

THE WESLEYAN.

Halifax, Saturday Morning, November 15, 1851.

REPLY TO OUR ACCUSER AT MARGARET'S BAY.

Our views of the Archbishop of Canterbury's admission of the validity of presbyterian orders confirmed—the folly of high-churchmen holding up John Wesley as a pattern to modern Methodists—the impolicy of J. S.'s reference to Peggy's Cove—the commendable efforts made to circulate *The Wesleyan* at Margaret's Bay.

Some weeks since, we noted the catholic statement of the ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY, admitting the validity of presbyterian orders, and the Protest which was getting up against it in England "for the signatures of both laity and clergy." Having had some choice specimens of the high-church sympathies of an "obscure individual," as he is pleased to style himself, at Margaret's Bay, whose self-assumed province seems to be, over the signature of "J. S.," to write down "dissent," and treat with contempt christian ministers not episcopally ordained, we took occasion to say, that "J. S. of Margaret's Bay would rejoice to sign that Protest and support it with all the weight of his authority;" and, in view of his blind attachment to the figment of Apostolical Succession, as held by persons of his class, we exclaimed—"Oh! how he must mourn over the low churchmanship of the Primate of all England!" These few, harmless words have stirred the spirit and nerved the arm of this redoubtable champion, and forthwith he takes the field, accoutered *cap-a-pie*, resolved to repel "the fresh editorial attack," and, we suppose, be the death of us. He has charged us, through *The Church Times*, in open column—stormed us with leaden bullets, heavy stuff indeed,—types only, it may be, of what is yet in store for our defenceless head.

He is truly a high-spirited, if not a successful, defender of Apostolical Succession; and would be a more formidable antagonist to truth, were he to wander less, and not expend his strength in vainly beating the air. His is a running, if not a raking, fire. His aim is not good—what wonder if he miss the mark. In his excitement he mistakes his object, and wounds friend and foe. "The Church" has received more injury from his own ill-directed blows, than from the supposed hostility of those whom his imagination has magnified and distorted into enemies, because they sometimes choose to defend themselves from the assaults of some of her vain-boasting sons. As far as we are concerned, the thunder and lightning of this valorous knight have been worse than vain. We are not terrified. The flash we indeed saw—it did not dazzle, much less, blind or kill. The noise was heard—but we knew whence it came; it was loud and confused, but harmless.

In vain he essays to gloss over the real purport of the Archbishop's admission—the fact remains. "I hardly imagine," are the words of the Primate, "that there are two bishops of the bench or one clergyman in fifty throughout our church, who would deny the validity of the orders of those" (foreign Protestant) "clergymen, solely on account of their wanting the imposition of episcopal hands." If therefore, in any circumstances, ordination by the hands of presbyters—the true scriptural bishops—is valid,—then ordination by the hands of ecclesiastical bishops is not essential to the validity of the christian ministry. The language of the Archbishop, taken as an answer to the question proposed by Gawthorn, is plain and definite, the legitimate meaning of which can neither be denied nor evaded. That we have not misrepresented the Archbishop is further evident from his own subsequent explanation which must have come under the notice of J. S.

The enquiry of Mr. Gawthorn, he says—"I thought equivalent to the question whether we held that no person, in any country or under any circumstances, could be entitled to minister in the Church of Christ except through the imposition of episcopal hands."

"I replied that I imagined this to be as far as possible from the general opinion, either among our bishops or clergy. I knew that neither our ARTICLES nor our FORMULARIES maintained such an opinion. I knew that many of our EMINENT DIVINES had disclaimed such an opinion; and I knew that such an opinion, if pursued to its consequences, would amount to declaring" (what J. S. has been vainly and very foolishly endeavouring to shew) "that no valid sacrament or

other ministerial act had ever been performed except under an episcopal form of government. And, therefore, I could not believe, and I still do not believe, that many of our clergy would venture seriously to maintain such an opinion."

When, therefore, J. S. asserts that we have "dishonestly distorted the Archbishop's opinion, in the hope that it will have the effect of appeasing many a qualm of conscience among our followers"—we tell him, that nothing can shield him from the imputation of bearing false witness against his neighbour. He may have fallen into this "sin" unintentionally, through a blind zeal for "the church," but the result should teach him the necessity of being more cautious in preferring groundless accusations against those who revere truth quite as much as himself.

In opposition to the judgment of the Archbishop and of the "many eminent divines" to whom he refers, including the English Reformers, the unsupported and anti-protestant opinion of such men as J. S. has not the weight of a single feather. Episcopacy, as held by high-churchmen, has no divine right; and if J. S. questions the truthfulness of this assertion, let him, if he can, produce a solitary passage from the Word of God which positively or impliedly affirms, that no ordination to the christian ministry is valid, unless it be effected by the laying on of the hands of a man invested with an order higher than that appertaining to a presbyter. We respect the judgment of the Archbishop in this case, because it is in unison with the general tenor and spirit of the Scriptures, as well as on account of its catholicity; but should another Archbishop arise and express an opinion contrary to that of the present Primate, we should feel bound to regard it just as we would any other opinion not warranted by divine authority.

