

was that he was a Papist; and though it was treated by him with characteristic sprightliness, it appears to have been the occasion of much popular odium arising from the fears entertained by the nation of the movements of the pretender; as well as of the persecutions he and his followers had to endure in many places. However "through evil report and good report," he travelled and preached almost incessantly, strong in the confidence, that He whom he served would succeed his efforts, and that He was also the righteous Judge of his cause. Both he and his brother had several remarkable escapes from the power and malice of wicked and unreasonable men; and new societies were formed in the western, midland and northern counties,* whilst those before collected continued greatly to increase.

In August, 1744 Mr. Wesley preached for the last time before the University of Oxford. Mr. Charles Wesley was present, and observes in his Journal "My Brother bore his testimony before a crowded audience much increased by the races. Never have I seen a more attentive congregation; they did not suffer a word to escape them. Some of the Heads of Colleges stood up the whole time, and fixed their eyes upon him. If they can endure sound doctrine, like his, he will surely leave a blessing behind him. The Vice Chancellor sent after him and desired

Magistrates have orders from above to do you justice whenever you apply to us." Two or three weeks after, they did apply. Justice was done though not with grace; and from that time the Methodists had peace in London.

As a specimen of that cool and self-possessed manner which gave him so great a power over rude minds, we may take the following anecdote. A man at Newcastle had signalized himself by personal insults offered to him in the streets; and upon inquiry, he found him an old offender in persecuting the members of Society by abusing and throwing stones at them. Upon this he sent him the following note:—

"ROBERT YOUNG,
I expect to see you, between this and Friday, and to hear from you, that you are sensible of your fault. Otherwise, in pity to your soul, I shall be obliged to inform the Magistrates of your assaulting me yesterday in the street."

I am your real friend,

JOHN WESLEY."

Within two or three hours, Robert Young came, and promised different behaviour. Thus by kindness was an enemy overcome.

The following amusing occurrence is recorded in his Journal. "I stopped at Newport Pagnell, and then rode on till I overtook a serious man, with whom I immediately fell into conversation. He presently gave me to know what his opinions were; therefore I said nothing to contradict them. But that did not content him; he was quite uneasy to know whether I held the doctrine of the decrees as he did. As I told him, over and over, we had better keep to practical things, lest we should be angry at one another; and so we did for two miles, till he caught me unawares, and dragged me into the dispute before I knew where I was. He then grew warmer and warmer;—told me I was rotten at heart, and supposed I was one of John Zerkley's followers. I told him, 'No' I am John Wesley himself!' Upon which he appeared,

Improvisum aspris veluti qui sentibus anguem

Pressit —————

as one who had unawares trodden on a snake,* and would gladly have run away outright. But being the better mounted, I kept close to his side, and endeavoured to show him his heart till we came to Northampton."