

haps) be held legally responsible for the numerous errors and falsehoods sent abroad through your Journal, yet as the Superintendent Minister of the Society in which you meet in Gt. St. upon "Trial," I necessarily must, under the circumstances (knowing you to be the writer) hold you morally responsible for them, and deal with you in the Church accordingly. It follows, therefore, that I cannot conceive of you otherwise than as the willing and voluntary evil tool and aid, of some unknown agitators in and about this City.

For reasons included in such general texts as the above: I feel it to be my bounden duty to state to you frankly and personally, that I have not the least confidence in you, and consider you as utterly unworthy of a place among us, even upon trial. You will therefore regard your exit as official and Methodistically dropped from among us.

I have by me a copy of this my letter to you, and should you in any way make an improper use of it, or any part of it, or of its contents, I shall feel myself at liberty to publish the letter entire, with such remarks accompanying it as I may judge the occasion demands.

With suitable regards, I am your, &c.
H. WILKINSON.

P.S.—I have notified your Leader of my official act in your case.
H. W.

Toronto, 13th May, 1845.

To the Rev. H. Wilkinson.

Sir,—I have received your letter, of the 7th inst., and I am glad to receive it instead of a personal visit, which, both agreeable to the discipline of the Church and the New Testament, was your first duty. "I thy brother hath fought against thee, go and tell him his fault between him and thee alone," but I believe you had not the moral courage to do this. You say you have consulted my feelings, and preferred writing to publicly exposing me: this can hardly be true, it being inconsistent with the latter part of your letter, in which you have threatened that exposure. It is at the same time done, as much as you are able; for you cannot expect that I shall not make your letter public, both in the Church and to the world. It is a letter calculated to wound me in the tenderest part; and its object is to keep me and my family out of the Church forever: it is you only who need to be afraid of exposure. I shall not imitate the spirit or the language of your letter, but shall proceed simply to reply to what you are so careful to repeat are your facts.

The first is, "that I was put off the plan to avoid disgrace to the Church." Why did you not honestly admit, that it was at my own voluntary request I wish you know is the truth. The facts of the case are that I came to you in private, at Kingston, and beseeching at the time difficulties in my business, requested to be allowed to withdraw from the plan, to which you consented; and no further action whatever, on your part or on the part of the Church, was taken, than that of assenting to my request. I solemnly appeal to God, and to your own conscience, for the entire accuracy of this statement: I defy you to make more of this than what I have now stated. The conversation between you and me, on that occasion being strictly private, and it being found in the *Colonist*, of March 11th, in an anonymous article, signed "Truth," I now have the satisfaction of knowing that you furnished that portion of the article which relates to the question before me. At a proper time I will produce my partner's corroboration of my present statement.

With regard to your two facts, as you call them. As to the first, I ask, did I not voluntarily request to be allowed to withdraw from public labour? You must say I did. Then your fact is a falsehood. I was not put off the plan, to avoid disgrace to the Church, and I remained a member of the Church nearly two years after that; and if the disgrace did not affect membership, it could not have been disgrace.

As to the second, Was there ever an act of expulsion, in relation to me, on the part of the Church? You know there was not. If there had been, you would have made the most of it long before this; and your article in the *Colonist*, of the 11th March, would not have required so many equivocal expressions. But you have so constructed your language as to lead to the inference that I was put off the plan by an act of the Church, without to receive to my expressed wish, and that, without an interval of nearly two years, I was subsequently excluded altogether. In a sermon from you, a few weeks ago, on the subject of lying, you said, that making an impression contrary to fact was lying. I entirely agree with you in this. What, then, must be your conduct, when you dare not say that I was expelled, while you leave it to be inferred? This is not only lying, but, in my humble opinion, the worst species of lying—the most malignant and the most cowardly. If you still say, I did disgrace the Church, it was when you was Superintendent there: why then did you not interfere, but leave me a member when you left the Circuit? Your charge, called your second fact, plainly implies exposure: that is, expulsion in the active sense of the word. No act of expulsion ever took place in relation to me;—no impropriety was ever proved against me; and if the present Superin-

