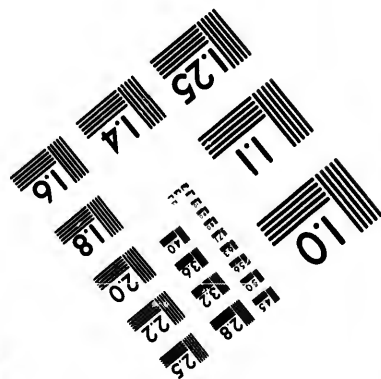
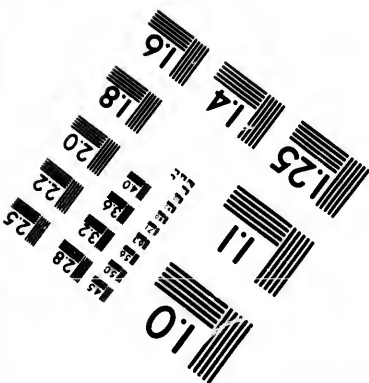
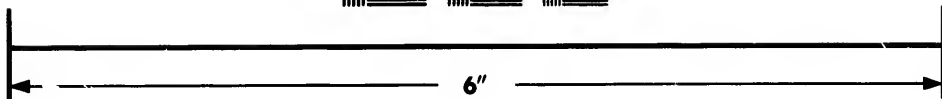
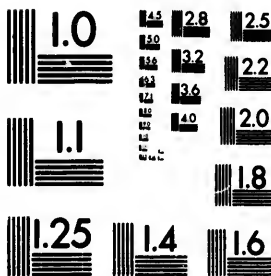


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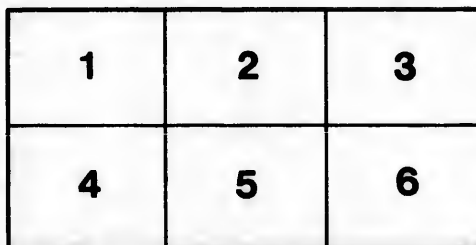
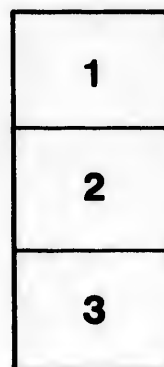
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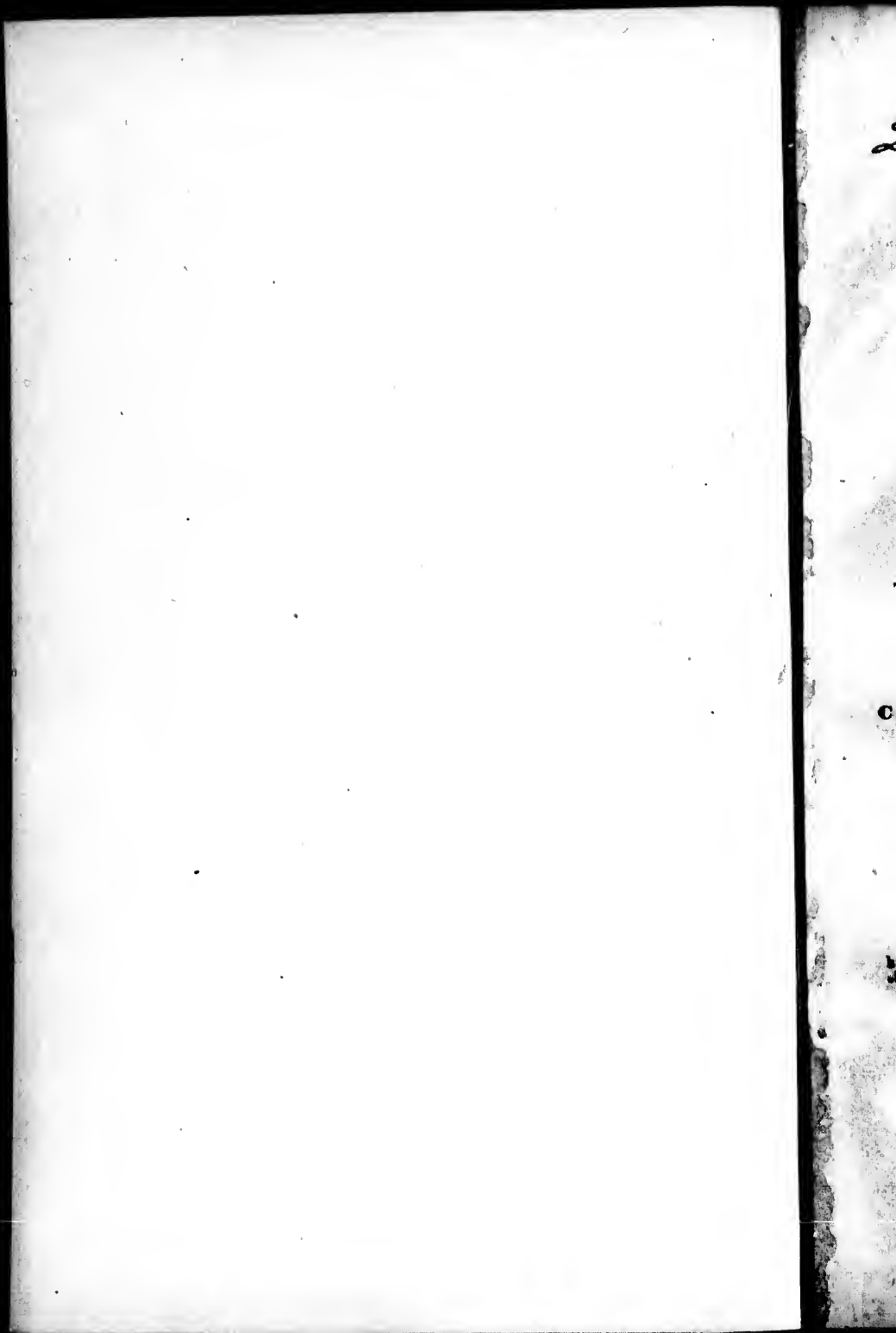
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THE
NATURE, ORIGIN, PROGRESS, PRESENT STATE, AND
CHARACTER
OF
WESLEYAN METHODISM,
A SERMON,
PREACHED AT PICTON, UPPER CANADA,
On Friday the 25th October, 1839,
BEING
THE DAY APPOINTED BY THE WHOLE METHODIST CONNEXION
FOR
COMMEMORATING THE INSTITUTION AND CELEBRATING THE
CENTENARY OF WESLEYAN METHODISM
BY RELIGIOUS SERVICES:

