

12. For, supposing (what I utterly deny) that the receiving you as a Preacher, at the same time gave an authority to administer the sacraments; yet it gave you no other authority than to do it, or anything else, *where I appoint*. But where did I appoint you to do this? Nowhere at all. Therefore, by this very rule you are excluded from doing it. And in doing it, you renounce the first principles of Methodism, which was wholly and solely to preach the Gospel.

13. It was several years after our society was formed, before any attempt of this kind was made. The first was, I apprehend, at Norwich. One of our Preachers there yielded to the importunity of a few of the people, and baptized their children. But as soon as it was known, he was informed it must not be, unless he designed to leave our Connexion. He promised to do it no more; and I suppose he kept his promise.

14. Now, as long as the Methodists keep to this plan, they cannot separate from the Church. And this is our peculiar glory. It is new upon the earth. Revolve all the histories of the church, from the earliest ages, and you will find, whenever there was a great work of God in any particular city or nation, the subjects of that work soon said to their neighbors, "Stand by yourselves, for we are holier than you!" As soon as ever they separated themselves, either they retired into deserts, or they built religious houses; or at least formed parties, into which none was admitted but such as subscribed both to their judgment and practice. But with the Methodists it is quite otherwise: they are not a sect or party; they do not separate from the religious community to which they at first belonged; they are still members of the Church;—such they desire to live and to die. And I believe, one reason why God is pleased to continue my life so long is, to confirm them in their present purpose, not to separate from the Church.

15. But, notwithstanding this, many warm men say, "Nay, but you *do* separate from the Church." Others are equally warm, because they say I *do not*. I will, nakedly declare the thing as it is.

I hold all the doctrines of the Church of England. I love her liturgy. I approve her plan of discipline, and only wish it could be put in execution. I do not knowingly vary from any rule of the Church, unless in those few instances, where I judge, and as far as I judge, there is an absolute necessity.

For instance, (1.) As few Clergymen open their churches to me, I am under the necessity of *preaching abroad*.

(2.) As I know no forms that will suit all occasions, I am often under a necessity of *praying extempore*.

(3.) In order to build up the flock of Christ in faith and love, I am under a necessity of uniting them together, and of dividing them into little companies, that they may provoke one another to love and good works.

(4.) That my fellow-labourers and I may more effectually assist each other, to save our own souls and those that hear us, I judge it necessary to meet the Preachers, or, at least, the greater part of them, once a year.

(5.) In those Conferences, we fix the stations of all the Preachers for the ensuing year.

But all this is not separating from the Church. So far from it, that, whenever I have opportunity, I attend the Church Service myself, and advise all our societies so to do.

16. Nevertheless, as the generality even of religious people, who do not understand my motives of acting, and who on the one hand hear me profess that I will not separate from the Church, and on the other that I do vary from it in these instances, they will naturally think I am inconsistent with myself. And they cannot but think so, unless they observe my two

principles: the one, that I dare not separate from the Church, that I believe it would be a sin so to do; the other, that I believe it would be a sin not to vary from it in the points above mentioned. I say, put these two principles together,—first, I will not, separate from the Church; yet, secondly, in cases of necessity, I will vary from it, (both of which I have constantly and openly avowed for upwards of fifty years,)—and inconsistency vanishes away. I have been true to my profession from 1730 to this day.

17. "But is it not contrary to your profession to permit service in Dublin at Church hours? For what necessity is there for this? or what good end does it answer?" I believe it answers several good ends, which could not so well be answered any other way. The first is, (strange as it may sound,) to *prevent a separation* from the Church. Many of our society were totally separated from the Church; they never attended it at all. But now they duly attend the Church every first Sunday in the month. "But had they not better attend it every week?" Yes; but who can persuade them to it? I cannot. I have strove to do it twenty or thirty years; but in vain. The second is, the weaning them from attending Dissenting meetings, which many of them attended constantly, but have now wholly left. The third is, the constantly hearing that sound doctrine which is able to save their souls.

