

have been our benefactors, and that we are all indebted to them in our political and religious capacities for their labors. Because they have not done every thing which they might have done, or which they ought to have done, we should not withhold the meed of thanks for what they have done. Although two systems of religion, both end in the flesh, one may be greatly preferable to the other. This will appear evident when it is considered that, amongst religious persecutors, some are more exorable and lenient than others. Now, if there should be two systems of religion that both lead to persecution and issue in it, that one which carries its rage no farther than to the prison and to the whipping-post, is greatly to be preferred to that which leads to the torturing wheel and to the faggot. The reason of this is very obvious, for most men would rather be whipped than burned for their religion. In other respects there are differences, which are illustrated by the preceding.

Those reformers are not most deserving of our thanks who stand highest and most celebrated in the annals of reformations. We owe more to John Wickliffe than to Martin Luther, and more, perhaps, to Peter Bruys than to John Calvin. The world is more indebted to Christopher Columbus than to Americus Vesputius, yet the latter supplanted the former in his well earned fame. So it has been amongst religious reformers. The success of every enterprize gives eclat to it. As great and as good men as George Washington have been hung or beheaded for treason.

The reformations most celebrated in the world are those which departed the least from the systems they professed to reform. Hence, we have been often told that there is but a paper wall between England and Rome. The church of England, with King Henry or George IV. as her head, though a celebrated reformation, has made but a few and very short strides from her mother, the church of Rome, with the pope at her head. So sensible of this are the good members of the reformed church of England, that they yet give to their king the title of "Defender of the Faith," although the title was first given him by the pope for defending his faith. The reformation of the church of England, effected by Mr. Wesley, which issued in Episcopal Methodism, has entailed the same clerical dominion over that zealous people, which their forefathers complained of in the hierarchies of England and Rome. And not in England only does this dominion exist, but even in these United States, of all regions of the earth the most unfriendly to a religious monarchy, or even a religious oligarchy. The question remains yet to be decided, whether a conference of Methodistic clergy, with its bishop in its chair, and laity at home, is any reformation at all from a conclave of English prelates, headed by a metropolitan or an archbishop. It is even uncertain whether the Methodistic discipline has led more people to heaven, or made them happier on earth, than the rubric or liturgy of England.

All the famous reformations in history have rather been reformations of creeds and of clergy, than of religion. Since the New Testament was finished, it is fairly to be presumed that there cannot be any reformation of religion, properly so called. Though called reformations in religion, they have always left religion where it was. I do not think