Like others "J. S." is willing to emblazon the memory and garnish the tomb of Mr. WESLEY, if thereby he can cast a slur on his followers.—A little knowledge of Wesleyan history would do him no harm ere he venture on this ground. He holds up Mr. Wesley for the imitation of Wesleyans at the present day! Let us remind him then of a few facts.

Mr. Wesley acted independently of the bishops in the Church of England. He formed Societies, drew up Rules for their direction, and governed them—received money, appropriated it in building chapels, and to other religious and charitable purposes—raised up, employed, and ordained Ministers for Scotland, for America, and finally for England—used *ex-tempore* prayer—appointed Fasts—met his Preachers in Annual Conference—and all this without consulting the bishops of the English Church.

Mr. Wesley denied the dogma of Apostolical Succession—called it "a fable," which no man had proved, and which no man could prove—and in certain cases justified his people in absenting themselves from the services of the Established Church.

The Methodists were driven from the Church of England—were denounced from the pulpit and through the press, as papists, whilst all manner of evil was said of them falsely for their religion's sake. Charles Wesley and scores of members of Society were rudely repelled from the sacramental table. The Church ministers generally took no pastoral oversight of the Methodists, but in many instances excited, headed, and led on lawless mobs to persecute and destroy. A partial separation from the Church took place in Mr. Wesley's life-time, which he could not with all his influence prevent, yet he acknowledged these persons and treated them as members of Society. Thousands of his members never belonged to the Establishment by any religious act of their own. Such was the case before, and after, Mr. Wesley's decease; and by the Providence of God, his followers were led on step by step until they became a Church, possessing all the attributes and essential qualifications of a Church of Christ.

When Mr. Wesley would have exerted his utmost power to unite to the Established Church those whom he had reclaimed from the world, that Church would not receive them but closed the door; and it ill-becomes such men as "J. S." to taunt the Wesleyans of the present day for occupying a position to which they were driven by churchmen of other days, but which God has signally overruled for the advancement of his own glory, and the spread of vital godliness in the earth. Such reproaches only recoil with accumulated force upon the primary actors in these discreditable scenes, and on those at the

present day who show a disposition to justify them.

We may, therefore, safely say, that the time has gone by for the Wesleyans as a body to merge into the Church of England. Indeed they could not do so, and retain those peculiar privileges which have distinguished them from the beginning: and with the "Parties in the Church," according to J. S.'s own showing, especially with the wide-spread infection of Puseyism, its externalism and tendency to Rome, in sorrow more than in any other feeling, we are compelled to say, that the English Church is in that state as to render such absorption neither inviting nor desirable. Yet, for all pious churchmen, Wesleyans have ever held high esteem, and cherished christian affection; and they still desire to live on terms of fraternal intercourse.

We pass over in silence, as being altogether unworthy of notice, the undignified insinuations of "J. S." respecting our anxiety to establish our authority, and to be recognized, "as a legitimate minister of Christ." These may go for what they are worth.

Prudence, however, should have dictated to "J. S." a better policy than to have made particular reference to "Peggy's Cove." The length to which this article has extended prevents us from saying as much as we would desire on this subject. A few words must suffice.

From indubitable authority we can affirm that a Wesleyan preached in "Peggy's Cove" at least five or six years before "J. S." paid his first visit there; so that the Wesleyans have not been entering into other men's labours even in that "village." If that "village" has hitherto been most happily united, that joyous state is not of recent date, as for many years our Ministers have been in the habit of visiting that place, but conducting Divine worship, until very recently, in a private house. But that our readers may understand the present position of affairs, we would state, that before "J. S." Church was erected, he held his services in a School House, for the erection of which Wesleyans contributed as well as others. When J. S. removed his services to his Church, application was made to allow our Ministers to hold divine worship in the School House—the request was flatly denied.—A private room having been found inconvenient, at our instance, an effort was made, and so far with success, to build a Church for the accommodation of those at Peggy's Cove who felt disposed to attend the Wesleyan Ministry. This course has given huge offence to the would-be sole shepherd of Margaret's Bay and Peggy's Cove; and he vents his little spleen at "one or two women" who, he says, had a "leaning" towards our Church. The women there will appreciate this compliment. It does them great honour. We wish we had "one or two women" in other places, who could so effectually rebuke intolerance, and so well succeed in building Wesleyan Churches. The fact is, J. S. is blinded by his high-church prejudices. He, and he only, has the right to preach and administer the ordinances of the Sanctuary, at Peggy's Cove and elsewhere on those shores. All others are necessarily intruders—"Sectarian Ministers"; and in respect to ourselves in particular, because we presume to preach the gospel to the "women"—we include the men—at Peggy's Cove, he considers us "to be sinning with our eyes wide open" and "solemnly warns us of it!" Well, we should not like to go down to Peggy's Cove with our eyes close shut—if we go at all, we should greatly prefer having "our eyes wide open"—for these among other reasons, the road is very bad, and to a man with his eyes close shut, it is very dangerous; and after we arrived there in safety, we should like to see the people. The "sin"—arises not from the breach of a divine law, but from some code peculiar to J. S. It sits lightly on our conscience—and, in consequence, we fear the "solemn warning" will have no more effect than if we had, with our eyes shut, committed the heinous offence of preaching the gospel to our fellow-men.

