolorem*.† But here we are, after all, God be praised, even God that heareth the prayer ! Thanks, in the second place, to our praying brethren : The Lord return it into their bosom ! But let them pray on for us, and we for them. And I pray the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to send down his blessing and his Spirit on all you who are now assembled together, and hear this read. Peace be unto you, even the peace that passeth all understanding. Look for it every moment ! Receive it this—and go in peace to that heavenly country, whither we are hastening to meet you !”

Intending to visit Mr. Gwynne’s family at Garth, in Wales, he took horse the next morning, and by three in the afternoon came to Baldon Ferry. Here he observes, “ We overfilled the small old boat, so that *Gemuit sub pondere Cymba sutilis, et multam accepit rimosa paludem*.”‡ The wind being strong, and the waves high, in the middle of the channel his young horse took fright, and they had a very narrow escape from being overset. But a gracious Providence attended him ; he came safe to land, and on the 25th, in the evening, reached Garth ; but great fatigue, bad weather, and continual pain had so weakened him, that when he came into the house, he fell down totally exhausted.

Mr. C. Wesley had already conceived a great regard for Mr. Gwynne’s family, and particularly for Miss Sarah Gwynne. A kind of embryo intention of making proposals of marriage, had dwelt in his mind for some time. He had mentioned it to his brother in Dublin, who neither opposed nor encouraged him in the matter. During his present stay at Garth, this intention ripened into more fixed resolution ; but still he thought it necessary to take the advice of his friends. After he had been a short time in London, he went to Shoreham, and opened all his heart to Mr. Perronet, who advised him to wait. Much prayer was made, and every prudential step was taken which his friends could suggest ; and here the business rested for the present.§

August 13.—Mr. C. Wesley arrived again in Dublin, and on the 17th set out on horseback for Cork, which he reached on the 20th, notwithstanding the incessant rains, the badness of the roads, and wretched accommodations at the inns. The next day, being Sunday, he went out to the Marsh at five in the morning, and found a congregation of some thousand persons. He preached from ‘ *Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer,*’ &c. They devoured every word with an eagerness beyond description. “ Much good,” he says, “ has already

* Do I embrace thee, my country ! Through various perils, through such diversity of trials !

† To renew the suffering.

‡ The frail patched vessel groaned under the weight, and, being leaky, took in plenty of water.

§ When Mr. Gwynne went first to meet him in Wales, he had a *mittimus* ready in his pocket, to send him to jail. However, he thought it right to hear him first, when the Lord so changed his heart, that he invited Mr. C. Wesley to his house, had him to preach in the church, and at length became his father-in-law.

been done in this place : Outward wickedness has disappeared, and outward religion succeeded it. Swearing is seldom heard in the streets, and churches and altars are crowded, to the astonishment of our adversaries. Yet some of our Clergy, and all the Catholic Priests, take wretched pains to hinder their people from hearing us.

“At five in the evening, I took the field again, and such a sight I have rarely seen.’ Thousands and thousands had been waiting some hours ; Protestants and Papists, high and low. The Lord endued my soul, and body also, with much strength to enforce the faithful saying, ‘*That Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.*’ I cried after them for an hour, to the utmost extent of my voice, yet without hoarseness or weariness. The Lord, I believe, hath much people in this city. Two hundred are already joined in a Society. At present we pass through honour and good report. The chief persons of the town favour us. No wonder, then, that the common people are quiet. We pass and repass the streets, pursued only by their blessings. The same favourable inclination is all round the country : Wherever we go, they receive us as angels of God. Were this to last, I would escape for my life to America.*

“I designed to have met about two hundred persons, who have given me their names for the Society ; but such multitudes thronged into the house, as occasioned great confusion. I perceived it was impracticable, as yet, to have a regular Society. Here is, indeed, an open door ; such as was never set before me till now : Even at Newcastle, the awakening was not so general. The congregation, last Sunday, was computed to be ten thousand. As yet there is no open opposition. The people have had the word two months, and it is not impossible but their love may last two months longer, before any number of them rise to tear us in pieces.

“I met a neighbouring Justice of the Peace, and had much serious conversation with him. He seems to have a great kindness for religion, and determined to use all his interest to promote it.—For an hour and a half, I continued to call the poor blind beggars to JESUS : They begin to cry after HIM on every side, and we must expect to be rebuked for it.—Waited on the Bishop at River’s Town, and was received with great affability by himself and family. After dinner, rode back to Cork, and drank tea with some well disposed Quakers, and borrowed a volume of their dying sayings : A standing testimony, that the life and power of God was with them at the beginning ; as it might be again, were they humble enough to confess their want of it.”

We have here an instance of true candour in Mr. C. Wesley.—The extravagant manner in which Baptism and the Lord’s Supper were spoken of, when the first Quakers appeared—the people being generally taught at that time, that those who had been baptized, and afterwards received the Sacrament, were true Christians, and had a sure title to eternal life—induced those zealous men to think, that the most effectual way of resisting this delusion, would be the totally laying aside these ordinances ! Thus one extreme produced another, neither party being ‘*under the law to Christ.*’

* Is then persecution, or even contempt, absolutely necessary ? Must we always be helped to live to God by the sin of others ? Rather is not this to be considered as the remains of his old mystic theology ? *Aut pati, aut mori !*—(Let me suffer, or let me die !) A dread, however, of any thing that would soften his spirit, and unfit him for his work, was the ruling principle.

“August 27.—I had much conversation with Mr. C. a sensible pious Clergyman; one after my own heart, in his love to our desolate Mother. He is clear in the doctrine of Faith, and gave a delightful account of the Bishop.—Sometimes waiting on great men, may do good, or prevent evil. But how dangerous the experiment! How apt to weaken our hands, and betray us into an undue deference and respect of persons! The Lord send to them by whom he will send; but hide me still in disgrace or obscurity!”

August 28.—He went out about five miles from Cork, where, says he, “Justice P. received us, and used all his authority with others to do the same. He sent word to the Romish Priest, that if he forbade his people from hearing us, he would shut up his Mass house. Several of the poor Roman Catholics ventured to come, after the Justice had assured them, he would himself take off the curse their Priest had laid upon them. I exhorted all alike to repentance towards God, and faith in Jesus Christ.—I hastened back to the Marsh: On seeing the multitudes, I thought on those words of Prior: ‘Then, of all these whom my dilated eye with labour sees, how few will own the messenger of God when the stream turns!’ Now they all received me with inexpressible eagerness. I took occasion to vindicate the Methodists from the foulest slander: That they rail against the Clergy. I enlarged on the respect due to them; prayed particularly for the Bishop, and laid it on their consciences to make mention of them (the Clergy) in all their prayers.

“August 29.—I passed a useful hour with Mr. C. He rejoiced that I had preached in his parish last Sunday. If our brethren (the Clergy) were like minded, how might their hands be strengthened by us! But we must have patience, as he observed, till the thing speak for itself; and the mist of prejudice being removed, they see clearly that all our desire is the salvation of souls, and the establishment of the Church of England.

“Sept. 1.—I met the infant Society for the first time, in an old play-house. Our Lord’s presence consecrated the place. I explained the nature of Christian fellowship; and God knit our hearts together in the desire of knowing him. I spake with some, who told me, they had wronged their neighbours in time past, and now their conscience will not let them rest till they have made restitution. I bid them tell the persons injured, it was this preaching had compelled them to do justice. One poor wretch told me before his wife, that he had lived in drunkenness, adultery, and all the works of the devil, for twenty-one years: That he had beat her almost every day of that time, and never had any remorse till he heard us; but now he goes constantly to church, behaves lovingly to his wife, abhors the thing that is evil, especially his old sins. This is one instance out of many.”

Sept. 5.—He observes, that the work now increased rapidly, one and another being frequently justified under the word. “Two,” says he, “at the Sacrament yesterday: Two at the Society. One overtook me going to the Cathedral, and said, ‘I have found something in the preaching, and cannot but think it is forgiveness. All the burden of my sins sunk away from off me in a moment. I can do nothing but pray, and cry *Glory be to God!* I have such a confidence in his love, as I never knew: I trample all sin and sorrow under my feet.’ I bid him watch and pray, and expect greater things than these.—Our old master, the

world, begins to take it ill, that so many desert and clean escape its pollutions. Innumerable stories are invented to stop the work, or rather are repeated; for they are the same we have heard a thousand times, as the primitive Christians did before us."

September 6.—He rode to Kinsale, and at noon walked to the market-place. The windows were filled with spectators rather than hearers. Many wild-looking people stood with their hats on, in the street; and the boys were rude and noisy. Some well dressed women stood behind him and listened. His text was, '*Go out quickly into the streets, and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor and the maimed, and the halt and the blind.*' "I did," says he, "most earnestly invite them all to the great Supper. It was fallow ground, yet the word was not all lost. Several settled into serious attention; others expressed their approbation; a few wept.—In the evening the multitude so trod on one another, that it was some time before they could settle to hear. I received a blow with a stone on the side of my head, and called on the person to stand forth, and if I had done him any wrong, to strike me again. This little circumstance increased their attention. I lifted up my voice like a trumpet, and showed the people their transgressions, and the way to be saved from them. They received my saying, and spake well of the truth. A sudden change was visible in their behaviour afterwards, for God had touched their hearts. Even the Roman Catholics owned, 'None could find fault with what the man said.' A lady of the Romish Church would have me to her house. She assured me, the Governor of the town, as soon as he heard of my coming, had issued orders that none should disturb me; that a gentleman who offered to insult me, would have been torn in pieces by the Roman Catholics, had he not fled for it; and that the Catholics in general are my firm friends."—It is worth observing, that every denomination of Christians in Kinsale claimed him as their own. He tells us, "The Presbyterians say, I am a Presbyterian; the people who go to Church, that I am a Minister of theirs: and the Catholics are sure I am a good Catholic in my heart." This is good evidence, that he confined himself, in his public discourses, to the essential doctrines of the Christian religion.

Mr. C. Wesley, in his excursions from Cork, had already visited Bandon once or twice, where the words he spake had considerable effect. On his return at this time from Kinsale, a poor man and his wife from Bandon met him, and pressed him so earnestly to give them another visit, that he could not resist their importunity. He went thither again, September the 12th, and the poor man and his wife soon found him out, and took him to their house in triumph. The neighbours flocked in, and "We had, indeed," says Mr. C. Wesley, "a feast of love. A prodigal came, who had been a monster of wickedness for many years, but is now returned to his Father: So are many of the town, who were wicked to a proverb. In the evening, I invited about four thousand sinners to *the great Supper*. God hath given them the hearing ear. I went to Mrs. Jones's, a widow gentlewoman, who is determined to promote the work of God to the utmost of her power: All in the place seemed like-minded, except the Clergy! O why should they be the last to bring home their King! It grieved me to hear the poor encouragement given last Sunday to the crowds that flocked to

church ; which place some of them had not troubled for years before. We send them to church to hear ourselves railed at, and, what is far worse, the truth of God.

“ Tuesday, September 13.—We parted, with many tears and mutual blessings. I rode on to Kinsale. Here also the Minister, Mr. P., instead of rejoicing to see so many publicans in the temple, entertained them with a railing accusation against me, as an impostor, an incendiary, and messenger of Satan. Strange justice ! that Mr. P. should be voted a friend of the Church, and I an enemy, who send hundreds into the Church for him to drive them out again.

“ September 16. The power of the Lord was present in the Society at Cork : I marvel not that Satan hates it : We never meet, but some or other is plucked out of his teeth. After a restless night of pain, I rose to confer with those who desired it. A woman declared, that the Lord had spoken peace to her trembling soul at the Sacrament. Thomas Warburton asserted, that faith came to him by hearing ; and that now he hates all sin with a perfect hatred, and could spend his whole life in prayer. Stephen Williams witnessed, ‘ Last night I found my heart burdened in your prayer ; but I repeated after you till my speech was swallowed up. Then I felt myself, as it were, fainting, falling back, and sinking into destruction ; when, on a sudden, I was lifted up, my heart lightened, my burden gone ; and I saw all my sins, once so black, so many, all taken away. I am now afraid of neither death, devil, nor hell. I am happier than I can tell you. I know God has, for Christ’s sake, forgiven me.’ Two others, in whom I found a real work of grace begun, were Papists, till they heard the Gospel, but are now reconciled to the Church, even to the invisible Church, or Communion of Saints. A few of these lost sheep we pick up, but seldom speak of it, lest our good Protestants should stir up the Papists to tear us in picces. At Mr. Rolf’s, a pious Dissenter, I heard of the extreme bitterness of two of the Ministers, who make it their business to go from house to house, to set their people against the truth, threatening all who hear us with excommunication. So far beyond the Papists are these *moderate* men advanced in persecution !”—Mr. C. Wesley now quitted this part of the kingdom, and, visiting several towns in his way back, he came safe to Dublin on the 27th of September.

October 8. He took his passage for England, and the next night landed at Holyhead. He wrote to a friend the following account of the dangers he had escaped :—“ On Saturday evening, at half past eight, I entered the small boat, and we were two hours in getting to the vessel. There was not then water to cross the bar ; so we took our rest till eleven on Sunday morning. Then God sent us a fair wind, and we sailed smoothly before it five hours and a half. Towards evening the wind freshened upon us, and we had full enough of it. I was called to account for a bit of cake I had eat in the morning, and thrown into violent exercise. Up or down, in the cabin or on deck, made no difference ; yet, in the midst of it, I perceived a distinct heavy concern, for I knew not what. It was now pitch dark, and no small tempest lay upon us. The captain had ordered in all the sails. I kept mostly upon deck till half past eight, when, upon inquiry, he told me, he expected to be in the harbour by nine : I answered, we would compound for ten. While we were talking, the mainsail, as I take it, got loose ; at the same time,

the small boat, for want of fastening, fell out of its place. The Master called all hands on deck, and thrust me down into the cabin ; when, in a minute, we heard a cry above, ‘ We have lost the mast ! ’ A passenger ran up, and brought us worse news, that it was not the mast, but the poor Master himself, whom I had scarcely left, when the boat, as they supposed, struck him and knocked him overboard. From that moment he was seen or heard no more. My soul was bowed before the Lord. I kneeled down, and commended the departing spirit to his mercy in Christ Jesus. I adored his distinguishing goodness : ‘ *The one shall be taken and the other left.* ’ I thought of those lines of Young :

No warning given ! Unceremonious death !
A sudden rush from life’s meridian joys ;
A plunge opaque beyond conjecture !

The sailors were so confounded, that they knew not what they did. The decks were strowed with sails ; the wind shifting about the compass ; we just on the shore, and the vessel driving, where or how they knew not. One of our cabin passengers ran to the helm, and gave orders as Captain, till they had righted the ship. I ascribe it to our Invisible Pilot, that we got safe to shore soon after ten. The storm was so high, that we doubted whether any boat would venture to fetch us. At last one answered and came. I thought it safer to lie in the vessel ; but one calling, ‘ Mr. Wesley ! You must come, ’ I followed, and by eleven o’clock found out my old lodgings at Robert Griffith’s.—October 10, I blessed God that I did not stay in the vessel last night : A more tempestuous one I do not remember.”

He now wrote the following thanksgiving hymn :

All praise to the Lord,
Who rules with a word
The untractable sea,
And limits its rage by his steadfast decree !
Whose providence binds
Or releases the winds,
And compels them again
At his beck to put on the invisible chain.
Even now he hath heard
Our cry, and appear’d
On the face of the deep,
And commanded the tempest its distance to keep :
His piloting hand
Hath brought us to land ;
And, no longer distress’d,
We are joyful again in the haven to rest.
O that all men would raise
His tribute of praise,
His goodness declare,
And thankfully sing of his fatherly care !
With rapture approve
His dealings of love,
And the wonders proclaim,
Perform’d by the virtue of Jesus’s name.
Through Jesus alone,
He delivers his own,
And a token doth send,
That His love shall direct us, and save to the end :
With joy we embrace
The pledge of his grace,
In a moment outfly
These storms of affliction, and land in the sky,

"At half past nine o'clock, I took horse in a perfect hurricane, and was wet through in less than ten minutes; but I rode on, thankful that I was not at sea. Near five in the afternoon, I entered the boat at Baldon Ferry, with a Clergyman and others, who crowded our small crazy vessel. The water was exceedingly rough, our horses frightened, and we looking to be overset every moment. The Minister acknowledged, he never was in the like danger. We were half drowned in the boat. I sat at the bottom, with him and a woman, who stuck very close to me, so that my being able to swim would not have helped me: But the Lord was my support. I cried out to my brother Clergyman, 'Fear not, Christian! the hairs of our head are all numbered!' Our trial lasted near half an hour, when we landed wet and weary in the dark night. The Minister was my guide to Carnarvon, and, by the way, entertained me with the praises of a Preacher, he had lately heard and talked with. He could say nothing against his preaching, but heartily wished him ordained. His name, he told me, was Howel Harris. He took me to his own inn, and at last found out who I was, which increased our intimacy."

Mr. C. Wesley pursued his journey to Garth, which place he reached October 13. Here he staid about a week, and, on the 21st, arrived safe in Bristol.

He now confined his labours in the Gospel, for some months, to London, Bristol, and the neighbouring places, making an occasional excursion to Garth in Wales. April 9, 1749, he was married by his brother, at Garth, to Miss Sarah Gwynne, an agreeable young lady, of good sense and piety. Mr. John Wesley observes, "It was a solemn day, such as became the dignity of a Christian marriage."

Mr. J. Wesley, accompanied by Messrs. Meriton and Swindells, arrived in Dublin in the spring of the year 1748, before his brother Charles 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 the members of which 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

* Nearly forty years ago, that excellent man, Mr. Edwards of Bedfordbury, (Mr. Fletcher's Leader,) told me, that he, and the other leaders in London, lamented that Mr. Wesley and his brother should spend so much time in Ireland, and send so many preachers thither. Mr. Wesley replied, "Have patience, and Ireland will repay you."—"We could hardly think it," said the good man, "but when Mr. Walsh came, we saw that Mr. Wesley's faith was better than ours."

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 surprised 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 sighing 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 sailed, 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 this 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 dogs*, and *heretic b—tch—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 not obtain 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 a 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 for 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 Wheatley, &c.

We find and present John Larwood, &c.

We find and present Joseph Mc. Auliff, &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 hallooing as they went along, "Five 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 I have been relating.

"REVEREND SIR,—Your favour of the 15th instant, I received the 22d. I am more satisfied than ever, that you aim at nothing but what

* 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.*'

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 praiseworthy. 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 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 anywise 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,

“Reverend and dear Sir,

“Your very affectionate Brother and Servant,

“RICHARD LLOYD.

“*August 21, 1749.*”

In consequence of the shameful refusal of justice above-mentioned, the rioters continued the same outrages during the great part of the following winter. At the Lent assizes, the preachers (who made up the 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 was 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-singer, the Judge desired him to withdraw, observing, “That it was a pity, that he who was a vagabond by profession, 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, 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 proceeded to Cork ; and at the repeated invitation of Mr. Alderman Pembroke, 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. 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 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 Pembroke, who immediately desired Mr. Alderman Winthrop, his nephew, to go down to him at Mr. Jenkins' ; with whom

they walked 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 street, abusing all that were called Methodists, and 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.

At this time Mr. Wesley enjoyed peace at Bandon, notwithstanding the unwearied labours, both public and private, of Dr. ——— to stir up the people. But, on Saturday, 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 only 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 morning, 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 my readers, I cannot refrain from adorning this 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 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 throng 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 condemn'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 always 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 grovelling 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, he lost his right arm 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. 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, his learning considerable, and his labours and sufferings very great. I doubt not, but a short extract from the Journal of this man of God will be acceptable to my Readers, especially as it clearly shows what the preachers of that day had to encounter, in testifying the Gospel of the grace of God.

* It has been denied, that Mr. John Wesley was the author of this hymn. I must still think, that he was : I believe, I was not misinformed. There is, I think, also some internal evidence. The hymn has the purity, strength, and sobriety of both the brothers ; but it seems to want the poetical *vis animi* of Charles.

“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 farther discourse on the design of my coming to preach the Gospel to them, and appealing to themselves concerning the necessity of it, their rage seemed a little abated. They then told me, they would let me go, on condition that I would swear never more to come to Roscrea. But when I resolutely refused this, they consulted on rougher measures; and, after much debate, were determined to put me into a well, which they had prepared for that purpose. They hurried me away into the town, where I was surrounded, as by so many human wolves. They held a consultation again, and resolved either to make me swear, that I would never more come thither, or else to put me into the well. But I refused either to swear or promise. Some then cried vehemently that I should go into the water, but others contradicted, and as positively said I should not.

“After some time, the parish Minister came, who behaved well, and desired I might be set at liberty. They consented, provided I would go out of town immediately. From an inn, where they had confined me, they brought me out into the street, and it being market-day, I began to preach to the people. But seizing me by the coat, they hurried me before them out of the town. At length I got on horseback, and, taking off my hat, I prayed for them some considerable time. I then called upon them in the name of God, for Christ’s sake, to repent; and told them, as to myself, in the cause of God, I feared neither devils nor men; that to do their souls good, was my sole motive of coming among them; and that, if God permitted, they might put me into the well, or even stone me; that be it how it would, I was content.

“I came off from them at length in peace of conscience and serenity of mind. From the first to the last, I was not the least disturbed, nor felt anger or malice towards them. O God, it is Thou alone that hast wrought this deliverance for me, in restraining the malice of men and devils, not suffering them to hurt me, when they rose up against me! Therefore, with angels and archangels, I laud and magnify thy holy name, thy tender mercy and paternal affection towards me, O holy Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!”

Mr. Walsh preached with great success in many parts of Ireland and England. But his soul chiefly mourned over the poor ignorant people

of that communion which he had renounced. For their sakes he often preached in Irish, which he perfectly understood; and many of them were thereby turned to God. But, as one observes, his soul was too large for his body. At the age of twenty-eight, he died an old man, being worn out by his great and uninterrupted labours.

Mr. Walsh was the first who preached from the *Pulpit* in London. Before that time, the preachers had addressed the congregation from the reading-desk. When Mr. Walsh came, he walked up into the pulpit, taking no notice of the custom. The solemnity of his manner, and the mighty force of his preaching, awed the congregation in an uncommon degree. From that time the preachers ascended the London pulpits, no man forbidding them.

CHAPTER II.

MR. WESLEY'S LABOURS AND PROVIDENTIAL ESCAPES—HIS OPINION OF THE MONTANISTS.—DEATH OF MR. JANE—HIS PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE.—FALL OF WHEATLEY, AND RENEWED LABOURS OF MR. C. WESLEY.

MR. WESLEY continued his labours without intermission. He generally preached three or four, and sometimes five, times in the day; and often rode thirty or forty, sometimes fifty, miles. Thus did he labour while he could ride on horseback; nor do we believe there could be an instance found, during the space of forty years, wherein the severest weather hindered him 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 (1750) 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 I 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. I shall mention one more, in his own words.

"After preaching at Oakhill, a village in Somersetshire, I rode on to Shepton Mallet, 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 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."

On his return from Ireland, he visited Cornwall, and August 15, 1750, observes, "By reflecting on an odd book, which I had read in this journey, 'The General Delusion of Christians with regard to Prophecy,' I was fully convinced of what I had long suspected; 1. That the Montanists, in the second and third centuries, were real Scriptural Christians: And 2. That the grand reason why the miraculous gifts were so soon withdrawn, was, not only that faith and holiness were well nigh lost, but that dry, formal, orthodox men began even then to ridicule whatever gifts they had not themselves, and to decry them all, as either madness or imposture."*

On his return from Cornwall, he preached in the street at Shaftesbury; but none made any noise, or spake one word, while he called '*the wicked to forsake his way.*' When he was returned to the house where he lodged, a constable came, and said, "Sir, the Mayor discharges you from preaching in this borough any more." Mr. Wesley replied, "While King George gives me leave to preach, I shall not ask leave of the Mayor of Shaftesbury."

September 8, he came to London, and received the following account of the death of one of the travelling preachers:—"John Jane was never well after walking from Epworth to Hainton, on an exceeding hot day, which threw him into a fever. But he was in great peace and love, even to those who greatly wanted love to him. He was some time at Alice Shadforth's house, with whom he daily talked of the things of God, spent much time in private prayer, and joined likewise with her in prayer several times in a day. On Friday, August 24, he sat in the evening by the fireside; about six he fetched a deep sigh, and never spoke more. He was alive till the same time on Saturday, when, without any struggle or sign of pain, with a smile on his face, he passed away. His last words were, 'I find the love of God in Christ Jesus.'

"All his clothes, linen and woollen, stockings, hat, and wig, are not thought sufficient to answer his funeral expenses, which amount to one pound, seventeen shillings, and three pence. All the money he had was, one shilling and four pence."—"Enough," adds Mr. Wesley, "for any unmarried Preacher of the Gospel to leave to his executors!"†—

* The Montanists were a sect of Christians, which sprung up about the year of Christ 171. They took their name from Montanus, a Phrygian by birth. They made no alteration in the creed or articles of belief then commonly received. They were abstemious and moral in their conduct. They maintained, that the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost were not withdrawn from the faithful and pious; and that they had among themselves the gift of prophecy, &c. It is to be lamented, that, at this early period of Christianity, Christian principles and Christian practice, or morality, were too much separated; and that whoever differed from the rulers of the church, were immediately branded with the name of heretics; their principles and practices were represented with little or no regard to truth; and all manner of evil was spoken of them, to deter the people from going near them.

† Mr. Southey seems to think, that *the crucifixion to the world*, manifest in Mr. Jane, arose from his devotedness to Mr. Wesley; and supposes St. Francis himself would have

Mr. Wesley spent the remainder of the year, 1750, in London, Bristol, and the neighbouring places; and in preparing several books for the use of the children at Kingswood School.

Mr. Wesley had many correspondents; and it often surprised his friends, that he could answer one fourth of the letters he received. But by never losing any time, he was enabled to get through this duty also, and could say with the Trojan hero, "*Nec me labor iste gravabit.*" He was often fatigued, but *his labour never saddened him*: He served a good Master.

Writing to a friend on the subject of reproof, and of remedying things that were amiss, he observes, "Come on, now you have broke the icé, and tell me the other half of your mind. I always blamed you for speaking too little, not too much. When you spoke most freely, as at Whitehaven, it was best for us both.

"I did not always disbelieve, when I said nothing. But I would not attempt a thing, till I could carry it. *Tu quod scis, nescis*, [*to be as though I knew not what I really know*,] is a useful rule, till I can remedy what I know. As you observe, many things are remedied already, and many more will be. But you consider, I have none to second me. They who should do it, start aside as a broken bow."

The following abstract from a letter written to Mr. Wesley, by one who loved and highly esteemed him, may show us, that he had some friends who spake their minds freely, when they saw any thing which, in their judgment, deserved censure or blame: "I love, I honour, I reverence you," says the writer, "for your great worth, wisdom, and high office; yet I have not that fellowship with you, that I once had with T. S.—I have loved your company, loved your conversation, admired your wisdom, been greatly blessed under your discourses and exhortations; and yet we are two spirits! I think you have the knowledge of all experience, but not the experience of all you know. You know, speaking with limitation, the heights and depths, the beginning and end of true religion. You know the fallen state of man, his inability to rise again; the freeness of redeeming love, and the mighty workings of the Holy Ghost. You know the heaven and happiness of man is to feel a change of nature, to enjoy deep communion with God, and to walk in love with all around. All these things you know, partly by the information of others, and partly from experience. But, I think, your experience is buried in your extensive knowledge.* I think you feel not, abidingly, a deep sense of your own spiritual weakness, the nearness of Christ to save, nor a sweet communion with God, by the Holy Ghost. You have the appearance of all Christian graces; but they do not, I think, spring from a deep experience, or change of nature. A good natural temper of mind, with great abilities, will mimic grace; but grace is more than outward; it brings the soul to a deep union with God and its fellow Christians. One outward proof, from which I think I judge aright, is the want of SYMPATHY in your discourses and conversation. Those who attend to an *inward* work, more than to an *outward*, pass through many

been satisfied with such a disciple. *We* give him credit for a higher principle: He had learned of the same Master.

*Never was a character more mistaken. I had the advantage which Mr. Briggs had not, and I know that this great man was a little child among those he loved, and that he even lay at their feet, and gladly learned of them, when he saw they had '*the wisdom from above.*'

weighty and grievous conflicts, from the stubbornness of their own nature, or the subtilty of the devil, so that often they go on lamenting and weeping, and yet trusting in God. When do you *feelingly* and with tears address yourself unto such?—That the cause, the only cause of my disunion with you may be in myself, I cannot but allow. My ignorance, my weakness, my aptness to mistake, is great! My judgment is often biassed by circumstances too immaterial to be the ground of determination; and therefore often, yea mostly, rather than be in danger of judging amiss, I remain in doubtful silence.

“W. BRIGGS.”

Mr. Wesley really felt all this, and sympathized with all those who fought this ‘*good fight of faith*.’ But his duties were so great, so public, so constant, that he could not let out his feelings as the Pastor of a separate congregation might.

January 30, 1751.—Mr. Wesley, at the pressing request of Dr. Isham, then Rector of Lincoln College, set out early in the morning to vote for a Member of Parliament. It was a severe frost, the wind north-west, full in his face, and the roads so slippery, that the horses could scarcely keep their feet. Nevertheless, about seven in the evening, he, and those with him, (for he seldom travelled alone,) came safe to Oxford. A congregation was waiting for him, whom he immediately addressed in those awful words, ‘*What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?*’—The next day he went to the schools, where the Convocation met. “But,” says he, “I did not find that decency and order which I expected. The gentleman for whom I voted was not elected; yet I did not repent of my coming: I owe much more than this to that generous, friendly man, who now rests from his labours.” Mr. Wesley means Dr. Morley, who so generously assisted him with his interest when he was elected Fellow of Lincoln College.

It does not appear, that Mr. Charles Wesley kept a regular Journal, from the year 1749. His Journal fails with the constancy of his itinerant labours. Sensible and pious readers will easily account for this. It seems, he considered it a conscientious duty to record those arduous exertions, with the dangers and gracious deliverances that accompanied them. It did not appear to him necessary to record the common routine of duty, however important to himself. Those who knew him do not need to be told, that he was deeply imbued with a modest and retired spirit: Not that kind of modesty which is the offspring of fear or self-seeking, but that which, in the most fearless efforts for truth, revolts from every kind of ostentation. He had deep self-knowledge, and even an undue love of retirement, arising, I believe, from a natural melancholy, which only divine grace could counteract. He became, at this period, a domestic man, and was soon the father of a family. There was no provision, at that time, for a family itinerating; his labours, therefore, in that line, were, from this time, occasional, and seldom continued long, when necessity or plain duty did not call for them. Those occasional labours he has recorded; but he was too well aware of what the satirist has said, concerning the “importance of a man to himself,” either to trouble or amuse the world with an account of common occurrences, however interesting. He kept a Diary during his life, of daily events, written in shorthand, which he showed to me; and by which he

could review his mercies, and excite his spirit to thankfulness, but without any thought of its ever meeting the public eye, and which therefore has, very properly I think, been withheld from it. I shall proceed to give the remains of his labours, as an Itinerant, which will not be found uninteresting.

The marriage of Mr. C. Wesley does not appear to have long interrupted his labours. April 29, about three weeks after he was married, he wrote thus to his brother: "I hope this will find you prospering in Ireland. I left Garth yesterday se'nnight. Mr. Gwynne, with Sally and Betty, accompanied me to Abergavenny. There I left them on Saturday morning, and got hither, (Bristol,) by one o'clock. Overriding occasioned a fever.—I was too eager for the work, and therefore believe, God checked me by that short sickness. Till Wednesday evening at Weaver's Hall, my strength and understanding did not return; but from that time, the Lord has been with us of a truth. More zeal, more life, more power, I have not felt for some years, (I wish my mentioning this may not lessen it,) so that hitherto marriage has been no hinderance. You will hardly believe it sits so light upon me. Some farther proof I had of my heart on Saturday last, when the fever threatened most. I did not find, so far I can say, any unwillingness to die, on account of any I should leave behind; neither did death appear less desirable than formerly—which I own gave me great pleasure, and made me shed tears of joy. I almost believe, nothing shall hurt me; that the world, the flesh, and the devil, shall keep their distance; or, by assaulting, leave me more than conqueror. On Thursday, I propose setting out for London, by Oxford, with T. Maxfield. If they will give me a year of grace, I shall wonder and thank you.* I hope you came time enough to save J. Cownly,† &c. Set your time for returning; *when abouts*, at least.‡ Will you meet me at Ludlow? It is a thousand pities you should not be here, when the library makes its first appearance. The Lord cut short your work and his, and make a few weeks go as far as many months! What say you to T. Maxfield and me taking a journey, when you return, through all the Societies, Northern and Western, and settling correspondences with the Stewards, *alias* Booksellers? My kindest love to Mr. Lunell, Mr. Lloyd, Mr. Fowks, Mr. Gibbons, and all friends at Cork and Dublin. We make mention of you in all our prayers; be not unmindful of us. The Lord preserve us all to *his day*."

February 8, 1750. He observes, there was an earthquake in London. This place he reached on the 1st of March; and, on the 8th, wrote thus to his brother: "This morning, a quarter after five, we had another shock of an earthquake, far more violent than that of February the 9th. I was just repeating my text, when it shook the Foundry so violently, that we all expected it to fall on our heads. A great cry followed from the women and children. I immediately cried out, '*Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be moved, and the hills be carried into the midst of the sea: For the Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob*

* He alludes to that law of Moses, which ordered, that a man newly married should not go out to war for one year.

† His fear for that good man was, that he would melt in the sun-shine of Cork, which, after the persecution was over, his brother used to call the Capua of the Preachers; alluding to Hannibal's army at that place. The people of Cork thought, they never could sufficiently show their love to the Preachers who had suffered with them, and for them, in that fiery trial.

‡ In this familiar way, approaching to carelessness, he often wrote to his brother.

is our refuge!" He filled my heart with faith, and my mouth with words, shaking their souls as well as their bodies. The earth moved westward, then east, then westward again, through all London and Westminster. It was a strong and jarring motion, attended with a rumbling noise like that of thunder. Many houses were much shaken, and some chimneys thrown down, but without any farther hurt."

March 10.—He expounded the 24th chapter of Isaiah; a chapter, he tells us, which he had not taken much notice of, till this awful providence explained it.—April 4, he says, "Fear filled our chapel, occasioned by a prophecy of the return of the earthquake this night. I preached my written sermon on the subject, with great effect, and gave out several suitable hymns. It was a glorious night for the disciples of JESUS.—April 5. I rose at four o'clock, after a night of sound sleep, while my neighbours watched. I sent an account to M. G. as follows: 'The late earthquake has found me work. Yesterday I saw the Westminster end of the town full of coaches, and crowds flying out of the reach of Divine Justice, with astonishing precipitation. Their panic was caused by a poor madman's prophecy. Last night they were all to be swallowed up! The vulgar were in almost as great consternation as their betters. Most of them watched all night; multitudes in the fields and open places; several in their coaches: many removed their goods. London looked like a sacked city. A Lady, just stepping into her coach to escape, dropped down dead. Many came all night knocking at the Foundry door, and begging admittance for God's sake.'—These, however, were not Methodists, but others, who, under the general apprehension of danger, thought there was more safety under the roof of religious persons than elsewhere: A plain proof, that those who neglect religion, and perhaps despise the professors of it, while in health and free from apparent danger, yet when great calamities approach them, clearly discover that they think the state of religious persons better than their own.—Mr. C. Wesley's account of the great confusion in London, on the 4th of April, is confirmed by a letter of Mr. W. Briggs, to Mr. John Wesley, dated on the 5th of the same month, in which he says, "This great city has been, for some days past, under terrible apprehensions of another earthquake. Yesterday thousands fled out of town, it having been confidently asserted by a dragoon, that he had a revelation, that great part of London, and Westminster especially, would be destroyed by an earthquake the 4th instant, between twelve and one at night. The whole city was under direful apprehensions. Places of worship were crowded with frightened sinners, especially our two chapels, and the Tabernacle, where Mr. Whitefield preached. Several of the Classes came to their leaders, and desired, that they would spend the night with them in prayer; which was done, and God gave them a blessing. Indeed all around was awful! Being not at all convinced of the prophet's mission, and having no call from any of my brethren, I went to bed at my usual time, believing I was safe in the hands of Christ; and likewise, that by doing so, I should be the more ready to rise to the preaching in the morning—which we both did; praised be our kind Protector!"—In a postscript he adds, "Though crowds left the town on Wednesday night, yet crowds were left behind; multitudes of whom, for fear of being suddenly overwhelmed, left their houses, and repaired to the fields, and open places in the city. Tower-hill, Moorfields, but, above all, Hyde-

Park, were filled, best part of the night, with men, women, and children, lamenting. Some, with stronger imaginations than others, mostly women, ran crying in the streets, ‘An earthquake! an earthquake!’ Such a distress, perhaps, is not recorded to have happened before in this careless city. Mr. Whitefield preached at midnight in Hyde-Park. Surely God will visit this city: it will be a time of mercy to some. O may I be found watching!”

June 22.—“I met,” says Mr. C. Wesley, “a daughter of my worthy old friend Mr. Erskine, at the Foundery: she was deeply wounded by the sword of the Spirit: confessed she had turned many to Deism, and feared there could be no mercy for her.—July 18. I had the satisfaction of bringing back to Mr. Erskine his formerly disobedient daughter. She fell at his feet: it was a moving interview—all wept—our Heavenly Father heard our prayers.”

December 2.—Being in Wales, he observes, “I encouraged a poor girl to seek a cure from him who hath wounded her. She has the outward mark too; being daily threatened to be turned out of doors by her master, a great swearer and strict churchman, a constant communicant and a habitual drunkard.”

At this time, James Wheatley, having fallen from God, brought much scandal on the people with whom he was connected. Mr. Wesley, in conjunction with his brother, searched out the truth of the complaints, and first suspended, and afterwards expelled the guilty person. Wheatley had said, when charged, that others were as guilty as he had been; a very natural supposition for such a man. This assertion put the brothers upon a resolution strictly to examine into the religious and moral character of every preacher in the Connexion; “and the office,” says Mr. Charles Wesley, “fell upon me.” He was, under such circumstances, well fitted to search out the evil. It has been said, but not by a friend, that the two brothers were totally dissimilar—that one *believed all things*, and the other *believed nothing*. Both parts of the assertion are untrue. Both were upright men, but Mr. John Wesley had eminently ‘*the love that hopeth all things*.’ He had also a high and piercing sense of his situation and responsibility. In his rules of discipline, he exhorts every preacher to “beware how they believed evil of any man. Unless it be proved,” says he “take heed how you credit it. *Your word especially would eat as doth a canker.*” His brother did not sufficiently feel this, neither did he occupy such high ground. We shall see in the course of these Memoirs, how much he was hindered in his usefulness by a deficiency in this temper so absolutely necessary for such a situation.

Mr. Charles Wesley being clothed with his new office, set out the next morning, June 29, to visit the societies in the midland and northern counties, as far as Newcastle; in which journey Mrs. Wesley accompanied him: But even Dr. Whitehead adds, “I do not find, however, in the whole of his Journal, the least accusation of a nature similar to that of Wheatley, against any preacher in the Connexion.” In this journey he was a great blessing to the people wherever he came; many were added to the societies, and the old members were quickened in their zeal and diligence, to ‘*work out their own salvation with fear and trembling.*’

July 21.—He observes, “I rode to Birstal, (near Leeds,) where

John Nelson comforted our hearts with his account of the success of the Gospel in every place where he has been preaching, except in Scotland. There he has been beating the air for three weeks, and spending his strength in vain. Twice a day he preached at Musselborough to some thousands of mere hearers, without one soul being converted. I preached at one, to a different kind of people. Such a sight have I not seen for many months. They filled the valley and side of the hill as grasshoppers for multitude; yet my voice reached the most distant—God sent the word home to many hearts.”—July 25. He was taken ill of a fever; and, on the 28th, his fever increasing, he says, “I judged it incumbent on me, to leave my thoughts concerning the work and the instruments, and began dictating the following letter.”—Unfortunately the letter was not transcribed into the Journal,—a blank space was left for it: I apprehend it is not now to be found anywhere.

August 12.—Being at Newcastle, he desired W. Shent, who was with him, to go to Musselborough. Before he set out, he gave Mr. C. Wesley the following account of a remarkable trial they lately had at Leeds.—“At Whitecoat Hill, three miles from Leeds, a few weeks since, as our brother Maskew was preaching, a mob arose, broke the windows and doors, and struck the constable, Joseph Hawley, one of the Society. On this we indicted them for an assault; but the ringleader of the mob, John Hellingworth, indicted our brother the constable, and got persons to swear the constable struck him. The Grand Jury threw out our indictment, and found theirs against us, so we stood trial with them, on Monday, July 15, 1751. The Recorder, Richard Wilson, Esq., gave it in our favour, with the rest of the court. But the foreman of the jury, Matthew Priestley, with two others, Richard Cloudsly and Jabez Bunnel, would not agree with the rest, being our avowed enemies. The foreman was Mr. Murgatroyd’s great friend and champion against the Methodists. However, the Recorder gave strict orders to a guard of constables, to watch the jury, that they should have neither meat, drink, candles, nor tobacco, till they were agreed in their verdict. They were kept prisoners all that night and the next day till five in the afternoon, when one of the jury said, ‘he would die before he would give it against us.’ Then he spake closely to the foreman concerning his prejudice against the Methodists, till at last he condescended to refer it to one man. Him the other charged to speak as he would answer it to God in the day of judgment. The man turned pale, trembled, and desired that another might decide it. Another, John Hardwick, being called upon, immediately decided it in favour of the Methodists. After the trial, Sir Henry Ibison, one of the Justices, called one of our brethren to him, and said, ‘You see, God never forsakes a righteous man; take care you never forsake him.’”

CHAPTER III.

EXTRAORDINARY EVENT PRECEDING MR. WESLEY'S MARRIAGE—VERSES ON THAT OCCASION—HIS MARRIAGE—RENEWED ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN HIM AND HIS BROTHER—MR. WESLEY'S PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE.

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.

Some years 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."

I should not have said so much on the present occasion, if it was not for the many fleers 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 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 them. 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.

Dr. Whitehead has prefaced his account of this event by stating—"That Mr. Wesley, a year or more before this period, had formed a resolution to marry; but the affair coming to the knowledge of Mr. C. Wesley, before the marriage took place, he found means to prevent it, for reasons which appeared to him of sufficient importance. Mr. John Wesley, however, thought otherwise; and this was the first breach of that union and harmony, which had subsisted between the two brothers without interruption, for more than twenty years."—As I know more of the case alluded to than Dr. Whitehead did, I must state it a little more at large. The person on whom Mr. Wesley's affections were placed, was in every respect worthy of them. From documents now before me, I am enabled to give a short account of this very interesting attachment, and of its failure, so very painful to Mr. Wesley.

Miss Grace Norman, of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, was married, at a very early age, to Mr. Alexander Murray, of a respectable family in Scotland. He was then in the seafaring line, in which he continued till

his death. He was an affectionate husband, and his kind attentions were repaid by the affectionate attachment of his wife ; but they were both, at that time, totally insensible to the happiness of religion, Mrs. Murray having departed from the God of her early youth. After some time, she was awakened by the powerful preaching of that day, and immediately began to fulfil her baptismal vow. She renounced the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, in which they had both delighted, and became the devoted servant of the Lord that bought her.* This change gave her husband great pain, and for some time she suffered a degree of real persecution from him. He even threatened to confine her in a madhouse. Her gentle and affectionate behaviour in some measure overcame this evil ; but his death at sea, which happened not long after, almost overwhelmed her. She was, however, strengthened by divine grace to submit to this afflictive bereavement, and it was sanctified, in a remarkable manner, to her *furtherance and growth in grace*.

After the death of her husband, Mrs. Murray returned to Newcastle ; and when Mr. Wesley formed a family, connected with his chapel in that town, he appointed her to be the housekeeper. Mr. Wesley had three houses which he accounted *his own*, one at London, another at Bristol, and a third at Newcastle ; to all others, he had only the power to appoint the preachers. These houses might be called *Religious Houses* ; the housekeepers were persons eminent for piety. The Itinerant Preachers in the Western, Northern and Middle Counties occasionally visited these establishments, and rested for a short space from their great labour.

Mrs. Murray had now full employment in that way in which she delighted. In the town and in the country societies, her labours of love, especially among the females, were remarkably owned of the Lord and highly edifying. Mr. Wesley then enlarged her sphere, and she travelled through the Northern counties to meet and regulate the female classes. She then, under his direction, visited Ireland, where she abounded in the same work of faith and love, for several months ; and though she never attempted to preach, her gifts were much honoured, and her '*name as ointment poured forth*.' She returned by Bristol, and visited the societies in the Southern and Eastern counties, and rested again at Newcastle.

Mr. Wesley, who knew all her proceedings and greatly esteemed her labours, thought he had found a help meet for him. But while he indulged these pleasing prospects, in which he was encouraged by his highly-valued friend, the Vicar of Shoreham, and others, they were dashed to pieces by the intelligence of Mrs. Murray's marriage, on the third day of October, 1749, at Newcastle, to Mr. John Bennet, one of the Itinerant Preachers, in the presence of Mr. C. Wesley and Mr. Whitefield !

A son, the fruit of this marriage, and who became a Dissenting Minister, published a short Memoir of his pious mother, after her death ; in which he informs his readers, that his father when on a visit to the house at Newcastle, was seized with a violent fever ; and that, when all his friends despaired of his life, he was, as he always declared, given back to them in answer to the prayers of Mrs. Murray. From that period he thought, as his son informs us, that " she was given to him for a

* See her Letter to Mr. Charles Wesley, vol. i, p. 303.

wife, although he did not declare this for a long time after." I cannot at this distance of time fully state the causes of this strange interference, especially as, contrary to his usual freedom, I do not remember ever to have heard Mr. Wesley mention the event. The high character of those concerned, forbids the imputation of any corrupt motive.

The disappointment was a most severe one to Mr. Wesley, and perhaps the forgiveness and love which he manifested on that occasion, was the highest proof of the power of the religion he possessed that he was ever called to exercise towards man. He continued to employ Mr. Bennet as before, and behaved to him with his usual kindness: That gentleman, however, became still more intimate with Mr. Whitefield, adopted his sentiments, and at length publicly separated from Mr. Wesley at Bolton, in Lancashire, on April 3d, 1752. He afterwards settled, as a Dissenting Minister, at Warbuton, in Cheshire, where he died on the 24th of May, 1759.

There is now lying before me a copy of verses by Mr. Wesley, never yet published, which will fully warrant all I have said concerning this painful event. He seems to have written to ease his bleeding heart. The public life which his high calling obliged him to adopt, caused him generally to restrain the feelings of one of the kindest hearts that ever man was blest with. But in these verses we see that warm and tender nature breathe itself forth without restraint, except from submission to God; a point of religion which he ever inculcated as the highest fruit of grace.

REFLECTIONS UPON PAST PROVIDENCES.

OCTOBER, 1749.

O Lord, I bow my sinful head !
 Righteous are all thy ways with man ;
 Yet suffer me with Thee to plead,
 With lowly rev'rence to complain ;
 With deep unutter'd grief to groan,
 "O what is this that thou hast done !"

Oft, as through giddy youth I roved,
 And danced along the flow'ry way,
 By chance or thoughtless passion moved,
 An easy, unresisting prey
 I fell, while love's envenom'd dart
 Thrill'd through my nerves, and tore my heart.

At length, by sad experience taught,
 Firm I shook off the abject yoke ;
 Abhor'd his sweetly-pois'nous draught,
 Through all his wily fetters broke ;
 Fix'd my desires on things above,
 And languish'd for celestial love !

Borne on the wings of sacred hope,
 Long had I soar'd and spurn'd the ground .
 When, panting for the mountain-top,
 My soul a kindred spirit found ;
 By Heaven entrusted to my care,
 The daughter of my faith and prayer.

In early dawn of life, serene,
 Mild, sweet, and tender was her mood ?
 Her pleasing form spoke all within
 Soft and compassionately good ;
 List'ning to every wretch's care,
 Mingling with each her friendly tear.

In dawn of life, to feed the poor,
 Glad she her little all bestow'd ;
 Wise to lay up a better store,
 And hast'ning to be rich in God ;
 God whom she sought with early care,
 With reverence, and with lowly fear.

Ere twice four years pass'd o'er her head,
 Her infant mind with love he fill'd ;
 His gracious, glorious name reveal'd,
 And sweetly forced her heart to yield ;
 She groan'd t' ascend Heaven's high abode,
 To die into the arms of God !

Yet, warm with youth and beauty's pride,
 Soon was her heedless soul betray'd ;
 From heaven her footsteps turn'd aside,
 O'er pleasure's flow'ry plain she stray'd,
 Fondly the toys of earth she sought,
 And God was not in all her thought.

Not long—a messenger she saw,
 Sent forth glad tidings to proclaim :
 She heard, with joy and wond'ring awe,
 His cry, " Sinners, behold the LAMB !"
 His eye her inmost nature shook,
 His word her heart in pieces broke.

Her bosom heaved with lab'ring sighs,
 And groan'd th' unutterable prayer ;
 As rivers, from her streaming eyes,
 Fast flow'd the never-ceasing tear,
 Till Jesus spake—" Thy mourning 's o'er,
 Believe, rejoice, and weep no more !"

She heard ;—pure love her soul o'erflow'd ;
 Sorrow and sighing fled away ;
 With sacred zeal her spirit glow'd,
 Panting His every word t' obey ;
 Her faith by plenteous fruit she show'd,
 And all her works were wrought in God.

Nor works alone her faith approved ;
 Soon in affliction's furnace tried
 By him, whom next to Heaven she lov'd,
 As silver seven times purified,
 Shone midst the flames her constant mind,
 Emerged, and left the dross behind.

When death, in freshest strength of years,
 Her much-loved friend torn from her breast,
 Awhile she poured her plaints and tears,
 But, quickly turning to her rest,
 " Thy will be done !" she meekly cried,
 " Suffice, for me the Saviour died !"

When first I view'd, with fix'd regard,
 Her artless tears in silence flow,
 " For thee are better things prepar'd,"
 I said, " Go forth, with Jesus go !
 My Master's peace be on thy soul,
 Till perfect love shall make thee whole !"

I saw her run, with winged speed,
 In works of faith and lab'ring love ;
 I saw her glorious toil succeed,
 And showers of blessings from above,
 Crowning her warm effectual prayer,
 And glorified my God in her.

Yet while to all her tender mind
 In streams of pure affection flow'd,

To ONE by ties peculiar join'd,
 One, only less beloved than God,
 "Myself," she said, "my soul I owe,—
 "My guardian angel here below!"

From heaven the grateful ardour came,
 Pure from the dross of low desire;
 Well-pleased I mark'd the guiltless flame,
 Nor dared to damp the sacred fire,
 Heaven's choicest gift on man bestow'd,
 Strength'ning our hearts and hands in God.

'Twas now I bow'd my aching head,
 While sickness shook the house of clay;
 Duteous she ran with humble speed,
 Love's tend'rest offices to pay,
 To ease my pain, to soothe my care,
 T' uphold my feeble hands in prayer.

Amaz'd, I cried, "Surely for me
 A help prepared of Heaven thou art!
 Thankful, I take the gift from Thee,
 O Lord! and nought on earth shall part
 The souls that thou hast join'd above,
 In lasting bonds of sacred love."

Abash'd she spoke, "O what is this?
 Far above all my boldest hope!
 Can God, beyond my utmost wish,
 Thus lift his worthless handmaid up?
 This only could my soul desire!
 This only had I dared require!"

From that glad hour, with growing love,
 Heaven's latest, dearest gift I view'd;
 While, pleased each moment to improve,
 We urged our way with strength renew'd,
 Our one desire, our common aim,
 T' extol our gracious Master's name.

Companions now in weal and wo,
 No power on earth could us divide;
 Nor Summer's heat nor Winter's snow
 Could tear my partner from my side;
 Nor toil, nor weariness, nor pain,
 Nor horrors of the angry main.

Oft, (though as yet the nuptial tie
 Was not,) clasping her hand in mine,
 "What force," she said, "beneath the sky,
 Can now our well-knit souls disjoin?
 With thee I'd go to India's coast,
 To worlds in distant oceans lost!"

Such was the friend than life more dear,
 Whom in one luckless baleful hour,
 (For ever mention'd with a tear!)
 The tempter's unresisted power
 (O the unutterable smart!)
 Tore from my inly-bleeding heart!

Unsearchable Thy judgments are,
 O Lord! a bottomless abyss!
 Yet sure thy love, thy guardian care,
 O'er all thy works extended is!
 O why didst Thou the blessing send?
 Or why thus snatch away my friend?

What Thou hast done, I know not now;
 Suffice, I shall hereafter know!
 Beneath thy chast'ning hand I bow;
 That still I live to Thee I owe.
 O teach thy deeply-humbled son,
 Father! to say, "Thy will be done!"

Teach me, from every pleasing snare
 To keep the issues of my heart;
 Be Thou my Love, my Joy, my Fear!
 Thou my eternal portion art!
 Be Thou my NEVER FAILING FRIEND,
 And love, O love me to the end!

In the year 1788, the son of Mr. Bennet, already mentioned, officiated at a chapel on the PAVEMENT in Moorfields, and his mother came to London in that year on a visit to him. Mr. Thomas Olivers, having seen her, mentioned the circumstance to Mr. Wesley when I was with him, and intimated, that Mrs. Bennet wished to see him. Mr. Wesley, with evident feeling, resolved to visit her: and the next morning, he took me with him to Colebrooke-row, where her son then resided. The meeting was affecting; but Mr. Wesley preserved more than his usual self-possession. It was easy to see, notwithstanding the many years which had intervened, that both in sweetness of spirit, and in person and manners, she was a fit subject for the tender regrets expressed in those verses which I have presented to the reader. The interview did not continue long, and I do not remember that I ever heard Mr. Wesley mention her name afterwards.

Some years after the death of her husband, Mrs. Bennet removed to Chapel-en-le-Frith, where she again joined the Methodist Society, and, according to her first faith and practice, she abounded in those works of piety and mercy, which distinguished her early days. She lived twelve years after the death of Mr. Wesley, and entered into the joy of her Lord, February the 23d, 1803, in the eighty-fifth year of her age.

Dr. Whitehead, speaking of Mr. Wesley's marriage, says that "he seems to have considered St. Paul's advice to the church at Corinth, as a standing rule to Christians in all circumstances;" and adds, "it is really wonderful how he could fall into such an error." But Mr. Wesley did not fall into it; the wonder is, that the Doctor should assert that he did. Mr. Wesley wrote the tract on that subject, chiefly from our Lord's words, (Matt. xix,) which were spoken at a time when the infant church was not in such circumstances as the Apostle's words imply. Mr. Southey's account is much more correct and candid: He observes, "Mr. Wesley did not suppose that such a precept could have been intended for the many;" and that "he assented fully to the sentence of the Apostle who pronounced the forbidding to marry to be a doctrine of devils." To the generality of men, with all its dangers and troubles, marriage is absolutely necessary in order to holiness. The Doctor, however, observes with truth, that, "had he married a woman who could have entered into his views and accommodated herself to his situation, it might have formed a basis for much happiness. But had he searched the whole kingdom on purpose, he could hardly have found a woman more unsuitable in these respects than the one he married."

Mrs. Vizelle, (afterwards Wesley,) however, from all that I have heard from Mr. Wesley and others, had every appearance of being well qualified for the sphere into which she was introduced. She seemed truly pious, and was very agreeable in her person and manners. She conformed to every company whether of the rich or the poor: and she had a remarkable facility and propriety in addressing them concerning their true interests. She departed, however, from this excellent way, and the marriage consequently became an unhappy one. I cannot take upon

me to state, in every respect, all 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 me, 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 travelled with him for some time, but afterwards 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 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 churchyard 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 I have had before me, and fully considered; but they would add nothing material to the account which I have given. I shall, however, present my 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 liftest 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 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,)* 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 show that I do indeed love you, even as Christ the church.”

Mr. Wesley, however, bore this severe trial well. He has repeatedly told me, that he believed the Lord overruled this whole painful business for his good ; and that if Mrs. Wesley had been a better wife, and had continued to act in that way in which she knew well how to act, he might have been unfaithful in the great work to which the Lord had called him, and might have too much sought to please her according to her own views.

Soon after his marriage, he resigned his Fellowship. His letter of resignation was as follows : “*Ego Johannes Wesley, Collegii Lincolnienſis in Academia Oxoniensi Socius, quicquid mihi juris est in prædictâ Societate, ejusdem Rectori et Sociis sponte ac libere resigno : illis universis et 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 them all, and to each of them, continual peace, and all felicity in Christ.”

Mr. Wesley having fully considered his situation, determined to continue in the course prescribed to him ; and shaking off his trials, “like dew-drops from a lion’s mane,” he set out on his northern journey. He travelled through the Societies as far as Whitehaven ; and April 20, 1751, he came to Newcastle. On the 24th, he set out with Mr. Hopper, to pay his first visit to Scotland. He was invited thither by Captain (afterwards Colonel) Galatin, who was then quartered at Musselborough. “I had no intention,” says he, “to preach in Scotland ; not imagining that there were any that desired I should. But I was mistaken : Curiosity, if nothing else, brought abundance of people together in the evening. And whereas in the kirk, Mrs. Galatin informed me, there used to be laughing and talking, and all the marks of the grossest inattention ;

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

it was far otherwise here. They remained as statues from the beginning of the sermon to the end. I preached again at six in the evening, on, ‘*Seek ye the Lord while he may be found.*’ I used great plainness of speech towards high and low, and they all received it in love; so that the prejudice which had been several years planting, was torn up by the roots in one hour. After preaching, one of the Bailiffs of the town, with one of the Elders of the kirk, came to me, and begged I would stay with them a while; nay, if it were but two or three days, and they would fit up a far larger place than the school, and prepare seats for the congregations. Had not my time been fixed, I should gladly have complied. All that I could now do, was to give them a promise, that Mr. Hopper would come back the next week, and spend a few days with them. And it was not without a fair prospect: The congregations were very numerous, many were cut to the heart, and several joined together in a little Society.”

Mr. Southey has observed, that “resentment was a plant that *could never* take root in the heart of Wesley.” We must doubt of this, as we do not hold Christian Perfection quite so high, as Mr. Southey seems to do, in this instance. But we do believe, that, by the grace of God, it *never did*. We have seen how deeply Mr. Wesley, like his Divine Master, was wounded in the house of his friends. Resentment, it is true, was refused admission; but something more is needed, than the absence of that root of bitterness, to constitute Christian friendship; and especially that oneness so essential in those who conduct a work of God, particularly a work so new, being *wholly Scriptural*, and so great as we have seen this to be.

Mr. C. Wesley was now become, in a great degree, a domestic man; and the want of that activity which we have heretofore seen in his labours of love, much impaired his own comforts, and laid him open to strong temptation. Mr. John Wesley has remarked to me,—“While my brother remained with me, he was joyous in his spirit, and his labour saddened him not. But when he departed from that activity, to which the Lord called him, and in which he so greatly blessed him, his spirit became depressed; and being surrounded with ‘croakers,’ he often looked through the same clouds which enveloped *them*.”—In this point, Dr. Whitehead’s opinion coincides.

“In August, 1751,” says the Doctor, “Mr. C. Wesley wrote to his brother, under great oppression of mind, and in very strong language. Whenever he saw some things wrong, his fears suggested to him, that there might be many more which he did not see; and the natural warmth of his temper,”—and, I will add, his great sincerity,—“led him to use expressions abundantly more severe than the case required.” But the Preachers, against whom, as the Doctor observes, “he had no material charge, but the want of qualifications for their office,” (and that chiefly on report,) “soon obtained fresh encouragement from his brother; which was another means of weakening the union that had long subsisted between them.”

Having met in London, the two brothers went down to Shoreham in November, and talked the matter over, in the presence of Mr. Perronet, whom Mr. C. Wesley used to call “our Archbishop.” A less exceptionable *days-man* could not have been found; a man full of faith and love, and entirely devoted to God, and to his work. He had fitted up

a large outer room in the parsonage-house, (which I had the privilege of visiting,) where the Preachers used to meet the pious people of the parish: The good man rejoicing in all that he heard, and in all the good that was done. In his presence the two brothers expressed their entire satisfaction in the end which each had in view; namely, the glory of God, and the salvation of souls. They both acknowledged the sincerity of each, in desiring union between themselves, as the means to that end; and after much conversation, they both agreed to act in concert with respect to the Preachers, so that neither of them should admit or refuse any, but such as both admitted or refused.—About six weeks afterwards, they were at Shoreham again, and then signed the following articles of agreement:

“With regard to the Preachers, we agree,

“1. That none shall be permitted to preach in any of our Societies, till he be examined, both as to his grace and gifts; at least, by the Assistant, who, sending word to us, may, by our answer, admit him a Local Preacher.

“2. That such Preacher be not immediately taken from his trade, but be exhorted to follow it with all diligence.

“3. That no person shall be received as a Travelling Preacher, or be taken from his trade, by either of us alone, but by both of us conjointly, giving him a note under both our hands.

“4. That neither of us will re-admit a Travelling Preacher laid aside, without the consent of the other.

“5. That if we should ever disagree in our judgment, we will refer the matter to Mr. Perronet.

“6. That we will entirely be patterns of all we expect from every Preacher; particularly of zeal, diligence, and punctuality in the work; by constantly preaching and meeting the Societies; by visiting, yearly, Ireland, Cornwall, and the North; and, in general, by superintending the whole work, and every branch of it, with all the strength which God shall give us. We agree to the above written, till this day next year, in the presence of Mr. Perronet.

“JOHN WESLEY.

“CHARLES WESLEY.”

Dr. Whitehead observes, “Mr. John Wesley was prevailed upon, with some difficulty, to sign these articles.” But he soon found, that, from the causes already mentioned, his brother was unable to execute so large an engagement with any efficiency. Mr. J. Wesley may, therefore, from this time, be considered as the sole director of the work: Not from the heathenish principle which Dr. Whitehead imputes to him, without any evidence, viz. that he would be *aut Cæsar, aut nullus*,* but from necessity. He could not admit of any *partner* who would not superintend the whole work and every part of it, as above stated. Mr. C. Wesley, however, occasionally assisted his brother, especially in London and Bristol, and his ministrations were always acceptable and profitable to the people.

About this time, Mr. Wesley received a letter from that distinguished servant of Christ, the Rev. Mr. Milner, who had been at Chester, and wrote as follows, on the temper of the Bishop towards the Methodists:

* He would be supreme, or he would be nobody.

“The Bishop,” says he, “I was told, was exceeding angry at my late excursion into the North in your company. But I found his Lordship in much better temper than I was bid to expect by my brother Graves,* who was so prudent, that he would not go with one so obnoxious to the Bishop’s displeasure, and all the storm of anger fell upon *him*. When he told me how he had been treated, for speaking in your defence, I was fully persuaded all the bitterness was past, and accordingly found it so. I told his Lordship, that God was with you of a truth; and he seemed pleased with the relation of the conversion of the barber at Bolton; and with your design of answering Taylor’s book on Original Sin.—I have made no secret of your manner of proceeding, to any with whom I have conversed, since I had the happiness of being in your company. And to the Bishop I was very particular in telling him, what an assembly of worshippers there is at Newcastle: How plainly the badge of Christianity, LOVE, is there to be seen. When his Lordship talked about ORDER, I begged leave to observe, that I had nowhere seen such a want of it, as in his own cathedral; the preacher so miserably at a loss, that the children took notice of it; and the choristers so rude, as to be talking and thrusting one another with their elbows. At last I told him, there was need of some extraordinary messengers from God, to call us back to the doctrines of the Reformation; for I did not know one of my brethren in Lancashire, that would give the Church’s definition of faith, and stand to it. And alas, I had sad experience of the same falling away in Cheshire; for one of his son’s curates would not let me preach for him, because of that definition of faith.”

In the ensuing year, Mr. Wesley continued his labours and travels, with the same vigour and diligence, through various parts of England and Ireland.—February, 1753, he makes the following observations: “I now looked over Mr. Prince’s History. What an amazing difference is there, in the manner wherein God has carried on his work in England and in America! There, above a hundred of the established clergy, men of age and experience, and of the greatest note for sense and learning in those parts, are zealously engaged in the work. Here, almost the whole body of aged, experienced, learned clergy, are zealously engaged against it; and few, but a handful, of raw young men engaged in it, without name, learning, or eminent sense! And yet by that large number of honourable men, the work seldom flourished above six months at a time, and then followed a lamentable and general decay, before the next revival of it; whereas that which God hath wrought by these despised instruments, has continually increased for fifteen years together; and at whatever time it has declined in any one place, it has more eminently flourished in others.”

To know the whole of a man’s character, it is not sufficient to view him as he appears before the public, but in his more retired moments, and particularly in his private correspondence. The two following letters will show the temper in which Mr. Wesley answered charges that were privately brought against him, either from prejudice or misapprehension. “You give,” says he, “five reasons why the Rev. Mr. P. will come no more amongst us: 1. ‘Because we despise the Ministers of the Church of England.’—This I flatly deny. I am answering letters this very post, which bitterly blame me for just the contrary. 2. ‘Because so much

* Afterwards Mr. Fletcher’s Curate.

backbiting and evil-speaking is suffered amongst our people.'—It is not suffered: All possible means are used, both to prevent and remove it. 3. 'Because I, who have written so much against hoarding up money, have put out seven hundred pounds to interest.'—I never put sixpence out to interest since I was born; nor had I ever one hundred pounds together, my own, since I came into the world. 4. 'Because our Lay-Preachers have told many stories of my brother and me.'—If they did, I am sorry for them: When I hear the particulars I can answer, and, perhaps, make those ashamed who believed them. 5. 'Because we did not help a friend in distress.'—We did help him as far as we were able.—'But we might have made his case known to Mr. G., Lady H., &c.'—So we did more than once; but we could not pull money from them whether they would or no. Therefore, these reasons are of no weight.—You conclude with praying, 'that God would remove pride and malice from amongst us.'—Of *pride*, I have too much; of *malice*, I have none: However, the prayer is good, and I thank you for it."

The other letter, from which I shall give an extract, was written apparently to a gentleman of some rank and influence. "Some time since," says Mr. Wesley, "I was considering what you said, concerning the want of a plan in our Societies. There is a good deal of truth in this remark. For though we have a plan, as to our spiritual economy, (the several branches of which are particularly recited in the *Plain Account of the People called Methodists*,) yet it is certain, we have barely the first outlines of a plan with regard to our temporal concerns. The reason is, I had no design for several years to concern myself with temporals at all; and when I began to do this, it was wholly and solely with a view to relieve, not to employ, the poor; except now and then, with respect to a small number; and even this I found was too great a burden for me, as requiring more money, more time, and more thought, than I could possibly spare. I say, 'than I could possibly spare;' for the whole weight lay on me. If I left it to others, it surely came to nothing. They wanted either understanding, or industry, or love, or patience, to bring any thing to perfection.

"Thus far I thought it needful to explain myself, with regard to the economy of our Society. I am still to speak of your case, of my own, and of some who are dependant upon me.

"I do not recollect, for I kept no copy of my last, that I charged you with want of humility or meekness. Doubtless, these may be found in the most splendid palaces. But did they ever move a man to build a splendid palace? Upon what motive you did this, I know not; but you are to answer it to God, not to me.

"If your soul is as much alive to God, if your thirst after pardon and holiness is as strong, if you are as dead to the desire of the eye and the pride of life, as you were six or seven years ago, I rejoice; if not, I pray God you may; and then you will know how to value a real friend.

"With regard to myself, you do well to 'warn me against popularity, a thirst of power, and of applause; against envy, producing a seeming contempt for the conveniences or grandeur of this life; against an affected humility; against sparing from myself to give to others, from no other motive than ostentation.' I am not conscious to myself, that this is my case. However, the warning is always friendly; and it is always seasonable, considering how deceitful my heart is, and how many the

enemies that surround me.—What follows I do not understand : ‘ You behold me in the ditch, wherein you helped, though innocently, to cast me, and with a *Levitical* pity, passing by on the other side.’—‘ He and you, Sir, have not any merit, though Providence should permit all these sufferings to work together for my good.’—I do not comprehend one line of this, and therefore cannot plead either guilty, or not guilty.—I presume, they are some that are dependant on me, ‘ who,’ you say, ‘ keep not the commandments of God ; who show a repugnance to serve and obey ; who are as full of pride and arrogance, as of filth and nastiness ; who do not pay lawful debts, nor comply with civil obligations ; who make the waiting on the offices of religion a plea for sloth and idleness ; who, after I had strongly recommended them, did not perform their moral duty, but increased the number of those incumbrances which they forced on you against your will.’—To this, I can only say, 1. I know not whom you mean ; I am not certain that I can so much as guess at one of them. 2. Whoever they are, had they followed my instructions, they would have acted in a quite different manner. 3. If you will tell me them by name, I will renounce all fellowship with them.”—That is, after due inquiry. This I must add ; for, I am certain, he would not renounce fellowship with the poorest man in the world, to please the greatest King.

CHAPTER IV.

MR. WESLEY’S DANGEROUS ILLNESS—MR. C. WESLEY’S RENEWED LABOURS—MR. WESLEY’S REASSUMPTION OF ITINERANCY—HIS CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE REVEREND MR. WALKER, OF TRURO—HIS PROPOSAL FOR A UNION OF THE EVANGELICAL CLERGY OF THAT DAY—ACCOUNT OF MR. GRIMSHAW.

MR. WESLEY had hitherto enjoyed remarkable health, considering his great and continued labours, and exposures of every kind. But, October 19, 1753, soon after his return to London, he was taken ill. In a short time his complaint put on the appearance of an ague. Before he was perfectly recovered, he repeatedly caught cold, and was presently threatened with a rapid consumption.—November 26, Dr. Fothergill told him, he must not stay in town one day longer : That if any thing would do him good, it must be the country air, with rest, asses milk, and riding daily. In consequence of this advice, he retired to Lewisham, to the house of his friend Mr. Blackwell, the Banker. Here, not knowing how it might please God to dispose of him, and wishing “to prevent vile panegyric” in case of death, 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 tombstone.

From Lewisham he removed to the Hotwells 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 own piety and feelings, that I make no apology for inserting it:

BRISTOL, Dec. 3, 1753.

"REVEREND 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, reverend 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 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, reverend 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,

"Reverend and very dear Sir,

"Your most affectionate, sympathizing,

"And afflicted younger brother,

"In the Gospel of our common Lord,

"G. WHITEFIELD."

Mr. C. Wesley was roused by his brother's illness, and exerted himself to supply his place. Sunday, July 14, he came to Norwich, and at seven o'clock in the morning took the field. He preached on Hoghill to about two thousand hearers, his brother standing by him, then, in some degree, amended in his health. A drunkard or two were troublesome, but more out of mirth than malice. They afterwards went to church; and the people, both in the streets and at the cathedral, were remarkably civil. He adds, "The Lessons, Psalms, Epistles, and Gospel, were

* I shall follow, though not with equal steps.

very encouraging. The Anthem made our hearts rejoice: '*O pray for the peace of Jerusalem. They shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces! For my brethren and companions' sake will I now say, Peace be within thee! Because of the house of the Lord our God, will I seek thy good.*'—We received the Sacrament at the hands of the Bishop. In the afternoon I went to St. Peter's, and at five o'clock to Hoghill, where it was computed, that ten thousand persons were present. Again I preached repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. They listened with great seriousness—their hearts were plainly touched, as some showed by their tears. Who could have thought the people of Norwich would ever more have borne a Field Preacher? It is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes. To him be all the glory, who saith, '*I will work, and who shall hinder?*' "

July 19.—Mr. John Wesley left them, and Mr. Charles continued his labours. "At night," he says, "I had multitudes of the great vulgar and the small to hear me, with three Justices and nine Clergymen. Many, I am persuaded, felt the sharp two-edged sword.—Sunday, July 21. My audience at seven in the morning was greatly increased. I dwelt chiefly on those words, '*He hath sent me to preach glad tidings to the meek,*' or poor; and laboured, as all last week, to bring them to a sense of their wants; and for this end, I have preached the law, which is extremely wanted here. It is a cause for wonder and thanksgiving, that they can endure sound and even severe doctrine. I received the Sacrament again from his Lordship, among a score of communicants. If the Gospel prevail in this place, they will, by and by, find the difference.—July 22. God is providing us a place; an old large brew-house, which the owner, a Justice of the Peace, has reserved for us. He has refused several, always declaring he would let it to none but Mr. John Wesley. Last Saturday Mr. Edwards agreed in my brother's name, to take a lease for seven years; and this morning Mr. S. has sent his workmen to begin to put it into repair. The people are much pleased at our having it: So are not Satan and his Antinomian Apostles."

July 27.—He was informed of the death of a person whom he considered and loved as a son in the Gospel, but whose unsteadiness had given him great pain. His observations on the occasion show, that he had a mind susceptible of the finest sentiments of friendship. "Just now," says, he, "I hear from Leeds, that my poor rebellious son has taken his flight. But God healed his backslidings first, and he is at rest! My poor J. H—n is at rest in the bosom of his heavenly Father. O what a turn has it given my heart! What a mixture of passions do I feel here! But joy and thankfulness are uppermost. I opened the book of consolation, and cast my eye upon a word which shall wipe away all tears: '*I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death.*'—Sunday, July 28, I met our little Society, or rather candidates for a Society, at five in the morning. At seven, I preached Christ Jesus, the Saviour of all men, to a numerous quiet congregation, and afterwards heard the Bishop preach, and received the Sacrament from him. At five in the evening, after prayer for an open door, I went forth to such a multitude as we have not seen before in Norwich. During the hymn, a pale trembling opposer laboured to interrupt the work of God, and draw off the people's attention: But as soon as I

began to read the history of the Prodigal Son, his commission ended, and he left me to a quiet audience. Now the door was opened indeed. For an hour and a half I showed their sins and wanderings from God, and invited them back to their Father's house. And surely he had compassion on them, inclining many hearts to return. God, I plainly found, had delivered them into my hand. He filled my mouth with persuasive words, and my heart with strong desires for their salvation. I concluded, and began again, testifying my good-will towards them, which was the sole end of my coming. But if I henceforth see them no more, yet is my labour with my God. They have heard words whereby they may be saved; and many of them, I cannot doubt, will be our crown of rejoicing in the great day. Several serious persons followed me to Mr. Edwards's, desiring to be admitted into our Society. I told them, as others before, to come among us first, for some time, and see how they liked it. We spent some time together in conference, praise, and prayer. I am in no haste for a Society: First, let us see how the candidates live."—But, I would ask, are we not to help them to live? Mr. John Wesley, speaking on this subject, says, "What am I to wait for? To see if the man *repents*? That, perhaps, is evident. If so, am I not to help him in every way that I can, lest he *turn back to perdition*?"

Mr. C. Wesley goes on: "July 30. I preached at five, and found the people's hearts opened for the word. The more Satan rages, the more our Lord will own and bless us. A poor rebel, at the conclusion, lifted up his voice, for whom I first prayed; and then, turning full upon him, preached repentance and Christ to his heart. I desired him to turn his face towards me, but he could not. However, he felt the invisible chain, which held him to hear the offers of grace and salvation. I have great hope that Satan has lost his slave: Some assured me they saw him depart in tears.—July 31. I expounded Isaiah xxxii, 1, to my constant hearers, who seem more and more to know their wants. At night I laid the axe to the root, and showed their actual and original corruption, from Rev. iii, 17: '*Thou sayest, I am rich, and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.*' The strong man was disturbed in his palace, and roared on every side. My strength increased with the opposition. A gentleman on horseback, with others, was ready to gnash upon me with his teeth; but my voice prevailed, and they retreated to their strong hold, the alehouse. There, with difficulty, they procured some butchers to appear in their quarrel; but they had no commission to approach till I had done. Then, in the last hymn, they made up to the table with great fury. The foremost often lifted up his stick to strike me, being within his reach; but he was not permitted. I staid to pray for them, and walked quietly to my lodgings. Poor Rabshakeh muttered something about the Bishop of Exeter; but did not accept of my invitation to Mr. Edwards's. The concern and love of the people were much increased, by my supposed danger. We joined together in prayer and thanksgiving, as usual, and I slept in peace."

After a considerable time, in which we have no account of his labours, we find Mr. C. Wesley at York. He observes, "October 2, 1756. The whole day was spent in singing, conference, and prayer. I attended," says he, "the Quire Service. The people there were marvellously civil, and obliged me with the anthem I desired, (Hab. iii,) *a feast for*

a king! as Queen Anne called it. The Rev. Mr. Williamson walked with me to his house, in the face of the sun. I would have spared him, but he was quite above fear. A pious sensible Dissenter cleaved to us all day, and accompanied us to the preaching. I discoursed on my favourite subject, *'I will bring the third part through the fire.'* We glorified God in the fire, and rejoiced in hope of coming forth as gold.

"Sunday, October 3. From five till near eight in the morning, I talked closely with each of the Society: Then, at Mr. Williamson's request, I preached on the Ordinances from Isaiah lxiv, 5, *'In those is continuance, and we shall be saved.'* I dwelt longest on what had been most neglected, Family Prayer, Public Prayer, and the Sacrament. The Lord set to his seal, and confirmed the word with a double blessing.—I received the Sacrament at the Minster. They were obliged to consecrate twice, the congregation being doubled and trebled through my exhortation and example. Glory be to God alone!—I went to Mr. Williamson's church, who read prayers as one who felt them, and then beckoned me. I stepped up into the pulpit, when no one expected it, and cried to a full audience, *'The kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye, and believe the Gospel.'* They were all attention. The word did not return void, but accomplished that for which it was sent. *'Neither is he that planteth any thing, neither is he that watereth.'*"

October 11.—Mr. Whitefield and Mr. Grimshaw were present at a watch-night at Leeds. Mr. C. Wesley preached first, and Mr. Whitefield after him. It was a time of great solemnity, and of great rejoicing in hope of the glorious appearing of the great God.—He now left Leeds, but continued preaching in the neighbouring places a few days. At Birstal, he makes the following observation: "The word was clothed with power, both to awaken and to confirm. My principal concern is for the disciples, that their houses may be built on the rock, before the rains descend. I hear, in most places, the effect of the word; but I hearken after it less than formerly, and take little notice of those who say they receive comfort, or faith, or forgiveness. Let their fruits show it."—But why should we *take little notice of them?* Ought we not to rejoice in hope, that fruit will follow? And this, I know, he did do. He was far from the apathy into which some have been led by the Mystic Theology, though some of his short sentences may look like it.

October 17.—He talked largely with Mr. Grimshaw, how to remedy the evil which threatened them. "We agreed," says he, "1. That nothing can save the Methodists from falling a prey to every seducer, but close walking with God, in all the commandments and ordinances; especially reading the word, and prayer, private, family, and public.—2. That the Preachers should be allowed more time in every place, to visit from house to house, after Mr. Baxter's manner.—3. That a small treatise should be written, to ground them in their calling, and preserve them against seducers, and be lodged in every family."—These remedies were certainly very obvious.

Mr. C. Wesley wrote, from Manchester, to the Society at Leeds, as follows:

"To my beloved Brethren at Leeds, &c.

"GRACE and PEACE be multiplied! I thank my God on your behalf, for the grace which is given unto you, by which ye stand fast in

one mind and in one spirit. My Master, I am persuaded, sent me to you at this time, to confirm your souls in the present truth—in your calling, in the old paths of Gospel ordinances. O that ye may be a pattern to the flock for your unanimity and love! O that ye may continue steadfast in the word, and in fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers, (private, family, and public,) till we all meet around the great white throne!—I knew beforehand, that the Sanballats and Tobiahs would be grieved when they heard, there was a man come to seek the good of the Church of England. I expected they would pervert my words, as if I should say, *The Church could save you*. So, indeed, you and they thought, till I and my brethren taught you better; and sent you, in and through all the means, to Jesus Christ. But let not their slanders move you. Continue in the Old Ship. Jesus hath a favour for our Church, and is wonderfully visiting and reviving his work in her. It shall be shortly said, ‘*Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: Rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her.*’ Blessed be God, you see your calling. Let nothing hinder you from going constantly to Church and Sacrament.* Read the Scriptures daily in your families, and let there be a church in every house. The word is able to build you up; and if ye watch and pray always, ye shall be counted worthy to stand before the Son of Man. Watch ye, therefore, stand fast in the faith, quit yourselves like men, be strong: Let all your things be done in love. I rejoice in hope of presenting you all in that day. Look up, for your eternal salvation draweth near.

“CHARLES WESLEY.”

