

The Church.

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[WHOLE NUMBER, CCCLI.]

Poetry.

GOOD FRIDAY.

O my chief good,
How shall I measure out thy blood?
How shall I count what thee behest,
And each grief tell?
Shall I thy woes
Number according to thy foes?
Or, since one star shew'd thy first breath,
Shall all thy death?
Or shall each leaf,
Which falls in Autumn, score a grief?
Or cannot leaves, but fruit, be sign
Of the true vine?
Then let each hour
Of my whole life one grief devour;
That thy distress through all may run,
And be my sun.
Or rather let
My several sins thy sorrows get;
That, as each beast his cure doth know,
Each sin may so.
Since blood is fittest, Lord, to write
Thy sorrows in, and bloody fight;
My heart hath store; write there, where in
One box doth lie both ink and sin;
That, when sin spies so many foes,
Thy whips, thy nails, thy wounds, thy woes,
All come to lodge there, sin may say,
No room for me, and fly away.
Sin being gone, oh fill the place,
And keep possession with thy grace;
Least sin take courage and return,
And all the writings blot or burn.

GEORGE HERBERT.

CHRIST CRUCIFIED.

(From Archbishop Magee on the Atonement.)

That the sublime mystery of the Redemption, should have escaped the comprehension both of the Jew and of the Greek: that a crucified Saviour, should have given offence to the worldly expectant of a triumphant Messiah, whilst the proud philosopher of the schools turned with disdain from the humiliating doctrine, which proclaimed the insufficiency of human reason, and threatened to bend its aspiring head before the foot of the Cross,—were events, which the matured growth of national prejudice, on the one hand, and the habits of contentious discussion, aided by a depraved moral system, on the other, might, in the natural course of things, have been expected to produce. That the Son of God had descended from heaven: that he had disrobed himself of the glory which he had with the Father, before the world began: that he had assumed the form of the humblest and most degraded of men: that submitting to a life of reproach, and want, and sorrow, he had closed the scene with a death of ignominy and torture; and that through this voluntary degradation and suffering, a way of reconciliation with the Supreme Being had been opened to the whole human race, and an atonement made for those transgressions, from the punishment of which unassisted reason could have devised no means of escape: these are truths, which prejudice and pride could not fail, at all times, to have rejected; and these are truths, to which the irreligion and self-sufficiency of the present day, oppose obstacles not less insurmountable than those, which the prejudice of the Jew and the philosophy of the Greek presented, in the age of the Apostle. For, at this day, when we boast a wider diffusion of learning, and more extensive acquirements of moral knowledge, do we not find these fundamental truths of revelation questioned? do we not see the haughtiness of lettered scepticism, presuming to reject the professed terms of salvation, because it cannot trace, with the finger of human science, the connexion between the cross of Christ and the redemption of man? But, to these vain and presumptuous aspirations after knowledge placed beyond human reach, we are commanded to preach **CHRIST CRUCIFIED**: which, however it may, to the self-fancied wise ones of this world, appear as foolishness, is yet, to those who will humble their understanding to the dispensations of the Almighty, the grandest display of the divine perfections; *Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.*

Strange to say, some who assume the name of Christians, and profess not altogether to discard the written word of revelation, adopt the very principle [of the Deist], which we have just examined. For what are the doctrines of that description of Christians, in the sister country, who glory in having brought down the high things of God to the level of man's understanding?—that Christ was a person sent into the world, to promulgate the will of God: to communicate new lights, on the subject of religious duties: by his life, to set an example of perfect obedience: by his death, to manifest his sincerity: and by his resurrection, to convince us of the great truth which he had been commissioned to teach, our rising again to future life.—This, say they, is the sum and substance of Christianity. It furnishes a purer morality, and a more operative enforcement: its morality more pure, as built on juster notions of the divine nature; and its enforcement more operative, as founded on a certainty of a state of retribution. And is then Christianity nothing, but a new and more formal promulgation of the religion of nature? Is the death of Christ but an attestation of his truth? And are we after all left to our own merit for acceptance, and obliged to trust for our salvation, to the perfection of our obedience?—Then, indeed, has the great Author of our religion, in vain submitted to the agonies of the cross; if, after having given to mankind a law, which leaves them less excusable in their transgressions, he has left them to be judged by the rigour of that law, and to stand or fall by their own personal deserts.

