

desire to preserve identity in the form of the Class-meeting, but so to modify its relation to the church, as no longer to require attendance as a term of membership. This question is now being discussed in some of the official organs of a branch of the Methodist Church, in a neighbouring country, and therefore claims at least, a notice in a journal devoted to the advocacy and defence of the general principles of the Wesleyan economy. The change of relation of the Class-meeting, so as no longer to require attendance as a condition of membership in the Methodist Church is advocated for two reasons. First,—That the rule involves an unscriptural requirement, and—Secondly, it is distasteful to a large class of the friends of Methodism, and therefore is an obstacle to their union with the church.

1. If the first ground of objection, can be sustained, no further controversy should be had by any true Protestant, who receives the Scriptures as the only and sufficient rule both of faith and practice. Neither Mr. Wesley's authority, nor the usage of more than one hundred years, can invest any practice with the character of a christian duty, which not only lacks Scriptural authority, but which is opposed to that rule of faith. But can the objection be sustained, that the rule involves an unscriptural requirement, and is therefore an infringement of the rights of those who on all other grounds, both from choice and conviction, prefer membership in the Methodist church to any other? A charge so serious, and involving so grave a reflection upon the Wesleys and their successors, who for more than one hundred years have sanctioned and enforced the rule, should not be made but upon evidence sufficient to produce the clearest conviction of its truth. Upon this point, a recent number of a contemporary* happily supplies us with a most forcible defence.

“The class-meeting simply represents and systematizes Christian conversation, or the relation of religious experience. Is a rehearsal of our life experiences not right? Is it not scriptural? The Psalmist did not think it wrong to cry out:—“Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul.” His entire utterances furnish an epitome of an earnest, honest, sublime human life, conversant with conflicts, familiar with penitential strains, and by no means a stranger to triumphs and their attendant joys. The Psalms are scarcely anything else than a book of religious experiences, and it is this that has made them the chief joy of the Church of all times. The Apostolic Church, as presented to view in the writings of the New Testament, exhibits a fervency, pathos, and earnestness in the relation of religious experience, but too little known at the present day. Paul emulated and even surpassed the Psalmist in

* Pittsburg Advocate.