

THE
CHRISTIAN RECORDER:

Vol. II.

DECEMBER, 1820.

No 10.

SOUTHEY'S LIFE OF WESLEY.

MR. SOUTHEY introduces this long-promised work by observing that the sect or society of Methodists has existed for the greater part of a century, that they have their seminaries, and their hierarchy, their own regulations, their own manners, their own literature; form a distinct people, an *imperium in imperio*, in England; are extending widely in America, and in both countries number their annual increase by thousands; and that yet the history of their founder is very little known beyond the limits of those who are termed the religious public. He might have added, that even this limited public is much better acquainted with the leading events in Wesley's life, than with the nature, or origin, or tendency of his system. In one quarter he is confounded with his own illiterate teachers, and in another he is regarded as a patron saint. One class, which has the honour to reckon Mr. Southey among its members, is aware of his errors, but still considers him a public benefactor—another in which we are desirous to be enrolled, is not blind to his various and very uncommon merits; yet thinks that, on the whole, he did more harm than good.

We feel convinced that this last opinion will eventually prevail—and, though it obviously is not the opinion of Mr. Southey, yet we suspect that his labours will contribute to give it strength.—His well merited popularity will recommend the history of Methodism to the attention of numbers who had previously treated it with unmerited neglect—his candid and perspicuous narrative will guide them gently through the labyrinth, without giving any violent shock to their prejudices. or producing any unnecessary intellectual fatigue; the peculiar merits and failings of his hero, will be perceived, and Wesley's life will be contemplated in the