It is said, indeed, that as by this new dispensation, the certainty of pardon on repentance, has been made known, mankind has been informed of all that is essential in the doctrine of mediation. But granting that no more was intended to be conveyed, than the sufficiency of repentance; yet it remains to be considered *in what way* that repentance was likely to be brought about. Was the bare declaration, that God would forgive the repentant sinner, sufficient to ensure his amendment? or was it not rather calculated to render him easy under guilt, from the facility of reconciliation? What was there to alarm, to rouse, the sinner from the apathy of habitual transgression? what was there to make that impression which the nature of God's moral government demands? Shall we say, that the grateful sense of divine mercy would be sufficient; and that the generous feelings of our nature, awakened by the supreme goodness, would have secured our obedience? that is, shall we say, that the love of virtue, and of right, have we not, then, had abundant experience of what man can do, when left to his own exertions, to be cured of such vain and idle fancies? What is the history of man, from the creation to the time of Christ, but a continued trial of his natural strength? And what has been the *moral* of that history, but that man is strong, only as he feels himself weak?—strong, only as he feels that his nature is corrupt, and from a consciousness of that corruption, is led to place his whole reliance upon God? What is the description, which the Apostle of the Gentiles has left us, of the state of the world, at the coming of our Saviour?—"Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness,

covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despisers, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful—who, knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them."—Rom. i. 29, 30, 31, 32.

Here were the fruits of that natural goodness of the human heart, which is the favourite theme and fundamental principle with that class of Christians, with whom we are at present concerned. And have we not then, had full experiment of our natural powers? And shall we yet have the madness to fly back to our own sufficiency, and our own merits, and to turn away from that gracious support which is offered to us, through the mediation of Christ? No: as true men were, at the time Christ appeared, to all sense of true religion: lost as they must be to it, at all times, when left to a proud confidence in their own sufficiency; nothing short of a strong and salutary terror, could awaken them to virtue. Without some striking expression of God's abhorrence of sin, which might work powerfully on the imagination and on the heart, what could prove a sufficient counteraction to the violent impulse of natural passions? what, to the entailed depravation, which the history of man, no less than the voice of revelation, pronounces to have infected the whole human race? Besides, without a full and adequate sense of guilt, the very notion of forgiveness, as it relates to us, is unintelligible. We can have no idea of forgiveness, unless conscious of something to be forgiven. Ignorant of our forgiveness, we remain ignorant of that goodness which confers it. And thus, without some proof of God's hatred for sin, we remain unacquainted with the greatness of his love.

The simple promulgation then, of forgiveness on repentance, could not answer the purpose. Merely to know the condition could avail nothing. An *inducement*, of sufficient force to ensure its fulfilment, was essential. The system of *sufficiency* had been fully tried, to satisfy mankind of its folly. It was now time to introduce a new system, the system of *humility*. And for this purpose, what expedient could have been devised more suitable, than that which has been adopted?—the sacrifice of the Son of God, for the sins of men: proclaiming to the world, by the greatness of the ransom, the immensity of the *guilt*; and thence, at the same time evincing, in the most fearful manner, God's utter abhorrence of sin, in requiring such expiation: and the infinity of his love, in appointing it.

THE PROPHECIES OF OUR LORD'S SUFFERINGS AND DEATH.

(From Bishop Sherlock's Discourses.)

