

Titus Oates—those days of eternal infamy to the English people of that period—his sordid and exhortations would not have been wanting to stimulate the full flooding of that innocent Catholic blood which was shed, through the perjured forms of judicial solemnity.

Secondly,—His religious opinions were as various as the patches on a harlequin's jacket. He began his career as a zealous priest of the Established church, and actually passed over as such to America, to convert the Indians to Church-of-Englandism. But the only feat he achieved there—for he did not convert a single Indian—was to excommunicate a respectable young lady who thought fit to disappoint him by marrying another suitor. His first faith, therefore, was Church of Englandism.

Thirdly,—After his return to England, he himself, in the year 1783, declared that for many years he had been tossed about by various winds of doctrine, and that he had been a Papist without knowing it. Thus, his second and third professions were—Uncertainty and some species of Popery.

Fourthly—One Peter Bohler converted him to Moravianism, and he was then to be a Moravian for ever. His own words prophesied the perpetuity of the Moravian tenets. Speaking of Bohler, he writes,—“O, what a work hath God begun, since his,” (Bohler's) “coming to England. Such a one as shall never come to an end till heaven and earth shall pass away!!” Thus was Moravianism, in fact, his fourth belief.

Fifthly.—Having put on record an odious character of those in connexion with the Moravians, he adopted Antinomian Calvinism; and he continued in this, his fifth profession of faith, for a considerable time.

Sixthly,—In his old days he invented a new species of Methodism; that which the Conference, the now ruling power of the Wesleyan Methodists, purport to follow; with its twofold mode of justification. This was his sixth faith; convinced he was right in each, yet wrong in all.

Seventhly,—Nor were these light and insignificant changes. He himself describes the Moravians, with whom he had been long in communion, as “swallowed up in the dead sea of stillness, opposing the ordinances, namely, prayer; the reading of the Scriptures, the frequenting the sacraments and public worship.” Also, as “selling their Bibles, &c., in order to rely more fully on the blood of the Lamb.” This, indeed, is a frightful description of his colleagues and co-religionists of many years standing.

Eightly.—But when he comes to describe his next set of co-religionists, the Antinomians, his description is still more frightful. He asks himself the question, “What is Antinomianism?” and he answers it thus—“Its main pillars are, that Christ abolished the moral law; that, therefore, Christians are not obliged to keep it—that Christian liberty is liberty from obeying the commands of God.” I will not pollute my pen with dwelling upon any more of these doctrines, which Wesley entertained for years, and which he himself, has described

in the most fearful terms. Yet I may observe, that the person whom Wesley intended as his successor, Fletcher, if possible, exceeds his master in reprobation of the Antinomian Calvinism, using these remarkable words:—“*There are few of our celebrated pulpits where more has not been said for sin than AGAINST it.*” But take the doctrine of that Antinomianism from one who did not desert it with Wesley, but was consistent in believing it to the last. I give it on the authority of that same Fletcher. The words (he quotes from high Antinomian authority, as their doctrine) are:—“My sins may displeasure God, my person is always acceptable to him. Though I should outsin Manasses himself, yet I should not be a less pleasant child, because God always views me in Christ. Hence in the midst of adulteries, murders, and incests, he can address me with, ‘*Thou art all fair my love, there is no spot in thee.*’ It is a most pernicious error of the schoolmen to distinguish sin according to the fact, not according to the person. Though I highly blame those who say, ‘Let us sin that grace may abound,’ yet adultery, incest, and murder, shall upon the whole, make me holier upon the earth, and merrier in heaven.”

Ninthly.—Such are the doctrines which belonged to Wesleyan Methodism until the old age of Wesley. He abandoned them in his last years, apparently with some difficulty, as his eulogist, Fletcher, makes his apology for him: “I admire the candor of an old man of God, who, instead of obstinately maintaining an old mistake, comes down like a little child, and acknowledges it before his preachers, whom it is his interest to secure.” This is, indeed, a characteristic apology.

Tenthly,—The way in which Wesley, having secured his preachers, purified his religious system from the defilement of Antinomianism was this: he invented a twofold mode of justification; one without repentance, the love of God, or other works, the other, to which these works were essential. The former was for those who should die soon after their pretended experience of saving faith; that latter for those who had time and opportunity for performing them. The observation of a celebrated Catholic divine on this system is no less astounding than it is just and accurate. It is in these words:—“Thus, to say no more of the system, a Nero and Robespierre might, according to it, have been established in the grace of God, and in a right to the realms of infinite purity, without one act of sorrow for their enormities, or so much as an act of their belief in God.”

Eleventhly,—Thus, your venerable Wesley had no less than about half a dozen different sets of religious opinions, each of which in its turn, he considered and proclaimed as the true faith. He found each of them—for the time—in the Sacred Scriptures; and as he abandoned each, he found from the same scriptures that his new opinion was true, and that the former belief was false. He was sincere in each belief. His avowal of his change was a proof of his sincerity, demonstrating these two things. Firstly, the facility with

which any number of persuasions may be founded on individual interpretation of scripture; and, secondly, that mere sincerity can be no justification of any particular belief, nor any protection against error.