“I examined more of the Society. Most of them have known the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

“October 30.—I dined with my candid friend and censor, Dr. Byrom. I stood close to Mr. Clayton, (one of the first Methodists at Oxford,) in the church, as all the week past; but not a look would he cast towards me, ‘so stiff was his parochial pride,’ and so faithfully did he keep his covenant with his eyes, not to look upon an old friend, when called a Methodist!

“October 31.—I spake with the rest of the classes. I refused tickets to J. and E. R. All the rest were willing to follow my advice, and go to church and Sacrament. *The Dissenters I sent to their respective meetings.*”†—Dr. Whitehead observes, “These extracts from Mr. Charles Wesley’s Journal for the present year, show, in the clearest light, that

* And they continued to do so, till no church there could admit one-third of them. Any that choose continue to go to church: the original terms of Christian fellowship remain to this day.

† Dr. Whitehead puts these words in Italics, and then eulogizes them. The words are easily spoken; but where was the authority? Not in any of the rules of Methodism. No such coercive power is there assumed! And, certainly, there is no such authority given to man in the Holy Scripture. Have even the angels of God authority to constrain the sheep of Christ ‘to follow the voice of a stranger?’ No; their Master says, ‘they will not follow it: They know not the voice of strangers.’ And how many of these were strangers to the Gospel, and to the whole power of godliness?—and not a few ‘denied the God that bought them.’ Meantime, if any chose to attend the ministry which they were used to, they had liberty so to do, as they have at this day. Such a power would soon wear itself out. The fact is, it was not attended to. Mr. C. Wesley staid but a short time in each place; and, when he departed, every thing went on as usual; and the *religious Societies*, freed from this compulsive dictation, continued to build each other up in their most holy faith, to which his lively and powerful preaching mightily contributed. I have given the surmises of Dr. Whitehead to show, how he could vary from his own well known sentiments when writing for a party.

he had a just view of the peculiar Calling of the Methodists, and that he was exceedingly anxious they should abide in it. He was fully convinced, that all attempts to form the people into an independent body, originated in the pride and selfishness of some of the Preachers, and would be injurious to the progress of the work. He saw, however, that, under various pretences, the Preachers would finally prevail, and obtain their purpose, though not during the life of his brother. He was still comforted with the hope, that whenever such an event should take place, there would be found, perhaps, a third part of the people in the Societies who would have judgment and virtue enough left to withstand it, and continue a connexion on the original plan. How far his expectations will be realized, time must discover."—And time has discovered it. All these prophecies have failed ; and only the record of these evil surmises remains.

November 1.—Mr. C. Wesley left Manchester, and on the 6th came safe to his friends at Bristol. "This," says Dr. Whitehead, "I believe, was the last journey he ever took through any considerable part of the kingdom."—He afterwards divided his labours chiefly between London and Bristol, and continued to preach till within a short time of his death : But he still made short excursions, and thus occasionally visited the old societies. But as he did not enter into the work as at the beginning, his extreme spirit of caution, for which he was noted, was now mixed with a jealousy which greatly impeded the success of his labours, and lessened his own comfort. He heard how widely the work was spreading, and seems to have imbibed a fear that order and sobriety could not be maintained in so great a body : Those pious men, Newton and Scott, have expressed the same opinion. He frequently strove to induce his brother to adopt his straitened views : But Mr. J. Wesley, who visited every place, and saw with his own eyes, rejoiced in beholding those fruits, that still evidenced the work to be of God. He went on therefore in the same faith, and maintained the same joyful hope, according to that saying of Mr. Fletcher, "We need not fear a wreck, however tossed, while Christ is in the ship."

May 6, 1755, the Conference began at Leeds. "The point," says Mr. Wesley, "on which we desired all the preachers to speak their minds at large, was, *Whether we ought to separate from the Church?* Whatever was advanced on one side or the other, was seriously and calmly considered : and on the third day we were *all* fully agreed in that general conclusion, *That, whether it was LAWFUL or not, it was no ways EXPEDIENT.*"—*In a multitude of counsellors there is safety.*

Mr. Wesley proceeds : "August 6. I mentioned to our congregation in London, a means of increasing serious religion which had been frequently practised by our forefathers, the joining in a covenant to serve God with all our heart and with all our soul. I explained this for several mornings following, and, on Friday, many of us kept a fast unto the Lord, beseeching him to give us wisdom and strength, that we might '*promise unto the Lord our God and keep it.*'—On Monday, at six in the evening, we met for that purpose, at our Chapel in Spitalfields. After I had recited the tenour of the covenant proposed, in the words of that blessed man, Richard Alleine, all the people stood up, in token of assent, to the number of about eighteen hundred. Such a night I scarce ever knew before. Surely the fruit of it shall remain for ever."—The

covenant has been renewed once every year, since this period. The practice is now become general.

January, 1756.—The common expectation of public calamities in the ensuing year, spread a general seriousness over the nation. “We endeavoured,” says Mr. Wesley, “in every part of the kingdom, to avail ourselves of the apprehensions which we frequently found it was impossible to remove, in order to make them conducive to a nobler end, to that ‘*fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom.*’ And at this season I wrote ‘AN ADDRESS TO THE CLERGY,’ which, considering the situation of public affairs, I judged would be more seasonable, and more easily borne, at this time than at any other.

“February 6.—The fast-day was a glorious day; every church in the city was more than full: And a solemn seriousness sat on every face. Surely God heareth the prayer! and there will yet be a *lengthening of our tranquillity*.—Even the Jews observed this day with a peculiar solemnity. The form of prayer which was used in their synagogue, began, ‘Come and let us return unto the Lord; for he hath torn and he will heal us;’ and concluded with those remarkable words: ‘Incline the heart of our sovereign lord, King George, as well as the hearts of his lords and counsellors, to use us kindly, and all our brethren the children of Israel: that, in his days, and in our days, we may see the restoration of Judah, and that Israel may dwell in safety, and the Redeemer may come to Zion. May it be thy will! And we all say, AMEN!’”

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 a few years they seemed unwilling to share in his reproach. To avoid this, they desired 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, namely, “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?” I shall insert his reply to the above-mentioned gentleman, who wrote to him on the subject, in behalf of himself and his brethren:

“*Helstone, Cornwall, Sept. 16, 1757.*

“REVEREND 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, 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, 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 a 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 towards God and towards 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.

* Such was the difference between the two brothers ! Much has been said of the authority assumed by Mr. Wesley over his people. But he never attempted to use such authority as we have seen his pious brother exercise, (page 115,) and which Dr. Whitehead so much applauds. He only required that they should observe the rules to which they assented when they joined him.

“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 give it 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, that 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 Reverend Mr. Walker, in Truro.*”

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:

“REVEREND SIR,—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: 2. 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, Reverend Sir,

“Your affectionate brother,

“JOHN WESLEY.”

“DEAR SIR,—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

* I am not all-sufficient.

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 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 connexion or fellowship with each other than Protestants have with Papists.

“But ought this so 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, Stillingsfleet, Fletcher : Mr. Johnson, Baddeley, Andrews, Jane : Mr. Hart, Symes, Brown, Rouquet : Mr. Sellon, Venn, Richardson, Burnet, Furley, Crook : Mr. Eastwood, Conyers, Bentley, King : Mr. Berridge, Hicks : George Whitfield, John Wesley, Charles Wesley, 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 a union in *opinions*. They might agree or disagree, touching Absolute Decrees on the one hand, and Perfection on the other.—Not a union in *expressions*. These may still speak of the *imputed righteousness*, and those of the *merits* of Christ.—Not a 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 HINDERANCES 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 *success*, 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 BRE-

THREN? *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? 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; of anger, resentment, pride; long-contracted habits, 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 dependance 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 show *their* faith by *their* works.

“When Mr. C. was objecting the impossibility of ever effecting such a 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 et animam expone constanter pro gloriâ Dei.*†

“I am, Dear Sir,

“Your affectionate Servant,

“JOHN WESLEY.

“SCARBOROUGH, 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 Shoreham, in Kent, is such a picture of that blessed man, (now with God,) that, I doubt not, it will be acceptable to my readers.

“SHOREHAM, April 30, 1764.

“MY REVEREND AND DEAR BROTHER,—Yours of the 29th instant gave me both pain and pleasure.

* Most certainly only the principle of *perfect love* will bear such fruit.

† “Wait upon the Lord: Play the man: Doubt not: Shrink not: But sacrifice soul and body continually for the glory of God.”

“ 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,

“ Yours most affectionately,

“ VINCENT PERRONET.”

Mr. Hampson, in his Life of Mr. Wesley, 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, surprising that Mr. Hampson, 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*.—This surprise, however, is now swallowed up in the passing strangeness of a writer who has reiterated the notion in a biography, published in the year 1823 !

Having spoken so little concerning the calling of those preachers who laboured with Mr. Wesley, being desirous my readers might chiefly

attend to him whose Memoirs I write, and to the great work in which he was engaged, I believe it will not be unacceptable to lay before them his thoughts on this subject after twenty years' trial. He has given them very fully in a letter to the Rev. Mr. Walker, of Truro, written about this time, which I here subjoin :

“REVEREND 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 inconveniences, 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 Prester 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 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 waiving 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 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,

“Reverend and Dear Sir,

“Your affectionate Brother and Fellow labourer,

“JOHN WESLEY.

“To the Reverend Mr. Walker.”

I 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 I shall be excused in giving 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 September 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 [to his mental eye,] 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 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 Haworth 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 clothes 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 the neighbouring parishes had obtained by attending his ministry, concurred to bring upon him many earnest entreaties to come to their houses who lived in the neighbouring parishes, and to 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 nearly 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 enjoyed 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 know-

ledge 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 his eminent usefulness.”*

The cordial and intimate friendship, and union of ministerial labours, which for so many years subsisted between Mr. Wesley and Mr. Grimshaw, furnish high evidence of that catholic spirit, which Mr. Wesley so incessantly cultivated and preserved. Mr. Grimshaw did not agree in every point of doctrine with Mr. Wesley; but he had so much of ‘*the wisdom from above*,’ that he was ‘*easy to be convinced*,’ (ευπειθεῖς,) of any truth, and easy to be ‘*persuaded*’ in any good way. This excellent spirit appeared in him upon all occasions, and is manifest in a letter which he wrote to Mr. Wesley concerning those differences, which were indeed more in words than in judgment. The letter is dated July 23d, 1761. After apologizing for not attending the Conference then held at Leeds, he observes, “The disappointment is more my own loss than yours: For there are several things which have for some time been matter of so much uneasiness to me, that I thought, could they not at this time be some how accommodated, I should be obliged to recede from the Connexion; which to do, would have been one of the most disagreeable things in the world to me.—I would fain live and die in this happy relation I have for many years borne, and still bear to you.

“Two of the most material points were, concerning *Imputed Righteousness* and *Christian Perfection*. But as to the former, what you declared to be your notion of it, at Heptonstal, is so near mine that I am well satisfied.† And as to the other, your resolutions in Conference are such, if John Emmot informs me right, as seem to afford me sufficient satisfaction.

“There are other matters more, but to me not of equal importance; to which notwithstanding, I cannot be reconciled. Such as, asserting ‘a child of God to be again a child of the devil, if he give way to a

* The late Rev. Mr. Newton, several years after this, published a Life of Mr. Grimshaw, in which he gives him due honour; but strange to say, he omits his connexion with Mr. Wesley! Must we account for this in the way that Mr. Wesley himself accounts for such conduct in other good men who had been, like Mr. Newton, his intimate friends and correspondents?—“He is fallen into the pit of the Decrees, and knows me no more!”

† See the note in page 36.

temptation.—That *he* is a child of the devil *who* disbelieves the doctrine of *sinless perfection*.—That he is no true Christian who has not attained to it,* &c., &c.—These are assertions very common with some of our preachers, though, in my apprehension, too absurd and ridiculous to be regarded, and therefore by no means of equal importance with what is above said; and yet have a tendency, as the effect has already shown, to distract and divide our societies.—You will perhaps say, ‘Why did you not admonish them? Why did you not endeavour to convince them of the error of such absurd assertions?’—In some degree I have, though perhaps not so fully or freely as I ought, or could have wished to have done: For I feared to be charged by them, perhaps secretly to yourself, with opposing them or their doctrines. These things I mentioned to brother Lee, who declared, and I could not but believe him, that you did and would utterly reject any such expressions. I am therefore, in these respects, more easy; and shall, if such occasions require [it], as I wish they never may, reprove and prevent them with plainness and freedom.

“*Sinless† Perfection* is a grating term to many of our dear brethren; even to those who are as desirous and solicitous to be truly holy in heart and life, as any perhaps of them who affect to speak in this unscriptural way. Should we not discountenance the use of it, and advise its votaries to exchange it for terms less offensive, but sufficiently expressive of true Christian holiness? By this I mean, (and why may I not tell you what I mean?) all that holiness of heart and life, which is *literally, plainly, abundantly* taught us all over the Bible; and without which no man, however justified through faith in *the righteousness of Christ*, can ever expect to see the Lord. This is that holiness, that Christian Perfection, that sanctification, which, without affecting *strange, fulsome, offensive, unscriptural* expressions and representations, I, and, I dare say, every true and sincere-hearted member in our societies, and I hope in all others, ardently desire and strenuously labour to attain. This is attainable: For this therefore let us contend: To this let us diligently exhort and excite all our brethren daily; and this the more as we see the day, the happy, the glorious day approaching.

“I have only to add, that I am determined, through the help of God, so far as I know or see at present, to continue in close connexion with you, even unto death; and to be as useful as I am able, or is consistent with my *parochial*, and other indispensable obligations; chiefly in this round,‡ and at times abroad; to strengthen your hands in the great and glorious work of our Lord, which you have evidently so much at heart, elaborately so much in hand, and in which He (blessed for ever be his name!) has so extensively and wonderfully prospered you.”

Immediately on the receipt of this letter, before the Conference quite broke up, Mr. Wesley took an opportunity of preaching from the words of St. James, ‘*In many things we offend all.*’ On this occasion, he

* Uttered, do doubt, by warm men when disputing with Antinomians. Such contentions were very common in that day.

† Mr. Wesley himself never used that term. He looked upon it as almost, if not quite, equal to *legal perfection*.

‡ The Circuits were at that time called *Rounds*. Haworth, Mr. Grimshaw’s parish, was afterwards printed in the Minutes “Haworth Circuit,” and Mr. Grimshaw was appointed the *Assistant*, or the preacher who immediately assisted Mr. Wesley.

observed, “ 1. As long as we live, our soul is connected with the body.—2. As long as it is thus connected, it cannot think but by the help of bodily organs.—3. As long as these organs are imperfect, we are liable to mistakes, both speculative and *practical*.—4. Yea, and a mistake may occasion my loving a good man less than I ought ; which is a defective, that is, a wrong temper.—5. For all these, we need the *atoning blood*, as indeed for *every defect or omission*.—Therefore, 6. All men have need to say daily, ‘ *Forgive us our trespasses.* ’ ”—We see here the solid reason why Mr. Wesley always objected to the phrase, *sinless perfection*.

THE LIFE
OF
THE REV. JOHN WESLEY, A. M.

BOOK THE SEVENTH.

CHAPTER I.

GREAT REVIVAL OF RELIGION—SEPARATION OF MAXFIELD AND OTHERS
—MINUTES OF THE CONFERENCE AGAINST ANTINOMIANISM—PRO-
TEST BY THE REV. MR. SHIRLEY AND OTHERS—MR. FLETCHER'S
WRITINGS.

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 own 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 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 in it, 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 Dr. Barnard, then 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 time, however, 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 you what I dislike, in your doctrine, spirit, or outward behaviour. When I say *yours*, 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 a 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 known and taught it, (and so has my brother, as our writings show,) 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.

* By *instantaneous* sanctification, Mr. Wesley always meant the *principle* of entire sanctification, which St. John calls '*perfect love*;' that is, love that casts out all *opposite* tempers. May not this be given in a moment?

"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 over-valuing 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 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*; over-valuing *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* towards 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 tenour 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 class 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 the other duties of their calling, unless they omit either the preaching, or their class 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 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,

“JOHN WESLEY.

“*Canterbury, Nov. 2, 1762.*”

It does not appear that this letter had any good effect. George Bell, mentioned above as an intimate of Mr. Maxfield, was a sergeant 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 reprovng 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 a 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 se’night. “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 not the reproach of enthusiasm, 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 spiring up all with whom he was intimate, against me ; that he told them, I was not capable of teaching them ; and insinuated, that none was but himself ; and that the inevitable consequence must be a division in the Society."

But George Bell became still more wild : And, as he took every strong impression made upon his mind for a revelation from God, he at last prophesied, in January, 1763, that "the end of the world would be on the 28th of February following." Mr. Wesley explicitly declared against this, first in the Society, then in the Congregation, 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 seized upon many. After expounding the passage, he largely showed the utter absurdity of the supposition, that the world would be at an end that night. But, notwithstanding all he could say, many were afraid to go to bed, and some wandered about in the fields, being persuaded, that if the world did not end, at least London would be swallowed up by an earthquake. But he went to bed at his usual time, and, as he notes in his Journal, was fast asleep 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 attend 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 Guilford'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 Foundry 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 Foundry according to appointment. Mr. Wesley, who was at Westminster, where he intended to preach, hearing this, immediately returned to the Foundry, and preached there himself on the words of Jacob, '*If I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved !*' Thus was that breach made which could never afterwards be healed.

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 valued 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, from which it did not entirely

* Mr. Guilford afterwards became Itinerant ; and lived, laboured, and died, in the full triumph of Faith.

recover for several years. Poor George Bell lived many years after Mr. Maxfield, but he made no pretension to religion. He was 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*.—I shall have occasion to introduce Mr. Maxfield again to the reader, in a way truly characteristic.

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. Meantime 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 stumblingblock in the way, still the work of God went on, nor has it ceased to this day in any of its branches. God still convinces, justifies, sanctifies. We have lost only the dross, the enthusiasm, the prejudice and offence. The pure gold remains, ‘*faith working by love*,’ and, we have ground to believe, increases daily.”

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.”

* The late Rev. Mr. Fletcher, Vicar of Madely, Salop.

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

It may not be unacceptable, to 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 Diotrophes, '*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 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 tenour 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

* Mr. Southey strangely supposes, that this strong description exhibited the true state of the Wesleyan Societies ! Blessed be God, we had then, and have still, a discipline which prevents such a leaven from *spreading* among us. In the parishes, or congregations, it made great havoc.

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 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 molehill ; 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 heartfelt conviction, 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 show 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 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 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, and to prevent it from spreading among the people under his care, 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 towards 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, (εργαζέσθαι, 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 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, undervalue themselves in every respect: [i. e., think their case more hopeless than it really is.]

"8. Does not talking, without proper caution, of a *justified* or *sanc-tified* 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 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.

From the days of Augustine, who first introduced the question of the "Divine Decrees" to the Christian Church, even to the present day, this question has been mooted, and has occasioned much discord. The propositions at the conclusion of the Minutes were sufficient to kindle what before was only jealousy and suspicion, into a flame of contention

* That is, '*works meet for repentance*;' and *faith* that pleads the *atonement* and the *promises*, and which is therefore called, *the work of faith*, and also *justifying faith*. Does God justify any, who, being awakened, do not *thus* work?—We see here, that these Minutes were a death-blow to Antinomianism.

† A common phrase among the ancient Fathers.

and strife. The Calvinists took the alarm, and the late Honourable and Reverend Walter Shirley wrote a circular letter to all the serious clergy and others through the land.

In June, 1771, Mr. Fletcher sent a copy of this letter to Mr. Wesley, and at the same time wrote as follows: "When I left Wales, where I had stood in the gap for peace, I thought my poor endeavours were not altogether in vain. Lady Huntingdon said, she would write civilly to you, and desire you to explain yourself about your Minutes. I suppose you have not heard from her; for she wrote me word since, that she believed she must not meddle in the affair. Upon receiving yours from Chester, I cut off that part of it, where you expressed your belief of, what is eminently called by us, *the doctrine of FREE GRACE*, and sent it to the college, desiring it might be sent to Lady Huntingdon. She hath returned it, with a letter wherein she expresses the greatest disapprobation of it: The purport of it is, to charge you with tergiversation, (the old accusation of the Antinomians!) and me with being the dupe of your impositions. She hath wrote in stronger terms to her college.

"Things, I hoped, would have remained here; but how am I surprised, and grieved to see zeal borrowing the horn of discord, and sounding an alarm through the religious world against you! Mr. H—— called upon me last night, and showed me a printed circular letter, which I suppose is, or will be, sent to the serious clergy and laity through the land. I have received none, as I have lost, I suppose, my reputation of being a *real Protestant*, by what I wrote on your Minutes, in Wales.

"The following is an exact copy of the printed letter:

"*"Sir,—Whereas Mr. Wesley's Conference is to be held at Bristol, on Tuesday, the 6th of August next, it is proposed by Lady Huntingdon, and many other Christian friends, (real Protestants,) to have a meeting at Bristol, at the same time, of such principal persons, both clergy and laity, who disapprove of the underwritten Minutes; and as the same are thought injurious to the very fundamental principles of Christianity, it is farther proposed, that they go in a body to the said Conference, and insist upon a formal recantation of the said Minutes; and, in case of a refusal, that they sign and publish their protest against them. Your presence, Sir, on this occasion is particularly requested: But if it should not suit your convenience to be there, it is desired that you will transmit your sentiments on the subject, to such person as you think proper to produce them. It is submitted to you, whether it would not be right, in the opposition to be made to such a dreadful heresy, to recommend it to as many of your Christian friends, as well of the Dissenters, as of the Established Church, as you can prevail on, to be there; the cause being of so public a nature.*

"*"I am, Sir,*

"*"Your obedient servant,*

"*"WALTER SHIRLEY."*

Then followed a postscript, containing the objectionable propositions, &c, &c. After stating this, Mr. Fletcher proceeds: "I think it my duty, dear Sir, to give you the earliest intelligence of this bold onset; and assure you, that, upon the *evangelical* principles mentioned in your last letter to me, I, for one, shall be glad to stand by you, and your doctrine

to the last ; hoping that you will gladly remove stumblingblocks out of the way of the weak, and alter such expressions as may create prejudice in the hearts of those who are inclined to admit it. If you come this way, Sir, I will show you the Minutes of what I wrote in Wales, in defence of what is called your *dreadful heresy* : For, as to the writing itself, I have it not ; Lady H. would never return it to me. Dear Sir, we can never make too much of JESUS CHRIST : Some may preach and exalt him *out of contention*, but let us do it *willingly and Scripturally* ; and the Lord will stand by us. I beg, I entreat Him, to stand by you ; particularly at this time to give you the *simplicity of the dove*, and the *wisdom of the serpent* ; the condescension of a child, and the firmness of a father.

“ I write to Mr. Shirley, to expostulate with him to call in his circular letter. He is the last man who should attack you. His sermons contain propositions much more *heretical* and *anti-Calvinistic*, than your Minutes. If my letters have not the desired effect, I shall probably, if you approve of them and will correct them, publish them for your justification. I find Mr. Ireland is to write, to make you *tamely recant*, without measuring swords, or breaking a pike with our *real Protestants*. I write to him also.”

The Honourable and Reverend Walter Shirley, the brother of the unhappy Earl Ferrars, and Chaplain to his sister the pious Countess of Huntingdon, was a truly pious man, and affectionately attached for several years to Mr. Wesley, who had been the principal instrument of his conversion. The following letter will clearly show that piety and attachment :

“ LOUGHREA, Aug. 21, 1759.

“ REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,—Your obliging and truly Christian letter was welcome to my soul, ten thousand, thousand times ; and brought along with it a warm satisfaction, which could only be exceeded by the pleasure of a personal conversation with you. And I am not without hopes, that, when you shall think fit to visit those blessed seminaries of true vital religion in this kingdom, of your own planting, you will take an opportunity of honouring this place, and more particularly my house, with the presence of one, whose labours in the Gospel of my dear Master are so eminent.

“ I thank you greatly for your Alarm : Indeed, the devil could not make use of a more subtle, specious insinuation to dissuade us from pursuing the attack with vigour, than that of Christian prudence. I trust he sees himself baffled, through your timely caution. But, alas ! what confidence is there to be put in the weakness of man ! It is in the Lord’s strength alone that I shall be able to triumph over this, and all other temptations.

“ I highly honour and love Mr. Berridge, and Mr. Grimshaw. May God bless them with increasing success, that they may ‘ *see the travail of their souls and be satisfied* !’ And may He endue me with the same noble courage, that his name may be magnified even in this place !

“ What will you say, dear Sir ? Will you not give up every favourable opinion of so unworthy a minister as I am, when I inform you, that, though there are many under my charge, who confess they have been awakened ; yet I dare not boast of any confirmed converts (now living)

through my preaching and ministry? I bless my God, however, for one dear soul, who departed in peace.

"I am now about to leave them for two or three months, being in a very bad state of bodily health, and advised to go to Bath. Let me entreat your earnest prayers to the God of all grace, through Jesus Christ our Lord, that I may not be found an unprofitable servant; and that I may return to my dear parishioners, under the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of peace.

"That you may finish your course with joy, and in God's good season enter into the full possession of the fruits of your labours, is the sincere prayer of

"Your affectionate Brother,

"W. SHIRLEY.

"*To the Rev. J. Wesley.*"

A few years after this, Mr. Shirley adopted the creed of his noble sister, and, entering into all her views, became the champion of the cause which appeared to them of so much importance to "evangelical truth."

Tuesday, August 6, the Conference began at Bristol. On Thursday morning, Mr. Shirley and his friends* were admitted; when a conversation took place for about two hours, on the subject which occasioned their visit. Though the party had shown much violence in writing, yet the interview with the Conference was managed with much temper and moderation. Mr. Wesley showed great love to his old friend. But the party in the nation was so irritated, that all accommodation became hopeless, and it was thought absolutely necessary to publish Mr. Fletcher's letters. On the 14th, Mr. Wesley wrote the following letter to Lady Huntingdon:

"MY DEAR LADY,—When I received the former letter from your Ladyship, I did not know how to answer: And I judged, not only that silence would be the best answer, but also that with which your Ladyship would be best pleased. When I received your Ladyship's of the second instant, I immediately saw that it required an answer; only I waited till the hurry of the Conference was over, that I might do nothing rashly. I know your Ladyship would not 'servilely deny the truth.' I think, neither would I; especially that great truth, JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH; which Mr. Law indeed flatly denies, (and yet Mr. Law was a child of God,) but for which I have given up all my worldly hopes, my friends, my reputation; yea for which I have so often hazarded my life, and by the grace of God will do again. The principles established in the Minutes I apprehend to be no way contrary to this; or to that faith, that consistent plan of doctrine, which was '*once delivered to the saints.*' I believe, whoever calmly considers Mr. Fletcher's letters will be convinced of this. I fear, therefore, 'zeal against those principles' is no less, than zeal against the truth, and against the *honour* of our Lord. The preservation of HIS honour appears so sacred to me, and has done for above these forty years, that I have counted, and do count, all things

* The Calvinist ministers, who were summoned by Mr. Shirley, were not willing to enter the lists in the way that he had appointed; and therefore the good man was attended only by a few of the Countess's students from her college at Trevecka.

loss in comparison of it. But till Mr. Fletcher's printed letters are answered, I must think, every thing spoken against those Minutes is totally destructive of his *honour*, and a palpable affront to HIM, both as our Prophet and Priest, but more especially as the King of his people. Those letters, which therefore could not be suppressed without betraying the honour of our Lord, largely prove, that the Minutes lay no other foundation than that which is laid in Scripture, and which I have been laying, and teaching others to lay, for between thirty and forty years. Indeed it would be amazing, that God should at this day prosper my labours, as much, if not more than ever, by convincing as well as converting sinners, if I was 'establishing another foundation, repugnant to the whole plan of man's salvation under the covenant of grace, as well as the clear meaning of our Established Church, and all other Protestant Churches.' This is a charge indeed! But I plead, *Not guilty*. And till it is proved upon me, I must subscribe myself,

"My dear Lady,

"Your Ladyship's affectionate but much injured servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."

The controversy now fully commenced, and was continued for some time, but very prudently committed almost wholly to Mr. Fletcher; who managed it with astonishing temper and success. Indeed, the temper of this gentleman did not lead him to Polemic Divinity. He was devout and pious, to a degree seldom equalled since the days of the Apostles. But being urged into this controversy by the love of truth, and reverence for Mr. Wesley, he displayed great knowledge of his subject, and a most happy *manner* of treating it. In his hands, the ablest of his antagonists were as the lion in the hands of Samson. He demonstrated, that those propositions were equally agreeable to Scripture, reason, and the writings of the soundest, even of the Calvinistic divines. He largely showed, 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*, though not the *merit*, 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 had hitherto been 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, 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. My admiration of his character would

lead me to speak much more concerning him, had not his LIFE been published : To that I refer my 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 nine volumes octavo, and are well worthy the attention of all serious persons, who will find therein, '*the armour of righteousness, on the right hand and on the left ; the truth as it is in Jesus.*'

There is no truth which has not its closely allied falsehood. This victory of the doctrine of General Redemption caused many of those who were not established in the truth of the Gospel, to run into high Arminianism, which, Mr. Fletcher had declared, was nearly allied to Pelagianism. I have myself heard one of those confident spirits, whose '*glorying was not good,*' exultingly say, "I know I shall be in heaven, *for—I am determined to be there.*"—Mr. Wesley saw the danger, and in his sermons he strongly enforced the humility of the Gospel, showing that it was the humility of a *condemned man*, who in his *heart* acknowledges the justice of his sentence.—Some of these superficial professors denied also, that faith was the gift of God ; and would maintain, that it was in every man's power to believe the whole truth of the Gospel, even respecting his own acceptance, whenever he pleased ! To counteract this pride, and yet preserve the truth, Mr. Wesley frequently preached from the words of our Lord,—"*If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth,*"—and he showed '*how faith was the gift of God,*' and yet the act of man. He showed also the distinction with respect to time and calling, and that every man may believe *if* he will, but not *when* he will. '*Salvation is of the Lord ; he draws, enlightens, convinces men of sin, and helps their unbelief ;*'—every man may at those times *believe* to the salvation of his soul. The proper Scriptural fruit will accompany such a faith, and prove it to be living and powerful. These discourses were very edifying, and accompanied with uncommon power. He preached to the Conference in London, two years before his death, on Ephesians ii, 8, '*By grace ye are saved through Faith,*' and stated the old doctrine which he had preached, from the same words, before the University of Oxford in the year 1738. He warned the preachers against all subtle distinctions, which he pronounced to be "only fit for Jesuits," and totally contrary to the plain Gospel of '*God our Saviour.*' I had never heard him preach with more power or clearness, than upon that occasion.

CHAPTER II.

LABOURS OF MR. WESLEY, AND HIS ASSISTANTS IN SCOTLAND—CONTROVERSY RESPECTING MR. HERVEY'S LETTERS—RECENT REVIVAL OF THAT CONTROVERSY BY DR. ERSKINE'S BIOGRAPHER.

It has been already stated, that in the month of April, 1751, Mr. Wesley first visited Scotland, accompanied by Mr. Christopher Hopper, after having had some correspondence with Mr. Erskine on the subject. Colonel Galatin, then in quarters at Musselborough near Edinburgh had pressed him to pay him a visit. Mr. Wesley having mentioned this to Mr. Whitefield, he replied, "You have no business there: for your principles are so well known, that if you spoke like an angel, none would hear you. And if they did, you would have nothing to do but to *dispute* with one and another from morning to night." He answered, "If God sends me, people will hear. And I will give them no provocation to dispute: For I will studiously avoid controverted points, and keep to the fundamental truths of Christianity. And if any will begin to dispute, they may: But I will not dispute with them."

He went. Hundreds and thousands flocked to hear: And he was enabled to keep his word. He avoided whatever might engender strife, and insisted upon the grand points, the religion of the heart, and salvation by faith, at all times, and in all places. And by this means, he cut off all occasion of dispute.

At Musselborough especially, he was kindly received. He had given them a promise, that Mr. Hopper should come back the next week, and spend a few days with them. Mr. Hopper did accordingly return at the time appointed, and preached morning and evening to large congregations, who heard with the greatest attention.

In April, 1753, Mr. Wesley again visited Scotland. He now entered it on the side of Dumfries. In passing the sands which lie between Bonas and that town, the innkeeper who guided him, asked with great simplicity, "How much a year he got by preaching thus?" This gave him an opportunity of explaining, to his guide, that kind of gain to which he seemed an utter stranger. He appeared to be quite amazed, and spoke not one word, good or bad, till he took his leave.

When he arrived at Glasgow, that excellent man, Dr. Gillies, received him in a truly Christian spirit; and invited him to preach in his church. Upon this Mr. Wesley remarks, "Surely with God nothing is impossible! Who would have believed five-and-twenty years ago, either that the minister would have desired it, or that I should have consented to preach in a Scotch Kirk!"—He preached also at the prison; and then returned by Edinburgh and Tranent to England. Not long after, Mr. Wardrobe, Minister of Bathgate in Scotland, the twin-soul of Dr. Gillies, preached at Mr. Wesley's chapel in Newcastle, to the no small amazement and displeasure of some of his zealous countrymen. Some time after this, Mr. Wesley received from Dr. Gillies the following account of the death of that excellent man:

"Mr. Wardrobe died last night. He was seized on Sabbath last, just

as he was going to the Kirk, with a most violent cholic, which terminated in a mortification of his bowels. The circumstances of his death are worthy to be recorded. With what pleasure did he receive the message, and depart in all the triumph of a conqueror! Crying out, '*My warfare is accomplished; I have fought the good fight: My victory is completed! Crowns of grace shall adorn this head, (taking off his cap,) and palms be put into these hands. Yet a little while, and I shall sing for ever. I know that my Redeemer liveth.*' When he was within a few moments of his last, he gave me his hand, and a little after said, '*Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.*' Were I to repeat half of what he spoke, I should write you three hours. It shall suffice at this time to say, that as he has lived the life, so he died the death of a Christian. We weep not for him; we weep for ourselves. I wish we may know how to improve this awful judgment, so as to be also ready, not knowing when our Lord cometh."

Mr. Adams, Minister of Falkirk, wrote thus: "On Friday night, about ten, I witnessed Mr. Wardrobe of Bathgate's entrance into the joy of his Lord. But, ah! who can help mourning the loss to the Church of Christ? His amiable character gave him a distinguished weight and influence; which his Lord had given him to value, only for its subserviency to his honour and glory. He was suddenly taken ill on the last Lord's day, and from the first moment believed it was for death. I went to see him on Thursday evening, and heard some of the liveliest expressions of triumphant faith, and of zeal for the glory of Christ and the salvation of souls, mixed with the most amiable humility and modesty. '*Yet a little while,*' said he, '*and this mortal shall put on immortality. Mortality shall be swallowed up of life: This vile body fashioned like to his glorious body! O for the victory! I shall get the victory. I know in whom I have believed.*' Then with a remarkably audible voice, lifting up his hands, he cried out, '*O for a draught of the well of the water of life, that I may begin the song before I go off to the church triumphant! I go forth in thy name, making mention of thy righteousness, even thine only. I die at the feet of mercy.*'—Then stretching out his arms, he put his hand upon his head; and with the most serene, steady, and majestic eye I ever saw, looking upwards, he said, '*Crowns of grace, crowns of grace, and palms in their hands! O Lord God of truth, into thy hands I commend my spirit!*' After an unexpected revival, he said, '*O, I fear his tarrying, lest the prospect become more dark! I sometimes fear he may spare me to live, and to be less faithful than he has helped me to be hitherto.*' He said to me, '*You that are ministers, bear a proper testimony against the professors of this age, who have a form of godliness without the power.*'—Observing some of his people about the bed, he said, '*May I have some seals among you! O where will the ungodly and sinners of Bathgate appear? Labour to be in Christ.*'—Then he stretched out his hand to several, and said, '*Farewell, farewell! And now, O Lord, what wait I for? My hope is in thee!*'—Once or twice he said, '*Let me be laid across the bed to expire, where I have sometimes prayed and sometimes meditated with pleasure.*' He expressed his grateful sense of the assiduous care which Mr. Wardrobe of Cult had taken of him: And on his replying, '*Too much could not be done for so valuable a life,*' he said, '*O speak not so, or you will provoke God! Glory be to God, that I have ever had*

any regard paid me, for Christ's sake !"—I am greatly sunk under the event. O help by your prayers, to get the proper submission and improvement !"

The Lord was pleased, in Scotland also, to '*choose the foolish things of the world*' to carry on his work. Not only such men as Dr. Gillies, Mr. Wardrobe, and Mr. Wesley, but sometimes soldiers in quarters, or on recruiting parties, or tradesmen who went thither to get employment, were the instruments of turning many to God, who had before sought death in the error of their ways.

The first Societies were those of Musselborough and Dunbar ; many of whom, at Mr. Wesley's next visit, in the year 1757, could rejoice in God their Saviour. During this tour he preached in the open air in every place, and remarks that he was agreeably surprised at the simplicity and teachableness of many who attended his ministry. *Steadiness*, indeed, he looked for in the people of North Britain ; and he rejoiced to find also those other pleasing qualities in many.

He visited Scotland again in 1761, and found the labours of the preachers were not in vain. Mr. Hopper met him at Edinburgh, where the preaching was now well attended. From thence he went to Dundee and Aberdeen. At the latter place he was treated with much respect by the Principal and other eminent persons of the University. He preached first in the college-close, and then in the hall, which was crowded even at five in the morning ! In every place some desired to unite with him, (according to the rule,) to meet together weekly, to '*provoke each other to love and to good works.*'

An anecdote, which, I doubt not, will be pleasing to my readers, is mentioned by Mr. Wesley on this occasion : " May 4.—About noon," said he, " I took a walk to the King's College in Old Aberdeen. It has three sides of a square handsomely built, not unlike Queen's College in Oxford. Going up to see the hall, we found a large company of ladies with several gentlemen. They looked, and spoke to one another ; after which one of the gentlemen took courage, and came to me. He said, ' We came last night to the college-close, but could not hear, and should be extremely obliged if you would give us a short discourse here.'—I knew not what God might have to do, and so began without delay, on '*God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself.*' I believe the word was not lost. It fell as dew on the tender grass."

The work of God now prospered much. Many were brought to the knowledge and love of God by the preaching of Mr. Roberts and Mr. Hanby at Edinburgh, Dundee, and Aberdeen. But Satan was not idle. He made even a good man the cause of unspeakable evil. The late Mr. Hervey, of whose grateful sense of Mr. Wesley's fatherly kindness towards him, when he was his pupil at Oxford, I have inserted such strong testimonies, was persuaded by a Mr. Cudworth, an Antinomian teacher, to write a pamphlet against him. Cudworth boasted, that Mr. Hervey had permitted him "to put out, and put in, what he pleased," in this performance. In England this tract was but little attended to, the advocates for Particular Redemption being comparatively few. But Dr. Erskine, a man greatly esteemed in Scotland, having republished it in that kingdom, with a Preface wherein he bitterly inveighed against what he called *the unsoundness* of Mr. Wesley's principles, caused a flood of calumny to go forth, to the hurt of many who

before earnestly sought the kingdom of God.—“O,” said one of the preachers then labouring in Scotland, “the precious convictions which these letters have destroyed !* Many that have often declared the great profit they received under our ministry, were by these induced to leave us. This made me mourn in secret places !” Lady Frances Gardiner, the widow of that truly Christian soldier who fell at Preston-Pans, fighting for his lawful sovereign, was one of those. A letter which she wrote to Mr. Wesley, a short time before Mr. Hervey’s were published, while it does honour to the piety of the writer, is a clear proof of the evil which may arise from an immoderate attachment to systems of doctrine ; which oftentimes influences the excellent of the earth, even to forsake those whom they before esteemed as angels of God. I shall give it at large.

“EDINBURGH, July 25, 1763.

“REVEREND AND VERY DEAR SIR,—I persuade myself that you will not be displeased at my taking the liberty to write to you. You have cause to bless God for his having directed you in sending preachers to this place. As to those of them I have heard, I have cause to thank God that they came hither. There has been a comfortable reviving of late ; some sinners are newly awakened ; some formalists have got their eyes opened ; some backsliders are recovered ; and, I believe, many saints have been much edified. Mr. Roberts’s preaching has been remarkably blessed to many in Edinburgh ; and so was Mr. Hanby’s, the short time he stayed. O that their sermons may be blessed wherever they preach ! I verily believe, God sent them.

“I have never, I own, been at the preaching house in a morning yet, as they preach so early : But I ventured to the High School yard the morning you left Edinburgh ; and it pleased God, even after I had got home, to follow part of your sermon with a blessing to me ; and I think it my duty to mention, that God has often of late dealt very bountifully with me. Well may I be astonished at it, when I consider my own unworthiness. But I dare venture to say, that Christ and all with Christ is mine. I beg a share in your prayers ; and am, very dear Sir,

“Your Sister in Christ Jesus,

“FRANCES GARDINER.”

But ‘*many waters cannot quench love.*’ Those who ‘*sought not their own things, but the things of Christ,*’ redoubled their efforts. Very soon after those bitter waters were let out, Mr. Thomas Taylor visited Glasgow, and for several weeks together preached in the open air. As the winter came on, his difficulties were great : but he continued daily to

* It is well known, that these Letters of Mr. Hervey were a posthumous publication ; and it was also known to the intimate friends of that pious man, that on his deathbed he charged his brother, who was his executor, that they should not be published. The brother, however, was not of Mr. Hervey’s mind, and knowing that those letters would have a wide circulation, he gave them to the public. Some time after, this brother having fallen into a snare by lending money, to the amount of one thousand pounds, to an artful man, he was prosecuted for taking more than the legal interest, and the penalty of thrice the sum was recovered. Mr. Blackwell, the Banker, an intimate and warm friend of Mr. Wesley, and who for his plain honesty was called “the rough diamond,” was Mr. Hervey’s Banker. Upon that gentleman expressing his surprise, that he should be so entrapped, Mr. Blackwell replied, “Mr. Hervey, I will tell you the reason. You know, your brother ordered you to destroy those letters against Mr. Wesley. But you thought they would be productive, and you published them. The business is now settled, and you may count your gains !”—We see there were other persons beside Mr. Wesley, who believed in a particular and remunerative providence.

testify '*repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.*' At length he saw fruit of his labour. Some turned to God, and acknowledged his messenger. A place was then provided for him in which to preach, and the little Society was soon increased to seventy persons.

The preachers now penetrated into the Highlands; and, at his next visit, Mr. Wesley preached at Inverness. All in this place seemed to hear him gladly, and a Society was afterwards formed, which continues to this day. On his return to Edinburgh, finding it was the time of celebrating the Lord's Supper, he laid aside his last portion of bigotry, and partook of that holy ordinance at the West Kirk!

But though of a truly catholic spirit, he was firm to his own principles. He abhorred that speculative Latitudinarianism, that indifference to all opinions, which some men have applauded as true liberality. He knew, God had given us a standard of truth; and that nothing was indifferent, which was found therein. On this subject he used great plainness of speech; an instance of which he soon after gave to the same people with whom he had communicated.

"The sum," he observes, "of what I spoke was this:

"I love plain dealing. Do not you? I will use it now. Bear with me.

"I hang out no false colours, but show you all I am, all I intend, all I do.

"I am a member of the Church of England, but I love good men of every Church.

"My ground is, the Bible. Yea, I am a Bible-bigot. I follow it in all things, both great and small.

"Therefore, 1. I always use *a short, private prayer*, when I attend the public service of God.* Do not you? Why do you not? Is not this according to the Bible?

"2. I *stand*, whenever I sing the praises of God in public. Does not the Bible give you plain precedents for this?

"3. I always *kneel* before the Lord my Maker, when I pray in public.

"4. I generally in public use *the Lord's Prayer*; because Christ has taught me, *When I pray, to say—*

"I advise every preacher connected with me, whether in England, or Scotland, herein to tread in my steps."

The reader will recollect the observation of Mr. Gambold, that "faith was looked upon as a downright robber" by those who had accumulated a stock of religion, which might be truly called *their own*. In Scotland, this remark has often been realized. This robber has especially been exclaimed against as troubling the disciples of the Geneva creed; which has been generally so mixed with politics as to betray its earthly origin. Mr. Wesley knew, that many in Scotland, who were truly pious, had received that creed from their infancy, had associated it with their gracious helps and comforts, and also revered it as the established orthodoxy. He therefore abstained from the controversies so common in that day, and enforced the '*faith*,' that alone '*overcometh the world, and worketh by love*;'—so highly needful for those devout pupils of tradition. This was interpreted as deception, Jesuitism, &c, by those professors of religion who were fond of controversy, and of whom Dr.

* The generality of the people in Scotland used to come into the kirk, and sit down, as in any common house.

Erskine now became the champion. It is well for the reputation of the great Apostle, that those flowers of polemic oratory *must not* be lavished upon *him*. What a fair mark has he given to the adepts in that kind of warfare, by his open declaration respecting his own views and conduct! 1 Cor. ix, 20—23. ‘*The love that thinketh no evil*’ sees in all this ‘*the wisdom from above*,’* James iii, 17. But to others who do not see through that medium, it is all art, policy, and deception!

Sir Henry Moncreiff Wellwood, Bart., D. D., in his *Life of Dr. Erskine*, lately published, has revived this stale controversy concerning Mr. Hervey’s letters, and, with the aid of Bishop Warburton’s old scurrility, he would make out a fresh case against the Methodist faith. But this also comes a little too late. The *personal* righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ, as *imputed to us for our justification*, which was the fond opinion of Mr. Hervey, is now exploded by the pious Calvinists, as manifestly precluding the necessity of a Divine Atonement, and opening a wide door to Antinomianism.† The very respectable biographer of Dr. Erskine has laboured to establish this faith; but it will not stand against the faith which

Lays the rough paths of peevish nature even,
And opens in each breast a little heaven.

The first Quakers attacked the swelling words of the professors of that day in a concise but forcible manner:—“Friend, thou speakest great things. But is Christ *in thee*? If not, thou art a *reprobate*, with all thy talk.” Many a Goliath in orthodoxy was felled with this stone, taken out of the brook of truth.—A writer in a periodical publication, strangely called “The Christian Instructor,” has laboured hard to support Sir Henry’s cause; but so ignorant is that writer of the common facts needful to be known respecting this controversy, that he names Mr. Charles Wesley, who never was in Scotland, and who never wrote on the subject, as the grand troubler of their Israel!—It should also be noted, that neither Mr. Wesley’s Answer, nor the Rev. Walter Sellon’s Reply to these Eleven Letters, is mentioned in this renewed controversy.

Dr. Whitehead observes, “The preachers met with no riotous mobs to oppose their progress in Scotland. Here, all ranks and orders of the people, from the highest to the lowest, had long been remarkable for a decent regard to religion, and respect for the ministerial character:” A consequence of that *power* of religion which once rested on that nation. But the preachers soon found, that they had prejudices to contend against more difficult to be overcome than the violence of a mob. They found the Scots strongly intrenched within the lines of religious opinions and modes of worship, which almost bade defiance to any mode of attack. Their success was therefore small, when compared with what they had experienced in England and Ireland, where their lives had often been in danger from the mob. Mr. Wesley, however, in his stated journeys through Scotland, every where met with the most flattering marks of respect; both from the nobility, (who often invited him to take their houses in his way,) from many of the established ministers, and from the magistrates of the cities. In April this year, (1772,) being on his biennial visit to Scotland, he came to Perth, where the magis-

* See the liberal and pious sentiments of Mr. Robe, and Mr. Erskine, pages 57—59.

† See the note in page 30.

trates, as a token of their respectful regard for him, presented him with the freedom of the city. The diploma ran thus :

“*PERTH vigesimo octavo die mensis Aprilis, Anno Domini millesimo septingentesimo septuagesimo secundo :*

“*Quo die, Magistratum illustris ordo, et honorandus Senatorum cæus inclytæ civitatis Perthensis, in debiti amoris et affectûs Tesseram erga Johannem Wesley, Artium Magistrum, nuper Collegii Lincolnienſis Oxoniæ Socium, Immunitatibus præfatæ civitatis, Societatis etiam ac Fraternalitatis Œdilitiæ privilegiis, de omnibus a cive necessario exigendis ac præstandis donârunt,*” &c.*

This diploma was struck off from a copper-plate upon parchment : The arms of the city and some of the words were illuminated, and flowers painted round the borders, which gave it a splendid appearance. And for purity of the Latin, it is not perhaps exceeded by any diploma, either from London or any other city in Europe.

Mr. Southey supposes, that the reason why Methodism did not prosper in Scotland as in England, was, that it was not needed ; that the religious education of the Scotch, made ‘*the foolishness of preaching*’ unnecessary, and consequently *really* foolish. It is not surprising that Mr. Southey should think thus. His opinion of human nature is entirely at variance with the Holy Scriptures, and with the authorized creeds of the Established Churches of both kingdoms. Were Mr. Southey’s doctrine true, it would be quite sufficient to *direct* men how to walk, and no inward renovation would be needful. In that case, the ironical observation of a pious man would be realized—“If a man be born on the other side of the Tweed, he need not be born again.” Mr. Wesley, however, painfully found, that the self-righteousness natural to man was mightily fostered by *that kind* of religious education so common in Scotland. “I am now,” says he, speaking of Scotland, “among a people, many of whom hear much, know every thing, and feel nothing.” Thus ‘*that which might have been for their health, became an occasion of falling.*’ There is, however, a great and blessed change in this respect. Dr. Chalmers, and other pious ministers, seem to have adopted, in a good measure, Mr. Wesley’s views ; and their success has been so great that multitudes have been roused from their self-righteous delusion : So that the simple and powerful religion of the Bible bids fair to become again the religion of Scotland.

* PERTH, the twenty-eighth day of April, in the year of our Lord one Thousand, Seven Hundred, and Seventy-two :

“On which day, the illustrious order of Magistrates, and the honourable Assembly of Senators [Aldermen] of the celebrated city of PERTH, in token of their deserved love and affection for JOHN WESLEY, Master of Arts, late Fellow of Lincoln College in Oxford, have bestowed upon him the immunities of the above-mentioned city, and have endowed him with the privileges of the Society and Brotherhood of a Burgess,—with respect to all those things which are necessarily required from and performed by a citizen,” &c.

CHAPTER III.

PROPOSAL TO MR. FLETCHER FULLY TO UNITE WITH MR. WESLEY IN THE WORK—REMARKABLE DEATH OF MR. DOWNS—MR. WESLEY'S DANGEROUS ILLNESS IN IRELAND—DISPUTE CONCERNING THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION—CURIOUS ANECDOTE CONCERNING MR. WESLEY'S PLATE.

MR. WESLEY now saw the religious societies he had been the happy instrument of forming, spread rapidly on every side; and the preachers increasing in an equal proportion. He became, therefore, every day more solicitous to provide for their unity and permanency after his decease, wishing to preserve, at the same time, the original doctrines and economy of the Methodists. From the beginning he had stood at the head of the Connexion, and by the general suffrage had acted as a Father, in matters relating to the government of the societies. He had often found, that all his authority was necessary in order to unanimity, and he wished that authority to be continued.

In January, 1773, being at Shoreham, where, no doubt, he had consulted Mr. Perronet on the subject, he wrote the following letter to Mr. Fletcher, whom, of all men, he thought the most proper to fill his place, when the Lord should remove him :

“DEAR SIR,—What an amazing work has God wrought in these kingdoms, in less than forty years! And it not only continues, but increases throughout England, Scotland, and Ireland; nay, it has lately spread into New-York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Maryland, and Carolina. But the wise men of the world say, ‘When Mr. Wesley drops, then all this is at an end!’ And so it surely will, unless, before God calls him hence, one is found to stand in his place. For *Ουκ αγαθον πολυκοιρανιη. Εις κοιρανος εσω.** I see more and more, unless there be one *Προεδρος,†* the work can never be carried on. The body of the Preachers are not united: Nor will any part of them submit to the rest; so that either there must be ONE to preside over ALL, or the work will indeed come to an end.

“But who is sufficient for these things? Qualified to preside both over the Preachers and people? He must be a man of faith and love, and one that has a single eye to the advancement of the kingdom of God. He must have a clear understanding; a knowledge of men and things, particularly of the Methodist doctrine and discipline; a ready utterance; diligence and activity, with a tolerable share of health. There must be added to these, favour with the people, with the Methodists in general. For unless God turn their eyes and their hearts towards him, he will be quite incapable of the work. He must likewise have some degree of learning; because there are many adversaries, learned as well as unlearned, whose mouths must be stopped. But this cannot be done, unless he be able to meet them on their own ground.

* It is not good, that the supreme power should be lodged in many hands: Let there be One chief governor.

† A person who presides over the rest.

“But has God provided one so qualified? Who is he? **THOU ART THE MAN!** God has given you a measure of loving faith; and a single eye to his glory. He has given you some knowledge of men and things; particularly of the whole plan of Methodism. You are blessed with some health, activity, and diligence; together with a degree of learning. And to all these, he has lately added, by a way none could have foreseen, favour both with the preachers and the whole people.—Come out in the name of God! Come to the help of the Lord against the mighty! Come, while I am alive and capable of labour—

Dum super est Lachesi quod torqueat, et pedibus me
Porto meis, nullo dextram subeunte bacillo.*

Come while I am able, God assisting, to build you up in faith, to ripen your gifts, and to introduce you to the people. *Nil tanti.* What possible employment can you have, which is of *so great importance?*

“But you will naturally say, ‘I am not equal to the task: I have neither grace nor gifts for such an employment.’ You say true; it is certain you have not. And who has? But do you not know **HIM** who is able to give them? Perhaps not at once, but rather day by day: As each is, so shall your strength be.—‘But this implies,’ you may say, ‘a thousand crosses, such as I feel I am not able to bear.’ You are not able to bear them now; and they are not now come. Whenever they do come, will he not send them in due number, weight, and measure? And will they not all be for your profit, that you may be a partaker of His holiness?

“Without conferring, therefore, with flesh and blood, come and strengthen the hands, comfort the heart, and share the labour of

“Your affectionate friend and brother,

“**JOHN WESLEY.**”

“This warm and sincere invitation,” says Dr. Whitehead, “to a situation not only respected but even revered by so large a body of people, must have been highly flattering to Mr. Fletcher; especially as it came from a person he most sincerely loved; whose superior abilities, learning, and labours he admired; and to whose success in the ministry he wished to give every assistance in his power. But he well knew the embarrassments Mr. Wesley met with in the government of the preachers, though he alone, under the providence of God, had given existence to their present character, influence, and usefulness; he was also well acquainted with the mutual jealousies the preachers had of each other, and with their jarring interests; but above all, with the general determination which prevailed among them, not to be under the control of any one man after the death of Mr. Wesley. Under these circumstances, he saw nothing before him but darkness, storms, and tempests, with the most threatening dangers, especially if he should live to be alone in the office. He therefore determined not to launch his little bark on so tempestuous an ocean.”

I have quoted the above passage from Dr. Whitehead, in his own words, as expressive of his views and feelings! But he wrote on a subject with which he was wholly unacquainted. The *charity* of his sur-

* While Lachesis has some thread of life to spin, and I walk on my own feet without the help of a staff.—*JUVEN. Sat. 3.*

misings is, however, very manifest. He did not know, that Mr. Fletcher had ever answered Mr. Wesley's letter ; but I am happy in being able to lay his answer before the reader, who will see in it the very different spirit of that man of God. His faith, indeed, respecting the continuance of the *whole body* of the preachers in their first calling, seems to have been shaken, as Mr. Wesley's also was ; but there is no such feeling expressed as that which festered in the mind of Dr. Whitehead. His attachment to that work which he fully believed to be of God, is also strikingly evident. He certainly could not be easily persuaded to take the station which Mr. Wesley wished him to take, as his well-known humility used to give the preachers trouble by his constantly preferring them before himself. But he certainly would have taken a most decided part in the work, if his total loss of health, which obliged him to leave his parish, and to retire to Switzerland, had not prevented it. Upon his return, with his strength renewed in some degree, he married, and thus became settled in his parish, evidencing to the last his ardent love to the work of God, and to those who were employed in it. At the last Conference which he attended, in the year 1784, (the year before he died,) he entreated Mr. Wesley to put Madeley into the Minutes, as a Methodist Circuit, and that he might be put down as Supernumerary there : Thus wishing to be still more united to those whom he so much loved.

The following is Mr. Fletcher's answer :

“ MADELEY, 6th February, 1773.

“ REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,—I hope the Lord, who has so wonderfully stood by you hitherto, will preserve you to see many of your sheep, and *me* among the rest, enter into rest. Should Providence call you *first*, I shall do my best, by the Lord's assistance, to help *your brother* to gather the wreck, and keep together those who are not absolutely bent upon throwing away the Methodist doctrine or discipline, as soon as he that now letteth shall be removed out of their way. Every little help will then be necessary ; and I hope, I shall not be backward to throw in my mite.

“ In the mean time, you stand sometimes in need of an assistant to serve tables, and occasionally to fill up a gap. Providence visibly appointed me to that office many years ago : And though it no less evidently called me here, yet I have not been without doubt, especially for some years past, whether it would not be expedient that I should resume my place, as your Deacon ; not with any view of presiding over the Methodists after you, (God knows !) but to save you a little in your old age, and be in the way of receiving, and perhaps of doing, more good. I have sometimes considered, how shameful it was that no Clergyman should join you, to keep in the church the work which the Lord had enabled you to carry on therein ; and, as the little estate I have in my native country is sufficient for my maintenance, I have thought I would, one day or other, offer you and the Methodists my *free* services.

“ While my love of retirement, and my dread of appearing upon a higher stage than that I stand upon here, made me linger, I was providentially called to do something in Lady Huntingdon's plan ; but being shut out there, it appears to me, I am again called to my first work.

“ Nevertheless, I would not leave this place, without a *fuller* persuasion that the time is quite come. Not that God uses me much *now*

among my parishioners, but because I have not sufficiently cleared my conscience from the blood of all men, especially with regard to ferreting out the poor, and expostulating with the rich, who make it their business to fly from me. In the mean time, it shall be my employment to beg the Lord to give me light, to guide me by his counsel, and make me willing to go any where or nowhere, to be any thing or nothing.

"I have laid my pen aside for some time ; nevertheless, I resumed it last week, at your brother's request, to go on with my treatise on *Christian Perfection*. I have made some alterations in the sheets you have seen, and hope to have a few more ready for your correction, against the time you come this way.

"How deep is the subject ! What need have I of '*the Spirit, to search the deep things of God !*' Help me by your prayers, till you can help me by word of mouth.

"Reverend and dear Sir,

"Your willing, though unprofitable, servant in the Gospel,

"J. FLETCHER."

Respecting the Preachers, Mr. Fletcher, it is plain, had no feelings in common with Dr. Whitehead. The wish to have Mr. Fletcher at their head, in case of Mr. Wesley's removal, originated with themselves. They pressed Mr. Wesley to apply to him ; and, on his reporting Mr. Fletcher's answer, they were so encouraged, that they requested that the application should be renewed. Mr. Wesley replied in his usual short way, "He will not come out, unless the Lord should baptize him for it."—His habits were very retired, though his exertions *in his parish* were great. In one of his letters to his friend Mr. Ireland, he says, "I am like one of your casks of wine : I am good for nothing till I settle."—"If," said he in another letter, "I had a heart full of grace, a head full of wisdom, and a pocket full of money, I might take Mr. Wesley's place."—From all I know of Mr. Fletcher, I am certain he would have resisted such thoughts as that to which Dr. Whitehead has thus given utterance, and would have considered them as coming from '*the Accuser of the brethren.*'

Mr. Wesley was now advancing in the seventy-first year of his age, and found his health and strength undiminished : He, therefore, continued his labours and travels, with the same assiduity and punctuality as at the beginning. In June 1774, when he entered on his seventy-second year, he speaks thus of himself : "This being my birth-day, the first day of my seventy-second year, I was considering, how is this, that I find just the same strength as I did thirty years ago ? That my sight is considerably better now, and my nerves firmer, than they were then ? That I have none of the infirmities of old age, and have lost several I had in my youth ? The grand *cause* is, the good pleasure of God, who doth whatsoever pleaseth him. The chief *means* are, 1. My constantly rising at four, for about fifty years : 2. My generally preaching at five in the morning, one of the most healthy exercises in the world : 3. My never travelling less, by sea or land, than four thousand five hundred miles in a year."

About this time died Mr. John Downs, who had been many years a Preacher among the Methodists. He was a man of sincere unaffected piety, of great affliction, and also of uncommon genius. Mr. Charles

Wesley gives the following account of his death :* “ John Downs has lived and died the death of the righteous. For several months past, he has been greatly alive to God, walked closely with him, and visibly growing in grace. Ever since the time that he resolved to preach again, he has preached as often as he really could, and with great success. On Friday morning he rose full of faith, and love, and joy. He declared it was the happiest day of his life, and that he had not been so well in body for years. He expressed his joy in showers of tears—He was led to pray for the people, so as never before. Going out to the chapel at West-street, he said, ‘ I used to go to preach trembling, and with reluctance, but now I go in triumph.’ His text was, ‘ *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden,*’ &c. His words were unusually weighty, and with power, but few. He perceived, that he could not finish his discourse, and gave out this verse of the hymn,

Father, I lift my heart to thee,
No other help I know.

His voice failing, he fell on his knees, as meaning to pray ; but he could not be heard. The Preacher ran and lifted him from his knees, for he could not raise himself. They carried him to bed, where he lay quiet and speechless till eight on Saturday morning, and then fell asleep. O for an end like his ! It is the most enviable, the most desirable I ever heard of. His widow I visited yesterday afternoon. She surprised me, and all who saw her ; so supported, so calm, so resigned. A faithful friend received her into her house. She had one sixpence in the world, and no more. But her Maker is her husband : We all agreed, it is the Lord’s doing, and is marvellous in our sight.”

In 1775, Mr. Wesley visited Ireland in his usual course ; and in June, being then in the North, on his return from Londonderry, he had the most severe illness he had ever before experienced. It was, however, in part, brought on, and afterwards increased by his own imprudence. I shall give the circumstances in his own words : “ Tuesday, 13, (of June,) I was not very well in the morning, but supposed it would soon go off. In the afternoon, the weather being extremely hot, I lay down on the grass in Mr. Lock’s orchard at Cockhill. This I had been accustomed to do for forty years, and never remember to have been hurt by it. Only I never before lay on my face, in which posture I fell asleep. I waked, a little, and but a little, out of order, and preached with ease to a multitude of people. Afterwards I was a good deal worse ; however, the next day I went on a few miles to the Grange. The table was placed there in such a manner, that all the time I was preaching, a strong and sharp wind blew full on the left side of my head : And it was not without a good deal of difficulty that I made an end of my sermon. I now found a deep obstruction in my breast. My pulse was exceeding weak and low. I shivered with cold, though the air was sultry hot, only now and then burning for a few minutes. I went early to bed, drank a draught of treacle and water, and applied treacle to the soles of my feet. I lay till seven on Thursday, the 15th, and felt considerably better. But I found near the same obstruction in my breast : I had a low, weak pulse : I burned and shivered by turns ; and if I ventured to cough, it jarred my head exceedingly. In going on to Derry-Anvil, I wondered what was the matter, that I could not attend to what I was

* Taken from his Diary in short-hand.

reading ; no, not for three minutes together, but my thoughts were perpetually shifting. Yet all the time I was preaching in the evening, (though I stood in the open air, with the wind whistling round my head,) my mind was as composed as ever.—Friday, 16, in going to Lurgan, I wondered again that I could not fix my attention to what I read : Yet while I was preaching in the evening on the Parade, I found my mind perfectly composed, although it rained a great part of the time, which did not well agree with my head.—Saturday, 17, I was persuaded to send for Dr. Laws, a sensible and skilful physician. He told me, ‘I was in a high fever, and advised me to lie by.’ I told him, that could not be done ; as I had appointed to preach in several places, and must preach as long as I could speak. He then prescribed a cooling draught, with a grain or two of camphor, as my nerves were universally agitated. This I took with me to Tandragee ; but when I came there, I was not able to preach ; my understanding being quite confused, and my strength entirely gone. Yet I breathed freely, and had not the least thirst, nor any pain from head to foot.

“I was now at a full stand, whether to aim at Lisburn, or to push forward for Dublin : But my friends doubting whether I could bear so long a journey, I went straight to Derry-Aghy, a gentleman’s seat on the side of a hill, three miles beyond Lisburn. Here nature sunk, and I took to my bed ; but I could no more turn myself therein, than a newborn child. My memory failed as well as my strength, and well nigh my understanding. Only those words ran in my mind, when I saw Miss Gayer on one side of the bed, looking at her mother on the other,

She sat, like patience on a monument,
Smiling at grief.

“I can give no account of what followed for two or three days, being more dead than alive. Only I remember it was difficult for me to speak, my throat being exceedingly dry. But Joseph Bradford tells me, I said on Wednesday, ‘It will be determined before this time to-morrow ;’ that my tongue was much swoln, and as black as a coal ; that I was convulsed all over : and, for some time, my heart did not beat perceptibly, neither was any pulse discernible.

“In the night of Thursday, the 22d, Joseph Bradford came to me with a cup, and said, ‘Sir you must take this.’ I thought I will, if I can, to please him ; for it will do me neither harm nor good. Immediately it set me vomiting : My heart began to beat, and my pulse to play again : And from that hour, the extremity of the symptoms abated. The next day I sat up several hours, and walked four or five times across the room.—On Saturday, I sat up all day, and walked across the room many times, without any weariness.—On Sunday I came down stairs, and sat several hours in the parlour.—On Monday, I walked before the house.—On Tuesday, I took an airing in the chaise : And on Wednesday, trusting in God, to the astonishment of my friends, I set out for Dublin.”

About this time, Mr. Wesley published his “*Calm Address to the American Colonies*,” then at war with England, the mother country. This tract made a great noise, and raised him many adversaries. Being frequently asked, why he published it ? He answered, in Lloyd’s Evening Post,

“Not to get money. Had that been my motive, I should have

swelled it into a shilling pamphlet, and have entered it at Stationer's Hall.—Not to get preferment for myself, or my brother's children: Not to please any man living, high or low. I know mankind too well. I know they that love you for political service, love you less than their dinner; and they who hate you, hate you worse than the devil.—Least of all did I write, with a view to inflame any: Just the contrary. I contributed my mite towards putting out the flame which rages all over the land," &c.

Dr. Whitehead observes upon this, "Many of his friends, however, were of opinion, that he would have acted a more wise and better part, had he never meddled with political disputes.* Observation had convinced them, that Ministers of the Gospel, by interfering with politics, have seldom done any good, and often much harm; having frequently hindered their own usefulness, and made a whip for their own backs." This also is very likely. But Mr. Wesley suffered for teaching men to '*fear God, and honour the King.*' He meddled no more with politics than St. Paul did. But he had harder work than the Apostle, *on this point*; viz., '*to show to many of God's people their transgressions.*'

In the beginning of the year 1776, Mr. Fletcher was recovering from a severe illness. Mr. Wesley, having a high opinion of the salutary effects of easy journeys through the country, in such cases, invited Mr. Fletcher to come out, and accompany him through some of the societies in the spring. Part of Mr. Fletcher's answer is as follows: "I received last night the favour of yours, from Bristol. My grand desire is, to be just what the Lord would have me to be. I could, if you wanted a travelling assistant, accompany you, as my little strength would admit, in some of your excursions. But your recommending me to the societies as one who might succeed you, should the Lord take you hence before me, is a step to which I could by no means consent. It would make me take my horse and gallop away. Beside, such a step would, at this juncture, be, I think, peculiarly improper.—We ought to give as little hold to the evil surmisings and rash judgments of our opponents as may be.—What has made me glut our friends with my books, is not any love to such publications, but a desire to make an end of the controversy.† It is probable that my design has miscarried; and that I have disgusted, rather than convinced, the people.—I agree with you, Sir, that now is the time to pray both for ourselves and our King, for the Church of England, and that part of it which is called the Methodists. I cast my mite of supplication into the general treasure. The Lord guide, support, and strengthen you more and more unto the end!"

An order had been made by the House of Lords, in May, this year, "That the Commissioners of his Majesty's Excise do write circular letters to all such persons whom they have reason to suspect to have plate, as also to those who have not paid regularly the duty on the same," &c.—In consequence of this order, the Accomptant-General for Household Plate, sent Mr. Wesley, in September, a copy of the order, with the following letter:

"REVEREND SIR,—As the Commissioners cannot doubt but you

* It was very natural for them to think so. They took counsel with flesh and blood, which he never dared to do.

† That is, the American controversy; wherein this man of peace and love wrote more largely and more strongly than Mr. Wesley had done.

have plate, for which you have hitherto neglected to make an entry, they have directed me to send you the above copy of the Lords' order, and to inform you, they expect that you forthwith make due entry of all your plate; such entry to bear date from the commencement of the plate-duty, or from such time as you have owned, used, had, or kept any quantity of silver plate, chargeable by the Act of Parliament; as, in default hereof, the Board will be obliged to signify your refusal to their Lordships.

"N. B. An immediate answer is desired."

Mr. Wesley answered as follows :

"SIR,—I have two silver teaspoons at London, and two at Bristol. This is all the plate which I have at present; and I shall not buy any more, while so many round me want bread.

"I am, Sir,

"Your most humble Servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."

CHAPTER IV.

LABOURS AND OPPOSITION IN THE ISLE OF MAN—SECESSION OF AN EMINENT PREACHER—PROTESTANT ASSOCIATION—MR. WESLEY'S LETTER ON THAT OCCASION—HIS LETTER TO THE BISHOP OF LONDON, AND TO SIR HARRY TRELAWNEY—THOUGHTS ON "DR. PARSON'S REMAINS OF JAPHET"—CURIOUS QUESTIONS PUT TO MR. WESLEY—HIS LETTER RESPECTING THE SABBATH-DAY, ADDRESSED TO ONE OF HIS MAJESTY'S MINISTERS—CURIOUS FRAGMENT—MR. WESLEY'S VISITS TO HOLLAND.

In the year 1776, the Methodist Preachers visited the Isle of Man.* The year before, a Local Preacher from Liverpool, Mr. John Crook, had paid them a visit, and spent some time with them. He repeated his visit this year, and Societies were already formed in seven different places, and they reckoned 157 members in the Island. It happened

* This island is mentioned by several ancient authors. Cæsar calls it *Mona*; but the *Mona* of Tacitus can only be applied to Anglesey. Pliny calls it *Monabia*: And in Ptolemy, we find *Monaida*, that is, the farther or more remote *Môn*. Orosius styles it *Menavia*; and tells us, that it was extremely fertile. Bede, who distinguishes clearly two Menavian Islands, names this the *Northern Menavia*, bestowing the epithet of *Southern* upon Anglesey. Alured of Beverly also speaks of it as one of the Menavian Islands. The Britons, in their own language, called it *Manaw*, more properly *Main au*, that is, "a little island," which seems to be Latinized in the word *Menavia*. All which proves, that this small Isle was early inhabited, and as well known to the rest of the world, as either Britain or Ireland.

The Isle of Man was, for a long time, an independent State, governed by its own Princes. At length, however, they became feudatories to the Kings of England, resorted to their Court, were kindly received, and had pensions bestowed upon them. Upon the demise of Magnus, the last King of this isle, without heirs male, Alexander III, King of Scots, who had conquered the other isles, seized likewise upon this; which, as part of that kingdom, came into the hands of Edward I, who directed William Huntercumbe, Warden of that isle for him, to restore it to John Baliol, who had done homage to him for the kingdom of Scotland.

But it seems there was still remaining a Lady named Austrica, who claimed this sovereignty as nearest of kin to the deceased Magnus. This claimant being able to obtain

here, as in most places of Great Britain and Ireland, that the first preaching of the Methodists produced no commotions or riots among the common people. I am, indeed, fully convinced, that the lower orders of the people would never become riotous on account of religion, were they not excited to it, under false pretences, by persons who have some influence over them, and who endeavour to keep behind the scene. The Preachers, however, did not long enjoy peace. Two or three ill-minded persons, of some influence in the island, formed a plan of opposition, which, in such cases, is but too often successful. These persons, to give greater weight to their opposition, so far prejudiced the mind of the Bishop against these new comers, that he wrote a pastoral letter, directed to all the rectors, vicars, chaplains, and curates within the isle and diocese of Man.

In this letter his Lordship states the ground of his opposition thus : "Whereas we have been informed, that several unordained, unauthorized, and unqualified persons from other countries, have, for some time past, presumed to preach and teach publicly, and hold and maintain conventicles ; and have caused several weak persons to combine themselves together in a new society, and have private meetings, assemblies, and congregations, contrary to the doctrines, government, rites, and ceremonies of the Established Church, and the civil and ecclesiastical laws of this Isle. We do, therefore, for the prevention of schism and the re-establishment of that UNIFORMITY in religious worship which so long hath subsisted among us, hereby desire and require each and every of you, to be vigilant and use your utmost endeavours to dissuade your respective flocks from following, or being led and misguided by such incompetent teachers," &c. &c.—After expatiating a little on this part of his charge, he tells his clergy that if they could not prevail with the people by persuasion, they must get a knowledge of the names of such persons as attended at "these *unlawful* meetings," as he calls them, and especially of such as enjoyed any office or privilege by episcopal license, and present them to his Reverend Vicars General, or to some of them. He then requires every one of his clergy, to repel any Methodist Preacher from the sacrament, if he should offer himself at the table to receive it. He farther directs, that this pastoral letter should be read, *plenâ Ecclesiâ, in full church*, the next Sunday after the receipt thereof.

The storm now became violent, and Methodism was threatened with a total shipwreck on the island. The preachers and people, however, weathered it out ; and in the end of May, 1777, Mr. Wesley paid them

nothing from John Baliol, applied herself to King Edward, as the superior Lord. He, upon this application, by his writ, which is yet extant, commanded both parties, in order to determine their right, to appear in the King's Bench. The suit, it seems, was successful ; for we know, that this lady, by a deed of gift, conveyed her claim to Sir Simon de Montacute ; and after many disputes, invasions by the Scots, and other accidents, the title was examined in Parliament, in the seventh of Edward III, and solemnly adjudged to William de Montacute ; to whom, by letters patent dated the same year, that monarch released all claim whatsoever. It descended afterwards to the Duke of Athol, from whom the English Government purchased it, in the year 1765, the Duke retaining his landed property. The manorial rights and emoluments, the patronage of the Bishopric, and other ecclesiastical benefices, are unalienably vested in the Crown, and the Island subjected to the regulations of the British Excise and Customs.—The inhabitants of the Isle are of the Church of England, and the Bishop is styled, Bishop of Sodor and Man. By an Act of Parliament, the thirty-third of Henry VIII, this Bishopric is declared to be in the province of York.—*Encyclop. Brit.*

a visit, and was received in a very friendly manner by a few persons of respectability and influence. At Peele-town, Mr. Corbet said, he would gladly have asked him to preach in his church, but the bishop had forbidden. On this occasion Mr. Wesley observes, "Is any clergyman obliged, either in law or conscience, to obey such a prohibition? By no means. The *will* even of the King does not bind any English subject, unless it be seconded by an express law. How much less the will of a bishop? *But did not you take an oath to obey him?* No: Nor any clergyman in the three kingdoms. This is a mere *vulgar error*. Shame that it should prevail almost universally!"

Before Mr. Wesley's next visit, the Bishop was dead. His successor was a man of a very different spirit; and has proved a blessing to the Island. When Mr. Wesley arrived, all was peace. Before his departure, he made the following remarks, with which I shall conclude this account:—

"Having now visited the Island round, East, South, North, and West, I was thoroughly convinced, that we have no such Circuit as this, either in England, Scotland, or Ireland. It is shut up from the world: And having little trade, is visited by scarce any strangers. Here are no disputers; no opposition, either from the Governor, (a mild, humane man,) from the Bishop (a good man) or from the bulk of the Clergy. One or two of them did oppose for a time: but they seem now to understand us better. So that the scandal of the cross seems to have for the present ceased. The natives are a plain, artless, simple people; few of them are rich or genteel; the far greater part moderately poor. And most of the strangers that settle among them, are men that have seen affliction." The word of the Lord has therefore free course, and the fruits of righteousness and peace have increased to this day.

About the time of the Conference this year, a Travelling Preacher, the late Mr. J. H., who had been well received by the people, and who had enjoyed a large share of Mr. Wesley's confidence for several years, withdrew from the Connexion, and went among the Quakers. There had been a misunderstanding between them, for some time before he took this step; and soon afterwards he wrote his determination to Mr. Wesley. Mr. Charles Wesley was in the habit of corresponding with this preacher, and happening to see the letter, requested his brother to let *him* answer it. The request was granted; and as the answer is written with candour, contains some good observations on young converts, and points out one striking trait in Mr. John Wesley's character, I shall insert it. The date is October, 1777.*

"I thank you," says he, "for your affectionate letter.† It confirms and increases my love towards you. Your phrase and dress make no difference to us.—Let us abide in the love of Jesus, and we must continue to love one another.—Out of true impartial love to you both, I long for peace between you and my brother. But alas! you do not love each other so well as I do. Mutual confidence is lost, and then what union can there be? I submit to the permissive will of Providence.

"If I know my own heart, I have nothing there but tender disinterested love for him and for you: And it is, and must be, a serious grief to me that you are not cordially affected to each other. But we might

* This letter is taken from Mr. Charles Wesley's papers in short hand.

† I suppose, one that Mr. Charles had received from him.

part friends, who can never part.—I wished to see you ; I should not have said one word against your religion ; but I should have taken the liberty of giving you a friendly caution or two, lest Satan get an advantage over you, or us.

“ You know, when a man leaves one religious party or society, it is a theme both to him and them. Those of his old friends who loved him merely as a member of their society, will cease to love him on that account : Those who have little or no grace, will partly treat him as a deserter, and express their anger or ill-will by speaking against him. This stabbing a man in the back, as soon as he turns it upon us, I abhor and protest against ; and discourage to the utmost of my power. One, who forsakes his former friends, will be tempted to speak evil of them, and mention their faults, real or supposed, to justify himself for leaving them, or to recommend himself to his new friends. I always stood in doubt of such converts ; whether from the Calvinists, Moravians, Dissenters, or any other. Beside, a young convert is always most zealous in making *proselytes* ; which awakens suspicion in the deserted party, and arms them against depredations.

“ My brother showed me your last : I desired him to let me answer it. Hope of a free conversation with you, hindered me from writing. You know, I have talked with you concerning him, without reserve : I could not have used such confidence towards another. Still I am as incapable of mistrusting you, as you are of trusting him. In many things I have more fellowship with you, than I have with him : My love for both is the same.

“ But, ‘ You expect he will keep his own secrets !’ Let me whisper it into your ear ; he never could do it since he was born. It is a gift which God has not given him. But I shall speak to him, and put a stop to what you justly complain of, and let all be buried in oblivion—I wish you may never have an uneasy thought on our account. Speak not therefore of my brother ; think no evil of him ; forget him, if you can, entirely, till you meet above.

“ You are now entering on a new scene of things. You have no doubt of God’s calling you among the Friends. I judge nothing before the time : Time will show. I heartily pray God, you may do and receive much more good among them, than you did among us.* If God give you discernment and favour, and you are the approved instrument of reviving his work, and *their* first love, I shall rejoice and be thankful that you ever left us. But if (which God forbid !) you should bury your talent, do no good, and only change *one form for another* ; alas ! alas ! my brother, you will prove yourself mistaken, and lose many jewels which might have been added to your crown.†

“ I should think worse of our society than you do, if they felt no sorrow at parting with you—Some whom I know, will seldom think of you

* This good man was possessed of eminent ministerial gifts, but he fell into the Mystic delusion from which Mr. Wesley had escaped. He then became high-minded and censorious ; and Mr. Charles Wesley, in his hours of depression, used too much to listen to him. The Quakers were jealous of him, and kept him silent a long time, to his great mortification : But it was the very thing he needed. It was *good medicine to heal his sickness*.

† This was precisely the issue. In one of Mr. H.’s last conversations with me a few years ago, he said, “ I would not have thy people to think of changing : They may be disappointed.” He was then in a sweet and humble spirit, very different from that in which he left us ; and I rejoiced in hope of meeting him where *those who overcome, shall be pillars in the temple of God to go out no more*.

without a sorrowful tear. The days of my mourning are just ended. My hope of you is steady, that if you hold out a little longer, I shall find you again among the blessed in that day."

Hitherto the Society in London had occupied the old Foundery, near Upper Moorfields, as a place of worship; but were now making preparations to quit it. They had obtained the promise of a lease from the city, of a piece of ground in the City-road; and, every thing being prepared, the day was fixed for laying the foundation of a chapel. "The rain," says Mr. Wesley, "befriended us much, by keeping away thousands who purposed to be there. But there were still such multitudes, that it was with great difficulty I got through them to lay the first stone. Upon this was a plate of brass, covered with another stone, on which was engraved, 'THIS WAS LAID BY JOHN WESLEY, ON APRIL 1, 1777.' Probably this will be seen no more, by any human eye; but will remain there, till the earth and the works thereof are burnt up."