I shall not need to carry you far in search of this evidence; the chapter (Isaiah 53) alone is so full a description of this part of our Saviour's character, that it looks more like an history than a prophecy, and may with more reason be suspected to be a copy drawn from his life, than not to be a description of it. Yet this scripture was in being long before our Lord was born, was in the keeping of his enemies, of those who hated and despised him, and at last put him to a cruel death, and were at once the preservers and the fulfillers of this prophecy. Here you find him represented as void of "form and of comeliness"; as having "no beauty that we should desire him"; one "despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief"; from whom "we hid as it were our faces; he was despised, and we esteemed him not." Yet this is he, of whom before the Prophet had prophesied: "Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace; of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever." What enigmas are these! Shall he be a mighty prince, and yet despised and rejected of men? Shall he be encompassed with the glories of David's throne, and yet be void of form and of comeliness? Shall he reign for ever, and establish justice and judgment for evermore, and shall he yet be taken from prison, and cut off from the land of the living? Where can these contradictions meet, and in what manner of person can they be reconciled? But to go on: after this general description of his low estate, the Prophet proceeds to point out some of the most remarkable calamities of his life. He was not only despised and rejected, but he "was oppressed and afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment, and cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of the people he was stricken." And yet he "had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him, and to put him to grief. His soul was an offering for sin." And yet after this, when the Prophet had killed and buried him, he adds, "He shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied. By his knowledge shall his righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities." Where are we now? must he die a wretched death, and be numbered with the transgressors; and yet shall he prolong his days, and see the work of the Lord prosper in his hands? How shall we clear these things? Look into the Gospel, and there you will find the scene opening again: there you will find your Lord despised and rejected of men, persecuted and afflicted, and put to a cruel death and open shame, and yet rising to glory and honour. There you may see this prisoner of the grave ascending to the glory of his Father, giving gifts unto men, and leading captivity captive.

Let us then consider the historical evidence we have for the completion of these prophecies, which describe the calamitous condition of our blessed Redeemer.

The way was prepared before he was born. His conception led to it: since the meanness of his parentage could promise nothing for the child but labour and sorrow: and so it proved. This mighty Prince of peace made his first appearance in a manger; and we may well suppose the other conveniences he met, upon his first coming into the world, were answerable to this. No sooner was he born but his life was sought after: the distressed parents fly their country, and the child is carried into banishment, before he knew to distinguish between good and evil. His youth was spent in the difficulties of poverty, and his hands employed in the works of it; and when the time came that he was to be made known unto Israel, and stood forth in the power of the Lord, confirming his doctrine with mighty signs and wonders, the opposition to him increased, and every act of charity he did to others brought new sorrow and misery to himself. During this time, in which he went about doing good, "he had not," as he himself has told us, "where to lay his head." When he cast out devils, he was immediately charged to be in league with the prince of the world: when he healed the sick of their infirmities, and forgave their sins, then he was a blasphemer, an encroacher upon the prerogative of God. When he restored the withered hand, and cured the lame or the blind on the sabbath-day, then he was no longer fit to live: these were such offences, as nothing but his death could expiate. Consider what he suffered, and he was the lowest of the sons of men: consider what he did, and he appears, as he truly was, to be the Son of God.

But still there remains behind the gloomiest scene of sorrow. When the powers of darkness prevailed, and the time of his being offered up drew near, all things conspired to make his death bitter and terrifying. In his life he had chosen twelve to be his constant companions, and they at least adhered to him, and willingly partook in his afflictions; but now one of these bosom-friends conspires his ruin, and sells him for thirty pieces of silver. The rest, though they were guilty of no such baseness, yet proved no comfort in his distress.

As the danger drew near, our blessed Lord, who was in all things tempted like unto us, sin only excepted, felt the pangs of nature at the approach of death, and retired to prayer, the only support of an afflicted spirit. In this his grief he chose Peter, and the sons of Zebedee, to be his companions, that they might watch with him in his sorrow; but even here they forsook him, and insensible of their Master's agony, fell asleep. They were soon awakened; but they awoke only to fly, and Christ was left alone.—Peter followed, but he was afar off; and he only followed him to deny him. Thus betrayed, and thus forsaken, he is carried to judgment. When he is silent, he is reproached with silliness: when he speaks, he is charged with blasphemy. Sometimes he is buffeted and spit on; and by and by, in cruel sport, they pay him the mock honours of a prince, he is crowned with thorns, has a reed put into his hand, and in derision he is saluted, "Hail, King of the Jews." And that nothing might be wanting to show how vile and contemptible he was to the people, the question was put between him and a murderer, which should be released; and with one voice the people answered, "Release unto us Barabbas." Thus was he "despised and rejected of men."

