

that "the principal difference" betwixt it and its sister forms of Methodism "seems to be that the Bible Christians take a sitting posture at the Lord's Supper." To resolve the difference betwixt one variety of Methodism and another into the interval betwixt a chair and a hassock is surely very cruel!

A not unfriendly historian, J. R. Green, is puzzled by this evil fertility in divisions which marks one stage of Methodist history, and offers as an explanation the statement that "of all Protestant Churches, Methodism is the most rigid in its organisation, the most despotic in its government." But that statement, if it ever was true, is true no longer!

Some divisions were, no doubt, inevitable in Methodist history; for when Wesley died, no true equipoise betwixt the forces and tendencies within its bounds had been reached. An institution which had felt from its very birth, and for so many years, the pressure of a single masterful hand could hardly develop in a moment the virtues both of flexibility and of self-poised stability. Methodism, too, was affected in its earlier years by the temper of secular politics outside it. The French Revolution, when Wesley lay dying, was beginning to shake, as with the thrust of an earthquake, and almost into ruin, all forms of human society, secular or religious. The influence of that great movement predisposed men for nearly a generation, both to vehemently demand changes, and to vehemently refuse them.

But whatever may be the explanation of the great and quick-following disruptions which rent Wesley's Church asunder, and made it for a time resemble an exploded planet flying in fragments through the ecclesiastical heavens, it might have been predicted with the utmost confidence that these divisions would arrest all spiritual growth. The remarkable circumstance is that this was not the case! The spiritual impulse of Methodism has survived all its schisms. It has characterised in some degree or other each separate fragment. Sea transit has not killed it; new social and geographical environments have not arrested it. Methodism has crossed all the seas of the planet, and taken root on every soil. It has varied its name, its forms, its methods; but under all