PUBLISHED AT THE REQUEST OF THE QUARTERLY MEETING,

By JOHN G. MANLY, Wesleyan Minister.

Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken:

ISA. XXXiii. 20.

KINGSTON,

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR, BY T. H. BENTLEY:

And may be had of him, and of Messrs. E. H. Hardy and J. M. Rorison
Kingston; at the Wesleyan Book Room, Toronto; and of
the Author, Picton.

1840.



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A D V E R T I S E M E N T .

THE following discourse is designed as an exposition and defence of Wesleyan Methodism. The appointment of a day for commemorating the institution of Methodism and celebrating the centennial year of its existence induced the writer to examine with unwonted attention the religious system to which gratitude, duty, deliberate choice and affection bind him. The result of his investigations and thinkings he now lays before the public, in compliance with the request of his brethren and friends. He has aimed at delineating the great and leading *principles* of Methodism : the facts which serve as proofs and illustrations, being supplied, in detail, in other authentic publications. The defence of Methodism against the assaults of the "Successionists" will not be deemed unseasonable or unnecessary by those who are acquainted with the movements and signs of "the times", and the tendency of the scheme refuted : And perhaps this discourse may be read by many who cannot have access to lengthy and elaborate treatises. On this and on every other principal point connected with his interesting theme, information has been diligently sought from the writings of others. The number and importance of the topics included in the discourse, and the peculiarity of the occasion on which it was delivered, are the Author's apology for its extraordinary length.

Picton, November, 1839.

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SERMON.

"Walk about Zion, and go round about her; tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it in the generation following. For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death."—Psalm: xlviii—12, 13, 14.

While every earthly object is empty and evanescent; while every present scene is rapidly passing away; while the heavens and the earth and time itself are swiftly hastening to a close, it behoves us to remember that there are truths and interests of loftier character, of vaster moment, and of greater duration. God is a moral Being, and man whom he made in his own image is the same. The purposes for which God created the universe and continually sustains and governs it; the purposes for which he has redeemed man; the purposes of all his works and ways, are strictly and emphatically moral. The resplendent suns and the bodies which roll round them; the innumerable tribes which issue from the material world, in all their variety, gradations, beauty and harmony; the intelligences to whom God has given birth, from the most elevated and expanded to the most debased and contracted, including man himself, upright or fallen, are all designed for the display of the divine glory, for the developement of the divine perfections, for the pleasure of their supreme and glorious Author. And for the same end shall the heavens and the earth be consigned to devouring fire; time be arrested in his course; unnumbered millions be summoned before the dread tribunal of the universal Sovereign; and the eternal and irrevocable doom of every creature be pronounced. Creation in its greatness and extent; Conservation in its vastness and minuteness, its constancy and continuance; Divine Government in its secrecy and publicity, its obviousness and its mystery, its speciality and universality, its ends and its means, its justice, goodness and truth, its laws, sanctions, investigations and decisions; Redemption in its awful sublimity and its adapted simplicity, its grandeur of purpose and its amplitude of means, its rigorous demands and its prompt compliances, its surpassing wisdom and its obvious excellence, its unyielding truth and its melting mercy, its stern justice and its perfect peace, its boundless love and its celestial bliss, are all, all,

the Works and Ways of the great Being who is infinite and eternal, incomprehensible and immutable ; they are all exhibitions of himself ; they are all component parts of a vast and wondrous Plan ; and they all issue in the accomplishment of moral designs.

How obvious and how just, then, is the conclusion that, in our estimation, in our connexions, pursuits and enjoyments, every thing should be subordinated and applied to moral ends and aims ! Literature and Science, Agriculture and Commerce, Civil Government and social life, general objects and individual purposes, should centre and terminate in the service and fruition of God. The Science that instructs and assists us in such a course is denominated RELIGION. This is the noblest, the most comprehensive and important of all species of knowledge. It is the foundation, cement, and pervading element and key-stone of the whole arch of the Sciences. It is the transcript of infinite and eternal excellence ; the harbinger, the agent, and the very communication of the Deity himself. It discloses our origin, our rank, our relations, our duties and advantages, and our eternal destiny. It presents to our attention the things of heaven and of earth, of time and eternity in their proper character and light. It relumes our understandings with the radiance of truth ; it sanctifies and governs our passions with the principles of holiness ; it satisfies and delights us with the truest bliss ; it esconces and defends us in peril and alarm ; it guides us through the scenes and events of life ; it animates and sustains us in the close of our conflict, toil and trial ; it crowns us with complete and eternal triumph in the resurrection morn ; it exalts and rewards us in the Day of Audit and Decision ; and it places us on the throne with the eternal Son of the Highest through the ages of eternity. Justly, then, does a Science of such origin, magnitude and effects claim our undivided and unceasing attention, affection and obedience.