18. I wish all of you who are vulgarly termed Methodists would seriously consider what has been said. And particularly you whom God hath commissioned to call sinners to repentance. It does by no means follow from hence, that ye are commissioned to baptize, or to administer the Lord's Supper. Ye never dreamed of this, for ten or twenty years after ye began to preach. Ye did not then, like Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, "seek the priesthood also." Ye knew "no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." O contain yourselves within your own bounds; be content with preaching the Gospel; "do the work of Evangelists;" proclaim to all the world the loving-kindness of God our Saviour; declare to all, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand: repent ye, and believe the Gospel!" I earnestly advise you, abide in your place; keep your own station. Ye were, fifty years ago, those of you that were then Methodist Preachers, *extraordinary messengers* of God, not going in your own will, but *thrust out*, not to supersede, but to "provoke to jealousy," the ordinary messengers. In God's name, stop there! Both by your preaching and example provoke them to love and to good works. Ye are a new phenomenon in the earth,—a body of people who, being of no sect or party, are friends to all parties, and endeavour to forward all in heart-religion, in the knowledge and love of God and man. Ye yourselves were at first called in the Church of England; and though ye have and will have a thousand temptations to leave it, and set up for yourselves, regard them not; be Church-of-England men still; do not cast away the peculiar glory which God hath put upon you, and frustrate the design of Providence, the very end for which God raised you up.

19. I would add a few words to those serious people who are not connected with the Methodists; many of whom are of our own Church, the Church of England. And why should ye be displeased with us? We do you no harm; we do not design or desire to offend you in anything; we hold your doctrines; we observe your rules, more than do most of the people in the kingdom. Some of you are Clergymen. And why should ye, of all men, be displeased with us? We neither attack your character nor your revenue; we honour you for "your work's sake!" If we see some things which we do not approve of, we do not publish them; we rather cast a mantle over them, and hide what we cannot commend. When ye treat us

unkindly or unjustly, we suffer it. "Being reviled, we bless;" we do not return railing for railing. O let not *your* hand be upon us!

20. Ye that are rich in this world, count us not your enemies because we tell you the truth, and, it may be, in a fuller and stronger manner than any others will or dare do. Ye have therefore need of us, inexpressible need. Ye cannot buy such friends at any price. All your gold and silver cannot purchase such. Make use of us while ye may. If it be possible, never be without some of those who will speak the truth from their heart. Otherwise, ye may grow grey in your sins; ye may say to your souls, "Peace, peace!" while there is no peace. Ye may sleep on, and dream ye are in the way to heaven, till ye awake in everlasting fire.

21. But whether ye will hear, or whether ye will forbear, we, by the grace of God, hold on our way; being ourselves still members of the Church of England, as we were from the beginning, but receiving all that love God in every church, as our brother, and sister, and mother. And in order to their union with us, we require no unity in opinions, or in modes of worship, but barely that they "fear God and work righteousness," as was observed. Now, this is utterly a new thing, unheard of in any other Christian community. In what church or congregation beside, throughout the Christian world, can members be admitted upon these terms without any other conditions? Point any such out, whoever can: I know none in Europe, Asia, Africa, or America! This is the glory of the Methodists, and of them alone! They are themselves no particular sect or party; but they receive those, of all parties, who "endeavour to do justly, and love mercy, and walk humbly with their God."

CORK, May 4, 1789.

ECCLESIASTICAL NOTES.

THE BISHOP OF MEATH.—The Very Rev. Dean Reichel, bishop-elect of Meath, was born in Yorkshire, and was graduated from Trinity College, Dublin, in 1843. He is a member of the Senate of the University. He holds a prominent position in the Irish Church both for character and abilities. He has been Archdeacon of Meath, as well as Canon of St. Patrick's and Dean of Clonmacnois. He has published sermons on the Lord's Prayer, on the Prayer Book, and on the Origin of Christianity, besides several other works.

DISESTABLISHMENT.—Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, speaking of the disestablishment of the Church of England said:—

Some of us may be old-fashioned enough to think to-day that of all the wants of our common humanity there is nothing more important than some provision for religious instruction; and yet, although Mr. Chamberlain suggests that the State shall provide almost everything for its members, he couples that proposal with the disestablishment and disendowment of the Church of England. The poorest classes throughout our land, in our great cities, in our country towns, in our rural villages, are to lose that spiritual and temporal help by which they have profited for so many generations, and all this on the ground of some fancied inequality between the Church of England and other religious congregations of the country. I think it will be some time to come before our great and grand Church is destroyed by such attacks as these. Let her but continue to do her duty—let her but continue to support herself as she is now supporting herself through the length and breadth of the land, and she will sustain safely and without harm these attacks of the *Brummagem* caucus, all the more certainly because the sound of these attacks will but serve to rally defenders round about her.