By the end of October, 1778, the chapel was built, and ready to be opened. "November 1," says Mr. Wesley, "was the day appointed for opening the new chapel in the City-road. It is perfectly neat, but not fine; and contains far more than the Foundery: I believe, together with the morning chapel, as many as the Tabernacle. Many were afraid, that the multitudes, crowding from all parts, would have occasioned much disturbance: But they were happily disappointed; there was none at all. All was quietness, decency, and order. I preached on part of Solomon's *prayer at the dedication of the Temple*; and, both in the morning and afternoon, God was eminently present in the midst of the congregation."

In February, 1779, Mr. John Wesley observes, "Finding many serious persons were much discouraged by *prophets of evil*, confidently foretelling very heavy calamities, which were coming upon our nation; I endeavoured to lift up their hands, by opening and applying those comfortable words, Psalm xliii, 5, 6, '*Why art thou so heavy, O my soul? Why art thou so disquieted within me? O put thy trust in God; for I will yet give him thanks, who is the help of my countenance and my God.*'"—The next day was the National Fast. And he observes, "So solemn a one I never saw before. From one end of the city to the other, there was scarce any one seen in the streets. All places of public worship were crowded in an uncommon degree; and an unusual awe sat on most faces. I preached on the words of God to Abraham, interceding for Sodom, '*I will not destroy it (the city) for ten's sake.*'"

Dr. Whitehead here also well observes, "When we find a man constantly travelling through all parts of the nation; holding intercourse with immense multitudes of people, by means of the pulpit and private correspondence: and exerting all his influence on every occasion of public distress or alarm, to soften and quiet the minds of the people, we must call him a national blessing. And such was the constant practice of Mr. Wesley for more than half a century!"

In the beginning of this year, 1780, a great clamour was raised against the Bill passed in favour of the Roman Catholics. A "Protestant Association" was formed to obtain a repeal of it; and, in the end, much mischief was done;—not without suspicion, however, that the outrages which followed were greatly promoted and increased by Papists, and by others in disguise. The one party wished to disgrace "the Asso-

ciation ;” the other, the ministry. But before these things happened, a pamphlet was written in defence of the object the Association had in view ; and an answer to it soon appeared. These pamphlets were put into Mr. Wesley’s hands ; and, having read them, he wrote a letter on the subject, dated January 21, which he sent to the Printer of the *Public Advertiser*. In this letter, after premising, that persecution had nothing to do with the matter, and that he wished no man to be persecuted for his religious principles ; he lays down this general proposition, “ That no Roman Catholic does or can give security to a Protestant Government, for his allegiance and peaceable behaviour.” He rested the proof of this proposition on the following arguments :

“ 1. It is a Roman Catholic maxim, established not by private men, but by a public Council, that *No faith is to be kept with heretics*. This has been openly avowed by the Council of Constance ;* but it never was openly disclaimed. Whether private persons avow or disavow it, it is a fixed maxim of the Church of Rome.

“ 2. One branch of the *spiritual power* of the Pope is, and has been for ages, the power of *granting pardons* for all sins, past, present, and to come ! But those who acknowledge him to have this spiritual power, can give no security for their allegiance.—*Ergo*.

“ 3. The power of *dispensing* with any promise, oath, or vow, is another branch of the *spiritual power* of the Pope. And all who acknowledge his spiritual power, must acknowledge this : But whoever acknowledges this *dispensing power* of the Pope, cannot give security for his allegiance to any Government.—Nay, not only the *Pope*, but even a *Priest*, has *power to pardon sins* ! This is an essential doctrine of the Church of Rome. But they who acknowledge this, cannot possibly give any security for their allegiance to any Government.

“ Setting then religion aside, it is plain, that, upon principles of reason, no Government ought to tolerate men,† who cannot give any security to that Government for their allegiance and peaceable behaviour. But this no Romanist can do, not only while he holds that ‘ No faith is to be kept with heretics,’ but so long as he acknowledges either *priestly absolution*, or the *spiritual power* of the Pope.”

A Mr. O’Leary, a Capuchin Friar, wrote a reply to these propositions, and endeavoured to explain away the obnoxious decree of the Council of Constance. The propositions, however, remained unanswered, and the decree of the Council could not be got over. The Rev. Mr. Skelton, an eminently pious and learned Minister of the Church of Ireland, celebrated for several useful publications, especially a remarkable one, published during the Rebellion in Scotland, entitled “ THE HOPES OF THE CHEVALIER,” returned Mr. Wesley his thanks, for his letters in answer to Mr. O’Leary. He used to speak much of them ; and the gentleman who delivered his thanks to Mr. Wesley, (with whom I then was in Dublin,) observed, “ Sir, Mr. Skelton declared to me, that your propositions were a wall of adamant ; and that Mr. O’Leary’s arguments were as boiled peas shot against it.”

* By the decree of this Council, John Husse and Jerome of Prague were burned alive, notwithstanding the *safe-conduct*, to and from the Council, granted to each of them by the Emperor.

† He meant, that they ought not to give them political power. No man abhorred persecution on account of religion more than Mr Wesley. Soon after this, he published his admirable tract, entitled, *POPEY CALMLY CONSIDERED*.

This mighty fabric of Popery is evidently nodding to its fall. It has continued so long, partly by the support of political power, but chiefly because so many truly-devoted souls have been found within its pale. It may truly be called the *Christianity of the World*. But the Bible has gone forth, as it never did before, and THE FAITH ‘*that overcometh the world*’ keeps pace with it. In a little time, none will be found to submit to the antichristian yoke, but those who *reject the word of God*. Those who receive the truth will come forth, saying to the would-be UNIVERSAL BISHOP, as the Greek Church said long ago, in departing, “Thy greatness we know, thy covetousness we cannot satisfy, thy intolerable insolence we can no longer endure :—LIVE TO THYSELF !” It will then ‘*suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.*’

In the course of this year, 1780, some persons in America, attached to the doctrines and to the ritual of the Church of England, wrote to Mr. Wesley, requesting that he would get a young man ordained for them, by one of the Bishops in this country. They did not apply to “*the Society for propagating Christian Knowledge in Foreign Parts,*” because they did not want pecuniary assistance from that fund. Mr. Wesley wrote to Dr. Lowth, Bishop of London, begging the favour, that he would ordain a pious young man for them. The Bishop refused ; and August 10, Mr. Wesley sent him the following letter :

“MY LORD,—Some time since I received your Lordship’s favour, for which I return your Lordship my sincere thanks. Those persons did not apply to the Society, because they had nothing to ask of them. They wanted no salary for their Minister ; they were themselves able and willing to maintain him. They therefore applied, by me, to your Lordship, as members of the Church of England, and desirous so to continue, begging the favour of your Lordship, after your Lordship had examined him, to ordain a pious man who might officiate as their Minister.

“But your Lordship observes, ‘There are three Ministers in that country already?’ True, my Lord : But what are three, to watch over all the souls in that extensive country ? Will your Lordship permit me to speak freely ? I dare not do otherwise. I am on the verge of the grave, and know not the hour when I shall drop into it. Suppose there were threescore of those Missionaries in the country, could I in conscience recommend these souls to their care ? Do they take any care of their own souls ? If they do, (I speak it with concern !) I fear they are almost the only Missionaries in America that do. My Lord, I do not speak rashly : I have been in America ; and so have several with whom I have lately conversed. And both I and they know, what manner of men the far greater part of these are. They are men who have neither the power of religion nor the form ; men that lay no claim to piety, nor even decency.

“Give me leave, my Lord, to speak more freely still : Perhaps, it is the last time I shall trouble your Lordship. I know your Lordship’s abilities and extensive learning : I believe, what is far more, that your Lordship fears God. I have heard that your Lordship is unfashionably diligent in examining the candidates for holy orders : Yea, that your Lordship is generally at the pains of examining them *yourself*. ‘Exa-

mining them !' in what respects ? Why whether they understand a little Latin and Greek, and can answer a few trite questions in the science of Divinity ! Alas, how little does this avail ! Does your Lordship examine, whether they serve Christ or Belial ? Whether they love God or the world ? Whether they ever had any serious thoughts about heaven or hell ? Whether they have any real desire to save their own souls, or the souls of others ? If not, what have they to do with holy orders ? and what will become of the souls committed to their care ?

" My Lord, I do by no means despise learning ; I know the value of it too well. But what is this, particularly in a Christian Minister, compared to piety ? What is it in a man that has no religion ? '*As a jewel in a swine's snout.*'

" Some time since, I recommended to your Lordship a plain man, whom I had known above twenty years ; as a person of deep genuine piety, and of unblameable conversation. But he neither understood Greek nor Latin ; and he affirmed, in so many words, that ' He believed it was his duty to preach, whether he was ordained or no.' I believe so too. What became of him since, I know not. But I suppose he received Presbyterian ordination ; and I cannot blame him, if he did. He might think any ordination better than none.

" I do not know, that Mr. Hoskins had any favour to ask of the Society. He asked the favour of your Lordship to ordain him, that he might minister to a little flock in America. But your Lordship did not see good to ordain *him* : But your Lordship did see good to ordain, and send into America, other persons, who knew something of Greek and Latin ; but who knew no more of saving souls, than of catching whales.

" In this respect also, I mourn for poor America : for the sheep scattered up and down therein. Part of them have no Shepherds at all, particularly in the Northern colonies ; and the case of the rest is little better, for *their own Shepherds pity them not*. They cannot, for they have no pity on themselves. They take no thought or care about their own souls.

" Wishing your Lordship every blessing from the Great Shepherd and Bishop of our souls,

" I remain, my Lord,

" Your Lordship's dutiful son and servant,

" JOHN WESLEY."

In the midst of the multiplicity of affairs in which Mr. Wesley was concerned, he constantly paid attention to the spiritual welfare, not only of the members of his own society, but of those persons with whom he occasionally corresponded. The following is an instance of this kind attention and brotherly care. Sir Harry Trelawney,* celebrated for his zeal and eccentricities, had been a Calvinist, and, during that period, had been shy of Mr. Wesley's acquaintance. At length being convinced, that the narrow and limited views of John Calvin, concerning the atonement of Christ, were not agreeable to the general tenour of the invitations, promises, and threatenings of the New Testament, he quitted

* He was the Hero of a witty book, entitled the *Spiritual Quixote*, or the History of Geoffrey Wildgoose, Esq. It was written by a Minister of the Church of England, for the want of better work.

the Calvinists. On this occasion, Mr. Wesley wrote to him, congratulating him on his escape; but, at the same time warning him of the danger of running into the opposite extreme. This is so natural to the human mind, that it is difficult to be avoided: And by yielding to this impulse in some doctrines of importance, it is to be feared that many have made '*shipwreck of the faith.*' Mr. Wesley kindly cautioned his friend, against the danger which lay before him. "For a long time," says he, "I have had a desire to see you, but could not find an opportunity; and, indeed, I had reason to believe, my company would not be agreeable; as you were intimate with those who think they do God service by painting me in the most frightful colours. It gives me much satisfaction to find, that you have escaped out of the hands of those warm men. It is not at all surprising, that they should speak a little unkindly of you too, in their turn. It gave me no small satisfaction to learn from your own lips, the falsehood of their allegation. I believed it false before, but could not affirm it so positively as I can now.

"Indeed, it would not have been without precedent, if, from one extreme, you had run into another. This was the case with that great man, Dr. Taylor, of Norwich. For some years; he was an earnest Calvinist; but afterwards, judging he could not get far enough from that melancholy system, he ran, not only into Arianism, but into the very dregs of Socinianism. I have reason, indeed, to believe, he was convinced of his mistake, some years before he died. But to acknowledge this publicly, was too hard a task for one who had lived above eighty years.

"You have need to be thankful on another account likewise; that is, that your prejudices against the Church of England are removing. Having had an opportunity of seeing several of the churches abroad, and having deeply considered the several sorts of Dissenters at home, I am fully convinced, that our own church, with all her blemishes, is nearer the Scriptural plan, than any other in Europe.

"I sincerely wish you may retain your former zeal for God; only, that it may be a '*zeal according to knowledge.*' But there certainly will be a danger of your sinking into a careless, lukewarm state, without any zeal or spirit at all. As you were surfeited with an irrational, unscriptural religion, you may easily slide into no religion at all; or, into a dead form,* that will never make you happy either in this world, or in that which is to come. Wishing every Scriptural blessing, both to Lady Trelawney† and you,

"I am, Dear Sir,

"Your affectionate servant,

"J. WESLEY."

Notwithstanding Mr. Wesley's itinerancy, his daily labour of preaching, visiting the societies, and extensive correspondence; yet he still found time to read many books. And, what is rather singular, he often met with books that are very scarce, which many men of literature, with good libraries, have never seen. He read, not only books of divinity, of natural history, and moral philosophy, which came more immediately

* This fear was unhappily realized.

† Lady Trelawney was the daughter of the Rev. Mr. Brown, an intimate friend of Mr. Wesley, of whom I shall have to speak hereafter.

within the province of his profession, but books which treated of the most remote antiquity. Here investigation is difficult; and the highest degree of evidence to be attained, a bare probability. Yet even these books Mr. Wesley read, with uncommon diligence and care, often collecting the substance of them into a small compass, and directing it to the one point which he had ever at heart. The following is an instance of this kind:

Sept. 1, 1781, he says, "I made an end of reading that curious book, Dr. Parson's *Remains of Japhet*. The very ingenious author has struck much light into some of the darkest parts of ancient history. And although I cannot subscribe to every proposition which he advances, yet I apprehend, he has sufficiently proved the main of his hypothesis; namely,—1. That after the flood, Shem and his descendants peopled the greatest part of Asia.—2. That Ham and his children peopled Africa.—3. That Europe was peopled by the two sons of Japhet, Gomer, and Magog; the Southern and Southwestern, by Gomer and his children; and the North and Northwestern, by the children of Magog.—4. That the former were called Gomerians, Cimmerians, and Cimbrians; and afterwards, Celtæ, Galatæ, and Gauls; the latter were called by the general name of Scythians, Scuti, and Scots.—5. That the Gomerians spread swiftly through the North of Europe, as far as the Cimbrian Chersonesus, including Sweden, Denmark, Norway, and divers other countries, and then into Ireland, where they multiplied very early into a considerable nation.—6. That some ages after, another part of them, who had first settled in Spain, sailed to Ireland under Milea, or Milesius, and, conquering the first inhabitants, took possession of the land.—7. That, about the same time the Gomerians came to Ireland, the Magogians, or Scythians, came to Britain; so early, that both spake the same language, and well understood each other.—8. That the Irish spoken by the Gomerians, and the Welsh spoken by the Magogians, are one and the same language, expressed by the same seventeen letters, which were long after brought, by a Gomerian Prince, into Greece.—9. That all the languages of Europe, Greek and Latin* in particular, are derived from this.—10. That the Antediluvian language, spoken by all till after the flood, and then continued in the family of Shem, was Hebrew; and from this (the Hebrew) tongue, many of the Eastern languages are derived. The foregoing particulars, this fine writer has made highly probable. And these may be admitted, though we do not agree to his vehement panegyric on the Irish language; much less receive all the stories told by the Irish poets, or chroniclers, as genuine authentic history."

Dr. Whitehead observes, "Candour will readily acknowledge, and envy itself must confess, that a man in the seventy-ninth year of his age, who, in the midst of daily avocations which he deemed of the highest importance to himself and others, could go through a work of this kind with so much attention, and collect the substance of it into a few general heads, must have possessed great strength of mind, and an uncommon degree of the spirit of inquiry."

In February, 1782, a person unknown proposed a few questions to

* How amazingly, in that case, must these languages have been improved! Of the Latin in particular, I do not wonder that Cowper should say, "What a people they must have been, who spoke such a language!"

Mr. Wesley in writing, and begged the favour of unequivocal answers. The questions and answers were as follow :

“ Is it your wish, that the people called Methodists should be, or become, a body entirely separate from the Church ? ”

Answer. No. [And it is not so now.]

“ If not, *where*, that is, *how often*, and *where*,—I mean, upon what description of Teachers of the Establishment, are they to attend ? ”

Answer. I advise them to go to church. [In what churches could half of them now find room ?]

“ More particularly, if the fall, the corruption, and natural impotence of man ; his free and full redemption in Christ Jesus, through faith working by love, should be taught and inculcated, and offered to the attention of *all*, at the church of the parish where they reside, are they *then*, in your opinion, bound in conscience to *hear*, or may they, at their own option, *forbear* ? ”

Answer. I do not think, they are bound in conscience to attend any *particular* church.

“ Or if they are at liberty to absent themselves, are they at liberty, that is, have they a *Christian privilege* to censure this doctrine in the gross, to condemn such Teachers, and boldly to pronounce them, ‘ *blind leaders of the blind* ? ’ ”

Answer. No ; by no means.

“ Whenever this happens, is it through prejudice, or rational piety ? Is it through bigotry, or a Catholic spirit ? Is it consistent with Christian charity ? Is it compatible with a state of justification ? Or, is it even allowable in the high habit of evangelical perfection ? ”

Answer. I think it is a sin. [So this curious, and, I am afraid, artful inquirer, took nothing for his motion !]

About the latter end of this year, 1782, a report prevailed, and gained credit, that Administration had an intention to bring in a Bill into the House, for embodying the Militia, and for exercising them on a Sunday. On this occasion, Mr. Wesley wrote the following letter to a Nobleman, then high in office :

“ MY LORD,—If I wrong your Lordship, I am sorry for it ; but I really believe your Lordship fears God : And I hope your Lordship has no unfavourable opinion of the Christian Revelation. This encourages me to trouble your Lordship with a few lines, which otherwise I should not take upon me to do.

“ Above thirty years ago, a motion was made in Parliament, for raising and embodying the Militia, and for exercising them, to save time, on Sunday. When the motion was like to pass, an old gentleman stood up and said, ‘ Mr. Speaker, I have one objection to this : I believe an old book, called the *Bible*.’ The Members looked at one another, and the motion was dropped.

“ Must not all others, who believe the Bible, have the very same objection ? And from what I have seen, I cannot but think, these are still three fourths of the nation. Now, setting religion out of the question, is it expedient to give such a shock to so many millions of people at once ? And certainly it would shock them extremely : It would wound them in a very tender part. For would not they, would not all England, would not all Europe, consider this as a virtual repeal of the Bible ?

And would not all serious persons say, 'We have little religion in the land now; but by this step, we shall have less still.' For wherever this pretty show is to be seen, the people will flock together; and will lounge away so much time before and after it, that the churches will be emptier than they are already!

"My Lord, I am concerned for this on a double account.—FIRST. Because I have personal obligations to your Lordship, and would fain, even for this reason, recommend your Lordship to the love and esteem of all over whom I have any influence.—SECONDLY. Because I now reverence your Lordship for your office sake, and believe it to be my bounden duty to do all that is in my little power, to advance your Lordship's influence and reputation.

"Will your Lordship permit me to add a word in my old-fashioned way? I pray Him that has all power in heaven and earth, to prosper all your endeavours for the public good, and am,

"My Lord,
"Your Lordship's willing servant,
"JOHN WESLEY."

In the beginning of this year, 1782, Mr. Wesley received from one of those good kind of people, whom he used to call *Croakers*, (and who appears to have been displeased with him for having written concerning the war with America,) a dolorous letter, full of his own apprehensions. A fragment of it only has been preserved. "And first," says the writer, "I would advise you to speak comfortably to the people, who are irritated to a high degree against you. The die is not yet cast: You are not yet in as bad a situation as England is, with regard to America. A few comfortable words might yet make them your own for ever. Let not your sun go down under a cloud. Stain not with blood every action of your whole life. Leave the event to Providence.—You cannot prevent a separation of your Preachers [the common notion at that time,] after you are gone to rest; why should you see it in your life-time? A door is open for you at Bristol, and a comfortable door too: Why should you leave the word of God to serve tables? at the instigation of those who would be glad to see your head laid in the dust, if they might sit in your chair! One would think you might, with almost half an eye, see what some of them are aiming at. May the God of peace open your eyes, and direct you to act in such a manner, as will disappoint our grand adversary of his unlawful prey.

"I am, Reverend Sir,
"Your well-wisher and humble servant,
"J. M."

Thus the *Croakers* of his day used to pester the great Lord Burleigh, the Minister of Queen Elizabeth, with their *information and advice*; but they always found, that he knew more of the matter than they did. The prophecies of the *separation of the Preachers* and of the *work dwindling into little sects and parties*, have all come to an end; like those which were spoken, foretelling the ruin of England and America, by that violent collision. But '*the kingdoms of the world shall become the kingdoms of the LORD! and THE GOVERNMENT is upon His shoulders,*' to that very end. How often, therefore, may it be said,

Far, far above thy thought,
His counsel shall appear,
When fully he the work hath wrought,
Which caused thy needless fear!

England and America have both prospered since that lamentable contention, beyond all calculation; and bid fair, when '*patience shall have its perfect work*,' and a firm union (so much desired!) shall be accomplished, not only to awe the antichristian powers, and secure peace to the world, but to carry the Gospel to the remotest regions of the earth.

Dr. Whitehead observes, "In June 1783, Mr. Wesley went over to Holland, and spent his birth-day, completing the eightieth year of his age, in that country. He seemed pleased with his visit, though the motives for making it are not very obvious. It is not probable, that the design originated with himself; and any *conjectures* concerning the reasons why others put him upon it, might be false, and appear ill-natured or invidious."—Very likely they might—But, as the Doctor has well observed, in another place, "Mr. Wesley had no secrets."—He has detailed the facts in his Journal; and I am enabled to state with whom the design originated.

Mr. William Ferguson, a member and Local Preacher in the London Society, traded to Holland for some years, and generally spent his summers there. He was a truly pious man, and could not be hid from those who had '*like precious faith*.' He soon found in Holland some who were Methodists in every thing except the name. His company was desired, not only by those of his own rank, but by many of the principal inhabitants and persons in authority. He spoke much of Mr. Wesley, and of the people under his care in England, and distributed his sermons among his new friends. Of these they expressed high approbation, and also their wishes to see the venerable Founder of Methodism among them. Mr. Ferguson pressed Mr. Wesley to visit these pious people. His own philanthropy, always alive to that which is good, aided the request.

Accordingly, on the 12th of June, 1783, he sailed from Harwich, and landed the next day at Helvoetsluys. He was received with uncommon respect by all the people, and favoured with the company of many eminent Ministers of the church of Holland, as well as of the English Ministers in the commercial towns. With the former he conversed in Latin. In the Episcopal church at Rotterdam, he preached twice to large congregations; the first time on '*God created man in his own image*,' and the people "seemed, all but their attention, dead;" the second time, on '*God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son*.'

At the Hague, he was invited to tea by Madam de Vassenaar, a lady of the first rank in that city. She received him with that easy openness and affability, which is almost peculiar to Christians and persons of quality: Soon after, came ten or twelve ladies more, who seemed to be of her own rank, (though dressed quite plain,) and two most agreeable gentlemen, one of whom was a Colonel in the Prince's Guards. After tea, he expounded the three first verses of the thirteenth Chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians; and Captain M—— interpreted sentence by sentence. Mr. Wesley then prayed, and Colonel V—— prayed after him.

On the following day, he dined at Mrs. L——'s. Her mother, upwards of seventy, seemed to be continually rejoicing in God her Saviour. The daughter breathed the same spirit; and her grand-children, three little girls and a boy, seemed to be all love. A gentleman coming in after dinner, Mr. Wesley found a particular desire to pray for him. In a little while, the stranger melted into tears, as indeed did most of the company. The next day, Madam de Vassenar invited Mr. Wesley to a meeting at a neighbouring lady's house; where he expounded Gal. vi, 14; and Captain M—— interpreted as before.

In his way from Haerlem to Amsterdam, he met with several fellow passengers who were truly serious. Some of them sung hymns in a very pleasing manner: And his and their hearts were so knit together in Christian love, that their parting at Amsterdam was very affecting.

In that city he visited a lady of large fortune, who appeared to be entirely devoted to God. "There is such a childlike simplicity," observes Mr. Wesley, concerning Amsterdam, "in all that love God in this city, as does honour to the religion they profess."

After performing service in the English church, he visited a Mr. B——, who had, not long before, found peace with God. This gentleman was full of faith and love, and could hardly mention the goodness of God without tears. His lady seemed to be exactly of the same spirit. From thence he went to another house, where a large company was assembled; and all seemed open to receive instruction, and desirous to be altogether Christians.

On the 28th of June, he made the following observation: "I have this day lived fourscore years; and, by the mercy of my God, my eyes are not waxed dim: and what little strength of body or mind I had thirty years since, just the same I have now. God grant I may never live to be useless. Rather may I

My body with my charge lay down,
And cease at once to work and live."

On the next day, he preached, in the English church at Utrecht, a very faithful, searching sermon; and afterwards dined with a merchant, who seemed to be deeply acquainted with religion. In the evening, at the desire of several persons, he repeated in a private house, the substance of his morning's sermon, to a large company, Mr. Toydemea, the Professor of Law in the University, interpreting it sentence by sentence. The congregation then sung a Dutch hymn, and Mr. Wesley and his companions, an English one. Afterwards Mr. Regulet, a venerable old man, spent some time in prayer for the establishment of peace between the two nations.

On Tuesday, July 1, he sailed from Helvoetsluys, but, through contrary winds, did not arrive at Harwich till the Friday following. He observes on the whole, that the persons with whom he conversed in Holland, were of the same spirit with his friends in England; and that he was as much at home in Utrecht and Amsterdam, as in Bristol and London.

In the year 1786, he again visited Holland. Nothing new arose during this tour. Many of the Ministers waited on him. Some of the churches were opened. He preached and expounded in many private houses; and received many marks of courtesy from several pious persons of rank and fortune, particularly from Mr. Loten, one of the

Burghomasters of Utrecht, who, both at this time and on his former visit, seemed studious to show him proof of his regard and attention. Miss Loten, his daughter, a most amiable and pious young lady, continued to correspond with Mr. Wesley till his death, in the English language, which she well understood : I have read many of her letters to Mr. Wesley.

In visiting Holland, he had no design to form Societies. He made these visits partly for relaxation, and partly to indulge and enlarge his catholic spirit, by forming an acquaintance with the truly pious in foreign nations. He often, with great satisfaction, reflected on the sameness of true religion in every country. He saw that the genuine spirit of piety, in every time and place, tends to promote union in heart and brotherly kindness. The same simplicity of manners and dress he also observed, even in those of the highest rank that professed godliness. The meetings for Christian fellowship he found to be very similar to those he had himself established. But as few of the Ministers of the church of Holland seemed to encourage or rightly understand the excellency of this great help to piety ; and as the intolerant spirit of the national Establishment, at that time, prevented these pious persons from having ministers after their own heart, they were, on these accounts, deprived of the full advantages, which they might have enjoyed in more favourable circumstances. But the Lord will, in his own good time, remove from that lovely people this want of conformity to his pure Gospel.

THE LIFE
OF
THE REV. JOHN WESLEY, A. M.

BOOK THE EIGHTH.

CHAPTER I.

THE DEED OF DECLARATION—MR. WESLEY'S ORDINATIONS—SHORT
ACCOUNT OF DR. COKE.

The year 1784 is remarkable in the annals of Methodism, 1. For the solidity given to its affairs by the Deed of Declaration, enrolled in Chancery, whereby the numerous chapels of the connexion were secured to the people, for the purposes for which they had been built : And, 2. For the advancement of its spiritual privileges, by giving a full Christian ministry to the Societies in America, just then become independent of the mother country.

The Founder and chief instrument, in the hand of God, of this great work, had often, before this time, been importuned to take those steps, which, to the generality of our people, seemed necessary for those great purposes, and thus to quiet the minds of many who dreaded the dissolution of this social compact, whenever they contemplated the death of the venerable Founder. But he was not hasty to listen to those fears. He never forgot, that the work was the Lord's, and that he need not, and ought not, to be anxious about the circumstances of it, but to wait the Lord's time.

How exceedingly men have mistaken the character of Mr. Wesley ! Because he held, what the Scriptures teach concerning religious affections, it has been confidently said, and published too, that he was wholly led by impulses and inward feelings. In the whole compass of thought, there could not be a greater mistake respecting him. What his father used to observe of him, when he was a boy, was true to the last moment of his life : " As for Jack, he will have a reason for every thing he is to do. I suppose, he would not do any thing, (*non etiam crepitare*) unless he had a reason for it." Mr. Wesley observed to me one day, " Count Zinzendorff was mistaken in his notion of the way in which the Lord leads his servants ; viz. by a divine impression. His account suits only one kind of men, and it is safe to *them* only while they continue entirely devoted. The Lord, on the contrary, has three ways of guiding them, suited to the different construction of men's minds :—

1. To some he gives a divine impression, that what is proposed in any particular case, not expressly defined in Holy Scripture, is of Him.—
2. To others, who are more sober in their mental constitution, he gives an apt and convincing Scripture.—
3. To others he gives a clear *reason* for that particular line of duty which they should then adopt. He has

chiefly led me in this last way, though I have found at times all the three concur." I had myself observed this in him. When I have spoken of the probable utility of any proposed measure, he would say, in his usual kind way, "Come, Henry, *hoc age!* 'Mind the point in hand.' Give me a reason."—The reason why he should act, as already intimated, was now very apparent; and he hesitated no longer.

With respect to the chapels, which were then greatly multiplied, the call was imperative. They were safe during his life, as the various deeds specified, that he by name, should appoint the Preachers from time to time. The generality of those deeds specified also, that, after his death, the CONFERENCE OF THE PEOPLE CALLED METHODISTS should appoint the Preachers in like manner. Some of those deeds had no reference to any posthumous appointment, and so would have been completely in the power of the Trustees, at Mr. Wesley's decease. Several even of those Trustees, where the chapels were settled according to the Methodist plan, did not scruple to say, "That the CONFERENCE was not an assembly that the law would recognise, and that, therefore, they would, after Mr. Wesley's death, appoint whom they should think proper." One of these said to me, "They might appoint a Popish Priest, if they should think it proper."

That there could be but little hope, that the work should continue to be a work of God, where such a power should be assumed, was very clear to all who were the subjects of that work. Upon Mr. Wesley's mind, it lay with great weight. That men, not a few of whom had departed from the society, (and some had been expelled from it,) should merely, by virtue of their *legal* authority over the premises, appoint Preachers to feed and guide the flock, exhibited a distressing prospect. Even where the Trustees continued members of the society, and attached to its interests, what could be expected, in a matter of such vital concern, from men so much engaged in worldly business? This has often been proved in religious communities. It was the chief cause of the decline of religion among the latter Puritans: Their lay-elders assumed, after some time, the whole authority. From this proceeded that worldly spirit and political zeal, which so greatly dishonoured that work in its last days; and which had previously overthrown both Church and State. We see also, in our day, in the sufferings of the excellent Scott, as detailed in his Memoirs lately published, what both ministers and people have to expect from such a system of Lay-Government.

The evil showed itself in prominent overt acts, previous to this period. Mr. Wesley having striven to prevail on some Trustees, in Yorkshire, to settle their chapels, so that the people might continue to hear the same truths, and be under the same discipline as heretofore, was assailed with calumny, and with the most determined opposition, as though he intended to make the chapels his own! Another set of Trustees, in the same county, absolutely refused to settle a lately-erected chapel; and, in the issue, engaged Mr. Wesley's Book-Steward in London, who had been an Itinerant Preacher, to come to them as their Minister. This man, however, was '*wise in his generation*;' and insisted upon having an income of sixty pounds per annum, with the Chapel-house to live in, settled upon him during his life, before he would relinquish his place under Mr. Wesley. What will not party-spirit do! I was a witness, when, after Mr. Wesley's death, it was found, that the Preach-

ers continued united and faithful in their calling, how deeply those men repented of their conduct in this instance. In vain they represented to the man of their unhappy choice, how lamentably their congregations had declined, and how hardly they could sustain the expences they had incurred. The answer was short: They might employ other Preachers, if they should think it proper; but the dwelling-house and the stated income belonged to him!

We need not wonder, that Dr. Whitehead should speak with such deep concern, and indulge such a spirit of calumny, concerning this important measure of settling the chapels. The Doctor, and many others who had departed from the work, had, through that wise measure, but little prospect of succeeding, like his friend the Book-Steward, to occupy chapels, built for the people by Mr. Wesley's influence, and the labour of the Preachers. The favour of those Trustees, who might be disposed to forget their sacred obligations, and incur such an awful responsibility, held out but little hope to such men, now that a legal definition was given to the phrase—**THE CONFERENCE**: And, in fact, every appeal made to Equity has fully succeeded, on this very ground.

In that day of uncertainty and surmise, there were not wanting some, even among the Itinerant Preachers, who entertained fears respecting a settlement of this kind. They had but little hope, that the work would continue, after Mr. Wesley's death, as it had during his life; and they thought it probable, that the largest Societies, and, of course, the principal chapels, would become independent. In such a case, the favour of the chief men, and especially of the Trustees, would insure considerable advantages to those Itinerants, who might wish to become settled Ministers. Of all this Mr. Wesley was fully aware, and he determined to counteract such wisdom. He found it, however, very difficult to do so, without breaking with them, which love forbade; or assuming, in a questionable case, an authority contrary to that of a father in Christ. One of those Preachers, and of considerable eminence, attacked the Deed of Settlement, and declared, that Mr. Wesley might as justly place all the dwelling-houses, barns, workshops, &c, in which we had preached for so many years, under the authority of the Conference, as he had done the chapels; and that he thus assumed an authority that the Lord had not given him. This seemed far too strong to be generally received, and it was quickly answered. A Preacher, in reply, observed, "that, certainly, there was as much justice in the one case as the other, provided those dwelling-houses, barns, workshops, &c, had been built in consequence of the preaching, and by the subscriptions of the connexion; and in order that those erections might continue to be used for the purposes for which they were thus built!" This closed the debate for that time; but the Preacher first mentioned, soon after he got to his circuit, rallied again, and wrote Mr. Wesley a long and earnest expostulation on the same subject, which I read to him in course. To this, Mr. Wesley thus shortly replied:

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—I do not love to dispute; and, least of all, to dispute with *you*, who will dispute through a stone wall. It seems a little thing with you, who shall appoint the Preachers; with me it is, under God, every thing, both for the prosperity and the continuance of the work."—He concluded with some fatherly advice, not to be so very sure of his own opinion, or so wise in his own conceit.

The first charge which Dr. Whitehead brings against this important transaction is, that "neither the design of the deed, nor the words of the several clauses, are to be imputed to Mr. Wesley."—I answer, the Doctor here asserts that of which he had no knowledge. He had, several years before, departed from the work, and from all fellowship with the Preachers or people. When he again joined the Methodist Society in London, he heard the surmisings and complaints of some who had taken offence at this measure, and this he detailed at a convenient period. Some of the Itinerant Preachers brought the same charge, at the first Conference after the deed was enrolled; and declared, that it was the work of Dr. Coke, who had joined Mr. Wesley a few years before. Mr. Wesley only replied to this in the words of Virgil, *Non vult, non potuit!* "He had neither the will nor the power."

The truth is: The Conference had requested Mr. Wesley to get such an instrument drawn up, as would define or explain what was meant by that expression, used in the various deeds of the chapels so settled; viz. "THE CONFERENCE OF THE PEOPLE CALLED METHODISTS," upon the meaning of which terms, the authority so appointing must rest, so long as there should be an Itinerant Ministry. The elder Mr. Hampson, mentioned in the preface to this work, was particularly earnest with Mr. Wesley, to have such an instrument executed without delay. He immediately set about it; and having given directions to his solicitor, who took the opinion of Counsel upon the most proper and effectual way of doing it, he committed it chiefly to the care of Dr. Coke, as his own avocations would not admit of a constant personal attendance. He, however, wrote, with his own hand, a list of a hundred names, which he ordered to be inserted, declaring his full determination, that no more should be appointed; and as there never had been so great a number at any Conference, and generally from twenty to thirty less, the number so fixed would not, it was thought, have excited either surprise or displeasure.

Some of those Preachers, however, whose names were omitted, were deeply offended, as I have stated in the Preface to the first Volume. But I can state with the fullest certainty, that what Dr. Whitehead has asserted, respecting Mr. Wesley having repented of this transaction, is totally unfounded. On the contrary, he reviewed it always with high satisfaction; and praised God, who had brought him through a business, which he had long contemplated with earnest desire, and yet with many fears. The issue, even to this day, proves the wisdom of the measure; and that it was in the order of HIM, without whom "nothing is strong, nothing is holy." Many chapels have been restored to the Societies, to whom they, in justice, belonged, by the upright decisions of our Courts of Equity, so that now no fears are entertained of any chapels settled according to this Deed.

Dr. Whitehead's second objection is a poor cavil. He strives, in the strongest language, to fix the charge of *falsehood* on those who drew up this DEED, and on Mr. Wesley, who signed and sanctioned it, because of the term, "THE CONFERENCE OF THE PEOPLE CALLED METHODISTS." I cannot but fear, that this charge might be retorted against the Doctor with truth; for he well knew, when he wrote thus, that the term was inserted in this explanatory and authoritative instrument, because it was not only the term used in common speech for

many years, but also because it was used in every record, and in all the Deeds of chapels which were settled in this way. It was, therefore, absolutely necessary, that, in such an explanatory Deed, the same term should be used, as in the Deeds of the particular chapels to which it referred. Had not the Doctor, therefore, an intention to deceive, when he cried out, "It is well known, that the *People called Methodists* never held a Conference since *Methodism* existed!" Certainly not; nor will they ever come together till they '*all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ.*' But there was no deception in thus using the term. Every member of the connexion knew, that it meant the assembled *Preachers* of the people called Methodists. The Doctor brings in the *People*, as he does the *Church*, when it suits his purpose. His observations on this point are only suited to the theories of our wildest demagogues. This absolutely necessary work was done *for the people*, who could, in no other way, retain their property, and have an Itinerant ministry. They now enjoy these blessings, and are thankful to God and man.

The Deed of Declaration is dated February 28, 1784. It is entitled, "The Rev. John Wesley's Declaration and Establishment of the Conference of the People called Methodists:" And, in the attested copy, is said to be, "Enrolled in his Majesty's High Court of Chancery."—I shall endeavour to state the substance of the Preamble to this Deed, as concisely as possible, to retain the sense complete:—It says, that, "WHEREAS divers buildings, commonly called chapels, with a messuage and dwelling-house, situate in various parts of Great Britain, have been given and conveyed, from time to time, by the said JOHN WESLEY, to certain persons and their heirs, in each of the said gifts and conveyances named—UPON TRUST; That the Trustees in the several Deeds respectively named, and the survivors of them, and the Trustees for the time being, to be elected as in the said Deeds is appointed, should permit the said John Wesley, and such other persons as he should, for that purpose, nominate and appoint, at all times during his life, to have and enjoy the free use and benefit of the said premises, therein to preach and expound God's holy word: And, *upon farther trust*, that the said respective Trustees, &c, should permit CHARLES WESLEY, brother of the said John Wesley, and such other persons as the said Charles Wesley should, for that purpose, nominate and appoint, in like manner, during his life. And after the decease of the survivor of them, the said John and Charles Wesley, THEN UPON FARTHER TRUST, that the said respective Trustees, &c, should permit such persons, and for such time and times as should be appointed at the *Yearly Conference of the people called Methodists, in London, Bristol, or Leeds*, and no others, to have and enjoy the said premises for the purposes aforesaid: AND WHEREAS divers persons have, in like manner, given or conveyed many chapels, &c, situate in various parts of Great Britain, and also in Ireland, to certain Trustees, in each of the said gifts and conveyances respectively named, upon the like trusts, and for the same uses and purposes as aforesaid, (except only, that, in some of the said gifts and conveyances, no life estate or other interest is thereby given and reserved to the said Charles Wesley:) AND WHEREAS, for rendering effectual the trusts created by the said several gifts or conveyances, and that no doubt or litigation may arise with respect to the interpretation and true

meaning thereof, it has been thought expedient by the said John Wesley, on behalf of himself, as donor of the several chapels, &c, as of the donors of the said other chapels, &c, to explain the words, *Yearly Conference of the people called Methodists*, contained in all the said TRUST DEEDS, and to declare, *what persons* are members of the said Conference, and how the *succession* and *identity* thereof is to be continued : *Now, therefore, these presents witness*, that, for accomplishing the aforesaid purposes, the said John Wesley doth hereby declare, that *the Conference of the people called Methodists*, in London, Bristol, or Leeds, ever since there hath been any yearly Conference of the people called Methodists, hath always heretofore consisted of the Preachers, commonly called Methodist Preachers, in connexion with. and under the care of, the said John Wesley, whom he hath thought expedient, year after year, to summon to meet him, to advise with them for the promotion of the Gospel of Christ, to appoint the said persons so summoned, and the other Preachers also in connexion with, and under the care of, the said John Wesley, not summoned in the yearly Conference, to the use and enjoyment of the said chapels ; the names of all which persons so summoned and appointed with the chapels to which they were so appointed, together with the duration of such appointments, with all other matters transacted at the said yearly Conference, have, year by year, been printed and published under the title of ‘MINUTES OF CONFERENCE.’ ”

The Deed then states the declaration and establishment of the Conference in the following words : “ *And these presents farther witness*, and the said JOHN WESLEY doth hereby avouch and farther declare, that the several persons hereinafter named, to wit.”—After mentioning by name one hundred of the Preachers, it farther states that these—“ Being Preachers and expounders of God’s holy word, under the care of, and in connexion with, the said JOHN WESLEY, HAVE BEEN, NOW ARE, and do, on the day of the date hereof, constitute *the members of the said Conference*, according to the true intent and meaning of the said several gifts and conveyances, wherein the words, ‘Conference of the people called Methodists’ are mentioned and contained. And that the said several persons before named, and their successors for ever, to be chosen as hereinafter mentioned, are, and shall for ever be construed, taken, and be, *the Conference of the people called Methodists*. Nevertheless, upon the terms and subject to the regulations hereinafter prescribed ; that is to say,

“ *First*. That the members of the said Conference, and their successors for the time being for ever, shall assemble once in every year, at London, Bristol, or Leeds, (except as after mentioned,) for the purposes aforesaid ; and the time and place of holding every subsequent Conference shall be appointed at the preceding one, save that the next Conference after the date hereof shall be holden at Leeds, in Yorkshire, the last Tuesday in July next.

“ *Second*. The act of the majority in number of the Conference assembled as aforesaid, shall be had, taken, and be the act of the whole Conference, to all intents, purposes, and constructions whatsoever.

“ *Third*. That, after the Conference shall be assembled as aforesaid, they shall first proceed to fill up all the vacancies occasioned by death or absence, as after mentioned.

“*Fourth.* No act of the Conference, assembled as aforesaid, shall be had, taken, or be the act of the Conference, until forty of the members thereof are assembled, unless reduced under that number by death, since the prior Conference, or by absence as after-mentioned ; nor until all the vacancies occasioned by death or absence shall be filled up by the election of new members of the Conference, so as to make up the number one hundred, unless there be not a sufficient number of persons, objects of such election : And, during the assembly of the Conference, there shall always be forty members present at the doing of any act, save as aforesaid, or otherwise such act shall be void.

“*Fifth.* The duration of the yearly assembly of the Conference, shall not be less than five days, nor more than three weeks, and be concluded by the appointment of the Conference, if under twenty-one days ; or otherwise, the conclusion thereof shall follow, of course, at the end of the said twenty-one days , the whole of all which said time of the assembly of the Conference shall be had, taken, considered, and be the yearly Conference of the people called *Methodists* ; and all acts of the Conference, during such yearly assembly thereof, shall be the acts of the Conference, and none others.

“*Sixth.* Immediately after all the vacancies, occasioned by death or absence, are filled up by the election of new members as aforesaid, the Conference shall choose a President and Secretary of their assembly out of themselves, who shall continue such until the election of another President or Secretary in the next, or other subsequent Conference ; and the said President shall have the privilege and power of two members in all acts of the Conference during his Presidency, and such other powers, privileges, and authorities, as the Conference shall, from time to time, see fit to intrust into his hands.

“*Seventh.* Any member of the Conference absenting himself from the yearly assembly thereof for two years successively, without the consent or dispensation of the Conference, and being not present on the first day of the third yearly assembly thereof, at the time and place appointed for the holding of the same, shall cease to be a member of the Conference, from and after the said first day of the said third yearly assembly thereof, to all intents and purposes, as though he was naturally dead. But the Conference shall and may dispense with, or consent to the absence of, any member from any of the said yearly assemblies, for any cause which the Conference may see fit or necessary ; and such member, whose absence shall be so dispensed with, or consented to by the Conference, shall not, by such absence, cease to be a member thereof.

“*Eighth.* The Conference shall and may expel and put out from being a member thereof, or from being in connexion therewith, or from being upon trial, any person, member of the Conference, admitted into connexion, or upon trial, for any cause which to the Conference may seem fit or necessary ; and every member of the Conference, so expelled and put out, shall cease to be a member thereof, to all intents and purposes, as though he was naturally dead. And the Conference, immediately after the expulsion of any member thereof as aforesaid, shall elect another person to be a member of the Conference, in the stead of such member so expelled.

“*Ninth.* The Conference shall and may admit into connexion with

them, or upon trial, any person or persons whom they shall approve, to be Preachers and expounders of God's holy word, under the care and direction of the Conference; the name of every such person or persons so admitted into connexion, or upon trial, as aforesaid, with the time and degrees of the admission, being entered in the Journals or Minutes of the Conference.

"Tenth. No person shall be elected a member of the Conference, who hath not been admitted in connexion with the Conference, as a Preacher and expounder of God's holy word, as aforesaid, for twelve months.

"Eleventh. The Conference shall not nor may nominate or appoint any person to the use and enjoyment of, or to preach and expound God's holy word in, any of the chapels and premises so given or conveyed, or which may be given or conveyed upon the trusts aforesaid, who is not either a member of the Conference, or admitted into connexion with the same, or upon trial, as aforesaid; nor appoint any person for more than three years successively to the use and enjoyment of any chapels and premises already given, or to be given or conveyed upon the trusts aforesaid, except ordained Ministers of the Church of England.

"Twelfth. That the Conference shall and may appoint the place of holding the yearly assembly thereof at any other city, town, or place, than London, Bristol, or Leeds, when it shall seem expedient so to do.

"Thirteenth. And for the convenience of chapels and premises already, or which may hereafter be given or conveyed upon the trusts aforesaid, situate in Ireland, or other parts out of the kingdom of Great Britain, the Conference shall and may, when and as often as it shall seem expedient, but not otherwise, appoint and delegate any member or members of the Conference, with all or any of the powers, privileges, and advantages herein-before contained or vested in the Conference; and all and every the acts, admissions, expulsions, and appointments whatsoever of such member or members of the Conference so appointed and delegated as aforesaid, the same being put into writing, and signed by such delegate or delegates, and entered in the Journals or Minutes of the Conference, and subscribed as after mentioned, shall be deemed, taken, and be the acts, admissions, expulsions, and appointments of the Conference, to all intents, constructions, and purposes whatsoever, from the respective times when the same shall be done by such delegate or delegates, notwithstanding any thing herein-contained to the contrary.

"Fourteenth. All resolutions and orders touching elections, admissions, expulsions, consents, dispensations, delegations, or appointments and acts whatsoever of the Conference, shall be entered and written in the Journals or Minutes of the Conference, which shall be kept for that purpose, publicly read, and then subscribed by the President and Secretary thereof for the time being, during the time such Conference shall be assembled; and, when so entered and subscribed, shall be had, taken, received, and be the acts of the Conference; and such entry and subscription as aforesaid shall be had, taken, received, and be evidence of all and every such acts of the said Conference and of their said delegates, without the aid of any other proof; and whatever shall not be so entered and subscribed as aforesaid, shall not be had, taken, received, or be the act of the Conference: And the said President and Secretary are hereby required and obliged to enter and subscribe, as aforesaid, every act whatever of the Conference.

“*Lastly.* Whenever the said Conference shall be reduced under the number of forty members, and continue so reduced for three yearly assemblies thereof successively, or whenever the members thereof shall decline or neglect to meet together annually, for the purposes aforesaid, during the space of three years, that then, and in either of the said events, *the Conference of the people called Methodists* shall be extinguished, and all the aforesaid powers, privileges, and advantages shall cease, and the said chapels and premises, and all other chapels and premises which now are, or hereafter may be settled, given, or conveyed, upon the trusts aforesaid, shall vest in the Trustees, for the time being, of the said chapels and premises respectively, and their successors for ever : UPON TRUST, that they, and the survivors of them, and the Trustees for the time being, do, shall, and may appoint such person and persons to preach and expound God’s holy word therein, and to have the use and enjoyment thereof, for such time and in such manner as to them shall seem proper.”

The second occurrence, for which the year 1784 is remarkable, was, as already intimated, the advancement of the spiritual interests of the connexion, by giving a full Christian ministry to the Societies in America, just then become independent of the mother country. In this transaction, Dr. Coke, already mentioned, bore a prominent part, and, in consequence, had to endure much obloquy. Dr. Whitehead seems to take pleasure in heaping upon him the grossest calumny. Having been favoured with a much more intimate knowledge of Dr. Coke, and of the business in which he was employed, than Dr. Whitehead ever had, or could have, I think it my duty to state the facts as they occurred : And, in order to elucidate those facts, it is necessary that I should give the reader a short account of that eminent man, who acted so conspicuous a part in the Methodist connexion for many years.

The Rev. THOMAS COKE, LL. D., of the University of Oxford, already mentioned, had joined Mr. Wesley about six or seven years before this period. It was at first thought, that, like some other pious Clergymen, he would act as an assistant to Mr. Wesley, in those chapels in London where the prayers were read and the Sacrament administered, according to the form of the Church of England, every Lord’s-day ; but the warmth and energy of his mind soon led him to take part in the whole work, wherever Mr. Wesley had need of such an active assistant.

His LIFE has been published by Mr. Drew ; who, for some years before the Doctor’s decease, assisted him in his literary labours. His biographer, who has executed his task with considerable ability, has, however, given his readers, not only a very defective, but, (through wrong information,) an erroneous view of several important particulars in the Memoirs which he has given to the world. A short view of these facts will not only, it is apprehended, be interesting, considering what a prominent part the Doctor acted in the work, during the latter years of Mr. Wesley ; but it is absolutely necessary, in order to account for the obloquy which Dr. Whitehead has cast upon him, respecting those events which I have now to relate in these Memoirs of Messrs. John and Charles Wesley.

Dr. Coke, as his biographer truly observes, was infected with infidel

principles while at the University, in which he was unhappily strengthened by his ungodly Tutor.* From this perilous infection he was, in a considerable degree, delivered, by reading the works of Bishop Sherlock and some other divines; but he continued a mere theoretic believer till some time after his connexion with Mr. Wesley.

He was, as his biographer acknowledges, naturally ambitious and aspiring; and, for some years, had made great efforts to obtain preferment in the Church; but finding himself disappointed, and at length shut up in the curacy of South Petherton, in Somersetshire, he became very unhappy, and felt the want of that real good, which, as yet, was unknown to him. At this time, he found some comfort by reading, in secret, the prayers composed for King William, by Archbishop Tillotson. Those gracious drawings, I have reason to believe, from his own account, was all the experience which he had of divine things, till after his union with the Methodists.

About this time, the Doctor became acquainted with the Rev. Mr. Brown, of Taunton, an old friend of Mr. Wesley. (See the Note in page 167.) From this gentleman, he received some of the writings, both of Mr. Wesley and Mr. Fletcher, which opened to his view scenes of usefulness, accompanied with labour and suffering, to which, till then, he had been a stranger. All that was of God, in his naturally aspiring mind, eagerly seized these openings of a new life; and “the ambitious stirrings” which Mr. Southey has imputed to Mr. Wesley, (not only without, but contrary to, all evidence,) was realized in the active mind of Dr. Coke.

Hearing soon after, that Mr. Wesley was on his way to Cornwall, and would be at Mr. Brown’s on a particular day, the Doctor resolved to visit that gentleman, and thus obtain an introduction to the great founder of Methodism, whom he now admired above all men.

He found Mr. Wesley, as usual, mild and easy of access, with an appearance of happiness that exceedingly impressed him. The Doctor staid all night; and, in the morning, Mr. Wesley having walked into the garden, he joined him there, and made known his situation and enlarged desires. Mr. Wesley, with marked sobriety, gave him an account of the way in which he and his brother proceeded at Oxford, and advised the Doctor to go on in the same path, doing all the good he could, visiting from house to house, omitting no part of his clerical duty; and counselled him to avoid every reasonable ground of offence. The Doctor was exceedingly surprised, and, indeed, mortified. “I thought,” said he when he related the account to me, “he would have said, *Come with me, and I will give you employment according to all that is in your heart.*” But to be thus put off, and confined still to the work of a parish, while such extensive labours and usefulness passed in vision before him, was a disappointment he could hardly bear.

He, however, began, and his warm and active mind gathering strength in its progress, he proceeded to turn the parish into a kind of Methodist Circuit. He visited and preached in every part of it; and, as some showed signs of dissatisfaction, and spoke against his proceedings, he cast off all restraint; and, after the second lesson, on the Sunday morn-

* It was chiefly in his cups that this gentleman administered the poison.—“Eh! Coke,” he would then say, as well as he could, “do you believe the Adam and Eve story, Eh?”—And thus get rid of the Bible with a fool-born jest.

ing, he commenced the practice of reading an account of his intended labours for the week to come, to the amazement of his auditory.

These bold advances soon brought matters to a crisis. The Doctor was dismissed from his curacy; and, as his opponents found out the day on which he was to leave the town, the bells were rung, and some hogsheads of cider were brought into the street, that those who were so disposed might rejoice over the deliverance of the parish from its Methodist Curate.

On Mr. Wesley's next visit to that part of the kingdom, Dr. Coke joined him, and accompanied him to Bristol. In this city, among a people established in the true faith of the Gospel, the Doctor's gentlemanly manners, his manifest zeal for religion, and his attachment to Mr. Wesley, gained him universal love and esteem. His biographer, however, has manifested very little knowledge of Mr. Wesley's character, in supposing that he kept the Doctor under his own eye for some considerable time, fearing that he might be tempted to turn back, and that he should thus lose a helper, that promised to be so useful. In all those things, Mr. Wesley always kept his mind perfectly free, knowing his high responsibility. Speaking of his own constant fellow labourers, to whom under God he was indebted for his great success, he observed many years before this time, "The desire of serving me, as sons in the Gospel, was on their part, not mine; my wish was to live and die in retirement." He was still more cautious with respect to the Clergymen who joined him. He well knew, that only those whom *the Lord of the harvest thrusts forth* into the work, would be permanently useful in it; and he certainly was in no bondage respecting Dr. Coke. Upon Mr. Wesley's going to London, he left the Doctor at Bristol, where he remained a considerable time.

While Dr. Coke continued in that city, he became more fully acquainted with the rules of the Society into which he had entered. The discipline, which has been detailed in these Memoirs, it now became his duty to maintain, and consequently to be present at all the meetings of the Society. In these meetings, he listened to Christian experience, to which he was himself a stranger; and not unfrequently, without being conscious of the cause, he found himself in that embarrassing situation, described by Dr. Edwards, of New England, in his "Considerations on the Work of God," in that province: "How melancholy," observes that great man, "is the case of one who is to act as a shepherd and guide to a people, many of whom are under great awakenings, and many are filled with divine light, love, and joy; to undertake to instruct and lead them all, under those various circumstances; to be put to it to play the hypocrite, and force the airs of a saint in preaching, and, from time to time, in private conversation; and, in particular dealing with souls, to undertake to judge of their circumstances; to talk to those who come to him, as if he knew what they said; to try to talk with persons of experience, as if he had experience as well as they; to force a joyful countenance and manner of speech, when there is nothing in the heart. What sorrowful work is here! O how miserable must such a person feel! What wretched slavery is this! Besides the infinite provocation of the most high God, and displeasure of his Lord and Master!"

The case of Dr. Coke, who truly wished to do good, was, however, not so lamentable. He was not in the condition of an ungodly minis-

ter, who, for a living, undertakes such a work. The Doctor had no stipend, his own fortune being sufficient for his support; and, not being convinced of sin, he felt no such misery. He did not, indeed, like Mr. Southey and others, suppose that those people laboured under a mental disease; on the contrary, he supposed them sincere and of a sound mind: but he comforted himself with his own supposed advantages. "They have," he said to himself, "a knowledge of God among them which is strange to me; but in philanthropy, and in large views for the good of mankind, I am superior to them."

Dr. Coke had not those advantages in early youth with which Mr. Wesley was so eminently favoured. He had not been brought up '*in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*;' his parents being only attached to the forms, but having no knowledge of the power of religion. He was also an only child, and greatly indulged. I have not, therefore, to trace in him that early work of grace which was so conspicuous in the great subject of these Memoirs; rather, I have to represent him as '*a brand plucked from the burning*,' from the fire of ambition, and the intoxicating love of the world, so natural to man. He seems to have been altogether ignorant of the higher principle of the Gospel, when his long-suffering God directed his steps to a people who were '*prepared of the Lord*' to direct him to '*that fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness*,' and to a principle of action wholly unknown to the natural man, whatever his talents may be,—'*faith that worketh by love*.' In this respect he had an advantage which Mr. Wesley had not: he was received, not into the wide field, where he might possibly find the pearl of great price, but into the garden planted by the Lord, where '*gold, silver, and precious stones*,' all the holy fruits of faith, were common to those who believed.

Being called to London, an event which happened on the road was a mean in the hand of Him who '*numbered the hairs of his head*,'—'*who worketh all in all*,' and who compassionated his ignorance, of teaching him how little real cause he had of self-preference. One of the passengers in the coach in which he travelled, was taken with a fit; and, as there was an immediate cry for water, the Doctor ran to a brook which he saw at some distance. Having no vessel, he thought of his hat; but on beholding the fine new beaver, decorated with an elegant rose, then common among clergymen, his heart, which he had supposed so large, instantly failed him, and he returned in haste to the scene of distress. A gentleman, who was assisting the afflicted man, and had observed with pleasure the Doctor's design, exclaimed with surprise and indignation, "What, Sir! have you brought no water?" and instantly ran himself to the brook, and returned with his hat full.

The Doctor felt his situation, in the presence of the passengers; but his inward mortification was inexpressible. He was deeply wounded in the very part where he supposed himself invulnerable. *He had trusted in himself that he was righteous*, on a high scale, and had despised—or lightly esteemed—others. That scale now kicked the beam, and the convicted sinner felt the truth of that word, '*He that trusteth his own heart is a fool*,'—'*he knoweth nothing as he ought to know*.' With his spirit thus wounded he arrived in London.

The Doctor was now prepared to attend more seriously to what he heard among a people, who were well acquainted with those teachings

and reproofs of the Spirit of God, and with that renunciation of '*their own righteousness*' which must precede the obtaining of '*that righteousness which is of God by faith.*'

His trouble increased. He found himself to be what our Lord calls a *Stranger* in the fellowship of his people. The Holy Spirit, who, by fastening one wrong act on the mind of a sinner, can, in the issue, as in the case of the Samaritan woman, convince him of '*all that ever he did,*' now showed him that '*in him dwelt no good thing.*' But, to acknowledge his state, and to take his place among those who "groaned their nature's weight to feel," was a sacrifice as yet too great for him. He was stript of that self-complacency which had served at Bristol as a shield against all the arrows of conviction, and his distress became very great. He felt he had undertaken a work for which he was wholly unfit, and he saw no way of deliverance.

His arrival made some noise ; and he had many visitors. Among the number was Mr. Maxfield, who had separated from Mr. Wesley, as already related, and who occupied a chapel in the neighbourhood of Moorfields.* The ardency and strength of this gentleman's mind has been already noted. What Lady Huntingdon had said of him, when first employed in the work, must be fresh in the reader's recollection. After a short preface, he inquired, with his usual promptness, into the Doctor's own state : He seemed not to doubt of his justification (as neither did Mr. Wesley,) but inquired if he were *perfected in love* ? The Doctor acknowledged, he had not attained that privilege. Mr. Maxfield immediately pressed it upon him with all his might ; showing, in his usual strong way, that the blessing was to be received by faith, and consequently that it might and ought to be received now. The Doctor was amazed, and much embarrassed : He got off, however, from his vehement exhorter as well as he could, informing him, that he would maturely consider what had been advanced, and make it a matter of prayer.

The Doctor did so ; and an intimacy took place between them, the consequence of which was, that, through the instrumentality of that extraordinary man, the Doctor found rest unto his soul. He obtained that faith which gave his labouring conscience peace ; and which, in a mind naturally so ardent, raised him up as on the wings of eagles ! He joined, from that time, in all the exercises of religion with a fervour that surprised many, and caused the people to whom he ministered to glorify God on his behalf.

He confined himself no longer to the duties of a clergyman, but took part in all the work of a regular preacher. Preaching abroad, and in all the chapels ; exhorting all with a zeal almost equal to Maxfield himself ; † '*instant in season and out of season,*' no labours seemed too much for him,—no journeyings too fatiguing ; so that Mr. Wesley used to say, he was to him as a right hand.

* What the biographer of Dr. Coke says of Mr. Maxfield's living at South Petherton, and of his being acquainted with the Doctor there, is, I believe, an entire mistake.

† In this account the Reader will see much of what has been already related respecting Mr. Maxfield. See page 131.—Mr. Wesley told me, that while this very zealous man remained in connexion with him, he took care to have Dr. Jones in London at the same time with Mr. Maxfield. The one was remarkable for enforcing the fruits of faith, and the duties of the Gospel : The other for vehemently insisting on faith itself. Each had his peculiar talent ; but labouring together, the people were kept in the safe path of faith and obedience. But Dr. Coke did not need any stimulus to duty. He was '*zealous of good works*' from the first day to the last.

That much of the "infection of nature" (which our church, in conformity with holy Scripture, states as "remaining even in the regenerate,") still remained in him, must not, and, indeed, cannot be denied. '*The wisdom from above*' was not always manifest in his zeal; so that those who *sought occasion* were amply supplied with matter for declamation against him. He spared not those whom he thought lukewarm, and consequently they did not spare him. Complaints were sometimes made to Mr. Wesley against what was called his rash spirit and proceedings; but as those complaints were generally made by those who were known to be *lukewarm*, or not well affected, that man of God, who would believe evil of no man, and put the best construction upon every thing, took little notice of these complaints, having generally abundant cause to be satisfied with all the Doctor's conduct, which came under his own observation, and especially with the humility and meekness with which he received every reproof or advice from his father in God.

I have no intention of giving a biography of Dr. Coke: that is already done. But I think it needful to give this short sketch of this good and very zealous man's character, in order to correct the mistakes of his biographer; and chiefly, that the reader may know the real ground of those unjust censures, which Dr. Whitehead has so liberally heaped upon him, in his *Life of Mr. Wesley*. That *Life* was written to please some who were most offended with Dr. Coke; and we may believe also, that Dr. Whitehead was not without hope, that the calumnies which he thus cast upon him would excuse the injury which he had committed against the Doctor, concerning Mr. Wesley's manuscripts.

I shall now proceed to detail the particulars concerning his being employed by Mr. Wesley in a very extensive Missionary work;—a work which led him into his own proper element, and in which he so greatly distinguished himself, not only on the continent of America, but in the West India Islands. There he proved himself an '*able Minister of the New Testament*' towards those who, without that ministry, would have been '*of all men most miserable.*' He thus became the zealous successor of Nathaniel Gilbert, the pious and excellent Speaker of the House of Assembly in Antigua. The labours of those men, with their able coadjutors, will, through '*the grace of Him who worketh all in all, be found unto praise, and honour, and glory, in the day of the Lord Jesus.*'

CHAPTER II.

PROGRESS OF RELIGION IN AMERICA—ORDINATION FOR THE AMERICAN SOCIETIES—OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED.

AMERICA, unlike other empires, owes all its greatness to religion, especially North America, of which we must now speak.

In 1606, James the First erected two companies for the colonization of New England, then included under the general name of VIRGINIA. But no regular settlements were then formed; a small trade only was carried on with the Indians. But under the violent persecutions of the Non-conformists by Archbishop Laud, many of that oppressed people

fled for refuge to New England ; and, with indefatigable and unremitted zeal, through almost every difficulty and danger that could obstruct so hazardous an undertaking, changed the face of a great tract of country from a waste wilderness to an improved and cultivated land. Many of these first settlers did undoubtedly experience the vital power of godliness, and were joined by a multitude of others, that fled from the tyranny of Charles the Second.

For some considerable time, all the holy fruits of religion were manifested among them. But, as usual, an uninterrupted flow of prosperity damped the sacred flame ; and, perhaps, their wars with the Indian nations might also contribute towards it. Then appeared the same spirit among themselves, which they had so much opposed in England. The views of mankind were not sufficiently enlarged at that period, to enable them to see the importance of universal toleration to the prosperity of society. None of them seem to have had a conception, that a most perfect civil amity may be preserved among those who differ in the speculative points of Theology. They, therefore, persecuted the emigrants, who, like themselves, had left their native country for a more comfortable habitation than they found at home, but who unhappily differed from them, either in modes of worship or religious sentiments. Of these, the Quakers were the most offensive, and were inhumanly, yea cruelly, treated by them. Mercy and pure religion, inseparable companions, then forsook the land. They lost their piety ; and, to say the best of them, were a *flourishing, commercial people*.

In 1729, the Lord raised up that eminent man, Dr. Jonathan Edwards. In his time, religion flourished again in New England. A very brief account of this revival I shall give, in his own words :

“ In the town of Northampton, in New England, after a more than ordinary licentiousness in the people, a concern for religion began to revive in 1729, but more observedly in 1733, when there was a general reformation of outward disorders, which has continued ever since.

“ About this time, I began to preach concerning *Justification by faith alone*. This was attended with a very remarkable blessing. Then it was that the Spirit of God began wonderfully to work among us. A great and earnest concern about the things of God ran through all parts of the town. All talk, but of eternal things, was laid aside. The conversation in all companies, (unless so far as was necessary for the carrying on of worldly business,) was wholly upon religion. Hence there soon appeared a glorious alteration, so that, in 1735, the town seemed to be full of the presence of God. There were remarkable tokens of God’s presence almost in every house : Parents rejoicing over their children as new born, husbands over their wives, and wives over their husbands.

“ God has also seemed to go out of his usual way in the quickness of his work. It is wonderful, that persons should be so suddenly, and yet so greatly, changed. Many have been taken from a loose and careless way of living, and seized with strong convictions of their guilt and misery ; and, in a very little time, old things have passed away, and all things have become new with them.”

There were many also, in New England, and among the Indians, truly converted to God, by those eminent and laborious ministers, Mr. Elliott and Mr. Brainerd.

In 1739, Mr. George Whitefield made his second visit to America,

and the Spirit of the Most High did, indeed, rest upon him. He revived that pure religion, which was so remarkable in the time of Dr. Edwards, but after his removal had decayed. Great was his zeal, and great his success. *'God spake the word, and great was the company of the Preachers.'* The zealous Ministers raised by his labours, who were distinguished by the denomination of *New Lights*, became the most numerous body in New England: And, strange as it may appear, the old, wise, literary body of Presbyterians, in a Synod held among themselves, formally thrust out or excommunicated the majority; declaring, they would have no ministerial union with such an illiterate body of men. But the real Ministers of God were not to be silenced by such means. However, this revival also was but of short duration. Formality on the one hand, and Antinomianism on the other, again recovered their ascendancy.

The States of New-York and New Jersey, the former of which was first settled by the English in 1664; and the latter, some time in the reign of Charles II, were never remarkable for religion, till they were visited by some of the members of Mr. Wesley's Societies. Being so near New England, they, indeed, partook in a small measure of its revivals, especially those under Dr. Edwards and Mr. Whitefield.

Pennsylvania, which formerly included the little State of Delaware, was possessed originally by the Dutch and Swedes; but was settled by the English in the reign of Charles the Second under the direction of that great and good man, William Penn, the Quaker. The first of these settlers, as we might naturally expect, were chiefly persons of his own persuasion; and the Quakers make now a very considerable part of that state. They certainly had, and now have, real religion among them. The quaintness of their manners, and their ideas concerning the superior light of their dispensation, have kept them from being much known, and from being very useful. But the noble sacrifice of all their slaves, whom they have emancipated to a man, is a proof of the strong religious principle of that people.

In respect to the religion of Pennsylvania, (that of the Quakers excepted,) we can say but little in its commendation; though it cannot be doubted, that Mr. Whitefield kindled the flame of divine love in the hearts of several individuals, during his short visits to Philadelphia.

The five States to the South of those already mentioned, viz., Maryland, Virginia, North and South Carolina, and Georgia, may be considered together. The Baptists, who are numerous in some parts of these States, have been useful to thousands, both of whites and blacks. The abilities of their Ministers in general were peculiarly small; but their zeal was great, and God was pleased to own it. To this day, a considerable measure of real religion is to be found among them. Many of their Preachers having embraced the unscriptural doctrine of Universal Restitution, have introduced thereby much controversy and dissension into their church. Here and there, in that vast tract of country, from the most eastern point of Maryland to the most western point of Georgia, some Ministers were also to be found, that sprung from the labours of Mr. Wesley and Mr. Whitefield, who were zealous for the salvation of souls. The Clergy of the Church of England, in these States, in general, presented a melancholy contrast to these true Ministers of the Gospel. Notwithstanding the purity and many other excellencies of

their Liturgy, Articles, and Homilies, they were, with few exceptions, a disgrace to the church of God : Nor had their wretched flocks, at the distance of three or four thousand miles from the source of ecclesiastical power, the least hopes of redress. But, we acknowledge, and bless God for it, that the change has been abundantly for the better, since they have been favoured with an Episcopacy of their own.

During the space of thirty years before Mr. Wesley's death, several persons, members of his Society, emigrated from England and Ireland, and settled in various parts of America. About the year 1770, Philip Embury, a Local Preacher from Ireland, began to preach in the city of New-York, and formed a Society of his own countrymen and some of the citizens. About the same time, Robert Strawbridge, another Local Preacher from Ireland, settled in Frederic county, in Maryland, and, preaching there, formed some Societies. A little before this period, Mr. Webb, a Lieutenant in the army, preached at New-York and Philadelphia with great success, and, with the assistance of his friends, erected a chapel in New-York, which was the first chapel in Mr. Wesley's connexion in America. Induced by the success he met with, and by an earnest desire of saving souls, he wrote a letter to Mr. Wesley, earnestly importuning him to send Missionaries to that Continent. Accordingly, Mr. Wesley nominated Mr. Richard Boardman and Mr. Joseph Pilmoor, as Missionaries for America, who landed at Philadelphia in 1769, and were the first Itinerant Preachers in connexion with Mr. Wesley on that Continent. A few days after their landing, Mr. Pilmoor wrote a letter to Mr. Wesley, of which the following is an extract :

“ *Philadelphia, Oct. 31, 1769.*

“ REVEREND SIR,—By the blessing of God, we are safe arrived here, after a tedious passage of nine weeks.

“ We were not a little surprised to find Captain Webb in town, and a Society of about a hundred members, who desire to be in close connexion with you. ‘ *This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.*’

“ I have preached several times, and the people flock to hear in multitudes. Sunday evening, I went out upon the Common. I had the stage, appointed for the horse-race, for my pulpit ; and, I think, between four and five thousand hearers, who heard with attention still as night. Blessed be God for field-preaching ! When I began to talk of preaching at five o'clock in the morning, the people thought it would not answer in America : However, I resolved to try, and had a very good congregation.

“ Here seems to be a great and effectual door opening in this country, and, I hope, many souls will be gathered in. The people in general like to hear the word, and seem to have some ideas of salvation by grace.”

Mr. Boardman observes, in a letter to Mr. Wesley from New-York, dated April 24, 1770 : “ Our house contains about seventeen hundred hearers. About a third part of those who attend the preaching, get in ; the rest are glad to hear without. There appears such a willingness in the Americans to hear the word, as I never saw before. They have no preaching in some parts of the back settlements. I doubt not, but an effectual door will be opened among them.—O may the Most High now

give his Son the Heathen for his inheritance ! The number of Blacks that attend the preaching, affects me much."

Mr. Pilmoor visited Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina, and preached in those States with considerable success.

About the latter end of the year 1771, Mr. Wesley sent over Mr. Francis Asbury, and Mr. Richard Wright, to the assistance of the former Missionaries. Mr. Asbury was then, as he continued to his death, indefatigable in his labours. He staid not long in the cities. Most of his time he spent in the villages and plantations, forming Societies in many places. He frequently complains in his Journal, which was published in America, that his brethren were too fond of the cities ; and justly observes, that no extensive work could be carried on in America, unless the Preachers devoted more of their time to the plantations ; the cities and towns being very few, and a great majority of the inhabitants settled in the interior parts of the country.

In 1773, Mr. Wesley sent over Mr. Thomas Rankin and Mr. George Shadford. When they arrived, they found that the Societies in New-York and Philadelphia had laid aside almost all discipline, and were little better than a rope of sand. Mr. Rankin, who was a strenuous advocate for all the various branches of the economy established by Mr. Wesley, and was invested by him with considerable authority, soon reduced every thing into order. He and Mr. Shadford laboured for near five years on that Continent, travelling through all the States between New-York and North Carolina inclusive, forming Societies and preaching the Gospel with great success.

"At our first little Conference in Philadelphia, July, 1773," observes Mr. Rankin, in his own printed account, "we had about a thousand in the different Societies, and six or seven Preachers : And, in May, 1777, we had forty Preachers in the different circuits, and about seven thousand members in the Societies ; besides many hundreds of Negroes, who were convinced of sin, and many of them happy in the love of God. Were it not for the Civil War, I have reason to believe, the work of God would have flourished in a more abundant manner ; as both rich and poor gladly embraced the truths of the Gospel, and received the Preachers with open arms."

When the Civil War unhappily became general in that country, Mr. Rankin, with other Preachers from England, who had spoken publicly in behalf of the British cause, were obliged to fly for their lives. And of all the European Missionaries, Mr. Francis Asbury alone was determined to bear the heat and burden of that day. Though he had preserved a perfect neutrality, and had spoken nothing in public or private on the merits of the war, yet he was obliged, from the suspicions already raised against the Societies, to conceal himself for two years, in the county of Kent in Delaware, at the house of a Mr. White, a Justice of the Peace and a member of the Society. In the house of this gentleman, he held two Conferences with all the Preachers he could collect in the midst of the troubles. But a gentleman of Delaware, who became a very celebrated character by his publications, entitled "The Farmer's Letters," JOHN DICKENSON, Esq., predecessor to Dr. Franklin in the Government of Pennsylvania, with great candour gave him a strong letter of recommendation, by virtue of which he ventured and continued to travel through the States without any molestation.

Many of the Preachers, who had learned, like Mr. Wesley, to be men of one book, scrupled to take the oaths of allegiance to the States in which they respectively laboured, and were consequently fined or imprisoned. But, in every instance, those who were confined, soon found some powerful friend, yea, often one who had no connexion with the Society, who used his influence with the Governor and Council of the State, and obtained their liberty. Frequent instances there were, when the Preachers were brought before the Judges, that they bore such a pointed testimony against sin, and preached with such power the doctrines of the Gospel, that the Judges were at a loss in what manner to behave to them. Mr. Moore, a Preacher in Baltimore, delivered, on one of those occasions, such a sermon from the bar, as filled the Judges and the whole Court with astonishment. The Assembly of Maryland, partly perhaps to deliver the Judges from the trouble which was given them, and partly out of a spirit of candour, passed an Act, expressly to allow the Methodist Preachers, so called, to exercise their function without taking the oath of allegiance.

Some time before this a remarkable occurrence happened in a county in Maryland. Mr. Chew, one of the Preachers, was brought before Mr. Downs, then Sheriff of the county, and afterwards a member of the General Assembly of the State. The Sheriff demanded, whether he was a Minister of the Gospel. On receiving from Mr. Chew an answer in the affirmative, he required him to take the oath of allegiance. Mr. Chew answered him, that he had scruples on his mind, and therefore could not consent at present. Mr. Downs informed him, that he was bound on oath to execute the laws, and must, in such case, commit him to prison. Mr. Chew calmly replied, that he by no means wished to be the cause of perjury, and therefore was perfectly resigned to suffer the penalty incurred. "You are a strange man," cried the Sheriff, "and I cannot bear to punish you. I will, therefore, make my own house your prison." He accordingly committed him, under his hand and seal, and kept him in his own house for three months; during which time, the Sheriff was awakened, and his lady converted. They soon afterwards joined the Society; and Mr. Downs, with the assistance of some neighbouring gentlemen, built a preaching house for the Society at Tuckahoe, the place where he lived.

During the Civil War, the societies were destitute of the Sacraments, except in two or three of the cities. They could not obtain Baptism for their children, or the Lord's Supper for themselves, from the Presbyterian, Independent, or Baptist Ministers, but on condition, that they would leave the society of which they were members, and join those churches respectively: And almost all the Clergy of the Church of England had left the country. The Societies in general were so grieved on this account, and so influenced the minds of the Preachers by their incessant complaints, that, in the year 1778, a considerable number of them earnestly importuned Mr. Asbury to take proper measures, that the people might enjoy the privileges of all other churches, and no longer be deprived of the Christian Sacraments. Mr. Asbury's attachment to the Church of England was, at that time, exceedingly strong: He, therefore, refused them any redress. On this, the majority of the Preachers withdrew from him, and consequently from Mr. Wesley, and chose out of themselves three senior brethren, who ordained others by the imposi-

tion of their hands. The preachers thus set apart administered the Sacraments to those whom they judged proper to receive it, in every place where they came. However, Mr. Asbury, by indefatigable labour and attention, and by all the address in his power, brought them back one after another ; and, by a vote of one of the Conferences, the ordination was declared invalid, and a perfect re-union took place.

When peace was established between Great Britain and the States, the intercourse was opened betwixt the societies in both countries. Mr. Wesley then received from Mr. Asbury a full account of the progress of the work during the war ; and especially of the division which had taken place, and the difficulties he met with, before it was healed. He also informed Mr. Wesley of the extreme uneasiness of the people's minds for want of the Sacraments ; that thousands of their children were unbaptized, and the members of the Societies in general had not partaken of the Lord's Supper for many years. Mr. Wesley then considered the subject, and informed Dr. Coke of his design of drawing up a plan of church-government, and of establishing an ordination for his American Societies. But, cautious of entering on so new a plan, he afterwards suspended the execution of his purpose, and weighed the whole for upwards of a year.

At the Conference held in Leeds in 1784, he declared his intention of sending Dr. Coke and some other Preachers to America. Mr. Richard Whatcoat and Mr. Thomas Vasey offered themselves as Missionaries for that purpose, and were accepted. Before they sailed, Mr. Wesley abridged the Common Prayer-book of the Church of England, and wrote to Dr. Coke, then in London, desiring him to meet him in Bristol, to receive fuller powers ; and to bring the Rev. Mr. Creighton with him. The Doctor and Mr. Creighton accordingly met him in Bristol ; when, with their assistance, he ordained Mr. Richard Whatcoat, and Mr. Thomas Vasey, Presbyters for America : And, being peculiarly attached to every rite of the Church of England, he afterwards ordained Dr. Coke a Superintendent, giving him letters of ordination under his hand and seal, and, at the same time, the following letter to be printed, and circulated in America :

“ Bristol, September 10, 1784.

“ To Dr. COKE, Mr. ASBURY, and our Brethren in North America.

“ By a very uncommon train of providences, many of the provinces of North America are totally disjoined from their mother country, and erected into independent States. The English Government has no authority over them, either civil or ecclesiastical, any more than over the States of Holland. A civil authority is exercised over them, partly by the Congress, partly by the Provincial Assemblies. But no one either exercises or claims any ecclesiastical authority at all. In this peculiar situation, some thousands of the inhabitants of these States desire my advice ; and, in compliance with their desire, I have drawn up a little sketch.

“ Lord King's account of the Primitive Church convinced me, many years ago, that Bishops and Presbyters are the same order, and conse-

quently have the same right to ordain.* For many years I have been importuned, from time to time, to exercise this right, by ordaining part of our Travelling Preachers. But I have still refused, not only for peace sake, but because I was determined, as little as possible, to violate the established order of the National Church to which I belonged.

"But the case is widely different between England and North America. Here there are Bishops who have a legal jurisdiction. In America there are none, neither any parish Ministers. So that, for some hundred miles together, there is none either to baptize or to administer the Lord's Supper. Here, therefore, my scruples are at an end; and I conceive myself at full liberty, as I violate no order, and invade no man's right, by appointing and sending labourers into the harvest.