It pleased the great Author of all good to make gradual and successive discoveries of his will concerning man, instead of pouring forth at once the full tide of illumination. Under the Patriarchal Dispensation from Adam to Moses, he disclosed the pre-determined incarnation and mediation of the Son of God ; the nation to which, according to the flesh, he should belong ; and so much of the means by which redemption is obtained as was necessary to salvation. Under the Levitical Economy, from the awful and appalling scenes of Sinai to the glories of the Day of Pentecost, he depicted and illustrated the scheme of salvation more clearly and fully by

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means of types, ordinances, laws and predictions. The perfect, the final and eternal dispensation of "grace and truth" was at length introduced by the Birth, Life, Death, Resurrection, Ascension and Intercession of the incarnate Son of God, and the consequent plenary effusion of the Holy Spirit, in miraculous and sanctifying influences on the ever-memorable Day of Pentecost. By means of the ministration of divine truth, thousands of souls were then and at subsequent times translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Those who believed were united together in Christian worship, communion and brotherhood, and instructed, fed and governed by the Apostles and their co-adjutors and successors in the ministry. In obedience to the Redeemer's last charge, the Apostles and Evangelists travelled from place to place, declaring to Jews and Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. With the co-operation of Prophets and Presbyters they founded and regulated churches in various places; burning with the intense fervour of love and zeal to "preach to every creature," the "glorious gospel." Believers, Churches, Ministers and Martyrs were multiplied till the glorious tidings were "sounded out" through various countries and in various languages. But, as had been foretold by Christ and his Apostles, contentions, divisions and "damnable doctrines" sprung up among them. Error, the love of the world, pride, the lust of power and riches, and priestly ambition, armed with secular authority, at length almost entirely eclipsed the splendour of truth, and threw a thick veil over the face of Christendom. Sable Night, with but a feeble glimmering of twilight, spread his mantle over the christian church, and ignorance, superstition and sin fearfully prevailed. So long as Christianity retained the truth uncorrupted, in faith and practice, the hostility of Pagan learning, opulence, influence and power proved wholly ineffectual. But the superinduced corruptions, concealment and tyranny of Popery fearfully retarded and obscured the truth. The Antichristian Court of Rome en fettered, enchained and destroyed the souls of men by prohibiting the perusal of the Scriptures and other religious books; by concealing the import of divine worship under an unknown language; by misinterpreting and perverting the word and ordinances of God; by superseding and suspending Kings and Princes; by persecuting to the death the faithful advocates of the truth; and by claiming the control of the destinies of eternity. Earnest and repeated efforts were made to ameliorate the state of the Christian Church, from age to age. But the piety of the Vandois or Waldenses in the valleys of Piedmont; the ef-

sorts of Grostete, Bradwardine, Fitzralph and Wiclif, in England; and of John Huss and Jerome of Prague, in Bohemia, though eminently useful, proved incompetent to overturn the Despotism of the Vatican, till the auspicious era of the Reformation, when Luther, Melancthon, Calvin and Zuinglius, raised up, qualified and employed by the Head of the Church, struck a death-blow to the power of the Papacy; rent the veil of error and superstition; and restored to the minds of men the pure light of the Gospel. The exertions of these honoured and eminent servants of God were followed up, in England, by Cranmer, Latimer and Ridley, till the throne and the altar were purged from the desecration and pollution of Popery, and consecrated afresh to the kingdom of Christ. Happy had it been for England had the lustre of the Reformation continued to increase, without interruption or eclipse, unto the perfect day. But, though the errors of Popery were not permitted to regain the ascendancy, Infidelity, immorality and an unscriptural theology became alarmingly prevalent. The beginning of the eighteenth century beheld England debased and corrupted by irreligion and vice. But the God of all grace who "neither slumbers nor sleeps" in the government of his People and of the world, raised up the Wesleys and Whitefield and their co-adjutors to revive primitive faith and piety throughout the kingdom, and to diffuse them throughout the world. Their labours were crowned through the divine blessing, with eminent and permanent success. The Societies which were formed and the religious system which was established took the well-known appellative of **WESLEYAN METHODISM**. Of its benefits and blessings thousands have partaken. We are among the number. We are assembled here to-day to ponder the Lord's dealings with us and our brethren by means of Methodism. We are convened to praise God for his gracious dispensations; to give *Him* the whole glory of the good that has been effected; to dedicate ourselves afresh to his service; and to implore upon ourselves and upon the Church at large, the copious effusions of his holy Spirit.

In consonance with the objects for which this day has been appointed, and for which you are gathered together, we invite your earnest attention to the *Nature*, the *Origin*, the *Progress and Present State*, and the *Character of Wesleyan Methodism*, and to those important *Practical Reflections* which naturally arise from the whole subject.