We are quite pleased to be informed by so good authority, that "great pains are being taken to circulate" *The Wesleyan* at Margaret's Bay; and we think J. S. is in a fair way, if he continue his comments, to give it a wider circulation.—We hope our friends there will take the hint, and act upon it, as it would be a great pity for us to know, that the above assertion of J. S., like many others, is without sufficient foundation.

More people live to a great age in elevated situations than in a lower one.

More of It.

A writer, over the signature of *Cleopas* in the *Christian Visitor* has the following language on Infant Baptism:

"The greatest error—if one error can be greater than another—the greatest and most pernicious error in the Roman Catholic Church, is that of *Infant Sprinkling*. The doctrines of Purgatory, of Transubstantiation, of Auricular Confession, of the worship of Saints and Images, are innocuous compared with that Cardinal error, *Infant baptism*."

It is almost beyond endurance, to see fallible men take on themselves thus authoritatively, and in such offensive terms, to decide a point, on which some of the greatest, the wisest, the best, the most useful men the Church of God ever had, have conscientiously differed from such dogmatists. If Romanists, and others, who believe in baptismal regeneration, have erred in their opinions in this particular, that error renders not less true the scriptural view of infant baptism.

THE WESLEYAN MISSIONARY MEETINGS, recently held in various parts of England, were highly encouraging, and we see it almost invariably stated, that the collections were in advance of those made last year. The Anniversary at LEEDS was particularly interesting; the entire proceeds, including the collections after the sermons, at the public and breakfast meetings, and the sums taken at the bazaar, being £1,610 17s. 4d., an amount exceeding that of any previous year.

The pulpit of the Wesleyan Chapel at Oxford, was lately occupied by a gentleman named Fletcher, of the great age of 105. His discourse was listened to with great interest by a numerous congregation.

Ketturah Levy, aged 44, a respectable and intelligent Jewess, wife of Mr. Abraham Levy, who is now an interpreter at Antioch, was publicly baptized a short time since, in the Wesleyan Chapel, Stafford-street, Sunderland, when she was presented with a handsome copy of the Bible.

The Foreign Evangelization Committee, who have recently held a meeting of great interest in Exeter-Hall, report, that nearly 40,000 foreign tracts and books of various kinds have been distributed—seeds destined, we trust, to be wafted to distant lands, and to be sown there in lasting commemoration of the Great Exhibition.

The *China Mail* contains the intelligence of the death of Dr. Gutzlaff, who had just completed his 48th year.

Father Gavazzi has been delivering lectures at Birmingham, against the Pope and Popery, the Rev. W. H. Rule, Wesleyan Minister, acting as interpreter.

A correspondent of the *Philadelphia Ledger*, writing from Nauvoo, states that the MORMON sect is already split into seven antagonistic bodies, viz.:—Riglonites, the original sect, scattered through the land; Brighamites, in the valleys of Utah; Strangites, at Force, Beaver Island, Lake Michigan; Hyddites, on the unreserved public lands in Western Iowa, Kanessville being their head-quarters; Cutlerites, on Silver Creek, Mills County, Iowa; Brewsterites, at Socorro, New Mexico; Bishopites, at Kirkland, Lake County, Ohio. The Strangites, Brewsterites, and Bishopites are new lights; the Cutlerites are reformers; and the Brighamites and Hyddites are two branches of usurpers of the government of the church, after the assassination of Prophet Smith.

It is stated that the prompt and decided tone of the Archbishop of Canterbury's monitions, served on a large number of Puseyite clergymen in his Grace's diocese, has had the desired effect, and that the whole of the gentlemen alluded to have signified their intention of discontinuing the practices objected to.

The Committee of the Protestant Alliance have determined to commence forthwith a vigorous agitation for the repeal of the grant to Maynooth. Arrangements are in progress for holding a great general meeting on the subject.

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