"I have accordingly appointed Dr. Coke and Mr. Francis Asbury to be joint Superintendents over our brethren in North America; as also Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey, to act as Elders among them, by baptizing and administering the Lord's Supper. And I have prepared a Liturgy, little differing from that of the Church of England, (I think, the best constituted national church in the world,) which I advise all the Travelling Preachers to use on the Lord's-day, in all the congregations, reading the Litany only on Wednesdays and Fridays, and praying extempore on all other days. I also advise the Elders to administer the Supper of the Lord on every Lord's-day.

"If any one will point out a more rational and Scriptural way, of feeding and guiding those poor sheep in the wilderness, I will gladly embrace it. At present, I cannot see any better method than that I have taken.

"It has, indeed, been proposed, to desire the English Bishops to ordain part of our Preachers for America. But to this I object, 1. I desired the Bishop of London to ordain only one, but could not prevail. 2. If they consented, we know the slowness of their proceedings; but the matter admits of no delay. 3. If they would ordain them *now*, they would likewise expect to govern them. And how grievously would this entangle us? 4. As our American brethren are now totally disentangled both from the State and from the English hierarchy, we dare not entangle them again either with the one or the other. They are now at full liberty, simply to follow the Scriptures and the Primitive Church. And we judge it best, that they should stand fast in that liberty, 'where-with God has so strangely made them free.'

"JOHN WESLEY."

Dr. Whitehead, true to the party for whom he wrote, and contrary to his own well-known principles, and earnest wishes, so manifest in the statement set forth in the Preface to this work, lampoons this whole proceeding, in language that not only sets all sobriety at defiance, but even borders on impiety. He begins by introducing what he calls "part of a letter from one Preacher to another," concerning this solemn transaction. I cannot but suspect, that the letter was really written by the Doctor himself, as it manifests so much spleen, as could hardly be

* A pious Prelate, (the late Rev Dr. Horne, Bishop of Norwich,) remarks on this transaction, "If a Presbyter can ordain a Bishop, then the greater is blessed of the less, and the order of all things is inverted." No; not if Mr. Wesley's position be true, that they are *the same order*. The Bishop should have overthrown this position, (if he could,) to have established his own.

felt by any but a disappointed man. If it were really written by any other Preacher of that day, I should think it the production of his friend the Book-Steward, recently mentioned; as he was the only Preacher who spoke against Mr. Wesley's ordinations in the Conference, some time before he accepted the call of those Trustees, by whom the chapel, already noticed, (and, so far as their influence extended, a society also,) was wrested from their spiritual Fathers and Brethren, and became the property of that Preacher during his life. A few expressions in that rancorous epistle will show the spirit of the writer:

"So we have Methodist Parsons of our own!—I greatly fear, the SON OF MAN was not Secretary of State, or not present, when the business was brought on and carried.—Who is the father of this *monster*, so long dreaded by the Father of his people, and by most of his sons? Whoever he be, time will prove him a *Felon* to Methodism, and discover his assassinating knife sticking fast in the vitals of its body. Years to come will speak in groans our religious madness for gowns and bands. Will it not sting a man, that has been honoured by his Lord and Master for many years, to have a black-robed boy, flirting away in the exercise of his sacred office, set over him?" &c. Poor Dr. Whitehead! He was, indeed, stung almost to madness, when he wrote, or published to the world, this vulgar Philippic.

The *Felon*, with his knife, &c, so charitably mentioned, was Dr. Coke, whose zeal had literally provoked many. When his incensed calumniator had got possession of Mr. Wesley's MSS., as related in the Preface, he found among them a letter written by the Doctor to Mr. Wesley, which he thought would answer his wretched purpose. This document Dr. Whitehead has given entire. I shall also present it to the reader, not doubting but, in this day, when every malignant prophecy has failed, when no "black-robed boys" have appeared among the plain Preachers of the Gospel, when no madness for gowns and bands has been manifested, when no such "flirting" novices have been set over the Lord's favoured servants, and when the circumstances of that day are considered, it will appear, that Dr. Coke had much ground for the apprehensions which he expressed, and for the request which he preferred in that letter.

It being determined at Leeds, that the Ministers, who were to assist Mr. Wesley, should meet him at Bristol; August the 9th, Dr. Coke sent him the following letter:

"HONOURED AND DEAR SIR,—The more maturely I consider the subject, the more expedient it appears to me, *that the power of ordaining others should be received by me from you*, by the imposition of your hands; and that you should lay hands on brother Whatcoat and brother Vasey, for the following reasons: 1. It seems to me the most Scriptural way, and most agreeable to the practice of the Primitive Churches.—2. I may want all the influence in America, which you can throw into my scale. Mr. Brackenbury informed me at Leeds, that he saw a letter in London from Mr. Asbury, in which he observed, 'that he would not receive any person deputed by you to take any part of the superintendency of the work invested in him;' or words which evidently implied so much. I do not find any the least degree of prejudice in my mind against Mr. Asbury; on the contrary, a very great

love and esteem ; and I am determined not to stir a finger without his consent, unless mere sheer necessity obliges me, but rather to lie at his feet in all things. But as the journey is long, and you cannot spare me often, and it is well to provide against *all events*, and an authority *formally* received from you will, (I am conscious of it,) be fully admitted by the people ; and my exercising the office of ordination without that *formal* authority may be disputed, if there be any opposition on any other account ; I could, therefore, *earnestly* wish you would exercise that power, in this instance, which, I have not the shadow of a doubt, but God hath invested you with for the good of our connexion. I think, you have tried me too often to doubt, whether I will, in any degree, use the power you are pleased to invest me with, farther than I believe absolutely necessary for the prosperity of the work. 3. In respect of my brethren, (brother Whatcoat and Vasey,) it is very uncertain indeed, whether any of the Clergy, mentioned by brother Rankin, will stir a step with me in the work, except Mr. Jarrit ; and it is by no means certain, that even he will choose to join me in ordaining : And propriety and universal practice make it expedient, that I should have two Presbyters with me in this work. In short, it appears to me, that every thing should be prepared, and every thing proper be done, that can possibly be done *this side the water*. You can do all this in Mr. C——n's house, in your chamber ; and afterwards, (according to Mr. Fletcher's advice,)* give us letters testimonial of the different offices with which you have been pleased to invest us. For the purpose of laying hands on brothers Whatcoat and Vasey, I can bring Mr. Creighton down with me, by which you will have two Presbyters with you. In respect to brother Rankin's argument, that you will escape a great deal of odium by omitting this, it is nothing. Either it will be known, or not known ; if not known, then no odium will arise ; but if known, you will be obliged to acknowledge that I acted under your direction, or suffer me to sink under the weight of my enemies, with, perhaps, your brother at the head of them. I shall entreat you to ponder these things.

“ Your most dutiful,

“ T. COKE.”†

Dr. Whitehead indulges in some splenetic remarks on this letter, and on Mr. Wesley's conduct in this whole transaction. Not choosing to attack Lord King's position, that Bishops and Presbyters were, in the Primitive Church, the same order, (of the truth of which he had no doubt,) he insists, that it does not justify Mr. Wesley ; and asserts, that, according to the position laid down, “ Dr. Coke had the same right to ordain Mr. Wesley, that Mr. Wesley had to ordain Dr. Coke.” If this should be granted, what will it amount to ? As presbyters of the church, they had, certainly, the same right to ordain ; and if Dr. Coke had been the Father of that great work which is called Methodism, he would, in that case, have had a right to ordain Mr. Wesley, to superintend any part of that work. But Dr. Coke was not the father of that work ; he was still *a babe, a son in the Gospel*, but remarkable for zeal

* Mr. Fletcher attended the Conference in 1784, and was one of the meeting which Mr. Wesley called, in order to consider the subject.

† Dr. Whitehead observes, “ This letter is taken from an attested copy of the Doctor's letter, in Mr. Charles Wesley's handwriting.”

and activity. His education, rank in life, and station in the Established Church, pointed him out, however, as a proper person to be employed in that new and very delicate situation, in which the Methodists were placed, by the recent revolution in America. The Doctor, certainly, needed all the authority and influence which Mr. Wesley could give him; and if he chose to give it to him, according to the forms of the Church of England, which he loved, and which is so truly venerable, who has a right to find fault with him? Certainly, not Dr. Whitehead; who, in all he has said on the subject, has contradicted his own principles.

The Doctor concludes his lampoon with supposing, that "the three gentlemen were highly gratified with their new titles, as we see both young and old children gratified with gilded toys."—To these suppositions, I shall only say, that those good men, being then called to exercise the duties of the entire Christian ministry, were, no doubt, much comforted and strengthened, in receiving from the father of the work, and from his reverend assistants, that full Scriptural authority, which, in every age of the church, and among all people, has been counted essential to the full exercise of that sacred function, in its entire duties; which they were, at length, so imperiously called to perform; and concerning which, we may hope, they said with the great Apostle, '*Who is sufficient for these things?*' We need not be at a loss, however, to suppose, what were the feelings of Dr. Whitehead, on being refused that Scriptural authority, which he sought in the most earnest manner, and, to obtain which, he was willing to make considerable sacrifices.

Mr. Wesley well knew the difference between the *office* and the *title*. He knew and felt the arduous duties and high responsibility which attaches to the one, and the comparative nothingness of the other. In this respect, his brother, with all his High-Church zeal, has stated the truth, concerning the church which he loved:

Whatever shines in outward splendour great,
I give it up,—a creature of the State.

I say *comparative* nothingness; for who can, with sobriety, say, that titles are nothing in a national church? Would it have been wise, considering the state of this nation, and, indeed of Europe, at the time of the Reformation, to have abolished these titles altogether, which men had been used to identify with those offices for so many generations? Have not real shepherds borne those titles?—men who *naturally* cared for the flock, and who proved it by *laying down their lives for them*? If we allow, that these things are, in truth, "a creature of the state," yet it may be asked, Could we, humanly speaking, ever have had a thorough deliverance from the yoke of Popery, identified as it was with the State, if the civil government had not adopted the Scriptural creed of the Reformers? It is certain, however, that the Lord took that way, and did the work of deliverance by that aid: And while such freedom is given to those who think it their duty to dissent, and also to us who do not, but who are irregular, yet only for the Lord's sake,—may we not at least innocently pray, that no rude or ungodly hand may be permitted to hurt that goodly fabric? It still does good; and if we contrast her greatness with the meretricious greatness of former days, we must acknowledge it to be *National Christianity*. Those who wish to learn '*the way of God more perfectly*,' have entire liberty so to do.

With respect to the title of BISHOP, I know, that Mr. Wesley en-joined the Doctor and his associates, and, in the most solemn manner, that it should not be taken. In a letter to Mrs. Gilbert, the widow of the excellent Nathaniel Gilbert, Esq., of Antigua, a copy of which now lies before me, he states this in the strongest manner.—In this and in every similar deviation, I cannot be the apologist of Dr. Coke ; and I can state, in contradiction to all that Dr. Whitehead and Mr. Hampson have said, that Mr. Wesley never gave his sanction to any of these things ; nor was he the author of one line of all that Dr. Coke published in America, on this subject. His views on these points were very different from those of his zealous son in the Gospel. He knew, that *a work of God* neither needed, nor could be truly aided, nor could recommend itself to pious minds, by such additions.

When pressed and goaded by his brother's severe remarks, concerning his thus acting as a Bishop, he answered, "I firmly believe, that I am a Scriptural Επισκοπος, as much as any man in England, or in Europe ; for the UNINTERRUPTED SUCCESSION I know to be a fable, which no man ever did or can prove. But this does, in no wise, interfere with my remaining in the Church of England ; from which I have no more desire to separate, than I had fifty years ago." He gave to those Επισκοποι whom he ordained, the modest, but highly expressive, title of *Superintendents*, and desired, that no other might be used. That the Lord has greatly blessed this boon to the American Societies is evident, by their great and continued increase. The numbers in the various societies, when Dr. Coke went over, were about fifteen thousand. Six years after, they had increased to nearly seventy thousand ; and, in the year 1820, they were two hundred and eighty thousand !

Tradition is old, and ought to be respected ; but the Bible is older, and contains "the only religion of Protestants." *'He that is of God heareth God's word.'* A man of one book, like Mr. Wesley, must wonder to see the office of BISHOP made thus the head of the Christian ministry. In the Apostolic church, it was, certainly, a limited and inferior office, appointed by the Apostles and Evangelists, for the care of a particular flock, while they continued, according to the original commission, *'to preach the Gospel to every creature.'*—This was their great and awful charge ! to proclaim the Saviour to *'all the world'*—their immense Diocess !—Mr. Wesley, having obtained the same faith, felt the same call, and surprised the sons of tradition by declaring, that he "looked upon all the world as his parish." When the Apostolic church became enlarged, and this original commission was forgotten, it is no wonder, that the Bishops, in every place, should be considered as the head and fountain of all authority. It answered the design of the civil rulers also, who adopted Christianity as the religion of the Empire. By thus setting up the Local Shepherds, they gained the flock in every place. *But from the beginning it was not so.* The "booted Apostles," as Mosheim calls those who were sent forth by Constantine and his successors, to proclaim the religion of the Empire, laboured for the Emperor and for his Bishops, rather than for the Lord. Hence the corruptions that followed, until THE CHIEF SHEPHERD removed the *golden candlesticks*, and the *man of sin* enthroned himself in the church ; while the impostor Mohammed spread darkness and desolation through those fields which the Lord had so greatly blessed.

With respect to titles, what a simplicity do we find in the book of God! Not one of the Apostles calls himself BISHOP. They call themselves Presbyters or Elders, sometimes Deacons. 'God,' says St. Paul, '*has made us able Ministers,*' (in the original, *Διακονοι*, Deacons,) '*of the New Testament;*' while he calls *his sons in the Gospel*, *Αποστολοι*, *Apostles of the churches*. So simple is the language of these men of God!—So little anxious were such respecting any distinguishing title, where only the propagation of truth was aimed at!

Dr. Whitehead also takes much pains to affix blame on Mr. Wesley, on account of the ordinations being secret, that is, not performed before the congregation. When Dr. Whitehead wished to share in the privilege, he did not object to that circumstance. There were witnesses enough present on those occasions. In vain the Doctor brings forward passages from ancient writers, which declare, that Ministers should be ordained before the church. Certainly, they ought, when they are to minister to that church. But the ordination that is the subject of these remarks, was the ordination of Evangelists, truly so called, and who, however lightly esteemed among men, took up the original commission, and were confined to no particular flock. That a competent number of those in the same office should be present, was all that was needful; nor do we read of any other way of setting such apart in the Apostolic Church, where the authority was not limited, as in the case of Bishops or Pastors and Teachers. The jealousy also of that day, which Dr. Whitehead strove to fan into a flame, rendered greater publicity improper. In the present day, large congregations assemble to see our Missionaries set apart, in the Scriptural way, for their arduous work. '*The Lord has stilled the enemy,*' and his people praise him for the consolation.

That Mr. Wesley should never before this time, so late in life, exercise that authority, which he had no doubt he possessed, is easily accounted for. He never before had such a *reason* for exercising it, as fully satisfied him. That word of God seemed written on his heart,—'*render to all their due.*' He well knew, and ever acted upon that principle, that real religion no more needs the violation of any relative duty in bodies of men, than in individuals. He always deplored and condemned that zeal that would unnecessarily violate established order. He saw no precedent for such a zeal in the oracles of God. That a portion of this zeal, however, should never appear in any individuals, in the best constituted churches of Christ, is more than we have any right to expect, in the present state of human nature, notwithstanding the great advantages which the history, both of the world and the church, affords us, to bring about a more charitable and reasonable conduct. That Mr. Wesley should, however, maintain this Scriptural and sober principle for so many years, notwithstanding the earnest wish of the Preachers to be Scripturally ordained, and the almost incessant opposition and slander which he had to encounter, is truly surprising; and perhaps, no part of his conduct more strongly proves his divine commission.

Dr. Whitehead quotes a passage from a sermon, which Mr. Wesley published about two years before his death, as fully corroborating what the Doctor has said against Mr. Wesley's ordinations. The text was Hebrews v, 4: '*No man taketh this honour to himself, but he who is called of God, as was Aaron.*' "In this discourse," says the Doctor, "he has clearly shown, that the office of a Priest was totally distinct

and separate from the office of a Preacher or expounder of God's word and will, sometimes called a *Prophet*; that from Adam to Noah, and from Noah to Moses, the first-born in every family was the Priest, by virtue of his primogeniture: But any other of the family might be a Prophet or expounder of God's will to the people. In the time of Moses, the priesthood was restricted to the tribe of Levi; while the Preachers, or expounders of God's law might be, and afterwards were, of different tribes. In the New Testament, these expounders of the law are called *νομικοι*, or Scribes: But few, if any of them, were Priests.

"The Lord Jesus Christ, the great High Priest of our profession, sent out *Apostles* and *Evangelists*, to proclaim the glad tidings of peace to all the world. Afterwards, *Pastors* were appointed to preside over, and to build up in the faith, the churches that were formed. 'But,' says Mr. Wesley, 'I do not find, that ever the office of an *Evangelist* was the same with that of a *Pastor*, frequently called a *Bishop*. I cannot prove, from any part of the New Testament, or from any author of the three first centuries, that the office of an *Evangelist* gave any man a right to act as a *Pastor* or *Bishop*. I believe, these offices were considered as quite distinct from each other, till the time of Constantine.'

"Mr. Wesley then goes on to observe, that, among the Presbyterians, in the Church of England, and even among the Roman Catholics, the office of an *Evangelist* or *Teacher* does not imply that of a *Pastor*, to whom peculiarly belongs the administration of the Sacraments. All Presbyterian churches, that of Scotland in particular, license men to preach throughout the whole kingdom, before they are ordained. And it is never understood, that this appointment to preach gives them any right to administer the Sacraments. 'Likewise,' says he, 'in our own church, persons may be authorized to preach, yea, may be Doctors in Divinity, as Dr. Atwood, at Oxford, was, when I resided there, who are not ordained at all, and, consequently, have no right to administer the Lord's Supper. Yea, even in the Church of Rome itself, if a Lay-brother believes he is called to go on a mission, as it is termed, he is sent out, though neither Priest nor Deacon, to execute that office, and not the other.' And Mr. Wesley declares," says Dr. Whitehead, "that he and his brother considered the Lay-Preachers in the light of *Evangelists*, or *Preachers* only, when they received them as helpers in the work, or they never should have admitted them."

I was with Mr. Wesley in London, when he published that sermon. He had encouraged me to be a man of *one book*, and he had repeatedly invited me to speak fully whatever objection I had to any thing which he spoke or published. I thought, that some things in that discourse were not to be found in the book, and I resolved to tell him so the first opportunity. It soon occurred. I respectfully observed, that I agreed with him, that the Lord had always sent, by whom he would send, instruction, reproof, and correction in righteousness, to mankind; and that there was a real distinction between the prophetic and priestly office in the Old Testament, and the prophetic and pastoral office in the New, (where no Priesthood is mentioned but that of our Lord;) but I could not think, that what he had said, concerning the Evangelists and the Pastors, or Bishops, was agreeable to what we read there; viz. that the latter had a right to administer the Sacraments, which the former did not possess. I observed, "Sir, you know, that the *Evangelists* Timothy

and Titus were ordered by the Apostle to ordain *Bishops* in every place ; and, surely, they could not impart to them an authority which they did not themselves possess.”—He looked earnestly at me for some time, but not with displeasure. He made no reply, and soon introduced another subject. I said no more. The man of one book would not dispute against it. I believe he saw his love to the church, from which he never deviated unnecessarily, had, in this instance, led him a little too far.

He had foreseen, that the increase of the Societies, so far beyond all that he had looked for in his own days, would necessarily oblige the people to assemble in their own chapels, and, at length, to have all the privileges which the Holy Scriptures secure to all Christian believers. In many places, the parish church would not contain the Methodist Society, even if the other parishioners were excluded, in order to accommodate them. To give, therefore, to the people under his care all the advantages needful for their growth in grace, and yet continue a friendly connexion with the Established Church, seemed to him a *desideratum*. Here a change, in some degree, seemed as necessary, therefore, as in America, though for a different reason. He had firmly resisted, for many years, every effort made by those who were for a more liberal plan, as they termed it. Even Thomas Walsh, in that early day, deplored his obstinacy respecting the Roman Catholics. He expostulated with him in the bitterness of his soul, not through any enmity to the Established Church, with which he constantly communicated, but from tender love to those desolate children of his faith and prayer, and for whom chiefly he was prodigal of life. “Sir,” said he, “they must have the ordinances of Christ, but they will not go to church. They will not hear those men, whose ungodly lives they daily behold ; but they will joyfully communicate with those, by whom they have been brought to God. You may open the kingdom of heaven to those multitudes, who have hitherto walked in the way to hell, *as they have been led*. Beware how you shut it against them !”—Mr. Wesley revered this man of God—this ‘*debtor to all men*’—this Apostle of the Roman Catholics,—beyond all the men of his day ; but he was steadfast and unmoveable in his great views, not seeing, even in that hard case, a *good reason* for deviating. I believe, this conversation was the last they had on earth ; and I am constrained to believe, that Mr. Wesley’s inflexibility hastened the lamented death of that great and good man. Many sorrows compassed him about, while hard and continual labours shattered the clay tenement ; but this seemed to oppress him more than all. He found rest in a premature grave, giving up his soul into the hands of his merciful and faithful Creator, exclaiming, “*My Beloved is mine and I am his !—his for ever !*”

But while Mr. Wesley yielded to the *good reason*, when it appeared nearly thirty years after, he yielded with the same unostentatious simplicity which marked his path from the beginning. He was much grieved with something of the contrary spirit which was manifest in his sons in the Gospel, who were chiefly employed in conducting that necessary work. We have already seen something of it in his letter to Mrs. Gilbert. A letter now before me, and which he wrote when I was with him, will clearly show, how much he felt that deviation from the simplicity which is in Christ, in those whom he much loved. It was written to

Mr. Asbury, and is dated *London, Sept. 20, 1788*. After speaking on some general subjects, he adds,

"There is, indeed, a wide difference between the relation wherein you stand to the Americans, and the relation wherein I stand to *all* the Methodists. You are the elder brother of the American Methodists: I am, under God, the father of the whole family. Therefore, I naturally care for you all in a manner no other person can do. Therefore, I, in a measure, provide for you all; for, the supplies which Dr. Coke provides for you, he could not provide, were it not for me—were it not that I not only permit him to collect, but also support him in so doing.

"But, in one point, my dear brother, I am a little afraid, both the Doctor and you differ from me. I study to be *little*; you study to be *great*. I *creep*; you *strut* along. I found a *school*; you a *college*! Nay, and call it after your own names!* O beware! Do not seek to be *something*! Let me be nothing, and '*Christ be all in all*!'

"One instance of this, of your *greatness*, has given me great concern. How can you, how dare you, suffer yourself to be called BISHOP? I shudder, I start at the very thought! Men may call *me* a knave or a fool; a rascal, a scoundrel, and I am content: But they shall never, by my consent, call me *Bishop*! For my sake, for God's sake, for Christ's sake, put a full end to this! Let the Presbyterians do what they please, but let the Methodists know their calling better.

"Thus, my dear Franky, I have told you all that is in my heart: And let this, when I am no more seen, bear witness how sincerely I am

"Your affectionate friend and brother,

"JOHN WESLEY."

There were very few men that stood higher in Mr. Wesley's esteem, for disinterested attachment to the cause of God, and arduous labour therein, than Mr. Asbury, who lived and died honoured by all his brethren. Mr. Wesley, in writing to him, as above stated, acted according to his own rule. (See page 36.)—"Tell every one what you think wrong in him, and that plainly; else it will fester in your heart. Make all haste to cast the fire out of your bosom."—Mr. Asbury meekly bore the fatherly reproof; but he was not convinced, that he had acted wrong: And, certainly, every church of Christ derives from its Divine HEAD, and ONLY MASTER, a right to whatever the *Holy Scriptures* makes their privilege, or marks the OFFICE of its PASTORS.—That Mr. Asbury lost none of his veneration for his Father in the Gospel, on this occasion, will appear from the following extract from his Journal, lately published:

"The public papers have announced the death of that dear man of God, JOHN WESLEY. He died in his own house, in London, in the eighty-eighth year of his age, after preaching the Gospel sixty-four years.—When we consider his plain and nervous writings; his uncommon talent for sermonizing and journalizing; that he had such a steady flow of animal spirits; so much of the spirit of government in him; his knowledge, as an observer; his attainments, as a scholar; his experience, as a Christian; I conclude, his equal is not to be found among all the sons he hath brought up, nor his superior among all the sons of Adam. For myself, notwithstanding my long absence from Mr. Wes-

* Cokesbury College, twice burned down. The name was formed from the name of its founders—Coke and Asbury.

ley, and a few unpleasant expressions in some of his letters written to me, (occasioned by the misrepresentations of others,) I feel the stroke most sensibly; and, I expect, I shall never read his works without reflecting on the loss which the church of God and the world have sustained by his death."

Mr. Asbury was, however, mistaken when he supposed, that Mr. Wesley was influenced by "the misrepresentations of others," and not by the facts stated, when he wrote those letters.

I have thought it my duty thus to show, how invariably Mr. Wesley cherished those principles which so eminently shone in the early period of his Christian course, and which issued in what may be called a hatred of all display, excepting that of truth, love, and victory over the world, to the latest period of his life,—and even when the Lord had given him so great a people, and such a number of able coadjutors. But did he not, upon this occasion, a little forget what he had written, in his Address to the Societies in America, after their separation from the mother country?*"—"They are now at full liberty simply to follow the Scriptures and the Primitive Church: and we judge it best, that they should stand fast in the liberty wherewith God has so strangely made them free."—But the association in his mind, between the assumed title, and the display connected with it in the later ages of the church, was too strong. He could not, at that moment, separate the plain laborious Bishops of the American Societies, where there is no legal establishment, from the dignified Prelates of the mighty Empire of Great Britain. That our brethren who are in that office, are true Scriptural Bishops, I have no doubt at all; nor do I wish that the title should be relinquished, as it is grown into use, and is known, by every person in the United States, to designate men distinguished only by their simplicity and abundant labours.

There was no danger that a man of this spirit should be suffered to deviate from the truth, in any essential point, in conducting this work of God. Mr. Wesley firmly adhered to the Scriptures, the Primitive Church, and the Church of England. When the necessity of the case, however, was apparent, he minded only the Scriptures, believing that men may err, but '*the word of God shall abide for ever.*' Where the necessity did not appear, he highly respected antiquity, and would never deviate from the accumulated wisdom of ages, or shock the common sense of mankind. The moment he saw the necessity of giving an entire Gospel ministry to his people, he revolted from conferring it in any way not sanctioned by the Apostolic practice, or the usage of the purest ages that succeeded them. Hence, he never would acknowledge any ministry that was not conferred in the Scriptural, Apostolic, and ancient way, by '*laying on of hands.*' Of all the men who ever attempted to break down these fences, there were none he loved more than the two sons of his venerable friend, the Vicar of Shoreham, Charles and Edward Perronet, and Nicholas Norton, whom I personally knew and highly respected. These men were truly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon them the '*ministry of the word.*' They felt and walked in the power of it; but when they would maintain, that the Spirit's call to teach implied also a call to the full Pastorship, and would no longer be indebted to what they called a carnal ministry, in partaking of the ordi-

* See page 194.

nances of Christ, he withstood them with all the authority that the *Chief Shepherd* had given him. Several letters passed between them on this subject. They contended for liberty of conscience. This he fully allowed, but at the same time, maintained his own liberty, and the authority which, he believed, the Lord had given him, respecting the people of his charge. "You believe," said he, "it is a duty to administer : Do so, and herein follow your own conscience. I verily believe, it is a sin ; which, consequently, I dare not tolerate ; and herein I follow my conscience. Yet this is no *persecution*, [which they, in their letters, alleged it to be,] were I to separate from our society those who practise what, I believe, is contrary to the word, and destructive of the work of God.—Keep from proselyting others, and keep your opinion till doomsday, self-inconsistent, unprimitive, and unscriptural as it is."

When, however, Dr. Hey, of Leeds, whose Life has been recently published, (and in which some of these things are noted,) and others, attempted to hedge him in on the other hand, and so constrain him to make that, which he fully believed to be a revival of Primitive Christianity, a mere appendage to the church as by law established, they found, he would not walk in the trammels of men, or consent to their narrow and, sometimes, worldly proposals.* When his own beloved brother

* Mr. Wesley has repeatedly observed to me, that he could rarely keep professional men, either in law or medicine, long in the society. While young, in their apprenticeship, or pursuing their studies, they held fast their first desire,—“To flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins,” (the one purpose for which the Wesleyan Methodists are associated,) and were thankful for the help which the society afforded. This was the case with Dr. Hey, (I use the title by which he was commonly known,) for a longer period than usual. After he rose to eminence in his profession, the society, by its strict discipline, became rather a burden than a help. He then began, as his respectable biographer, Mr. Pearson, informs us, to reason upon his situation, “and finally determined, in the year 1781, on the expediency of withdrawing from the Methodists.” But Dr. Hey could not submit to retire in the usual quiet way. He drew up a long statement of his fears for the Established Church, and added a set of propositions, amounting to an entire change of the whole Methodist Constitution, and to which the whole connexion must submit, as the condition of his remaining with them ! He desired permission of Mr. Wesley to read this statement to the Conference, then assembled at Leeds, which was readily granted.

The Doctor being introduced, a most extraordinary scene was exhibited. A member of a particular society, without one other member to second or countenance him, gravely proposing to the Methodist Conference, (assembled to consult about, and transact the business of the whole connexion, according to the rules that govern the body,) to consent to the overthrow of their whole discipline, and to act immediately on the speculations of Dr. Hey ! He declaring, as Mr. Pearson informs us, “that, if they rejected his proposals, he could no longer remain a member !” In an Independent congregation, perhaps, this would have excited but little surprise ; but, I believe, we may safely say, that such a proposal was never before made to any such united body of people. We may also add, I think, never did such a proposal meet with a more gentle dismissal : Mr. Wesley only observing, (after hearing quite enough to learn the Doctor’s design,) that, “as much business lay before them, brother Hey must defer reading the remainder of his paper to another opportunity.” But brother Hey troubled them no more. He withdrew from the society, and, no doubt, in his own eyes, in a very honourable way ; observing, (which, we are told, he often did,) “He did not leave the Methodists—they left him.”

We readily allow, that Mr. Wesley and the Methodist Conference *refused* to have Dr. Hey to rule over them, and, of consequence, to rule over the whole connexion. But the society at Leeds continued, in company with Dr. Hey, to attend the Church and Sacrament ; but he would no longer go with them to the Society, or partake of that Christian fellowship which had been, for so many years, light and life to him. About twenty years ago, when I was stationed at Leeds, I had the privilege of attending the Church and Sacrament, with a goodly company of the Methodists ; and so far we still claimed a brotherhood with Dr. Hey, who had departed from the society more than twenty years before. He well knew, and so does his biographer, that he might have continued a Churchman and a Methodist to the hour of his death, if he had been so minded. But to use a common saying, the good man “saw things in another light.” Perhaps, the fear expressed by the Apostle, 2 Cor. xi, 3, may give some elucidation to the worthy Doctor’s departure from the friends of his youth, and from his first calling.

and partner in the work would have aided their views, even this did not shake him. He would go on with his Divine Leader, and they found, that, as it was said of old, they could not '*bind him for the maidens, or part him among the merchants,*' either of the world or of the church. There were not wanting those who, from the beginning of the work, having departed from simplicity, fondly hoped, that he also would,

"Though born for the universe, narrow his mind,
And to party give up what was meant for mankind."

But they prevailed not. He held on his even course, and "squared his useful life below by reason and by grace." To use his own expression, he *crept* along, '*through honour and through dishonour;*' and could neither be beat down nor turned out of the way. The Lord shined upon his path, and none of *his works have been burned*. Even in this last, and by those who watched for his halting, supposed to be his greatest deviation, '*the wisdom that is from above*' is apparent. The amazing extension, and wholly religious nature of the work, speaks for itself; evidencing the utter impossibility, that it ever could be strictly united to any human system; while its friendliness to all, and especially to our venerable establishment, shows it to be the work of '*Him who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.*' That time now appears swiftly approaching.

CHAPTER III.

CONTINUANCE OF MR. WESLEY'S LABOURS—HIS VISIT TO IRELAND—
ACCOUNT OF THE WORK OF GOD IN THE FRENCH ISLANDS—MR.
WESLEY'S VISIT TO THEM—LATTER DAYS AND DEATH OF MR.
CHARLES WESLEY—A REVIEW OF HIS CHARACTER.

DURING the latter years of Mr. Wesley's life, he was a wonder unto many. To see a man, at the age of fourscore years and upwards, persevering in daily labours, from which even the young and vigorous would recede, as from an intolerable burden: To see him rising in the morning at four; travelling often from thirty to sixty or seventy miles a day; preaching daily two, three, or four, yea, sometimes five sermons; reading, writing, visiting the sick, conversing with his friends, and superintending the societies wherever he came: And, in all this labour and care, to see him a stranger to weariness, either of body or mind:—This was *a new thing in the earth*, and excited the admiration of mankind.

I have already noted the observations which he made on his birthday, in Holland, in the year 1783, that, "by the mercy of God, his eyes were not waxed dim, and what strength of body or mind he had thirty years before, the same he had then." And we find similar remarks yearly in his Journal till the year 1787.

In that year, he visited Ireland; and, passing through the North of that kingdom, he called upon a respectable Clergyman, whose kind attentions in his sickness at Tandragee, in the year 1775, had laid him under obligations. After he had quitted this agreeable family, reflecting on some painful deviations which he had observed, he sent the Clergy-

man the following letter. It will serve, as one instance, to show that faithfulness for which he was so remarkable.

“REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,—I have obligations to you, on many accounts, from the time I first saw you; particularly for the kind concern you showed, when I was ill at Tandragee. These have increased upon me every time that I have since had the pleasure of waiting upon you. Permit me, Sir, to speak without reserve. Esteem was added to my affectionate regard, when I saw the uncommon pains you took with the flock committed to your care; as also, when I observed the remarkably serious manner wherein you read prayers in your family. Many years have passed since that time; in any more than I am likely to see under the sun. But before I go hence, I would fain give you one instance of my sincere regard; the rather, because I can scarce expect to see you again till we meet in a better world. But it is difficult for me to do it, as I feel myself inferior to you in so many respects. Yet permit me to ask a strange question, Is your soul as much alive to God as it was once? Have you not suffered loss from your relations or acquaintance, that are sensible and agreeable men, but not incumbered with religion? Some of them, perhaps, as free from the very form, as from the power of it. O Sir, if you *lose* any of the things which you have wrought, who can make you amends for that loss? If you do not receive a full reward, what equivalent can you gain? I was pained, even at your hospitable table, in the midst of those I loved so well. We did not begin and close the meal in the same manner you did ten years ago! You was then, contrary to almost universal custom, unfashionably serious in asking a blessing and returning thanks. I know many would blame you for it: But surely the Lord said, ‘Servant of God, well done!’ Wishing you and your lovely family every blessing,

“I am, Reverend and dear Sir,

“Your obliged and affectionate Brother and Servant,

“J. WESLEY.”

On his return, he notes in his Journal:—“For seventy years I have observed, that England abounds with prophets, who confidently foretel many terrible things. They generally believe themselves; but are carried away with a vain imagination; and are seldom undeceived, even by the failure of their predictions, but still believe, they will be fulfilled some time or other.”—Such was the constant sobriety of his mind, and so did he reprove the pestilent spirit of curiosity, too common even among good men.

The following paper is without date; and though it was probably written before this period, I shall insert it here, omitting an observation or two, which could not now be considered interesting. The style is truly Wesleyan, and the thoughts may be of use even in our day. We have still men in the nation, both pious and learned, who are as fanciful as Mr. Hutchinson himself.

“To the Reverend Dean D——.

“REVEREND SIR,—When Dr. Bentley published his Greek Testament, one remarked, ‘Pity but he would publish the Old; then we

should have two New Testaments ! It is done. Those who receive Mr. Hutchinson's emendations certainly have two New Testaments ! But I stumble at the threshold. Can we believe, that God left his whole Church so ignorant of the Scripture till yesterday ? And if He was pleased to reveal the sense of it *now*, to whom may we suppose he would reveal it ? 'All Scripture,' says Kempis, 'must be understood by the same Spirit whereby it was written.' And a greater than he says, 'Them that are *meek* will He guide in judgment, and them that are *gentle* will He learn his way.' But was Mr. Hutchinson eminently meek and gentle ?

"However, in order to learn all I could from his works, after first consulting them, I carefully read over Mr. Spearman, Mr. Jones's ingenious book, and the Glasgow Abridgment. I read the last with Mr. Thomas Walsh, [already mentioned,] the best Hebrew I ever knew. I never asked him the meaning of a Hebrew word, but he would immediately tell me, how often it occurred in the Bible, and what it meant in each place ! We then both observed, that Mr. Hutchinson's whole scheme is built upon etymologies ; *the most uncertain foundation in the world, and the least to be depended upon*. We observed, Secondly, that if the points be allowed, all his building sinks at once : And Thirdly, that, setting them aside, many of his etymologies are forced and unnatural. He frequently, to find the etymology of one word, squeezes two radices together ; a liberty never to be taken, where a word may fairly be derived from a single radix.

"But may I hazard a few words on the points ? Mr. H. affirms, they were invented by the Masorites, only thirteen or fourteen hundred years ago, in order to destroy the sense of Scripture. I doubt this : Who can prove it ? Who can prove they were not as old as Ezra, if not coeval with the language ? Let any one give a fair reading, only to what Dr. Cornelius Bayley has offered in the Preface to his Hebrew Grammar, and he will be as sick of reading without points as I am ; at least, till he can answer the Doctor's arguments, he will not be so positive upon the question.

"As to his Theology, I first stumble at his profuse encomiums on the Hebrew language. But, it may be said, Is it not the language which God himself used ? And, is not Greek too the language which God himself used ? And did he not use it in delivering to man a far more perfect dispensation, than that which he delivered in Hebrew ? Who can deny it ? And does not even this consideration give us reason at least to suspect, that the Greek language is as far superior to the Hebrew, as the New Testament is to the Old ? And, indeed, if we set prejudice aside, and consider both, with attention and candour, can we help seeing, that the Greek excels the Hebrew, as much in beauty and strength as it does in copiousness ? I suppose, no one from the beginning of the world wrote better Hebrew than Moses. But does not the language of St. Paul excel the language of Moses, as much as the knowledge of St. Paul excelled his ?

"I speak this, even on supposition that you read the Hebrew, as I believe Ezra, if not Moses, did with points. For, if we read it in the modern way without points, I appeal to every competent judge, whether it be not the most equivocal."—The paper has been partly destroyed.

In the countries which have hitherto been considered, (the Isle of Man excepted,) the English language has been universally spoken. But Divine Providence led Mr. Wesley, with the Preachers in connexion with him, into an unexpected line of usefulness, promising the happiest results.

The Islands of Jersey, Guernsey, and Alderney, are situated in St. Michael's Bay, near the coast of Normandy. They are the only remains of the Norman dominions annexed to Great Britain by William the Conqueror. The inhabitants in general, (those of the principal towns excepted,) speak only French.

Jersey was known to the ancient Romans under the name of *Cæsarea*. It is twelve miles in length, and contains about twenty thousand inhabitants. Guernsey is seven or eight miles long, and contains about fifteen thousand people. These two islands are exceedingly fertile and healthy. Alderney is about eight miles in circumference, and has about three or four thousand inhabitants.

In a regiment of soldiers, which was sent over to Jersey in the French war, before the Revolution, there were a few serious Christians who had heard the Gospel in one of the seaport towns of England. These men, finding no help for their souls in the island, wrote to Mr. Wesley, entreating him to send them a Preacher. Mr. Brackenbury, a gentleman of fortune in Lincolnshire, who had joined the society, and soon after preached in connexion with Mr. Wesley, was present when the letter was received, and offered his service, as he had some acquaintance with the French language. Mr. Wesley readily accepted the offer. Mr. Brackenbury set off for Jersey, rented a house in the town of St. Helier, preached the Gospel through the island, and was the instrument of turning many from their sins to God. At first, his religious assemblies were greatly disturbed, particularly in the parish of St. Mary, by a miserable set of ungodly men, who, on an appeal to the Civil Magistrate, were fined, and obliged to give security for their good behaviour.

In the year 1786, Mr. Wesley sent another Preacher, Mr. (now Dr.) Adam Clarke, to the Island of Jersey. Mr. Clarke preached several times in the town of St. Aubin, surrounded by a very violent mob, from whom he received much abuse, and was often in danger of losing his life. The rioters tore the house in which he preached almost to pieces. At another time, one of the Magistrates headed a large mob, and pulled down Mr. Clarke from the pulpit with his own hands. The drummer of the St. Aubin Militia was then called, who had the honour of violently assaulting the Minister of God, and afterwards of drumming him through and out of the town. Mr. Clarke, however, was not to be intimidated by the usage he met with, but continued his visits and labours, till he at last outweathered the storm. Regular preaching was then established in the town, and even the mob themselves revered the Preacher.

From this time, religion flourished more and more in the Island of Jersey. Many Preachers were raised among the natives, and societies formed all over the island.

In the course of these events, a shopkeeper of the Island of Guernsey, whose name was Arrivé, visited Jersey, and, under the preaching of Mr. Brackenbury, was convinced of sin. He then invited Mr. Brackenbury to visit Guernsey. He went, and was universally well

received. Many of the gentry opened their houses to him, and permitted him to preach in their parlours. Dr. Coke, who about this time visited the French Islands, followed Mr. Brackenbury in Guernsey, and formed the first society in that island. Afterwards, Mr. Clarke, with much pain and difficulty, accompanied by many remarkable providences, erected a very commodious chapel in the town of St. Peter, in which a large congregation regularly attended. Much good was done, till a foppish Minister, (as a pious man then on the island observes,) came there from England, and introduced doubtful disputations, respecting the decrees of God, among the people, and thereby exceedingly injured the congregation and the work in general. "It nearly cost me my life," says the same person, "to bring back into the way of salvation those whom he had been so unhappy as to turn out of it."

Mr. De Queteville, a native of Jersey, was also very useful in the Island of Guernsey, particularly in the country parts, where the French language alone is spoken. But he endured great persecutions. The most horrid things were laid to his charge. A prosecution was carried on against him in the Supreme Court, with the design of procuring a sentence of banishment. But the very witnesses who were employed to swear the falsest things against him, and most probably intended it when they first appeared before the Court, were yet strangely led to give the most pointed evidence in his favour, which entirely counteracted all the designs of his enemies.

In the beginning of the year 1787, Mr. Clarke visited the Isle of Alderney. When he arrived, he knew not where to go: He had no acquaintance in the island, nor had any person invited him thither. For some time, he was perplexed in reasoning on his situation, till that word of the God of Missionaries powerfully impressed his mind, "Into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, *Peace be to this house*,—and in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give," Luke x, 5, 7.

On this, he took courage, and proceeded to the town, which is about a mile distant from the harbour. After having walked some way into it, he took particular notice of a very poor cottage, into which he found a strong inclination to enter. He did so, with—"Peace be to this house!" and found in it an old man and woman, who, understanding his business, bade him "welcome to the best food they had, to a little chamber where he might sleep; and, (what was still more acceptable,) to their house to preach in." He now saw clearly the hand of Providence in his favour, and was much encouraged.

Being unwilling to lose any time, he told them he would preach that evening, if they could convene a congregation. The strange news spread rapidly through the town; and long before the appointed hour, a multitude of people flocked together, to whom he spoke of '*the kingdom of God*,' nearly as long as the little strength he had, after the fatigues of his voyage, remained. When he had concluded, it was with much difficulty he could persuade them to depart, after promising to preach to them again the next evening. He then retired to his little apartment, where he had not rested twenty minutes, when the good woman of the house came and entreated him to preach again, as several of the gentry, (among whom was one of the Justices,) were come to hear what he had to say.

He went down immediately, and found the house once more full. Deep attention sat on every face, while he showed the great need they had of a Saviour, and exhorted them to turn immediately from all their iniquities to the living God. He continued in this good work about an hour, and concluded with informing them, what his design was in visiting their island, and the motives that induced him thereto.

Having ended, the Justice stepped forward, exchanged a few very civil words with him, and desired to see the book out of which he had been speaking. He handed his Bible to him. The Justice looked at it with attention, and returned it with apparent satisfaction. The congregation then departed; and the concern evident on many of their countenances fully proved, that God had added *his* testimony to that of *his* servant.

The next evening, he preached again to a large attentive company. But a singular circumstance happened the following day. While he was at dinner, a constable came, from a person in authority, to solicit his immediate appearance at a place called the Bray, (where several reputable families dwell, and where the Governor's stores are kept,) to preach to a company of gentlemen and ladies, who were waiting, and at whose desire one of the large store-rooms was prepared for the purpose. He immediately went, and in a quarter of an hour after his arrival, a large company was assembled. The gentry were not so partial to themselves, as to exclude the sailors or labourers. All heard with deep attention, except an English *gentleman*, so called; who, perhaps, meant to show the islanders, how much *he* despised sacred things.

The next Lord's-day, in the evening, he preached again in the same place to a much larger congregation, composed of the principal gentry of the island. The day following, being the time appointed for his return, many were unwilling he should leave them, saying, "We have much need of such preaching and such a Preacher: We wish you would abide in the island, and go back no more." However, the vessel being aground, he was detained till the next morning, to the great joy of his new friends, when after a tender parting, he left the island.

After this, the native Preachers, raised up in Jersey and Guernsey, visited this little island: And, by their means, a chapel has been erected, a large society formed, and many souls brought to the knowledge of God.

On Monday, August 6, 1787, Mr. Wesley, with Dr. Coke and Mr. Bradford, set off from the Manchester Conference to visit the French Islands. On the 11th. they sailed from Southampton, but contrary winds and stormy weather obliged them to fly for refuge, first into the port of Yarmouth in the Isle of Wight, and afterwards into that of Swanage. On the 14th, they expected to reach the Isle of Guernsey in the afternoon; but the wind turning contrary, and blowing hard, they were obliged to sail for Alderney. But they were very near being shipwrecked in the Bay. Being in the midst of rocks, with the sea rippling all around them, the wind having totally failed. Had they continued in this situation many minutes longer, the vessel must have struck on one or other of the rocks. So they went to prayer, and the wind sprung up instantly, and brought them about sunset to the port of Alderney.

At eight the next morning, Mr. Wesley preached on the Beach, near the place where he lodged; and before his hymn was ended, had a

tolerable congregation. Soon after he had concluded, the Governor of the island waited upon him with very great courtesy. After which, he, with his company, sailed for Guernsey.

On his arrival, he went into the country, to the house of Mr. De Jersey, a gentleman of fortune, whose whole family have been converted to God. At five the following morning, he preached in a large room of Mr. De Jersey's to a very serious congregation; and, in the evening, to a crowded audience in the preaching house in the town of St. Peter. On the 18th, he and Dr. Coke dined with the Governor, who studied to show them every mark of civility. On the 20th, he sailed for the Isle of Jersey. Mr. Brackenbury received him on his arrival, and in his house he frequently preached to exceeding serious congregations. "Even the gentry," observes Mr. Wesley, speaking of his visit to this island, "heard with deep attention. What little things does God use to advance his own glory! Probably," continues he, "many of these flock together, because I have lived so many years! And, perhaps, even this may be the means of their living for ever!"—In the country, he preached in English, Mr. Brackenbury interpreting sentence by sentence; and even in this inconvenient way of speaking, God owned his word. Being detained a considerable time by contrary winds, the assembly room was offered him, in which he preached to very large congregations, and to the profit of many.

On the 29th, the wind still continuing to blow from the English coast, he returned to the Isle of Guernsey; where the winds, or rather a kind Providence, detained him till the 6th of September. Hardly a gentleman or lady in the town of St. Peter omitted a single opportunity of attending his ministry. So universal and steady an attendance of the rich and the gay, he never before experienced. During this visit, he was favoured with singular powers of elocution; and delivered a series of discourses, peculiarly suited to his hearers. On the 6th, a ship sailed for Mount's Bay in Cornwall; and, the wind not permitting him to sail for Southampton, he took his passage in it, and on the next day landed at Penzance.

There is now a surplus of native Preachers in the French Islands, several of whom have visited France, and have formed societies there: So that there is a prospect of the work of God spreading in that large and populous kingdom.

In February, 1788, his 85th year, Mr. Wesley observes, "I took a solemn leave of the congregation at West-street, by applying once more what I had enforced for fifty years, '*By grace ye are saved, through faith.*' The next day, we had a very numerous congregation at the New Chapel, (in the City-road,) to whom I declared, in the words of St. Paul, '*the whole counsel of God.*' I seemed now to have finished my work in London. If I see it again, well: If not, I pray God to raise up others, that will be more faithful and more successful in his work."

It was always in February, generally the last week, that he left London, and began his spring journeys. Those times of departure were always solemn and edifying. The solemnity was much increased at this time, by the state of his beloved and venerable brother's health. Mr. Charles Wesley had been for some time declining, and it was painfully anticipated, that we should soon lose '*the sweet singer of our Israel,*' and '*one of the stars in his right hand*' who had begun and con-

tinued the great work. We have seen the differences, as well as the union of the brothers. Nothing, however, could separate them from their Lord, or from each other. Towards the close of life, Mr. C. Wesley seemed to have adopted more liberal sentiments, and more comfortable views of the work of religion. He generally feared much; it was his besetting weakness. But love triumphed over fear. In one of his last letters to his brother, dated April 9, 1787, he observes, "I served West-street chapel on Friday and Sunday. Next Saturday I propose to sleep in your bed.—Stand to your own proposal: 'Let us agree to differ.' I leave America and Scotland to your latest thoughts and recognitions; only observing now, that you are exactly right.—Keep your authority while you live; and, after your death, *detur digniori*—or rather, *dignioribus*. You cannot settle the succession: You cannot divine how God will settle it.—Have the people of —— given you leave to die, E. A. P. J.?"*

The quotation above is an allusion to the dying words of Alexander the Great. Dr. Whitehead, as usual, supposes, that Mr. C. Wesley used the expression—*Let it be given to the WORTHIEST*—as an irony against the Preachers. This is quite in character. But Mr. C. Wesley now entered more into his brother's views; and knowing that it was a work of God in which they had been employed, he believed that God alone, as he observes, could settle the succession. And the Lord did settle it in a way, that joyfully surprised even the wisest and most pious in the connexion. He continued the Preachers in their office, and gave them unanimity. There were no '*battles of shaking*'—no perverse disputations—but they agreed, to a man, to take up his plan, (so truly distant from *all* sectarianism,) as he left it: Having proved it, for more than fifty years, to be truly primitive and Apostolic.

In this letter, speaking of genius, he observes, "I never knew a genius that came to good. What can be the reason? Are they as premature in evil as in good? or do their superior talents overset them? *Must* every man of a superior understanding lean to, and trust, and pride himself in it?—I never envied a man of great parts: I never wished a friend of mine possessed of them.

"Poor J. Henderson! What has genius done for him? ruined his fortune and ruined his body. Last night I heard he was dying of a putrid fever. We prayed for him at the table: But I know not whether he is alive or dead. His sickness was sent to prepare him either for Paradise or for Orders.† Such a messenger may, perhaps, take Sam. or

* *Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ Presbyter Johannes*: "John, Presbyter of the Church of England." This signature, I believe, Mr. John Wesley sometimes used in the early part of life, when writing to his brother.

† He was the son of Mr. Richard Henderson, one of the Itinerant Preachers; and was accounted the best scholar in the University of Oxford, where he lived till near his last illness. He was educated at Kingswood School; and, when twelve years old, was taken to Lady Huntingdon's College at Trevecca, to teach the classics there. Mr. Wesley's account of him, in his Journal, (May, 1789,) is, that, "with as great talents as most men in England, he lived two-and-thirty years, and did—just nothing!"—Not a vestige of his writings remains! This was owing to what some would call a remarkable cross providence. He used to visit his father, at Hannam near Bristol, in the summer vacation. He there studied intensely, and wrote largely. His MSS. he stowed in a large trunk, without a lock. Returning home, some time before his last illness, he flew to his treasure, but found the trunk empty. He enquired of Mrs. Henderson, who called up the servant, and asked for the papers in the trunk. The girl, who had been hired that year, replied, with great simplicity, "La, Ma'am, I thought they were good for nothing, and so I lighted the fires with them during the winter."—Mr. J. Henderson looked at his excellent mother-in-law for some time, but spoke not a

Charles from the evil. I never sought great things for them ; or greater for myself, than that I may escape to land—on a broken piece of the ship. It is my daily and hourly prayer, that I may escape safe to land, and that an entrance may be ministered to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of Jesus Christ.”

Dr. Whitehead observes, “ Mr. Charles Wesley had a weak body, and a poor state of health, during the greatest part of his life. I believe, he laid the foundation of both at Oxford, by too close application to study, and abstinence from food. He rode much on horseback, which probably contributed to lengthen out life to a good old age. I visited him several times in his last sickness, and his body was, indeed, reduced to the most extreme state of weakness. He possessed that state of mind which he had been always pleased to see in others—unaffected humility and holy resignation to the will of God. He had no transports of joy, but solid hope and unshaken confidence in Christ, which kept his mind in perfect peace.”

The circumstances of his death are related by his daughter, Miss Wesley, in a letter to her uncle Mr. John Wesley, as follows :—

“ DEAR AND HONOURED UNCLE,—We were all present when my dear respected father departed this life. His end was, what he particularly desired it might be, *Peace!*

“ For some months past, he seemed totally detached from earth ; he spoke very little, nor wished to hear any thing read but the Scriptures. He took a solemn leave of all his friends. I once asked, if he had any presages that he should die? He said, ‘ No ; but his weakness was such, that he thought it impossible he should live through March.’ He kindly bade me remember him ; and seemed to have no doubt, but I should meet him in heaven.

“ All his prayer was, ‘ Patience and an easy death !’ He bade every one who visited him to supplicate for these, often repeating, ‘ An easy death !’

“ He told my mother, the week before he departed, that no fiend was permitted to approach him ; and said to us all, ‘ I have a good hope !’

“ When we asked, if he wanted any thing, he frequently answered, ‘ Nothing but Christ.’ Some person observed, that the valley of the shadow of death was hard to be passed : ‘ Not with Christ,’ replied he.

“ On March the 27th, (after a most uneasy night,) he prayed, as in an agony, that he might not have many such nights. ‘ O my God !’ said he, ‘ not many.’ It was with great difficulty he seemed to speak. About ten days before, on my brother Samuel’s entering the room, he took hold of his hand, and pronounced, with a voice of faith, ‘ I shall bless God to all eternity, that ever you were born : I am persuaded I shall !’

“ My brother Charles also seemed much upon his mind : ‘ That dear boy,’ said he, ‘ God bless him !’ He spoke less to me than to the rest, which has since given me some pain. However, he bade me trust in God, and never forsake him, and then, he assured me, he never would forsake me !

word. He then turned into his study, and was never known to mention the subject more. Did these MSS. contain the “ *Physic of the Soul?*” From what I have seen of his writings, I fear not. He was a great speculator in theology, as well as in other things. There was, however, hope in his end. *‘The broken and contrite heart God will not despise.’*

"The 28th, my mother asked, if he had any thing to say to us : Raising his eyes, he said, ' Only thanks ! Love ! Blessing !'

"Tuesday and Wednesday, he was not entirely sensible. He slept much, without refreshment, and had the restlessness of death for, I think, the whole week.

"He was eager to depart ; and, if we moved him, or spoke to him, he answered, ' Let me die ! Let me die !'

"A fortnight before, he prayed with many tears for all his enemies, naming Miss ——. ' I beseech thee, O Lord, by thine agony and bloody sweat,' said he, ' that she may never feel the pangs of eternal death.'

"When your kind letter to my brother came, (in which you affectionately tell him, that you will be a father to him and my brother Samuel,) I read it to our father. ' He will be kind to you,' said he, ' when I am gone : I am certain, your uncle will be kind to all of you.'

"The last morning, (which was the 29th of March,) being unable to speak, my mother intreated him to press her hand, if he knew her, which he feebly did.

"His last words which I could hear, were, ' Lord—my heart—my God !' He then drew his breath short, and the last so gently, that we knew not exactly the moment in which his happy spirit fled.

"His dear hand was in mine for five minutes before, and at the awful period of his dissolution.

"It often had been his desire, that we should attend him to the grave ; and though he did not mention it again, (as he did the place of his burial,) during this illness, we all mean to fulfil his wish ; trusting we shall be supported, as we have been hitherto, in our afflicting situation.

"I am,

"Your afflicted and dutiful niece,

"S. WESLEY."

"*Chesterfield-Street, April 4, 1788.*"

A few days before his death, he composed the following lines. Having been silent and quiet for some time, he called Mrs. Wesley to him, and bid her write as he dictated :

In age and feebleness extreme,
Who shall a sinful worn redeem ?*
Jesus, my only hope thou art,
Strength of my failing flesh and heart ;
O ! could I catch a smile from thee,
And drop into eternity !

Thus died, March 29, 1788, aged seventy-nine years and three months, the truly Reverend CHARLES WESLEY. He was buried, April 5, in Marybone Churchyard, at his own desire. The pall was supported by eight Clergymen of the Church of England. On his tombstone are the following lines, written by himself, on occasion of the death of one of his friends : They could not be more aptly applied to any person than to Mr. Charles Wesley :

With poverty of spirit bless'd,
Rest, happy saint, in Jesus rest ;
A sinner saved, through grace forgiven,
Redeem'd from earth to reign in heaven !

* Viz., from that distressing feebleness : The smile of Christ would thus redeem his feeble dying nature.

Thy labours of unwearied love,
By thee forgot are crown'd above;
Crown'd, through the mercy of thy Lord,
With a free, full, immense reward!

Dr. Whitehead observes, "Mr. C. Wesley was of a warm and lively disposition; of great frankness and integrity, and generous and steady in his friendships. His love of simplicity, and utter abhorrence of hypocrisy, and even of affectation in the professors of religion, made him sometimes appear severe on those who assumed a consequence, on account of their experience, or were pert and forward in talking of themselves and others. In conversation, he was pleasing, instructive, and cheerful; and his observations were often seasoned with wit and humour. His religion was genuine and unaffected. As a Minister, he was familiarly acquainted with every part of divinity; and his mind was furnished with an uncommon knowledge of the Scriptures. His discourses from the pulpit were not dry and systematic, but flowed from the present views and feelings of his own mind. He had a remarkable talent of expressing the most important truths with simplicity and energy; and his discourses were sometimes truly Apostolic, forcing conviction on the hearers, in spite of the most determined opposition. As a husband, a father, and a friend, his character was amiable. Mrs. Wesley brought him five children, of whom two sons and a daughter are still living. The sons discovered a taste for music, and a fine musical ear, at an early period of infancy, which excited general amazement; and they are now justly admired by the best judges for their talents in that pleasing art."

His poetical talents were of the first order. It is concerning *his* compositions, that his brother Mr. J. Wesley writes such strong encomiums in his preface to his large Hymnbook. "In these hymns," says he, "there is no doggerel, no botches, nothing put in to patch up the rhyme; no feeble expletives. Here is nothing turgid or bombastic, on the one hand, or low and creeping on the other. Here are no cant expressions, no words without meaning. Here are, (allow me to say,) both the purity, the strength and the elegance of the English language, and, at the same time, the utmost simplicity and plainness, suited to every capacity."

He wrote short hymns on most of the remarkable passages of the Old and New Testament, and very largely on some parts of both. His Hymns and Sacred Poems are an invaluable treasure. There is not a point of divinity, doctrinal, experimental, or practical, which he has not illustrated in verse; which, for purity, and often for sublimity, may vie with any in the English language. But they especially evidence, that the mind of the writer was deeply impressed with his subject, and fully acquainted with the religion of the heart.

It has been said by some who knew him superficially, that the poet was spoiled by religion, else he would have shined in the higher walks of that science. But, had he been so unfaithful to Him who called him, as to leave Paradise for Parnassus, there could be no certain fulfilment of these conjectures, as the Lord might take away even those natural gifts. Specimens are, however, still extant, which fully show, that he had genius equal to the highest walks of poetry, and taste to direct it, so as to excite admiration in the best informed. I shall give some spe-

cimens from his translations of the most admired Classics, and fear not to rank them with either Dryden or Pope.

*--Fuit ante Helenam mulier telerrima belli
Causa: Sed ignotis perierunt mortibus omnes
Quos Venerem incertam rapientes, more ferarum,
Viribus editior cædebat, ut in grege taurus.*

Full many a war has been for woman waged,
Ere half the world in Helen's cause engaged;
But unrecorded in historic verse,
Obscurely died those savage ravishers:
Who, like brute beasts, the female bore away,
Till some superior brute re-seized the prey.
As a wild bull, his rival bull o'erthrown,
Claims the whole subject-herd, and reigns alone.

*—Turpe pecus, glandem atque cubilia propter
Certabant pugnis, dein fustibus atque ita porro
Pugnabant armis, quæ post fabricaverat usus.*

The human herd, unbroken and untaught,
For acorns first and grassy couches fought;
With fists, and then with clubs, maintain'd the fray,
Till, urged by hate, they found a quicker way,
And forged pernicious arms, and learn'd the art to slay.

*Jupiter antiqui contraxit tempora veris,
Perque hiemes æstusque et inæquales autumnos;
Et breve ver spatium exegit quatuor annum.*

The God of nature, and her sovereign king,
Shorten'd the primitive perennial spring:
The spring gave place, no sooner come than past,
To summer's heat, and winter's chilling blast;
And autumn sick, irregular, uneven:
While the sad year, through different seasons driven,
Obey'd the stern decree of angry heaven.

*—Irrupit venæ peioris in ævum
Omne nefas: Fugere pudor, verumque, fidesque
In quorum subiere locum fraudesque dolique
Insidiæque et vis, et amor sceleraçus habendi.*

A flood of general wickedness broke in
At once, and made the iron age begin:
Virtue and truth forsook the faithless race,
And fraud and wrong succeeded in their place.
Deceit and violence, the dire thirst of gold,
Lust to possess, and rage to have and hold.

*Viviter ex rapto: Non hospes ab hospite tutus:
Filius ante diem patrios inquirat annos;
Victa jacet pietas; et virgo cæde madentes,
Ultima caelestium terras Astræa reliquit.*

They live by rapine. The unwary guest
Is poison'd at the inhospitable feast.
The son, impatient for his father's death,
Numbers his years, and longs to stop his breath;
Extinguish'd all regard to God and man:
And Justice, last of the celestial train,
Spurns the earth drench'd in blood, and flies to heaven again.

The classical reader will perceive, in all these examples, how exactly the sense is given, while the translation has all the freedom of original thought.

God can debase the highest genius, and render groveling the most exquisite. Perhaps, those writers whom the world have most admired, were never truly turned to God, and, consequently, could not turn from God to court the applause of men; it was their original element, from

which they departed not. A poetic censure, pronounced by old Mr. Samuel Wesley upon the great, but unhappy, John Dryden, (as related to me by Mr. John Wesley,) is strikingly appropriate. Supposing the great poet and critic to stand before the Judgment-seat, (even if he should find mercy,) he exclaims—

“How will he wish that each high-polish’d line,
That makes vice pleasing, and damnation shine,
Had been as dull as honest Quarles’ or mine !”

Mr. Charles Wesley was soon delivered from this bewitching danger. He ‘*rendered to God the things that were God’s,*’ and glorified him with *all* his ransomed powers. The world will not, cannot, appreciate the beauties of sacred poetry. Mr. Pope’s “Universal Prayer” has been admired : I will put one stanza of it before one of Charles Wesley’s, on a subject nearly similar :

POPE.—The blessings thy free bounty gives,
Let me not cast away ;
For God is pleased when man receives :
T’ enjoy is to obey.

This is very true ; but is it not very flat ? Let us hear our religious poet :

C. WESLEY.—Come then, our heavenly Adam, come,
Thy healing influence give ;
Hallow our food, reverse our doom,
And bid us EAT AND LIVE !
Earth then a scale to heaven shall be ;
Sense shall point out the road ;
The creatures all shall lead to thee,
And all we taste be God !

It has been said, “that one born a poet, is a poet in every thing.” I have often thought of this sentiment when contemplating the character I am striving to portray. He had great eccentricity, even from a child. Divine grace soon corrected this constitutional exuberance ; but something of it innocently remained throughout his whole life. When at the University, in early youth, his brother, (as he informed me,) was alarmed whenever he entered his study. *Aut insanit homo, aut versus facit.**—Full of the muse, and being short-sighted, he would sometimes walk right against his brother’s table, and, perhaps, overthrow it. If the “fine phrenzy” was not quite so high, he would discompose the books and papers in the study,—ask some questions without always waiting for a reply,—repeat some poetry that just then struck him—and at length leave his brother to his regularity ; but all this was soon corrected by ‘the wisdom from above.’

His complete knowledge of the classic writers, and his high relish for their beauties, when it could be drawn from him, (for he was dead even to that kind of applause,) has often excited my surprise how he could bring himself into the bondage of regular study, which he must have done to attain such excellence. But his brother Samuel was his tutor, and kept him, *pro imperio*, to his books till the drudgery was over, and then the stores of Greek and Roman poetry were a sufficient stimulus. One day, after having talked on religious subjects for some time, he broke out,—“Come, I’ll give you two hundred lines of Virgil.” He began, and it was Virgil indeed. I question if the great poet was ever more honoured. The prosody was as truly Roman as the language.

* “The man is mad, or making verses.”

When he was nearly fourscore, he retained something of this eccentricity. He rode every day (clothed for winter even in summer) a little horse, gray with age. When he mounted, if a subject struck him, he proceeded to expand and put it in order. He would write a hymn thus given him, on a card (kept for the purpose) with his pencil in shorthand. Not unfrequently he has come to our house in the City-road, and, having left the pony in the garden in front, he would enter, crying out, "Pen and ink! pen and ink!" These being supplied, he wrote the hymn he had been composing. When this was done, he would look round on those present, and salute them with much kindness, ask after their health, give out a short hymn, and thus put all in mind of eternity. He was fond of that stanza upon those occasions :

There all the ship's company meet,
Who sailed with the Saviour beneath;
With shouting each other they greet,
And triumph o'er sorrow and death.

The voyage of life 's at an end,
The mortal affliction is past;
The age that in heaven they spend,
For ever and ever shall last!

It seemed to me that he could never study regularly after he was delivered from tutors and governors. His Hymns and Sacred Poems, which will be admired beyond any thing on that subject when the age shall have a truly religious taste, perhaps owed much of their strength and excellence to that circumstance. His feelings were strong, his affections warm, and his imagination ardent; and, as he was a master of language, the subject flowed from him in an order that no study could supply. But he seldom, if ever, wrote a line upon any subject that was given to him. He admired Mr. Fletcher beyond all men; but he never, I believe, wrote a line upon his death. His brother requested him to write an elegy upon that occasion, "which," said he, "I will print with my funeral sermon." He made no reply, but seemed to nod assent. Some time after, I asked Mr. J. Wesley if he had received the elegy. He replied, "No: my brother I suppose is waiting for a thought. Poets you know are magotty." The thought I believe never came: yet he wrote something upon almost every thing that occurred. He wrote a whole set of hymns (which were published) on the riots in London in the year 1780. There was a beauty as well as a feeling in those hymns which evidenced the piety, strong affection, and high taste, of the mind that gave them birth. One circumstance is remarkable in those compositions: the measure varies according to the progress of the threatening ruin, and concludes with that kind (the ten-lines measure) which is only proper for joy and thanksgiving. On almost every thing that affected his most compassionate heart he wrote something. The awful end of the celebrated Miss Ray, who was shot coming out of Covent-Garden Theatre, produced from his feeling mind some most moving elegiac stanzas.

Numberless examples might be given of his genius and taste; but, however unfashionable it may appear, I cannot but give the palm to his "Family Hymnbook." Such accumulated strength and beauty of expression, in presenting the daily wants, pains, trials, and embarrassments of a family, to the *God of the families of the whole earth*, surely never before was presented to the suffering children of men. It seems as if he had,

after he became a domestic man, noted every want that flesh is heir to within that circle, and that his one desire was to elevate and direct the subjects of the *curse* to that only *remedy* that turns all into blessing ! We expect a man of real genius to be great where the subject is inspiring ; but to be great in the privacies of common life, to be a true poet (while the man of God equally appears) in those littlenesses, so called, of daily occurrence, shows an elevation and spirituality of mind that has been rarely, if ever, equalled. A shrewd judge of human nature has said, that no man ever appeared great in the eyes of his valet-de-chambre. Charles Wesley was as great in the eyes of the retired partners of his domestic joys and sorrows as in the schools of philosophy and the arts, or the dangers and toils of the field in which he entreated sinners to be reconciled unto God !

In this last mentioned glory his brother alone was his superior, and that chiefly by continuance. Men of God alone can conduct a work of God. Those only who have passed through the conflict that awaits those who *come to God*, can truly direct those who encounter the same perils, nor can any other safely superintend those who *walk with God*. The excellent Scott, lately gone to his reward, has recorded those trials which he had to endure with those who were the children of his faith and prayer, and has noted the same fears and perplexities which his pious friend Newton confided to his friendly heart. Those who beget children in the Lord, should never cease to superintend them, knowing the wiles of the devil, and the deceitfulness of the human heart ; nor should any clerical forms hinder that superintendence. Mr. John Wesley felt this ; and, according to the excellent form of his ordination, he “forsook all other cares and studies” that would hinder or cramp this one great and divine obligation, and persevered in that sacred work to the end of his life. He lamented that his devoted brother ever left his side. Much may be said, and with truth, of the great tenderness of that brother’s spirit, the weakness of his body, and the degree of constitutional depression to which he was subject, and which was increased by the care of a family. For several years he rose above all these weights, and the Lord was with him of a truth ; nor did he forsake him in his retirements. But his gifts were extraordinary, and the call to exercise them in defiance of all that nature pleads for, seemed imperative. Yet, though he comparatively departed from the great public work, I have abundantly showed he never departed from the Lord.

I have now before me the strongest testimony that can be given at this day, that he refused a living of five hundred pounds a year, choosing to remain among the people that he loved. He also refused a large fortune, left to him by a lady whose relatives had quarrelled with her ; telling her, in his usual short way, “it was unjust.” The lady, after trying in vain to bend his spirit, informed him that she “had struck his name out of her will ; but that, nevertheless, her family should not possess the fortune.” Being advised to accept the fortune, and give it to the relatives—“That is a trick of the devil,” said he, “but it won’t do. I know what I am now ; but I do not know what I should be if I were thus made rich.”

As a Preacher, he was ‘mighty in the Scriptures,’ and possessed a remarkable talent of uttering the most striking truths with simplicity, force, and brevity. His ministerial gift was in one respect truly extra-

ordinary : it came the nearest of any thing I ever witnessed to that which we have reason to believe was the original way of preaching the Gospel. It is well known that the Greek word which we render to *preach*, signifies to proclaim as a herald. The herald is to bring forward nothing of his own, but to deliver the proclamation of the king his master. Hence the astonishing effects which accompanied the word in the primitive days. '*I rejoice,*' says St. Paul, '*that ye received the word, not as the word of man, but as it is, indeed, the word of God, which effectually worketh in you who believe. Our word came not unto you in word only, but in power and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance.*' Our Lord, declaring his commission, says, '*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach [proclaim] the Gospel to the poor : he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to publish the acceptable year of the Lord.*' Man is the same at this day ; God is the same ; and these effects *now* follow, when men, who have themselves been thus healed and set at liberty, proclaim, by the same Spirit, the Gospel of God ; and when '*it is mixed with faith in those who hear it.*' Where the man who is not himself a subject of this work, takes some notes out of the king's proclamations, and thus forms a proclamation of his own, we need not wonder that no such effects follow—that no sinners are converted to God. Much of this power of truth rested on Mr. J. Wesley, Mr. Fletcher, and others ; but on none more conspicuously than on Mr. Charles Wesley, while he gave himself up entirely to the work. His Sermon before the University of Oxford, in the year 1742, in his course as a student of Christ Church, on Ephesians v, 14, is an example of this way of proclaiming the Gospel, in which he so greatly excelled ; but it falls short of many discourses which he delivered in the highways and to large auditories in his own chapels. The scholar was under *some* restraint while preaching at St. Mary's, knowing the state of many in his learned congregation, and the need of preserving order in his discourse ; but where only God and conscious sinners were before him, it seemed as if nothing could *withstand the wisdom and power with which he spoke* : to use the expression of a pious man, "It was all thunder and lightning." Even when he retired from the itinerant work, I have known him thus favoured and thus great, so that I should not have wondered at beholding the whole congregation on their knees, or prostrate on their faces before God, crying for mercy ! But though these times were not of frequent recurrence, he was always *the savour of life* to those who *waited upon God* ; but those of the congregation who looked for a regular discourse, concerning which they might give their judgment, were seldom satisfied : He was either an ambassador *for* God, or he was nothing. He would not *preach himself*, in any sense of that expression.

In the three or four last years of his life, he visited the prisoners under sentence of death in Newgate. Having become acquainted with the Rev. Mr. Villette, the Ordinary, he had full liberty for this work, and frequently preached what is called "the condemned sermon." I attended him upon one of those occasions, and witnessed, with feelings which I cannot describe, the gracious tenderness of his heart. I saw the advantage of proclaiming the Gospel to those who knew they were

soon to die, and who felt that they had greatly sinned. He composed many hymns, most strikingly suited to their unhappy condition; and used to come, as before mentioned, to the Chapel-house in the City-road, and after reading those hymns to us, he used to call us to unite in prayer for these outcasts of men. When we arose, something of that peculiarity would sometimes appear which I have already noted. He would ask, "Can you *believe*?" And upon our answering "Yes, sir," he would flourish his hand over his head, and cry out, "We shall have them all!" and immediately hasten away to the cells to hold out life to the dead.

But I must conclude a subject that lies near my heart, and of which I could never be weary. Yet I must mention the remarkable gift which he possessed, of promptness in answering attacks, or replying to the remarks of those who attempted to hedge him in. Soon after the work of God began, the question of Absolute Predestination was introduced among the people, and was soon followed by Antinomianism. Mr. Charles Wesley was roused to the most determined opposition against this evil, which was making havoc of the people around him. One day, he was preaching in Moorfields, and having mentioned those things, he added, "You may know one of these zealots by his bad temper." A person in the crowd immediately vociferated, "You lie!" "Ha!" says Mr. C. Wesley, "*have I drawn out leviathan with a hook?*"

An anecdote, which he related to me himself, is perhaps still more striking. When that dignified character, Dr. Robinson, primate of Ireland, and who was raised to the *temporal* peerage, was at the Hot-wells, near Bristol, he met Mr. C. Wesley in the pump-room. They were both of Christ-church, Oxford. The Archbishop seemed glad to see his old fellow collegian, and conversed with him freely. After some time, he observed, "Mr. Wesley, you must be sensible that I have heard many things of you and your brother; but I have not believed them: I knew you better. But one thing has always surprised me,—your employing laymen."

C. W.—It is your fault, my lord.

Archbishop.—My fault, Mr. Wesley?

C. W.—Yes, my lord, yours and your brethren's.

Archbishop.—How so, sir?

C. W.—Why, my lord, you *hold your peace*, and so *the stones cry out*.

They took a turn in silence. His grace however rallied:

Archbishop.—But I hear they are unlearned men.

C. W.—Very true, my lord; in general, they are so: so *the dumb ass rebukes the prophet*.

His grace immediately turned the conversation.

I shall conclude this sketch of the character of this great and most estimable man, by expressing my conviction of him also, as of his brother, that

"I ne'er shall look upon his like again!"

CHAPTER III.

THE THREE LAST YEARS OF MR. WESLEY'S LIFE—HIS LAST ILLNESS AND DEATH—THE INSCRIPTION ON HIS TOMB—HIS LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT.

THE long life graciously dispensed to these brothers in the flesh and in the Lord, was a blessing to the people under their care. The want of the personal superintendence of Mr. C. Wesley, in his latter years, was but little felt while his brother continued in the full enjoyment of his vast powers. But the time drew near when he also must prove, that '*it is appointed unto men once to die.*' This awful hour began now to be very generally anticipated, accompanied with inquiries concerning the probable consequences of his death to that great work of which he had been the father, and still continued the chief instrument. He alone seemed without carefulness. That it was *a work of God*, and consequently that it would no more come to an end than the *word* that was given, and by which it had been formed, seemed never for a moment to depart from his mind. That his death must be sudden, was a very general thought; "for, if the people apprehend danger, they will keep him here while prayer will be heard." Careful to do the work of Him that sent him, all other care he cast upon Him in whom is the life of man.

December 31, 1788, he makes the following remarks:—"A numerous company concluded the old year with a very solemn watchnight. Hitherto God hath helped us; and we neither see nor feel any of those terrible judgments which, it was said, God would pour out upon the nation, about the conclusion of the year."—And again notes, that, "for near seventy years, I have observed, that before any war or public calamity, England abounds with prophets, who confidently foretel many terrible things. They generally believe themselves; and are seldom undeceived, even by the failure of their predictions."

On his birth-day, (June 28, 1788,) Mr. Wesley observes, "I this day enter on my eighty-sixth year. And what cause have I to praise God, as for a thousand spiritual blessings, so for bodily blessings also! How little have I suffered yet, by the '*rush of numerous years*!' It is true I am not so *agile* as I was in times past: I do not run or walk so fast as I did. My *sight* is a little decayed: my left eye is grown dim, and hardly serves me to read. I have daily some pain in the ball of my right eye, as also in my right temple, (occasioned by a blow received some months since,) and in my right shoulder and arm, which I impute partly to a sprain and partly to the rheumatism. I find likewise some decay in my memory with regard to names, and things lately past; but not at all with regard to what I have read or heard twenty, forty, or sixty years ago. Neither do I find any decay in my hearing, smell, taste, or appetite, (though I want but a third part of the food I did once,) nor do I feel any such thing as weariness, either in travelling or preaching. And I am not conscious of any decay in writing sermons, which I do as readily, and I believe as correctly, as ever.

“To what cause can I impute this, that I am as I am? First, doubtless, to the power of God, fitting me for the work to which I am called, as long as he pleases to continue me therein; and next, subordinately to this, to the prayers of his children.

“May we not impute it as inferior means:

“1. To my constant exercise and change of air?

“2. To my never having lost a night's sleep, sick or well, at land or at sea, since I was born?

“3. To my having sleep at command, so that whenever I feel myself almost worn out, I call it, and it comes, day or night?

“4. To my having constantly, for above sixty years, risen at four in the morning?

“5. To my constant preaching at five in the morning, for above fifty years?

“6. To my having had so little pain in my life, and so little sorrow, or anxious care?

“Even now, though I find pain daily in my eye, or temple, or arm, yet it is never violent, and seldom lasts many minutes at a time.

“Whether or not this is sent to give me warning that I am shortly to quit this tabernacle I do not know; but be it one way or the other, I have only to say,

My remnant of days
I spend to his praise
Who died the whole world to redeem:
Be they many or few,
My days are his due,
And they all are devoted to him!”

It had been reported that Mr. Charles Wesley had said a little before he died, that his brother would outlive him but one year. Mr. Wesley did not pay much attention to this, but he seemed to think, that considering his years, and the symptoms of decay which he had marked in himself, such an event was highly probable. Yet he made not the least alteration in his manner of living, or in his labours. He often said to me, during that year, “Now what ought I to do in case I am to die this year? I do not see what I can do but to go on in my labour just as I have done hitherto.” And in his Journal he remarks, “If this is to be the last year of my life, I hope it will be the best. I am not careful about it, but heartily receive the advice of the angel in Milton,

‘How well is thine: How long permit to heaven.’”

In conversing on this subject, before he left London, he observed to me, “Mr. (afterwards Sir) James Stonehouse said, many years ago, that my brother and I should die in the harness. My brother did not, but I believe I shall.”

He accordingly refused to listen to the advice of many who loved him, and contrary to their earnest entreaties went to Ireland at the usual time. He travelled through that kingdom once more, preaching and meeting the societies as he had used to do. While on this journey he was attacked with a complaint entirely new to him,—a *diabetes*. Being at that time in London, he wrote to me, and described the symptoms of this disorder, desiring me to consult Dr. Whitehead, and let him know what the Doctor should advise. I did so, and the Doctor wrote for him; but he observed to me, that if the complaint should continue it

would shorten his life ; his advanced age could not bear it. The complaint abated, but he was never entirely delivered from it ; it gave him some uneasiness even to the last.