Follow him but one step farther, and you will find him hanging upon the cross between two common robbers, groaning under the bitterest agonies of death. Nor yet can all this misery create in the lookers-on any pity or compassion. See how they shake their heads, and say, "Come down from the cross, Son of God, come down, and we will believe thee." But neither the pains of the cross, nor those pangs which drew from him that complaint, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" nor all the malice and scorn of the crucifiers, could make him one moment forget his love and tenderness towards them. You hear no complaint from him, no appeals made against them to a future judgment: instead of this, with latest breath he pleads their cause, excuses their weakness, and begs for their pardon; "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

And here let us close this scene, and return to ourselves with this question, "What reward shall I give unto the Lord for all the benefits that he hath done unto me?" Let us also answer for ourselves in the words of the Psalmist, "I will receive the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord." We have nothing to return but our love and obedience, and nothing else is required of us; "he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows"; let us not call for them again by our iniquities: let them be buried for ever, but let us arise to a new life of righteousness in Christ Jesus, that "when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we may also appear with him in glory."

THE EARLY COLONIAL CHURCH.

(From the British Magazine.)

It is satisfactory to know that from the first formation of our settlements in America there has been, on the part of the mother country, a recognition, at least of her twofold duty; first, to maintain the true faith among her own children; and, secondly, to propagate it among the surrounding heathen.

It would be inconsistent with the design of the present sketch to recount in detail the various efforts, whether of corporations or of individuals, for the planting of Christianity in our colonies. Some few instances, however, may be given.

Sir Walter Raleigh, the father of English colonization, after the failure of his enterprise in Virginia, on assigning over his patent in 1589 to a company of merchants, gave the sum of £100 "in especial regard and zeal of planting the Christian religion in those barbarous countries, and for the advancement and preferment of the same, and the common utility and profit of the inhabitants."

His celebrated companion, Hariot, the great mathematician, may perhaps be not unjustly styled the first English missionary to the new world.

"Many times (says he) and in every tongue where I came, according as I was able, I made declaration of the contents of the Bible, that therein was set forth the true and only God, and his mighty works, that therein was contained the true doctrine of Salvation through Christ, with many particularities of miracles and chief points of Religion, as I was able then to utter, and thought fit for the time. And although I told them the books materially and of itself was not of any such virtue, as I thought they did not conceive; but only the doctrine therein contained: yet would many be glad to touch it, to embrace it, to kiss it, to hold it to their breasts and heads, and stroke over all their body with it, to show their hungry desire of that knowledge which was spoken of."

In the charter which was granted by King James I., April 10, 1606, for improving trade and plantations in Virginia, one of the avowed objects expressed in his Majesty's instructions to the company was, "that the true word and service of God be preached, planted, and used, not only in the colonies, but also such as might be among the savages bordering upon them, and this according to the rites and doctrines of the Church of England."

Among those who had petitioned for this charter was one little known, but deserving of all honour, Robert Hunt, an English clergyman, whose Christian meekness, cheerfulness, and perseverance, under the severest trials, were a signal blessing to the colony. He seems to have gone out with the single purpose of devoting himself to the religious interests of the new settlement. His first object was the erection of a church, which was no sooner built, than, together with the town, it was destroyed by an accidental fire. The worthy pastor, however, whose own library had perished in the flames, never lost heart, but at once zealously set about the work of restoration, and ere long had the happiness of seeing the church restored, and James Town rebuilt.

Another shining light of the early colonial church was Alexander Whitaker, who went out as chaplain with Lord Delaware.

This devoted servant of God, "the Apostle of Virginia," seeing the spiritual harvest to be reaped among the native Americans, and indignant at the apathy of his brethren at home, thus speaks out of the fulness of his heart:—"I muse that so few of our English ministers that were so hot against surplice and subscription come hither, where neither are spoken of. Do they not wilfully hide their talent, or keep themselves at home, for fear of losing a few pleasures? Be there not any among them of Moses, his mind, and of the apostles, that forsook all to follow Christ? But I refer them to the Judge of all hearts, that shall reward every one according to the gain of his talent."

It is pleasing to remember, in connection with this colony, that the saint-like Nicholas Ferrar was for several years, either as council or deputy-governor, the principle manager of the company. His father

left a sum of £300 towards erecting a school in Virginia for the education of infidel children. The king had already issued a letter to the Bishops, requiring a collection to be made for a like purpose in all parish churches, and contributions amounting to £4000 were raised. These facts serve to show that those who were first concerned in what Lord Bacon calls "the heroic war of plantations" had due regard to the promotion of God's honour in the sight both of their own people and of the Gentiles.