Twelfthly,—With all this consciousness of the instability and insecurity of any one of the religious opinions that he from time to time entertained, he was exceedingly liberal in consigning those who differed from him in any point to eternal punishment. For example, he taught for many years that all persons under any of these three categories would certainly be damned:

1st, All who were in heaviness through manifold temptations.

2d, All those from whom God, for wise ends, permits an abstraction of spiritual comfort.

3d, All who walk in darkness and have no light, and who, the prophet says, “shall trust in the Lord and stay himself upon his God.”

Upon this principle, he taught that if any of those persons died in that state, they must go to hell, however they might hate sin and cultivate holiness. But this monstrous and horrible doctrine he afterwards totally renounced; and he admitted it to be so unchristian that he himself said, “When I and my brother taught this doctrine, I wonder that the people did not stone us.” What would have become of your venerable John Wesley, had he been stoned for insisting upon false doctrine, as he himself says that he ought to have been? And yet he for years taught those errors, and was, upon his own confession, a deceiver in religion! “venerable,” forsooth!

Thirteenthly,—One instance more. In the conference of 1774, he himself says, “We have received it as a maxim that a man is to do nothing in order to justification.” He adds, “than this nothing can be more false.” Mark! that here he admits that he and his preachers under him had received, and had been teaching a doctrine as the truth of God, “than which nothing could be more false.”

Fourteenthly,—You Wesleyan Methodists, who claim to be as orthodox as the church of England Protestants, can you deny this; that your John Wesley, being himself only in priest's orders, ordained several priests to be priests also? and went so far as to commit the “*facinus inauditum*”—that is, he a priest, consecrated Dr. Coke to be—a bishop!!! This, indeed, so horribly scandalizes his own brother Charles, that it created a lasting schism among the Methodists; and the son of that Charles afterwards became a Catholic!

I could extend this catalogue of Wesleyan enormities and contradictory wanderings in matters of religion, if a space permitted. I could also point out in detail the cruel tyranny exercised over the preachers by your self appointed Conference.—But my business with you must, for the present, for want of space, not for want of materials, be limited to some of its effects.

Wesley, by the manner in which he instituted the governing powers of the Conference, formed a despotic oligarchy of the closest nature. In the appointment of the men who composed that Conference, the

body of Methodists have no choice or selection. Over their conduct they have no control. The property of their chapels &c., is vested absolutely in this oligarchy, and freedom of opinion is no more to be found among them than in the divan of the Turkish sultan. What care I for this power, if it were not used for political purposes? The great body of Wesleyan Methodists have always been the worst politicians. John Wesley himself so hated popular liberty, that amongst his vagaries he actually offered the government of the day, to raise a regiment to enable George the Third to put down what he called the “American Rebellion.” From that day to this the Wesleys have been found the ardent supporters of every bigotted and oppressive administration; in short, of every administration but one that happened to be tinged with liberality; and they have as uniformly opposed every measure calculated to increase the franchise, or diminish the burdens of the British people, or to lessen in any way the irresponsible authority of the wealthy and powerful classes. In religion they have been bigots; in politics slaves; tyrants in their conference; sordid sycophants in the exercise of religious privileges; a body formidable in the cohesion of this unholy alliance; deplorable in their opposition to the tranquil spread of civil as well as religious liberty.

They hold out, however, a great example; an example of what ought to be avoided, not of that which we should imitate. They have in their history—in the dissensions that have risen amongst them—in the secession from brother to brother; in the great revolt of Whitefield from Wesley—Whitefield, who was as sincere as Wesley; and, above all, in the contradictions and contrarieties of the religious belief of that Wesley himself—demonstrated, that neither human talent, nor sincerity, nor zeal, nor erratic piety, however strongly disinterested and persevering; that none of these great qualities, taken separately, nor all of them taken together, can secure man from believing or teaching monstrous falsehood—from preaching “more in favor of sin than against it;” from instructing in doctrines so very false and criminal as to deserve the punishment of stoning; from fanatically disclaiming obedience to the commands of God—in short, from error, absurdity, and impiety. No, Wesleys. There is but one way of security. There is but one way to keep “the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.” It is “clear as the sun.” It is to be found in the reasonable and therefore entire submission to the authority of the everlasting Church of God, “the pillar and ground of truth.”

I am, with unfeigned pity, your servant,
DANIEL O'CONNELL.

DISASTERS AT SEA.—The Sailor's Magazine contains the following list of the vessels known to have been wrecked at sea during the past year. About 650 lives have been lost, and nearly \$15,000,000. Of the whole 94 were English vessels:—Ships 68; barks, 47; brigs, 130; schooners, 346; sloops, 21; steamboats, 5; unknown 40. Total 557.