In Dublin he made the following remarks on his birth-day : " This day I enter on my eighty-seventh year. I now find I grow old.—1. My *sight* is decayed, so that I cannot read a small print, except in a strong light.—2. My *strength* is decayed, so that I walk much slower than I did some years since.—3. My *memory* of names, whether of persons or places, is decayed : I am obliged to stop a little to recollect them. What I should be afraid of is, (if I took thought for the morrow,) that my body should weigh down my mind, and create either *stubbornness*, by the decrease of my understanding, or *peevishness*, by the increase of bodily infirmities. But thou shalt answer for me, O Lord my God !"

On the first day of the following year, (1790,) he remarks : I am now an old man, decayed from head to foot. My eyes are dim ; my right hand shakes much ; my mouth is hot and dry every morning. I have a lingering fever almost every day. My motion is weak and slow. However, blessed be God, I do not slack my labour. I can preach and write still."

Being in the house with him when he wrote thus, I was greatly surprised. I knew it must be as he said ; but I could not imagine his weakness was so great. He still rose at his usual hour, four o'clock, and went through the many duties of the day, not indeed with the same apparent vigour, but without complaint, and with a degree of resolution that was astonishing. He would still, as he afterwards remarks, " do a little for God before he dropped into the dust."

I should greatly rejoice to be able to testify that his days of weakness were days of uninterrupted tranquillity. That he might enjoy even more than

" The soul's calm sunshine and the heartfelt joy,"

was certainly the wish of every benevolent mind. God had made all those who had been his enemies in years past, to be at peace with him. But he had still to contend with that '*jealousy*' which '*is cruel as the grave*,' and never to be satisfied.

He often observed, that in a course of fifty years, he had never, either *premeditatedly* or *willingly* varied from the Church of England in one article, either of doctrine or discipline ; but that through *necessity*, not *choice*, he had slowly and warily, and with as little offence as possible, varied in some points of discipline, by preaching in the fields, by extemporary prayer, by employing lay-preachers, by forming and regulating societies, and by holding yearly conferences ; but that he did none of these things till he was convinced of the necessity of them, and could no longer omit them but at the peril of his soul. And his constant wish and prayer was, that all who laboured with him, or were under his care, might herein tread in his steps.

To straiten the terms of church communion is seldom serviceable to a church. Were it certain that none are of the Church of England who violate its rules, it would follow that the church has exceeding few members, even among the Clergy. There are but few of these who do not secretly disapprove of some of the articles, and openly violate many of the canons. It would be safer, as well as more liberal, to allow every

one to be of the church who attends its worship and receives its sacraments ; and it will be hard to prove they are not. A national church must comprehend all the king's subjects, especially all who are willing to be so comprehended.

The generality of the preachers and people in connexion with Mr. Wesley, were of the established church. Nevertheless, as a defence against the violence of brutal men, the greater number of the preachers and chapels were licensed according to the *toleration act*. That act, we are sensible, was made for the protection of those who dissent from the established church, and particularly to free them from the penalties of the Conventicle Act. The preachers who laboured with, and the societies which were formed by Mr. Wesley, reposed, however, under the shadow of the act of toleration. But about three years before Mr. Wesley's death, certain *friends of the church* resolved to '*deal wisely with them.*' They considered, "These men profess to be of the Church of England. What then have they to do with the Toleration Act. They shall have no benefit from it." And they acted accordingly. In vain did those who applied for licenses plead that they only desired to defend themselves against the violence of ungodly and lawless men, and to avoid the penalties of an act, which, perhaps, was made to prevent *sedition* meetings, but in reality forbids *religious* assemblies of every description, except in the churches of the Establishment. The answer was short, "You shall have no license, unless you declare yourselves Dissenters." Some, who considered that the holding meetings for prayer or preaching, without the authority of the Diocesan, was in fact a kind of dissent, declared their willingness (though others refused this concession) to be called Dissenters in the certificate. But neither did this avail them. They were told, "You must not only profess yourselves Dissenters ; you must declare that you scruple to attend the service or sacraments of the church, or we can grant you no relief ; for the act in question was made only for those who have these scruples."

In various places both preachers and people were thus treated. In the mean time the informers were not idle. If any one dared to have preaching, or a meeting for prayer or Christian fellowship in his house, information was given, and all that were present at the meeting were fined, according to the penal clauses laid down in the conventicle act. A great majority of those who thus offended were tradesmen and labourers, who severely felt the fines which were thus levied upon them. Some appealed to the Quarter-Sessions, but no relief could be obtained ; they had no license, and therefore the law, as thus interpreted, showed them no mercy.

Mr. Wesley saw this evil with a degree of pain which he had seldom experienced. He perceived whereto it tended, and that, if persisted in, it would oblige him to give up the work in which he had been engaged, and which he believed to be the work of God ; or to separate from the Established Church. This was to him a most painful alternative. Wishing to be relieved from it, he stated the case to a Member of Parliament, a real friend to religious liberty, in the following manner : "Last month a few poor people met together in Lincolnshire, to pray to and praise God in a friend's house : There was no preaching at all. Two neighbouring justices fined the man of the house twenty pounds. I suppose he was not worth twenty shillings. Upon this, his household

goods were distrained and sold to pay the fine. He appealed to the Quarter-Sessions; but all the Justices averred, 'The Methodists could have no relief from *the act of toleration*, because they went to Church; and that, so long as they did so, *the conventicle act* should be executed upon them.'

"Last Sunday, when one of our preachers was beginning to speak to a quiet congregation, a neighbouring justice sent a constable to seize him, though he was licensed; and would not release him till he had paid twenty pounds, telling him 'his license was good for nothing, because he was a Churchman.'

"Now, Sir, what can the Methodists do? They are liable to be ruined by *the conventicle act*, and they have no relief from *the act of toleration*! If this is not oppression, what is? Where then is English liberty? the liberty of Christians? yea, of every rational creature, who, as such, has a right to worship God according to his own conscience? But, waiving the question of right and wrong, what prudence is there in oppressing such a body of loyal subjects? If these good Magistrates could drive them, not only out of Somersetshire, but out of England, who would be gainers thereby? Not his Majesty, whom we honour and love: not his Ministers, whom we love and serve for his sake. Do they wish to throw away so many thousand friends, who are now bound to them by stronger ties than that of interest?—If you will speak a word to Mr. Pitt on that head, you will oblige," &c.

Dr. Whitehead observes, "The paper from which the above is taken is only a copy; and I have some doubt whether Somersetshire be not inserted for Lincolnshire, before mentioned in the same paper.* However this may be, Mr. Wesley wrote to the Bishop of — the following letter a few months before the above was written:

"MY LORD,—I am a dying man, having already one foot in the grave. Humanly speaking, I cannot long creep upon the earth, being now nearer ninety than eighty years of age. But I cannot die in peace, before I have discharged this office of Christian love to your Lordship. I write without ceremony, as neither hoping nor fearing any thing from your Lordship, or from any man living. And I ask, in the name and in the presence of Him, to whom both you and I are shortly to give an account, why do you trouble those that are quiet in the land? those that fear God and work righteousness? Does your Lordship know what the Methodists are? That many thousands of them are zealous members of the Church of England, and strongly attached, not only to his Majesty, but to his present Ministry? Why should your Lordship, setting religion out of the question, throw away such a body of respectable friends? Is it for their religious sentiments? Alas, my Lord! is this a time to persecute any man for conscience' sake? I beseech you, my Lord, do as you would be done to. You are a man of sense; you are a man of learning; nay, I verily believe, (what is of infinitely more value,) you are a man of piety. Then think, and let think.—I pray God to bless you with the choicest of his blessings.

"I am, my Lord," &c.

* No. It was in Somersetshire. Mr. Andrew Inglis was fined thus during the Bristol Conference, in the year 1790. The lawyer at the head of this persecution boasted that he would drive Methodism out of Somersetshire. "Yes," said Mr. Wesley, "when he drives God out of it."

To a prelate, in whose diocess this kind of persecution was, I suppose, still more violent, he wrote the following letter :

“ MY LORD,—It may seem strange, that one who is not acquainted with your Lordship should trouble you with a letter. But I am constrained to do it : I believe it is my duty both to God and your Lordship. And I must speak plain ; having nothing to hope or fear in this world, which I am on the point of leaving.

“ The Methodists, in general, my Lord, are members of the Church of England. They hold all her doctrines, attend her service, and partake of her sacraments. They do not willingly do harm to any one, but do what good they can to all. To encourage each other herein, they frequently spend an hour together in prayer and mutual exhortation. Permit me then to ask, *Cui bono?* ‘*For what reasonable end*’ would your Lordship drive these people out of the Church? Are they not as quiet, as inoffensive, nay, as pious as any of their neighbours? Except perhaps here and there a hairbrained man, who knows not what he is about. Do you ask, ‘Who drives them out of the Church?’ Your Lordship does ; and that in the most cruel manner ; yea, and the most disingenuous manner. They desire a license to worship God after their own conscience. Your Lordship refuses it ; and then punishes them for not having a license ! So your Lordship leaves them only this alternative, ‘Leave the Church, or starve.’ And is it a Christian, yea a Protestant bishop, that so persecutes his own flock ? I say *persecutes* : for it is persecution, to all intents and purposes. You do not burn them indeed, but you starve them : and how small is the difference ! And your Lordship does this under colour of a vile, execrable law, not a whit better than that *de Hæretico comburendo* !* So persecution, which is banished out of France, is again countenanced in England !

“ O my Lord, for God’s sake, for Christ’s sake, for pity’s sake, suffer the poor people to enjoy their religious, as well as civil liberty ! I am on the brink of eternity ! Perhaps so is your Lordship too ! How soon may you also be called to give an account of your stewardship to the Great Shepherd and Bishop of our souls ! May he enable both you and me to do it with joy ! So prays, my Lord,

“ Your Lordship’s dutiful son and servant,

“ JOHN WESLEY.

“ *Hull, June 26, 1790.*”

Mr. Wesley had hitherto ordained ministers only for America and Scotland. But during the period I have mentioned, being assisted by other presbyters of the Church of England, he set apart a certain number of preachers for the sacred office by the imposition of his hands and prayer, without sending them out of England. One of these he ordained after writing the above letter, and but a short time before his death ; strongly advising them, at the same time, that, according to his example, they should continue united to the Established Church, so far as that work of God in which they were engaged would permit.

To avoid an extreme so very painful to him as separating from the Church, he took counsel with some of his friends, who advised that an application should be made to Parliament for the repeal of the Conven-

* Concerning the burning of heretics.

ticle Act. Several of the members of the House of Commons who were convinced of his sincere attachment to the present government, and of the inexpediency of that law in the present day, were inclined to favour the application.* But his increasing infirmities prevented his bestowing that attention upon it which was needful. He would omit none of his religious duties or labours. Herein he would listen to no advice. His almost continual prayer was, "Lord, let me not live to be useless!" At every place, after giving to the society what he desired them to consider as his last advice, 'To love as brethren, fear God, and honour the king,' he invariably concluded with that verse :

Oh that without a ling'ring groan
I may the welcome word receive ;
My body with my charge lay down,
And cease at once to work and live !

In this manner he went on till the usual time of his leaving London approached. Determined not to relax, he sent his chaise and horses before him to Bristol, and took places for himself and his friend in the Bath coach. But the vigorous mind could no longer support the body. It sunk, though by slow and almost imperceptible degrees, until

The weary wheels of life stood still at last.

On Thursday the 17th of February, 1791, he preached at Lambeth. When he came home he seemed not to be well : And being asked, How he did ? he said, He believed he had caught cold.

Friday the 18th. He read and wrote as usual, and preached at Chelsea in the evening. But he was obliged to stop once or twice, and to inform the people his cold so affected his voice as to prevent his speaking without those necessary pauses.

Saturday the 19th. He filled up most of his time with reading and writing, though his fever and weakness seemed evidently increasing. At dinner he desired a friend to read to him three or four chapters out of the book of Job. He rose (according to custom) early the next morning, but utterly unfit for his Sabbath-day's exercise. At seven o'clock he was obliged to lie down, and slept between three and four hours. When he awoke he said, "I have not had such a comfortable sleep this fortnight past." In the afternoon he lay down again, and slept an hour or two : Afterwards two of his own Discourses on our Lord's *Sermon on the Mount* were read to him, and in the evening he came down to supper.

Monday the 21st. He seemed much better ; and though his friends tried to dissuade him from it, would keep an engagement made some time before to dine at Twickenham. When he returned home he seemed better : And on Tuesday went on with his usual work ; and preached in the evening at the chapel in the City-road.

On Wednesday he went to Leatherhead, and preached to a small company on '*Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, and call ye upon him while he is near.*' Here ended the ministerial labours of this man of God. On Thursday he stopped at Mr. Wolff's at Balaam. At this

* The question mooted above was carefully prepared, and came to issue about twenty years after, in what has been called *Lord Sidmouth's Bill*. The issue was decisive, and caused a reaction that set the question completely at rest, and obtained for religious liberty a more solid basis. His majesty's ministers behaved on that occasion with the greatest candour and liberality.

place he was cheerful ; and seemed nearly as well as usual, till Friday about breakfast time, when he grew very heavy. About eleven o'clock he returned home ; and, having sat down in his room, desired to be left alone, and not to be interrupted for half an hour by any one.

When the limited time was expired some mulled wine was given him. He drank a little and seemed sleepy ; but in a few minutes threw it up, and said, "I must lie down." He accordingly was put to bed, and lay most of the day, having a quick pulse and a burning fever.

Saturday the 26th. He continued much the same ; spoke but little, and if roused to answer a question, or take a little refreshment, (which was seldom more than a spoonful at a time,) he soon dosed again.

On Sunday morning he got up, took a cup of tea, and seemed much better. While sitting in his chair he looked quite cheerful, and repeated the latter part of that verse in the Scripture Hymns on '*Forsake me not when my strength faileth :*'

Till glad I lay this body down,
Thy servant, Lord, attend ;
And O ! my life of mercy crown
With a triumphant end !

Soon after, in a most emphatical manner he said, '*Our friend Lazarus sleepeth.*' Some who were then present, speaking rather too much to him, he tried to exert himself, but was soon exhausted and obliged to lie down. After a while he looked up, and said, "Speak to me, I cannot speak."—On which one of the company said, "Shall we pray with you, sir?"—He earnestly replied, "Yes." And while they prayed his whole soul seemed engaged with God for an answer, and he added a hearty AMEN.

About half after two he said, "There is no need for more than what I said at Bristol. My words then were,

‘I the chief of sinners am,
But Jesus died for me!’”*

One said, "Is this the present language of your heart, and do you now feel as you then did?" He replied, "Yes." When the same person repeated,

"Bold I approach th' eternal throne,
And claim the crown through Christ my own ;"

and added, "'Tis enough. He, our precious Immanuel, has purchased, has promised all ;" he earnestly replied, "He is all ! He is all !" and then said, "I will go." Soon after to his niece Miss Wesley, who sat by his bedside, he said, "Sally, have you zeal for God now?" After this the fever was very high, and at times affected his head : But even

* At the Bristol Conference in the year 1783, Mr. Wesley was taken very ill : Neither he nor his friends thought he would recover. From the nature of his complaint, he thought a spasm would probably seize his stomach, and occasion sudden death. Under these views of his situation, he said to Mr. Bradford, "I have been reflecting on my past life : I have been wandering up and down between fifty and sixty years, endeavouring in my poor way to do a little good to my fellow creatures ; and now, it is probable that there are but a few steps between me and death ; and what have I to trust to for salvation ? I can see nothing which I have done or suffered that will bear looking at. I have no other plea than this :

"I the chief of sinners am,
But Jesus died for me."

The sentiment here expressed, and his reference to it in his last sickness, plainly show how steadily he had persevered in the same views of the Gospel with which he set out to preach it.

then, though his head was subject to a temporary derangement, his heart seemed wholly engaged in his Master's work.

In the evening he got up again, and while sitting in his chair, he said, "How necessary is it for every one to be on the right foundation !

‘I the chief of sinners am,
But Jesus died for me.’

We must be justified by faith, and then go on to full sanctification."

He slept most of the following day, and spoke but little ; yet that little testified how much his whole heart was taken up in the care of the churches, the glory of God, and the things pertaining to that kingdom to which he was hastening. Once in a low, but very distinct voice, he said, "There is no way into the holiest but by the blood of Jesus."

He afterwards inquired what the words were on which he preached at Hampstead a short time before. He was told they were these : *‘Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.’* He replied, "That is the foundation, the only foundation : There is no other." He also repeated three or four times in the space of a few hours, *‘We have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.’*

Tuesday, March 1st. After a very restless night, (though when asked whether he was in pain, he generally answered "No," and never complained through his whole illness, except once when he felt a pain in his left breast when he drew his breath,) he began singing,

All glory to God in the sky,
And peace upon earth be restored !
O Jesus, exalted on high,
Appear our omnipotent Lord !
Who, meanly in Bethlehem born,
Didst stoop to redeem a lost race ;
Once more to thy people return,
And reign in thy kingdom of grace.
O ! wouldst thou again be made known,
Again in the Spirit descend ;
And set up in each of thine own
A kingdom that never shall end !
Thou only art able to bless,
And make the glad nations obey ;
And bid the dire enmity cease,
And bow the whole world to thy sway.

Here his strength failed : But after lying still awhile, he called for a pen and ink. They were brought to him : But those active fingers, which had been the blessed instruments of conveying spiritual consolation and useful instruction to thousands, could no longer perform their office. Some time after, he said, "I want to write : " But on the pen's being put into his hand, and the paper held before him, he said, "I cannot." One of the company answered, "Let me write for you, sir ; tell me what you would say. "Nothing," replied he, "but that God is WITH US." In the forenoon he said, "I will get up." While they were bringing his clothes, he broke out in a manner which, considering his extreme weakness, astonished all present, in these words :

I'll praise my Maker while I've breath,
And when my voice is lost in death,
Praise shall employ my nobler powers :

My days of praise shall ne'er be past,
While life, and thought, and being last,
Or immortality endures.

Happy the man, whose hopes rely
On Israel's God : He made the sky,
And earth and seas, with all their train :
His truth for ever stands secure,
He saves th' oppress'd, he feeds the poor,
And none shall find his promise vain.

Another time, he was feebly endeavouring to speak, beginning, "Nature is — Nature is." One that was present, added, "Nearly exhausted, but you are entering into a new nature, and into the society of blessed spirits." He answered, "Certainly ;" and clasped his hands together, saying, "Jesus !" The rest could not be well heard, but his lips continued moving as in fervent prayer.

When he got into his chair, he appeared to change for death : but, regardless of his dying frame, he said, with a weak voice, "Lord, thou givest strength to those that can speak, and to those that cannot. Speak, Lord, to all our hearts, and let them know that thou loosest the tongue." He then sung

To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
Who sweetly all agree,—

Here his voice failed him, and after gasping for breath, he said, "Now we have done——Let us all go." He was then laid on the bed, from which he rose no more. After lying still, and sleeping a little, he desired those who were present to pray and praise. They knelt down, and the room seemed to be filled with the Divine presence. A little after he said, "Let me be buried in nothing but what is woollen, and let my corpse be carried in my coffin into the chapel." Then, as if done with all below, he again begged they would pray and praise. Several friends that were in the house being called up, they all kneeled down to prayer, at which time his fervour of spirit was visible to every one present. But in particular parts of the prayer, his whole soul seemed to be engaged in a manner which evidently showed how ardently he longed for the full accomplishment of their united desires. And when Mr. Broadbent, who did not long survive him, was praying in a very expressive manner, that if God was about to take away their father to his eternal rest, he would be pleased to continue and increase his blessing upon the doctrine and discipline, which he had long made his aged servant the means of propagating and establishing in the world ; such a degree of fervour accompanied his loud amen, as was every way expressive of his soul's being engaged in the answer of the petitions.

On rising from their knees, he took hold of all their hands, and with the utmost placidness saluted them, and said, "Farewell, farewell."

A little after, a person coming in, he strove to speak, but could not. Finding they could not understand him, he paused a little, and with all the remaining strength he had, cried out, "*The best of all is, God is with us :*" And then lifting up his dying arm in token of victory, and raising his feeble voice with a holy triumph not to be expressed, he again repeated the heart-reviving words, "*The best of all is, God is with us.*"

Seeing some persons standing by his bedside, he asked, "Who are these ?" And being informed who they were ; Mr. Rogers said, "Sir, we are come to rejoice with you ; you are going to receive your crown."

"It is the Lord's doing," he replied, "and marvellous in our eyes." On being told that his sister-in-law Mrs. Wesley was come, he said, "He giveth his servants rest." He thanked her, as she pressed his hand, and affectionately endeavoured to kiss her. On wetting his lips, he said, "We thank thee, O Lord, for these and all thy mercies: Bless the Church and King; and grant us truth and peace, through Jesus Christ our Lord, for ever and ever!"*

At another time he said, "He causeth his servants to lie down in peace." Then pausing a little, he cried, "The clouds drop fatness!" And soon after, "The Lord is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge!" He then called those present to prayer: And though he was greatly exhausted, he appeared still more fervent in spirit. These exertions were however too much for his feeble frame; and most of the night following, though he often attempted to repeat the Psalm before mentioned, he could only utter

- I'll praise——I'll praise—

On Wednesday morning the closing scene drew near. Mr. Bradford, his faithful friend, prayed with him, and the last word he was heard to articulate was, "Farewell!" A few minutes before ten, while several of his friends were kneeling around his bed; without a lingering groan, this man of God, this beloved Pastor of thousands, entered into the joy of his Lord.

At the desire of many friends, his corpse was placed in the New Chapel, and remained there the day before his interment.† His face during that time had the trace of a heavenly smile upon it, and a beauty which was admired by all that saw it. The crowds which came to see him, while he lay in his coffin, were so great, that his friends, apprehensive of a tumult if he was interred at the usual time, determined to bury him, contrary to their first resolution, between five and six in the morning; of which no notice was given till late the preceding evening; notwithstanding which, the intelligence had so far transpired, that some hundreds attended at that early hour. These, with many tears, saw his dear remains deposited in the vault which he had some years before prepared for himself, and for those Itinerant preachers who should die in London. From those whom he loved in life he chose not to be divided in death.

The funeral service was read by the late Rev. Mr. Richardson, who had served him as a son in the gospel for nearly thirty years, and who now lies with him in the same vault. When Mr. Richardson came to that part of the service, "For as much as it hath pleased Almighty God to take unto himself the soul of our dear brother," &c, he substituted, with the most tender emphasis, the epithet "Father" instead of "Brother;" which had so powerful an effect on the congregation, that from silent tears they seemed universally to burst out into loud weeping.

* This was his constant thanksgiving after meals.

† Mr. Southey has repeated, after Mr. Hampson, "That he had a Bible in one hand, and a white handkerchief in the other; and the old clerical cap on his head." As I was an eyewitness, I may state that there is no truth at all in this account. He had no clerical cap, old or new, in his possession; and his friends had too much sense to put any thing into the hands of a corpse.

The inscription on the coffin was,

JOHANNES WESLEY, A. M.
Olim. Soc. Coll. Lin. Oxon.
Ob. 2 do. die Martii, 1791.
An. Æt. 88.*

The following was the inscription on his tomb :

To the Memory of
THE VENERABLE JOHN WESLEY, A. M.
Late Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford.
This great light arose,
(By the singular providence of God,)
To enlighten these nations,
And to revive, enforce and defend,
The pure apostolical doctrines and practices of the
primitive church :
Which he continued to do, by his writings and his labours,
For more than half a century :
And, to his inexpressible joy,
Not only beheld their influence extending,
And their efficacy witnessed
In the hearts and lives of many thousands,
As well in the Western World as in these kingdoms :
But also, far above all human power or expectation, lived to see provision
made, by the singular grace of God,
For their continuance and establishment,
To the joy of future generations !
Reader, if thou art constrained to bless the instrument,
Give God the glory !
After having languished a few days, he at length finished his course
and his life together ;
Gloriously triumphing over death,
March 2, An. Dom. 1791,
In the eighty-eighth year of his age.

The following is a copy of his last Will and Testament :

“ In the name of God, Amen !

“ I, JOHN WESLEY, Clerk, some time Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford, revoking all others, appoint this to be my last Will and Testament.

“ I give all my books now on sale, and the copies of them, (only subject to a rent charge of 85*l*.† a year, to the widow and children of my brother,) to my faithful friends, John Horton, merchant ; George Wolff, merchant ; and William Marriott, stock-broker, all of London, in trust for the general fund of the Methodist Conference in carrying on the work of God by Itinerant Preachers ;‡ on condition that they permit the

* John Wesley, Master of Arts, formerly Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford, died on the 2d day of March, 1791, in the eighty-eighth year of his age.

† Two thousand pounds had been secured to Mr. Charles Wesley on his marriage, to which the stock of books, which was all the property that Mr. John Wesley possessed, was made liable, and from which one hundred pounds a year was paid as the interest. Mr. Wesley determined to pay off the principal, and three hundred pounds were actually paid at the time of his death. That Mrs. Wesley and her family might not suffer any loss, or be at any uncertainty, the conference being happily united in the work, resolved to act according to Mr. Wesley's intention. They accordingly borrowed the remaining seventeen hundred pounds, and paid it to Mrs. Wesley, in the presence of Mr. Charles Wesley's executors.

‡ Above a year and a half after the making of this will, Mr. Wesley executed a deed, in which he appointed seven gentlemen, viz. Dr. Thomas Coke, and Messrs. Alexander Mather, Peard Dickenson, John Valton, James Rogers, Joseph Taylor, and Adam Clarke, trustees for all his books, pamphlets, and copy-right, for carrying on the work of God by Itinerant preachers, according to the enrolled deed, which we have already mentioned. But Dr. Coke being in America at the time of Mr. Wesley's death, the deed was suffered to lie dormant till his return. The three executors then took the advice of two of the most eminent counsellors in the kingdom, who informed them that the deed was of a testamentary nature, and therefore superseded the will with respect to the books, &c. The deed

following Committee, Thomas Coke, James Creighton, Peard Dickenson, Thomas Rankin, George Whitfield, and the London Assistant for the time being, still to superintend the printing press, and to employ Hannah Paramore and George Paramore as heretofore, unless four of the Committee judge a change to be needful.

"I give the books, furniture, and whatever else belongs to me in the three houses at Kingswood, in trust to Thomas Coke, Alexander Mather, and Henry Moore, to be still employed in teaching and maintaining the children of poor Travelling Preachers.

"I give to Thomas Coke, Dr. John Whitehead, and Henry Moore, all the books which are in my study and bedchamber at London, and in my studies elsewhere, in trust for the use of the Preachers who shall labour there from time to time.

"I give the coins, and whatever else is found in the drawer of my bureau at London, to my dear granddaughters, Mary and Jane Smith.

"I give all my manuscripts to Thomas Coke, Dr. Whitehead, and Henry Moore, to be burnt or published as they see good.

"I give whatever money remains in my bureau and pockets at my decease, to be equally divided between Thomas Briscoe, William Collins, John Easton, and Isaac Brown.

"I desire my gowns, cassocks, sashes, and bands, may remain at the chapel for the use of the Clergymen attending there.

"I desire the London assistant for the time being to divide the rest of my wearing apparel between those four of the Travelling Preachers that want it most; only my pelisse I give to the Rev. Mr. Creighton; my watch to my friend Joseph Bradford; my gold seal to Eliz. Ritchie.

"I give my chaise and horses to James Ward and Charles Wheeler, in trust, to be sold, and the money to be divided, one half to Hannah Abbott, and the other to the poor members of the Select Society.

"Out of the first money which arises from the sale of books, I bequeath to my dear sister Martha Hall (if alive) 40*l.*, to Mr. Creighton, aforesaid, 40*l.*, and to the Rev. Mr. Heath 60*l.*

"And whereas I am empowered by a late deed to name the persons who are to preach in the New Chapel at London, (the Clergymen for a continuance,) and by another deed to name a Committee for appointing Preachers in the New Chapel at Bath, I do hereby appoint John Richardson, Thomas Coke, James Creighton, Peard Dickinson, Clerks, Alexander Mather, William Thompson, Henry Moore, Andrew Blair, John Valton, Joseph Bradford, James Rogers, and William Myles, to preach in the New Chapel at London, and to be the Committee for appointing Preachers in the New Chapel at Bath.

was then presented to the judge of the prerogative court of Canterbury, who received it as the third codicil of Mr. Wesley's will: on which the three executors delivered up their general probate, and received a new one limited to those particulars which were not mentioned in the deed. At the same time a probate was granted by the court to the seven trustees, constituting them executors for all the books, pamphlets, and copy-right, of which Mr. Wesley died possessed; and empowering them to pay all his debts and legacies. This testamentary deed has been faithfully executed.—Dr. Whitehead has, however, indulged himself on this occasion, in his usual strain of calumny. He strives to represent this deed as being imposed on Mr. Wesley during the days of his weakness: he does not, however, bring forward any evidence. The fact is, Mr. Wesley, fearing lest any of his heirs at law should possess themselves of that property which he considered as sacred to God and his work, strengthened his will by this additional instrument. He accordingly ordered the deed to be prepared immediately after the conference at Bristol, in the year 1790, and upon his coming to London in the month of October following, he immediately executed it.

"I likewise appoint Henry Brooke, painter, Arthur Keen, gent., and Wm. Whitestone, stationer, all of Dublin, to receive the annuity of 5*l*. (English) left to Kingswood School by the late Roger Shiel, Esq.

"I give 6*l*. to be divided among the six poor men, named by the Assistant, who shall carry my body to the grave; for I particularly desire there may be no hearse, no coach, no escutcheon, no pomp, except the tears of them that loved me, and are following me to Abraham's bosom. I solemnly adjure my executors in the name of God, punctually to observe this.

"Lastly, I give to each of those Travelling Preachers who shall remain in the Connexion six months after my decease, as a little token of my love, the eight volumes of Sermons.

"I appoint John Horton, George Wolff, and William Marriott, afore-said, to be executors of this my last Will and Testament, for which trouble they will receive no recompense till the resurrection of the just.

"Witness my hand and seal, the 20th day of February, 1789.

"JOHN WESLEY." (seal.)

"Signed, sealed, and delivered, by the said Testator as for his last Will and Testament, in the presence of us

"WILLIAM CLULOW,

"ELIZABETH CLULOW."

"Should there be any part of my personal estate undisposed of by this my Will, I give the same unto my two nieces E. Ellison, and S. Collet, equally.

"JOHN WESLEY."

"WILLIAM CLULOW,

"ELIZABETH CLULOW."

"Feb. 25, 1789.

"I give my types, printing presses, and every thing pertaining thereto, to Mr. Thomas Rankin, and Mr. George Whitfield, in trust, FOR THE USE OF THE CONFERENCE.

"JOHN WESLEY."

CHAPTER IV.

A REVIEW OF MR. WESLEY'S LABOURS AS A WRITER, AND AS A MINISTER OF CHRIST—TESTIMONIES OF EMINENT MEN CONCERNING HIM—CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS ON THE FELLOWSHIP AND DISCIPLINE ESTABLISHED IN THE SOCIETIES.

THOSE who have hitherto considered Mr. Wesley as a writer, have fallen under great mistakes. There was a unity in his character, of which they were either totally ignorant, or not sufficiently sensible; and without this it was not possible to do him justice. In the year 1725, he tells us he made a resolution to dedicate all his life to God,—*all his thoughts, words, and actions*; being thoroughly convinced there was no medium; but that *every part* of his life, not *some* only, must either be a sacrifice to God or to himself, that is, in effect, to the devil.

It is in this light his writings as well as all his labours are to be viewed. His design in writing and in preaching was the same, viz., that he might be faithful to every talent committed to him, and that all might issue in bringing glory to God, and peace and good will to men. But he was careful never to suffer this subordinate talent to interfere with his higher call to '*preach the unsearchable riches of Christ.*' '*Wo unto me if I preach not the Gospel,*' seemed to be always before him. He knew this was especially God's ordinance; and he received the Apostle's word to Timothy, '*not in word only, but in power.*'—'*I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing, and his kingdom, preach the word—be instant in season, out of season; convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.*'

Mr. Wesley's writings, therefore, as they were subordinate to his ministerial duties, so they were in perfect unison with them; enforcing and confirming the same divine truths; and as it was thus his one aim to do all the good he could, it would have been strange if, in a life of eighty-eight years, he had not produced many books. The number, great and small, amounts to some hundreds.

We are assured in the Holy Scriptures, that '*the path of the just is as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day.*' This promise, for such it is according to the gospel covenant, was fulfilled in Mr. Wesley. He began his religious course, as all sincere persons do who are *convinced of sin*, with placing the Holy Law of God before him, and striving to bend his spirit to its sacred precepts; resolving even to risk '*the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.*' His brother Samuel well describes him in his poetical epistle of April 20, 1732,* to Mr. C. Wesley.

Does John seem bent beyond his strength to go,
To his frail carcass literally foe?
Lavish of health, as if in haste to die,
And shorten time, t' ensure eternity?

His first publication, of any note, was his edition of Kempis, elegantly printed in octavo, in the year 1735, while he was yet at Oxford, by his friend Mr. C. Rivington, already noted. He was dissatisfied with Dean Stanhope's translation, and determined to give a full view of the self-denying purity of his favourite guide. He methodized this admirable treatise of "*The Imitation of Jesus Christ,*" as he did the Holy Scriptures, when, as he informs us, he "*began not only to read, but to study the Bible.*" This edition of Kempis now lies before me, and clearly shows not only his great attention to the truths which it contains, but his admirable skill in putting into order, and thus illustrating, its high and invaluable sentiments. This book was his constant companion; and when his mind at all revolted at the strait path, he seemed to say, in the words of his author, "*Thou dust, learn to obey.*" I need not, however, inform my readers, that in the increase of light which the Lord gave him, he, like the great apostle, '*became dead to the law;*' his self-confidence being utterly '*slain by the commandment.*' The faith which brings in a new creation was then placed before him, and he was not disobedient to the heavenly calling. '*The righteousness of the law was fulfilled in him, walking, not after the flesh, but after the spirit, by faith in Christ Jesus.*'

* See vol. i. page 112.

His first sermon, preached on January 1, 1733, before the university, on *the circumcision of the heart*, Rom. ii, 29, when he was emerging into the light of the Gospel, is a most admirable picture of the state of his own mind. It exhibits the perfection of the Christian character, which he was then ardently pursuing. But it was deficient respecting the inward life, peace, and power, of which *true faith* is the root. Of this defect he was unconscious in that day: he could not attain to it till he claimed it as *the gift of God*; and this could not be while *he sought it not by faith*, as a *condemned sinner*, through the infinitely perfect atonement of the Son of God.

His second and third sermons, preached before the University on June 18, 1738, and on July 25, 1741, though diversified in the structure, have the same design. They exhibit the *new creature*, with the simple and only way of attaining that blessed state—*by faith*. The learned assembly, who had listened with some complacency to the fair though somewhat rigid portrait of a Christian, in his first discourse, delivered while he resided among them, were amazed at '*the new and living way*' of thus '*entering into the holiest by the blood of Jesus*.' They felt that they were considered by the preacher as *sinner*s, and, as such, condemned men. Their character as learned and wise, they saw, if this were true, availed them nothing before God, but rather increased their guilt, while they shrunk from the powerful word that showed them—*all was theirs in Christ Jesus*.

His fourth discourse was preached, as he has informed us,* in order to *deliver his soul*, as he could not expect to have these opportunities continued to him. He again placed before them the simple life divine, which should in time become the religion of the world: while he broke in pieces all the proud pretences of fallen man, however dignified. It is an admirable illustration of the apostle's word, 2 Cor. x, 4, 5: '*The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God; to the pulling down of strong holds, destroying reasonings, and every high thing which exalteth itself against the knowledge of God; and bringeth every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ*.'

After having for some years declared the same truths in every part of the land, he saw the necessity of composing a *form of sound words*, comprising the essential truths of the gospel, from which all men might know the doctrines which he taught, and which might remain with his associates in the work, as a concise, but clear and full "*body of divinity*," in keeping of which they could not greatly err: while the people who were raised up by their labours might, if they should continue *one body*, *hear the same truths, and mind the same things*.

After thinking much on this subject, he retired to Lewisham, to the house of his friend Mr. Blackwell, already mentioned, and taking with him, as he informed me, only the Holy Scriptures in the original tongues, he composed, at several visits, what is well known among us as "*The four volumes of Sermons*," those preached before the University being the first in order.

Of his design in composing these Discourses, as well as of his method of investigating truth in general, he has given us the following striking account in his Preface:

"I design plain truth for plain people. Therefore of set purpose I

* See page 22.

abstain from all nice and philosophical speculations, from all perplexed and intricate reasonings ; and, as far as possible, from even the show of learning, unless in sometimes citing the original Scripture. Nothing appears here in an elaborate, elegant, or rhetorical dress. I mention this, that curious readers may spare themselves the labour of seeking for what they will not find.

“ My design is, in some sense, to forget all that I have ever read in my life. I mean to speak, in the general, as if I had never read one author ancient or modern, (always excepting the inspired.) I am persuaded that on the one hand this may be a means of enabling me more clearly to express the sentiments of my heart, while I simply follow the chain of my own thoughts, without entangling myself with those of other men : And that on the other, I shall come with fewer weights upon my mind, with less of prejudice and prepossession, either to search for myself, or to deliver to others, the naked truths of the Gospel.

“ To candid reasonable men I am not afraid to lay open what have been the inmost thoughts of my heart. I have thought, I am a creature of a day, passing through life as an arrow through the air. I am a spirit come from God, and returning to God : Just hovering over the great gulf ; till a few moments hence I am no more seen ; I drop into an unchangeable eternity ! I want to know one thing, the way to heaven : How to land safe on that happy shore. God himself has condescended to teach the way ; for this very end he came from heaven. He hath written it down in a book. O give me that book ! At any price, give me the book of God ! I have it : Here is knowledge enough for me. Let me be *homo unius libri*.* Here then I am, far from the busy ways of men. I sit down alone : Only God is here. In his presence I open, I read his book ; for this end, to find the way to heaven. Is there a doubt concerning the meaning of what I read ? Does any thing appear dark or intricate ? I lift up my heart to the Father of lights. ‘ *Lord, is it not thy word, If any man lack wisdom, let him ask it of God ? Thou givest liberally and upbraidest not. Thou hast said, If any man be willing to do thy will, he shall know. I am willing to do : Let me know thy will.*’ I then search after and consider parallel passages of Scripture, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. I meditate thereon with all the attention and earnestness of which my mind is capable. If any doubt still remains, I consult those who are experienced in the things of God : and then the writings whereby, being dead, they yet speak. And what I thus learn, that I teach.”

After such an account as this, to consider his sermons according to the usual mode of criticism, would be to forget, or be insensible to, his whole character, as a man who had been truly sent of God to teach the way of God. They fully answer the expectation, which the pious and sensible reader is led to form by this exordium. His first four volumes contain the substance of what he usually declared in the pulpit. He designed by them to give a view of what St. Paul calls (*την αναλογίαν της πίστεως*) *the analogy of faith* ; viz., the strong connexion and harmony between those grand fundamental doctrines, *original sin, justification by faith in the divine atonement of the Son of God, the new birth, inward and outward holiness*. They are written with great energy, and, as much as possible, in the very words of the inspired writers. He

* A man of one book.

was fully of Luther's mind, who declared, that divinity was nothing else than a grammar of the language of the Holy Ghost.

His other sermons were written occasionally. The last four volumes (which he wrote for his Magazine) have been much admired, even by those who were not much disposed to relish his doctrines in general. They certainly contain abundance of the most necessary and interesting information; and are written, not only with his usual strength, but with more than usual elegance. Two of the last sermons which he wrote (the latter of which he finished about six weeks before his death) are inferior to nothing he ever composed, if to any thing in the English language. The subjects are remarkably striking. The former was from Psalms lxxiii, 20: '*Even like as a dream when one awaketh, so shalt thou make their image to vanish out of the city.*' The latter from Hebrews xi, 1: '*Faith is the evidence of things not seen.*' In this last discourse he has given his thoughts on the separate state, the state of souls from death to the resurrection. The thoughts are deep and high; yet rational and Scriptural; worthy of one, who, standing on the verge of time, looked forward into that eternity which he had long and earnestly contemplated.

Leaving the old, both worlds at once they view,
Who stand upon the threshold of the new.

Yet the whole is considered with that diffidence which becomes an embodied spirit. How deep and sacred is the subject!

Sacred how high, and deep how low,
He knew not here, but died to know!

His Appeals ("Apologies" they would have been called in the ancient church) answer the idea, which the term *masterly production* usually gives us: We have seen the strong opinion expressed by Dr. Doddridge respecting them.* They were written in the fulness of his heart; while beholding '*the world lying in the wicked one, he wept over it.*' We could almost venture to assert, that no unprejudiced person can read them without feeling their force and acknowledging their justness. It is certain, they have convinced many persons who were deeply prejudiced; and those too of considerable learning. It has been remarked, that those who truly preach the Gospel, do it with a flaming tongue. I am ready to make a similar remark respecting these Appeals: The flame, the power, and yet the sobriety of love, are highly manifest in them; and I cannot but earnestly recommend them to all, who desire to know '*what spirit he was of*' while contending against almost the whole world; and whether it really was for the truth of God he so contended.

In the year 1749, he began to select and abridge the works of the wisest and most pious men that have lived since the days of the Apostles, in order to form a Christian Library.† He began with the Epistles and other writings of the Apostolic Fathers, Ignatius, Polycarp, Clements Romanus, &c. He waded through a prodigious number of books on practical and experimental religion, in regular succession, according to the times when they were written; and, at length, completed a work of fifty volumes. When we consider, that he reduced many folios and quartos to a pocket volume each; that he did this in the midst of labour,

* See page 62.

† See page 63.

which many would think in itself sufficient to wear out the most robust of mankind ; that he abridged some of those volumes on horseback, and others at inns or houses, where he stayed but a few days or hours ; how astonishing will his industry and perseverance appear !

He willingly embraced any toil which might promote the wisdom or happiness of mankind. With this view, he compiled a "System of Natural Philosophy," in five volumes, comprising therein what is known with any certainty, or is likely to profit those who have pleasure in the works of God ; who consider,

These, as they change, Almighty Father ! these
Are but the varied God !

And his labour was not lost. Even the learned have admired this performance, as a useful and edifying compendium. Mr. Wesley received letters highly expressive of satisfaction from some of the first names in Oxford, to whom he had presented it. Considered as an illustration, for general use, of the wisdom and goodness of the Creator, it is excellent ; and the moral reflections it contains are as much distinguished by their justness and elegance as by their utility. It is, upon the whole, the most useful *Christian* compendium of philosophy in the English language.

From the same motive he compiled his historical works. He had not time to be original in those productions. He therefore chose the best he could find, civil and ecclesiastical ; and abridged, added, or altered, as he believed the truth required, and to suit the convenience of the purchaser ; his chief aim being to spread religious and useful knowledge among the poor or middling class of men.

His controversial pieces he wrote as need required. First, to preserve those who were in danger of being seduced from the plain religion of the Bible ; and, secondly, if possible, to recover those who had fallen into the snare. The chief of these is his Treatise on Original Sin, in answer to Dr. Taylor, of Norwich ; the most subtle, refined, plausible Arian and Pelagian of the age in which he lived ; and whose writings gained the more credit, as he was a man of good moral character and sober habits. Mr. Wesley looked upon the Doctor's system, to use his own words, as "*a blow at the root of the whole of Christianity.*" He felt much for the Doctor, and hoped that he might be induced to review the awful subject. But on being informed that "Dr. Taylor declined replying to Mr. Wesley," he wrote to him as follows :

"Hartlepool, July 3, 1759.

"REVEREND SIR,—I esteem you, as a person of uncommon sense and learning ; but your doctrine I cannot esteem : And, some time since, I believed it to be my duty to speak my sentiments at large concerning your doctrine of *original sin*. When Mr. Newton mentioned this, and asked whether you designed to answer, you said, 'You thought not ; for it would only be a *personal controversy* between John Wesley and John Taylor.'—How gladly, if I durst, would I accept of this discharge ! But, certainly, it is a controversy of the highest importance ; nay, of all those things that concern our eternal peace. It is *Christianity* ?—or *Heathenism* ? For, take away the Scriptural doctrine of redemption, justification, and the new birth, the beginning of sanctification ; or,

which amounts to the same, explain them as you do,—and in what is Christianity better than Heathenism? Wherein, (save in rectifying some of our *notions*,) has the religion of St. Paul any pre-eminence over that of Socrates or Epictetus? The point is, therefore, are those things that have been believed for so many ages, throughout the Christian world, real, solid truths, or monkish dreams and vain imaginations?

“Either you or I mistake the whole of Christianity from the beginning to the end! Either my scheme or yours is as contrary to the Scriptural as the Koran is. Is it mine or yours? Yours has gone through all England, and made numerous converts. I attack it from end to end: Let all England judge whether it can be defended or not.”

“Earnestly praying that God may give you and me a right understanding in all things,

“I am, Reverend Sir,

“Your servant, for Christ’s sake,

“JOHN WESLEY.”

The Doctor, however, persisted in his resolution to be silent. It has been said that he always spoke of Mr. Wesley with the highest respect; and that when he first heard his intention he cried out, “What! is that servant of God going to write against *me*?” Dr. Taylor had spent the greatest part of his life in composing this treatise, and in revising, correcting, and strengthening it against all objections. His own comforts, at more than eighty years old, were thus interwoven with his favourite system; and, with respect to others, he was willing, perhaps, that they should choose for themselves, and take their chance.

“What is truth?” said Pilate, and retired;

Dissolved the court, and mingled with the throng!

Mr. Wesley, however, being more sure of his creed than the learned Doctor seemed to be of his system, which he had brought forth with such persevering labour, continued to bear a faithful testimony against this *deceivableness of unrighteousness*. In the preface to his Reply,* he observes, “This is not a question which may be safely determined either way. On the contrary, it may be doubted whether the scheme before us be not far more dangerous than open Deism itself. It does not shock us like barefaced infidelity: We feel no pain, and suspect no evil, while it steals ‘*like water into our bowels, and like oil into our bones.*’ One who would be on his guard in reading the works of Dr. Middleton, [who yet would fain have passed for a Christian!] or Lord Bolingbroke, is quite open and unguarded in reading the smooth decent writings of Dr. Taylor.

“I said, ‘than open Deism.’ For I cannot look upon this scheme as any other than *old* Deism in a new dress; seeing it saps the foundation of all revealed religion, whether Jewish or Christian. There is, according to this, no need of Christianity; for ‘*the whole have no need of a physician*,’ and the Christian religion speaks of nothing else, but the great *Physician* of our souls. But what need of this if we are in perfect health? If we are not sick, why should we seek *a medicine to heal our sickness*? If, therefore, we take away this foundation, that man is by nature foolish and sinful, ‘*fallen short of the glorious image of*

* His Works in thirty-two volumes, vol. xxi.

God,' in which we were created, the Christian system falls at once : Nor will it deserve so honourable an appellation as that of '*a cunningly-devised fable.*' '*

This wretched system has hurt many, and not a few who were men of strong understanding and considerable learning. The late Dr. Robertson having published the Chevalier Ramsay's '*Principles of Religion,*' with Notes, Mr. Wesley wrote to him in the year 1753, and, quoting the Chevalier's bold declaration, (agreeable to Dr. Taylor's system,) "that the frivolous and blasphemous notions of those who represent the expiatory sacrifice of Christ as destined to appease Divine justice, and divert Divine vengeance, arise from deplorable ignorance," he replies,—"'These frivolous and blasphemous notions' do I receive as the precious truths of God ; and so deplorable is my ignorance, that I verily believe all who deny them '*deny the Lord that bought them.*'"

That any who have known the '*truth in power*' should be captivated by this system, is still more surprising and deplorable. It is natural that such should attempt to mend it ; but it cannot be. The foundation is wrong, and no skill can support the fabric. He that runs into it is not safe. It is of *the old serpent* ; and only '*the weaned child*' can, with any safety, '*put his hand on the hole of the cockatrice's den!*' We should warn all others that their life is at stake. Those who, like Mr. Wesley, are well grounded in what St. Paul calls '*the foolishness of God,*' will smile at, or weep over, the imposing wisdom of the learned Doctor.

The glorious liberty of the children of God, (liberty from the guilt and power of sin, and from tormenting fear,) is attended with a bondage which the natural man knows not of, and a yoke which Antinomians will not take upon them. Christ's true servants '*are under the law to Christ;*' and while the natural man, and the Antinomian professor, maintain the liberty to do all that their various talents, real or imaginary, may prompt or enable them to do ; the Christian fears, hesitates, and must be satisfied that it is his duty to oppose error, as well as propagate truth. Even then he will fear lest '*the weapons of his warfare*' should be in any wise '*carnal;*' in which case, the contest will not be '*the good fight of faith,*' nor will it have the blessing of Him whose religion is *truth and love.* Mr. Wesley felt all this exquisitely when he first became a controversialist. The preface to his first work of this kind shows a tenderness of spirit which is truly admirable. A few years after he had in his Journals stated those doctrines of the Bible and of the Church of England, that first made such a noise, and afterwards had such a mighty influence, a Mr. Tucker attacked them in a pamphlet entitled "*A Brief History of the Principles of Methodism.*" Mr. Wesley thought it his duty to oppose the erroneous statements in this publication, and thus prefaces his reply :†

"I have often wrote on *controverted points* before, but not with an eye to any particular person ; so that this is the first time that I have appeared in *controversy*, properly so called. Indeed I have not wanted occasion to do it before ; particularly when, after many stabs in the dark, I was

* A true minister of Jesus Christ lives with that fallen wretched state of man ever before his eyes ; and hence the language of his heart is, like the great Apostle's, '*This one thing I do.*' If he should fall from this true sense of his high calling, we ought not to wonder if he should take up with any other that may offer.

† His Works in thirty-two volumes, vol. xvi.

publicly attacked, not by an open enemy, but '*by my own familiar friend.*' But I could not answer *him*. I could only cover my face and say, *Kai σὺ, ἐν ἐκείνῳ :* *Kai σὺ, ἑαυτὸν ?**

"I now tread an untrod path with fear and trembling ; fear, not of my adversary, but of myself. I fear my own spirit, lest I fall, '*where many mightier have been slain.*' I never knew one (or but one) man write controversy with what I thought a right spirit. Every disputant seems to think (as every soldier) that he may hurt his opponent as much as he can ; nay, that he ought *to do his worst* to him, or he cannot *make the best* of his own cause.

"But ought these things to be so ? (I speak on the Christian scheme.) Ought we not '*to love our neighbour as ourselves ?*' And does a man cease to be our neighbour because he is of a different opinion ? nay, and declares himself so to be ? Ought we not, for all this, to '*do to him as we would he should do to us ?*' But, do we ourselves love to be exposed, or *set in the worst light ?* Would we willingly be treated with contempt ? And yet who scruples it ? Who does not hit every blot he can, however foreign to the merits of the cause ? Who shows that he loves his brother, only less than the truth ?

"I have made a little faint essay towards this. I have a brother who is as my own soul. My desire is, in every word I say, to look upon Mr. Tucker as in his place, and to speak no tittle concerning the one in any other spirit than I would speak concerning the other. If I have spoken any thing in another spirit, I pray God it may not be laid to my charge, and that it may not condemn me in that day when the secrets of all hearts shall be made manifest !" — The whole tract is written in this spirit. The truth is maintained in love. It was this spirit, we may well believe, that, as one cause, induced Dr. Taylor not to reply to an opponent, whose life and labours he well knew, — who had the whole weight of Holy Scripture on his side, and who enforced its sacred truths in the same spirit in which they were written.

In the *Reverend* Dr. Conyers Middleton he had a very different opponent.† He took but little notice of the Doctor's flippant remarks on, what he called, the Methodistical miracles : But, when he essayed his great power to sap the foundations of that religion which he had bound himself, by every sacred obligation, to maintain and enforce, Mr. Wesley ceased, comparatively, from his great labours for *nearly twenty days*, (as he informs us,) and in that time produced a reply to the Doctor's ponderous volume against the miracles of the Primitive Church. There were but few men, even of those who knew Mr. Wesley, that could imagine that so many months, as the days he has mentioned, would suffice to wade through the fathers of the three first centuries, and produce such a triumphant refutation !

It has been said of Hume, that he could not bear to hear the name of Doctor Beattie mentioned ; so completely did the Doctor's *Essay on*

* *Art thou also among them ? Art thou, my son ?* The allusion is to Cæsar's words when he saw Brutus raise his hand against him.

† His works in thirty-two volumes, vol. xviii. — In the Monthly Magazine for May, 1804, there is a letter from Dr. Middleton to Lord Harvey, communicated by his Lordship's brother to the Rev. William Talbot, Rector of Kingston, Warwickshire. In that letter Dr. Middleton says, "It is my misfortune to have had so early a taste for Pagan science, as to make me very squeamish in my Christian duties." — This squeamishness did not, however, hinder his undertaking the Christian ministry ; but not savouring the truths which he was bound to teach, we find the squeamishness issue in aversion and infidelity.

Truth expose the sophisms of the infidel, evidently showing that they sapped the foundations of all knowledge, human and divine. The same shameful defeat he suffered from Dr. Campbell, in his reply concerning the authenticity of miracles. Mr. Wesley had harder work than either of these learned men. Dr. Middleton strove to save appearances,—to keep on the armour of the Church. But as Homer informs us concerning Patroclus, though the borrowed armour might serve to cover the imposture, and affright men like himself, it could not withstand the assault of Apollo. Mr. Wesley's armour was '*girt about him with truth.*' With what ease, with what lively wit, with what deep research, with what cogent arguments, with what exact quotations from the venerable writers of those early days, he essayed that insolent publication, is known to those who have read his reply, with a mind, in any good degree, equal to the subject.

In one point the Doctor must have been exceedingly mortified, viz. Mr. Wesley's exposure of his ignorance of the Greek language. In one of the Doctor's quotations from Justin Martyr, this ignorance was so apparent, that the GRÆCIAN (as Mr. Wesley used to be called at the University) could no longer contain. "In very deed, Sir," says he, "I am sometimes inclined to suspect, (notwithstanding the learned quotations which adorn your margin,) that you are yourself related to certain ancient fathers, who used to say, *Græcum est : non potest legi.** You lay me under an almost invincible temptation to think so upon the present occasion. For what could induce you, if you knew what the writer said, to place at the bottom of your page a passage which so clearly confutes your whole argument?"—But this *learned* Doctor also took refuge in silence.

His Letter to Dr. Gibson, Bishop of London, occasioned by his Lordship's *Charge to his Clergy*, is an admirable mixture of true respect for the Bishop's office and character, and of the indignation of truth when assailed with calumny; and which was the less to be excused, as he had explained himself fully to the Bishop in several conversations. It had, by every account, a great effect on that venerable Prelate, so that a vulgar report got abroad that the Bishop of London was turned Methodist! It is certain he wrote no more against Mr. Wesley.

As Bishop Warburton's errors in Divinity have been so fully exposed, both while he lived, and since his decease, I need not say much respecting Mr. Wesley's controversy with that eminent man.† True to his principles, he does not forget, that he is writing to a dignitary of the Church; though, alas! the Bishop seems totally to forget that he is writing to a scholar and a gentleman. Comparing Mr. Wesley with the first Christian preachers, he breaks out, "This paltry mimic!" To this Mr. Wesley only replies, "*Bona verba!* [Good words!]" Surely, a writer should *reverence himself*, how much soever he may *despise* his opponent." In his reply to the Bishop's tract, *On the office and operations of the Holy Spirit*, Mr. Wesley clearly shows, that the Bishop's statements are totally contrary to the Bible, to the Fathers of the Primitive Church, and of the Church of England; and to the doctrines and offices of that Church, as by law established.

Of his reply to Bishop Lavington's ribaldry, in his *Enthusiasm of the Methodists and Papists compared*,‡ little need be said. The Bishop's

* It is Greek : It cannot be read.

† His Works, vol. xviii.

‡ Ibid. vol. xvi.

pamphlet was anonymous, and Mr. Wesley was, therefore, more at liberty in his answer. His lively wit and keen logic is admirably used against his facetious opponent; concerning whom, he was obliged to say, "Wit, not truth, is your object." The Lord, who had taught him to write, even to his enemies, in love, also taught him '*to answer a fool according to his folly.*' I shall have occasion to mention the Bishop and his writings in another place.

Mr. Wesley possessed a remarkable talent for *extracting* the works of other writers, so as to bring order out of confusion, and light out of darkness. Many publications have been thus rendered truly edifying, that were either tedious or dangerous in their original form. The practical works of Mr. Law, by being thus purged, formed a most useful auxiliary to Mr. Wesley's system of pure religion. The controversies also of that great man, with the formalists or sceptics of his day, Trap, Warburton, Woolaston, &c, became, under Mr. Wesley's hand, most clear and powerful defences of revealed religion. Some of the most valuable tracts in his works (thirty-two volumes) are extracts from the best writers of that day. A few years before his death, he thus extracted *Hook's Roman History*. This work now remains in his library a proof of his skill in that most useful mode of composition.

Mr. Wesley, however, took care not to injure any author by thus extracting his works. They were public property before he thus used them. The Rev. Mr. Jones, in his memoirs of the late pious and excellent Dr. Horne, has indeed charged Mr. Wesley with selling a work of his: I suppose he means his tract on the Trinity. But this is a mistake. Mr. Wesley recommended that tract, because he approved of it; but he never reprinted or sold it in any form. Mr. Charles Wesley composed some hymns on the Trinity, in which he made use of some texts of Scripture quoted by Mr. Jones in the work above mentioned: but surely this was not reprinting his pamphlet in any sense whatever. It is painful to see, in so respectable a writer as Mr. Jones, a sourness of temper and a disposition to find fault, every now and then break out, in spite of all his endeavours to appear candid and liberal.

Many of those who wrote against Mr. Wesley were far from being respectable; and some of them were destitute either of ability or information. His friends regretted that he would condescend to bestow an answer upon them. But though these writers knew neither the man they vilified, nor the subject they treated, yet they generally made a fierce attack, however clumsy, on some part of what he esteemed *the truth of God*. To this they were indebted for an answer. And many who never saw the publications of these gentlemen, have been edified by his replies; the truth appearing to them in a still stronger light than ever before.

It was in those controversial pieces that his consummate skill in argument appeared with such advantage. He needed not to complain, concerning any of his opponents,

Quo teneam vultum mutantem Protea nodo :*

He could bind the subtlest of them. He perceived in a moment when they departed from the question, shifted the terms, or used any fallacy. And, as he was attacked from every quarter, there is scarce any point of

* How shall I hold one who is continually changing his shape?

divinity which he has not illustrated and confirmed in those occasional publications. I cannot but strongly recommend these writings to all who would know the truths which he taught, and especially to my younger brethren in the ministry. I cannot see how they can so accurately state or defend the doctrines which they are bound to support, if they are not well grounded in these interesting and edifying controversies.

His Notes on the New Testament I have already mentioned, as being composed during his illness in the year 1753, and chiefly during his confinement at the Hot Wells near Bristol. As he avows in his preface that he took Bengelius for his model, we cannot be surprised that most of his notes are concisely explanatory. Those who have read the *Gnomon* of Bengelius need not be informed, with what a degree of abhorrence that learned man speaks of long comments, as tending to draw off the reader's attention from the Scripture itself; or as leading him to magnify some parts of it to the neglect or lightly esteeming of other parts, equally given by the Divine Author for our profit. "We should rather," he observes, "make easy channels for the *water of life*, than desire to raise a land-flood from our broken cisterns." How exactly did these two great men agree in sentiment!

Agreeably to this, Mr. Wesley observes, in his preface, "I have endeavoured to make the Notes as short as possible, that the *comment* may not obscure or swallow up the *text*; and as plain as possible in pursuance of my main design, to assist the unlearned reader. For this reason I have studiously avoided not only all curious and critical inquiries, but all such methods of reasoning and modes of expression as people in common life are unacquainted with: For the same reason, as I rather endeavour to *obviate* than to propose and answer *objections*, so I purposely decline going deep into many difficulties, lest I should leave the ordinary reader behind me."—He had another reason for writing thus plainly: As he intended this Commentary, in connexion with his four volumes of Sermons, already noted, to form a body of divinity, that his associates and successors in the work of God should *speak*, and the people *hear*, the same truths; so, as he informed me, he also took care, respecting these difficulties, not to bind any man's conscience, where God has not bound it.*

* Some of these difficult questions are important, and have long troubled mankind. Of the *divine predestination*, Rom. viii, 29, 30, the comment is sober and perspicuous.—On *personal election* to eternal life, Peter i, 1, 2, the statement is short and clear; and the objections to the doctrine, in the *absolute* sense, are given in a clear summary. The curious question of Christ's descent into HELL, is treated with marked sobriety. Acts ii, 27, 'Thou shalt not leave my soul in hades'—(the original word;) "that is, in the *invisible world*. But it does not appear that ever our Lord went into HELL. His soul, when it was separated from the body, did not go thither, but to PARADISE, Luke xxiii, 43. The meaning is, Thou wilt not leave my soul in its separate state, nor suffer my body to be corrupted, Verse 31." Mr. Wesley, however, repeated the *creed* in its popular language without scruple.

It is no wonder that a question that relates to things so entirely out of our sight, and concerning which there is no express declaration in Holy Scripture, should have given rise to so much speculation. One of the principal supports of the contrary doctrine is, that as all power was *given* to Christ, so he must take possession of every part of his dominions, and consequently of HELL. That he had, and always will have, possession, as God, can admit of no doubt: hence the apparent impossibility of a restoration. But did he thus take possession of HELL as the *Son of Man* and *Mediator*? If so, then it should seem the impossibility is removed, and there is *hope* for those consigned to it: and Dante's poetical inscription on the gates of his INFERNO, "Let him that enters here cast away hope," should be expunged!—The consequence, however foreign to the design of those who advocate the contrary opinion, seems to me inevitable. Of this entire speculation, however, Mr. Wesley did not believe one tittle. As Bishop Latimer said of the Mass, he could not find it IN THE BOOK.

Speaking of this Commentary, on another occasion, he observed, "I do not write to save people the trouble of *thinking*, but to *help* them to think." He knew that *such* a way of reading only could be truly edifying. In order to this, "I have," said he, "divided the text all along (though marking the chapters and verses in the common way) according to the matter it contains, making a larger or a smaller pause, just as the sense requires. And even this is such a help in many places, as one who has not tried it can scarcely conceive."

In order more fully to help the reader to *think*, he constantly marked the words in the Commentary where the leading thoughts occur, with capitals, (without any regard to the punctuation,) and thus gave the reader a clue to profitable meditation. But, alas! in the editions of this invaluable work since his death, *both* these helps have disappeared.—When I compare these editions with his own, now lying before me, printed in 1757, I can hardly look upon them as the same work! Nor can I derive any thing like the same profit from them. I say, this *invaluable* work; for such it will be found by those who simply desire to know the mind of God. I was assured by a friend, of considerable learning, (more than forty years ago,) that when one of the most eminent and pious Doctors of the Church of England saw it, he declared—"There is nothing like it in the world."

Some time after the publication of his New Testament, he was strongly solicited to write a comment on the Old Testament also. But his various labours rendered this impossible. He at length so far complied with importunity, as to select and abridge the comments of those writers who are most highly esteemed, particularly Henry and Poole; leaving out what he thought needless or inconsistent with truth, and adding what he conceived necessary to perfect the sense, or make it conduce more directly to the spiritual profit of the reader. Those who can relish the Holy Scriptures in their own naked majesty, have used this help with thankfulness.

But this commentary would have been still more edifying, if Mr. Wesley could have superintended the printing of his works, like other writers. This the great work to which he was called forbade. It was originally intended that this exposition should be printed in three volumes quarto: the third volume being appropriated to the prophets. But when the printer, the late Mr. Pine, of Bristol, came to that part of the work, he was obliged to shorten the notes to get them into the prescribed size. Those that know Mr. Wesley's style are sensible that his sentences could not be curtailed without injury; and they have accordingly much regretted this circumstance. The work was admirably printed, and on such paper as is not now common; and it is, notwithstanding this defect, a *safe* and valuable exposition of the Old Testament. The preface, the summary of the various chapters, and the account of the writers of the different books, are all admirable.

In the year 1778 he began to publish a periodical work, which he called "The Arminian Magazine," as he designed to insert in it extracts and original treatises on universal redemption. Many of these are of great value, and were written by men of great erudition. In this work he reprinted an original tract of his own, entitled "Predestination Calmly Considered." Concerning this piece, Mr. Hampson, who cannot be suspected of partiality, has observed, "It is a model of controversy:

clear and cogent ; concise and argumentative ; and the more convincing, because the spirit in which it is written is as amiable as the reasoning is unanswerable. Perhaps there is not in the English language a treatise which contains in so small a compass so full and masterly a refutation of the principle he opposes."

In this miscellany he also published an original sermon every two months. Concerning these I have already spoken. This publication has, upon the whole, been very profitable to its numerous readers. It is a Christian library in itself, containing controversial, doctrinal, and experimental divinity, in prose and verse, animated by accounts of the triumphant deaths of many holy persons. Natural philosophy, and remarkable anecdotes from history and travels, have also a place in it. This work, which has been continued to this day, is now entitled, "*THE WESLEYAN METHODIST MAGAZINE*," and its growing interest and great increase need no remark of mine. No person who wishes to know how *that work of God*, begun by the venerable founder of Methodism, goes on, can have that wish gratified without a constant perusal of this edifying publication.

What has been said of Mr. Wesley's design in writing, may also be said of his style. His conciseness, which has been often remarked, did not arise from his abhorring circumlocution as a writer only, but also as a Christian. He has often told me, that he made a conscience of using no more words on any subject than were strictly necessary. I am not sure that he did not sometimes, on this account, complain with Horace,

—————*brevi esse laboro,*
Obscurus fio.

"Striving to be concise, I become obscure." But this was rarely the case. His perspicuity is as remarkable as the manliness of his style.

His original works have great force and energy. This, I have often thought, arose in a good degree from a circumstance not generally known. He never set himself to consider a subject, before the necessity of his treating upon it first appeared. Even then, he never wrote a line till his mind was fully impressed with the nature and importance of it. He has said on one of those occasions, as Job, '*Now if I hold my tongue, I shall give up the ghost!*' And he might have often said the same. His ideas came thus warm, both from the head and the heart. His soul was in the subject : And hence the indelible impressions often made upon the minds of the readers.

I shall conclude this account, partly in the words of the writer I have already mentioned : "If usefulness be excellence ; if public good ought to be the chief object of attention in public characters ; and if the greatest benefactors to mankind are the most estimable ; Mr. Wesley will be long remembered as one of the best of writers, as well as of men, as he was for more than fifty years the most diligent and indefatigable."—Thus all his biographers, after striving to lessen his character among men, have been obliged to subscribe to its general excellence !

There is, perhaps, nothing more difficult than to form a true judgment of the characters of men. Our information in this respect is in general partial or defective. Mankind are too much taken up with their own real or supposed wants, the calls of penury, or the insatiable cravings of desire, to attend to other men. A few there are in every age,

who emerge from the obscurity which the multitude of persons and things makes the common lot. These cannot be lost in the general mass. Their station, their talents, their virtues, or their crimes, make them conspicuous. Mankind are obliged to look at them; and they are considered as friends or enemies, as their actions are supposed to affect the general weal.

Yet, with regard to these, how hard it is to form a true judgment! Concerning the greatest men that have been in the world, how partial is the information, how great the variety of opinions!

One thinks, on Luther Heaven's own Spirit fell,
Another deems him instrument of hell!

Even the plainest facts are seen in different colours, according to the mirror which reflects them. And may not even Christian charity admit the justness of the Heathen's remark when he accounts for the obloquy often cast upon the greatest men?

————— *Diram qui contudit Hydram,
Notaque fatali portenta labore subegit,
Comperit invidiam supremo fine domari.
Urit enim fulgore suo, qui prægravat artes
Infra se positas: extinctus amabitur idem.*

“ The greatest men ere they resign their breath,
Find envy is not conquer'd but by death.
The great Alcides, every labour past,
Had still that monster to subdue at last.
Oppress'd we feel the beam directly beat:
These suns of glory please not till they set.” POPE.

If it be then a truth, that even the world, on these accounts, does not always love its own; how should it love, and consequently be disposed to judge favourably of, those who are not of the world, but who testify continually that its deeds are evil? Those who receive the Holy Scriptures as of God, will easily admit the truth of this observation. If, indeed, ‘*Satan be the God of this world;*’ and those who are truly ministers of Christ, be ‘*ambassadors for God,*’ and consequently their whole employment be to counteract, defeat, and destroy whatever is contrary to the kingdom of God: If they are not to ‘*count their lives dear to themselves,*’ so they may be faithful witnesses, and clear from the blood of all men; if these Scriptures are allowed to be the truth; how reasonable is the warning of our Lord! ‘*The disciple is not above his Master: If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more they of his household: Wo be unto you, when all men shall speak well of you: But blessed are ye, when men shall revile you and speak all manner of evil against you falsely, for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you.*’

That Mr. Wesley drank largely of this cup, that it was indeed almost the only cup which men held to his lips for many years, is well known, and has abundantly appeared from the facts which I have, I hope with all plainness, laid before my readers. He also

Stood pilloried on infamy's high stage,
And bore the pelting scorn of half an age.

But he did indeed bear it. He turned not aside to the right hand or to the left. He slackened not his pace. Whatsoever he was called to do, he did it with his might, and was never hindered either by honour or dishonour, by good report or evil report.

It will appear from these memoirs, that we are not under the same difficulties in forming a judgment of him, as of most other men. His life, from the time that he became generally known, was spent in public. Many were the witnesses of the manner in which he filled up all his time. He also could say, *In secret I have done nothing*. I may add, that perhaps no man that ever lived has given a more minute account of himself than Mr. Wesley has done. He has published to all men his religious experience, and the labours and sufferings of his life, from day to day. And with respect to the motive which influenced him, which was so long disputed, no cloud remains upon him. In the honour due to Moses, (whose dearest relatives were merged in the mass of common Levites,) he also claims a share. Placed at the head of a great people by Him who called them, he reaped nothing but toil and danger. Knowing that his station was from God, he never employed its influence, either for his own emolument or the aggrandizement of his family. His only care was to be faithful unto death; and to see that no impediment should arise by his means in the way of those whom God should call to carry on that work which was begun by him; and of this he has often largely conversed with me.

I shall therefore present to the reader a short review of the chief incidents of his life, and then proceed to a more particular delineation of him, both as a man and as a minister of Christ.

Mr. Wesley enjoyed the inestimable advantages of a religious education. He saw no irreligious conduct in his parents; they continually warned him against it, as the greatest possible evil; and he was not unfaithful. The sobriety, industry and piety of his youth were highly exemplary. He never was of the world in the gross sense of that expression. His chief employment, as well as highest ambition, in those days which are so commonly consumed in vanity or vice, was

*Inter silvas academi quærere verum.**

But his high attainments in literature did not cause him to forget God or eternity. Rather, the more he knew, the more he was inclined to say with Solomon, *This also is vanity*: and with Moses, who was skilled in all the learning of the Egyptians, he declared, that *to be wise was to remember our latter end*. He was sensible of his high origin, that he came from God; and he remembered his high calling, to return to God, through him who has declared himself '*the way, the truth, and the life*.'

To the praise of him who girded him with strength, I have to record, he took not counsel with flesh and blood. He took his station firmly on the Lord's side. He made haste, and delayed not to keep his commandments. And when, for this, his name was cast out as evil, he patiently submitted to be a follower of him who was '*despised and rejected of men, and who covered not his face from shame and spitting*.'

But *before honour is humility*. To this his redeeming God now led him. He turned his eyes inward. He discovered to him "how far he was gone from original righteousness." God showed him, as his soul could bear, the depths of *inbred sin*; and the deviations, unfaithfulness, and consequently, the guiltiness before God, which is found in that state, Romans vii, he has recorded with a plainness and a contrition seldom found in the narratives of pious men; even of those who have obtained the *victory of faith*. He consequently submitted to take upon him his

* "To search out truth in academic groves"

true character ; and he acted agreeably thereto. He humbled himself before God. The pride of the scholar was lost in the abasement of the sinner. This was the gracious return, with which the Lord recompensed the zeal, that led him from his parents, friends, academical honours, and every thing the world calls good and great. Painful self-knowledge was the good he reaped from this costly sacrifice.

But ‘*blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*’ Some foretastes of this the Lord had already given him ; but now, ‘*out of his fulness he received, and grace for grace.*’ He was ‘*endued with power from on high.*’ He was ‘*chosen out of the world.*’ He became zealous for the Lord. ‘*The Spirit of the Lord was upon him, because he had anointed him to preach the gospel to the poor, to heal the broken in heart, and to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.*’

Zeal and prudence are the chief graces whereby a man is fitted to serve his neighbour. The former is dangerous, when alone ; and the latter selfish, vile, and useless. But when united, how mighty are they in operation ! They are *terrible as an army with banners.*

They were united in Mr. Wesley. Like Paul, the cry of his heart from the moment he knew the lovingkindness of the Lord, was, ‘*What wouldst thou have me to do ?*’ He also could say, ‘*The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.*’ The love of Christ constrained him to burst every band asunder that was inconsistent with the glory of God and the happiness of man. In vain did worldly men lament the violated order, under which sloth and impiety had found an honourable asylum. Filled with *the spirit of love and of a sound mind*, he cried out, “What is this order of which you speak ? Will it serve instead of the knowledge and love of God ? Will this order rescue those from the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will ? Will it keep those who are escaped a little way, from turning back into Egypt ? If not, how shall I answer it to God, if, rather than violate I know not what order, I sacrifice thousands of souls thereto ? I dare not do it. It is at the peril of my soul. Indeed if by *order* were meant true Christian discipline, whereby all the living members of Christ are knit together in one, and all that are putrid and dead cut off from the body : this order I reverence, for it is of God. But where is it to be found ? Where, but among the very people whom you continually blame for their violation and contempt of it ?”

But how inviolably did he keep all order consistent with saving souls from death ! Herein his truly *Christian* prudence eminently shone. He rendered to all their due, whether to the king as supreme, or to his ministers in church or state ; exhorting continually all who were under his care, that they should thus adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour, and evidence to all men their earnest desire to ‘*lead a peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.*’

And how great was his labour to save souls from death ! He was indeed a perfect foe to rest, though no man was more fitted to enjoy whatsoever of wise, or good, or useful, or elegant, can be found in retirement. Even unto hoary hairs, and beyond the usual life of man, he was abundant in labours. The Lord, to whom he had given his whole life, seemed to grant him a dispensation from the general lot. His strength at more than fourscore years, was not *labour and sorrow*. He, to the last, sought ‘*not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him.*’

He soared above that harmless wish which the generality of mankind indulge,

To crown a youth of labour with an age of ease.

He slackened not his pace to the last week of his life. He resigned his soul and his charge together, into the hands of his merciful and faithful Redeemer.

Respecting such a man, even the smallest particulars will not be unpleasing. He was, in his person, rather below the middle size, but remarkably well proportioned. He had what some call a clean constitution in a high degree. He seemed not to have an atom of superfluous flesh, and yet was muscular and strong. His whole person was expressive of the activity and health which generally arise from strong bodily powers, preserved by temperance and exercise. His face was remarkably fine, even to old age. A clear smooth forehead, an aquiline nose, an eye the brightest and most piercing that can be conceived, conspired to render him a venerable and most interesting figure. The freshness of his complexion continued to the last week of his life. It has often been observed, that many who were deeply prejudiced against him, have been changed in a moment into sentiments of veneration and esteem, on being introduced into his presence.

In dress, he was a pattern of neatness and simplicity. A narrow plaited stock, a coat with a small upright collar, no buckles at his knees, no silk or velvet in any part of his apparel, and his thin silver locks gave to his whole person an air of something primitive and apostolic.

The same neatness and simplicity was manifest in every circumstance of his life. In his chamber and study, during his winter months of residence in London, I never observed that a book was misplaced, or even a scrap of paper left unheeded. He could enjoy every convenience of life; and yet, he acted in the smallest things like a man who was not to continue an hour in one place. He seemed at home in every place, settled, satisfied, and happy: And yet was ready every hour to take a journey of a thousand miles.

His conversation was always pleasing, and frequently interesting and instructive in the highest degree. By reading, travelling, and continual observation, he had acquired a fund of knowledge, which he dispensed with a propriety and perspicuity that has been rarely equalled. The Greek and Latin classics were as familiar to him as the most common English authors; and also many of the best French writers. Yet though so richly furnished, we believe those of the most improved taste have never observed in him the affectation of learning. He joined in every kind of discourse that was innocent. As he knew that all nature is full of God, he became all things to all men in conversing on those subjects. But his delight was to speak of '*God as being in Christ, reconciling the world to himself*;' and he strove to bring every conversation to this point. One thing has astonished those who have been much in his company: He generally concluded the conversation with two or three verses of a hymn, illustrative of what had just been spoken; and this he was enabled to do from the inexhaustible stores of his own and his brother's poetry, of which his memory was a rich repository. Thus the philosopher, and the man of the world, were often surprised into a confession of Christ as filling all in all, and were obliged to recollect the advice of the old Heathen,

Εκ Διὸς ἀρχώμεθα καὶ ἐν Διᾷ λήγεται Μῶσαι.*

The late Dr. Samuel Johnson, with whom Mrs. Hall, Mr. Wesley's sister, was intimate for some years, desired that she would procure him an interview with her brother. She made known his desire to Mr. Wesley, and a day was accordingly appointed for him to dine with the Doctor, at his house in Salisbury-court. The Doctor conformed to Mr. Wesley's hours, and appointed two o'clock: The dinner, however, was not ready till three. They conversed till that time. Mr. Wesley had set apart two hours to spend with his learned host. In consequence of this, he rose up as soon as dinner was ended and departed. The Doctor was extremely disappointed, and could not conceal his chagrin. Mrs. Hall said, "Why, Doctor, my brother has been with you two hours!" He replied, "Two hours, madam! I could talk all day, and all night too, with your brother."

Mr. Boswell in his *Life* of that eminent man, informs us, that the Doctor observed to him,—“John Wesley's conversation is good, but he is never at leisure. He is always obliged to go at a certain hour. This is very disagreeable to a man who loves to fold his legs, and have his talk out, as I do.”—But the Doctor was under a small mistake. Mr. Wesley could not fold his legs, &c. only because he had no leisure, but because he was *under the law to Christ*. That law respects our use of time, as well as of every other talent.

Mr. Boswell informs us, that on Easter Sunday, April 25, 1781, he dined with Dr. Johnson: Mrs. Hall and Mrs. Williams were of the company. The conversation turned upon the subject—*Of the saints that rose with Christ*. Mrs. Hall wished the Doctor to discuss the question, but he was reluctant. She strove to provoke him to it by some remarks of her own, but in vain. The mighty mind of our English Aristotle, like him of Greece, revolted from the contemplation of such subjects. His great sincerity would not stoop to dissemble his fears, and *his faith* was not of that kind which could look *through* the dark valley: He could only look *at* it, and the sight appalled him. Mr. Charles Wesley observed to me, “that there were but few ladies that the Doctor would suffer to address him so freely as Mrs. Hall.”—“It was surprising,” said he, “how he would listen to; and bear her interrogations, and sometimes even her venturing to differ from him.”—It does not surprise me. He not only revered her brother beyond all men, but it was impossible for such a man not to respect the truly Wesleyan understanding which she possessed. Besides, there was no stimulus to contradiction when conversing with her. There was no rivalry, no fear of being conquered; and therefore his vast understanding was in full and easy dominion. Mr. Boswell candidly confesses, that the Doctor sometimes strove more for victory than he ought; and that the greatest sophist of the age had too often recourse to sophisms.

The following letter from Dr. Johnson to Mr. Wesley, is a striking proof of the high estimation in which he was held by that truly great man:

“February 6, 1776.

“SIR,—When I received your Commentary on the Bible, I durst not at first flatter myself that I was to keep it, having so little claim to so

* “Muses, begin and end with God supreme.”

valuable a present ; and when Mrs. Hall informed me of your kindness, I was hindered, from time to time, from returning you those thanks which I now entreat you to accept.

“ I have thanks likewise to return for the addition of your important suffrage to my argument on the American question. To have gained such a mind as yours may justly confirm me in my own opinion. What effect my paper has had upon the public I know not ; but I have no reason to be discouraged. The lecturer was surely in the right, who, though he saw the audience slinking away, refused to quit the chair while Plato staid.

“ I am, Reverend Sir,

“ Your most humble servant,

“ SAM. JOHNSON.”

I have already mentioned his exactness in redeeming time. This must appear to every reader of reflection, from the many and various duties of his eminent situation, which he punctually fulfilled. But still I believe it hardly possible for those who were not intimate with him to have a just idea of his faithfulness in this respect. In many things he was gentle and easy to be entreated : In this point decisive and inexorable. One day his chaise was delayed beyond the appointed time. He had put up his papers, and left his apartment. While waiting at the door he was heard to say, by one that stood near him, “ I have lost ten minutes for ever ! ”—Speaking at another time with a person who said, “ You need not be in a hurry, sir,”—Mr. Wesley replied, “ A hurry ! No ; I have no time to be in a hurry.”—He had no time to mend any thing that he either wrote or did. He therefore always did every thing, not only with quietness, but with what might be thought slowness. As a writer especially he was the slowest I ever saw.

