

men to confide in whom they have at present, and all other mutual stipulations would soon be settled."

What is more remarkable is, that the same person applied to Mr. Wilberforce to get him to recommend to the Crown that he should be consecrated himself as the first Bishop of the Church of England at Calcutta, at the time Bishop Middleton was appointed. In his letter to Mr. Wilberforce, Dr. Coke said—

"The prominent desire of my soul, even from my infancy, (I may almost say,) has been to be useful. Even when I was a deist for part of my time at Oxford, (what a miracle of grace!) usefulness was my most darling object. The Lord has been pleased to fix me for about thirty-seven years on a point of great usefulness. My influence in the large Wesleyan connection, the introduction and superintendence of our missions in different parts of the globe, &c., the wide sphere opened to me for the preaching of the Gospel to almost innumerable, large, and attentive congregations, have opened to me a very extensive field for usefulness. And yet I could give up all for India. Could I but close my life in being the means of raising a spiritual Church in India, it would satisfy the utmost ambition of my soul here below."

This circumstance is sufficient to show how little ground they have to profess to have any real Episcopate, and at the same time may possibly indicate something—but upon that I am afraid to touch—as to what they might be contented with. But when we turn to what they might now be contented with, I must take leave to mention the opinions of one worthy of all respect, and which cannot but command attention—I mean the opinions of Robert Southey. He concludes his *Life of Wesley* in these words:—

"Nor is it beyond the bounds of reasonable hope that, conforming itself to the original intention of its founders, it (Methodism) may again draw towards the Establishment from which it has seceded, and desire to be recognized as an auxiliary institution, its ministers being analogous to the regulars and its members to the tertiaries and various fraternities of the Romish Church. The obstacles to this are surely not insuperable, perhaps not so difficult as they may appear. And were this effected, John Wesley would then be ranked, not only among the most remarkable and influential men of his age, but among the great benefactors of his country and his kind."

I beg to say that I am not propounding this plan, but am endeavoring to show that there have been those of high authority whose opinions are worthy of all regard, who may have thought that there may be means by which a reconciliation might be attempted. I am not asking you to adopt this plan or to recommend it to the Bishops, but I am endeavoring to show that reconciliation is not altogether so hopeless as perhaps it has sometimes been supposed. Then there is another thing which Southey here refers to—namely, the various fraternities of the Romish Church. A most remarkable circumstance is the similarity between the opinions of Wesley and the institutions he founded, and those which were held by St. Francis and his followers, and the institution of the Franciscan friars in the middle ages. In a *Life of St. Francis—Vita di San Francisco, dal P. Candido Chalippe, Recolletto*—published at Assisi, in the year 1801—I have translated these words from the Italian—the writer says—

"Being one day in prayer in a deserted hermitage, and calling to mind all his years in the bitterness of his soul, he became assured by means of a new effusion of the Holy Spirit, by which he felt himself filled with joy, that his sins were pardoned. It cannot be doubted but that he had already received the remission of his sins by means of a lively grief and of the Sacrament of Penance, when he was converted. But in this happy moment he knew it for certain by revelation, and at the same