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THE CLASS-MEETING CONTROVERSY.

Churches as well as nations and individuals have their seasons of trial, and of the one as of the other may it be said, "Blessed are those who endure temptation," for they shall come forth as gold seven times purified. The Methodist Church has had its full share of the trials which the confessors of Christ in modern days have had to endure; and although it may not have been called, except in rare instances, "to resist unto blood, in striving against sin," there is hardly any form of opposition which the enemies, or the professed advocates of the truth, have not employed to resist its progress, and weaken its power. Wesleyan expositions of Scripture doctrines have been put to the test of the severest criticism, and no sooner had the ecclesiastical polity of Methodism begun to acquire a definite form, and exhibit its power as an instrumentality in the spread of vital godliness, than it became the subject of the wit and ridicule of the skeptic; or the more serious trial of an examination of its Scriptural character, by those who have long claimed possession of the only authority which can place the seal of Divine approbation upon any church organization. It is not our purpose here to review the conflicts through which the Methodist church has passed, in its efforts for the revival and maintenance of vital piety; but to notice a controversy which is now going on, respecting the Scriptural character and utility of one of its cherished institutions. We refer to the regulation which makes attendance upon Class-meetings a condition of membership.

It was not to be expected that an institution so important, as the past history of Methodism proves this has been, in promoting experimental religion, would escape the ordeal which even every essential truth of Christianity has had to undergo. We refer now not so much to the open attacks of the enemies of Methodism, in representing it as one and the same in its character and results with the Romish confessional; but to the efforts of, it may be sincere, though mistaken friends, who profess a