

tingle again. The laws of Society and the rights of men cannot always be violated with impunity. The day of reckoning will come;—the gloomy night of spiritual degradation will pass away, and the beautiful morning of intelligence and freedom—of holiness and peace and love—will yet appear.

P.S.—Since writing the above the Minutes of the British Conference, for 1847, have been published, and show a decrease of 2098 members in England, and of 2913 in Ireland! i.e. in all 5011; while at *all the foreign Stations* there has been only an increase of 253.

Mr. Wesley and the Apostle Paul's ideas about the Office of a Bishop.

"How can you, how dare you, be called a Bishop? I shudder 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 a Bishop! For my sake, for God's sake, for Christ's sake, put an end to this."—EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM JOHN WESLEY TO FRANCIS ASBURY, Dated Sept. 20th, 1788.

"This is a true saying, if a man desire the office of a Bishop, he desireth a good work."—Extract of a Letter from the Apostle Paul to Timothy.

There is between the two writers we have quoted, a very remarkable difference of opinion; and no christian can doubt on which side the truth lies. An inspired messenger of Christ says, that to desire the office of a Bishop is a good work;—Mr. Wesley, a good but uninspired man says, that he would rather be called a knave—a fool—a rascal—or a scoundrel, than be called a Bishop! Why, this singular opposition of a good man to the Apostle? We reply, that the Apostle was writing about one thing and Mr. Wesley about another. Paul was writing about CHRISTIAN BISHOPS, whose jurisdiction never extended beyond a single congregation; while Mr. Wesley was writing about DIOCESAN or STATE CHURCH BISHOPS, whose jurisdiction always extends over a vast multitude of congregations: Paul was referring to an office of divine appointment: Mr. Wesley to an office of mere human appointment. The truth is, Mr. Wesley was educated in the dark school of national episcopacy; and although the jurisdiction of Diocesan State Bishops has no countenance whatever from the New Testament, but is a gross usurpation; yet he sincerely believed that they were the *alone legal successors of the Apostles*, and had a right to exercise such power as true Apostolic Bishops! Hence his pious but mistaken dread at Mr. Asbury being called a Bishop.—The good man appears to have been alarmed at one of the many hob-goblins set up by priestcraft,—and almost dreaded the fate of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram for himself or his friends, if any of them had assumed the name or functions of a Bishop."! Yet Mr. Wesley, or any of his colleagues, being the chosen Pastor of a congregation of Christian believers, and confining his powers, as a ruler, within the limits prescribed by Scripture,—namely to that single congregation.—was in reality a true Christian Bishop: while the Diocesans whom he feared and revered, were mere usurpers, and had no claim whatever to the title.

To prove this, we give our readers evidence of the important fact that EVERY CHURCH OR CONGREGATION established by the Apostles HAD TWO OR MORE BISHOPS, or Elders ordained to be its rulers. See Acts xiv. 23, and Phillipians i. 1. Mark then the mighty contrast between Scriptural

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