I. THE NATURE OF METHODISM.

Wesleyan Methodism is Scriptural and Primitive Christian-

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ity, revived and re-organized, under the divine guidance and blessing by the Rev. John Wesley and his co-adjutors, in the eighteenth century, and continued to the present period.— This is the most concise, comprehensive and correct definition of the subject which we are able to give. And in thus explaining it, we do not mean to assert that it is absolutely perfect. We know too well that nothing is such but the Divinity and his operations. We know that notwithstanding the perfect purity of the revealed fountain of truth, no stream can issue from it through man, without partaking of his infirmities and imperfections. But we regard the leading, the essential, the distinctive features of Methodism as truly scriptural: As a whole, we conceive it to be more completely assimilated to primitive Christianity than any other religious system known among men. We appreciate and cheerfully acknowledge the excellences and usefulness of other orthodox Protestant denominations and the systems which they respectively uphold. Of these Wesleyan Methodism is neither a rival nor a foe, but an affectionate, zealous and efficient ally. And, though we rejoice that the former have done nobly, we must be permitted to believe that the latter "excelleth them all." In thus speaking we cannot be charged with the exclusiveness of bigotry, though we may with the partiality of peculiar attachment. To such a charge we plead guilty.— But ours is not the partiality of educational prejudice, of hasty decision, or of blind and irrational affection; but the result of observation, examination and experience. The principles and facts on which such a partiality is based we are now, with divine assistance, about to lay before you. One hundred years having elapsed since the erection of our Methodist Zion, we are now to take a Centennial "walk about" it and through it. The City to which we belong is a WAR-LIKE and FORTIFIED CITY, having "walls, towers, and bulwarks:" she is a ROYAL and HIGHLY-ADORNED CITY, having stately and elegant "palaces:" her consequent strength, beauty and excellence we are to "mark and consider." And how stirring the reflection that the walk is not a solitary and gloomy one. We are accompanied in our Centennial perambulation and observations by unnumbered thousands in every quarter of the globe. We are joined in our tour by the swarthy African, the Islanders of the Ocean, the red men of our own country, and the enlightened sons of Europe and America. Thousands of eyes now gaze intently upon the same fair City. Thousands of ears now hear the same joyous and gladdening sounds. Thousands of hearts

beat and swell simultaneously with the same inexpressible and delightful emotions. Let us, then, in such company and circumstances, "walk about Zion and go round about her; tell the towers thereof. Mark well her bulwarks and consider her palaces;" singing as we go, "This God is our God forever and ever; He will be our guide even unto death."

1. In examining the NATURE of Methodism, our attention must first be directed to the DOCTRINES which are taught by her Ministry and publications, and received by her membership.

With respect to these, let it be understood that we receive the Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments, as the revealed Will of God; the sole and sufficient Repository of moral truth; the appointed rule of faith and practice. Creation and Providence throw concurring but subordinate light on some of the great truths involved in the origin, rank and destiny of man. Tradition or the opinions of men we hold to be of no authority, though sometimes useful in the elucidation of Scripture. The Evidences of Christianity, comprising miracles and prophecy and all collateral proofs, we esteem sufficient to convince and satisfy every impartial and diligent inquirer of the authenticity and inspiration of the Sacred Writings.

We hold, also, that the province of Reason is to examine and decide upon the Evidences of Christianity; and, when satisfied with these, to ascertain the true sense of the Sacred Writings, by the proper application of sound and just principles of exegesis. We are not among those who depreciate the reasoning powers with which our beneficent Creator has endowed us, though we wish to confine them within their legitimate sphere. We regard the Christian Religion as a pure, a benevolent and a rational system, the offspring of infinite reason and excellence, and addressed at once to the understandings, consciences and hearts of mankind. But we studiously avoid the dangerous and impious extreme of subordinating Revelation to Reason, as if the latter were the superior, the perfect and ultimate standard of appeal. If the highest reason of man must acknowledge the credibility and authority of the Sacred Records; and if reason, under the guidance and influence of the eternal Spirit, is to interpret them according to the laws of philology and sound criticism, and then receive their testimony, we deem it the greatest arrogance and profaneness for man to reject or even question the revelation of God, merely because to human reason it may be mysterious or obscure. Such, from their nature and magnitude, we may reasonably expect many of its truths to be. It is sufficient for us to know what is the mind of God in any particular; and

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then, whatever difficulty or concealment may attend it, we must humbly and believingly exclaim—"Even so Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight."

The authorized human Exponents of our faith are Mr. Wesley's sermons and his notes on the New Testament.* The utility and necessity of thus embodying the principles of our belief are perfectly apparent. However utterly discordant with each other and with the Bible may be the doctrines of various sects, the authority of inspiration is claimed for all. As, then, a mere appeal to the Bible is not sufficient to guard the truth and to exclude error, to silence or convince the gainsayers, and to satisfy the sincere inquirer, we profess our belief, in conformity with the ancient and modern practice of nearly every branch of the Christian Church, in language as intelligible and unequivocal as we can possibly employ. We claim not infallibility for the expositors we have mentioned; we pledge not ourselves for the correctness of every expression; nor do we insist on every article as capital or essential; but we receive them as a "form of sound words," and recommend them to others as valuable helps to a right understanding of "the Scripture of truth."

