

that the same cannot be said of Mr. Wesley and his labours! But in thus speaking of Mr. Simeon's scriptural adherence to the Church, I would wish you to understand me as referring to his *conduct* as a whole, for I have understood that even he adopted some measures, in order to secure what he considered an Evangelical Ministry, which savoured perhaps more of human policy than of that Wisdom the strength of which is of edient faith; but I am told that in his later days the soundness of his Church principles became yet more pleasingly conspicuous; and such a fact, in connection with such an individual, speaks volumes.

Mr. Brown.—Stop, my dear Sir; you forget that the path of duty is not the same for every individual; because Mr. Simeon was useful in his particular situation at the University, I cannot see how that proves that Mr. Wesley was wrong in his more extended labours. Besides, you know that Mr. Wesley always followed what he believed to be the guidance of Divine Providence, and surely that would not lead him into error.

Mr. Seeker.—I grant that the path of duty is not the same to every man; but I instituted this comparison for the purpose of showing you that even the plea of doing more extensive good would not avail to excuse Mr. Wesley's erratic line of conduct, inasmuch as in Mr. Simeon we see an example of similar, perhaps, greater usefulness, and in accordance with those principles of Church unity and due subordination which the Sacred Scriptures and the Primitive Church have always enjoined. Indeed it is, under any circumstance, an unsound principle to suppose that we are justified in disregarding a known law in order to bring about what we imagine will be a greater good; for what is that but to say that our aim is so necessary to the cause of Christ, that, sooner than it should not be rendered, we are at liberty to neglect His laws. But surely, if Christians would but consider, they would perceive the arrogance of supposing that God *needed* the help of any man,—it is in fact an act of the highest condescension, on His part, to permit us to be co-workers with Him, and surely, therefore, it would be inconsistent with His dignity to allow us, as though He could not do without our help, to disobey Him in one thing, in order that we may serve Him in another. Now *this* I consider Mr. Wesley did, when, in the hope of spreading spiritual religion, he violated the Unity of the Church, and trifled with Episcopal authority. Was not this doing evil that good might come? And what is it but this false principle which has caused most of the divisions and heresies of the Church? And, in fact, is it not this principle, fairly carried out, which is the ground-work of all the corrupt doings of the Jesuits themselves? I know how exceedingly difficult it is for even good men entirely to submit their own judgment to the wisdom of God, fully satisfied that

"to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." The *judicious* Hooker, who, as you may know, was one of the gentlest and yet most unanswerable opposers, in Queen Elizabeth's time, of those Puritanic sectaries whose principles laid the foundation of the Great Rebellion, and consequent martyrdom of King Charles I., thus speaks concerning the evil of leaning, in matters of religion, to our own understanding; "unless we will be authors of confusion in the Church, our private discretion, which otherwise might guide us a contrary way, must here" (namely, in subjection to ecclesiastical authority) "submit itself to be that way guided, which the public judgment of the Church hath thought better." He also quotes, on this subject, from Zonaras, an ancient Father of the Church, who, speaking of those who in his day disregarded the authority of the Church says, "let good things be done in a good and convenient manner,—good things do lose the grace of their goodness, when in good sort they are not performed."

Mr. Brown.—I must confess, Mr. Seeker, that you appear to me to reason correctly; and I am now scarcely surprised that, after having thus examined the matter, you could not longer remain amongst the Methodists; because, if schism and insubordination are sins, and that they are so I cannot doubt, then, and it is with pain that I make the admission, I see not but that Mr. Wesley was wrong in the course he pursued. But yet I still cannot think that the Divine Being would have been better pleased had he been comparatively inactive, and the amazing good he effected remained consequently undone.

Mr. Seeker.—I perfectly agree with you there, my dear sir, but remember, inactivity was not the alternative; for though in order to strengthen my argument, I have incidentally shown that it cannot be right, even under the hope of greater usefulness, to disobey the law of Christ or his Church, yet it does appear to me that Mr. Wesley was without even this plea, and it was to prove this that I adduced the instance of Mr. Simeon's usefulness; Mr. Wesley like him was a clergyman, a scholar, and a fellow of the University; had he then only employed his sound learning and superior talents, hallowed as they were by his zeal for God, in extending true piety in the University by his example and preaching, and implanting right feelings and principles in the candidates for Holy Orders, had he thus acted, how glorious and untrammelled had been his success; it is true he would not have been the founder of a sect, but would he not like Simeon have had the far higher glory of reviving true piety within the borders of the one Catholic Church itself? Mr. Simeon, it appears to me, commenced at the right end, he instructed those in true righteousness, who were to be the scripturally appointed Pastors of the people, and hence they went forth spreading the saviour of