

We are not able to predict particular occurrences; but we insist on the fact, that a spiritually-minded people will not sustain a political ministry. Perhaps the division we predicted might be that of separating nearly the whole body from such preachers, making them, and the few who might adhere, the real separatists—the authors of division.

But no one has a right to say that we meditate a division of the Church, when we emphatically deny it: no one can give us credit for honesty and sincerity if it were possible for us to be contemplating a division, when we said that such an event would be exceedingly disastrous, and that our utmost efforts should be made to prevent it.

In our February number, we had occasion to notice the subject again, as a contemporary had quoted the above paragraph, omitting the concluding sentence. We then repeated, in effect, the declaration on the subject previously made: Notwithstanding, the opponents of our journal continue most industriously to circulate the misrepresentation, that our object is division. Some of them, we regret to say, are members of the Conference, who neither read our paper, nor allow, so far as their influence can prevail, the members of the Church to do so,—more effectually, perhaps, to support their own assertion, and to induce others to believe them; for it would be impossible either for them, or any one else, to say that our object is division, if they read our paper. Once more, under the impression of the necessity of strengthening our position on this point, we pledge our veracity, honesty, and sincerity on the question, and assert that our object is not division. Not only so, but we will most heartily afford every possible assistance towards the great object of gathering into the body those dispersed members of the Methodist family who have been aggrieved, and scattered by the baneful influence of the dominant power in the Conference, which has been exercised for some years past. Some of these have been the most able and most useful members of the Church, both lay and clerical. The unity and integrity of Methodism is dear to us, as it is to thousands of the older members of the Church; and we are aware, that if we were vulnerable on this point, we should lose their support in our present undertaking, and should deserve to lose it.

To satisfy these more fully, and to silence those who thus misrepresent us, we shall be still more explicit as to our object, which will prove that division was never contemplated by us.

Our object is to effect an entire separation of the clergy from all public interference in politics, and to separate the Church from all dependance on Government for support: the latter is the natural consequence of the former. Our paper, the instrument in this undertaking, is under the management of a committee of lay-members of the Church, supported by correspondents in all parts of the Province, also members of the Church.

All these are compactly united in support of the best interests of the Church: they love it, they are devoted to it; and they expect

the instructions and consolations of religion, till they rest from their labours. We put the question therefore seriously to the friends of the Church; how can these parties accomplish their object by leaving the Church? They have history and experience in condemnation of division generally, and they are fully persuaded that division will not accomplish the object they have in view.

Besides, Canada itself furnishes melancholy evidence of the injurious tendency of division. What a number of Methodist bodies have we now in the Province, once so strong, compact, and prosperous! Our present unhappy and divided Church included nearly the whole.

Let us suppose that all these, with the British Wesleyans and those of the New Connexion were united in one body: in such a unity there would be strength; but what are they now? They would, united, be the most powerful for good, and perhaps the most prosperous, and most numerous of the religious bodies in the Province.

Who separated them? It would be well if those who charge us with contemplating division were clear of the charge, of having been too instrumental in causing it. We allude to the governing portion of the Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, and especially to Dr. Ryerson and those who have acted with him, in the business of the Union, in 1833, and its dissolution in 1840.

Having cleared ourselves, we hope, from the charge of intending to effect a division, we shall retort the charge, and we believe with more effect, on the real authors of division. We regret to say, that it is because our object is not division, that such an intention is imputed to us: if it were clearly our object, it would be more satisfactory to some. We are too familiar with the usual reply given to all who complain of the existence of abuses in the Church; they are contemptuously called croakers; and it is said to them, "If you do not like our system, you may leave the Church." This is the method adopted by some of the rulers of the Church to prevent division—by separating members from the Church daily. No wonder that the Church increases in number so slowly. But is this a just reply to those who have grounds for complaint? Is it just to tell a man who has made the Methodist Church his spiritual home on earth, for himself and his family, for twenty, thirty, or forty years, to go elsewhere,—to say to him, "Go, serve other Gods?" Is it reasonable that such persons should have any interest in causing division?—the very men who have built the Churches, and been their supporters for years!

If the object of division could be inferred from our publication, our opposers would readily publish the proofs of it: On the contrary, they attempt to suppress and forbid our paper, lest they should be confuted by it.

The real authors of division are some of the members of the Conference, who wish to be left alone, and to be relieved of all members of independent mind, and who dare to

them in love, and point out errors, for the general good. We have pretty good evidence that they would bring to the ecclesiastical tribunal all who patronize this journal, as well as its managers, if they could find any portion of the discipline that could be brought to apply to the case. Their success in such a process might effect a division, and that of such magnitude that it would be doubtful whether that portion submitting to the present state of the Church, would be numerous enough to deserve the name.

Though, even in such a case, we believe the Conference would hold on to their power, in hope of recruiting in numbers, to supply the place of those that were expelled. "Skin for skin; all that a man hath will he give for his life," is a scriptural sentiment. It applies, in our opinion, to the governing portion of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference, in relation to their love of power, and tenacity of adherence to it. A separation of a few hundreds, or a few thousands, is of less consequence to them than the loss of power.

We conclude, therefore, that those who resist our scriptural reasons for a separation of the clergy from all secular affairs, and who would drive us out of the Church on that account, are the real authors of division.

But we have another proof, as to this point, that the governing portion of the Conference are the real promoters of division. They even now contemplate to separate from their fraternity those ministers who are likely to be their competitors for government in the Conference. These are the most pious of the preachers, but perhaps of less brilliant talents, and who consequently meekly and gladly submit to appointments of spiritual labour in the wilderness, or any where. These, it is contemplated to pay off, or, rather to buy off, by giving them a sum of money to retire; and till they consent to this, Methodism will be made irksome to them, if possible, by excluding them from all the most desirable stations and circuits. To be Chairmen of Districts is no part of their destiny.

This will astonish some of our readers; and lest they should think we are accusers of the brethren, we submit the following extract of a communication from Picton, the author of which we can produce whenever we think it necessary:—

"You will agree with me in saying, this is a most serious and suspicious affair on the part of the ministry of our Church. The facts are these. A leading minister of our Conference, while in a general conversation with a respected clergyman of another denomination, calmly acknowledged that many of our old preachers were not adequate, as far as talent is concerned, to take a prominent place in the itinerant work, and fearing that, ere many years, the Conference would be burdened with the pecuniary claims of such men on the funds of the Connexion, a plan is being set on foot, to be carried out as soon as practicable, to induce such aged and other second-class preachers to accept something like £100 sterling, and withdraw from the Conference altogether. Comment on this is unnecessary. On the other side I furnish you with the names of the parties with whom this conversation occurred, and you are at liberty to use them, should occasion require."

We confess that we were more astonished on receipt of this communication, than at anything that we had previously heard or seen, in reference to the conduct of the ruling members of the Conference. We would ask in the hand of the party in the