We hold as verities of Scripture the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity; the creation, preservation and government of all things by and for God; the fall of man from original righteousness to total depravity; the proper Divinity and humanity, and the general atonement of Jesus Christ; the personality, Deity and operations of the Holy Ghost; justification by faith only; the direct witness of the Holy Spirit; the necessity of holiness, both inward and outward; salvation from all sin in this life by the "blood of sprinkling;" the resurrection of the body; the judgment of the world by Jesus Christ; and an eternity of rewards and punishments. Some of these doctrines seem especially committed to the Methodists for defence and diffusion; though they are all the truths of God and addressed alike to all. Those to which we allude are the direct testimony of the Holy Spirit, by which the believer is assured of his justification and admission into the family of heaven; and the entire sanctification of the believer's heart, or the attainment of "perfect love," before death. These, in conjunction with salvation by grace through faith, are of the greatest importance. The first inquiry of every awakened sinner must be—"What must I do to be saved;" and the on-

* Not the whole of his sermons: but the first series, or the first fifty-three in the third corrected London edition of Mr. Wesley's works, published in 1829, by the Rev. Thos. Jackson.

ly Scriptural answer is—"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." There are none who prize more highly or explain and enforce more frequently and earnestly than the Methodists the essential doctrine of justification by faith only. "We conclude," with the Apostle, "that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law;" and we rejoice in the conclusion, knowing that, unless justified in this manner, we can never be justified at all; inasmuch as we have violated the law and incurred its penalty without ability to atone, and without ability to return to obedience until pardoned and renewed. But the trembling penitent must be as anxious to learn the fact of his acceptance as to ascertain its mode. 'Till assured by some suitable and sufficient means of pardon and regeneration, he must be a stranger to well-grounded and lasting peace and to enlivening hope. On such a subject it is as impossible as it is unscriptural to be fully satisfied with mere inferences and hopes. Blessed be God, "we have a more sure word of prophecy" and promise, "whereunto we do well that we take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place:" "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God:" "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father: He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit." Such a testimony completely puts doubt to flight. Such a testimony dispels the clouds and the darkness of fear and unbelief. Such a testimony supplies peace that flows like a river; inspires confidence and strength; and imparts an authorized and joyous hope of everlasting life. And, when thus consciously justified, it is equally important and delightful to the Christian to know that, in this life, "as he which called him is holy," so is he to be holy; to be sanctified "wholly;" to be cleansed "from all unrighteousness;" and by entire purification, made truly meet for his Master's use. Instead of resigning himself to the task of struggling against indwelling sin till death; instead of sinking discouraged by the distance of victory; he is authorized by Scripture to believe and be saved, to believe and triumph. "Perfect love which casteth out fear" he may now attain; and steadily advancing from step to step and from stage to stage, with increasing lustre and happiness, eventually "appear before God in Zion." To prove the correctness of the foregoing synopsis of Methodist doctrine, it is unnecessary to aduce quotations from our connexional standards. In the writings of Wesley, Fletcher,

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Benson, Watson and Clarke, you will find these great and glorious truths amply and impressively set forth.

As respects practical godliness, we insist upon the authority and obligation of the Divine law, as a rule of life, and as a rule of final judgment. While anxiously avoiding Phariseism, we as anxiously avoid Antinomianism. We do not make void the law through faith. We believe that justification by faith has no prospective reference, but relates wholly to sins that are past; and, therefore, that while, in relation to the past, "there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus," as regards the present and future, they are "not without law to God, and under the law to Christ." The atonement is not designed to supersede present and future obedience, but to cover the offences of the past, and the unavoidable infirmities and imperfections of the future. If faith be a root, it is a living root through which is conveyed to the living tree of inward holiness the sap of divine nutriment and aid, issuing in the living fruit of scriptural obedience. If Abram, the sinner, was justified solely by faith, in the estimation of St. Paul; Abraham, the saint, was not justified by a dead, inoperative faith, but by the evidence of the works of holiness, in the harmonious and correct judgment of Saint James. Instead of believing that we are to "continue in sin that grace may abound," we view it as a gross inconsistency, and as a moral impossibility to be at once "dead to sin," as is every saint, and yet "living therein." The law and the Gospel are perfectly concurrent. The Gospel is not an exemption from duty, but from the deserved "curse of the law." The law is not the way to divine mercy, but the rule of our behaviour. The law does not pardon our previous aberrations from the pathway of holiness; but it clearly and accurately defines that path. The Gospel does not erase the lines of demarcation drawn by the law, but pardons our past wanderings beyond them into the regions of sin, and supplies us with ability and motives to keep within them, till we are conducted to "an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away." We, also, interpret the law as "spiritual;" as "exceeding broad;" as "holy and just and good."

2. The survey we have taken of the Doctrines of Methodism exhibits the foundation on which the City is erected, the principal bulwarks which contribute to her strength and security, and the outlines of the palaces which beautify and adorn her, and in which "God is known," by her Citizens, "as a refuge." God is known in these palaces, because sought unto and served. Having entered them, let us consid-

er the WORSHIP which is offered therein to the Divine Founder, Builder and Ruler of the City.

