

A HUMBLE OVERTURE, &c.

METHODIST DIVISIONS A DISGRACE AND A CAUSE OF FEEBLENESS.

THE many divisions in Methodism are nothing to its credit, showing that those who bear the name have set too little store by unity, which they have so often severed for very trifling considerations. If this pettish tendency to interrupt communion on trivial grounds marked the infancy of our denomination, it is time that we had "put away childish things," in this particular; and that we now cultivate the dignity of denominational manhood. If we do not, we shall find ourselves outstripped by a sister denomination, which has recently composed the differences between almost as many sections of Presbyterianism as there are of Methodism.

NONE OF OUR ORIGINAL PRINCIPLES CONFLICT WITH
COMPROMISE.

Looking back on the original testimony and character of Methodism, which all sections of it profess to revere, there is really no principle involved that need keep us apart. Methodism was not the result of declaring for or against Church establishments, for it pronounced an establishment from the first, "a merely human institution;" it did not declare for or against Presbyterianism, or Episcopacy, for its Presbyterian section in England holds fraternal relations with its Presbyterio-Episcopal Sister in the United States, and its ordinations and ministerial *status* are reciprocally regarded as on a par. *Connexionalism*, however, is a characteristic of Methodism under every name and aspect which its many sections have assumed, or preserved.

There are only three features essential to Methodism, and these three have been retained by all: namely, its *peculiar doctrines*, or its *manner* of emphasizing the doctrine of assurance, or the witness of the Spirit, and the possibility of "perfecting" of that "holiness," "without which no man shall see God;" certain *prudential means of grace of a social character*, such as the class and fellowship meeting, and the lovefeast; and the *itinerancy*, or the *united, rotating, itinerant pastorate*, including a central appointing power. Methodism is a *revival*—it means *conversion*: and the preaching of the above-mentioned doctrines, and the maintenance of a ministry detached from local ties, and the frequent assembling together above referred to, are necessary to conserve that revival and to promote conversions, or to the "spread of scriptural holiness over the land." If these essentials are preserved, other things may be modified according to circumstances; for it has been a principle in Methodism from the first, that no exact system of Church order is taught in the New Testament.

THE CHANGES PROPOSED ARE NO "CONCESSION."

To adopt a useful feature by one section from another, or in forming a union with another, cannot be called a "concession." And, after