Besides his Journal, in which he recorded the daily events of his life, he kept a diary, in which he exactly noted the employment of every hour. He wrote this in short-hand. His hour of rising, his preaching, what he read or wrote till breakfast, and the after duties of the day, were faithfully recorded. He carried a book of this kind continually with him, in the first page of which he always wrote this concise determination,

“ I resolve, *Deo juvante*,*

“ 1. To devote an hour, morning and evening : no pretence or excuse whatsoever.†

“ 2. To converse, *Κατα Θεον* ;‡ no lightness ; no *ευτραπεία*.”§

He was equally faithful in respect to the worldly goods, with which the Great Proprietor of heaven and earth had entrusted him. He strictly followed the rules he laid down for others. He gained all he could (*viz.*, by writing,) without hurting his *soul*, his *body*, or his *neighbour*. He saved all he could, cutting off every needless expense, and wasting nothing. And he gave all he could : he rendered unto God the things which were God's. He faithfully dispensed all he could thus gain and save, being ‘*merciful after his power, willing to communicate, glad to distribute, laying up for himself a good foundation against the time to come, that he might lay hold on eternal life.*’

In this point, even those who have seemed desirous to find fault have been constrained to do him justice. “ Perhaps,” says Mr. Hampson,

* With the help of God. † These hours were for private prayer.

‡ According to God : setting God before his eyes. § Jestings.

"the most charitable man in England was Mr. Wesley. His liberality to the poor knew no bounds. He gave away, not merely a certain part of his income, but all he had. His own necessities provided for, he devoted all the rest to the necessities of others. He engaged in this good work at an early period. When he had thirty pounds a year, he lived on twenty-eight, and gave away forty shillings. The next year receiving sixty pounds, he still lived on twenty-eight, and gave away two-and-thirty. The third year he received ninety pounds, and gave away sixty-two. The next year he received a hundred and twenty pounds. Still he lived on twenty-eight, and gave to the poor ninety-two. In this ratio he proceeded during the rest of his life; and we are persuaded that, upon a moderate calculation, he gave away in fifty years, upwards of thirty thousand pounds." His accounts lie before me, and his expenses are noted with the greatest exactness. Every penny is recorded; and I am persuaded Mr. Hampson might have increased the supposed sum to several thousands more. In the last year of his life, he wrote in his diary, "I shall keep no more accounts. It must suffice, that I give to God all I can, that is, all I have."

In mercy to the bodies of men, his friend Mr. Howard was the only person I ever knew who could be compared to him. The extensive work of love in which they were both engaged, made it almost impossible for them to converse together in this world. But they have eternity to live together. They are now in that world, where '*the inhabitants shall no more say, I am sick;*' and thousands who have blessed them upon earth, have welcomed them into '*those everlasting habitations.*'

A letter from Alexander Knox, Esq., of Londonderry, (now of Dublin,) contains a pleasing anecdote of that great and good man, Mr. Howard. As it also respects Mr. Wesley, I shall make no apology for giving it to my readers. "Mr. Howard," observes my correspondent, "in the course of his tour through Ireland in the year 1787, spent a few days in Londonderry. I earnestly wished to see him; but bad health confined me to the house, and I thought I could not be gratified. Such were my thoughts when I was told, a gentleman had called to see me. It was Mr. Howard! I was most delightfully surprised. I acknowledge it as one of the happiest moments of my life. He came to see me because he understood I was Mr. Wesley's friend. He began immediately to speak of him. He told me he had seen him shortly before in Dublin; that he had spent some hours with him, and was greatly edified by his conversation. 'I was,' said he, 'encouraged by him to go on vigorously with my own designs. I saw in him, how much a single man might achieve by zeal and perseverance. And I thought, why may not I do as much in my way as Mr. Wesley has done in his, if I am only as assiduous and persevering? And I determined I would pursue my work with more alacrity than ever.' I cannot quit this subject," continues Mr. Knox, "without observing, that excepting Mr. Wesley, no man ever gave me a more perfect idea of angelic goodness than Mr. Howard. His whole conversation exhibited a most interesting tissue of exalted piety, meek simplicity, and glowing charity. His striking adieu I never shall forget. 'Farewell, Sir,' said he; 'when we meet again, may it be in heaven, or farther on our way to it!' Precious man! May your prayer be answered! *Cum tua sit anima mea.*"*

* May my soul be with thine!

In the beginning of the year 1789, Mr. Howard called at Mr. Wesley's house in the City-road, London, in order to take his leave of him, as he was again flying to the continent at the call of mercy. He carried his last quarto upon the jails under his arm, in order to present it to his friend; but Mr. Wesley was on his way to Ireland. He favoured us with his company for upwards of an hour. He delightfully called to mind the former days, when he had first heard Mr. Wesley at his seat in Bedfordshire, and well recollected the discourse which made the first deep impression on his mind. The text was Eccles. ix, 10: '*Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave whither thou goest.*' "I have," said he, "but one thing to do, and I strive to do it with my might. The Lord has taken away whatsoever might be an incumbrance. All places are alike to me, for I find misery in all. He gives me continual health. I have no need to be careful for any thing. I eat no animal food, and can have all I want in the most inconvenient situation. Present my respects and love to Mr. Wesley. Tell him, I hoped to have seen him once more. Perhaps we may meet again in this world; but if not, we shall meet, I trust, in a better." We hung upon his lips, delighted. Such a picture of love, simplicity, and cheerfulness, we have seldom seen. Taking his leave, he observed, "I have gained, I think, a little knowledge concerning the plague. I shall, therefore, after visiting the Russian camp, pass into the Turkish, and from thence by Constantinople to Egypt." So he purposed, his heart being enlarged with the love of God and man. But while this angel of mercy was ministering to the sons of war, in the hospital of the Russian camp, God said, '*It is enough; come up hither. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!*'

Mr. Wesley's charitable donations were often misrepresented. Envy will never want a pretext to put the worst construction on the best and most generous actions. Many years ago, Erasmus, Bishop of Crete, visited London. It has been said, that his episcopal character was authenticated by a letter from the patriarch of Smyrna; who added, that the Turks had driven him from his see for baptizing a Mussulman into the faith of Christ. That the known liberality of Mr. Wesley should induce him to be kind to such a stranger in distress, is not to be wondered at; but the report, circulated in some periodical publications of that time, that Mr. Charles Wesley had offered him forty guineas to consecrate his brother a Bishop, is totally without foundation: It has not even the shadow of probability to give it credit. '*Having begun in the Spirit, he would not thus be made perfect by the flesh;*' nor would Mr. Charles Wesley's principles admit of his desiring such a consecration, nor of his making such an offer. Three local preachers were ordained by the Bishop; but Mr. C. Wesley would not act with them. The venerable Sampson Staniforth, whose eventful life has been published, was one of these; but he consented not to act upon his orders, rather than leave the connexion. He died in the triumph of faith, honoured and beloved by his brethren.

As Mr. Wesley sincerely offered up that excellent prayer in the Church service, "For all sorts and conditions of men," so he strove in every possible way for its fulfilment. Among the great number of pamphlets which he wrote, there was a notable one, entitled "Thoughts on Slavery." He was one of the earliest writers on this subject, which has

since undergone so complete an investigation. He has treated it in a moral and religious view. It is written with great strength and feeling, and had a powerful influence, especially in America. The noble examples of so many persons in those states in emancipating their slaves, and the regulations made by the government there to meliorate their condition, it is supposed was chiefly caused by that publication. The last letter which he ever wrote, (five days before his death,) was to a highly honoured friend, then engaged in bringing about the abolition of that execrable trade, since so happily effected. What a fit close to such a life spent in ‘*preaching deliverance to the captives, and the opening of the prison doors to those who were bound!*’ I am happy in being able at length, after so many years, to give it publicity, in a day when the Lord seems to have ‘*risen out of his place,*’ in behalf of these outcasts of men.

“*London, February 26, 1791.*

“DEAR SIR,—Unless the Divine Power has raised you up to be as *Athanasius contra mundum*,* I see not how you can go through your glorious enterprise, in opposing that execrable villany, which is the scandal of religion, of England, and of human nature. Unless God has raised you up for this very thing, you will be worn out by the opposition of men and devils. But ‘*if God be for you, who can be against you?*’ Are all of them together stronger than God? O! ‘*be not weary in well doing.*’ Go on in the name of God, and in the power of his might! till even American slavery (the vilest that ever saw the sun) shall vanish away before it.

“Reading this morning a tract, wrote by a poor African, I was particularly struck by that circumstance,—that a man who has a black skin, being wronged or outraged by a white man, can have no redress; it being a *law*, in all our colonies, that the *oath* of a black against a white goes for nothing. What villany is this!

“That He who has guided you from your youth up, may continue to strengthen you in this, and all things, is the prayer of,

“Dear Sir,

“Your affectionate Servant,

“JOHN WESLEY.”

But to return. I have observed, that it was not easy to do justice to Mr. Wesley, as a writer, without considering the deep motive from which he acted in this and all things, viz. a single desire to please God. I am ready to make the same observation respecting him as a preacher. It appears from some discourses which he delivered before he went to Georgia, that he had ceased even then to be conformed to this world in that character also. We find nothing of what St. Paul calls the ‘*deceitful words of man’s wisdom*’ in them: nothing of that artificial eloquence, so much admired by those who have formed their taste only by heathen masters. It was said of some of the fathers in the Christian Church, (who had been philosophers, the *litterati* of that day,) that they came into Canaan laden with Egyptian gold. They did so; and in a little time they persuaded the simple-hearted to prize it more than the gold of the sanctuary. They were indeed the first grand corrupters of the Gospel of Christ. How very soon, like the philosophical divines of the present day, did they ‘*intrude into those things which they had not seen,*’

* Athanasius against the world.

and which only God can reveal, '*vainly puffed up in their fleshly mind.*' Mr. Wesley renounced this vain deceit, and betook himself, even thus early, to '*the sure word of prophecy.*' But especially after the full light of the Gospel shone upon his heart, he was steadfast and immovable therein, speaking in every respect as the oracles of God; holding forth '*the promise of the Father,*' the justifying and sanctifying influences of the Holy Ghost, to all who repent and believe the Gospel. Speaking of some in that day who were still fond of philosophising, and of rhetorical display, he observes, "My soul is sick of this sublime divinity. Let mine be that of a little child; and let the deepest words I use to express it, be those I find in the oracles of God."

The sacrifice made by Mr. Wesley is perhaps too generally overlooked. Men can see and acknowledge the sacrifice of his country, friends, and of all those gratifications for which so many pine. But to become a fool for Christ's sake!—to persevere to the end of his life in this '*foolishness of preaching!*'—to know nothing in this respect also, but '*Jesus Christ and him crucified!*'—this was a sacrifice indeed, especially in a man of whom it might be said, that he also

"Had made the whole internal world his own."

John Nichols, Esq., the venerable proprietor of the Gentleman's Magazine, has well elucidated this part of Mr. Wesley's character:—"This extraordinary man, though he was endowed with eminent talents, was more distinguished by their use than even by their possession. Though his taste was classic, and his manners elegant, he sacrificed that society in which he was peculiarly calculated to shine; gave up those preferments which his abilities might have obtained; and devoted a long life in practising and enforcing common duties. Instead of being 'an ornament to literature,' he was a blessing to his fellow creatures; instead of being 'the genius of the age,' he was the servant of God!"—*Literary Anecdotes*, vol. v, p. 247. Edit. 1812.

A view of these excellencies, added to many others which he possessed, drew forth the following beautiful effusion from the elegant and pious Cowper:

"O! I have seen, (nor hope, perhaps, in vain,
Ere life go down, to see such sights again,)
A veteran warrior in the Christian field,
Who never saw the sword he could not wield.
Grave without dulness; learned without pride;
Exact, yet not precise; though meek, keen-eyed.
A man that could have foil'd at their own play,
A dozen would-be's of the modern day.
Who, when occasion justified its use,
Had wit as bright as ready to produce:
Could fetch from records of an earlier age,
Or from philosophy's enlighten'd page,
His rich materials, and regale your ear,
With strains it was a privilege to hear.
Yet, above all, his luxury supreme,
And his chief glory, was the Gospel theme:
There he was copious as old Greece or Rome,
His happy eloquence seem'd there at home.
Ambitious not to shine or to excel,
But to treat justly what he loved so well!"

Happy eloquence indeed! For though '*the wisdom of the world, which is foolishness with God,*' was excluded both from his creed and from his sermons; yet how richly was his mind stored with Gospel!

truth! How strong, how full, how perspicuous was his elocution! I cannot call to mind those happy times, when I sat at his feet, and heard him hold forth the word of life, without recollecting that beautiful passage in Homer:

Ἄλλ' ὅτε δη μῦθος καὶ μῆδεα πασὶν ὑφαίνων,
'Η τοι μὲν Μενελάος ἐπιτροχάδην ἀγορεύει,
Παυρα μὲν, ἀλλὰ μαλὰ λιγέως, ἐπεὶ ἔ πολυμυθός,
Οὐδ' ἀφάρμοστοις.

"When Atreus' son harangued the list'ning train,
Just was his sense, and his expression plain;
His words succinct, yet full, without a fault;
He spoke no more than just the thing he ought."

POPE.

Even when fatigue of body, or peculiar exercises of mind, caused him to fall short of his usual excellence, yet the remark of Dr. Beattie, of Aberdeen, who had heard him at one of those seasons, was generally verified, "It was not a masterly sermon, yet none but a master could have preached it."—At this moment I well remember my first thought, after hearing him preach nearly fifty years ago: "*Spiritual* things are *natural* things to this man!"

To detract from this manifold excellence, much has been said concerning his ambition and love of power. This is usual among men: If they can find nothing to blame in the conduct, it seems a relief to judge the spirit. It would, therefore, be strange, if he had escaped a charge of this kind. "You take too much upon you," is a censure of an ancient date; and to which all who have truly served Christ have been obliged to submit. Whether he really loved power, is only known to the Searcher of hearts, and will appear in that day when '*God shall judge the secrets of men.*' It is certain he always denied it, and that in the most solemn manner.* Answering for himself, when thus accused several years ago, he observes, "When those persons, who afterwards composed the society, first put themselves under my care, the desire was on their part, not mine. My desire was to live and die in retirement. But I did not see that I could refuse them my help and be guiltless before God.—What then is my power? It is a power of admitting into and excluding from, the societies under my care: Of choosing and removing leaders and stewards; of receiving, or not receiving, helpers; and of appointing them when, where, and how to help me. And as it was merely in obedience to the providence of God, and for the good of the people, that I at first accepted this power, which I never sought, nay, a hundred times laboured to throw off; so it is on the same considerations, not for profit, honour, or pleasure, that I use it at this day.

"But several gentlemen are offended at my having so much power. My answer to them is this: I did not seek any part of this power: It came upon me unawares. But when it was come, not daring to bury that talent, I used it to the best of my judgment. Yet I was never fond of it. I always did, and do now bear it as my burden: The burden which God lays upon me; and therefore I dare not yet lay it down."

It has been my aim in stating the particulars of his life, that the reader might himself form a judgment of Mr. Wesley's character. And I believe, upon a review of those particulars, the candid will be ready to allow, that

* With that ambition mentioned by St. Paul, (an ambition only known to faith,) he was largely filled.—2 Cor. v, 9: '*Wherefore we labour—(φιλοτιμονεθα.) We are ambitious that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of Him.*'

whatever degree of power he enjoyed, he received it in the order of God, and consequently it was his bounden duty to be faithful to it ; which he could not have been if he had laid it down without a manifest providence calling him so to do. An attentive reader cannot but see, that from the time he truly turned to God, he took, according to Christ's direction, '*the lowest seat.*' To escape from these '*worldly lusts,*' in every sense of the expression, he would fain have buried himself in the uncultivated wilds of America, among those who roam

"In quest of prey, and live upon their bow,"

happy in the idea of leaving all the world, to be an unknown, unhonoured instrument in the hand of God, in '*giving to his Son the heathen for his inheritance.*' Disappointed in this, he hastened to bury himself in his loved retirement at Oxford. Just then, He, upon whose shoulders is the government, said, "Come up higher ! Give this man place !" Thus was the Scripture fulfilled. '*He humbled himself before God,*' and was '*exalted in due time.*'

And he was faithful to that which God conferred upon him. He used it according to his holy word. I believe even those who have pined at his pre-eminence, have never charged him with seeking his own ease or advantage thereby ; and no principle was ever sacrificed to it. To the end of his life he '*endured hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ ;*' and could say to the most active, "Come on ! follow me !" And with respect to the discipline which he introduced, this too he laboured to form, not according to his own will, ease, or advantage, but according to the Bible, and to the purest ages of the Christian church. He considered it with all the attention of which he was master ; he took counsel with those who laboured with him, and with the most pious of his friends ; and when, after several years' trial, he was convinced by the blessed effects which followed that he was not mistaken, he would not suffer a stone of the building to be removed by those who did not love such strictness.* When they attempted it they found him watchful, and not to be taken by surprise ; and their force availed as little as their wisdom. As his temper was naturally impetuous, and as he was a stranger to dissimulation, I am not sure that he did not upon some of those occasions, speak with a degree of warmth which cannot be wholly defended. But it was gone in a moment. It might be said of him also,

"He carried anger, as the flint bears fire ;
Which, much enforced, shows a hasty spark,
And straight is cold again."

And no man was ever more sensible of those improprieties than he was, or more ready to acknowledge them. There have been instances of this, when he has asked the offended person forgiveness in such a genuine spirit of humility, as much affected all who were present.

Perhaps there never was a man more free from jealousy or suspicion than Mr. Wesley. As he used no guile himself, he never suspected it in others. It was not easy to convince him that any one had intentionally deceived him ; and when convinced by facts, he would allow no

* There have been several attempts since Mr. Wesley's death, to secularize this great work, and to give it a retrograde and earthly direction : at one time, by the influence of wealth : at another, by popular suffrage. We have seen Dr. Whitehead occasionally using both these principles ; and other men have arisen, speaking such perverse things. But their work has been made manifest, as being of man ; while the real work divine has held on its way, and become more pure by these siftings.

more than that it was so in that single instance. He firmly held the loving, noble logic of the Gospel, as well as that of the schools, and knew, that to argue thus from a particular, to a general, was a fallacy which Christ would not hold guiltless. One happy consequence of this (among ten thousand) was, that his numerous friends rested secure of his love, and knew that they had only to pursue the path of uprightness to possess it to the end undiminished.

To the charge of ambition and love of power is added, chiefly by Mr. Southey, that of a "voracious credulity." I doubt if these are ever found united in the same character, except, perhaps, in some cases of extreme weakness of intellect. An ambitious man is suspicious, not credulous. He is striving to impose upon mankind, and consequently he is careful that they should not impose upon him. Concerning the sobriety of Mr. Wesley's mind, and his caution respecting vulgar errors and popular notions, it may be thought enough has been said; but his firm, and what skeptics would call, his obstinate belief of, and submission to, every thing contained in the Holy Scriptures, having exposed him to this attack, it may be needful to give it a more full consideration. To set the question at rest concerning apparitions, witchcraft, possessions, and Mr. Wesley's 'credulity' respecting such things, I need only present to the reader what Mr. Watson has said on the subject, in reply to Mr. Southey:

"On the general question of supernatural appearances, it may be remarked, that Mr. Wesley might at least plead authorities for his faith as high, as numerous, and as learned, as any of our modern skeptics for their doubts. It is in modern times only that this species of infidelity has appeared, with the exception of the sophists of the atheistical sects in Greece and Rome, and the Sadducees among the Jews. The unbelief so common in the present day among free-thinkers and half-thinkers on such subjects, places itself therefore, with only these exceptions, in opposition to the belief of the learned and unlearned of every age and of every nation, polished, semi-civilized, and savage, in every quarter of the globe. It does more; it places itself in opposition to the Scriptures, from which all the criticism, bold, subtle, profane, or absurd, which has been resorted to, can never expunge either apparitions, possessions, or witchcraft.* It opposes itself to testimony, which, if feeble and unsatisfactory in many instances, is such in others, that no man, in any other case, would refuse assent to it; or, so refusing, he would make himself the object of a just ridicule. That there have been many impostures, is

* Dr. Anthony Horneck has well observed, "If some few melancholy monks or old women had seen such ghosts and apparitions, we might then suspect that what they pretended to have seen might be nothing but the effect of a disordered imagination; but when the whole world, as it were, and men of all religions, men of all ages too, have been forced by strong evidences, to acknowledge the truth of such occurrences, I know not what strength there can be in the argument drawn from the consent of nations, in things of a sublimer nature, if here it be of no efficacy. Men that have attempted to evade the places of Scripture, which speak of ghosts and witches, we see, how they are forced to turn and wind the texts, and make, in a manner, noses of wax of them, and rather squeeze than gather the sense, as if the holy writers had spoke like sophisters, and not like men who made it their business to condescend to the capacity of the common people. Let a man put no force at all on those passages of Holy Writ, and then try what sense they are like to yield. It is strange to see, how some men have endeavoured to elude the story of the witch of Endor; and, as far as I can judge, play more hocuspocus tricks in the explication of that passage, than the witch herself did in raising the deceased Samuel. To those straits is falsehood driven, while truth loves plain and undisguised expressions, and error will seek out holes and labyrinths to hide itself, while truth plays above-board, and scorns the subterfuges of the skeptic interpreter."

allowed ; that many have been deceived, is certain ; and that all such accounts should be subjected to rigorous scrutiny, before they can have any title to command our belief, ought to be insisted upon ; but even imposture and error pre-suppose a previous opinion in favour of what is pretended or mistaken ; and if but one account in twenty, or a hundred, stands upon credible evidence, and is corroborated by circumstances in which, from their nature, there could be no mistake, that is sufficient to disturb the quiet, and confound the systems, of the whole body of infidels.* Every age has its dangers. In former times the danger lay in believing too much ; in our own, the propensity is to believe too little.† The only ground which a Christian can safely take on these questions is, that the *a priori* arguments of philosophic unbelievers, as to the ‘absurdity’ and ‘impossibility’ of these things, go for nothing, since the Scriptures have settled the fact that they have occurred, and have afforded not the least intimation that they should at any time cease to occur. Such supernatural visitations are, therefore, possible ; and, when they are reported, ought to be carefully examined, and neither too hastily admitted, nor too promptly rejected. An acute and excellent philosopher of modern times has come to the same conclusion : ‘Although *Δαιμονισ-*

* “And for as much as such coarse-grained philosophers as those Hobbians and Spinozians, and the rest of the rabble, slight religion and the Scriptures, because there is such express mention of spirits and angels in them, things that their dull souls are so inclinable to conceit to be impossible ; I look upon it as a special piece of providence, that there are ever and anon such fresh examples of apparitions as may rub up and awaken their benumbed and lethargic minds, into a suspicion at least, if not assurance, that there are other intelligent beings besides those that are clad in heavy earth or clay ; in this, I say, methinks the Divine Providence does plainly outwit the powers of the dark kingdom.”—*Dr. Henry More.*

† “There are times in which men believe every thing ; in this wherein we now are, they believe nothing ; I think there is a mean to be chosen, we may not believe every thing, but surely something ought to be believed. For this spirit of incredulity, and this character of a brave spirit, is good for nothing, and I have not as yet discovered the use thereof. ‘T is true, credulity hath destroyed religion, and introduced a thousand superstitions. For which reason I am content, that men stand upon their guard when any thing is debated and reported concerning wonderful and pious histories. The generality of those which are called honest men, are come so far from thence, that they have cast themselves on the other extreme, and believe nothing. Nevertheless whither goes this, and what will be the issue of it ? ‘T is to deny providence, ‘t is to make ourselves believe, God does not intermeddle in the affairs below, and to ruin all the principles of human faith, and by consequence to cast ourselves on a perfect skepticism, which is peradventure a disposition of mind the most dangerous to religion of any in the world. By doubting all matters of fact which have any appearance of extraordinary, they tell us they have no intention to extend it any farther than the history of the world. But we don’t perceive, that we insensibly entertain a habit of doubting, which extends itself to every thing. There is a God ; we all consent thereto. There is a providence ; we all profess and avow it. Nothing comes to pass without him. Is it possible, that God should so hide himself behind his creatures, and under the veil of second causes, that he should never at any time, though never so little, draw aside the curtain ? If we have taken the resolution to deny the truth of all extraordinary matters of fact, what shall we do with history, both sacred and profane ? He must have a hardness and an impudence that I understand not, that can put all historians in one rank, and range them all together as forgers of lies. I admire the argument of those writers, which lived two or three thousand years from one another, who nevertheless have all conspired to deceive us, according to our moderns, and there is neither sorcerers, nor magicians, nor possessions, nor apparitions of demons, nor any thing like it ! ‘T is much that these gentlemen have not pushed on their confidence, even to deny the truth of matters of fact contained in the Scriptures, which would be very convenient for them. In the times that the sacred writers writ their books, there were all these things ; and where do we find that they ought to cease, and that a time was to come in which devils should no more deceive men, and in which the heaven should speak no more in prodigies ? Because historians have not been infallible, must we believe that they have been all liars, and in all things ?—Let us conclude, therefore, that the credulity of our ancestors hath caused many mischievous tales to be received as faithful histories ; but also that it hath been the cause, that very faithful histories do at this day pass for false tales.”

Jurieu's Pastoral Letters.

gloom, or a fear of spirits, hath been abused by vain or weak people, and carried to extremes perhaps by crafty and designing men, the most rigorous philosophy will not justify its being entirely rejected. That subordinate beings are never permitted or commissioned to be the ministers of the will of God, is a hard point to be proved.*

“ Mr. Wesley’s belief in these visitations is, therefore, generally considered no proof of a peculiar credulousness of mind. On this he thought with all, except the ancient Atheists and Sadducees, modern infidels, and a few others, who, whilst in this point they agree with infidels, most inconsistently profess faith in the revelations of the Scriptures. Mr. Southey himself cannot attack Mr. Wesley on the general principle, since he gives credit to the account of the disturbances at Epworth, as preternaturally produced, and thinks that some dreams are the results of more than natural agency.

“ How then does the author prove the ‘ voracity and extravagance ’ of Mr. Wesley’s credulity ? Mr. Southey believes in one ghost story ; Mr. Wesley might believe in twenty or a hundred. Mr. Southey believes in a few preternatural dreams, say some four or five ; Mr. Wesley may have believed in twice that number. This, however, proves nothing ; for credulity is not to be measured by the number of statements which a person believes, but by the evidence on which he believes them. To have made out his case, Mr. Southey should have shown, that the stories which he presumes Mr. Wesley to have credited, stood on insufficient testimony. He has not touched this point ; but he deems them ‘ silly and monstrous ; ’ that is, he judges of them *a priori*, and thus reaches his conclusion. He did not, however, reflect, that his own faith in ghosts and dreams, as far as it goes, will be deemed as silly and monstrous by all his brother philosophers, as the faith which goes beyond it. Their reasoning concludes as fully against what he credits, as against what Mr. Wesley credited ; and, on the same ground, a mere opinion of what is reasonable and fitting, they have the right to turn his censures against himself, and to conclude his credulity ‘ voracious,’ and his mind disposed to superstition. As to the accounts of apparitions inserted by Mr. Wesley in his Magazine, Mr. Southey thinks that he had no motive to believe and insert them, except the mere pleasure of believing. I can furnish him with several other motives which, I doubt not, influenced their publication. The first was to collect remarkable accounts of such facts, and to offer them to the judgment of the world. It is assumed by Mr. Southey, that Mr. Wesley believed every account he published. This is not true. He frequently remarks, that he gives no opinion, or that ‘ he knows not what to make of the account,’ or that ‘ he leaves every one to form his own judgment of it.’ He met with those relations in reading, or from persons deemed by him credible, and he put them on record as facts reported to have happened. Now, as to an unbeliever, I know not what sound objection he can make to that being recorded which has commanded the faith of others. As a part of the history of human opinions, such accounts are curious, and have their use. But if Mr. Wesley’s readers were believers in such prodigies, it was surely not uninteresting to them to know what had been related. It neither followed that the editor of the work believed every account, nor that his readers

* Mr. Andrew Baxter’s Essay on the Philosophy of Dreaming, in the “ *Inquiry into the Nature of the Human Soul*.”

should consider it true because it was printed. It was for them to judge of the evidence on which the relation stood. I should make a very large deduction from the stories of this kind which might be brought together ; but I should feel much obliged to any one to form such a collection, that I might be able to judge of them for myself. Many of these accounts, however, Mr. Wesley did credit, because he thought that they stood on credible testimony ; and he published them for that very purpose, for which he believed they were permitted to occur,—to confirm the faith of men in an invisible state, and the immortality of the soul. These then were Mr. Wesley's motives for inserting such accounts in his Magazine ; and to the censure which Mr. Southey has passed upon him on this account, I shall oppose at least the equally weighty authority of the learned Dr. Henry More, in his letter to Glanville, the author of *Sadducismus Triumphatus*.* 'Wherefore, let the small philosophic *Sir Topplings* of the present age deride as much as they will, those that lay out their pains in committing to writing certain well-attested stories of apparitions, do real service to true religion and sound philosophy, and the most effectual and accommodate to the confounding of infidelity and atheism, even in the judgment of Atheists themselves, who are as much afraid of the truth of these stories as an ape is of a whip, and therefore force themselves with might and main to disbelieve them, by reason of the dreadful consequence of them as to themselves.' It is sensibly observed by Jortin, in his remarks on the diabolical possessions in the age of our Lord, that 'one reason for which Divine Providence should suffer evil spirits to exert their malignant powers at that time, might be to give a check to Sadducism among the Jews, and Atheism among the Gentiles ; and to remove in some measure these two great impediments to the reception of the Gospel.' For moral uses, supernatural visitations have doubtless been allowed in subsequent ages ; and he who believes in them, only spreads their moral the farther by giving them publicity. Before such a person can be fairly censured, the ground of his faith ought to be disproved, for he only acts consistently. This task would, however, prove one of the most difficult which Mr. Southey has yet undertaken."

The following portrait of Mr. Wesley appeared soon after his death, in a very respectable publication. It rather savours of the '*praise that is of men* ;' yet as I believe it does not in fact exceed the truth, I shall insert it :

"His indefatigable zeal in the discharge of his duty has been long witnessed by the world ; but as mankind are not always inclined to put a generous construction on the exertion of singular talents,† his motives were imputed to the love of popularity, ambition, and lucre. It now appears that he was actuated by a disinterested regard to the immortal interest of mankind. He laboured, and studied, and preached, and wrote, to propagate what he believed to be the Gospel of Christ. The intervals of these engagements were employed in governing and regulating the concerns of his numerous societies ; assisting the necessities, solving the difficulties, and soothing the afflictions of his hearers. He observed so rigid a temperance, and allowed himself so little repose, that

* Sadducism Triumphed over.

† How much his talents would have availed without *faith*, we have seen in the first volume of this work.

he seemed to be above the infirmities of nature, and to act independent of the earthly tenement he occupied. The recital of the occurrences of every day of his life would be the greatest encomium.

"Had he loved wealth, he might have accumulated without bounds. Had he been fond of power, his influence would have been worth courting by any party. I do not say he was without ambition;* he had that which Christianity need not blush at, and which virtue is proud to confess. I do not mean that which is gratified by splendour and large possessions; but that which commands the hearts and affections, the homage and gratitude, of thousands. For him they felt sentiments of veneration, only inferior to those which they paid to heaven: to him they looked as their father, their benefactor, their guide to glory and immortality: for him they fell prostrate before God, with prayers and tears, to spare his doom, and prolong his stay. Such a recompense as this is sufficient to repay the toils of the longest life. Short of this, greatness is contemptible impotence. Before this, lofty prelates bow, and princes hide their diminished heads.

"His zeal was not a transient blaze, but a steady and constant flame. The ardour of his spirit was neither damped by difficulty, nor subdued by age. This was ascribed by himself to the power of Divine grace; by the world, to enthusiasm. Be it what it will, it is what philosophers must envy, and infidels respect: It is that which gives energy to the soul, and without which there can be no greatness or heroism.

"Why should we condemn that in religion which we applaud in every other profession and pursuit? He had a vigour and elevation of mind, which nothing but the belief of the Divine favour and presence could inspire. This threw a lustre around his infirmities, changed his bed of sickness into a triumphal car, and made his exit resemble an *apotheosis*, rather than a dissolution.

"He was qualified to excel in every branch of literature: He was well versed in the learned tongues, in metaphysics, in oratory, in logic, in criticism, and every requisite of a Christian minister. His style was nervous, clear, and manly; his preaching was pathetic and persuasive; his journals artless and interesting; and his compositions and compilations to promote knowledge and piety, were almost innumerable.

"I do not say he was without faults, or above mistakes; but they were lost in the multitude of his excellencies and virtues.†

"To gain the admiration of an ignorant and superstitious age, requires only a little artifice and address; to stand the test of these times, when all pretensions to sanctity are stigmatized as hypocrisy, is a proof of genuine piety and real usefulness. His great object was to revive the obsolete doctrines and extinguished spirit of the Church of England; and they who are its friends cannot be his enemies. Yet for this he was treated as a fanatic and impostor, and exposed to every species of slander and persecution. Even Bishops and dignitaries entered the lists against him; but he never declined the combat, and generally proved victorious. He appealed to the Homilies, the Articles, and the

* He was wholly delivered from it, except as before stated. He was dead to the praise of men: he trampled it under his feet. This was a trait in his character, which, above all others, was most eminent.

† He has said of himself, in the language of faith:

O love, thou bottomless abyss,
My sins are swallowed up in thee!

Scriptures, as vouchers for his doctrine ; and they who could not decide upon the merits of the controversy, were witnesses of the effects of his labours ; and they judged of the tree by its fruit. It is true he did not succeed much in the higher walks of life ; but that impeached his cause no more than it did the first planters of the Gospel. However, if he had been capable of assuming vanity on that score, he might rank among his friends some persons of the first distinction, who would have done honour to any party. After surviving almost all his adversaries, and acquiring respect among those who were the most distant from his principles, he lived to see the plant he had reared spreading its branches far and wide, and inviting not only these kingdoms, but the Western world, to repose under its shade.—No people, since the first ages of Christianity, could boast a founder of such extensive talents and endowments. If he had been a candidate for literary fame, he might have succeeded to his utmost wishes ; but he sought not the praise of man ; he regarded learning only as the instrument of usefulness. The great purpose of his life was doing good. For this he relinquished all honour and preferment ; to this he dedicated all the powers of body and mind ; at all times and in all places, in season and out of season, by gentleness, by terror, by argument, by persuasion, by reason, by interest, by every motive and every inducement, he strove with unwearied assiduity to turn men from the error of their ways, and awaken them to virtue and religion. To the bed of sickness, or the couch of prosperity ; to the prison, the hospital, the house of mourning, or the house of feasting ; wherever there was a friend to serve, or a soul to save ; he readily repaired to administer assistance or advice, reproof or consolation. He thought no office too humiliating, no condescension too low, no undertaking too arduous, to reclaim the meanest of God's offspring. The souls of all men were equally precious in his sight, and the value of an immortal creature beyond all estimation. He penetrated the abodes of wretchedness and ignorance to rescue the profligate from perdition. He communicated the light of life to those who *'sat in darkness and the shadow of death.'* He changed the outcasts of society into useful members ; civilized even savages ; and filled those lips with prayer and praise that had been accustomed only to oaths and imprecations. But as the strongest religious impressions are apt to become languid, without discipline and practice, he divided his people into classes and bands, according to their attainments. He appointed frequent meetings for prayer and conversation, where they gave an account of their experience, their hopes and fears, their joys and troubles ; by which means they were united to each other and to their common profession. They became sentinels upon each other's conduct, and securities for each other's character. Thus the seeds he sowed sprang up and flourished, bearing the rich fruits of every grace and virtue. Thus he governed and preserved his numerous societies, watching their improvement with a paternal care, and encouraging them to be faithful to the end.

“ But I will not attempt to draw his full character, nor to estimate the extent of his labours and services. They will be best known when he shall finally deliver up his commission into the hands of his great Master.”

I shall conclude this part of the review with the following beautiful picture of our honoured father, drawn by his friend Mr. Knox, whom I

have already mentioned. I the more willingly present it to my readers, as it confirms some particulars which I have related, and happily expresses others which I have omitted :

“ Very lately* I had an opportunity, for some days together, of observing Mr. Wesley with attention. I endeavoured to consider him, not so much with the eye of a friend, as with the impartiality of a philosopher ; and I must declare, every hour I spent in his company afforded me fresh reasons for esteem and veneration. So fine an old man I never saw ! The happiness of his mind beamed forth in his countenance : every look showed how fully he enjoyed

The gay remembrance of a life well spent.

Wherever he went he diffused a portion of his own felicity. Easy and affable in his demeanour, he accommodated himself to every sort of company ; and showed how happily the most finished courtesy may be blended with the most perfect piety. In his conversation, we might be at a loss whether to admire most his fine classical taste, his extensive knowledge of men and things, or his overflowing goodness of heart. While the grave and serious were charmed with his wisdom, his sportive sallies of innocent mirth delighted even the young and thoughtless ; and both saw in his uninterrupted cheerfulness the excellency of true religion. No cynical remarks on the levity of youth embittered his discourses. No applausive retrospect to past times marked his present discontent. In him even old age appeared delightful, like an evening without a cloud ; and it was impossible to observe him without wishing fervently, ‘ *May my latter end be like his !*’

“ But I find myself unequal to the task of delineating such a character. What I have said may to some appear as panegyric ; but there are numbers, and those of taste and discernment too, who can bear witness to the truth, though by no means to the perfectness, of the sketch I have attempted. With such I have been frequently in his company ; and every one of them, I am persuaded, would subscribe to all I have said. For my own part, I never was so happy as while with him, and scarcely ever felt more poignant regret than at parting from him ; for well I knew,

‘ I ne’er should look upon his like again !’ ”

It was a sage remark of a Heathen, “ Count no man happy till you know his end.” With the Gospel of God our Saviour before us, we may nevertheless infer, that to begin well affords the highest prospect of a happy termination. Mr. Wesley took very high ground when in early youth, as he informs us,† he resolved to dedicate all his life to God ; all his thoughts, and words, and actions ; being thoroughly convinced there was no medium ; but that every part of his life, (not some only,) must either be a sacrifice to God, or to himself,—that is, in effect, to the devil. How strange must such a character appear to the world ! Yet who can deny, that wherever it is found, it is the greatest under the sun ? How truly great is he, who, in such a world as this, ‘ *lives not according to the desires of men, but to the will of God !*’ And how perfectly rational is such a determination ! Can any man be truly accounted wise who lives not for eternity ? Or is any man so great a fool as he who fools away his soul ?

We have considered *that whole life* ; we have traced it from infancy

* In the year 1789.

† See vol. i, page 95.

to the grave ; long protracted, and astonishingly filled up ; and may we not take, without fear, as strong ground on our part, and ask where is the deviation from the path so prescribed ? Where is the period in which he was left to himself, or in which we have seen him an unfaithful servant ? His enemies themselves being the judges, no blot remains upon his moral character ; and in any attempts which they have made to lessen him in the esteem of men, they have been obliged to disobey the precept of our Lord, Matt. vii, 1, ‘ *Judge not, that ye be not judged ;*’ and to disregard what he allows in the same chapter, viz., ‘ *By their fruits ye shall know them.*’ They have been thus obliged to *judge his spirit*, and to ascribe *motives* to such labours, privations, and sufferings, as are utterly at variance not only with Christian charity, but with reason and philosophy.

Some writers, who could think deeply and write well on other subjects, have gravitated when speaking of Mr. Wesley, and have adopted the most common and uncultivated notions. They seem not to have been able to account for such exertions, so long continued, upon any higher principle than the gentleman in Ireland, that listened politely to a lady, who rather disturbed the hilarity of a large company by speaking of the great labours of Mr. Wesley, (then travelling through the kingdom,) and was concluding with a warm opinion of his disinterestedness ; but he could hold no longer. “ Dear madam,” said he, “ you spoil all ! You would make him out a fool. We all know, Mr. Wesley is a great man,—a gentleman, a scholar, a philanthropist,—a very great man. But, depend upon it, he knows what he is about. Wait and see. *Disinterestedness !* No, madam ; you may be certain he is no such fool ! ”—The company seemed to acquiesce in this sage remark. The gentleman was one of those who know the world.

We have waited the great teacher—death, and we have seen the ‘ *fool for Christ’s sake*’ finish his course. We have seen the consolations of God rest upon his dying servant, and giving him anticipations of glory, who left not behind him what would defray the expenses of his very plain funeral !

His God supports him in his final hour !
His final hour brings glory to his God !

But these anticipations of glory—can these be explained away ? We suppose, the attempt might be made by the ignorant, or the most careless minds. Alas ! a learned and philosophical man, and who seemed to have a real respect for religion, after reading the twopenny tract, giving an account of Mr. Wesley’s happy death, exclaimed to the person who put that tract into his hand, “ Well, this is the most astonishing instance that ever I knew of the power of habit ! Here is a man who has been threescore years praying, preaching, and singing psalms, and, behold ! he thinks of nothing else when he is dying ! ”—*Risum teneatis, amici ?* No, my friends ; we must not laugh, but rather weep and say, Poor human nature ! Poor, indeed, in its most imposing forms !

We have seen the struggles of this servant of God against the corruptions of his nature, else we should not have credited the victory which he obtained ; and, perhaps, we should have seen them more largely detailed, if we had all his Journals. Mrs. Wesley carried off a considerable part of them.—‘ *If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.*’ If we deny the disease, the remedy cannot

be applied. The same may be said of the people raised up by his labours. The world find some relief in crying out for a spotless church. They think they are wise in rejecting any other. They may see, if they please, such a church in the Acts of the Apostles, chap. ii and iv. But we have never seen it since that day. Yet, *'the gates of hell have not prevailed. Those who believe, and are thus conformed to the Son of God,'* are still saved according to that standard. It would be very delightful to have them all thus *'strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might ;'* and that *'great grace should rest upon them all.'* But it is impossible that even such a church should continue to have *only* such members : For those, whose *'faith thus worketh by love,'* must strive to save others ; and, as soon as any have "a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins," they must receive them, and bear with all their ignorance, obstinacy, unbelief of heart, worldly mindedness, and evil tempers ; and never thrust them out till it is plainly seen, that they have *turned back to perdition.*

Here is the great, the divine work of a minister of Christ ! And, hence, we see the absolute necessity of *Christian discipline.* "The soul and the body," said one of the fathers, "make a man. The *spirit* and the *discipline* make a Christian." There are times of pulling down, and there are times of building up. Mr. Wesley was appointed to pull down ungodly formality, and to found THE FAITH ; but Christian discipline must preserve it. Without this, we realize the old saying, "Like priest, like people !" How great the duty, how awful the responsibility, of a minister of Christ !

The people of God *'have fellowship one with another :'* There can be no discipline where there is no such fellowship. What a butt for the ridicule, and even for the invectives of the world, has the fellowship of the Methodists been ! Yet, there is no church, that has any pretension to be called Scriptural, that has not attempted something of the kind, or lamented the want of it. Hence, "Christian congregations," as Mr. Wesley observes in his letter to Mr. Perronet, "are a mere rope of sand." The serious reader will see the necessity of the members of a Christian church having this mutual help, that *'reproof, edification, and correction in righteousness,'* may be administered to all : That *'speaking the truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, even Christ ;'* from whom *'the whole body, joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every member, maketh an increase of the body, to the edifying of itself in love.'*

The Reverend William Jowett, in his "*Christian Researches in the Mediterranean,*" published and recommended by the Church Missionary Society, has some excellent thoughts applicable to this subject.

"When," says that pious and laborious minister, "we come into these countries, [the remains of the Greek empire in Europe,] we are forcibly led by what we see, and often by what we hear, to reconsider matters, which, at home, we took for established opinions. This should be done with candour, humility, and a patient spirit ; otherwise, we cannot expect, that the Spirit of God should lead to that *'wisdom which is from above,—first pure, then peaceable.'* There is no extreme of rigid bigotry on the one hand, or of lax and undisciplined liberty of thought on the other, into which Satan is not permitted to beguile specu-

lative, curious, secular, and factious spirits : See Ephes. iv, 14 ; while the promise, in the words of the Psalmist, is, ‘ *The meek he will guide in judgment : the meek will he teach his way.*’

“ You ask me, What is your opinion of the origin of auricular confession, which the Greek Church practises ? Is it not an act of great humility ? Is it not commanded by our Saviour, and his Apostle James, in this sense ?—In the primitive times of the Christian Church, when the members of it were few in number, united one to another by the common bonds of affection within, and sufferings without, the sin of one individual was sensibly felt as a matter of pain and scandal to all. Confession and some kind of penance were then required in the presence of the whole body of the particular church where the offence occurred. Traces of this appear in the Corinthian Church : See 1 Cor. v ; 2 Cor. ii and vii. This kind of discipline is alluded to in the Preface to the Communion-Service of the Church of England ; and where the members of a church are, indeed, in a spiritual manner, ‘ *knit together in love,*’ such discipline appears truly wholesome.

“ It was in the fifth century that, on account of the weakness and corruption of the Church, Pope Leo Magnus gave permission to disuse the practice of public confession, and to confess to one priest ; of so late a date appears to be the *origin* of auricular confession, which was afterwards made a Sacrament ! By what strains upon texts of Scripture attempts have been made to support these tenets, I need not here explain.

“ The celebrated passage in St. James’s Epistle, ch. v, 16, seems to me to afford no support whatever to auricular confession, considered as a system. ‘ *Confess your faults one to another,*’ implies *mutual* confession. But this auricular system makes confession flow all one way. Mutual confession implies that the persons among whom it is performed, are ‘ *like-minded*’ respecting the subject of sin,—its real nature,—its hatefulness,—its burden. In some situations, a man [thus impressed] may be alone. This duty, in such a case, ceases, in the very nature of things.

“ With regard to the benefit of this practice, it may be viewed in the following lights :—1. It gives a taste to the loathsomeness of sin. If confession of it to our fellow sinners be so bitter, what must its nature be in the sight of a holy God ?—2. It [confession] may operate in making useful the mischief which sin does to society.—3. Confession, accompanied with mutual prayer, has a special promise. (James v, 16.)—Another benefit is that of godly counsel, [suited] to the case of the sinner, together with the application of the promises, through Christ.”

Such is the confession in a well regulated church, consisting of those who have *believed the word*,—who *desire to flee from the wrath to come*, and to be saved from their sins. Such a church or society is that established by Mr. Wesley.

Mr. Wesley informed me, that some years after the commencement of this *work of God*, a pious minister of the Church of England, who admired the discipline of the Methodists, thought he would try to institute something similar to it in his parish. He accordingly convened the principal inhabitants ; and, after laying his views and fears before them, proposed that they should thus meet together, and advise and pray for one another. The parishioners, who had come together with some

fear lest the meeting called should be concerning something that might affect their temporal interests, heard the proposal with not a little surprise; and the well meaning pastor was obliged to dismiss them without obtaining a promise of compliance from any one of the assembly.

Some time after, meeting with one of our society whom he knew, he expressed his painful disappointment, and asked with much feeling, "O! where did Mr. Wesley find such a people, who are thus willing to act as he advises?"—"You are mistaken, Sir," said his friend; "Mr. Wesley did not find them: He made them, or rather God by him. You must do the same. You must preach as he does. You must show them their true condition, and their danger of eternal perdition. Those who believe your word will receive every Scriptural advice you may be disposed to give them."

Mr. Jowett's statement will satisfy every reader who desires to know the mind of the Lord concerning his Church, that Christian discipline is *essential* to it. But will any submit to it who do not come '*under the law to Christ?*' Legal coercion, whether Papal or Protestant, is out of the question with every Bible Christian. The true mark, therefore, of a Church of Christ is, the members having this willing fellowship one with another,—all being '*under the law to Christ,*' as a rule of life, both personal and collective; and the discipline necessary to this, being executed in love, and without respect of persons.

But a higher and more intimate fellowship belongs to those who have *like precious faith*,—the *one true faith* of the Gospel, and which is eminently '*the gift of God.*' As all who receive this are devoted not only in life, but in heart; so they feel what that high Apostolic precept means: '*Having purified your souls, by obeying the truth through the Spirit, unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with pure hearts fervently.*' This love is founded on '*the love of God,*' which comes only by faith. '*We love him,*' says St. John, '*because he first loved us.*' This unfeigned love issues in a confidence which the world knows not of. Our Lord's intercessory prayer, John xvii, 20, 21, '*That they may all be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me,*' has this high consummation of the life of faith in view. The world will never truly believe till they see this love, and consequently this *oneness*.

Mr. Wesley, as he felt the power of this faith and love, so he discerned it in others. Accordingly, he appointed that higher mean of this sacred fellowship, which is called "meeting in band." Where this faith is not found, this mean cannot be used to any spiritual profit. Where the faith is given, this help will be found edifying beyond all calculation: and, from the experience which I have had in the work of God, I most sincerely doubt, if any believer ever knew, and yet neglected this precious help, without the loss of the *first love*, Revelations ii, 4, being the consequence. Unless this love be recovered, verse 5, '*perfect love,*' the great preparation for the day of judgment, 1 John iv, 17, cannot be attained. We need not wonder, therefore, at so many that once run well, having become as '*salt without savour.*'

Those who lived in the enjoyment of this faith, Mr. Wesley observes in his letter to Mr. Perronet, already mentioned, "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 kind, young and old, men and women, met together."

"These, therefore," he observes, "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 for one another, that ye may be healed.*'"

"In compliance with their desire, I divided them into smaller companies ; putting the married or single men, and the married or single women, together. The rules of these bands, (i. e. little companies,—so that old English word signifies,) run thus :—That they were to speak each in order, freely and plainly, the true state of their souls ; with the faults of which they are conscious, in thought, word, or deed ; and the temptations they have felt since the last meeting. The leader of the band was to speak *his* own state first, and then to ask the rest, in order, as many and as searching questions as may be, concerning their state, sins, and temptations."

The dignified author of "The Enthusiasm of the Methodists and Papists compared," with his usual ingenuity, terms this fellowship of believers "a private confession;" and cries out, no doubt with holy indignation, "What a scene is hereby disclosed! What a *filthy jakes* opened, when the most searching questions are answered without reserve!"—"Hold, Sir," says Mr. Wesley in his reply, "unless you are answering for yourself. This undoubtedly you have a right to do. You can tell best what is in your own heart ; and I cannot deny what you say. It may be a very *filthy jakes* for aught I know. But pray do not measure others by yourself. The hearts of believers are '*purified through faith.*' When these open their hearts to each other, there is no such scene disclosed. Yet temptations to pride or desire, of various kinds ; to self-will ; to unbelief in many instances, they often feel in themselves, (whether they give any place to them or no,) and occasionally disclose to their brethren."

Concerning the *filthy jakes* his Lordship seems to have been a competent judge : And so far he was *sound in the faith*. We may well believe, that he subscribed, *ex animo*, to the ninth article of the church, viz., *of original or birth sin* ; and that, "in every person born into the world," this *filthy jakes* "deserves God's wrath and damnation." But how to be delivered from it, appears from his whole book to have been a difficulty with the worthy Bishop. Would he say with Horace, (who had some notion of the *jakes*, according to his well known saying, *Nemo vitiis sine nascitur*,*) that "length of time, the advice of friends, and my own reason, will effect a cure?" This might do with Jupiter, who seems to have been a god after the poet's own heart. But, could the Bishop believe that this process, even if the '*Father of mercies*' should grant to him length of days, salutary advice, and the best rational powers, with all the rites of the church assisting, would '*conform him to the image of the Son of God*?' But we may hope, he considered the subject more maturely during the day graciously afforded him. I think we may thus hope ; for his mind seems to have been much changed respecting

* No man is born without vicious propensities.

Mr. Wesley. In one of his visits to Exeter, several years after, the Bishop invited him to dine at the palace, where, in the presence of several of his clergy, he treated him with the greatest attention and respect.

Perhaps he also thought more seriously of those high descriptions of the life of faith, which he often read in the communion service : That “those who spiritually eat the flesh of Christ, and drink his blood, *dwelt in Christ, and Christ in them : That they are one with Christ, and Christ with them !*” He might perhaps also consider what the church says of “the *godly* consideration of our election in Christ,” as believers, “who are called according to God’s purpose, by his Spirit working in due season : They, through grace, obey the calling ; they be justified freely ; they be made sons of God by adoption ; they be made like the image of his only-begotten Son Jesus Christ ; they walk religiously in good works ; and at length, by God’s mercy, they attain to everlasting felicity. That such as thus feel in themselves the working of the Spirit of Christ, mortifying the works of the flesh and their earthly members, and drawing up their minds to high and heavenly things, as it doth greatly establish and confirm their faith of eternal salvation, to be enjoyed through Christ, so it doth fervently kindle their love towards God. Furthermore, we must receive God’s promises in such wise as they be generally set forth to us in Holy Scripture. And, in our doings, that will of God is to be followed which we have expressly declared to us in the word of God.”

Perhaps this admirable conclusion, so decisive of the whole doctrine laid down in the seventeenth article, might have led the Bishop to a more diligent study of his Bible : And it is not impossible that he might imbibe some fear, lest the poetical account of his *work*, by my friend Mr. Roberts,* was conclusive against him.

He might thus be prepared to hear the church, speaking by its most pious and learned ministers. He would see what they say concerning confession, notwithstanding all their zeal against the Church of Rome. —In the homily on repentance, it is said, “We ought to confess our weakness and infirmities,” (the infirmity of our faith in this conflict, and our need of being made ‘*strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might,*’) “to the end that, knowing each other’s frailness, we may the more earnestly pray together to Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, that he will vouchsafe to pardon us our infirmities, for his Son Jesus Christ’s sake.”

The excellent Bishop Taylor might also have helped him to discover his grievous error and fault, in thus ridiculing before an ungodly world, one of the most blessed means of combating, and being cleansed from, that *filthy jakes* of human corruption. That pious prelate not only enjoins the practice, but directs, that it should be much more explicit than the rules of the bands, drawn up by Mr. Wesley, require. In the Bishop’s edifying book of *Holy Living*, chap. 2, sect. 4, he says, “To the same purpose it is of great use, that he who would preserve his humility should choose some spiritual person,” (how much better if it were five or six, the usual number of the band!) “to whom he shall oblige himself to discover his very thoughts and fancies, every act of his, and all his intercourse with others, in which there is danger ; that, by such an

* See the preface, page 14.

openness of spirit, he may expose every blast of vain-glory, every idle thought, to be chastened and lessoned by the rod of spiritual discipline ; and he that shall find himself tied to confess every proud thought, every vanity of his spirit, will also perceive that they must not dwell with him, nor find any kindness from him."

Mr. Wesley used to say of the Methodist societies, alluding to St. Paul's account of the apostolic church, Ephes. iv, "The classes are the sinews ; the bands are the nerves." The *solid parts* of the body seem unimpaired ; and (by our trustees knowing their high duty and sacred responsibility) to have acquired greater solidity. Our sinews seem also to have increased in strength ; and all are zealous to do good to all men ; but our nervous system seems to be much weakened. Life is not transmitted as it used to be ; and who can undertake for this ? We can do much towards '*lengthening our cords and strengthening our stakes* ;' but who can repair the waste of *spiritual life* ? When Mr. Wesley found any society in a declining state, he usually noted in his journal, as a prominent cause, that "the bands had crumbled to pieces." Being impressed with this, he at one time sent a circular letter to all the Preachers, declaring, that in his next tour he would visit only those places where there were bands ; adding, "for they only are Methodist societies." This roused many to remember the happy times of mutual aid, whereby they were strengthened to "cast the world and flesh behind,"—"*to leave the first principles of the doctrine of Christ, and to go on to perfection*.' He had comfort in meeting those who thus set out afresh, and rejoiced in the appearance of renewed life and vigour.

It may be thought that Mr. Wesley's declaration, that where there are no bands there is no true Methodism, is only an instance of his usual strong way of speaking ; but it is a sober truth. If the reader will turn to vol. i, page 320, he will find that the bands were the first in order in the Methodist fellowship. When the Lord afterwards thrust out his servants '*into the highways and hedges*,' and thus gathered together *the halt and the blind*, who '*desired to be made whole*,' the classes were established, not only to teach, but to inquire and examine if the people walked according to the Gospel : Vol. i, page 321. When any '*knew the Lord*,' (in the only way in which a sinner can know him,) as '*being merciful to their unrighteousness, and remembering their sins no more*,' then the bands were appointed to keep up the original design, that those who thus believed might be '*cleansed from all unrighteousness*.'

Now, if those who thus '*come to the knowledge of the truth*' will still be found *only* among the catechumens, can we wonder if many should '*lose the things which they have wrought, and not receive a full reward* ?' Or ought we to be surprised if they should be found, like some in the days of the Apostle, '*ever learning, yet never coming to the knowledge*,' or the enjoyment, '*of the truth* ?' Or if '*they should need to be taught again the first principles of the oracles of God* :.' And who can effectually help them, if they should be thus content to walk in a circle, and never '*press to the mark of their high calling of God in Christ Jesus* ?'

Yet what an invaluable blessing have the classes been to the Methodist societies ! By this a hedge is formed about those who begin to '*inquire their way to Zion*,' and a fellowship obtained, that greatly helps to preserve them from turning back to the ungodly fellowship of the world. What a defence has it provided for those who '*have not yet*

root in themselves,' and who might otherwise become a prey to those who inculcate the pernicious principles of modern infidelity! We have seen its salutary effects for many years. Could the ploughshare of destruction have passed through the continent, and have made it '*a field of blood*,' if '*the truth as it is in Jesus*' had been taught, and if the discipline of the Lord had preserved those who believed it?

When the almost prophetic voice, contained in that wonderful publication, *King's Morsels of Criticism*, came forth in the year 1788, the year before the French Revolution broke out,—and which was so strikingly fulfilled in that '*abomination of desolation*' wherewith the Lord visited the unfaithful professors of his holy and peaceful religion,—could any thing but true Christianity, both in its doctrine and discipline, have withstood the threatening ruin? Commenting on the twenty-fourth chapter of St. Matthew, the twenty-ninth verse, that extraordinary writer says, "If the words are spoken emblematically, then the images made use of are such as are well known to predict (consistently with their constant use in many other parts of prophecy,) a great destruction, and almost annihilation, of many of those lawful powers that at present rule on the earth, however beneficial any of them may be to the world; and a dreadful lessening of the dignity and splendour of all greatness, and a subversion of all good order and of civil government; than which nothing can be expected more formidable."

"Nevertheless, this conclusion is only too consistent with a similar intimation given to us in the book of Revelation, concerning the times immediately preceding the coming of our Lord. For therein we are informed, Rev. xvi, 21, that '*a great hail, every hailstone about the weight of a talent, falleth out of heaven upon the men; and the men blasphemed God, because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof is exceeding great.*'"

"Dreadful, indeed, must be a time, (if such a one is to come,) when men are let loose upon each other, possessed of all their present artificial improvements and advantages; but unrestrained either by law or principle; scorning the admonitions and authority of those who ought to maintain justice; and assisted by the more rude and barbarous parts of the world, whom they may find too ready to increase the universal uproar."

What a picture is here given us of what really happened in that awful misrule, on account of which Europe smarts to this day! Can those who may be disposed to dispute the critical propriety of the commentary, deny the awful fulfilment? Now, what preserved our nation in that day of '*rebuke and blasphemy*?' That the Lord had, in his gracious providence, given us much advantage by the Revolution of 1688, by which the nation was delivered from Popery and arbitrary power, just one hundred years before, I joyfully grant. But if our *population* had been found like that in France, or even like what it was in 1738, (see vol. i, pages 252, 253,) could even our admirable Constitution have saved us? What our great poet says of the tempestuous waves, may be said of the *madness of the people*,—

What care these roarers for the name of king?

But the roarings were checked, or a bulwark raised against them, not by the nobility or gentry,—(*they* were the object of their fury, and

could have no more prevailed in England than they did in France :) No ; but by those of their own tribes ; the men of their own sphere and station, who were converted to God ; the men now become religious ; many of whom ‘ *had run with those who remained ungodly to the same excess of riot,*’ but whose blasphemies were now turned to praise ! Had it not been for the labours of these men of God, who thus dared to go among this ungodly mass,—the uninformed, ungovernable mass of mankind ; and who, at the peril of their lives, and to the great displeasure of those who ought to have known better, called these sons of violence and disorder to ‘ *be wise, and remember their latter end ;*’ who cried to those *prodigals*, even in their own haunts, and invited them ‘ *to return to their Father’s house ;*’ promising them, with an authority and a love that only God could give, ‘ *the kiss of peace,*’ and ‘ *the robe of righteousness :*’—Had it not been for these labourers, this favoured land might also have been, years ago, a field of blood ! Religion, and religion alone, can save any land from destruction. ‘ *The nation that will not serve THEE shall perish !*’ And we may fear, lest ‘ *his wrath should not be turned away,*’ but ‘ *that he will again visit for these things.*’

That the fellowship of those who ‘ *are thus the called in Christ Jesus,*’ is of vital importance to the great design of God in giving his Son, can admit of no doubt in the mind of those who know that calling ; and that without it Christian discipline cannot be maintained, long experience has abundantly proved. To this discipline we are, under God, (and it was also *his* work,) indebted at this day for the preservation of our original principles and the moral health of our people. What else could have preserved us from the overflowing scourge which threatened all that was venerable in civil society ? When the assumption of *naked rights* in this land seemed to threaten us with a return to savage life !—When the Divine command, ‘ *Thou shalt not covet,*’ seemed repealed by acclamation !—When the multitude seemed to behold a usurper in every man who was richer than themselves ; our discipline, founded on the fellowship which the Scriptures show to be essential to a Church of Christ, formed a hedge and a bulwark against these deceitful pretensions,—this fraternity of hell, the work of the old liar and murderer. If the same discipline were found among all who profess the religion of Christ, what blessed effects would follow, not only in our population at home, but in distant lands, now so pressingly invited to return to God, who ‘ *has given to his Son the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession.*’

We make no unscriptural pretensions. We know no promise or declaration that confers infallibility on even the *purest* church, or takes away responsibility from the children of men. ‘ *It must needs be that offences should come ;*’ such is the weakness, corruption, and perverseness of man ; nor do we know any remedy for it, but in fearlessly and constantly ‘ *preaching the word,*’ and by wholesome Christian discipline preserving those who are brought to God by it. We have been thus preserved as the visible fruits and seals of the apostolic labours of those men of God who now ‘ *rest in him :*’ And we may humbly hope that we shall be preserved and increase till ‘ *the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD.*’

LETTERS

BETWEEN

THE REV. * * * * *

WHO PASSES BY THE NAME OF JOHN SMITH,

AND

THE REV. JOHN WESLEY.*

LETTER I.

To the Rev. Mr. John Wesley.

May, 1745.

REVEREND SIR,—*The labouring to bring all the world to solid, inward, vital religion; is a work so truly Christian and laudable, that I shall ever highly esteem those who attempt this great work, even though they should appear to me to be under some errors in doctrine, some mistakes in their conduct, and some excess in their zeal. You may expect therefore in me a candid adversary, a contender for truth and not for victory: one who would be glad to convince you of any error which he apprehends himself to have discovered in you, but who will be abundantly more glad to be convinced of errors in himself. Now the best way to enable you to set me right, wherever I may be wrong, will be by pointing out to you what I have to object to those works of yours which have fallen into my hands: and for order sake I shall reduce my objections to matter of Doctrine, to matter of Phraseology, and to matter of Fact.*

1. As to matter of Doctrine, I shall choose to express what I take to be your doctrine in my own words rather than in your words, that you may the more readily perceive whether I at any time mistake you. You seem then to me to contend with great earnestness for the following system, viz. That faith (instead of being a rational assent and moral virtue, for the attainment of which men ought to yield the utmost attention and industry) is altogether a divine and supernatural illapse from Heaven—the immediate gift of God—the mere work of Omnipotence, given instantaneously and arbitrarily, not with any regard to the fitness of the recipient, but the absolute will of the Donor: that the moment this faith is received, the recipient's pardon is signed in heaven, or he is justified. This pardon or justification is immediately notified to him by the Holy Ghost, and that (not by his imperceptibly working a godly assurance, but) by such a perceptible, such a glaring attestation, as is as easily discernible from the dictates of reason or suggestions of fancy, as light is discernible from darkness. Upon this perceptible and infallible notification, the recipient is saved, (i. e. as you explain yourself, is sanctified,) he has immediately the mind and the power to walk as Christ walked, and is become perfect; he has a perfection indeed admitting of degrees, yet such a perfection that he cannot sin. Thus he is in a moment regenerate, upon the first sowing of the seed of faith, which, you say, you cannot conceive to be other than instantaneous, whether you consider experience, or the word of God, or the very nature of the thing.

Now so various are men's understandings, or so unenlightened am I still as to spiritual affairs, that it appears quite manifest to me that experience, the word of God, and the nature of the thing, plainly evince the exact contrary.—As to my own experience, my parents and instructors, from my first infancy, carefully instilled into me such an amiable idea of God, that I cannot remember any time when I had *no more love of God than a stone*: consequently I cannot go so far back as the time 'when God first lifted up the light of his countenance upon me;' nor the day of my *eating butter and honey, of soaring upon eagles' wings, or of riding upon the sky*. These (I had like to have said *enthusiastic*;) but I would willingly avoid all offensive words,

* See page 53.

these) rapturous expressions may pass sometimes in poetry, but are too flighty, methinks, for plain prose: neither can I remember the exact day of *my espousals*, as you call it; but yet I am not so carnal a person as to have no perception of things spiritual. I have a taste for divine intercourse, a relish for the pleasures of devotion; so high a relish as to think all other pleasures low and insipid things, compared to those happy moments when we get disentangled from the world and lift our souls up unto the calm regions of heaven. I hope and believe myself to have as steady a faith in a pardoning God, as you can have; but my faith came by hearing—by hearing the word of God soberly and consistently explained, and not from any momentaneous illapse from Heaven. Thus stands my own experience.—Then, sir, if I appeal to the experience of all around me, they assure me that the case is the same with them; insomuch, that I am not acquainted with one pious person in the world whose experience (upon being consulted) is not flatly against you.

As to the word of God, let me observe to you, it is not the sound of particular texts, but the general tenour of the whole, on which we are to frame doctrines. There are texts whose sounds may favour quite contrary doctrines. Thus St. John says in one place, 'Whosoever is born of God cannot sin;' in another, 'If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us:' now no doctrine of perfection or imperfection should be founded on the sound of either of these texts; but from both of them, and the whole tenour of Scripture, we are to collect the true Scripture doctrine. In like manner there are Scriptures which declare we are *saved by faith*; others, that we are *saved by hope*; others again, that we are *saved by repentance, obedience, holiness*, and many other principal parts of religion, which, by a common synecdoche of *pars pro toto*, are put for the whole of it; here again we are not to be carried away with the sound of particular texts, maintaining that we are saved by faith alone, or hope alone, or obedience alone; but we are to construe one text so as to be consistent with all the rest, and to make one complete body or system of religion.—Again, *faith* is said in Scripture to be *the gift of God*, and so *riches* are said to be *the gift of God*; and indeed every other good thing, whether spiritual or temporal, is said to descend from Him from whom every good and perfect gift cometh: but then whether they descend merely as an illapse from Heaven, or as God's blessing on human industry, this cannot be collected from the sound of these texts, (though ever so often or ever so emphatically repeated,) but must be gathered from the general scope, drift, and tenour of Scripture.—Once more; if there be some texts which seem to favour God's arbitrary rule of mankind, and his dispensing his grace and favours promiscuously to the just and unjust, and without any regard to the fitness of the recipient; and if there be other texts which seem to favour the contrary doctrine of his dealing with his creatures according to their works, of his conferring grace and pardon on those who sinned through *ignorance and unbelief* preferably to more knowing and more audacious transgressors; then we must not hang upon the sound of either of these sort of texts, but pick out a sense at once consistent with both, and with the known attributes of Almighty God.—Lastly, if the human mind be sometimes termed *the candle of the Lord*, if in some places God's word is said to be *his lanthorn*, and in others, the Holy Ghost is represented as *the light of God*; then we must interpret all these places consistently, and walk by the joint light, as children of the light, without pretending prismatically to separate its rays, or dogmatically asserting which is which. We must not single out a few texts of Scripture of one particular cast or sound, and then call these "the word of God;" but from a careful attention to every part of the Sacred Volume, collect what is the general tenour and consistent meaning of the whole. The whole thus soberly studied, and consistently interpreted, I call "the word of God;" and this word of God appears to me to be manifestly against you: it speaks of growth in grace, in faith, and in religious knowledge as owing to the slow methods of instruction, not to momentaneous inspiration; it directs the gentle instilling the sacred science by long labour and pious industry, the advancing line upon line and precept upon precept, here a little and there a little; it compares even God's part of the work to his slow and imperceptible produce of vegetables; that whilst one planteth and another watereth, it is God all the while who goes on giving the increase.

Then lastly, the nature of the thing (which is the third witness you appeal to) seems to testify as clearly against you as the former two. It is the nature of faith, to be a full and practical assent to truth; but such assent arises not momentaneously, but by slow steps of ratiocination; by attending to the evidence, weighing the objections, and solving the difficulties. In short, the experience of mankind—the general tenour of the word of God, and the nature of the thing, all, in my opinion, make evidently and flatly against you. If you shall answer, that this my opinion is not by me suffi-

ciently supported and proved, I readily grant you that it is not, neither do I intend to enter farther into the proof of it. The controversies of the last century occasioned such a thorough discussion of the Calvinistical points, as settled those debates to the satisfaction of most men of learning and piety: and if young persons of the present age, instead of too hastily entering on the teaching of others, would but first give themselves the trouble to make themselves thorough masters of the points then settled, we should not have seen many of those crudities attempted to be revived at this time of day. To those writings I therefore refer you: for my present intention is, not to collect a body of divinity from the general tenour of Scripture, a work much too long for this letter, on the one hand; nor yet to cap a few texts of a contrary sound to those produced by you,—a task too trifling and insignificant, on the other; but my whole meaning is this: to state the case fairly between you and your adversaries. You have appealed to men of reason and religion: I have read your Appeals, and I shall impartially give you my sentiments as to your conduct.

We are at present upon the article of doctrine. Now your doctrine of momentaneous illapse, &c, as above related, (without entering at present into the truth or falsehood of it, is represented by your adversaries as having something of singularity in it, unsupported by Scripture, or the received doctrine of the Church of England; that these singularities are your most beloved opinions and favourite tenets, more insisted upon by you than the general and uncontroverted truths of Christianity. This is their charge. Now what is your defence? I was all attention to learn how you would maintain these singularities, these beloved opinions and favourite tenets; but what was my surprise when I found you answering that you had no singularities at all; that your notions are—true religion is the loving God with all our heart, and our neighbour as ourselves; that these are your favourite tenets, and have been so for many years: so that, in short, instead of having any peculiar doctrines which distinguish you from other Christians, you seem to suggest, that you preach nothing but what is common to all mankind; for, say you, *Are not my doctrines yours too? Do you say that any man can be a true Christian without loving God and his neighbour?* So then, Sir, it seems you teach nothing more singular than the love of God and man. Was it then for preaching this doctrine that the London clergy forbid you their pulpits? If so, I think you have had very hard usage. But if it be notorious, that you frequently insist on other beloved opinions, and on other controverted favourite tenets, then I fear your adversaries will think that you have given but a shuffling and evasive answer.

Nay, I think it will appear that you yourself were not fully satisfied with the answer, of no singularities, from the texts which you elsewhere quote, as carrying a sound in favour of your distinguishing singularities. But this is another objection which I have to make to your manner of treating your antagonists: you seem to think that you sufficiently answer your adversary, if you put together a number of naked Scriptures that sound in your favour. But please to remember, sir, that the question between you and them is not whether such words are Scripture, but whether (both parties admitting the words) the words are to be so or so interpreted. Should a Papist, in disputing with you, entrench himself in Scripture words; quote upon you 'This is my body;' insist upon it, that they were the words of Him who could not lie; and, in a declamatory way, undertake to prove all gainsayers to be infidels: I suppose you would tell him, that he was spending his zeal impertinently, for that you were as fully convinced as he, that the words were the words of Christ; but that the naked quotation of those words made nothing for his purpose, since the whole dispute between you was, not whether those words were Christ's, but whether those words of Christ were most truly and most agreeably to the whole tenour of Scripture interpreted by him in a literal, or by you in a figurative way. In like manner, if 'Sell all, and give to the poor,' be understood by Mr. Law as a precept directed to all Christians, and by you as limited to one particular person; then the naked quotation of those words of Scripture is not gaining any ground at all, but leaves the difference between you just as it found it. Once more, if a Churchman and a Quaker both allow that all God's children are led by the Spirit of God; but if the Churchman maintains, that this leading is by the written word, and by the gentle and imperceptible influences of the Divine Spirit on the human mind; and the Quaker, on the other hand, insists, that we are to be led by sudden, instantaneous inspirations, and by such perceptible movements of the Spirit, as are as distinguishable from the dictates of reason, or suggestions of fancy, as light is from darkness: if this be the difference between them, this difference is in no sort adjusted by barely quoting, 'As many as are led by the Spirit of God, are the sons of God:' for both acknowledge this Scripture, but differ as to their manner of interpreting it. Now,

sir, you often appear to me as attempting to adjust controversies by a bare quotation of the controverted texts.

And as you thereby fail of proving your singularities to be consistent with Scripture, so I must add, in the next place, you fail likewise of showing them consistent with the received doctrines of the Church of England. When your adversaries tax you with differing from the Church, not as it was a little before the reformation, or as it was a little after the reformation, but as it is at this day : and when you profess great deference and veneration for the Church of England ; you cannot naturally be supposed to mean, that much reverence was due to the Church, and its doctors and pastors, in the year 1545, and that in the year 1745 no reverence is due at all : if then, by the Church of England be meant (as ought to be meant) the present Church, I presume it will be no hard matter to show, that your doctrines differ widely from the doctrines of the Church. But here, perhaps, you will ask me, What then, does the present Church of England differ in doctrines from the Church at the time of the reformation ? I answer, I assert no such thing : but were it so, the presumption would lay in favour of the modern Church ; for it would be much more probable, that some truths might be brought to light, and some first hasty errors rectified upon the increase of learning, and growth of criticism, than that every thing should at once be brought to perfection, upon the first dawn of light into the regions of darkness and superstition, and that too amidst the sparks and heats of a warmly-agitated controversy. Bishop Jewel was a wise and good man, and so was Archbishop Sharp ; now if it had so happened that there was some difference of doctrine between them, the reasonable presumption would have been in favour of the latter, who had abundantly the best means of being accurate. Whatever partiality you, as a subscribing clergyman, may have for ancient sermons, published formerly under the name of homilies, others, free from all bias, must be allowed to judge quite impartially between the more ancient and more modern sermons, and to prefer those, whichever they be, which shall appear most consistent with the general tenour of Scripture. But I am not a going to examine which appear most so : we will suppose both the ancient and modern Reformed Church of *England*, under some variety of phrase, to teach one and the self-same doctrine. The catechism (phrase and all) is the doctrine both of the ancient and modern Church : now that teaches repentance, faith and obedience, as conditions of salvation. "No," say you, "we are saved by faith alone." In order to maintain this, you first give us to understand, that you mean by the word *salvation*, what other people mean by the word *holiness* ; and that you mean, by *faith alone*, faith preceded by *repentance*, and accompanied by *obedience*. Now, may not your adversaries reply in your own words, *Alas, what trifling is this, what a mere playing upon words !* Now, if you will explain yourself after this manner, nobody I think can have any difference with you, as to matter of doctrine, but the dispute between you will be reduced to matter of mere phraseology.

2. As to phraseology, every man is at liberty to use what phrases he likes best, provided he uses them according to their common acceptation, or else gives notice that he puts upon them a singular meaning of his own : if you choose to call that faith, which other people commonly note by the word *grace*, or to term that salvation, which every body else styles holiness, provided you give notice of this peculiar use of the words, we may make a tolerable shift to understand you, though, in my opinion, you would have done much better to have kept to the obvious and common sense. You may urge, perhaps, that your phraseology comes nearer to that of Scripture, and the original Reformed Church of England, and therefore is better than that in common use ; now, though some question may be made as to the absolute truth of the antecedent, yet granting the antecedent, I deny the consequence. For that phraseology may be quite proper at some times, and on some occasions, which may become highly improper upon a change of circumstances. To judge therefore of your propriety as to this matter, we must look back to the time of the apostles, and the time of the reformation, and carefully consider what was the state of affairs, both at the time of the first spreading, and at the time of the late revival of the gospel. At the time of the first preaching of the gospel, both Jews and Gentiles were very negligent as to internal holiness : they made light of the laws of piety and morality, but laid great stress upon external rites, and certain atoning actions, such as sacrifices, washings, lustrations, and other expiatory works, which, if they performed according to the due form of their respective religions, they doubted not but those works would render them acceptable to God, how free soever they made with the laws of morality and righteousness. The apostles therefore thought they could not express themselves too warmly against so wicked a persuasion, and often declare that we cannot be made righteous *by works* (by which they always meant such outward works as were

intended to commute for inward holiness) but by faith in Christ (by which they as constantly meant, by becoming Christians both in principle and practice.) In like manner, at the time of the reformation, when Popery had corrupted Christianity, and made a religion most of all other calculated for promoting moral goodness, really to subvert it, by substituting in the place of true holiness, certain trifling tricks, such as endowments, penances, and pilgrimages, to which they gave the emphatical name of *good works*, as if nothing else were good in comparison of them; and to which they ascribed such merit, that a man might thereby not only merit heaven for himself, but have too such a surplusage of merit to spare, as might be laid up in the storehouse of the Church, to be sold out by the Pope to those who had no merit of their own;—when these foolish and wicked doctrines had made men look out for other means of recommending themselves to God, than by a faithful and holy life; our reformers attacked those tenets with a becoming warmth, teaching that such fopperies were far from being good works, and that our best works were far from meriting heaven; that we were not to be justified by such outward trumperies, or by believing in saints or angels, but by faith alone in Jesus Christ. If in the heat of the argument, some crude things had been vented, it would have been no more than what usually happens in strenuous oppositions: the main of their argument was certainly pious and right. But the strong phrases which the reformers made use of, to guard against the Popish doctrine of justification by *good works*, gave occasion to Antinomians to run into a worse doctrine, if possible, than the former, viz., That of being justified and saved without *good works*. Now, sir, supposing the ancient and modern Reformed Church of England always to have maintained one and the same uniform doctrine, still every sensible man must allow, that the phraseology which was proper to express this doctrine at the one time, would be highly improper at the other; and the modern Church is as much to be commended, for avoiding all phrases that might countenance Antinomianism, as the ancient Church was for avoiding those which favoured Popery; and, consequently, that if the dispute between you and your adversaries be reduced to matter of phraseology, they have greatly the advantage of you in point of propriety. But as things of this nature are still liable to much altercation, I am for reducing this controversy to a much narrower compass, namely, to the third thing I at first proposed to object to, even one plain matter of fact.

3. If in fact, sir, you can work such signs and wonders as were worked by the apostles—if the Holy Ghost bears witness to your doctrines, as he did to theirs, by divers miracles, and visible supernatural gifts—if, I say, you can thus do the work of an apostle, you are, in my account, (notwithstanding what I might otherwise object to your doctrines or phrases,) entitled to the implicit faith which is due to one of that order. You relate of yourself many strange and wonderful things; but I will rest the whole affair upon this one fact,—your casting out devils. Now, sir, if one or two persons who appeared to be *lunatic*, and were actually *sore vexed, and torn by the devil*, upon your praying God to bruise Satan under their feet, were instantly dispossessed of that evil spirit, *vehemently crying out, "He is gone, he is gone,"* and straightway filled with the Spirit of love, and a sound mind. If they were so divinely enlightened, and made so strong in the Lord, as to acquire at once a contempt of all worldly things, and a temper quite unprovokable; if, I say, you prove this to be the fact, to the satisfaction of wise and good men, then I believe no wise and good man will oppose you any longer. Let me therefore rest it upon your conscience, either to prove this matter of fact, or to retract it. If, upon mature examination, it shall appear that *designing people* imposed upon you, or that hysterical women imposed upon themselves—acknowledge fairly that your zeal outran your wisdom—that your colourings are sometimes too strong, and your expressions too rapturous and glowing.

