

THE WESLEYAN.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1841.

The Church, on the 20th instant, notice the extract in the Record, on "Apostolical" and "Episcopal" Succession," together with "the editorial remarks by which it is introduced to notice," and anticipates no difficulty in refuting the arguments which it contains." We appreciate, and are quite disposed to reciprocate, the courtesy, moderation, and kindness of our respected contemporary: "Entertaining," he says, "a strong personal respect for several of the Wesleyan Ministers in Canada, in connexion with the British Conference, it is with pain that we find ourselves embarked in a controversy with their accredited organ. We trust, however, to discuss the points of difference between us, in a spirit of courtesy and gentleness." Now, be it remembered, the "embarkation" of the Church in a controversy with us is, on his part, perfectly gratuitous. We have not written a line against the doctrines, ritual or polity of the Established Church, nor have we the slightest disposition to do so; on the contrary, we have spoken in respectful and affectionate terms of the English Church; but if our contemporary chooses to become the apologist and advocate of the dreams of Successionism, and to throw down the gauntlet to every one that attempts to vindicate Christianity and the Establishment from superstition and error, we shall, of course, stand to our arms and defend our principles. Truth, not victory, shall be the object of our exertions, either offensive or defensive. We, however, in this instance, have not drawn the sword or sounded an attack. Week after week, our contemporary has inculcated principles and practices which, when pushed to their consequences, unchurch and unchristianize all non-episcopal denominations, and which, in themselves, are erroneous and absurd; and now, because we introduced the Record to our readers for the purpose of exhibiting the opinions of several of the reformers and divines of the Church of England, our contemporary must needs put on the harness and enter the arena of theological polemics. Before, however, the battle fairly commences (if fight we must) let us settle the preliminaries:—

I. What we disbelieve and disapprove, as we stated in our last, "Apostolical succession," as taught and defended by some in the present day. There is a succession of truth and holiness and of true Christian ministers which we firmly believe and strenuously maintain; but the modern scheme or theory of "Apostolical Succession" we utterly repudiate and deny. The Church quotes a sentence from the Prayer-book, which declares, not that the scheme or theory is true but, that "from the Apostles' time there have been three orders of ministers in Christ's Church—Bishops, Priests, and Deacons." Now, does not the Church know that though this is a part, it is not the most essential and the most repulsive part of Successionism? We might admit that there have been bishops, priests and deacons from the apostles' time, without at all embracing the dogmas of "Apostolical Succession." These dogmas involve not merely questions of historical fact but of Biblical exegesis and of theological controversy. They relate to the divine origin and authority, the direct obligation, the necessity, and the sole legitimacy of Episcopal Succession. It may not be amiss to state them more in detail, as follows:—

1. In the original Church, there existed three distinct orders of ministers, namely, Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons.
2. These three orders were divinely appointed.
3. The continuance or perpetuation of these three orders is directly obligatory on the Christian Church, and is essential to its identity.
4. Bishops must be installed and consecrated by triple ordination; first, as Deacons, secondly, as Presbyters, then as Bishops.
5. Bishops alone are empowered to ordain ministers.
6. The office and authority of a Christian Minister are truly committed, only by the imposition of a Bishop's hands, and, therefore, Episcopal ordination is the test of ministerial authority.
7. Bishops are divinely-empowered to rule and govern ministers as well as people.
8. Each Bishop provides over a diocese, including several ministers and congregations, without an associate.
9. Bishops and Episcopally-ordained ministers have been continued in the Church from its first organization by a lineal, visible, personal, uninterrupted succession.
10. Whoever is not found in this succession of Episcopal ordinations, whatever may be his gifts, graces and usefulness, is unauthorized to administer the ordinances of religion.

11. Therefore, the Roman Catholic and Protestant Episcopal denominations are the only scriptural, apostolical and authorized churches, and their ordinations and religious ministrations alone are valid.

This, then, we conceive, is what the editor of the Church has volunteered to defend; not a part but the whole; the nature and sufficiency of that defence we shall see in the sequel.

II. We adduced the extract from the Record to prove that this scheme of succession "is not the doctrine of the Church of England, in the judgment of Bishop Jewel, Archbishop Philipot, Bradford, and our other martyred reformers, Morton Bishop of Durham, Bishop Stillingfleet, Archbishop Whitgift, Dr Cosins, Dr Lant, the Bishop of St Asaph, Threlby, Redman and Cox." Let our words be carefully marked; and let it be remembered that the words of these men themselves are given as the expressions of their judgment. If it can be made appear that they never uttered such words, or, if uttered, that they do not convey their obvious meaning, then and not till then, will it be evinced that we have not established our position.