The obligation of Divine Worship is founded on Divine authority and law. Directly and inferentially it is enjoined in Scripture : "Worship God : " "God is a Spirit ; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." Besides, the ends of its institution and the effect it produces, conjoined with its obvious propriety, are sufficient to ensure its observance. Private devotion secures personal blessings. Family devotion includes or implies the important benefits of a godly example, religious instruction, and Divine approbation, protection and aid, in behalf of the household. Public worship is unspeakably advantageous to individuals, families and nations. It instructs, quickens, unites and edifies the Church, and supplies opportunities of teaching, warning and converting those that are without. It accords with the social principle, divinely implanted in the human breast. It is supported by analogy drawn from all cases of general interest, whether literary, agricultural, commercial or civil. It affords the most important facilities for the universal promulgation of the Gospel of Christ. It has been the practice of the Church in every age and nation ; and the seal of God's blessing attests its utility.

In considering the public worship of the Methodists, the first characteristic which strikes our attention is its *primitive and scriptural simplicity and purity*. Celebrating the praises of God in "psalms, hymns and spiritual songs ;" reading the sacred Scriptures ; Prayers ; Preaching ; the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper ; the renewal of our Covenant engagements with God ; Christian Communion and fellowship ; and fasting or abstinence, constitute the religious worship of the Wesleyan Methodists. In all this there are no needless and cumbrous rites ; no ceremonies which are learned and observed with difficulty. But there is a striking similarity to the mode of worship which obtained in the early ages of Christianity. This is known to every intelligent and well-read person ; and, while it furnishes a sufficient reply to some objections that are urged against us, should strengthen and confirm every member of our Church in his attachment to our institutions and ordinances. If in our weekly class-meetings, in obedience to the Apostolic injunction, we "confess our faults, one to another, and pray one for another," and receive suitable instruction and advice ; and, thus, like ancient fearers of God speak often, one to another : if once or twice in each week we meet for prayer and supplication, and

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to realize our Lord's gracious promise that, "where two or three are met together in his name, there is he in the midst:" if less frequently we unite in our feasts of charity or love, like the early Christians; not to magnify, but to humble ourselves, not to boast of our attainments but to lament their defectiveness, and to glorify the grace of God in ourselves and our brethren; and, also, to express our mutual fraternal affection, and stir each other up in the divine service; surely these things, however the infidel or mere worldling may regard them, should awaken no hostile feelings or prejudices, or give occasion to the application of no offensive epithets on the part of professed Christians of other denominations. If there be any scriptural arguments or valid objections against these institutions, let our opponents adduce them or renounce their dislike.— Meantime we must be permitted to retain our conviction of their propriety and utility, and to continue in the use of them.

The worship of the Methodists is *neither exclusively Liturgical or formal, nor exclusively extemporaneous, though chiefly the latter*. And this we are satisfied is the most ancient, the most scriptural, and the most excellent way. There are advantages in both methods, and consequently, evils in the total disuse of either; and also in the predominance of the former over the latter. The worship of the Jews doubtless embraced both. So, also, did that of the primitive Christians. Our blessed Lord, himself, gave to his disciples an invaluable set of words, as a form to be repeated, and as a model to be imitated: "When ye pray, say, Our Father," &c.; and, "After this manner pray ye." But extemporaneous prayer and preaching are, we believe, most accordant with the genius, simplicity and vitality of Christianity, and with its perfect and prompt adaptation to all varieties of circumstance and character. In most cases therefore our prayers, and in all cases our expositions and applications of divine truth are extemporaneous. But forms are very properly employed in the ordination of Ministers; the administration of Baptism and the Lord's Supper; the Solemnization of Matrimony and the Burial of the dead. Besides, the divine form of words, first taught the Apostles, is invariably used in our public services. Thus have we endeavoured to avoid the inconveniences and evils, and to embrace the advantages of Liturgical and extemporaneous devotion; pursuing in this, as in many other instances, a course which is calculated to harmonize and unite extreme contending parties.

The worship of the Methodists is strikingly marked by its *frequent recurrence*. In this they are clearly distinguished from many other christian churches. Instead of confining our-

selves to one or even two services in the week, we think it our duty to meet frequently for edification. If the wants of the body must often be supplied, so, also, must those of the soul. It is true, we can frequently repair to the closet, or at any time lift up our hearts in mental or ejaculatory prayer: but as religion is social, as well as personal and domestic; as Christians are intimately connected, as the members of one body, and designed to contribute to each other's prosperity, we deem it needful and useful to assemble frequently in the place of prayer: Here I may, also, be permitted to remark that there is, perhaps, no body of christians whose members attend more generally and punctually to family devotion than the Methodist Societies. We expect and require every head of a family to appear before the Lord, with his household, every morning and evening, for praise and supplication. We also earnestly enforce the devotions of the closet and the daily perusal of the word of God. We know that the ordinances of religion are not religion itself: but we know that they are the divinely appointed, external channels of communication with God. We use them as means to lead us to the end: and, hence, in the general Rules, which explain the conditions of membership in our Societies, it is expressly stated that—"It is expected of all who desire to continue in these Societies, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation, by attending on all the Ordinances of God: such are, the public worship of God; the ministry of the word, either read or expounded; the Supper of the Lord; family and private Prayer; searching the Scriptures; and fasting or abstinence."