Having now freely told you what I take to be wrong in you, I shall readily and thankfully attend to whatever you shall point out as amiss in me. I am desirous to retract and amend whatever is wrong. To your general design of promoting true religion I am a hearty friend; nay, to your particular scheme and singularities I am no enemy: so far from it, that I should rejoice greatly to become your convert, and instead of living as I now do in hopes of salvation, I should be much better pleased to obtain certainty of it, by the infallible testimony of the Holy Ghost. If I come not fully into your scheme, it is not for want of good will, but for want of evidence and conviction that it is true. I pray God to grant me all needful illumination: and I pray you to tell me what is still lacking on my part.

P. S.—As I live at a considerable distance from London, I have no convenience of a personal conference with you; but a letter will find me directed to "JOHN SMITH, at Mr. Richard Mead's at the Golden Cross, in Cheapside."

LETTER II.

For Mr. John Smith.

SIR,—1. I was determined, from the time I received yours, to answer it as soon as I should have opportunity. But it was the longer delayed, because I could not persuade myself to write at all, till I had leisure to write fully. And this I hope to do now, though I know you not, no, not so much as your name. But I take it for granted you are a person that fears God, and that speaks the real sentiments of his heart. And on this supposition, I shall speak without any suspicion or reserve.

2. I am exceedingly obliged by the pains you have taken to point out to me what you think to be mistakes. It is a truly Christian attempt, an act of brotherly love, which I pray God to repay sevenfold into your bosom. Methinks I can scarce look upon such a person, on one who is “a contender for truth and not for victory,” whatever opinion he may entertain of me, as any adversary at all. For what is friendship, if I am to account him my enemy who endeavours to open my eyes, or to amend my heart?

1. 3. You will give me leave (writing as a friend rather than a disputant) to invert the order of your objections, and to begin with the third, because I conceive it may be answered in fewest words. The substance of it is this: “If in fact you can work such signs and wonders as were wrought by the apostles, then you are entitled (notwithstanding what I might otherwise object) to the implicit faith due to one of that order.”—A few lines after you cite a case related in the Third Journal, p. 88, and add, “If you prove this to be the fact, to the satisfaction of wise and good men, then I believe no wise and good man will oppose you any longer. Let me therefore rest it upon your conscience, either to prove this matter of fact, or to retract it. If upon mature examination it shall appear that designing people imposed upon you, or that hysterical women were imposed upon themselves, acknowledge your zeal outran your wisdom.”

4. Surely I would. But what, if on such examination it shall appear that there was no imposition of either kind, (to be satisfied of which I waited three years before I told the story.) What, if it appear, by the only method which I can conceive, the deposition of three or four eye and ear witnesses, that the matter of fact was just as it is there related, so far as men can judge from their eyes and ears? will it follow that I am entitled to demand the implicit faith which was due to an apostle? By no means. Nay, I know not that implicit faith was due to any or all of the apostles put together. They were to prove their assertions by the written word. You and I are to do the same. Without such proof I ought no more to have believed St. Peter himself, than St. Peter's (pretended) successor.

5. I conceive therefore this whole demand, common as it is, of proving our doctrine by miracles, proceeds from a double mistake, 1. A supposition that what we preach is not provable from Scripture: (for if it be, what need we farther witnesses? to the law and to the testimony!) 2. An imagination, that a doctrine not provable by Scripture, might nevertheless be proved by miracles. I believe not. I receive the written word as the whole and sole rule of my faith.

II. 6. Perhaps what you object to my phraseology, may be likewise answered in few words. I thoroughly agree that it is best to “use the most common words, and that in the most obvious sense:” and have been diligently labouring after this very thing for little less than twenty years. I am not conscious of using any uncommon word, or any word in an uncommon sense; but I cannot call those *uncommon words* which are the constant language of Holy Writ. These I purposely use; desiring always to express Scripture sense in Scripture phrase. And this I apprehend myself to do when I speak of *salvation* as a *present* thing. How often does our Lord himself do thus? How often his apostles? St. Paul particularly. Insomuch that I doubt whether we can find six texts in the New Testament, perhaps not three, where it is otherwise taken.

7. The term *faith* I likewise use in the Scriptural sense, meaning thereby *the evidence of things not seen*. And, that it is Scriptural, appears to me a sufficient defence of any way of speaking whatever. For however the propriety of those expressions may vary, which occur in the writings of men, I cannot but think those

which are found in the Book of God will be equally proper in all ages. But let us look back as you desire, to the age of the apostles. And if it appear that the state of religion now, is (according to your own representation of it) the same in substance as it was then, it will follow that the same expressions are just as proper now as they were in the apostolic age.

8. "At the time of the first preaching of the gospel (as you justly observe) both Jews and Gentiles were very negligent of *internal holiness*, but laid great stress on *external* rites, and certain actions, which if they performed according to the due forms of their respective religions, they doubted not but those works would render them acceptable to God. The apostles therefore thought they could not express themselves too warmly against so wicked a persuasion, and often declare that we cannot be made righteous by works: (i. e. not by such outward works as were intended to commute for inward holiness,) but *by faith in Christ*, i. e. by becoming Christians both in principle and practice."

9. I have often thought the same thing, that the apostles used the expression, *salvation by faith* (importing inward holiness by the knowledge of God) in direct opposition to the then common persuasion, of *salvation by works*, i. e. going to heaven by outward works, without any inward holiness at all.

10. And is not this persuasion as common now as it was in the time of the apostles? We must needs go out of the world, or we cannot doubt it. Does not every one of our churches (to speak a sad truth) afford us abundant instances of those who are as negligent of *internal* holiness, as either the Jews or ancient Gentiles were? And do not these at this day lay so great a stress on certain external rites, that if they perform them according to the due forms of their respective communities, they doubt not but those works will render them acceptable to God? You and I therefore cannot express ourselves too warmly against so wicked a persuasion; nor can we express ourselves against it in more proper terms than those the apostles used to that very end.

It cannot be denied that this apostolical language is also the language of our own Church. But I waive this. What is Scriptural in any church I hold fast: for the rest, I let it go.

III. 11. But the main point remains. You think the doctrines I hold are not founded on holy writ. Before we inquire into this, I would just touch on some parts of that abstract of them which you have given.

"Faith (instead of being a rational assent and moral virtue, for the attainment of which men ought to yield the utmost attention and industry) is altogether supernatural, and the immediate gift of God."—I believe, 1. That a rational assent to the truth of the Bible is one ingredient of Christian faith:—2. That Christian faith is a moral virtue in that sense wherein hope and charity are:—3. That men ought to yield the utmost attention and industry for the attainment of it;—and yet, 4. That this, as every Christian grace is properly supernatural, is an immediate gift of God, which he commonly gives in the use of such means as he hath ordained.

I believe it is generally given in an instant; but not *arbitrarily*, in your sense of the word; not without any regard to the fitness (I should say *the previous qualifications*) of the recipient.

12. "When a man is pardoned, it is immediately notified to him by the Holy Ghost, and that (not by his imperceptibly working a godly assurance, but) by such attestation as is easily discernible from reason or fancy."

I do not deny that God imperceptibly works in some a gradually increasing assurance of his love. But I am equally certain he works in others a full assurance thereof in one moment. And I suppose, however this godly assurance be wrought, it is easily discernible from bare reason or fancy.

"Upon this infallible notification he is saved, is become perfect, so that he cannot commit sin."

I do not say this notification is *infallible* in that sense, that none believe they have it who indeed have it not: neither do I say that a man is perfect in love the moment he is born of God by faith. But even then I believe if he keepeth himself, he doth not commit (outward) sin.

13. "This first sowing of the first seed of faith, you cannot conceive to be other than instantaneous, (ordinarily,) whether you consider experience, or the word of God, or the very nature of the thing. Whereas all these appear to me to be against you. To begin with experience. I believe myself to have as steady a faith in a pardoning God as you can have. And yet I do not remember the exact day when it was first given."

Perhaps not. Yours may be another of those exempt cases which were allowed before.

But, "the experience" you say, "of all the pious persons you are acquainted with, is the very same with yours."—You will not be displeased with my speaking freely. How many truly pious persons are you so intimately acquainted with, as to be able to interrogate them on the subject? With twenty? With ten? If so, you are far happier than I was for many years at *Oxford*. You will naturally ask, With how many truly pious persons am I acquainted, on the other hand? I speak the truth in Christ, I lie not: I am acquainted with more than 1200 or 1300 persons, whom I believe to be truly pious, and not on slight grounds, and who have severally testified to me with their own mouths, that they *do know* the day when the love of God was first shed abroad in their hearts, and when his Spirit first witnessed with their spirits, that they were the children of God. Now, if you are determined to think all these liars or fools, this is no evidence to you: but to me it is strong evidence, who have for some years known the men and their communication.

14. As to the word of God, you well observe, "We are not to frame doctrines by the sound of particular texts, but the general tenour of Scripture, soberly studied and consistently interpreted." Touching the instances you give, I would just remark: 1. To *have* sin, is one thing; to *commit* sin, is another.—2. In one particular text it is said, '*Ye are saved by hope*;' perhaps in one more, (though I remember it not,) '*Ye are saved by repentance*,' or '*holiness*.' But the general tenour of Scripture, consistently interpreted, declares, '*We are saved by faith*.'—3. Will either the general tenour of Scripture, or your own conscience, allow you to say that faith is the gift of God in no other or higher sense than riches are?—4. I entirely agree with you, that the children of light walk by the joint light of reason, Scripture, and the Holy Ghost.

"But the word of God appears to you to be manifestly against such an instantaneous giving of faith; because it speaks of growth in grace and faith as owing to the slow methods of instruction."—So do I. But that is not the question. We are speaking not of the *progress*, but of the first *rise* of faith. "It directs the gentle instilling of faith, by long labour and pious industry."—Not the first instilling; and we speak not now of the *continuance* or *increase* of it. "It compares even God's part of the work to the slow produce of vegetables, that while one plants and another waters, it is God all the while who goes on giving the increase."—Very true. But the seed must first be sown before it can increase at all. Therefore all the texts which relate to the subsequent increase, are quite wide of the present question.

Perhaps your thinking "the nature of the thing to be so clearly against me," may arise from your not clearly apprehending it. That you do not, I gather from your own words: "It is the nature of faith to be a full and practical assent to truth."—Surely no. This definition does in no wise express the nature of Christian faith. Christian, saving faith, is a divine conviction of invisible things; a supernatural conviction of the things of God, with a filial confidence in his love. Now a man may have a full assent to the truth of the Bible, (probably attained by the slow steps you mention,) yea, an assent which has some influence on his practice, and yet not have one grain of this faith.

16. I should be glad to know to which writings in particular of the last age you would refer me for a thorough discussion of the Calvinistical points. I want to have those points fully settled; having seen so little yet wrote on the most important of them, with such clearness and strength as one would desire.

17. I think your following objections do not properly come under any of the preceding heads: "Your doctrine of momentaneous illapse, &c, is represented by your adversaries as singular and unscriptural; and that these singularities are your *most beloved* opinions and favourite tenets, *more insisted upon* by you than the general and uncontroverted truths of Christianity: this is their charge."—And so, I doubt, it will be to the end of the world:—for, in spite of all I can say, they *will* represent one *circumstance* of my doctrine (so called) as the main *substance* of it. It nothing avails, that I declare again and again, "Love is the fulfilling of the law." I believe this love is given in a moment. But about this I contend not. Have this love, and it is enough. For this I will contend till my spirit returns to God. Whether I am singular or no, in thinking this love is instantaneously given, this is not my *most beloved opinion*. You greatly wrong me when you advance that charge. Nay, I *love* (strictly speaking) *no opinion* at all. I trample upon opinion, be it right or wrong. I want, I value, I preach, the love of God and man. These are my *favourite tenets* (if you will have the word) *more insisted on* by me, ten times over, both in preaching and writing, than any or all other subjects that ever were in the world.

18. You will observe, I do not say (and who is there that can?) that I have no singular opinion at all. But this I say, that in my general tenour of preaching, I teach nothing (as the substance of religion) more singular than the love of God and man: and it was for preaching this very doctrine (before I preached or knew salvation by faith) that several of the clergy forbade me their pulpits.

"But if it be notorious, that you are frequently insisting on controverted opinions." If it be, even this will not prove the charge, viz. "That those are my *most beloved* opinions, and more insisted upon by me than the uncontroverted truths of Christianity."

"No singularities," is not my answer. But that *no singularities* are my most beloved opinions; that *no singularities* are more, or near so much insisted on by me, as the general uncontroverted truths of Christianity.

19. "Another objection (you say) I have to make to your manner of treating your antagonists. You seem to think you sufficiently answer your adversary, if you put together a number of naked scriptures that sound in your favour. But remember, the question between you and them is, not whether such words are Scripture, but whether they are to be so interpreted."

You surprise me. I take your word; else I should never have imagined you had read over the latter Appeal: so great a part of which is employed in this very thing, in fighting my ground, inch by inch; in proving, not that such words are Scripture, but that they must be interpreted in the manner there set down.

20. One point more remains, which you express in these words: "When your adversaries tax you with differing from the Church, they cannot be supposed to charge you with differing from the Church as it was a little after the reformation, but as it is at this day. And when you profess great deference and veneration for the Church of England, you cannot be supposed to profess it for the Church and its pastors in the year 1545, and not rather in the year 1745. If then by the Church of England be meant (as ought to be meant) the *present Church*, it will be no hard matter to show that your doctrines differ widely from the doctrines of the Church."

Well, how blind was I! I always supposed, till the very hour I read these words, that when I was charged with differing from the Church, I was charged with differing from the articles, or homilies. And for the compilers of these, I can sincerely profess great deference and veneration. But I cannot honestly profess any veneration at all for those pastors of the present age, who solemnly subscribed to those articles and homilies, which they do not believe in their hearts. Nay, I think, unless I differ from these men, (be they bishops, priests, or deacons,) just as widely as they do from those articles and homilies, I am no true Church of England man.

Agreeably to those ancient records, by Christian or justifying faith I always meant, faith preceded by repentance, and accompanied or followed by obedience. So I always preached; so I spoke and wrote. But my warm adversaries, from the very beginning, stopped their ears, cried out, "a heretic, a heretic," and so ran upon me at once.

21. But I let them alone: you are the person I want, and whom I have been seeking for many years. You have understanding to discern, and mildness to repeat (what would otherwise be) unpleasing truths. Smite me friendly and reprove me: it shall be a precious balm; it shall not break my head. I am deeply convinced, that I know nothing yet as I ought to know. Fourteen years ago, I said, (with Mr. Norris,) "I want heat more than light." But now I know not which I want most. Perhaps God will enlighten me by your words. O speak and spare not. At least you will have the thanks and prayers of

Your obedient and affectionate servant,

September 28, 1745.

JOHN WESLEY.

LETTER III.

For the Rev. Mr. John Wesley.

REVEREND SIR,—I heartily thank you for your very kind and very handsome letter; I have yielded it that attention which I think it justly deserves, and am now set down to give you my thoughts upon it. I shall first most readily take notice of those things wherein I stand corrected, and am gone over to you; and next I shall, with some reluctance, proceed to those, in which we first seem misfortunately to differ.

1. First, I stand corrected as to my charging your singularities, "as your most beloved opinions, and *more* insisted on," &c; I retract this comparative and superlative, and hope you will not think I *greatly wrong* you, when I charge you no higher, than with their being your *beloved* opinions *much* insisted on.

2. By saying that "you seem to think you sufficiently answer your adversary, if you put together a number of naked scriptures that sound in your favour," I meant not to say that you do this *always*, but only *sometimes*; it was a fault in me to express this in such general terms, and without some such proper word of restriction.

3. In speaking of the ancient and modern Church of England, I was aware I should lay myself open to some such rebuke as that—*How blind was I!* &c. I was to blame therefore not to explain myself a little. I know that the written creeds, articles, &c, of a church, are commonly spoken of as the whole doctrine of such church; and it would be so, were human language so univocal as to admit of some one written form, liable to one single sense only; but as this is not the case, the doctrine of any church is really its creeds, articles, &c, as generally understood and interpreted by its living pastors, e. g. "The body and blood of Christ are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's supper:" here is a written form of the Church of England, generally understood and interpreted in 1345, as teaching transubstantiation; the very same written words are retained in 1545, but then generally understood and interpreted in a sounder sense. Now should the duke of Norfolk, in 1745, insist that he differed not from the doctrine of the Church of England because he abided by that written form, might I not fairly be allowed to tell him, "My lord, if by the *Church of England* be meant, as ought to be meant, the present Church, it will be no hard matter to show that your doctrines differ widely from the doctrines of the Church." The case will be just the same, though we go no farther back than 1545. If the written articles, &c, were then generally understood and interpreted in the Calvinistical sense; and [in] 1745 are generally understood and interpreted in the Arminian sense; then if Mr. Whitefield will at this time of day expound the 17th article in the old justly exploded sense, you may fairly be allowed to show (as you do) the blasphemous consequence of the old exploded sense, and might justly be allowed to tell him, "Sir, if this be your interpretation, it will be no hard matter to show that your doctrine differs widely from the doctrine of the present Church."

Indeed should you, through either zeal, or anger, go so much farther, as to tax one another with solemnly subscribing to those articles, &c, which you do not believe in your hearts, this would be going much too far; for you do each of you believe the written articles in your hearts, though each of you in a sense very different from the other. These articles of peace admit of this latitude; and the royal authority which enjoins them, forbids the cramping it, and speaks of both parties subscribing to the written words.—The disbelieving your sense, is not disbelieving the article; and therefore, notwithstanding the blasphemous consequences of Mr. Whitefield's sense of the 17th article, you still acknowledge him as a child of God. I hope then the pastors of the present age, bishops, priests, and deacons, for differing from you in the sense of the 13th article, are not to be hinted at as unbelievers in their hearts and children of the devil.

4. Again, I agree with you, that the written word is [now] the whole and sole rule of faith, and that no such implicit faith is due to an apostle or other worker of miracles, as that we should admit any thing for truth contrary to the written word: this, I suppose, is all you mean, by "putting the apostles upon proving their assertions from the written word:" what, from the written word before they had wrote it? No; but your intention must be, that the written word (i. e. the Old and New Testament, as we now have them complete) is such a perfect rule of faith, that though an apostle or an angel from heaven were to teach any thing contrary thereto, and work ever so many miracles in confirmation of his new doctrine, still we ought not to believe him: this is as true, as that God is true, and that he cannot contradict himself. But where there is no such contradiction, these miracles have their weight. Now I supposed you, not as teaching some doctrine manifestly contradicted by Scripture, but only as inferring something from thence, which, others think, cannot fairly be inferred. I am attending to the inferences of these various teachers, and am in some suspense which are the right ones. During this suspense, one of them gives out, that the Spirit of God gives visible attestations to his ministry by miraculous works, (for surely the casting out of devils may be called so, if any thing can.) Now if this shall appear to be no exaggerated account, but a real fact, am I not justified in saying that I will, on account of this attestation, assent to his set of Scripture inferences? In short, sir, you either did, or did not, cast out devils; if you did, I am still ready to be your disciple and follower, all the world over; if you did not, you ought to say

so, and to own your error, in having related a *natural* fact in such high terms as unavoidably convey to the reader the idea of a *miraculous* one.

5. I agree too with you, that it is (generally) a sufficient defence of any way of speaking whatever, that it is Scriptural; but this admits of many restrictions and limitations: if, for instance, you relate a *melancholy person's amendment* in the Scriptural terms of Christ's *miraculous healing demoniacs*, this, the more Scriptural the terms, the more will it be misguiding: if low and common things are told in Scripture phrase, it becomes either cant or burlesque: if obsolete words are used familiarly, (as *earing* for *ploughing*,) the discourse grows unintelligible. If words that have shifted and changed their signification are used, as (*let*, not for *suffer*, but for its contrary *hinder*,) then what is said must appear strange and paradoxical; thus you would make your people start, should you say that all good souls but Christ's are left in hell till the day of judgment: if some of the apostles had a sort of *technical terms* peculiar to the controversies of those days, yet well understood by those to whom they wrote, it would be an odd kind of affectation to be familiarly using those terms, merely because they are Scriptural: St. Paul calls *Christianity* and *Judaism* *faith* and *works*, and sometimes *spirit* and *flesh*; yet if a man should say that *flesh* at present loses ground in *Spain*, and that *spirit* gains ground in *America*, he would but ill defend his singularity by urging that the terms are Scriptural; the case is the same with many others; salvation, justification, reprobation, predestination, and election. It is not therefore the merely being Scriptural that makes terms proper, but we must look back to the occasion of their use; and if the circumstances then and now are alike, then, and not otherwise, we may pronounce their use alike proper.

6. Well: you are willing to look thus back to the times of the apostles and reformers; and having so done, you ask, "Are not the same persuasions as common now as then?" No, by no means. The persuasion then was, that they might commute expiations or penances, and such like external works, *instead* of internal holiness. But does any Church of *England* man maintain any thing like this? Every wise Churchman uses external rites as *the means* of internal holiness; and the most ignorant and unwise among us, use them in no worse way than as *acts of goodness*: but as *commutations in the stead of holiness*, I never heard of one creature among us that professed to use them in so gross a way.

Pray, sir, do you know any people among us so grossly superstitious as to think that devotion might be put upon God *instead* of honesty? That three frauds might be committed for six *paternosters*? Or, that four sacraments might be taken in order to commit eight adulteries? It is true, *our churches* (to speak a sad truth) afford us abundant instances of those who are negligent of *internal holiness*,—yes, of the external rites of holiness likewise; our times therefore are times of *profaneness*, which differ widely from times of *superstition*, and consequently the phraseology which might be proper for the one, must needs be highly improper for the other: so improper, that possibly the misapplied anti-superstition phrases have contributed to spread not only *Antinomianism*, but infidelity too into the bargain.

7. And now that we are upon phraseology, give me leave to observe to you, that the insisting too strongly even on Scripture metaphors, has something in it misguiding to the reader; at least it gives him a claim to your more ready pardon when he mistakes your sense. Thus the hanging so much on faith being the eye, the ear, the finger, the palate, &c. of the soul, inclines a reader to think that you mean something more than mere metaphor; and the vehemence of your style in general (a vehemence rather to be envied than condemned) has yet, as such, a tendency to run, if not the writer, at least the reader into mistakes! Thus when you asserted that faith is the gift of God, which he bestows—*not on such as are fit to be crowned with his blessings, but on the ungodly and unholy, on those who are fit only for everlasting destruction*;—I understand (whether by the fault of the writer or the reader I do not say) that this implied *arbitrarily*: you will pardon me however, that from those warm words I understood you so, till you now explain yourself to mean, that it is *not bestowed without any regard to the fitness or previous qualifications of the recipient*. In like manner, when you teach that the pardon of sins in heaven, or justification, is certified to the sinner on earth by the Holy Ghost, and that this certificate or *testimony* is *as easily discernible from the suggestions of reason or fancy, as light is discernible from darkness*—I understood this to amount to the *infallible* testimony of the Holy Ghost. But, it seems, these phrases do not amount to *infallible, in that sense that none* (by the wrong deductions of reason, or false suggestions of fancy) *believe they have it, who indeed have not*. In what sense then is it thus plainly discernible and infallible? Is it in this sense, that none (by wrong reasoning or false fancy) *who indeed have it, believe they have it not*? No, nor in this sense neither (witness the case of Mrs. Hannah Richardson,

who, for above a year after this attestation of justification, continued almost in despair, fancying she should be damned.) Now, sir, in what sense is that attestation infallible and plainly discernible from fancy, which they who have not may fancy they have? and they who really have may fancy they have it not?

8. As to the experience of pious persons concerning the *progressive* or the *instantaneous* gift of faith, you ask me, (and I assure you without any offence,) *how many truly pious persons I am so intimately acquainted with, as to be able to interrogate them on the subject?* First, I must answer, that the sentiments of many hundreds may be known from their preachings, writings, or conversations, without any interrogation at all. Next, if you lay an emphasis on the word *truly*, I must remind you that neither I nor they pretend to have inspected the justification roll in heaven, or to have received any supernatural or miraculous attestation on that head on earth. If then by "truly pious persons" you mean those who appear to be such to a reasonable Christian charity, I hope I may answer, that I have known *thousands* of such in the way I mention: if you have known your *ten thousands* in the other way, God forbid I should envy your numbers! No: would to God all the Lord's people were known to be pious in some way or other! Yet I cannot help suspecting that the experience of your *tens of thousands*, expressed in cool language, will amount to nothing supernatural or miraculous, indeed to no more than this, that they do remember the day, when hearing the love of God preached in a more impetuous and energetic manner than they ever heard before, they were more affected than they ever were before, so that this was the first time they ever so warmly felt the divine love shed abroad in their hearts, and the first time they so seriously attended to the witness of God's Spirit with their spirit that they are the children of God. Witness of God's Spirit—how? by an audible voice from heaven, or any other supernatural or miraculous inspiration? No; but by his attestation in the Holy Scriptures.—True believers are the children of God—There is the witness of His Spirit. We are now true believers—There is the witness of their spirit.—*Ergo*, we are now the children of God: a conclusion drawn from both the premises in a natural and logical, not a supernatural or miraculous way.

9. As I apprehend much depends on the terms *natural* and *supernatural*, and their proper use, give me leave to enlarge a little on this head. *Natural*, *ordinary*, and *common*, when spoken of God's actions, I take to be entirely synonymous terms. *Supernatural*, *miraculous*, and *uncommon*, are likewise synonymous. Thus, when God, by slow and imperceptible degrees, increases a field of wheat forty, fifty, or a hundred fold, this (though it be truly God's own work, as if he had poured new created seed down from heaven,) we call *natural*, *ordinary*, and *common*. But when the same almighty power does at once, in a visible and perceptible manner, increase five loaves to the satisfying above five thousand hungry people, this (though in reality not a whit more of a difficulty or miracle, if I may so speak, in itself) we call *supernatural*, *miraculous*, and *uncommon*; and the case is the same in *spirituals* as in *temporals*: if God calls a sinner to repentance, faith, and obedience, by the ministry of man, and by his Holy Spirit's imperceptibly disposing the sinner's faculties to receive the call; this is his *natural*, *ordinary*, or *common* way of acting: but if he uses the ministry of a visible angel, or calls with an audible voice, '*Saul, Saul,*' outwardly; or suddenly inspires him inwardly with any immediate testimony from heaven, perceptibly coming from thence, and as easily distinguishable from the suggestions of reason and fancy, as light is distinguishable from darkness; then this is his *supernatural*, *miraculous*, or *uncommon* way.

10. This distinction remembered, let us examine your definition of faith. You condemn mine as defective. But I meant there to speak of faith or belief, as a genus, of which Christian saving faith may be considered as a species: had I confined myself to that species, I might perhaps have defined it,—"*a full practical assent to Christian truths, and an inward conviction of things invisible.*" And this I apprehend would perfectly have coincided with St. Paul's '*evidence of things not seen,*' though not with your "*supernatural conviction of the things of God*;" where does the Scripture say any thing like this, or give the least hint of faith's being a *supernatural* or *miraculous* gift? What, then, *is faith the gift of God, in no higher sense than riches are?* Yes, surely; but in no higher a sense than hope and charity are: nay, of these three, the greatest of these is charity. When I speak of a *full and practical assent*, you may be sure I mean such an assent as has (not barely some influence, but) its *full and proper influence* on practice: now, how a man can have such a full assent to all Christian truths, as is productive of all Christian practice, and yet not have one grain of faith, is, I own, to me quite incomprehensible.

I did not intend to refer you to the polemical or systematical writers of the last

century, but to their immediate successors, who had well concocted and thoroughly digested the former crudities, and who give occasionally, in their writings, such solid and consistent expositions of the former controverted texts, as seem to have been to the satisfaction of most men of learning and piety : insomuch, that I know no divines of the Church of England, from Barrow, Sharp, and Tillotson, down to Smallridge, Clark, and Waterland, and quite to this very day, who have gone back into the old and exploded expositions, except yourselves and Mr. Whitefield ; in which, however, you have not gone such unwarrantable lengths as he.

12. I think I have now touched upon all the points in your letter, except your defence of the *instantaneous gift of faith*, from its beginning, in some one first instant. I know not how to reply to this *pertinently*, without appearing to speak *harshly* ; the best way I know of doing this, is to follow St. Paul's example, and 'to transfer the things to myself in a figure.' Suppose, then, sir, I had asserted, that my friends and I had the *instantaneous gift of tongues* ; and you, on the other hand, had urged, that it was not so with you and your friends. If to this I had replied, that there is always some one first instant when people begin to apply to the learning any language, that therefore it is *instantaneous in its beginning*, and, consequently, all you had said about the slow use of *grammars, lexicons, &c.* related not to its beginning, but to its *progress and increase*, and so was wide of the *present question* : would not this have started you, sir ? And should I not have expected to be told that this was mere quibbling ? Not only *faith and language*, but *every thing else* in this sense is *instantaneous*, except God himself, who never had any first beginning at all.

13. But I have done with your letter, and begin now to repent that I have run out into so many particulars, and that too without any success as to the main point of my former letter ; which was the stating the case between you and your adversaries, to whom you appeared to have given but an evasive answer : to this main point, therefore, we must return again. The Christ-church people gave you the nickname of Methodists. Now the charge is, that the Methodists preach sundry singular and erroneous doctrines ; how many, perhaps is not easy to say ; but for the greater distinctness, we will say three, viz. unconditional predestination, perceptible inspiration, and sinless perfection. Now, once more, sir, hear your adversaries in their own words :—"A few young heads set up their own schemes (viz. of unconditional predestination, &c.) as the great standard of Christianity, and indulge their own notions (viz. those peculiar notions) to such a degree, as to perplex, unhinge, terrify, and distract the minds of multitudes—and all this, by persuading them, that they neither are, nor can be, true Christians but by adhering to their doctrines." Now you ask—*What do you mean by their own schemes—their own notions—their own doctrines ?* It is plain, we mean their distinguishing singularities, their unconditional predestination, their perceptible inspiration, and their sinless perfection.—You go on—"Are they not yours too ?" No, we are sure they are not ! *Are they not the schemes—the notions—the doctrines of Jesus Christ—the great fundamental truths of the gospel ?* No, we think they are not. *Can you deny one of them, without denying the Bible ?* Yes, Mr. Wesley denies one of them, and we deny the other two, and yet neither he nor we deny the Bible. "They persuade (so say your adversaries) multitudes of people, that they cannot be true Christians, but by adhering to their doctrines," (viz. of predestination, inspiration, and perfection.) *Why, who says they can ?* Say you, *Whosoever he be, I will prove him to be an infidel.* Well then, Mr. Wesley says, men may be true Christians without adhering to the first doctrine ; and Dr. Berriman says, they may be so without adhering to the second and third : and yet God forbid that either of those gentlemen should be proved to be infidels ! You proceed—*Do you say, that any man can be a true Christian without loving God and his neighbour ?* Surely no ; but what is this question to the purpose ? or how does this uncontroverted truth tend to clear the Methodists from teaching controverted errors ? Certainly this was *ad populum*, not *ad clerum* ; for he must be a poor clerk indeed, who could not perceive this shifting the question. whether it was an oversight in you, or whether it was an instance of your having not arrived at a more sinless perfection than St. Peter or St. Paul, must be left to the decision of your own breast.

14. Forgive me that I speak thus freely. Whatever error or fault there was in that evasion, I am persuaded you still, in the main, approve of honest and upright dealing. To deal so with you, I must needs tell you that in my opinion you have no other way of answering the charge of your adversaries, but either by showing that the singularities which they charge you with, are fundamental, and of the essence of Christianity ; or else, by frankly owning that you have been guilty of an error in preaching them "with such diligence and zeal, as if the whole of Christianity depended upon them."

15. This is the point between you and me. If we are to reap any benefit from this correspondence, (as God grant we may!) it must be by my convincing you that you insist upon things as necessary to final salvation which are not so; or by your convincing me that I neglect things which are: the former is such an error as affects not final happiness; but the latter excludes from heaven, and drives to hell. My part then may deserve the name of a *friend*, but yours alone that of a *benefactor*. To enable you to be this *benefactor*, is the *primary* end of this debate; your conviction is but the secondary only. I can think of but one way more of letting you into my wrong state in religion, (if such it be,) and that is, by reminding you of two former states of your own.—The first state is that which you mention in the 13th section of the sermon of “The Almost Christian.” Now, sir, let me ask you, if you had died suddenly in that state, is it your opinion that you should have gone to hell? —or to heaven? If you shall say “to hell,” this is running unwittingly into the grossest reprobation scheme: for what can be more so, than to suppose a “person using his utmost diligence to eschew all evil, and to have a conscience void of offence—redeeming the time—buying up every opportunity of doing all good to all men—constantly and carefully using all the public and all the private means of grace—endeavouring after a steady seriousness of behaviour at all times, and in all places, and this in all sincerity, having a real design to serve God—a hearty desire to do his will in all things—to please him by whom he was called to fight the good fight of faith, and to lay hold on eternal life,” and yet consigned over to eternal death, by God’s withholding from him that supernatural gift which he alone can give? If, on the other hand, you are of opinion that you should have gone to heaven, then your singularities are not essentially necessary to final salvation.—The second of your states, upon which I would interrogate you, is, when you were earnestly employed in preaching the love of God and man, before you preached or knew salvation by faith. Here I ask again, If you had died in this state, is it your opinion you should have gone to hell, or to heaven? If you should say “to hell:” then how could Christ say, that on these doctrines hang all the law and the prophets? If, on the other hand, you shall say, “to heaven:” then a man may be saved without knowing your doctrine of salvation by faith.

16. In the 78th page of the Second Appeal, you say, “Wherever I was desired to preach, salvation by faith was my only theme: things were in this posture, when I was told I must preach no more in this and this, and another church; the reason was usually added without reserve, Because you preach such doctrine.” Yet in your letter to me you say—“It was for preaching this very doctrine, the love of God and man, before I preached or knew salvation by faith, that several of the clergy forbade me their pulpits.” This is no way material in our present debate, but I thought it most candid to note what I could not, without your help, tell how to reconcile.

17. I have now done. If I have convinced you of any error, I dare say you will have candour enough to own it. If I have not, then I am persuaded you will have charity enough to take some farther pains to convince me of such vital mistakes, as threaten my perdition, and put a bar to our ever meeting at the resurrection of the just.

November 27, 1745.

LETTER IV.

For Mr. John Smith.

December 30, 1745.

SIR,—I am obliged to you for your speedy and friendly answer; to which I will reply as clearly as I can.

1. If you have leisure to read the last *Appeal*, you will easily judge how much I insist on any *opinions*.

2. In writing *practically*, I seldom argue concerning the meaning of texts: in writing *controversially*, I do.

3. In saying, “I teach the doctrines of the Church of England,” I do, and always did mean, (without concerning myself whether others taught them or no, either this year or before the reformation,) I teach the doctrines which are comprised in those *articles* and *homilies*, to which all the clergy of the *Church of England* solemnly profess to assent, and that in their plain, unforced, grammatical meaning.

As to the 17th article, Mr. Whitefield really believes, that it asserts absolute predestination. Therefore I can also subscribe to it with sincerity. But the case is

quite different with regard to those who subscribe to the 11th and following articles ; which are not ambiguously worded, as the 17th (I suppose, on purpose) was.

4. When I say, "the apostles themselves were to prove their assertions by the *written word*," I mean the *word written before* their time, the law and the prophets ; and so they did. I do not believe the case of Averel Spencer was *natural* : yet, when I kneeled down by her bedside, I had no thought at all of God's then giving any "attestation to my ministry." But I asked of God to deliver an afflicted soul : and he did deliver her. Nevertheless I desire none to receive my words, unless they are confirmed by Scripture and reason. And if they are, they ought to be received, though Averel Spencer had never been born.

5. That we ought not to relate a purely *natural* case in the Scripture terms, that express our Lord's *miracles* :—That *low* and *common* things are generally improper to be told in Scripture phrase :—That Scriptural words which are *obsolete*, or which have *changed* their signification, are not to be used familiarly, as neither those *technical terms* which were *peculiar* to the controversies of those days ;—I can easily apprehend. But I cannot apprehend, that *salvation* or *justification* is a term of this sort : and much less, that *faith* and *works*, or *spirit* and *flesh*, are synonymous terms with *Christianity* and *Judaism*. I know this has frequently been affirmed ; but I do not know that it has been proved.

6. However, you think there is no occasion now for the expressions used in ancient times : since the persuasions, which were common then, are now scarcely to be found. For, "does any Church of England man (you ask) maintain any thing like this, that men may commute external works, *instead of* internal holiness ?" Most surely : I doubt whether every Church of England man in the nation, yea, every *Protestant* (as well as *Papist*) in Europe, who is not deeply sensible that he did so once, does not do so to this day.

I am one, who for twenty years used outward works, not only as "acts of goodness," but as *commutations* (though I did not indeed *profess* this) *instead of* inward holiness. I knew I was not *holy*. But I quieted my conscience, by doing such and such *outward works*. And therefore, I hoped I should go to heaven, even without inward holiness. Nor did I ever speak close to one who had the form of godliness, without the power, but I found he had split on the same rock.

Abundance of people I have likewise known, and many I do know at this day, who "are so grossly superstitious, as to think devotion may be put upon God, instead of honesty," as to fancy, going to church and sacrament will bring them to heaven, though they practise neither justice nor mercy. These are the men who make Christianity vile, who above all others "contribute to the growth of infidelity." On the contrary, the speaking of *faith working by love*, of uniform, outward religion springing from inward, has already been the means of converting several deists, and one atheist (if not more) into real Christians.

7. "Infallible testimony" was *your* word, not *mine* : I never use it. I do not like it. But I did not object to *your* using that phrase, because I would not fight about words. If then the question be repeated, "In what sense is that attestation of the Spirit *infallible* ?" any one has my free leave to answer, In no sense at all. And yet, though I allow that some may fancy they have it when in truth they have it not ; I cannot allow that any fancy they have it not at the time when they really have. I know no instance of this. When they have this faith, they cannot possibly doubt of their having it : although it is very possible, when they have it not, they may doubt whether ever they had it or no. This was Hannah Richardson's case : and it is, more or less, the case with many of the children of God.

That *logical* evidence, that we are the children of God, I do not either exclude or despise. But it is far different from the *direct* witness of the Spirit ; of which I believe St. Paul speaks, in his epistle to the Romans ; and which, I doubt not, is given to many thousand souls who never saw my face. But I spoke only of those I personally knew ; (concerning whom indeed I find my transcriber has made a violent mistake, writing 13,000 instead of 1,300.) I might add, those whom I also have known by *their writings*. But I cannot lay so much stress on *their* evidence. I cannot have so full and certain a knowledge of a writer, as of one I talk with face to face. And therefore, I think the experiences of this kind are not to be compared with those of the other.

One, indeed, of this kind I was reading yesterday, which is exceeding clear and strong. You will easily pardon my transcribing part of his words. They are in St. Austin's Confessions, lib. 7, cap. 10. "*Intravi in intima mea, duce te : et potui, quoniam factus es adjutor meus. Intravi et vidi quacunq[ue] oculo animæ meæ, supra eundem oculum animæ meæ, supra mentem meam, lucem Domini incommutabilem : non hanc*

vulgarem, conspicuam omni carni; nec quasi ex eodem genere grandior erat—non hoc illa erat, sed aliud; aliud valde ab istis omnibus. Nec ita erat supra mentem meam, sicut—Cælum super terram. Sed superior, qui ipsa fecit me. Qui novit veritatem, novit eam. Et qui novit eam, novit aeternitatem. Charitas novit eam.

*“O æterna veritas! Tu es Deus meus! Tibi suspiro die ac nocte. Et cum te primum cognovi, tu assumpsisti me, ut viderem esse, quod viderem.—Et reverberasti infirmitatem aspectus mei, radians in me vehementer; et contremui amore et horrore: et inveni me longe esse a te—et dixi Nunquid nihil est veritas? Et clamasti de longinquo: immo vero; Ego sum, qui sum. Et audivi, sicut auditur in corde, et non erat prorsus unde dubitare. Faciliusque dubitare vivere me, quam non esse veritatem.”**

9. From many such passages as these, which I have occasionally read, as well as from what I have myself seen and known, I am induced to believe, that God's ordinary way of converting sinners to himself, is, by “suddenly inspiring them with an immediate testimony of his love, easily distinguishable from fancy.” I am assured, thus he hath wrought in all I have known, (except, perhaps, three or four persons,) of whom I have reasonable ground to believe that they are really turned from the power of Satan to God.

10. With regard to the definition of faith, if you allow that it is such “an inward conviction of things invisible, as is the gift of God in the same sense, wherein hope and charity are,” I have little to object: or, that it is “such an assent to all Christian truths, as is productive of all Christian practice.” In terming either faith, or hope, or love, *supernatural*, I only mean that they are not the effect of any or all of our *natural* faculties, but are wrought in us (be it swiftly or slowly) by the Spirit of God. But I would rather say faith is “productive of all Christian holiness” than “of all Christian practice:” because men are so exceeding apt to rest in *practice*, so called; I mean an *outside religion*: whereas *true religion* is eminently seated in the heart, renewed in the image of Him that created us.

11. I have not found in any of the writers you mention, a solution of many difficulties that occur on the head of predestination. And to speak without reserve, when I compare the writings of their most celebrated successors, with those of Dr. Barrow and his cotemporaries, I am amazed: the latter seem to be mere children compared with the former writers; and to throw out such frothy, un concocted trifles, such indigested crudities, as a man of learning, fourscore or a hundred years ago, would have been ashamed to set his name to.

12. Concerning the *instantaneous* and the *gradual* work, what I still affirm is this:—That I know hundreds of persons, whose hearts were one moment filled with fear, and sorrow, and pain, and the *next* with peace and joy in believing, yea joy unspeakable, full of glory:—that the same *moment* they experienced such a love of God, and so fervent a good will to all mankind, (attended with power over all sin,) as till then they were wholly unacquainted with:—that nevertheless the peace and love thus sown in their hearts received afterwards a *gradual increase*:—and that to this *subsequent increase*, the Scriptures you mention do manifestly refer. Now I cannot see that there is any *quibbling* at all in this. No: it is a plain, fair answer to the objection.

Neither can I apprehend that I have given an *evasive* answer to any adversary whatever. I am sure I do not desire to do it. For I want us to *understand* each other. The sooner the better. Therefore let us, as you propose, return to the main point.

“The charge is,” your words are, “that the *Methodists* preach sundry singular and erroneous doctrines: in particular three, unconditional predestination, perceptible inspiration, and sinless perfection.—‘They set up,’ say their adversaries, ‘their own schemes and notions as the great standard of Christianity, so as to perplex, un-

* “Under thy guidance and direction, I entered into my inward parts: and I was enabled to enter, because thou wast my Helper. I entered, and saw, with the eye of my soul, (such as it is,) the unchangeable light of the Lord [shining] above this very eye of my soul, and above my mind. I perceived that the light was not of this common kind, which is obvious to all flesh: neither did it appear, as if it was a larger light of the same kind. It was not a light of this description, but of another; a light that differed exceedingly from all these. Nor was it above my mind, in such a manner as the heavens are above the earth: but it was superior, because it made me. He who knows the truth is acquainted with this light; and he who knows it, knows eternity. Charity [or love] knows it.

“O Eternal Truth! Thou art my God. Day and night I sigh after thee! And when I obtained my first knowledge of thee, thou didst take me to see that there was something which I might behold. Thou didst likewise beat back the weakness of my own sight, and didst thyself powerfully shine into me. I trembled with love and with horror; and I found myself at a great distance from thee.—I exclaimed, ‘Is truth a nonentity?’—And thou didst reply from afar, ‘No, indeed! I AM THAT I AM!’—I heard this as we are accustomed to hear in the heart; and there was no ground whatever for doubting. Nay, I could more easily doubt of my existence itself, than that it was not the truth.”

hinge, terrify, and distract the minds of multitudes, by persuading them that they cannot be true Christians but by adhering to their doctrines.' This is the charge ;" now you ask, "What do you mean by *their own* schemes, *their own* notions, *their own* doctrines? It is plain we mean their unconditional predestination, their perceptible inspiration, and their sinless perfection."

The charge then is, "That the *Methodists* preach unconditional predestination, perceptible inspiration, and sinless perfection." But what a charge! Shall John Wesley be indicted for murder, because George Whitefield killed a man? Or shall George Whitefield be charged with felony, because John Wesley broke a house?—How monstrous is this?—How dissonant from all the rules of common sense and common honesty! Let every man bear his own burden. If George Whitefield killed a man, or taught predestination, John Wesley did not: what has this charge to do with him? And if John Wesley broke a house, or preached sinless perfection, let him answer for himself. George Whitefield did neither: why then is his name put into this indictment?

Hence appears the inexcusable injustice of what might otherwise appear a trifle. When I urge a man in this manner, he could have no plea at all, were he not to reply, "Why, they are both *Methodists*." So when he has linked them together by one *nickname*, he may hang either instead of the other!

But sure this will not be allowed by reasonable men. And if not, what have I to do with predestination? Absolutely nothing. Therefore set that aside: yea, and sinless perfection too. "How so? Do not you believe it?" Yes, I do: and in what sense I have shown in the sermon on Christian perfection. And if any man calls it an *error*, till he has answered that, I must say, "Sir, you beg the question." But I preach, perhaps, twenty times, and say no more of this than even a Calvinist would allow. Neither will I enter into any dispute about it, any more than about the *millenium*.

Therefore the *distinguishing doctrines* on which I do insist, in all my writings, and in all my preaching, will lie in a very narrow compass. You sum them all up in perceptible *inspiration*. For this I earnestly contend: and so do all who are called *Methodist preachers*. But be pleased to observe what we mean thereby. We mean that inspiration of God's Holy Spirit, whereby he fills us with righteousness, peace, and joy, with love to him, and to all mankind. And we believe it cannot be, in the nature of things, that a man should be filled with this peace, and joy, and love, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, without perceiving it as clearly as he does the light of the sun.

This is (so far as I understand them) the main doctrine of the *Methodists*. This is the *substance* of what we all preach. And I will still believe none is a *true Christian* till he experiences it; and consequently, "that people, at all hazards, must be convinced of this: yea, though that conviction at first *unhinge* them ever so much, though it should in a manner *distract* them for a season. For it is better that they should be *perplexed* and terrified now, than that they should sleep on and awake in hell."

I do not therefore, I *will* not, *shift the question*; though I know many who desire I should. I know the proposition I have to prove, and I will not move a hair's breadth from it. It is this, "No man can be a *true Christian*, without such an inspiration of the Holy Ghost as fills his heart with peace, and joy, and love: which he who perceives not, has it not." This is the point for which alone I contend. And this I take to be the very foundation of Christianity.

13. The answer, therefore, which you think we *ought* to give, is that [which] we do give to the charge of our adversaries. "Our singularities (if you *will* style them so) are fundamental, and of the essence of Christianity." Therefore we must "preach them with such diligence and zeal, as if the whole of Christianity depended upon them."

14. It would doubtless be wrong to insist thus on these things, if they were "not necessary to final salvation." But we believe they are; unless in the case of invincible ignorance. In this case, *undoubtedly* many thousands are doubtless saved who never heard of these doctrines. And I am inclined to think this was our own case, both at Oxford, and for some time after. Yet I doubt not, but had we been called hence, God would first, by this inspiration of his Spirit have wrought in our hearts that holy love without which none can enter into glory.

15. I was aware of the *seeming* contradiction you mention, at the very time when I wrote the sentence. But it is only a *seeming* one. For it is true, that from May 24, 1738, "Wherever I was desired to preach, *salvation by faith* was my only theme," (i. e. such a love of God and man as produces all inward and outward holiness, and

springs from a conviction wrought in us by the Holy Ghost, of the pardoning love of God :) and that when I was told, "You must preach no more in this church," it was commonly added, "Because you preach such doctrine!" And it is equally true, that "it was for preaching the love of God and man, that *several* of the clergy forbade me their pulpits," before that time, before May 24, before I either preached or knew *salvation by faith*.

16. We are at length come to the real state of the question between the Methodists (so called) and their opponents. "Is there perceptible inspiration, or is there not? Is there such a thing (if we divide the question into its parts) as faith producing peace, and joy, and love, and inward (as well as outward) holiness? Is that faith which is productive of these fruits, wrought in us by the Holy Ghost, or not? And is he in whom they are wrought necessarily *conscious* of them, or is he not?" These are the points on which I am ready to join issue with any serious and candid man. Such I believe you to be. If therefore I knew on which of those you desired my thoughts, I would give you them freely, such as they are: or (if you desire it) on any collateral question. The best light I have I am ready to impart; and am ready to receive farther light from you. My time, indeed, is so short, that I cannot answer your letters so particularly, or so correctly, as I would. But I am persuaded you will excuse many defects, where you believe the design is good. I want to know what, as yet, I know not. May God teach it me by you, or by whom he pleaseth! 'Search me, O Lord, and prove me: try out my reins and my heart. Look well if there be error or wickedness in me; and lead me in the way everlasting!'

January 3d, 1745—6.

LETTER V.

To the Rev. Mr. John Wesley.

REVEREND SIR,—I received the favour both of your book and your letter, for which I had returned my thanks sooner but for the interruption of having been a journey from home.

1. You think the case is quite different with regard to those who subscribe to the 11th and following articles, from the case of those who subscribe to the 17th. Now, I think the case is exactly the same: those articles are equally ambiguous, and I suppose of them, as you do of the 17th, that they were contrived so on purpose, in order to give the greater latitude for both parties to subscribe: that in fact they are ambiguous, is evident from the various interpretations of the commentators on them; and that they fairly admit of some latitude, you show by your practice; for the 15th article has these words:—"All we, the rest, although baptized and born again in Christ, yet offend in many things." Now, though the most *obvious, plain, unforced, grammatical* meaning be, that the most perfect Christians sin in many things, yet this hinders you not from preaching sinless perfection.* You should not then treat others as the children of the devil, for taking the same liberty which you and Mr. Whitefield take, who continue, notwithstanding, the children of God.

2. I would not willingly mistake you in this or any other article; but I must observe to you, that you speak so variously on various occasions, that it is extremely hard to take your right meaning: thus, sometimes you disclaim all *miraculous* powers, and supernatural attestations to your ministry; yet, at other times, God gives you *extraordinary attestations*, and you allow Averel Spencer's case to be *supernatural*: in one paragraph, you allow it lawful for good people to marry; in another, you say *all* should refrain who *can*, and that *all the children of God can*: sometimes perfection is *instantaneous*, and the newly-justified has at once power over *all sin*; at other times, this work is represented as slow, and *gradually increasing*: sometimes no one, *doubting* of faith, can be the child of God: at other times, doubting whether they ever had it or no, is more or less the case with many of the children of God: sometimes the newly-justified is represented as always receiving, in the very moment of his justification, an indubitable attestation of it from the Holy Spirit, as perceptible as the sun at noonday; yet, at other times, the justified person is spoken of as doubting whether she ever had any such *attestation*, for many months after her certain *justification*. Now, in order to soften this last case of Hannah Richardson, you shift the terms, you drop the word *attestation* of which I was speaking, and substitute the word *faith* in its stead; a person may have *faith* to-day, and be an *infidel to-morrow*, but no one

* See page 128.

can receive an *attestation to-day* from some credible and unquestionable authority, and yet *doubt to-morrow whether he had any such attestation*: if the Holy Spirit, the moment a person is justified, certifieth this justification by an *attestation* as plainly discernible from the suggestions of reason and fancy as light is discernible from darkness, then Hannah Richardson could not possibly doubt whether she had had this *attestation* or not, for above a twelvemonth after her *justification*: on the other hand, if Hannah Richardson after the *attestation* of her *justification* doubted whether she ever had such *attestation* or not, then this *attestation* is not such a glaring and manifest sunshine light as you would elsewhere represent it; nor any ways distinguishable from the suggestions of reason or fancy, since they who never had it may fancy they have it, and they who have had it may fancy they had it not.

3. I know not what kind of proof you expect of St. Paul's *technical terms*; I can say for myself, that the proof seems to me convincing even to demonstration, that *justification* was used as technically by the apostle as *Chisidim* was by the Jews, and that *faith* in some places stands for the *whole complex of Christianity*, and works for the *rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic law*: but if the arguments which learned men have used in this matter, seem less convincing to you, you are at liberty to reject their interpretation for any other which will make sense of the apostle's reasoning. This no way affects the main of our debate, and was brought in only obliquely and hypothetically; you had argued for the propriety of using *all* Scripture phrases, upon which I excepted *obsolete* and *technical terms*, upon supposition that there were any such.

4. Whether for twenty years together you used outward works as commutations instead of inward holiness, you are the best and only judge; every one knows what passes in his own mind, and must be allowed to be master of his own experience: allow me then capable of telling what I experience. I was confirmed about the age of fourteen. What childish apprehensions I might have [had] before that time, I cannot well say; but, for about forty years since, I have ever believed that '*without holiness no one shall see the Lord*,' nor did I once, that I know of, entertain so mean an opinion of the Supreme Being as to think he might have any thing else put upon him in the *stead*; neither did I ever, in the whole course of my life, meet with any Protestant, except yourself, that attempted commutations; I have known many Protestants that have leaned too much on the *opus operantis*, but on the *opus operatum* never one: all the *well-instructed* I know, receive the sacrament as a *means of goodness*; all the *ill-instructed*, as an act of goodness; but, as a *commutation instead of goodness*, surely no Protestant ever did but yourself; the most ignorant I ever met with, know better than this. If an unholy and hypocritical communicant is taken in adultery, what is the language of the lowest mob? Do they look on his *worship* as a *mitigation* of his *wickedness*? Do they not all with one mouth declare it an aggravation? Do they say?—"Well, his fault is not so great as another's, for he has been twelve times this year at the sacrament!"—No. The most ignorant wretch in the crowd can say—"What a villain is this to do thus, and yet to go so often to the sacrament!" So far are the most uninstructed Protestants from thinking that outward acts of worship may be commuted instead of chastity and purity! As to myself, I am very far from the state of a sinless perfection; yet with all my faults and infirmities about me, I can truly assert, that I am not sensible of the weakness and wickedness of commutation. But alas! this is only prejudicing you more against me, since you seem disposed to believe that every Protestant in Europe, that is not deeply sensible that he was once thus guilty, is so still to this day.

5. I suppose you lay but little stress on any human authority, and less on so flighty and injudicious an author as St. Austin, who, on whatever subject he wrote, (for instance, whether for or against Pelagianism,) was almost always in extremes; the same impetuosity of temper which made him so profligate a rake whilst a sinner, made him so flighty and rapturous when he became a saint: now, what is to be gathered from the rhetorical *protopopœia* of such a *valdè* man? Only this, that the oratorical flights of devotees would make strange articles put into a creed; almost every error that has crept into the church, has owed its rise more or less to rhetorical heightenings: even transubstantiation itself owes its birth to over-zealous orators too rapturously heightening the devotion of the altar. Yet their flights, like this which you quote of St. Austin, when put into cool language, prove just nothing at all.

6. "By calling *faith*, *hope*, or *love*, *supernatural*, you only mean that they are not the effect of any or all of our natural faculties, but are wrought in us by the Spirit of God." To this I have little to object but the propriety of the language. By terming some of our faculties *natural*, you seem to imply, that we have others *supernatural*, which I think we have not; and by making *faith*, *hope*, and *love*, the effects of God's

Spirit, you seem to suggest that there are *other acts* which we can effect *without the concurrence of the Divine Energy*, which I presume we cannot; we can no more turn ourselves in our bed without his immediate and actual assistance, than we can turn ourselves from a course of wickedness to a course of holiness: instead of setting this matter higher than others, you really set it lower, if you imagine God's aid necessary only in things *spiritual*, and not in things *physical* likewise: that uniform grasp of Providence which naturalists call attraction, is the immediate act of God; and a sparrow can no more fall to the ground, without an actual exertion of the Divine Power, than tongues of fire, the instantaneous gift of languages, illumination, sanctification, &c, can descend from heaven without such power; whatsoever is done in the earth, God doth it himself; yet we are not mere instruments liable only to be acted on, but he hath delegated to us active powers, so that with his concurrence we can become real agents: there is a sense therefore in which we *will* and *act*; and there is a sense too in which God worketh in us both to *will* and to *do*. Our *faculties* (whether you call them *natural* or *supernatural*) are all God's gifts, nor can the meanest be exerted without the assistance of his Spirit.

7. You find men too apt to rest in practice; I find them much more apt to rest in *theory*: there is no *speculation*, how wild or ill-grounded soever, but what the bulk of mankind will more easily give into, than into the uniform *practice* of universal piety; to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this world, seems to many a tedious way of getting to the next. But let an Antinomian teach that a strong belief will carry men to heaven, and thousands shall readily give into this senseless *speculation*: in like manner, how many are there who had rather rely on another's righteousness, than be at the pains of having any of their own! In short, clerical powers, irresistible decrees, confident assurance, or any groundless *theory*, is much oftener and more fatally rested on, than the steady *practice* of a holy and a Christian life.

8. I could not help being a little surprised at the offence which was taken at my charge on the Methodists. When it is said, "Men of such and such a denomination (no matter whether assumed or imposed) hold such or such errors," the meaning is always supposed to be, that those errors are held by *some* or *other* of them, not that *each* error is held by *each*; and I dare say the Quakers will not think you injured them, if you produced three tenets as the tenets of the Quakers, though one were a quotation from Fox, another from Naylor, and a third from Barclay: had I therefore made the charge indiscriminately, there had been nothing so much out of the way in the charge; but that which makes the offence still odder is, that I had *carefully distinguished* your supposed errors from Mr. Whitefield's: so far am I from confounding you together, that I have often wondered a man of your good sense and sound learning should hold any fellowship with so weak and empty a person as Mr. Whitefield. His unconditional predestination I noted as his, and expressly declared *your* denial of it: methinks therefore the declamatory paragraph about murder and housebreaking might have been spared, since I have neither indicted the murderer of housebreaking, nor the housebreaker of murder, but gave distinctly to each his due; to him, unconditional predestination: to you, sinless perfection and perceptible inspiration. As to the former, *you will not enter into any dispute about it, any more than about the millennium*, so our debate will be reduced into the shorter compass.

9. "We are at length come to the real state of the question between the Methodists and their opponents, *Is there perceptible inspiration, or is there not?*" That there is inspiration, or the influence of the Divine Spirit on the human spirit, is agreed by both parties; the whole of the question, therefore, turns upon the perceptibility of this inspiration: the question then is, Does God's Spirit work perceptibility on our spirit by *direct testimony*, (as you elsewhere call it,) by such *perceivable impulses* and *dictates* as are as distinguishable from the suggestions of our own faculties, as light is distinguishable from darkness? (as the Quakers maintain.) Or does he *imperceptibly* influence our minds to goodness, by gently and insensibly assisting our faculties and biasing them aright? Here is the whole of the question. Now let us consider how you attempt to divide this question into its parts. *Is there such a thing as faith producing peace, and joy, and love, &c?* Yes, and producing a general good life into the bargain. *Is that faith which is productive of these fruits wrought in us by the Holy Ghost or no?* Yes, as all other good things are wrought in us. *Is he in whom they (the fruits) are wrought, necessarily conscious of them, (peace, joy, love, &c,) or is he not?* Yes, for he who perceives not joy, has not joy; but what is this to perceptibility of inspiration? You would not venture to shift terms thus in a *physical* dissertation. Suppose we were disputing about *vegetation*; I maintained that it is a work so slow and gentle, as to be altogether imperceptible. You, on the contrary, assert, that it is a work as perceptible as the sun's light at noonday: for, say you, are not these

fruits, these apples, pears, and plums, things plainly perceptible? Yes indeed they are, but not one whit more perceptible than that you have now entirely *shifted* the question. This shifting quite amazes me; because I take you to have too good a head to do it without design, and to have too good a heart to do it with design: so I must leave this in the dark, till you are pleased to give me farther light.

10. The question to be debated then is, not whether the *fruits* of inspiration are things perceptible, but whether the *work* of inspiration itself be so? Whether the work of God's Spirit in us be as easily distinguishable from the working of our own spirit, as light is from darkness? (as you have elsewhere asserted.) If we are in the wrong, confute us by *argumentation*, but not by threatening us with our *awaking in hell*. The profuse throwing about hell and damnation may have its effect on *weak minds*; it may terrify such into hasty and sudden converts; but on men of *reason and religion*, to whom you appeal, it will be apt to have a quite contrary effect: they well know that *that scheme* of religion bids fairest for the *true one*, which breathes the largest and most extensive *Christian charity*. I have no stronger presumption against Popery itself, than its damning all who are not of its persuasion. When Henry IV of France decided in favour of the Popish disputants, because they denied salvation possible out of their pale, which the Protestants had allowed possible out of theirs, he made a conclusion the very reverse of truth and good sense, as if there were *most safety* where there were *least charity*. Yet, by the thunder of their anathemas, they terrify weak minds into a submission to them; and, to minds less weak they soften their uncharitable doctrine, by half-allowing, that other well-meaning Christians may have some chance of salvation in the case of *invincible ignorance*: but even then, it must needs be in their own narrow way of thinking, and by God's working on the hearts of the well-meaning on their deathbeds, that reconciliation to Holy Church, without which none can enter into glory. But these artificial threatenings, I dare say, have no other effect on you, or any other man of sense, than to move your pity.

11. If then we may expect most *truth* where there is most charity, the presumption will be in our favour, till you shall clearly prove the other side of the question in debate, for we by no means exclude you from heaven, even upon supposition that you do hold some wrong and enthusiastical notions: I dare say you mean no harm; yet suffer me to say frankly, I think you unwittingly do a great deal. Cartwright and the old Puritans I believe meant no harm; yet what a scene of disorder did their lectures produce! Strict order once broken, confusion rushes in like a torrent at a trifling breach. You find yourself every day going farther and farther from the orderly paths; you are now come to approve of lay preachers: well, if they preach the gospel of peace, where is the harm? But what if, order once broke, unsent persons take upon them to preach all sorts of error, discord, and confusion? "God may send," say you, "by whom he pleases:" and outward mission and order thus once set aside, the devil will send his emissaries fast enough. We are not ignorant of his devices. Your zeal puts you upon preaching in season and out of season; his cunning makes use of your honest zeal to his dishonest and diabolical purposes: he well knows you do him more service by breach of order, than ever you can do him disservice by all your laborious industry. I am not making conjectures of what may happen, but relating to you mischiefs which actually have happened; for (not to mention the shameful disorders you have undesignedly given occasion to at Wednesday, Darlaston, Walsal, &c.) in countries which you have not much frequented, there have appeared preachers, teaching the grossest *Antinomianism* on heaths and commons; these were hardly of your sending, yet have they personated being your disciples, by praying for you and your brother by name: others have come preaching in the streets against *prelacy*, and denouncing the bitterest woes and curses against all *bishops, priests, and deacons*; others have made as free with the lay ministry as these have with the *clerical*; and had not the rebels been driven back, we should have had thousands (it is said) pretending a mission from God to preach against the *wickedness of the great*. Thus, order once ever so little set aside, a door is opened to the tempter to drive in his legion of monstrous errors and wickedness, and throw us back into all the confusion of the last century, into the freakishness of enthusiasm, sedition, murder, and treason.

12. I know that you abhor these things: and the devil knows it too: he will therefore no more tempt you to these things, than he would tempt you to turn a *rake*, or a *stage-player*; but if he tempts you *through an excess of zeal to break in upon order*, he does his work as well. It was past his skill to make Tertullian a *profligate*, but he found the means to make him a *Montanist*. The son of a Wesley and an Annesley is in no danger of *lukewarmness*, but ought to take great care on the side of *impetuosity and zeal*. The tempter will never make you a *saunterer* or a *sluggard*, but if you

are not upon your guard, may possibly, before you are aware, make you a Quaker. Nay, *perceptible inspiration* admitted, you ought to be such; for I will be bold to say, that, allowing that one false principle, Mr. Barclay's is a very consistent and coherent system.

13. In short, sir, you must either defend *that* system, or renounce *this* principle; or if your *perceptible inspiration* any way differs from *that of the Quakers*, you will be so kind as to show us wherein. I have no more to add, but that I pray God to restrain your zeal if it be *excessive*; and to quicken mine if it be *defective*, as I have too much reason to fear it is.

February 26, 1745—6.

LETTER VI.

For Mr. John Smith.

London, June 25th, 1746.

SIR,—At length I have the opportunity which I have long desired, of answering the letter you favoured me with some time since. O that God may still give us to bear with each other, and to speak (what we believe is) the truth in love!

1. I detest all zeal which is any other than the flame of love. Yet, I find it is not easy to avoid it. It is not easy (at least to me) to be *always zealously affected in a good thing*, without being sometimes so affected in things of an *indifferent* nature. Nor do I find it always easy to proportion my zeal to the importance of the occasion; and to temper it duly with prudence, according to the various and complicated circumstances that occur. I sincerely thank you for endeavouring to assist me herein, to guard me from running into excess. I am always in danger of this, and yet I daily experience a far greater danger of the other extreme. To this day, I have abundantly more temptation to *lukewarmness* than to *impetuosity*: to be a *saunterer*—*inter sylvas academicas*, a philosophical *sluggard*, than an itinerant preacher. And, in fact, what I now do is so exceedingly little, compared with what I am convinced I ought to do, that I am often ashamed before God, and know not how to lift up mine eyes to the height of heaven!

2. But may not *love* itself constrain us to lay before men *the terrors of the Lord*? And is it not better that sinners “should be terrified now, than that they should sleep on and awake in hell?” I have known exceeding happy effects of this, even upon men of strong understanding; yet I agree with you, that there is little good to be done by “the profuse throwing about hell and damnation;” and the best way of deciding the points in question with us, is cool and friendly *argumentation*.

I agree too,—“That scheme of religion bids fairest for the true, which breathes the most extensive charity.” Touching the charity due to those who are in error, I suppose we both likewise agree, that really invincible ignorance never did, nor ever shall exclude any man from heaven. And hence, I doubt not, but God will receive thousands of those who differ from me, even where I hold the truth. But still, I cannot believe he will receive any man into glory (I speak of those under the Christian dispensation) “without such an inspiration of the Holy Ghost, as fills his heart with peace, and joy, and love.”

3. In this Mr. Whitefield and I agree; but in other points we widely differ. And therefore, I still apprehend, it is inexcusably unjust to link us together whether we will or no. For by this means each is constrained to bear not only his own, but another's burden. Accordingly, I have been accused a hundred times of holding unconditional predestination. And no wonder: for wherever this charge is advanced, “The Methodists preach sundry erroneous doctrines; in particular three, unconditional predestination, perceptible inspiration, and sinless perfection,” the bulk of mankind will naturally suppose that the *Methodists in general* hold these three doctrines. It will follow, that if any of these afterwards hear “Mr. Wesley is a Methodist,” he will conclude, “then he preaches unconditional predestination, perceptible inspiration, and sinless perfection.” And thus one man is made accountable (by others, if not by you,) for all the errors and faults of another.

4. The case of many who subscribe to the 11th and following articles, I cannot yet think, is exactly the same with the case of Mr. Whitefield and me subscribing the 17th. For each of us can truly say, “I subscribe this article in that which I believe from my heart is its *plain grammatical meaning*.” Twenty years ago I subscribed the

15th article likewise, in its plain, unforced, grammatical meaning. And whatever I do not now believe in this sense, I will on no terms subscribe at all.

I speak variously, doubtless, on various occasions, but I hope not inconsistently. Concerning the seeming inconsistency which you mention, permit me to observe briefly, 1. That I have seen many things which I believe were *miraculous* : yet I desire none to believe my words any farther than they are confirmed by Scripture and reason. And thus far I *disclaim miracles*.—2. That I believe he that *marrieth doth well* ; but he that doth not (being a believer) *doth better*. However, I have doubts concerning the tract on this head, which I have not yet leisure to weigh thoroughly :—3. That a *newly-justified person* has at once, in that hour, power over all sin : and finds from that hour the work of God in his soul *slowly and gradually increasing* :—And lastly, that many, who *while* they have faith, cannot doubt, do *afterwards* doubt whether they ever had it or no. Yea, many receive from the Holy Ghost an *attestation* of their acceptance, as *perceptible* as the sun at noonday ; and yet those same persons, at other times, doubt whether they ever had any such *attestation* : nay, perhaps, more than doubt, perhaps wholly deny all that God has ever done for their souls : in as much as in *this hour and power of darkness* they cannot believe they ever saw light.

6. I think St. Austin's description of his own case (whether it prove any thing more or less) greatly illustrates that light, that assurance of faith, whereof we are now speaking. He does not appear, in writing *this confession* to God, to have had any adversary in view : nor to use any *rhetorical heightening* at all ; but to express the naked experience of his heart, and that in as plain unmetaphorical words as the nature of the thing would bear.

7. I believe firmly, and that in the most literal sense, that *without God we can do nothing* ; that we cannot think, or speak, or move a hand or an eye, without the *concurrence of the Divine Energy* : and that all our natural faculties are God's gift, nor can the meanest be exerted without the assistance of his Spirit. What then do I mean by saying, "That faith, hope, and love, are not the effect of any, or all our natural faculties?" I mean this, that supposing a man to be now void of faith, and hope, and love, he cannot effect any degree of them in himself, by any possible exertion of his understanding, and of any or all his other natural faculties, though he should enjoy them in the utmost perfection. A distinct power from God, not implied in any of these, is indispensably necessary, before it is possible he should arrive at the very lowest degree of Christian faith, or hope, or love. In order to his having any of these (which, on this very consideration, I suppose St. Paul terms the 'fruits of the Spirit,') he must be created anew, thoroughly and inwardly changed by the operation of the Spirit of God, by a power equivalent to that which raises the dead, and which calls the things which are not as though they were.

8. The 'living soberly, righteously, and godly' in this present world, or the *uniform practice of universal piety*, presupposes some degree of these *fruits of the Spirit*, nor can possibly subsist without them. I never said men were too apt to rest on *this practice*. But I still say, I know abundance of men who quiet their conscience without either faith or love by the practice of a few *outward works*. And this keeps them as easy and contented, though they are without hope and without God in the world, as either the doctrine of *irresistible decrees* could do, or any *theory whatsoever*.

Now what is this but *using outward works as commutations for inward holiness* ? For, 1. These men love not *inward holiness* : they love the world ; they love money ; they love pleasure, or praise. Therefore, the love of God is not in them ; nor consequently, the Christian love of their neighbour. Yet, 2. They are in no wise convinced that they are in the broad way which leads to destruction. They sleep on and take their rest. They say 'Peace, peace,' to their soul, though there is no peace. But on what pretence ? Why, on this very ground, because, 3. They do such and such outward works. They go to church, and perhaps to the Lord's table. They use (in some sort) private prayer. They give alms, and therefore they imagine themselves to be in the high road to heaven. Though they have not 'the mind that was in Christ,' yet they doubt not but all is safe, *because they do thus and thus, because their lives are not as other men's are*. This is what I mean by *using outward works as commutations for inward holiness*. I find more and more instances every day of this miserable self-deceit. The thing is plain and clear. But if you dislike this phrase, we will drop it and use another.

Nearly allied to this is the "gross superstition of those, who think to put devotion upon God, instead of honesty." I mean, who practise neither justice nor mercy, and yet hope to go to heaven, because they go to church and sacrament. Can you

find no such men in the Church of England? I find them in every street. Nine times in ten, when I have told a tradesman, "You have cheated me, sold me this for more than it is worth," (which I think is a breach both of justice and mercy)—"Are you a Christian?—Do you hope to go to heaven?" His answer, if he deigned any answer at all, has been to this effect: "As good a Christian as yourself! 'Go to heaven?' Yes, sure! *for I keep my church*, as well as any man."

Now, what can be plainer, than that this man *keeps his church*, not only as an act of goodness, but as a *commutation instead of goodness*, as something which he hopes will do as well, will bring him to heaven, without either justice or mercy? Perhaps, indeed, if he fell into adultery or murder, it might awaken him out of his dream, and convince him (as well as his neighbours) that this *worship* is not a *mitigation*, but an *aggravation* of his wickedness. But nothing short of this will. In spite of all your reasoning and mine, he will persist in thinking himself a good Christian: and that if his brother have aught against him, yet all will be well so he do but constantly bring his gift to the altar.

I entreat you, sir, to make the experiment yourself; to talk freely with any that come in your way. And you will surely find, it is the very thing which almost destroys the (so called) Christian world. Every nominal Christian has some bit or scrap of *outward religion*, either negative or positive: either he *does not do* in some respect like other men, or he *does* something more than they. And by this, however freely he may condemn others, he takes care to excuse himself; and stifles whatever convictions he might otherwise have, '*that the wrath of God abideth on him.*'

After a few impartial inquiries of this kind, I am persuaded you will not say, "As a *commutation*, surely no Protestant ever did [receive the Sacrament] but yourself." Is there not something wrong in these words on another account? As well as in those, "You should not treat others as the children of the devil, for taking the same liberty which you and Mr. Whitefield take, who continue, notwithstanding, to be the children of God!" Is there not in both these expressions (and perhaps in some others, which are scattered up and down in your letters) something too keen? something that borders too much upon sarcasm? upon tartness, if not bitterness? Does not any thing of this sort, either make the mind sore, or harden it against conviction? Does it not make us less able to bear plainness of speech? or, at least, less ready to improve by it? Give me leave to add one word more before I proceed. I cannot but be jealous over you. I fear you do not know, near so well as you suppose, even what passes in your own mind. I question not but you believe, that *without inward holiness* no man shall see the Lord. But are you sure you never once entertained a thought that something else might be put upon him *in the stead*? Perhaps not grossly, not if it appeared just in that shape: no, nor have I, for these twenty years. But I find the same thought, to this day, stealing in continually under a thousand different forms. I find a continual danger of stopping short of a full renewal in the image of God; a continual propensity to *rest* in whatever comes between: to put some *work* or other that I do, even for God's sake, or some *gift* that I receive, *in the stead* of that great work of God, '*the renewal of my soul after his likeness in righteousness and true holiness.*'

9. One point of doctrine remains. "Is there any such thing as perceptible inspiration or not?" I asserted there is: but at the same time subjoined, "Be pleased to observe what we mean thereby,—we mean, that inspiration of God's Holy Spirit, whereby he fills us [every true believer] with righteousness, and peace, and joy, with love to him, and all mankind. And we believe it cannot be, in the nature of things, that a man should be filled with this peace, and joy, and love, and by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, without *perceiving* it as clearly as he does the light of the sun."

You reply, "You have now entirely shifted the question."—I think not. You objected, "That I held perceptible inspiration." I answered, "I do;" but observe in what sense—(otherwise I must recall my concession.) I hold, God *inspires* every Christian with peace, joy, and love, which are all *perceptible*. You reply, "The question is, not whether the *fruits* of inspiration are *perceptible*, but whether the *work* of inspiration itself be so." This was not my question; nor did I till now understand it was yours. If I had, I should have returned a different answer, as I have elsewhere done already.

When one warmly objected, near two years ago, "All reasonable Christians believe, that the Holy Spirit works his graces in us in an imperceptible manner;" my answer was, "You are here disproving, as you suppose, a proposition of mine. But are you sure you understand it? By the *operations* [*inspirations* or *workings*] of the Spirit, I do not mean the *manner* in which he operates; but the *graces* which he operates [*inspires* or *works*] in a Christian."

If you ask, But do not you hold, "That Christian faith implies a direct, *perceptible* testimony of the Spirit, as distinguishable from the suggestion of fancy as light is distinguishable from darkness, (whereas we suppose he *imperceptibly* influences our minds,)" I answer, I do hold this. I suppose that every Christian believer, over and above that imperceptible influence, hath a direct perceptible testimony of the Spirit that he is a child of God.

As I have little time, I must beg you to read and consider what I have already spoken upon this subject, in the first part of the Farther Appeal, at the 38th and following pages: and then to let me know, What kind of proof it is which you expect in a question of this nature, over and above that of Scripture, as interpreted by the writers of the earliest Christian church.

I have not studied the writings of the Quakers enough (having read few of them besides Robert Barclay) to say precisely what they mean by *perceptible inspiration*, and whether their account of it be right or wrong. And I am not curious to know; since between me and them there is a great gulf fixed. The sacraments of baptism, and the Lord's supper, keep us at a wide distance from each other. Insomuch that, according to the view of things I have now, I should as soon commence deist as Quaker.

I would just add, that I regard even faith itself, not as an *end*, but a *means* only. The end of the commandment is love, of every command, of the whole Christian dispensation. Let this love be attained, by whatever means, and I am content; I desire no more. All is well, if we love the Lord our God with all our heart, and our neighbour as ourselves.

10. I am aware of one inconvenience in answering what you say touching the *consequences* of my preaching. It will oblige me to speak what will try your temper beyond any thing I have said yet. I could indeed avoid this by standing on my guard, and speaking with great reserve. But had you not rather that I should deal frankly with you, and tell you just what is in my heart?

I am the more inclined to do this, because the question before us is of so deep importance. Insomuch that were I convinced you had decided it right, there would be an end at once of my preaching. And it lies in a small compass, as you say, "I am not making conjectures of what may happen, but relating mischiefs which actually have happened." These then, "the mischiefs which have actually happened," let us consider as calmly as possible.

But first we may set aside the "thousands whom (it is said) we should have had pretending a mission from God, to preach against the *wickedness* of the great, had not the rebels been driven back." The rebels, blessed be God, are driven back.* So that mischief has not *actually happened*. We may waive also "the legion of monstrous errors and wickedness, the sedition, murder and treason of the last century:" seeing, whatever may be hereafter, it is certain these "mischiefs also have not yet *actually happened*." Nor have I any thing to do with that poor madman, (I never heard of any more than one such) who came some time since, "preaching in London streets against prelacy" and Methodism; and "denouncing curses against George Whitefield, John Wesley, and all bishops, priests, and deacons."

I was more nearly concerned in what has *actually happened*, at *Wednesbury*, *Darlaston*, and *Walsal*. And these were "shameful disorders" indeed! Publish them not in Gath or Askelon! Concerning the *occasion* of which I may speak more freely to you than it was proper to do to the public.

When I preached at *Wednesbury* first, Mr. Egginton (the vicar) invited me to his house, and told me, "That the oftener I came, the welcomer I should be; for I had done much good there already, and he doubted not but I should do much more." But the next year I found him another man. He had not only heard a vehement visitation charge, but had been informed, "That we had publicly preached against drunkards, which must have been designed for satire on him." From this time we found more and more effects of his unwearied labours, public and private, in stirring up the people on every side, "to drive these fellows out of the country." One of his sermons I heard with my own ears. I pray God I may never hear such another! The minister of *Darlaston*, and the curate of *Walsal*, trod in the same steps. And these were they who (not *undesignedly*) occasioned all the disorders which followed there.

You add, "In countries which you have not much frequented, there have appeared Antinomian preachers, personating your disciples." These have appeared most in countries I never frequented at all, as in the west of *Lancashire*, in *Dorsetshire*, and

* This, and a similar passage, (p. 297.) refer to the complete discomfiture of the Pretender's forces in 1745.

in Ireland. When I came they disappeared, and were seen no more there; at least, not "personating our disciples." And yet, by all I can learn, even these poor wretches have done as little harm as good. I cannot learn that they have destroyed one soul that was before truly seeking salvation. But you think I myself "do a great deal of harm, by breaking and setting aside order. For, order once ever so little set aside, confusion rushes in like a torrent."

What do you mean by *order*? A plan of church discipline? What plan? The Scriptural? the primitive? or our own? It is in the last sense of the word that I have been generally charged with *breaking or setting aside order*; i. e. the rules of our own Church, both by preaching in the fields, and by using extemporary prayer.

I have often replied, 1. It were better for me to die than not to preach the gospel of Christ: yea, and in the fields, either where I may not preach in the church, or where the church will not contain the congregation: 2. That I use the service of the Church every Lord's day; and it has never yet appeared to me that any rule of the Church forbids my using extemporary prayer on other occasions.

But methinks I would go deeper. I would inquire, What is the end of all *ecclesiastical order*? Is it not to bring souls from the power of Satan to God? and to build them up in his fear and love? *Order* then is so far valuable as it answers these ends; and if it answers them not, it is nothing worth. Now I would fain know where *his order* answered these ends? Not in any place where I have been; not among the tinnors in Cornwall, the keelmen at Newcastle, the colliers in Kingswood or Staffordshire: not among the drunkards, swearers, sabbath-breakers of Moorfields, or the harlots of Drury Lane. They could not be built up in the fear and love of God while they were open, barefaced servants of the devil: and such they continued, notwithstanding the most *orderly* preaching both in St. Luke's and St. Giles's church. One reason whereof was, they never came near the church; nor had any desire or design so to do, till by what you term *breach of order*, they were brought to fear God, to love him and keep his commandments.

It was not therefore so much the *want of order*, as of the knowledge and love of God, which kept those poor souls for so many years in open bondage to a hard master. And indeed wherever the knowledge and love of God are, *true order* will not be wanting. But the most *apostolical order*, where these are not, is less than nothing and vanity.