The first colonists of Virginia being exclusively members of the Church of England, the legislature of the colony decreed a provision for the clergy: at the rate of 1500 pounds of tobacco and 16 barrels of flour annually for each clergyman. As each new borough was formed, it was ordered that a portion of glebe land should be set apart for the clergyman.—Tithes were afterwards instituted. Discipline was enforced by laws, it must be admitted, unjustly severe; and a pre-emptory enactment was passed that none but ministers Episcopally ordained should be allowed to officiate in the colony.

During the troubles which accompanied and followed the civil war, many of the cavaliers sought a refuge in Virginia; and this new emigration naturally tended to sustain the prevalent feeling of attachment to the Church and the monarchy. At a period long subsequent, King William and Queen Mary formed the noble design of erecting and endowing a college in Virginia. A charter was given with ample immunities and privileges, a public fund was allotted for the endowment, a president appointed, and the building commenced, but unfortunately destroyed by fire, and never afterwards restored. About the same time Rev. James Blair was sent out as ecclesiastical commissary of the province, and on the occasion Queen Mary gave a bounty of £200 a-year for the support of missionaries.

The history of the *New Plymouth* settlement is well known. It was first formed by a small party of Puritans, in the winter of 1621, and considerably increased in 1629 by an influx of their brethren, who were discontented with the state of things at home. It is said that among those who were on the point of abandoning their country for the enjoyment of unrestricted liberty in a new world, were, Hampden, Hasleig, and Oliver Cromwell; but they were prevented from embarking by an order from the court.

But though Cromwell was reserved to play a more important part at home, it was natural that he should feel a deep interest in the country of the "Pilgrim Fathers." And we find that during his Protectorate, in the year 1649, an ordinance was passed for the promoting and propagating of the gospel of Jesus Christ in New England by the erection of a corporation, to be called by the name of the President and Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England, to receive and dispose of moneys for that purpose; and a general collection was ordered to be made in all the parishes of England and Wales.—With the proceeds of this collection they purchased an estate in land; and some progress is said to have been made in the conversion of natives, both on the Continent and in the West India islands.

On the restoration of the monarchy the charter was renewed, through the influence of Sir W. Ashurst and Richard Baxter, with the Lord Chancellor Hyde, and the powers under it were enlarged, for now the corporation was styled "The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England and the Parts adjacent in America." Its object was defined to be "not only to seek the outward welfare and prosperity of the good and salvation of their immortal souls, and the publishing the most glorious gospel of Christ among them."

Clarendon is the first name on the list of the corporation, of which the Hon. Robert Boyle was secretary. It does not appear that any regular journal was kept of its proceedings; and it is therefore impossible to form an accurate estimate of the results which followed its establishment. The missionaries seem for the most part to have been deprived of clerical rank in the Church of England; and, indeed, Neal names seven "who being disturbed by the ecclesiastical courts for the cause of non-conformity, transported themselves to New England for the free exercise of their ministry, before the year 1641.—Among those mentioned are the celebrated John Eliot—is it certain that he was in holy orders?—and a very different person, Hugh Peters. The whole revenue of the corporation never exceeded £600 a-year; and with this, according to the same authority; they maintained from twelve to sixteen missionaries—English and Indian—on salaries of from £10 to £30;—erected schools, and supplied them with books.

We learn, however, from some letters addressed by Eliot, who has been surmised "the Apostle of the Indians," to Mr. Boyle, that the governor sent over to him considerable sums of money, £400 at one time, £460 at another, to enable him to complete his translation of the Bible into the Indian language. This work was finished, and many hundreds of copies circulated, in the year 1686: Mr. Boyle's own tract "The Practice of Piety," was also translated for the use of the natives.

Eliot's indefatigable exertions many companies of Indians in Massachusetts, Plymouth, Martha's Vineyard, and Nantucket, had been so far instructed in the faith, as to assemble themselves regularly every Sunday for common prayer and thanksgiving, and to be able "to practice and manage the whole instituted public worship of God among themselves, without the presence or inspection of any English among them." It is impossible not to feel regret that the Church at home took no measures to bring these promising converts within her fold, and to retain them for her own after their zealous pastor was called away.