The worship of the Methodists is, also, *happily and effectually adapted to the preservation and promotion of holiness*. The members are not only instructed to attend public worship, but to imbibe and vocally exercise the spirit of prayer, on proper occasions: such occasions present themselves in the Prayer Meeting, the Class Meeting, and in family worship, and when duly embraced, no doubt materially contribute to edification. At the Renewal of the Covenant they are solemnly urged to fresh and unreserved dedication to the duties of Religion.—The commencement and close of each year are improved by peculiarly solemn and impressive services. The General Quarterly Fasts, if duly observed, must also contribute to the spiritual benefit of our people. And, in the Quarterly Love-feast, the spirit of self-examination is awakened; the reality and importance of vital, experimental Religion are evidenced afresh; and affectionate exhortations given to renewed and untiring exertion. But among all the means of grace which

are more or less characteristic of Methodism, there is none so truly distinctive and so promotive and conservative of holiness as the weekly Class Meeting. In all other meetings a member may be silent, and his real state of mind be consequently unknown. But in this he is solemnly and affectionately examined respecting his inward walk with God. He cannot elude the inquiry, but by absence; and absence must eventuate in the loss of membership. And, while attending these meetings, he must either be sincerely endeavouring to serve God, or frankly acknowledging he is not, or wickedly assuming the garb of hypocrisy. It is perfectly evident that no person can long continue in such an avowal of irreligion, and that, therefore, he will either amend or withdraw. And it is equally apparent that the garb of hypocrisy cannot long be worn. The thin disguise will soon be penetrated, or the restraints it imposes become intolerably irksome to the individual himself. In either of these two cases, though our number be diminished, our character, our energy, our vitality, are maintained and perpetuated: and, in comparison with this, numbers are, with us, as the small dust of the balance. We know that the mere machinery of means will never secure such an end: but we know that the means in question is strikingly and felicitously adapted to such a purpose, and, with the divine sanction and blessing on its faithful use must prove successful. On its faithful use the approbation of God has hitherto rested. As far removed in its circumstances, mode of procedure and design, from the Popish Confessional, as it is from the laxity of discipline and want of christian communion which obtain in some Protestant Churches, it has greatly contributed to the maintenance of piety. While other Revivals of Religion have gradually declined, seldom continuing, as Luther thought, above thirty years, the Revival we are considering, has proceeded through the changes and hostilities of one hundred years, and, blessed be God, is still in active and efficient operation. And we doubt not that thus it will continue, till the agencies of the churches are merged and concentrated in the final and successful assault upon Paganism, Mahomedanism, Infidelity and corrupted Christianity, and our holy Religion, the religion of the Bible, universally prevails.

3. In the rapid glance we have taken at the Doctrines and Worship of Methodism, we have seen the basis and structure of the city and some of its principal buildings: let us now examine the nature of its GOVERNMENT, the character of its laws and the mode of their administration. If the Christian Church

in general, and the Wesleyan Methodist in particular, be a City, a warlike and fortified City, a royal and highly ornamented City, and, as it is elsewhere represented, "a holy nation," a heavenly "Kingdom," it must have a suitable form of Polity, a King and his Ministers, and a judicious administration of wholesome laws: if it be a "flock," it requires "able and faithful" Shepherds: if it be "a field" or "garden," it requires proper persons to fence and cultivate it; to "plant" and "water;" if it be an army of soldiers, who are to "put on the whole armour of God," to "endure hardness," and "fight the good fight of faith," it should have a Captain, officers and laws: and if it be a "family or household" it needs parental vigilance and control. The same views are elicited by a consideration of the subject divested of metaphor. There must, in the first place, be competent and authorized persons to form a church on proper principles and terms of communion; then to edify and multiply believers by faithfully ministering the divine Word and Ordinances; and, lastly, to preserve the organization and purity of the Church by a proper application and enforcement of discipline. The following observations of the late Rev. Richard Watson, on this subject, are well worthy of attention:—"The Church of Christ being a visible and permanent society, bound to observe certain rites, and to obey certain rules, the existence of government in it is necessarily supposed. All religious rites suppose order, all order direction and control, and these a directive and controlling power. Again, all laws are nugatory without enforcement, in the present mixed and imperfect state of society; and all enforcement supposes an executive. If Baptism be the door of admission into the Church, some must judge of the fitness of candidates, and administrators of the rite must be appointed; if the Lord's Supper must be partaken of, the times and the mode are to be determined, the qualifications of communicants judged of, and the administration placed in suitable hands; if worship must be social and public, here again there must be an appointment of times, an order, and an administration; if the word of God is to be read and preached, then readers and preachers are necessary; if the continuance of any one in the fellowship of Christians be conditional upon good conduct, so that the purity and credit of the church may be guarded, then the power of enforcing discipline must be lodged somewhere. Thus government flows necessarily from the very nature of the institution of the Christian Church; and since this institution has the very authority of Christ and his Apostles, it is not to be supposed that its

government was left unprovided for; and if they have in fact made such a provision, it is no more a matter of mere option with christians whether they will be subject to government in the church, than it is optional with them to confess Christ by becoming its members."—*Theological Institutes*: vol. iii. p. 342. These views are in perfect harmony with the declarations and precepts of the word of God: "Go ye therefore and *teach* (a *disciple*) all nations, *baptizing* them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. *Feed* (and *govern*, as the original also signifies) the flock of God which is among you, taking the *oversight* thereof." A bishop or elder is to "*take care* of the church of God." "Let the elders that *rule well* be counted worthy of double honour." "If he will not hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a heather man and a publican."