tendent has sent you a document which will maintain such a meaning, he has sent you a libellous one; but he and you know that expulsion never took place with regard to me. I should not use this strong language, if I had not found that in your letter you said of me, "you gave the lie to the two principal charges," and that you said, "that I knew in my heart that they were as true as the Bible." In these few words of your letter you have degraded the office of a Minister of the Gospel, by the use of such coarse language, and made a very injudicious comparison in reference to the Bible; I therefore indignantly repel your charges, and return your own language, "you know, in your own heart, you have stated falsehoods." You are now fairly challenged on your veracity, which you said, on a former occasion, you would "surrender to no man," and on your reputation, as a Minister of the Gospel, to clear yourself on these two points; and, as you also said to your opponent, "mind, it must be proof, not evasion," I say also, it must be proof; and on failing to do this, you cannot complain if the same measure is meted out to you, that you insisted on for your opponent,—you must stand before the community as the originator and propagator of calumny and falsehood." In this, it is obvious you resemble your noble exemplar, Dr. Haysen: you have embarked in the same cause, and use the same means of promoting it, but with less ability.

I have also to remark, as a further proof that, in your own knowledge, your two charges had no existence; you spoke favourably of me to the official meeting, and to others, after I came to Toronto; and when I told you that as soon as I could get comfortably settled in the city, with my family, I would see you, and renew my connection with the Church, you assented, and said you would endeavour to make me comfortable in that respect; your colleague, also, invited me to join a class more than once, to whom I gave the same reasons for a little delay in the matter. I ask you why you did not then treat me as one excluded altogether—as one who had degraded the Church, and unworthy to be a member even on trial? The only answer you can honestly give is, that the *Periodical Journal* had not then appeared. That part of your letter relating to the inflated charge of fraudulently imposing on you is not worth notice, as your own letter relieves it, by asking one way I did not rectify the mistake when I had discovered it. How could it be a fraud, if it was a mistake? You at the same time insinuate that I contradicted you, knowing that I was wrong. This is what I would not believe of you, without demonstration. The insinuation on your part is sufficient, however, to suggest a paraphrase of the well known royal motto,—The evil is in them that think it. But what inducement had I to return, on discovering my mistake, when I had been told by you that I was not fit to be a member of any Christian Church on earth, and when this was accompanied with coarse and abusive epithets? Surely you could not expect any one that wished to associate only with gentlemen & Christians to enter your house again.

The charges of falsehood arising out of the publication of the *Periodical Journal* I shall not notice, till the statements therein are disproved: all then, they are not falsehoods; only, I repeat, that what ever therein shall be clearly disproved, shall be honourably retracted, and due amends made; for no misrepresentation has ever been intentionally inserted. At the same time, I protest against the attempt to convert unavoidable inaccuracies into falsehoods. I shall admit nothing to be a falsehood but wilful misrepresentation whatever my opponents may do. But the great offence is, the publication of this Journal: this is the unpardonable sin, publishing the otherwise innumerable abuses in the Church, that public opinion may do what no other instrumentality can do.

For this, you have presumptuously placed yourself in the judgment seat of God, and declared me unworthy to be a member of any Church; and with regard to the Methodist Church, not worthy to be a member "even on trial."

Who gave you authority to excommunicate forever? What right have you to deprive a whole family of the benefit of the ministrations of the Church? for you must know that if you can place the head of it in a position impossible of reception on trial, you drive him and his family forever from it. If this is a specimen of your pastoral care, you will have much to answer for; and, indeed, it is too true that you and a few others have, in a similar way, scattered the flock in Canada for the last fifteen years. This proves you an unfaithful minister of Christ; for, while the principle of the Gospel is to gather in, your conduct drives whole families out. I think you will find, before long, that I now have told you the truth.

I have now only to notice the last clause of your letter, which insinuates that I could only make an improper use of it, and threatens me with exposure, in your publishing it. I wonder you forget 1st Corinthians, 13th chapter, when you wrote this, and even the whole of your letter; you have certainly no right to preach from that part of the Scriptures: pray lay it aside, till you can exhibit that loving spirit; or, to refer to higher authority, as more

suitable counsel on the occasion, "What hast thou to do to declare my statutes?"