III. The Church objects to our representation of the Record as "a journal in the interests of the Church of England." He says, "it is only recognized as such by a particular party, and is, we believe, in some measure, under Presbyterian management. We emphatically protest against its being considered an authoritative or generally recognized organ of Church opinions." In reply to all this, we beg leave to offer the following observations:—

- a. We did not represent the Record as an "authoritative organ" or as an "organ" at all of the Church of England. We know of no periodical, at home or abroad, that is entitled to be so considered. If there be such an one, we shall be glad to be informed.
- b. As the Church of England consists of parties—orthodox, "evangelical," "high-church," "liberal," "anti-Calvinistic,"—every paper, in the interests of the Church, must necessarily belong to "a particular party." We suppose the Record does not happen to belong to the party of the Editor of the Church, does not express his sentiments, and, therefore, according to his conception of "the interests" of the Church, ought not to be received in the light in which we have presented it. What reason the Church has for believing that the Record is, "in some measure," under Presbyterian management, and what his estimate of that "measure" is we have no means of ascertaining. The Editor of the Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine, published in London, who has ample means of knowing the position and principles of the Record, calls it "a religious newspaper, which very decidedly maintains the principles of the Church of England, as by law established." Our readers can judge whether such a paper is, as we stated, "in the interests of the Church of England" or not; whether the "protest" of the editor of the Church is well-founded; and whether we, as our contemporary asserts, have been guilty of an "inadvertence."

We have thus, we think, cleared the field; and we now await, in perfect quietude and good-humour, our respected contemporary's onset. With what weapons and tactics he means to assail us, we know not; for ourselves, we trust to "the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God." We hope nothing will be elicited, on either side, to check or prevent that "love" which is "the fulfilling of the law."

We thank our respected contemporary for his kind and perfectly satisfactory explanation respecting the Wesleyan Missionary Society. He is pleased to designate the "British Wesleyans" his "loyal and respected fellow-colonists," to lament that they and the Church "are not one," and to indulge "the hope of living to see a union effected." We fully reciprocate the spirit of these expressions; we doubt not that he has "always spoken as kindly of us as his honest convictions would permit;" but we lament that his convictions on some points—honest though they be—so sadly interfere with the catholic and comprehensive spirit of our holy religion, and, as we cannot but think, with the word of God, and that his expressions of these convictions so painfully tend to awaken and promote feelings of hostility, bitterness and strife. But we think and let think; and if, as an elegant writer observes, "the coldest bodies warm in contact, the hardest sparkle in collision," may we not hope that the present contact will prove mutually beneficial? At all events, let us "prove all things," and "hold fast that which is good."

We hope none of our readers will object to our articles merely on account of their length. We endeavour to select such as are well-written, on useful and appropriate themes; and we think none of them will be found longer than the subject demands. We could easily fill our pages with heterogeneous scraps, good enough of their kind and as far as they go; but this would be lowering the standard of our journal and frustrating the end of its institution, gratifying a vitiated taste, and sacrificing profit to amusement. We cannot be guided by the style and management of other periodicals, but must pursue the course which we deem most beneficial and becoming, and in which, our experienced predecessor has led the way. We think "The Wesleyan" should approximate the plan of "The Christian Advocate."

of a religious magazine as closely as possible, so as to be worthy of preservation, and of future as well as present perusal. But while aiming at solidity we shall not forget variety; and if the leading and primary departments be occupied with somewhat lengthy articles, the miscellaneous collections shall be, generally, brief and entertaining. We think that too many professed Christians are sadly deficient in religious knowledge, and careless of improving. There is no true religion without knowledge, and no religious improvement and increase without advancement in knowledge: "Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy father:" "Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Much may be said on this topic, but we must not dilate. Suffice it to observe that knowledge cannot be communicated by "shreds and patches," nor gained without toil and patience; that the Christian religion combines, in closest and most enduring intimacy, the wisdom of the serpent and the harmlessness of the dove; and that the exposition, defence and enforcement of that religion, are the duties assigned us in the management of this periodical.

Vita sine literis mors est.*

SUNDAY SCHOOL ADVOCATE.—The two first numbers of this periodical, "published on the first and third Tuesday of each month, by G. Lane & P. Sandford, N. Y., for the Sunday School Union of the Methodist Episcopal Church," have been received. It is conducted by the editors of the Christian Advocate and Journal, at the low price of three shillings and nine pence, per annum; is neatly printed, and embellished with several appropriate wood-cuts; and contains various agreeable and useful articles, in poetry and prose. We cannot but commend the design and its execution thus far, and most cordially wish it extensive and permanent success. Every true Christian should cherish a deep and lively interest in such truly benevolent and important institutions as Sunday Schools, and in judicious publications for their benefit and the welfare of children and young persons generally. The "Sunday School Advocate" has already obtained very extensive approbation and support, which will, doubtless, increase as it becomes more widely known.

THE CLASSIC; OR COLLEGE MONTHLY— is the name of a very respectable periodical, published in connexion with the Wesleyan University, Conn., under the editorial management of Professor W. M. Willist, which has been kindly sent us. The number now before us is the fifth of the second volume, and is printed on fine paper with new type; containing 43 pages 8vo.—price, two dollars per annum, in advance. It is enriched with highly interesting and well-written articles, entitled, "the revival of learning," "a colonial picture," "sea scenes," "transcendentalism," "essays of Queen Anne's reign," "antiquities of America," and some minor pieces. Such a publication is greatly to be preferred by persons of intelligence and good taste, before the light and frothy matter which so commonly issues from the press, and with which the time of too many is squandered.

THE DEDICATION OF THE NEW BRITISH WESLEYAN CHAPEL, IN THE TOWN OF HAMILTON, will take place (D.V.) on Sunday next, the 5th instant. The services will be conducted by the Rev. J. Strixson, Chairman of the District, and the Rev. M. Ruxley, A. M. A collection will be made at the close of each service.

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