Boyle, who had during his life-time devoted so much of his attention and of his wealth to the spiritual improvement of the native Americans, bequeathed at his death the sum of £100 to the society of which he had been governor, to be set aside and employed as stock for the relief of poor Indian converts. And, moreover, after settling an annual "salary for some learned divine to preach eight sermons every year for proving the Christian religion against notorious infidels; he requires that the said preacher shall be assisting to all companies, and encouraging them in any undertaking for propagating the Christian religion in foreign parts."

Another eminent instance of zeal for the colonial Church shall be added. Sir Leoline Jenkyns, in his last will, proved the 9th of Nov. 1685, provided that two additional fellowships "be founded and endowed at his cost and charges in Jesus College, Oxford, on condition that the said two fellows respectively, and their respective successors for ever, may be under an indispensable obligation to take upon them holy orders of priesthood, and afterwards that they go out to sea in any of H. M.'s fleets, when they or any of them are thereto summoned by the Lord High Admiral of England; and in case there be no use of their service at sea, to be called by the Lord Bishop of London to go out into any of H. M.'s foreign plantations, there to take upon them the cure of souls, and exercise their ministerial functions."

It is scarcely probable, that after a lapse of a century and a half from the date of this foundation, her majesty will be advised to demand the services of Sir Leoline's fellows as naval chaplains; but, as there is not a single one of her "foreign plantations," in which more clergy are not wanted, it might perhaps, be still worth while to inquire whether this noble endowment might not yet be reclaimed for its original purpose.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

A LETTER TO A METHODIST.

(By a Presbyter of the Diocese of Maryland.)

[CONTINUED FROM OUR LAST.]

It is enough to make one shudder, when contemplating the manner in which these men attempted to thrust themselves into the chief office of the Christian ministry. The recollection of it appears to have grievously weighed upon Dr. Coke's conscience, when he afterwards so earnestly wrote to Bishop Seabury to ordain him and Asbury Bishops! and to Bishops White and Seabury to ordain their preachers over again! And well it might weigh upon his conscience! The wonder is, it did not drive him into a mad-house. Wesley himself tells us the effect it had upon him, when he heard of Asbury claiming to be a Bishop! He tells us it made him shudder—and well it might. He thus writes to Asbury:

JOHN WESLEY TO FRANCIS ASBURY.

London, September 20, 1788.

"There is, indeed, a wide difference between the relation wherein you stand to the Americans, and the relation wherein I stand to all the Methodists. You are the elder brother of the American Methodists; I am, under God, the father of the whole family. Therefore, I naturally care for you all, in a manner no other person can do. Therefore, I, in a measure, provide for you all; for the supplies which Dr. Coke provides for me, he could not provide, were it not for me—were it not, that I not only permit him to collect, but support him in so doing.

"But, in one point, my dear brother, I am a little afraid both the Doctor and you differ from me. I study to be little, you study to be great; I creep, you strut along; I found a school, you a college. Nay, and call it after your own names! Oh, beware! Do not seek to be something! Let me be nothing, and Christ be all in all.

"One instance of this, your greatness, has given me great concern. How can you, how dare you suffer yourself to be called a Bishop?

"I shudder, I start at the very thought! Men may call me a haire, or a fool, a rascal, a scoundrel, and I am content; but they shall never, by my consent, call me a Bishop! For my sake, for God's sake, for Christ's sake, put a full end to this! Let the Presbyterians do what they please, but let the Methodists know their calling better.

"Thus, my dear Franky, I have told you all that is in my heart; and let this, when I am no more seen, bear witness how sincerely

"I am your affectionate friend and brother,
JOHN WESLEY."