But you say, "Strict order once set aside, confusion rushes in like a torrent." It has been so far from rushing in where we have preached most, that the very reverse is true. Surely never was "confusion worse confounded," than [it] was a few years since in the forest of Kingswood. But how has it been since the word of God was preached there, even in this *disorderly* manner?

Confusion heard his voice! and wild uproar
Stood ruled; and order from disorder sprung.

O sir, be not carried away with the torrent! the clamour either of the great vulgar, or the small! Re-examine your very first notions of these things. And then review that sentence, "The devil makes use of your honest zeal to his dishonest and diabolical purposes. He well knows you do him more service by *breach of order*, than disservice by all your laborious industry."—I hope not—first, because I bring the very *order* you contend for into places where it never was before. And, 2. Because I bring (yet not I, but the grace of God) that knowledge and love of God also, in conjunction wherewith *order* is of great price,—but, without them, a worthless shadow.

I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified by faith that is in him.

June 25, 1746.

LETTER VII.

To the Rev. Mr. John Wesley.

REVEREND SIR,—I am obliged to you for the letter of the 25th of June. But before I answer any other part, I must apologize for former tartness or bitterness. I was not aware of any excess of this sort. So far am I from entertaining any bitterness against you, that (as I at first told you) whatever errors in doctrine, mistakes in conduct, or excess in zeal, I may apprehend to be in you, still I cannot but love and

esteem you for the goodness of your intention. Yet something of tartness of expression is possible, and perhaps unavoidable, in a long debate: for how can the *absurdum* or *ridiculum* of an argument be exposed without a little smartness of reply? I have noted somewhat of this sort in you, but always with applause: if any thing then of that sort escapes me, let me crave your patience and forgiveness.

Hanc veniam petimusque damusque vicissim.*

2. Every one (whether an Antinomian or otherwise) who holds not the Popish doctrine of merit, may as well subscribe the 11th article in its plain grammatical meaning, as Mr. Whitefield and you can the 17th. The case therefore of the subscribers to the one or to the other, must continue to appear to me to be exactly the same, till you are pleased to say wherein they differ.

3. I had warned you against an impetuous zeal; but it seems that is not your weak side; your chief danger is from lukewarmness. The overdone humility in the first paragraph of your last letter, may serve to convince you of the contrary, if compared with paragraphs 93 and 94 of the Earnest Appeal: the comparison I am persuaded will show you, that whatever side of the question is uppermost in your mind, *that* you are apt to push with such impetuosity and excess, as unavoidably occasions the appearance of great variety (not to say inconsistency) of sentiment.

4. Thus you claim and you disclaim miracles: You claim them as having seen many miraculous attestations to your ministry. How then do you disclaim them? As "desiring none to believe your words any farther than they are confirmed by Scripture and reason." Very modest indeed! For might not St. Peter and St. Paul disclaim miracles on the same account? 2. As to the inconsistency I noted about marriage, if I take you right, you have still some doubt, and are not at leisure yet to permit or forbid to marry. 3. "The newly justified has at *once*, in that hour, power over all sin, and finds from that hour the work of God in the soul, *slowly and gradually* increasing."—What, till he has power over more than all sin? 4. But surely the tip-top of all inconsistencies is what follows, as explained even in your own way: "Many receive from the Holy Ghost an attestation of their acceptance, as perceptible as the sun at noonday, and yet these same persons, at other times, doubt or deny that they ever had such attestation." You have elsewhere asserted, that men may fancy they have this attestation when they have it not; you have now asserted, that they may fancy they never had such attestation when they really have had it. Can you find any words in language that shall assert more strongly, that this is the work of fancy, and not the work of God? A sick man who fancies to-day that he has swallowed a cobbler, may to-morrow fancy that he never did any such thing; but he who to-day really swallows a single pea, cannot possibly to-morrow (if he continue sound in his mind and memory) doubt or deny this matter of fact; since what was a matter of fact yesterday, will continue a matter of fact to all eternity. It is in vain to have recourse to the *power of darkness*: no one can in body or mind be darker than stone blind: now he that is stone blind to-day, cannot possibly doubt or deny that he saw the sun at noon yesterday, unless his memory and understanding be destroyed; and then he is not under the *power of darkness*, but the power of madness; and a pious man who should then suffer himself to be amused by his experiences and reveries, would be in some danger of being soon confined in the same apartment.

5. In the manner in which you first spoke of commutations, I thought I knew none so guilty; in the way in which you now explain yourself, I have reason to think I know none innocent. By *partial* and *commuting* I meant two different things. But if you will say that partial religion is a kind of commuting, as exchanging a part for the whole, then as the dispute will be entirely verbal I shall have no more to say on that head. God knows, we all offer him too small a part of duty and holiness! The highest degrees stand in need of his mercy, of which yet the lower degrees (for there are many mansions) need not through Christ despair.

6. Is there any such thing as perceptible inspiration, or not? This one point of doctrine, say you, still remains to be debated; but if this one point, like all the other points, be quite distinguished away, there will remain no longer room for debate, but only for amazement, that such sort of language should constantly be used, as all mankind must unavoidably understand in one sense, till distinguished into a quite different one. I appeal to all your readers, be they friends or adversaries, whether they did not understand you to teach an inspiration, perceptible in its *working* as well as in its *fruits* and *effects*. Nay, sir, do not your disciples commonly understand you thus? Nay farther, do you not intend they should understand you thus? Friends

* "Such a liberty we mutually ask and obtain of each other."

that can receive it, may receive it: and as for opponents, there are distinctions ready.

7. But what you distinguish away in one paragraph, you reclaim again in the next, maintaining "That every Christian believer, over and above the imperceptible influence, hath a direct perceptible testimony of the Spirit." And for the proof of this I am referred to the 35th page of the Farther Appeal. I have again carefully read from that page to the 73d; the dispute there was about the ordinary and extraordinary operations of the Holy Ghost. But of the perceptibility of the ordinary operations, as directly felt to be worked by him, there is not a word said, neither there, nor, that I know of, in any one place in the Bible. What proof is it then which I expect? Much better than the bare assertion of weak or wicked Richardsons or Spencers, who, hurried suddenly from the purgatory of despondency to the paradise of presumption, now fancy themselves to have attestations as perceptible as the sun at noon; then sunk back into the distraction of despondency, frankly own they never had any such attestation, and that it was all a mere fancy: a demonstration that it was a mere fancy, since a fact will continue a fact in spite of fate, and must be unavoidably remembered as such, by every mind undisturbed through lunacy or idiotism.

8. In short, if you will not suffer this direct perceptibility to be called enthusiasm, you must at least allow it to be called Quakerism, till you show wherein it differs from that. The gulf you mention is not so great as you imagine. The two sacraments are means of perfection: one who fancies himself to have obtained the end, may soon come to look on the means as superfluous. Touching them is now touching the apple of your eye; so once was touching regular ordination and appointment of preachers: yet you can now bear that touch without winking. But regular orders once set aside, what a door do you open to error and discord!

9. Will you ask me again what I mean by order? Was it not manifest that I meant to speak against lay-preaching, and in favour of regular ordination? How then could you give so strange an answer—"I bring the very order you contend for, into places where it never was before." Is this true in fact? Do you bring in the ministry of regularly ordained preachers, where before the people were used to the preaching of lay-brethren? That was the order I was contending for, the breach of which, I endeavoured to show you, would be attended with very bad consequences, some of which have already *actually happened*, and others *probably* (nay, upon any factions joining, almost *certainly*) would happen. You seem to make light of the ill consequences which have already actually happened, as if a number of unsent persons, going about the kingdom, and preaching the worst of heresies, were a mere trifle "since the poor wretches have done as little harm as good, and have not destroyed one soul." That is more than you know; but I hope it may be so, since the saving, or destroying souls depends not on these, or any poor wretches whatever. But leaving salvation to the Saviour, can you deny that this is doing an infinite deal of harm? Yet this is nothing compared to the mischief which must unavoidably ensue, when any state faction shall think fit to join the irregulars, as the Prince of Orange's faction did the Calvinists in Holland, and the republicans did the Puritans here in England, and the late rebels did the Cameronians in Scotland. If unsent well meaning laymen may preach out their zeal, do you not see, that upon the first opportunity which offers, unsent ill meaning laymen will spread their sedition like wildfire? Cartwright's irregularities did not extend so far as to the approving lay-preaching, and yet his irregularities and innovations, in the course of a century, did more harm than all the labours of his life ever did good. It is true, with all his irregularities, he was a better man than regular sluggards, drunken vicars, of Wednesbury, or persecuting parsons of Darlaston. Such regulars do no good and some harm, whilst the irregulars do some good but more harm. The very irregularity of their impetuous zeal awakens some to seriousness; but at the same time, it opens a door in the long run, to the hurt of many more; and if we cast up the account at one hundred years end, we shall find the loss exceed the profit. When Cartwright was hugging himself for his many converts to piety, he would have taken it ill to be told that he was doing the devil more service, by breach of order, than disservice, by all his laborious industry; and yet, for all that, could he have looked out of his grave, about the middle of the last century, he would have found that friendly admonition was literally true. And whoever should be suffered to look out of his grave, the middle of next century, will find, I believe, that the orderly preaching at St. Luke's and St. Giles's church, (how much soever it may be sneered at now,) has done more good, and abundance less harm, than the disorderly preaching at Kennington and Moorfields, assisted elsewhere by the still more irregular preaching of lay brethren. This is not

mere random conjecture, but a plain pointing out what must happen, from what has ever happened already; and I defy you to produce one irregular departure of good men from the orderly paths, through zeal, which has not, sooner or later, been improved by the devil into an occasion of much mischief; such mischiefs as the rebellion and horrid crimes of the Puritans in England, and the detestable freaks of the Anabaptists in Germany.*

10. I am not conscious to myself of being biassed by the clamours of the great vulgar or the small: as numbers have no influence on me, so neither has novelty; but I endeavour to seek for truth, wherever it may be found: but since you call upon me to re-examine my first notions of these things, I will recapitulate the whole affair:—A few years ago I had occasion to be in the west of England; there I first heard that you had made much impression on many people: the fact was allowed to be notorious, and I thought it worthy of great attention. My reason was this: either this gentleman preaches some more awakening doctrines than other ministers, or the Holy Ghost vouchsafes him such supernatural and miraculous blessing and attestation as he now-a-days grants not to others; or else God has at least given him such a natural knack of persuasion as is very rare and uncommon. One of these three, I thought, must of necessity be the case, and I judged it well worth a serious inquiry which: upon this I read your Appeals, and such other papers as I could get, and when I had carefully noted what your singular doctrines were, I resolved to write to you, that either you might convince me of their importance, or that I might convince you of their impropriety. The issue was, you distinguished away all that sounded peculiar, and pleaded that you maintained no singular doctrines at all. The case was the same as to miraculous, or supernatural attestation; you had spoken of this in all the strong language of a miracle-working apostle; but when this came to be explained, all this warm solemn language amounted to no more, than that sinners, upon becoming penitents, sometimes *fancy themselves* to have manifest attestations of acceptance, and sometimes fall back into despondency, owning (as they could not do had it been real matter of fact) that it was all a mere fancy and delusion. Thus, as despondency or presumption prevails on weak minds, the fancy varies: whereas a fact is a thing invariable, and if I really had an attestation yesterday from the Holy Ghost, that my sins were all forgiven, then (how much soever he may frown upon me to-day) still I cannot, if I am in my senses, deny that he smiled yesterday, or that what happened yesterday will not remain a fact to all eternity. Well, then, how shall we account for the considerable success of your itinerant preaching? It must be owned, that you have a natural knack of persuasion, and that you speak with much awakening warmth and earnestness; that God has blessed you with a strength of constitution, equal to the indefatigable industry of your mind. These natural abilities then, without having recourse to any thing supernatural, or miraculous, might alone account for the measure of your success. Yet there is another thing which gives you more advantage, and occasions you to make more impression than all these put together, and that is, the very irregularity and novelty of your manner. “The tanners, keelmen, colliers, and harlots,” say you, “never came near a church, nor had any desire or design so to do.” But when it was told them, There is a man preaching upon yonder mountain, they came in as great flocks to such a dispenser of divinity, as they do to a dispenser of physic who dances on a slack-rope. Such a doctor may, by his stratagem, have more patients, and consequently, if he has equal skill, may do more good, than Dr. Mead, who confines himself to the unalarming and customary carriage of a chariot; yet since it is next to certain, that the rules of the college once broke in upon, many unskilful persons will take upon them to get patients by the novelty of the slack-rope, it is likewise next to certain, that if we cast up the physic account at the end of any one century, we shall find that surprise and novelty have done much more harm than good, and that it was, upon the whole, much better to go on in the slower but safer way of the college.

11. Forgive me the setting of the matter in this light. I would willingly set it in any light that might do you good. My first intention in writing to you, was to do myself good. I hope I have not wholly failed. Yet as I have failed in part, and have not been able to bring myself to you, let me now endeavour to bring you back to the old orderly paths, which I think would be doing good both to you and to the public. But then you must bear with some tartness. Bitterness, I am sure, I have none. Nay, I would seem as little tart as possible: let us then drop our own persons and cases, and turn our discourse, for a minute, to fictitious ones. Let us suppose then some good man (we will say Mr. Law) very desirous of promoting the love of God and man; but observing how slowly this great work was carried on by men

* All this shows the difference between mere sectarianism and a *work of God*.

preaching standing on their feet, his zeal puts him upon gaining the attention of the otherwise unattentive, by preaching standing upon his head. This stratagem was not without its success; many heard who otherwise had never heard at all. As numbers of auditors increased, he began to look out for assistants; but not finding many of his brethren, the clergy, of sufficient agility to accompany him, he called in the assistance of lay-brethren. Ait innocent, but perhaps unenlightened neighbour, endeavours to show him the impropriety of his behaviour; that, besides the irregularity and indecorum of the thing itself, it was sure to be attended with very bad consequences; that he was already aped by numbers of weak or wicked men; and that the first time there was a design of public mischief, this novelty-stratagem would be sure to be made use of, as all novelty-stratagems had ever been, to very wicked and horrible purposes.—“What, then,” says Mr. Law, “would you have an end at once of my preaching?” No; God forbid! I would have an end of your headlong preaching. Take the largest and most laborious cure you please, and play the part of the most industrious curate; to this you may be regularly called; but I know no call you have to play the part of an itinerant evangelist, or to assume the episcopal, patriarchal, or apostolical, either language or office. Ah, my good friend Mr. Law! You have a regular call too to another place; how usefully and ornamentally might you be employed in your college of Emanuel, at Cambridge; not as a philosophical sluggard, or *saunterer*—*inter sylvas academicas currere cursum*, but *querere verum*;* a thing well worth your search; for the longer you live, the more you will find that you want light more than heat. When you had found the truth, how advantageously might you communicate it to the expecting youth! How many hundreds, in a course of years, might you fit for regular, yet zealous pastors! And to how many thousands might they, in a century or two, spread the love of God and man! These regularly raised plants, in due time, would be more numerous, but to be sure, more lasting, and less liable, when mixed with poisonous weeds, than those which are irregularly and suddenly raised in hot-beds. You would not indeed then be the head of a sect. Suffer my jealousy in turn. I fear you do not know every evil seed that may still lurk in your own breast. Are you sure there is no spark of vanity there? No love of singularity? No desire of distinction—*digito monstrari et dicier hic est*?† At least turn your emulation into a right channel. God can make you as conspicuous in a regular, as you are in endeavouring to make yourself in this irregular way. But if nothing else will serve you, but playing the part of an apostle, (nay, and pretending to a more perfect and sinless part, than they, poor men! could in the infancy of Christianity arrive to,) then I can add no more but my prayers to God, for you and for myself, that he will so cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of his Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love him here, and be prepared for a happy appeal to the awful bar, where all controversies shall be decided, and where men and angels shall be ear-witnesses of the just decision: whether it be the EUGE of “Good and faithful servant,” or reproof of—“Who hath required these things at your hands?”

August 11th, 1746.

LETTER VII.

To Mr. John Smith.

Newcastle, March 25th, 1747.

SIR,—1. In your last, I do not find much reason to complain either of tartness or bitterness. But is it so serious as the cause requires? If it be asked

—Ridentem dicere verum,
Quis vetat?‡

I think the nature of the things whereof we speak should forbid it. For, surely, it is a very serious concern, whether we dwell in the eternal glory of God, or in the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

2. If those who subscribe the 11th and following articles, do subscribe in what they believe from their hearts, to be the *plain, unforced* grammatical construction of

* “Not to doze out your existence in academic bowers, but to seek for truth in those sacred retreats.”

† “To be pointed out in the street, and hear the people say to each other, *Look, that is the man of genius!*”

‡ “Who can object against the recital of truth in a strain of pleasantry?”

the words, then they are clear before God. I trust you can answer for yourself herein ; but you cannot for all our brethren.

3. I am glad that our dispute concerning *commutations* in religion proves to be "entirely verbal:" as we both agree, 1. That abundance of those who bear the name of Christians, put a *part* of religion for the *whole* ; generally some outward work or form of worship :—2. That whatsoever is thus put for the whole of religion, (in particular, where it is used to supersede or commute for the religion of the heart,) it is no longer a part of it, it is gross irreligion, it is mere mockery of God.

4. When you warned me against "excess of zeal," I did not say, "This was not my weak side:" that it was not one weakness to which I am exposed. My words were, "I am always in danger of this ; and yet I daily experience a far greater danger of the other extreme." I do. I am, to this day, ashamed before God, that I do so little to what I ought to do. But this you call "overdone humility," and suppose it to be inconsistent with what occurs in the 93d and 94th paragraph of the *Earnest Appeal*. I believe it is not at all inconsistent therewith: only one expression there is too strong—"all his time and strength"—for this very cause "I am ashamed before God." I do not spend *all* my time so profitably as I might, nor all my strength: at least, not all I might have, if it were not for my own *lukewarmness* and remissness ; if I wrestled with God in constant and fervent prayer.

You mention four other instances of self-contradiction. The first, "You claim and you disclaim miracles. You claim them, as having seen many miraculous attestations to your ministry. You disclaim them, desiring none to—believe your words farther than they are confirmed by Scripture and reason," that is, you claim them in *one* sense, and disclaim them in *another*. Perhaps so ; but this is no contradiction.—2. "You are not at leisure yet, either to permit or forbid to marry." Indeed I am. Although I commend those who are as *eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake*, yet I know *All men cannot receive this saying*, and, *that it is better to marry than to burn*.—3. "The newly-justified has at once, in that hour, power over all sin, and finds from that hour the work of God in the soul, slowly and gradually increasing—What, until he has power over *more than all sin*?" No. But until he has *more* power over *all sin*: the struggle between the flesh and the spirit, gradually decreasing: and till he has more peace, more joy in the Holy Ghost ; more of the knowledge and love of God.—4. "But surely, the tip-top of all inconsistencies, is what follows, even as explained in your own way: many receive from the Holy Ghost an attestation of their acceptance, as perceptible as the sun at noonday, and yet these same persons, at other times, doubt or deny that they ever had such attestation."

The fact stands thus: 1. A man feels in himself the testimony of God's Spirit, that he is a child of God. And he can *then* no more deny or doubt thereof, than of the shining of the sun at noonday.—2. After a time this testimony is withdrawn. 3. He begins to *reason* within himself concerning it ; next, to *doubt* whether that testimony was from God ; and perhaps, in the end to *deny* that it was. And yet he may be, all this time, in every other respect, "of sound memory as well as understanding." Now whether these propositions are true or false, they are not *contradictory* to each other. They cannot, unless it were affirmed, that the same person *has*, and *has not* the same testimony at the same time.

5. However, you think I assert a thing impossible. What is impossible? That the Spirit of God should bear a clear perceptible witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God? Surely no! Whether this be fact or not, no man of reason will say it is impossible: or that the Spirit of God should cease to bear this witness. Neither can the possibility of this be denied. The thing then which is supposed impossible is this, That a man who once had it should ever *doubt* whether he had it or no? that is, (as you subjoin) "if he continue sound in mind (or understanding) and memory." Right! "If he continue." But the very supposition is, that in *this respect*, he does not continue so. While he did so continue he could not doubt. But his understanding is now darkened, and the very traces of that divine work well nigh crossed out of his memory. Nor can I think, "it is vain to have recourse here to the *evangelists* of the power of darkness." I verily believe, as it was the God of heaven who once *shone in his heart*, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God ; so it is the god of this world who hath now *blinded his heart*, so that the glorious light cannot shine upon it.

6. If the Quakers hold the same perceptible inspiration with me, I am glad ; and it is neither better nor worse for their holding it. Although, if I "distinguish it away," I do not hold it at all. But do I distinguish it away? or any point which I believe to be the truth of God? I am not conscious of this. But when men tack

absurdities to the truth of God, with which it hath nothing to do, I *distinguish away* those absurdities, and let the truth remain in its native purity.

It was several months before my correspondence with you, that I *thus* distinguished away *perceptible inspiration*: declaring to all men, "by perceiving or feeling the operations of the Spirit, I mean being inwardly conscious of them." "By the operations of the Spirit, I do not mean the *manner* in which he operates in a Christian."

This I mentioned in my last. But it is certain, over and above those other graces which the Holy Spirit inspires into, or operates in a Christian, and over and above his imperceptible influences; I do intend all mankind should understand me to assert, (what I therefore express in the clearest language I am master of,) every Christian believer hath a perceptible testimony of the Spirit, that he is a child of God. I use the phrase, *testimony of the Spirit*, rather than *inspiration*, because it has a more determinate meaning. And I desire men to know what I mean, and what I do not; that I may not fight as one that beateth the air.

7. Is there "not one word said of this, either in the *Farther Appeal*, or in any one place in the Bible?" I think there is in the Bible: in the 16th verse of the viii chapter to the Romans. And is not this very place proved to describe the ordinary *privilege* of every Christian believer, in the *Farther Appeal*, from the 45th to the 49th, and from the 56th to the 59th page?

Give me leave to remind you of some of the words. In the 49th page the argument concludes thus—"It will follow, that this witness of the Spirit is the *private testimony* given to *our own consciences*, which, consequently, all sober Christians may claim, without any danger of enthusiasm." In the 57th page are these words: "Every one that is born of God, and doth not commit sin, by his very actions, saith, Our Father which art in heaven: the Spirit itself bearing witness with their spirit, that they are the children of God. According to Origen, therefore, this testimony of the Spirit is not any *public* testimony by miracles, but an *inward* testimony belonging in common to all that are born of God." Once more, in the 58th page are these words: "He brings yet another proof of the superiority of those who had *this Spirit of adoption*. *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our Spirit that we are the children of God*. I prove this, says he, not only from the voice itself, but also from the cause whence that voice proceeds. For the Spirit suggests the words while we thus speak, which he hath elsewhere expressed more plainly, *God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father!* But what is—the *Spirit beareth witness with our spirit*? He means the Paraclete by the gift given unto us." (But that this was an *extraordinary* gift, we have no intimation at all, neither before nor after.) "And when the Spirit beareth witness, what doubt is left? If a man or an angel spake, some might doubt: but when the Most High beareth witness to us, who can doubt any longer?"

I am mistaken if this does not come home to the point, to the question now before us: describing a *perceptible testimony* of the Holy Ghost, "directly felt to be worked by himself."

8. But I will waive all authorities, that of Origen and Chrysostom, as well as of Hannah Richardson (though not a *weak* woman, but eminently the reverse) and Averel Spencer, though not a wicked one: only observing, that your argument proves too much. I am as fully assured to-day, as I am of the shining of the sun, that the Scriptures are of God. I cannot possibly deny or doubt of it *now*. Yet I may doubt of it *to-morrow*: as I have done heretofore a thousand times, and that after the fullest assurance preceding. Now if this be "a demonstration that my former assurance was a mere fancy," then farewell all revelation at once!

But to come closer yet, and weigh the point in debate in the balance of plain reason. You must allow there is a "testimony of the Spirit, with our spirit, that we are the children of God." But, you say, it is not a perceptible one. How is this? Let us examine it thoroughly. It is allowed, 1. The Spirit of God, 2. bears testimony to my spirit. 3. That I am a child of God. But I am not to perceive it. Not to perceive what? the first, second, or third particular? Am I not to perceive what is testified,—“That I am a child of God?” Then it is not testified at all. This is saying and unsaying in the same breath. Or am I not to perceive, *that it is testified to my spirit*? Yea, but I must perceive what passes in my own soul. Or lastly, am I to perceive that I am a child of God, and that this is testified to my spirit; but not to perceive *who it is that testifies*; not to know it is the Spirit of God? O sir, if there really be a man in the world, who hath this testimony in himself, can it be supposed that he does not know who it is that testifies? who it is that speaks to his heart? that speaks in his inmost soul as never man spake? If he does not, he is ignorant of the whole affair. If you are in this state, I pray God you may say from the heart,

"Lord, what I know not, teach thou me." How much better were this, than to canonize your own ignorance, as the only knowledge and wisdom! and to condemn all the generation of God's children of "*idiotism and madness.*"

9. Under your last head you do not confine yourself now within the bounds you at first proposed; when you said, "I am not making conjectures of what *may* happen, but relating mischiefs which actually have happened." Take care you do not grow warm when I reply to this: you will have need of all your patience to bear it.

You begin, "Will you ask what I mean by *order*? Was it not manifest I meant to speak against lay-preaching?" It was: but not against that alone. Therefore, before I entered upon the question, I defined the term in a wider sense, so as to include both this and every irregularity you had objected.—You go on, "How could you give so strange an answer, *I bring this order you contend for into places where it never was before.*" I reply, this is not my whole answer. It is but one, and that the most inconsiderable part of it. But it is strictly true.—"Do you then bring in the ministry of regularly ordained ministers, where before people were used to the preaching of lay-brethren?" Yes; them who were before used to no preaching at all, or to that of those whom you would term lay-brethren, I bring to attend on the ministry of those regular preachers who have the charge of their several parishes.

But very "ill consequences" of our irregular preaching you say have "actually happened: a number of unsent persons going about the kingdom, and preaching the worst of heresies." A number! Where? Within these nine years past I have heard of two, and no more, (besides that lunatic clergyman,) who have gone about thus, though, I doubt, sent neither of God nor man. But I have heard of no heresy which they preached; only a little, smooth, undigested nonsense. Nor can the ill done by these balance the thousandth part of the good already done, by the preaching of other laymen; viz. The turning so many bold, barefaced servants of the devil, into humble, holy servants of God.

However, evil "will happen if any state faction shall join the irregulars." If they shall? Yea, if they shall attempt it, (which is far enough off,) the irregulars will not join them. We bless God that the government is at present very fully convinced of this.

"But if unsent well meaning laymen may preach unsent, ill meaning laymen will, upon the first opportunity, spread sedition like wildfire." Yea, and clergymen as well as laymen, sent as well as unsent. Thus it ever was, and I presume ever will be.

10. That "the irregularities of Mr. Cartwright did more harm in the course of a century, than all the labours of his life did good," is by no means plain to me. And the less so, because I cannot learn from Mr. Strype, or any other impartial writer (whatever his mistakes in judgment were,) that he fell into any irregularities at all. I look upon him and the body of Puritans in that age, (to whom the German Anabaptists bore small resemblance,) to have been both the most learned and most pious men that were then in the *English* nation. Nor did they separate from the Church; but were driven out, whether they would or no. The vengeance of God which fell on the posterity of their persecutors, I think, is no imputation on Mr. Cartwright or them: but a wonderful scene of Divine Providence, visiting the sins of the fathers upon their children (when they also had filled up the measure of their iniquities) unto the third and fourth generation.

I am not careful for what may be a hundred years hence. He who governed the world before I was born, shall take care of it likewise when I am dead. My part is to improve the present moment. And whatever may be the fruits of lay-preaching when you and I are gone to our long home, every serious man has cause to bless God for those he may now see with his eyes, for the saving so many souls from death; and hiding a multitude of sins. The instances glare in the face of the sun. Many indeed God hath taken to himself: but many more remain, both young and old, who now fear God and work righteousness.

11. Perhaps a parallel drawn from physic may hold more exactly than you was apprized of. For more than twenty years I have had numberless proofs that *regular physicians* do exceeding little good. From a deep conviction of this, I have believed it my duty, within these four months last past, to prescribe such medicines to six or seven hundred of the poor, as I knew were proper for their several disorders. Within six weeks, nine in ten of them who had taken these medicines were remarkably altered for the better. And many were cured of diseases under which they had laboured for ten, twenty, forty years. Now, ought I to have let one of these poor wretches perish because I was not a *regular physician*? To have said, "I know what will cure you. But I am not of the *college*. You must send for Dr. Mead?" Before Dr. Mead had come in his chariot, the man might have been in his coffin. And

when the doctor was come, where was his fee? What! he cannot live upon nothing! So instead of an *orderly cure* the patient dies. And God requires his blood at my hands!

12. But you think "if one should look out of his grave in the middle of the next century, he would find the *orderly* preaching at St. Luke's and St. Giles's church had done more good than the disorderly preaching at *Kennington*." I cannot learn by all the inquiries I have made, that at present it does any good at all: that either Dr. B. or Dr. G. has in all these years converted one sinner to God. And if a man saves no souls while he is alive, I fear he will save few after he is dead.

But "it does abundance less harm." Perhaps not so neither. '*He that gathereth not with me scattereth*'—more especially if he be a preacher. He must scatter from him if he does not gather souls to God. Therefore a lifeless, unconvincing minister, is the murderer-general of his parish. He enters not into the kingdom of heaven himself, and those that would enter in he suffers not. He stands in the gap between them and true religion; because he has it not they are easy without it. Dead form contents him, and why not them? "Sure it is enough if we go as far as our guide!" And if he is not outwardly vicious, he the more effectually secures them from all inward, solid virtue. How choice a factor for hell is this! Destroying more souls than any deist in the kingdom! I could not have blamed St. Chrysostom, if he had only said, "Hell is paved with the skulls of *such* Christian priests."

13. I must be short on what remains. You suppose the impression made on men's minds by this *irregular* way of preaching is chiefly owing "to the force of novelty." I believe it was to obviate this very supposition, that my preaching has so rarely made any impression at all till the novelty of it was over. When I had preached more than six score times at this town, I found scarce any effect: only that abundance of people heard, and gaped, and stared, and went away much as they came. And it was one evening, while I was in doubt if I had not laboured in vain, that such a blessing of God was given as has continued ever since, and I trust will be remembered unto many generations.

You ascribe it likewise in part to "a natural knack of persuasion." If either by a natural or an acquired power of persuasion I can prevail upon sinners to turn to God, am I to bury even that talent in the earth? "No: but try if you cannot do more good in a college or in a parish." I have tried both, and I could not do any substantial good, either to my pupils or my parishioners. Among my parishioners in Lincolnshire, I tried for some years: but I am well assured, I did far more good to them by preaching three days on my father's tomb, than I did by preaching three years in his pulpit.

But you "know no call I have to preach up and down, to play the part of an itinerant evangelist." Perhaps you do not. But I do; I know God *hath required this at my hands*. To me, his blessing my work is an abundant proof, although such a proof as often makes me tremble. But "is there not pride or vanity in my heart?" There is; yet this is not my motive to preaching. I know and feel that the spring of this is a deep conviction that it is the will of God, and that were I to refrain I should never hear that word, 'Well done, good and faithful servant:—but 'Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness, where is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth.'

LETTER VIII.

To the Rev. Mr. John Wesley.

REVEREND SIR,—You make some question, whether my last was not wanting in that seriousness, which was required in so awful an inquiry as, *Whether we dwell in the eternal glory of God, or in the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels?* Truly this is so awful a subject, that I should think all pleasantries here quite out of place: but was that the subject of our inquiry? How much then was I mistaken when I took it to be no more than this, Whether Mr. Wesley is not wrong in his notions about the perceptibility of inspiration, and his deviations from established order? Now, if you think to blend these two inquiries together, as if they were convertible, it will be impossible for me to receive it with that seriousness which you seem to expect. Do not so profusely fling about everlasting fire, nor throw out such frequent hints, that all who dispute your nostrums are mere ignorants, condemners of all God's children, and consequently children of the devil. If I am in this bad state, you pray God I may say from my heart, "Lord, what I know not teach thou

me.⁷ Sir, your petition is granted; for (in whatsoever state I am) that is my daily prayer, and was so perhaps before you were born: for many years I have implored the assistance of God's good Spirit in the impartial search of truth, in which I have ever begged to be preserved at the expense of friends, relations, country, and all that I hold near and dear to me in this world. This you allow is much better than to canonize my own ignorance, which whether I do or not, I cannot say, because I do not at all understand the meaning of that phrase. But I am sure I do not condemn all (or any of) God's children of idiotism and madness; but I leave that to those whose schemes require it to be allowed, that many of God's children do not continue in sound mind and memory.

2. Sir, whilst you are pleased to submit to the equality of a disputant, you should not pronounce sentence *ex cathedra*. Who it is that mistakes his own ignorance for the only knowledge and wisdom, is not as yet decided; and till it is, I should esteem it a rude begging the question, to throw that imputation upon you, though it were cloaked under the charitable prayers of—"God help your ignorant head," or "the Lord correct your damnable error, and snatch you from hell fire." The softest prayers may be so contrived as to suggest the rudest things, even that one's antagonist is a brand of hell. This may move terror in children, but pity only in men of sense. Let me therefore once more entreat you to be more sparing of this manner, at least in your appeals to men of reason and religion.

3. And if this debate is to go any farther, I must insist upon your keeping your temper, and upon your bearing with patience your adversary's supposing himself in the right, and you in the wrong; he does but suppose so, and therefore keeps himself open to conviction, whenever you shall be able to offer it. Whenever it comes, he will receive it gladly; and if it never comes, he must then conclude you in an error, but such an error as no way shakes his opinion of your being a reasonable, sincere, and good man. Instead of anathematizing you, or devoting you to hell, he hopes to meet you in the blessed regions of heaven. Now, preserve but the same candour for him that he retains for you, and then this our friendly debate may be a friendly debate to the end of the chapter.

4. To proceed then. I can very patiently hear you reply to what I said of a number of unsent persons preaching about the kingdom; you have heard of but two, and no more, but I have heard of twice that number in one county, and of many more in other counties of this kingdom. I myself never saw but one; he prayed for you and your brother by name; and besides much *smooth, undigested nonsense*, preached up *heresy*, even that worst of heresies, (as not striking at the branches, but the whole root of holiness at once,) I mean Antinomianism. I was soon after told that I should see this preacher no more, for that he was committed to the county gaol, upon his own confession, for horse-stealing. Now, how many such preachers, or such horse-men, are gone forth in the kingdom, is not at all material to my argument, which is as well illustrated by one example, as by a thousand.

5. Whether the irregulars shall never join any state faction?—Whether they are not more liable to sedition than the regularly ordained clergy?—Whether the civil war, and the destruction of church and state, was God's vengeance for the persecution of those holy good men, the Puritans?—Whether you, without the study of physic, can cure more hundreds in four months, than the ablest students in physic can cure in as many years?—And whether Dr. B. and Dr. G. (whom I know not) are such wicked numskulls as are fit to pave hell withal?—All these things, to shorten our debate, I shall pass untouched. I must only observe, that much the greater part of the few clergy with whom I have the pleasure to be acquainted, are as averse to *dead form*, and as zealous for *inward solid virtue*, as you, or any one living can be: though they cannot take the liberty of gaining attention by irregular bold strokes, as never having yet had any call from the pulpit to the tombs.

6. That you caught attention by such bold strokes as preaching on tombs and mountains, I hope I might tell you without contradiction, because I had it from yourself, and you had told me so in express terms: nay, you now confirm this, whilst you attempt to deny it: for many gapers and sturvers came to hear you from your first appearance at Newcastle, though you had preached above sixscore times before you perceived you had made much impression. But you perceived the impression much sooner at Epworth, where the novelty and oddity of a son's preaching on his father's tomb, had more effect in three days, than preaching in his pulpit had in three years. Is not this plainly declaring that the effect was owing to the novelty, and to the novelty only? For here was the same preacher, the same hearers, and surely the same God to influence, (unless it were to be profanely said, that there is one God of the church, and another stronger influencing god of the churchyard,) so that the only difference

between preaching in the pulpit and on the tomb was this, that the former, being customary, made little impression; while the latter, from its strangeness, caught much attention. You may fancy, perhaps, that you have a divine call thus to catch attention; but other clergymen are sure they have no such thing, and therefore hold themselves obliged to forbear the novelty of preaching on tombs, as much as the singularity of preaching on their heads.

7. There are three ways in which the Holy Spirit may be said to bear witness. 1st. By external, miraculous, sensible attestations, (as by an audible voice from heaven, by visible signs, wonders, &c.) Or 2dly, By internal, plainly-perceptible whispers, ("Go not into Macedonia. Go with these men. Join thyself to this chariot," &c.) Or lastly, By his standing testimony in the Holy Scriptures. In all these three senses St. Paul and the other apostles might truly say—"The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." If external miraculous powers, and internal prophetic inspiration, both continued in the days of Ignatius and Polycarp; then they might too truly assert the same thing in all the three senses. But if in the days of Origen and Chrysostom external miraculous powers had ceased, while internal prophetic inspiration still remained; then they could not truly use the same phrase but in the two last senses. Lastly, if in the days of St. Bernard both miracles and prophecy had entirely ceased; then he could not truly use the expression but in the last sense only. If Bernard (who was somewhat enthusiastically given) yet insisted that he had still plainly-perceptible whispers, it would be natural for his neighbours to call on him to show either that it should be so by Scripture, or that it *was* so by facts. If for the former he produced Rom. viii, 16, the answer was easy, "You attempt to decide controversies by the very controverted texts." If for the latter he produced variable facts, to-day asserted, to-morrow doubted, and the day following denied; then it is evident the whispers were not so plainly-perceptible as was asserted, or that they were not the whispers of Him in whom is no variableness nor shadow of turning. The spirit of man, and his fancies or opinions, may vary, but the Spirit of God, and his facts, cannot. You may be fully of opinion to-day that the Scriptures are of God, and doubt of that to-morrow, and so vary your opinion a thousand times: but what is this to the purpose? We were speaking not of man's opinions, but of God's facts. Turn this to fact, and see how you will like it. If God tells you to-day that the Scriptures are true; can you to-morrow doubt whether they are false? Or could the man in the gospel, to whom Christ distinctly said, "Thy sins are forgiven thee," doubt or deny the day following that Christ ever said such a word? Yes, if we will groundlessly and blasphemously suppose that the god of this world can more strongly obliterate than the God of heaven can imprint: but if it be obliterated, whether it be by the god of the world, the devil, or by the goddess of the night, the moon, the man is no longer *compos mentis*; is altogether incapable of true religion, and fit only for the regions of Moorfields. Yet you suppose such a one still a religious subject, even after you allow that he does not continue in sound mind and memory. Now, pray sir, is it you or I that impute idiotism and madness to the children of God?

8. That the Spirit beareth witness with the spirit of the faithful, that they are the children of God, in some sense or other, (suppose in the third above mentioned,) was never denied by sober Christians: but that he beareth witness precisely in the first or second sense, was never maintained but by Montanists, Quakers, and Methodists: who have no more right to quote this text as decisive in favour of their peculiar interpretation, than the others have to urge [it] as decisive in favour of theirs. Neither this text, therefore, nor any other that I know of in the Bible, at all favours the doctrine of a direct, perceptible inspiration, as easily distinguishable from all suggestions of reason or fancy, as light is from darkness. Now, if Scripture fails, the only remaining proof is from instances and experiences. If we ask how we may know that these instances are not mistakes; the answer is, you feel they are not, for *God speaks to the inmost soul as never man spake*. If we reply that there are enthusiasts in the world, who are fully persuaded that they have this inward speaking, when in truth they have not; then you can keep your temper no longer, and the only answer is, that if we question it in you, or perceive it not in ourselves, we are *ignorant of the whole affair, and doomed to the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels*. Proceeds this now from the benign spirit of charity, or breathes it not a different and quite contrary spirit?

9. Some years ago a Quaker came to me with a message, which he was fully persuaded he had received from God. As the matter of the message was innocent, it might possibly come from Him; but I thought it more probable that it was only the effect of an overheated imagination. I asked the man what reason he had to think

it rather an inspiration of God than a suggestion of fancy; he answered almost in your very words, that the inward light was as plainly perceptible as the outward, and that God speaking to the inmost soul was distincter and sweeter than ever man spoke. Thus far you are equal. But, in point of charity he far outdid you: for he allowed that all the sincere servants of God, and hoppers for salvation, were in a fair way for it, though they had not been favoured like himself with a direct perceptible inspiration concerning these things. Yet I could not help suspecting that my neighbour was enthusiastic, although for some years, (*except in this respect*) *he continued in his sound mind and senses*; but at last his heated imagination blazed out; and I had the mortification to see this poor man confined, when he employed himself all day long in repeating gibberish, as a proof of his having the gift of unknown tongues.

10. In short, as the enthusiast seems as confident of his inspiration as one really inspired is of his, a third person hath a right to call for other proof than confident assertion: every one may say like Pharaoh in Cowley,

"If thus from God you come," said Egypt's king,

"What sign, what powers, what credence do you bring?"

God commonly attests to inward inspiration by outward miracles. To this attestation too you have likewise laid claim, to the casting out devils, to the doing many wonderful works, and to the having seen many miraculous things; now do but make good this claim, and I shall readily believe (not any thing which you shall advance contrary to plain Scripture, but) your interpretation of doubtful and controverted passages, preferably to the interpretation of all other men. But if you can by no means make this good, then I again call upon you ingenuously to own it, and to confess (as you do on another occasion in your last letter) *that the expression is too strong*.

11. I heartily thank you for your sermons: I was in hopes to have found there, (according to your profession in your first letter,) *the love of God and man more insisted on ten times over than all other subjects whatever*, but I must own I was disappointed; other subjects being ten times over more insisted on than that. There is, however, such a vein of seriousness and piety throughout the whole, as will ever make me love and esteem the author, and wish him freed from all excess and extravagance. Where we differ I may possibly be in the wrong; but where we agree I am sure we are both in the right. Our agreements are material, our differences (at least in the eye of charity) but trivial. Charity never faileth. This shall endure when all controversies about faith shall be ended, and when faith itself shall be swallowed up in vision.

April 27, 1747.

P. S.—Since I wrote the above, it came into my mind that possibly by your putting in Greek letters, the *εργασια* of the powers of darkness, you meant to suggest to me some particular emphasis of the original. But upon turning to the original I find no such expression. I can find the word but seven times in the New Testament. Six times it notes the power of God: the seventh is—*εργασιαν τς σατανα*, the *working of Satan*: "What, to erase the testimony of the Holy Ghost out of the memory of justified believers who are saved?" No, but to amuse with signs and lying wonders, them that receive not the love of the truth, them that perish. The same apostle elsewhere says, 'If our gospel be hid, it is hid' (to whom? to those to whom God specially reveals it? No, but) 'to them that are lost; in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds' (of whom? of true believers? No, but) 'of them who believe not.'—Strange! that from these passages, that mention the influence of the devil over wicked infidels, men should frame such a groundless, such a blasphemous hypothesis, as that when God has testified their justification to the regenerate in express terms and as perceptible as the sun at noon; yet the devil has the controlling power to erase God's plain testimony, and to throw God's children into such distraction, that they shall not only assert what God testified was false, but shall totally forget and deny that he ever testified any such thing at all!

LETTER IX.

To Mr. John Smith.

St. Ives, July 10, 1747.

SIR,—1. You put me in mind of an eminent man, who preaching at St. James's said, "If you do not repent, you will go to a place which I shall not name before this audience." I cannot promise so much either in preaching or writing, before any audience, or to any person whatever. Yet I am not conscious of doing this very

often, of "profusely flinging about everlasting fire." Though it is true I mentioned it in my last letter to you, as I have done now a second time, and perhaps I may mention it yet again. For (to say the truth) I desire to have both heaven and hell ever in my eye while I stand on this isthmus of life, between these two boundless oceans. And I verily think the daily consideration of both, highly becomes all men of reason and religion.

2. I think likewise, (or I would not spend five words upon the head,) that these are nearly concerned in our present question. To touch only on one branch of it: if I live in wilful sin, in a sinful "deviation from established order," am I not in the way to hell? I cannot take it any otherwise. I cannot help "blerding these two inquiries together." I must therefore speak seriously or not at all; and yet, I trust, without "losing my temper." Do you complain of this first, that I may not complain? It appears to me that you show more eagerness of spirit, more warmth and resentment in your last, than you ever have done from the beginning.

3. You spoke of "a number of unsent persons going about and preaching the worst of heresies." I answered,—“Within these nine years I have heard of two, and no more, who have gone about thus, though I doubt neither sent of God nor man.” Their names were Jonathan Wildboar, and Thomas Smith, *alias* Moor, *alias* I know not what: for I fear he changed his name as often as his place. It is not unlikely that either of these might steal as well as lie, which they have done abundantly, particularly in claiming acquaintance with Mr. Whitefield or me, wherever they judged it would recommend them to their hearers. I should not be surprised to hear of two more such: but I have not yet, in all the counties I have gone through between London and Berwick-upon-Tweed, or between Deal and the Land’s-end.

4. I would to God all the clergy throughout the land were "zealous for inward, solid virtue." But I dare not say one in ten of those I have known are so in any degree. The two clergymen of this place, on a late public occasion, were led home at one or two in the morning in such a condition as I care not to describe. One of them is rector of Lalant also, (a parish east of St. Ives,) of Twidnack to the south, and Zunnor to the west. At Zunnor he keeps another assistant, and one who is just as sober as himself, and near as zealous—not indeed for inward or outward virtue; but against these "scoundrels that pretend to preach in his parish."

5. I never "attempted to deny" that the novelty of our manner of preaching has induced thousands and ten thousands to hear us, who would otherwise never have heard us at all, nor perhaps any other preacher. But I utterly deny that "the effects wrought on many of them that heard, were owing to novelty, and that only." The particular effects wrought at Epworth were these:—Many drunkards—many unjust and profane men, (on whom both my father and I had for several years spent our strength in vain,) from that time began to live (and continue so to do) a sober, righteous and godly life. Now I deny that this effect can be owing to novelty, or to any principle but the power of God.

If it be asked, But were there not "the same hearers, the same preachers, and the same God to influence, in the church, as on the tombstone?" I answer, 1. There were not *all* the same *hearers* in the church; not above one third of them: 2. There was the same *preacher* in the church, but he did not *then* preach the same doctrine; and, therefore, 3. Though there was the same God, there was not the same influence or blessing from him.

6. The sum of what I offered before, concerning *perceptible inspiration*, was this:—"Every Christian believer has a perceptible testimony of God's Spirit, that he is a child of God." You objected, that there was not one word said of this, either in the Bible, or in the *Appeal*, to which I referred. I replied, "I think there is in the Bible, in the 16th verse of the viiith chapter to the Romans. And in the Farther Appeal, this place is proved to describe the ordinary privilege of every Christian believer."

This is there shown, both by Scripture, by reason, and by authority, particularly that of Origen and Chrysostom, whom his lordship of Litchfield had cited in his Charge, as asserting just the contrary. But waiving authorities, I reasoned thus: "You allow there is a testimony of the Spirit with our spirit, that we are the children of God. But you say, it is not a *perceptible* one. How is this? Let us examine it thoroughly. It is allowed, 1. The Spirit of God: 2. bears testimony to my spirit: 3. that I am a child of God; but I am not to perceive it. "Not to perceive what? The 1st, 2d, or 3d particular? Am I not to perceive *what is testified*? That I am a child of God? Then it is not testified at all. This is saying and unsaying in the same breath. Or am I not to perceive *that it is testified to my spirit*? Yea, but I must perceive what passes in my own soul! Or, lastly, am I to perceive that I am a child of God, and that this is testified to my spirit, but not to perceive *who it is that testifies*? Not to know it is the Spirit of God? O, sir, if there be really a man in the

world who hath this testimony in himself, can it be supposed that he does not know who it is that testifies? who it is that speaks to his heart?"

7. Instead of giving a direct answer to this, you have recourse to the same supposition with his lordship of Litchfield and Coventry, viz. That there was once an inward perceptible testimony of the Spirit, but that it was peculiar to the early ages of the church.

"There are three ways," say you, "in which the Holy Spirit may be said to bear witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: 1. By external, miraculous attestations: 2. By internal, plainly-perceptible whispers." (I must add, "not in words, at least not always, but by some kind of impressions equivalent thereto.") 3. "By his standing testimony in the Holy Scriptures. The apostles had all these three. Origen and Chrysostom probably the two latter. But if St. Bernard (several hundred years after) pretended to any other than the third, his neighbours would naturally ask for proof, either that it *should* be so by Scripture, or that it *was* so by facts."

Well, then, let us suppose St. Bernard and one of his neighbours to be talking together on this subject. On St. Bernard's saying, "The Spirit of God bears witness with my spirit, that I am a child of God:—his neighbour replies, I suppose he does, but not by an inward, plainly-perceptible testimony. "Yes, by an inward, plainly-perceptible testimony. I now have this testimony in myself. I plainly perceive that I am a child of God, and that it is his Spirit that testifies it to my spirit:—I fear you are somewhat enthusiastically given. I allow God's standing testimony in the Scriptures. But I cannot allow that there is now any such thing as this *inward* testimony, unless you can either prove by Scripture that it *should* be so, or by facts that it *is* so.—"Are not these words Scripture: '*The Spirit itself beareth testimony with our spirit, that we are the children of God*?'—Yes; but the question is, How they are to be understood? For I deny that they speak of an inward testimony. They speak of the outward, standing testimony of God in the Holy Scriptures.—"You put a manifest force upon the text. You cannot prove that it speaks of any outward testimony at all. But the words immediately preceding prove to a demonstration that it speaks of an inward testimony; '*Ye have not received the Spirit of bondage unto fear*.' (Is not fear an inward thing?) '*But ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father!*' The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God, even the same Spirit which '*God hath sent forth into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father!*'—I do not deny that the Spirit bears witness with our spirit. But I deny your peculiar interpretation of this text. I deny that this text at all favours an inward, perceptible testimony.

"The Spirit which God hath sent into my heart, and which now cries in my heart, '*Abba, Father,*' now beareth testimony with my spirit, that I am a child of God. How can these words be interpreted at all, but of an inward, perceptible testimony?" I tell you of God's standing testimony in Scripture.—"This is a palpable violence to the text. They no more speak of Scripture than of miracles. They manifestly speak of what passes in the heart—the spirit—the inmost soul of a believer, and that only."

8. But you would say, "Suppose this Scripture to prove that it *should* be so, can you show by facts that it *is* so?" Not if you take it for granted that every one who speaks of having this witness in himself is an enthusiast. You are then in no danger of proof from this quarter. You have a short answer to every fact which can be alleged.

But you turn the tables. You say it is I who allow that "many of God's children do not continue in sound mind and memory." I allowed, 1. A man feels the testimony of God's Spirit, and cannot then deny or doubt his being a child of God:—2. After a time this testimony is withdrawn, (not from every child of God. Many retain the beginning of their confidence steadfast unto the end.)—3. Then he may doubt whether that testimony was of God, and perhaps at length deny that it was; (especially if his heart be hardened by the deceitfulness of his sin.) And yet he may be all this time in every other respect of "sound memory, as well as understanding." In this respect I allowed he is not; that is, "His understanding is now darkened, and the very traces of that Divine work well nigh erased out of his memory." So I expressly determined the sense wherein I allowed, "He does not continue in sound mind and memory." But did I allow that even then he was *non compos mentis*, a madman in the common sense? Nothing less; I allowed no more, than that the Divine Light being withdrawn, his mind was again dark as to the things of God; and that he had forgotten τὴν καθαρὴν τῶν πάλαι αὐτοῦ ἀμαρτιῶν,* well nigh, as though it had never been.

* 2 Peter i, 9.

9. But you say, "If variable facts be produced, to-day asserted, to-morrow denied."—Nay, the facts, whether asserted or denied, are still invariable. "But if they be ever doubted or denied, they never were plainly perceptible." I cannot discern any force in that consequence: however, if they are afterwards "denied, they are not from Him, *'in whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.'*" neither is this consequence good. Though God is ever the same, man may either assert or deny his works. "The spirit of man, and his fancies or opinions, may vary, but God and his facts cannot." Thus far they can and do. God does not now bear witness, as he did before. And this variation of the fact, makes way for a variation in the judgment of him who had that witness, but now hath it not. "You may be fully of opinion to-day that the Scriptures are of God, and doubt of this to-morrow. But what is this to the purpose?" Very much. I am as fully convinced to-day that the Scriptures are of God, as that the sun shines. And this conviction (as every good gift) cometh from the Father of Lights. Yet I may doubt of it to-morrow. I may throw away the good gift of God. "But we were speaking, not of men's opinions, but of God's facts." We were speaking of both: of man's opinions, or judgment, concerning God's facts. "But could he, to whom Christ said, *'Thy sins are forgiven thee'*—ever doubt or deny that Christ said so?" I question not, but in process of time he might, particularly if he drew back unto perdition. But however that be, it is no "blasphemous supposition," but a plain undeniable truth, that the god of this world can obliterate what the God of heaven has strongly imprinted upon the soul. Yea, and that he surely will, unless we stir up the gift of God, which is in us, by earnestly and continually watching unto prayer.

I presume you do not deny that a believer, one who has the witness in himself, may make shipwreck of the faith; and consequently lose the witness (however it be explained) which he once had of his being a child of God. The darkness which then covers his soul again, I ascribe (in part) to the energy of Satan, who *εργεῖ* [worketh] (according to the apostle) in the children of unbelief, whether they did once believe or no. And has he not much power even on the children of God? to disturb, though not to destroy? to throw fiery darts without number; especially against those who, as yet, are but weak in the faith? to inject doubts and fears: sometimes unbelieving, sometimes even blasphemous thoughts? And how frequently will they be wounded thereby, if they have not put on the whole armour of God!

10. You add, "If we reply, There are enthusiasts in the world, you can keep your temper no longer; and your only answer is, If we perceive not the witness in ourselves, we are ignorant of the whole affair, and doomed to the everlasting fire, *'prepared for the devil and his angels.'*" I said not so. I can keep my temper, (blessed be God,) if you call me a hundred enthusiasts: if you affirm, I am ten times more of an enthusiast than that poor Quaker probably was. The sharpest word I said, was, "If a man does not know who it is that testifies with his spirit he is a child of God, he is ignorant of the whole affair." But I felt no anger when I said this. Nor do I now. Though I still think, (because you say it yourself,) "that you are ignorant of the whole affair," of the inward testimony for which I contend. Yet am I far from dooming you to everlasting fire. What you know not, I trust God will reveal unto you. Least of all was this my "only answer" to your supposition, "That this perceptible testimony is only an imagination, unless I am altogether in a dream." I have given you some other answer, and a pretty full one to the objection: such a one, I think, as the nature of the thing admits, at least, as my capacity would allow.

11. I have largely considered, both in the third part of the Appeal and in the latter part of the Second Letter to Mr. Church, the unreasonableness of the common demand, to prove our doctrine by miracles. I cannot but refer you to those tracts, having neither time nor inclination *actum agere*. Only I would weigh what you have now advanced in support of that demand. "If the enthusiast is as confident of his inspiration, as one really inspired is of his, a third person has a right to call for other proof than confident assertions," that is, for miracles. So you explain yourself in the following sentence; let us try how this consequence will hold, in a particular instance. 'The Spirit said unto Paul, Go not into Macedonia.' When he related this to his companions, ought they to have replied, "We call for other proof of this, than your confident assertion; seeing enthusiasts are as confident of theirs, as you are of this revelation?" If you say, "They had seen his miracles at other times:" I know not that; perhaps they had, perhaps they had not. But to step a little forward, "If in the days of Origen and Chrysostom, external miraculous powers were ceased, while internal inspiration still remained:" what becomes of your demand here? It is totally excluded: although there were, in those days also, pretenders to what they had not.

And yet there might have been other sufficient reasons for believing the assertion of Origen, Chrysostom, and St. Bernard too, that they had this internal testimony. Such was, besides the holiness of their lives, that great and standing miracle,—their saving so many souls from death, and hiding a multitude of sins.

12. There are at least as many pretenders to the love of God, as there are to the witness of his Spirit. But does this give me a right, if a man asserts he loves God, to demand his proving this assertion by miracles? Not so; but by their fruits I shall know a real and a pretended love of God. And in the same manner may I know him that has the witness of God's love, from an enthusiastic pretender to it. But if a man disclaims it, he sets himself out of the question. It is beyond dispute that he has it not.

Neither do I want miracles, in order to determine my judgment with regard to Scripture, variously interpreted. I would not say in this case, Show me a sign; but, Bring forth your strong reasons; and according to these, weighed in an even, impartial scale, would I incline to one side or the other.

13. From the beginning of our correspondence, I did not expect you to alter your judgment touching these points wherein we differed. But I was willing (and am so still) to hear and consider whatever you should advance concerning them; and so much the rather, because in the greatest points we do agree already; and in the smaller we can bear with each other, and speak what we apprehend to be the truth in love. Let us bless God for this, and press on to the mark. It cannot be long before we shall be quite of one mind; before the veil of flesh shall drop off, and we shall both see pure light, in the unclouded face of God.

LETTER X.

To the Rev. Mr. John Wesley.

REVEREND SIR,—Hell was made by God, to be threatened to, and inflicted on, impenitent sinners: the preacher was therefore ridiculously delicate, who minced the name to them that *would not repent*. To such persons, I would have hell and damnation set forth in the broadest manner. But if the Pope threaten damnation to all who believe not his infallibility; or Mr. Whitefield, to all who own not his election and reprobation; or Mr. Wesley, to all who deny that he is an inspired and a miracle-working prophet; then such untimely brandishing hellfire becomes ridiculous, fit only for the terror of vapoured women, but the pity and reproof of men of sense.

2. Heaven and hell are far from being offensive to my ears; I never desire to have either of them out of my thoughts. But I should blush at threatening you with hell, for your differing from me in speculations; nay, though your speculations were certainly false, and led to practice certainly wrong; we will say to a *deviation from established order*: for this may possibly be neither wilful nor sinful, and therefore no way connected with eternal awards. If you really (whether truly or falsely) believe yourself to have a call to the apostolate of *England*, I question not but God's mercy may both forgive and reward the irregular pains you take, *between London and Berwick, and between Deal and the Land's-end*.

3. And yet such deviation, how innocent soever in you, may still be very wrong and hurtful in itself, it may open a door to much disorder and error; *Wild-bores, Smiths, or Moors*, will enter at the breach. The man I saw, called himself *Williams*, but whether this was another man, or another *alias*, I know not. But government once dissolved, you need not look for preachers of heresy; witness one George Whitefield, whose doctrine you treat as heretical and blasphemous.

4. I wish to God, with you, that all the clergy throughout the land were zealous for inward solid virtue; but that all of any large body should be so, is rather to be wished than expected: the greater part, as I told you, with whom I am acquainted are so. I am sorry your acquaintance is so much worse that you cannot answer for one in ten. As to complaints of immoral clergymen, they are best made to the bishop of the diocese. If you will be so public spirited as to present them; if instead of censuring the heap, you will thus contribute to the winnowing the chaff from the wheat, I dare say you will have the thanks of the bishops, and of all good men, both clergy and laity.

5. There is a sense in which novelty awakens and amends; and there is a sense

in which God is the doer of all things, for whatsoever is done in the earth he doeth it himself. If your new doctrine, (or, not to differ about phrases,) if God's blessing on your new doctrine has amended some, on whom your father and yourself, whilst you preached the old doctrine, spent your strength in vain ; this is no proof of the superior truth, or of God's approbation of your novelties ; or that your father, who died unenlightened by them, is gone to hell ; or that his exerted strength did not contribute towards sending others to heaven ; it only shows that novelty, which has a natural tendency to awakening, may when God pleases, have an efficacious tendency to amending. The new act of parliament against swearing made a convert, who had been long deaf to sermons and Scripture : yet you will not say that an act of parliament is a better thing than the word of God, though in this instance attended with *his influence and blessing*.

6. I think you will not deny so plain a matter of fact, as that God's influence and blessing accompanies the ministry of many who are utter strangers to your new notions of inspiration, which can no more be supported by the eighth of Romans than by the first of Genesis, notwithstanding all your pains to distort that text : for any thing which has yet been said to the contrary, it may be understood of the Spirit's witness by miracles, by prophecy, or by the gently and imperceptibly wrought assurances of the Holy Ghost. But what proof is this of those divine illapses and sensible communications, maintained honestly by the Quakers *always*, and more amazingly by you *only sometimes* ? Sometimes you claim them in as strong terms as they do, though at other times you are disposed to distinguish them away. Your wriggling on this head, and on the plainness wherewith justification is notified, obliges me to call you back to order.

It is notorious that the Methodist writings abound with intimations of divine communications, prophetic whispers, and special guidances : it is as notorious that they teach the notification of justification to be as perceptible as the sun at noonday, and as distinct as our Saviour's notification, 'Son, thy sins are forgiven thee.' But the instances produced in support of these high claims, instead of supporting utterly subvert them. Thus H. R. had her justification notified, and yet she denied that her sins were forgiven, and continued almost in despair above a year afterwards. Now either this notification was not so distinct as is pretended ; or, if distinct, was notified by one of suspected credit, whom she could not believe ; or else if it was both distinct and credible, she was not of sound understanding if she disbelieved it ; nor of sound memory if she immediately doubted or denied that she had ever received such a message. Could she possibly deny a plain matter of fact ?—Yes, in process of time she might, particularly if she drew back to perdition ; that is, in a long time people may forget or deny facts, especially if they grow wicked and are given to lying. But what is this evasive answer to the case of H. R. who lived no length of time, and never did draw back to perdition ? After the time that she is said to have had *certain justification*, she lived a blameless and holy life, only terrified almost to death for fear that her sins were not remitted ; when she apprehended they were she died in raptures, declaring she *was in very great pain*, but that she did not *feel any*.

8. Now, sir, do you think that such ordinary instances can in anywise support such extraordinary pretences ? And after having assumed the language of an inspired prophet, and claimed the attestation of miracles, of casting out devils, and having seen many other miraculous things ; when you are called upon to specify, will you think it sufficient to refer to the *one great standing miracle* of making many converts ? I do not know that Origen or St. Chrysostom pretended to any such thing ; it would have been impertinent therefore to have demanded it of them, especially in support of a thing so probable as that they loved God. But had they demanded belief to something highly improbable, or claimed to themselves miraculous attestation ; in either of these cases there had been nothing so extravagant in the demand. If prophetic intimations were vouchsafed them, after external miracles were ceased, such intimations might be rules of action to yourselves, but could be none at all to other men, any farther than as they credited the claimant. Prophet indeed, a miracle working prophet, like St. Paul, had a right to a more implicit kind of belief : neither can I help thinking, that Paul, even in that infantine state of Christianity, and with all his thorns and infirmities about him, might more reasonably be looked upon as an inspired prophet, than Mr. Wesley in his newly matured state of Christianity, though arrived in his own imagination to a sinless perfection.

9. You have much to say against the demand of miracles in proof of doctrines. I make no such demand. I demand them as things to which you lay claim ; nay, in truth, I demand them no otherwise than as the prophet required idols to do good or to do evil ; which was no more than a manner of asserting that they had no such

power. All that I (properly speaking) demand is, that you should revoke your *ampullas et ses quipedalia verba*,* and ingenuously acknowledge that your expressions were too strong.

10. Had St. Bernard, after having talked throughout his voluminous works in the style of a miracle working prophet, intrenched himself at last in the *standing miracle of making many converts, and in the holiness of his life*; I should have thought he might have been answered in this manner: "You have hitherto always claimed much more, but still you claim too much; for to make converts (even true converts to a sober, righteous, and godly life) is no miracle at all; much less to make converts to popery, to the belief of such incredible proofless stuff as transubstantiation, and to the consequent idolatrous practice. Then as to holiness of life, no one but the Great Searcher of hearts can say what is true holiness. The popish severities of flesh-fastings, celibacies, and other monkeries, may pass for such with weak men, and draw many followers; and yet may imply no true holiness at all: nay, you may found nunneries for unholy and wicked purposes; abbesses and matrons may discipline their bands, and close bands for the uses of the fraternity, and the grossest wickedness may be carrying on under the cloak of hypocrisy."

11. God forbid that there should be any thing like this among the Methodists; though, to speak freely, I have been assured that there are very pregnant proofs about to be produced of very shocking things. I shall believe nothing without proofs. And in the mean time charitably hope that neither of us maintain any principles or practices which may bar us from seeing the unclouded face of God.

August 21, 1747.

LETTER XI.

To Mr. John Smith.

Dublin, March 23, 1747—S.

SIR,—I rejoice to find that in some points we come nearer each other, and that we can bear with each other where we do not. I entirely agree that hell was designed only for stubborn impenitent sinners, and consequently that it would be absurd to "threaten damnation to any, merely for differing from me in speculations." But it is an absurdity which I have nothing to do with: for it never yet entered into my thoughts.

2. I rejoice likewise in your allowing that my "speculations though false, yea and leading to a deviation from order, may yet possibly be neither wilful nor sinful:" and much more in that which follows, "I question not but God's mercy may both forgive and reward" even that zeal which is not according to knowledge.

3. Yet "such deviation," you think, "may open a door to much disorder and error." I grant it may: but I still insist, 1. that *accidental* ill consequences may flow from a good thing; 2. that the good consequences in the present case overbalance the evil, beyond all degrees of comparison. The same I believe of Mr. Whitefield's *public preaching*, (which was not the *consequence*, but the *cause* of mine,) whose doctrine in general (though he is mistaken in some points) I believe to be the truth of the gospel.

4. I never did censure the *whole body* of clergy, and God forbid that I ever should. I do not willingly censure any, even the grossly immoral. But you advise to "complain of those to the bishop of the diocese." In what way? "Be so public-spirited as to present them." Much may be said on that question. I should ask, 1. Have I a right to present them? I apprehend not. The churchwardens of each parish are to do this: which they will hardly do at my instance. 2. If I could do it myself, the presenting them to the *court* is not presenting them to the bishop: the bishop you cannot but know has no more authority in what is called the bishop's court, than the Pope of Rome. 3. I cannot present, suppose thirty persons, in as many counties, to the *lay-chancellors* or *officials*, (men whom I apprehend to have just as much authority from Scripture to administer the sacraments, as to try ecclesiastical causes,) without such an expense both of labour, and money, and time, as I am by no means able to sustain. And what would be the fruit, if I could sustain it? if I was the informer-general against the immoral clergy of England? O sir, can you imagine, or "dare you say, that I should have the thanks of the bishops, and of all good men, both clergy and laity?" If you allow only those to be good men who would thank me for this, I fear you would not find *seven thousand* good men in all our Israel.

* "Your bombastic expressions and lengthy words."

5. But you have been "assured there are proofs about to be produced of very shocking things among us also." It is very possible you may. And to say the truth, I expected such things long ago. In such a body of people must there not be some hypocrites? And some who did for a time serve God in sincerity, and yet afterwards turn back from the holy commandment once delivered to them? I am amazed there have been so few instances of this, and look for more every day. The melancholy case of that unhappy man, Mr. Hall, I do not rank among these. For he had renounced us long ago, and that over and over, both by word and writing. And though he called upon me once or twice a year, and lately made some little overtures of friendship, yet I have it under his own hand, "He could have no fellowship with us, because we would not leave the Church." But "*quia intellexi minus, protrusit foras.*"* To make it quite plain and clear how close a connexion there was between him and me, when I lately called on his poor wife at Salisbury, he fairly turned me out of doors, and my sister after me.

6. My father did not die unacquainted with the faith of the gospel, of the primitive Christians, or of our first reformers: the same which, by the grace of God, I preach, and which is just as new as Christianity. What he experienced before I know not; but I know that during his last illness, which continued eight months, he enjoyed a clear sense of his acceptance with God. I heard him express it more than once, although at the time I understood him not. "The inward witness, son, the inward witness," said he to me, "that is the proof, the strongest proof, of Christianity." And when I asked him, (the time of his change drawing nigh,) "Sir, are you in much pain?" He answered aloud, with a smile, "God does chasten me with pain, yea, all my bones with strong pain. But I thank him for all, I bless him for all, I love him for all!" I think the last words he spoke, when I had just commended his soul to God, were, "Now you have done all." And with the same serene cheerful countenance he fell asleep, without one struggle, or sigh, or groan. I cannot therefore doubt but the Spirit of God bore an inward witness with his spirit, that he was a child of God.

7. That "God blesses a doctrine preached (new or old) to the saving of souls from death, does not prove that every circumstance of it is true; for a predestinarian preacher may save souls." But it undoubtedly proves, that the *main* of what is preached is the truth as it is in Jesus. For it is only the gospel of Jesus Christ which is the power of God unto salvation. Human wisdom, as human laws, may restrain from outward sin; but they cannot avail as to the saving of the soul. If God gives this blessing to what is preached, it is a sufficient "proof of his approbation." But I will not contend about words, or when his *blessing* is allowed, dispute whether it has his approbation or not.

8. But to argue on your own supposition: you say, "It only shows that novelty, which has a natural tendency to awakening, may, when God pleases, have an efficacious tendency to amending." Well, then; if the novelty of an indifferent circumstance, such as place, has a natural tendency to awakening, surely we may use it according to its natural tendency, in order to awaken those that sleep in sin! And if God has in fact been pleased to use it beyond its natural tendency, to make it efficacious for amending as well as awakening, ought we not to acquiesce, yea, and rejoice therein?

9. But are sinners amended? Are they saved from their sins? Are they truly converted to God? Here is, what always must be, the main question. That many are in *some sort* converted, is owned. But to what are they converted? "To the belief of such proofless incredible stuff as transubstantiation? or to the Popish severities of flesh-fastings, celibacies, and other monkeries?" Not so. If they are converted at all, they are converted from all manner of wickedness, "to a sober, righteous, and godly life." Such a uniform practice is true outward holiness. And wherever this is undeniably found, we ought to believe there is holiness of heart: seeing the tree is known by its fruits.

10. That "the conversion of sinners to this holiness is no miracle at all," is new doctrine indeed! So new to me, that I never heard it before, either among Protestants or Papists. I think a miracle is a work of Omnipotence, wrought by the supernatural power of God. Now, if the conversion of sinners to holiness is not such a work, I cannot tell what is. I apprehend our Lord accounts it a greater work than giving sight to the blind, yea, or raising the dead. For it was after he had raised Lazarus from the dead that he told his apostles, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do, shall he do also. And greater works

* "But because I seemed reluctant to entertain his views, he expelled me from his dwelling."

than these shall he do, because I go unto my Father.' Greater outward works they could not do. It remains, therefore, that we understand those solemn words of converting souls to God: which is indeed a greater work than any that can be wrought on the body.

11. I am glad you do "not demand miracles in proof of doctrines." Thus far then we are agreed. But you demand them, 1. "as things to which I lay claim;" and in order to show that claim cannot be supported, 2. as necessary to give me "a right to be implicitly believed." And, 3dly. To justify my "assuming the apostolate of England."

If this be all, your demand must soon fall to the ground, since the whole foundation sinks beneath it. For, 1st. I lay no claim (in your sense) to miracles; for the clearing of which, suffer me to refer you once more (that I may not be surfeited with *cramba decies repetita**) to the second letter to Mr. Church. 2. I claim no implicit faith: I neither pay it to, nor expect it from, any man living. 3. I no otherwise assume the apostolate of England, (if you choose to use the phrase,) than I assume the apostolate of all Europe, or rather of all the world: that is, in plain terms, wherever I see one or a thousand men running into hell, be it in *England, Ireland, or France*, yea, in *Europe, Asia, Africa, or America*, I will stop them if I can: as a minister of Christ, I will beseech them, in his name, to turn back and be reconciled to God. Were I to do otherwise, were I to let any soul drop into the pit when I might have saved it from everlasting burnings, I am not satisfied God would accept my plea, "Lord, he was not of my parish."

12. If a single parish takes up your whole time and care, and you spend, and are spent upon it,—well. And yet I will be bold to say, that no blessing from God will accompany your ministry, but the drunkard will be a drunkard still, (and so the covetous, the brawler, the adulterer,) unless you both believe and teach what you love to call my "new notions of inspiration." I mean, as to the substance, not the particular manner of explication: you will all the day long stretch out your hands in vain, unless you teach them to pray, that the Spirit of God may inwardly witness with their spirits, that they are the children of God. I apprehend *you* are the person that "wriggle on this head," because the argument pinches: you appear to me to twist and wind to and fro, because I "distinguish away," not my doctrines, but your objections: unravelling the fallacies, showing what part is false, and what part true, but nothing to the purpose. Since you move it again, I will resume the point once more. You will pardon me if I speak home, that it may be seen which of us two it is that has hitherto given the "evasive answers."

13. You say, "Notwithstanding all your pains to distort the text, for any thing which has yet been said to the contrary, it may be understood of the Spirit's witness by miracles, by prophecy, or by the imperceptibly wrought assurances of the Holy Ghost." This (unless it gives up the whole cause, as indeed it must, if it does not imply a contradiction; seeing imperceptible assurance is no assurance at all) is neither an evasive nor unevasive answer. It is just no answer at all. Instead of refuting my arguments, you reply, "You distort the text. *Ipse dixi*."

"The Quakers maintain divine illapses, and sensible communications *always*; you *only sometimes*."—If you speak to the purpose, if you mean the inward witness of God's Spirit, I maintain it *always* as well as they.

"The Methodist writings abound with intimations of divine communications, prophetic whispers, and special guidance." Perhaps so; but that is another question. We are now speaking of the inward witness of the Spirit.

14. "They teach the notification of justification to be as perceptible as the sun at noonday." Now you come to the point, and I allow the charge. From the beginning of our correspondence to this day, I have, without any shifting or evasion at all, maintained flatly and plainly: 1st. A man feels the testimony of God's Spirit, and cannot then deny or doubt his being a child of God. 2. After a time that testimony is withdrawn, (not from every child of God: many retain the beginning of their confidence steadfast unto the end.) 3. Then he may doubt, whether this testimony was of God; and perhaps at length deny that it was."

There is no shadow of contradiction between this and the case of H. R. For 1. she felt the testimony of God's Spirit, and could not deny or doubt her being a child of God. 2. After a time, this testimony was withdrawn. 3. Then she doubted whether it was of God. Observe: she never forgot or denied that she had such a testimony. But she then doubted whether it was of God.

But you have still more to remark upon this head. So I attend you step by step.

* "Saying the same things ten times over."

15. "The instances produced (it should be *instance*, for you cite but one) in support of these high claims, instead of supporting, utterly subvert them. Thus H. R. had her justification notified: and yet she denied that her sins were forgiven." You should say, she *doubted* of it, after a time, when the testimony of God's Spirit was withdrawn. "Now either this notification was not so distinct as is pretended, or if distinct, was notified by one of suspected credit, whom she could not believe. Or if it was both distinct and credible, she was not of sound understanding, if she disbelieved it, nor of sound memory if she (*afterwards* it should be) doubted or denied that she had ever received such a message."

You say, 1. "Either that notification was not so distinct." It was so distinct, that she could not then doubt. "Or, 2. was notified to her by one of suspected credit, whom she could not believe." Yes, she then believed, and knew it was the voice of God. "Or, 3. she was not of sound understanding, if she disbelieved it."—*When* she disbelieved it, she was not. For as the serpent deceived Eve, so he then deceived her, *φθειρων το νοημα αυτης*.

"But could she possibly deny a plain matter of fact?" You add, as if I have said so, "Yes, *in process of time*, she might, particularly if she drew back to perdition:" and then subjoin, "But what is this evasive answer to the case of H. R.?" I think, nothing at all. I never applied it to her case. She never *denied* her having had such a testimony. But after a time she *doubted*, (as I said before) whether that testimony was true.

16. I presume *Eve* in paradise was at least equal in understanding with any of her posterity. Now unto her God said, *In the day that thou eatest of the tree of knowledge, thou shalt surely die*. And doubtless "this notification was as distinct and perceptible to her, as the sun at noonday. Yet after a time (perhaps only a few days) she utterly disbelieved it."

You exclaim, Absurd! impossible! there could be no such thing: as I shall prove immediately.

"Either this notification was not so distinct as is pretended; or, if distinct, was notified by one of suspected credit, whom she could not believe. Or else, if it was both distinct and credible, she was not of sound understanding if she disbelieved it, nor of sound memory, if she doubted of it." Therefore the whole story is absurd, and a self-inconsistent (not a cunningly-devised) fable.

Is not the plain answer this? This notification was as distinct as [is] pretended. And it was not notified by one of suspected credit, whom she did not then firmly believe. But afterwards Satan deceived her by his subtilty, *φθειρων το νοημα αυτης*, corrupting, spoiling, destroying, the soundness of her understanding, and of her memory too. And then she disbelieved God, and believed him who said, 'Ye shall not surely die.' How much more is he able by the same subtilty to deceive any of the fallen children of men!

17. What follows you did not design for argument, but wit. "I cannot help thinking that Paul, with all his infirmities, might more reasonably be looked upon as an inspired prophet, than Mr. Wesley, though arrived, in his own imagination, to a sinless perfection." I never told you so, nor any one else. I no more imagine that I have already attained, that I already love God, with all my heart, soul, and strength, than that I am in the third heavens.

But you make me abundant amends for this, by your charitable belief, that though I may now imagine things that are not, and be mistaken in many points, yet he who remembers I am but dust, will at last "forgive and reward me." It is enough: the time of error and sin is short: eternity is at hand.

Strangers and pilgrims here below,
This earth, we know, is not our place,
And hasten through the vale of woe,
And restless to behold thy face,
Swift to our heavenly country move,
Our everlasting Home above.

END OF THE LETTERS.

I HAVE given this controversy in full to the serious reader, not adding or omitting one word ; and I shall conclude with observing, that MR. JOHN SMITH, so called, retired from the contest, despairing of being able to induce Mr. Wesley, either to give up "THE APOSTOLATE OF ENGLAND," or to come back to the doctrine of "imperceptible" *justification and sanctification*, under which he had so long groaned, and from which he had in vain expected those *fruits and affections* of the HOLY SPIRIT, *love, joy, and peace* ; accompanied with a *hope full of immortality* : even that *rest* which CHRIST gives to those who come to him weary and heavy laden.

Concerning the *design* of this eminent controversialist, we can draw no certain conclusion. It may be inferred, however, with much probability, that if Mr. Wesley had yielded to his dignified opponent, and returned to the rational system, so called, which was so strongly pressed upon him, JOHN SMITH would have been his *friend*. It does not seem probable, that such pains would have been taken with such a man, through a mere love of disputation, or a desire of victory. A way seemed, therefore, opened to Mr. Wesley to return to honour and repose, at that very period of his life and labours, when nothing appeared before him but danger, and incessant labour and suffering. This trial, therefore, seems, in some respects, similar to that which is recorded of the *patriarchs*, Heb. xi, 15—*And truly if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly ; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God ; for he hath prepared for them a city. This was the trial of their faith. They were not disobedient to the heavenly calling.—They went out, not knowing whither they went ; neither would they accept the opportunities of returning, which their pilgrimage afforded, by the special providence of HIM who has always tried his servants. Mr. Wesley had bought the truth, and he would not sell it. He, also, endured as seeing HIM that is invisible ; hence we see the propriety of the STANZA with which he concludes his last letter.*

He therefore held on his way for forty-four years after the conclusion of this controversy ; *through honour and through dishonour, through evil report and good report ; as a deceiver, and yet true ; as unknown, and yet well known ; as chastened, and not killed ; as poor, yet making many rich ; as having nothing, yet possessing all things !*

And may we not hope, respecting his opponent, that a man of so much piety, of such rare endowments, so strong an understanding, and of so amiable a spirit ;—a man who seemed to want nothing, but what Mr. Wesley himself wanted only a few years before—THE TRUE AND LIVING FAITH OF THE GOSPEL, did not lose the benefit of such an investigation of its truths ? We may well hope it.—The retirement and sober thought, which increasing years impose on men, even of the highest station, may have brought him (as many have been brought) to attend to those teachings and reproofs of the HOLY SPIRIT, whose great office it is to *convince the world of sin*, (however specious its profession,) and to that *poverty of spirit*, that *sense* of our true condition in the sight of God ; that *feeling* of wretchedness, which alone can, in truth, extort the cry, *O wretched man that I am ! who shall deliver me from the body of this death ?* This cry was never refused at the Throne

of Grace. Thus believing with the heart, and pleading the only name, the God who bought him,—THE FAITH, which is eminently the gift of God, would not be refused. The Holy Spirit would thus glorify the Son, and the sinner becoming an adopted child of God, and walking by faith, would be enabled to give up his soul with joy into the hands of his merciful and faithful Creator.

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