Your sentence against me, of everlasting excommunication, implied in declaring me unworthy of being a member in the Church even on trial, (and that before you have proved immoral ty against me,) I regard but little: it will only tend to make you ridiculous, and bring a reproach on the Church of which you are a Minister. But it is a subject of more importance to the members of the Church in general than to me; for if you can thus excommunicate on your single authority in one case, you can do it again. It is an assumption of power so awfully dangerous, that I have no doubt it will either shortly be taken from you, or the worst consequences will follow the exercise of it. For no Christian Church can stand on such principles. Do not think I write with asperity because I write thus strongly. You have attempted the most serious injury to my character in your letter, which you have forced me to publish; in which I am stigmatized as unworthy to be even a member on trial; you cannot, therefore, expect to inflict such wounds with impunity. As to your remarks, that you have no confidence in me, they also refer to moral character, and are more of your poisoned arrows; but I feel very indifferent about not possessing your confidence. You have exhibited no inability in remaining some in the Church; you may be equally mistaken in relation to those you wish to put out; and the question now before the public is, what confidence the whole community will hereafter have in you?

Besides, Sir, I am as much of the Church as you are, and have as much right to excommunicate you as you me, according to the principles of the New Testament. I therefore mean to abide in it to the last. and if I am denied the privileges of a member, you cannot force me from the public services. This I shall do, not because I cannot go elsewhere, but to set an example to others to abide with the people of their choice, and not hastily to take offence, and leave them because of the arbitrary conduct of a Minister. The people, Sir, are the Church, and not the Ministers, who are the servants of it only; not the masters of it, any more than they are the Church itself. It has too long been found an easy remedy and deliverance from the people's complaints to get rid of the chief complainers—the agitators, as you have called them. The complainers have only to stand, firm with God and truth on their side, and those that love the pre-eminence, and are so fond of casting out of the Church, will be cast out themselves.

Having gone through your charges against me, I shall point out a few which lie against you. You are charged with participating in the late political intrigue, by saying, "We (the Methodists) are able to turn the elections at any time between the contending parties, and that before the elections come on we will run our own system, and the party who will take us up, or give us the most, shall have our support." This you know to be true, notwithstanding, in a letter in the *Globe*, dated September 21st, you characterized the letter containing the above extract as a vilification. Now, there are as many as a dozen persons in Toronto most unexceptionable witnesses of the truth of the utterance, by you, of that language. On another occasion, you told some official members you wished to be sent strong to Conference, plainly giving them to understand that you would deal faithfully with the Memorial committed to you to lay before Conference, to ensure the effect, namely, opposition to Mr. Ryerson's political course, with regard to which you wanted to be sent "strong to Conference." You were sent strong to Conference, but you never presented the memorial; and you afterwards denied the application of the words to the subject of the memorial. As to their application to the subject of the memorial, that was understood; and if you did not intend such an application of them, you should have been candid and explicit. And, as to the utterance of them, your disputing the application is one proof (in addition to which there are several unexceptionable witnesses) that you uttered them, and in connection with the memorial too. You are charged with falsehood, slander, and evil speaking, as being the author of the anonymous article signed "Truth," in the *Colonist*, of 11th March, which charges are all proved by your own writings. Under the most favourable circumstances you are guilty of evil-speaking; for you surely know the positive nature of the scriptural precept, "Speak evil of no man." And, in one instance, your own letter proves the falsehood of the anonymous article signed "Truth," in relation to another part of the subject. That article states that I was altogether put out of the Church, and was not in connection with any branch of the Methodist family, while the chief object of your letter to me is, to expel me from your own branch of it. Surely it is not for you to call the productions of others "falsely" and "very rancorous," and to characterize them as "zile," and "slandrous," and "foul things!" Your letter to me, in the judgment of every one, condemns you in relation to these very characteristics. It is evident you know not what spirit you are of, and that a spirit of heavenly sort did not indite a word of your letter. Every reader of your own letter, who has any genuine regard for the Church,