This letter is a remarkable document. Four years had nearly elapsed since his "appointment" of Dr. Coke. In the mean time Wesley had had time for reflection. He had time for a further and more deliberate investigation of the authority of Presbyterians to ordain; and however he might, for a season, have been blinded by the sophistical book of Sir Peter King, so as to suppose Presbyters and Bishops were the same order, yet now he gives his more mature judgment, that they were not—for that is the meaning of the last clause in his letter, where he speaks of the Presbyterians. It is well known that the doctrine of the Presbyterians is, that Bishops and Presbyterians are the same order; and many of them, even to this day, do not scruple to call themselves Bishops. In reference to this fact it is, that Wesley says in the above letter, "Let the Presbyterians do as they please, but let the Methodists know their calling better." That is, let the Presbyterians, if they please, call themselves Bishops, but let not the Methodists follow their example—let them know their calling better than to call themselves Bishops, when they are not.

Now, let it be remembered, that the question before us is: Did Wesley, when he "appointed" Coke and Asbury "Superintendents" of the Methodist Society, ordain them Bishops?

It is certain he did not. This letter to Asbury, in the very plainest manner possible—words cannot be plainer—declares that Asbury was no Bishop; and yet Coke did for Asbury precisely what Wesley did for Coke—he laid his hands upon him, and prayed over him; and if, in Wesley's judgment, this imposition of hands and prayer by a Presbyter, did not constitute Asbury a Bishop, neither could they, in Wesley's judgment, have constituted Dr. Coke a Bishop; for Coke's authority to ordain was the same as Wesley's, (which was no authority at all), both of them being *Presbyters* of the Church of England; and, therefore, it is proved clearly and undeniably, that in appointing Coke and Asbury to be "Superintendents" of the Methodist Society, Wesley did not ordain them Bishops.

Notwithstanding their high-handed assumption of the title of Bishop, still these men were uneasy. The fact was still staring them in the face, (and the world knew it) that Wesley had only "appointed" them to be Superintendents of the Methodist Society under him; and, however they might claim to be Bishops—and however they might alter the name in the minutes—still Bishops of the Church of God they were not! Something, then, must be done to get around this matter, and convince the people, 1. That Wesley was a Bishop; 2. That Wesley ordained Coke a Bishop; and 3. That Coke ordained Asbury a Bishop! One would suppose, when Asbury had Wesley's letter, (dated September 20th, 1788.), in his pocket, declaring that he was no Bishop, and that Asbury was no Bishop, that this would not be a very easy matter to accomplish. But these men did not stick at trifles; they had already fabricated a new set of minutes for their "Church" to get the title of Bishops, and they were determined to go all lengths sooner than fail in their project to be accounted real Bishops. The Bishops of the *Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States* had now for some time been consecrated; Coke and Asbury knew that their commission was authentic; that they had been consecrated in England and Scotland by lawful Bishops; and that the Church had received them as Bishops, in a regular succession from the Apostles. Coke and Asbury knew all this; and alongside of these men, as Methodist "Superintendents" they felt their littleness, although they had assumed the name of what they so much coveted! They knew that they had the name of a Bishop, and that was all! They had no succession to point to! Let us see, then, how they proceeded to get the reality. At one of their Conferences, held in the year 1789, Mr. Lee, in his "History," informs us (p. 142), that

"The Bishops, (that is, Coke and Asbury) introduced a question in the annual minutes, which was as follows:—
"Q. Who are the persons that exercise the Episcopal office in the Methodist Church in Europe and America?
"From Moore's Life of Wesley, vol. ii, page 285.
"In his letter "appointing" Dr. Coke a Superintendent, Wesley says, "Whereas many of the people in the Southern Provinces of North America, who desire to continue under my care, &c. In his letter to Asbury, he says: "The supplies which Dr. Coke provides for you, he could not collect, were it not for me—were it not that I not only permit him to collect, but support him in so doing." The following question and answer were adopted at the Conference in 1784. "Q. 2. What can be done in order to the future union of the Methodists? A. During the life of the Rev. John Wesley, we acknowledge ourselves his sons in the Gospel, ready in matters belonging to Church Government, to obey his commands, &c. (Lee's History, p. 95.) Mr. Lee afterwards observes: "This engagement to obey Mr. Wesley's commands, in matters belonging to Church Government, was afterwards the cause of some uneasiness." No wonder, Wesley's letter to Asbury when he set up for a Bishop, was well calculated to make him uneasy.

"A. John Wesley, Thomas Coke, and Francis Asbury, by regular order and succession!"

"The next question was asked differently from what it ever had been in any of the former minutes, which stands thus:

"Q. Who have been elected by the unanimous suffrages of the General Conference to superintend the Methodist Connection in America?"

"A. Thomas Coke and Francis Asbury."

The drift of these questions and answers can be seen at once. Their object is to make it appear (1.) That it was the *Conference* and not Wesley, which "appointed" them *Superintendents*; and (2.) To make it appear, that Wesley was a Bishop, and ordained them Bishops, and that thus they have a regular succession from a lawful Bishop! Now let it be remembered, that these questions were introduced by Coke and Asbury themselves! They saw the full drift of them, although the Conference might not have seen it! Calmly and without prejudice review this proceeding; and then taking it in connection with the fact, that they fabricated a new set of minutes to get the name of a Bishop, and with the fact that Asbury had in his possession Wesley's letter declaring that he was no Bishop, and that Asbury was no Bishop—I say, calmly and without prejudice review this proceeding, in connection with these facts, and then say, whether modern or ancient times afford a more daring, or unlawful scheme, than this presents, of men undertaking to usurp the office and authority of a Christian Bishop!

These facts, also, prove that Coke and Asbury knew that Wesley did not ordain them Bishops, when he "appointed" them Superintendents of the Methodist Society under him. But, if there be any doubts remaining on this point, they will be removed by the perusal of Dr. Coke's letters to Bishops White and Seabury of the Protestant Episcopal Church, marked A, B, in the Appendix.—As you will, of course, give these letters an attentive perusal, it will only be necessary for me briefly to refer to them.

1. It will be observed, in both of these letters, that Dr. Coke does not, for a moment, claim to be a Bishop.

2. His letter to Bishop White shows, that he exceeded the authority given him by Mr. Wesley, and that Mr. Wesley disapproved of his proceedings.

3. In his letter to Bishop Seabury, he asks Bishop Seabury to ordain him "a Bishop of the Methodist Society!" Thereby acknowledging that Wesley, when he "appointed" him a Superintendent, did not ordain him a Bishop, of that Society!

4. In his letter to Bishop Seabury, he asks Bishop Seabury to ordain Mr. Asbury a Bishop of the Methodist Society; thereby acknowledging that his ordination of Asbury to be a Bishop was only a mock ordination!

5. In his letter to Bishop Seabury, asking for the admission of the Methodist preachers into the Protestant Episcopal Church, Dr. Coke says, that he "knows that they must submit to re-ordination." Of course, the ordination they received from him was good for nothing, otherwise there would have been no necessity for their being ordained over again.

6. These letters prove, beyond question, that Coke knew and believed, that *Bishops alone* possessed authority to ordain; that no such authority was possessed by Presbyters (otherwise his own ordinations would have been valid, for he was a Presbyter); and, consequently, that he knew and believed that Presbyters and Bishops were not the same order.

7. These letters, too, show conclusively, what was Dr. Coke's opinion of Wesley's ordinations (as they are called)—that is that they possessed no validity whatever, and, therefore, that when Wesley "appointed" him a Superintendent of the Methodist Society, he did not "ordain" him a Bishop of the Church of God.

I shall now proceed to prove, that the Methodists themselves do not believe that Presbyters and Bishops are the same order.

Because, if Presbyters and Bishops were the same order, when a man is ordained a Presbyter, or Elder,* he would be a Bishop, without any further ordination; but the Methodists require those, whom they are about to elevate to the order of Bishop, to submit to a third ordination, and thereby acknowledge, that they do not consider a Presbyter (or Elder) to be a Bishop without such ordination, and consequently denying them to be the same order.

The Methodist form for the ordination of Presbyters, (or Elders,) may be found at page 127 of the Methodist "Book of Discipline"; their form for the ordination of those they call Bishops, may be found at page 140 of the same book. And, as these "forms" were drawn up by Wesley, from the ordination offices in the Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England, it is an additional proof (if any were wanting) that he did not believe Presbyters and Bishops to be the same order—because, if he did, why did he, why do the Methodists now, require those they call Elders, (or Presbyters) to submit to a third ordination, before they allow them to be called Bishops?

Let those answer this question who can.</