The government of the Church is external and internal, a visible and invisible: the latter is carried on in the hearts of all true believers by the Lord alone; and the former in the whole body of professed christians, under the supervision and direction of the great Head of the Church, Jesus Christ, by those whom he is pleased to designate. The origin of the government is directly divine; its nature is purely spiritual and heavenly, or "not of this world;" and its ends, like all the other arrangements and dispensations of the Most High, are human salvation and the divine glory. The exact form and order of this government are not fully delineated in the New Testament, though important leading principles are laid down for our guidance and direction. There are many ecclesiastical arrangements which are left to the wisdom and discretion of the Church, to be determined according to the peculiarities of times, places and circumstances: "Not," says the Episcopal Reformed Church of Scotland, "not that we think any policy, and any order of ceremonies, can be appointed for all ages, times and places." Hence the ecclesiastical diversity that obtains in the christian church, and the controversies that have arisen between Episcopalians, Presbyterians and Congregationalists in relation to their respective modes of government. It is not our design to enter into these controversies any farther than is necessary to a delineation and defence of the Wesleyan Polity, which we shall now consider. The facts and principles it involves are deeply interesting and practically momentous.

The Wesleyan Polity is *Presbyterial*, not *Episcopal*. The number of orders or degrees in the Primitive Christian Ministry has been a subject of warm and protracted debate. The modern Episcopalians, Roman Catholic and Protestant, con-

tend for three—Bishops, Priests or Presbyters or Elders, and Deacons; the Presbyterians admit of but one, asserting that the terms Bishop, Presbyter and Elder are official designations of the same persons, promiscuously and synonymously applied; and that Deacons were persons originally appointed to the service of “tables,” or the management of mere secular affairs, while the Apostles confined themselves to the ministry of the word. Whoever entertains the first view of the subject is denominated an *Episcopalian*; and whoever entertains the second a *Presbyterian*, whatever may be their doctrinal views. Neither *Episcopacy* nor *Presbyterianism* is essentially connected with *Calvinism* or *Arminianism* or any other peculiar creed. The terms have reference solely to modes of ecclesiastical government; and we have thought it necessary to explain their relation and use lest our own appropriation of them might be understood to imply certain doctrinal theories, by those who are little acquainted with the technicalities and details of religious controversy.

There is a real distinction between *order* and *office* which should be carefully remembered in discussing this subject. There may be but one order of Ministers in a Church, and yet various offices, giving rise to the existence of “superiors among equals.” So, in the Church of Scotland, the Moderator of the Presbytery, Synod, or General Assembly, is only equal to his brethren in order, but superior in the office of Moderator, to which they have elected him. So the President of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference is superior to his brethren in his elective office, yet only equal in order. In the Church of England, too, though there are only three orders, there are the distinct offices of Rector, Dean, Archdeacon, Archbishop and Primate. Now, as the term Bishop signifies an overseer or superintendent, there may be actual Bishops in a church, without plurality of order. Every Pastor of a congregation is a scriptural Bishop, superintendent or overseer. Among us every Superintendent of a Circuit, every Chairman of a District, and the President of the Conference, are actual scriptural Bishops, but differing in the extent of their jurisdiction, and the two latter entrusted with the especial oversight of Ministers. According to this view, the Wesleyan Polity is both *Episcopal* and *Presbyterial*: it is the latter in order, and the former in office. And hence it includes the advantages of both, without incurring the absurdities and difficulties which are chargeable on the maintenance of three distinct and divinely-appointed orders. On this ground Mr. Wesley believed himself as scriptural a Bishop as any man in

England, being a regularly-ordained Minister, and in addition to this, the Father, the Founder, the Overseer and Ruler of the Methodist Societies. On these principles, too, we defend his ordination of Dr. Coke as the Superintendent, a Bishop (as he was subsequently called) of the Methodist Societies in America. Mr. Wesley was the actual and acknowledged Father and Superintendent of these Societies, and he barely invested Dr. Coke with the authority which he himself possessed. Had he done this on the principles of modern diocesan episcopacy, his conduct would have been inconsistent and absurd ; but, as he did it on the principles which we have stated, the raillery, sarcasm and ridicule of his enemies are perfectly pointless and harmless. The question between him and them is one of ecclesiastical government, not practical consistency ; and must be settled by argument, not irony and invective.— They believed in three orders ; he in but one. He says in his Journal :—“ I set out for Bristol. On the road I read over Lord King’s account of the Primitive Church. In spite of the vehement prejudices of my education, I was ready to believe that this was a fair and impartial draught. But if so, it would follow that Bishops and Presbyters are (essentially) of one order.” Again, Mr. Wesley’s opponents viewed him simply as a Presbyter of the Church of England ; he viewed himself as he was, the Instrument of an extraordinary Revival of Religion, and as the Pastor and Bishop of the numerous Societies which he had been the means of raising up and forming, to whom he sustained a peculiar relation, and for whose spiritual welfare he was bound to provide. On these principles he ordained Preachers for both Europe and America : on these principles we defend his proceedings and the validity of Methodist ordinations throughout the world : and in support of these principles we adduce the following arguments ; premising that the terms Elder and Presbyter are allowed to be synonymous ; that the office of Deacon was originally secular, and not ministerial ; and that, therefore, the question depends on the ordinal identity or diversity of Bishops and Presbyters.

1. The *names* of Bishop and Presbyter are promiscuously applied in the New Testament to the same persons. In the twentieth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, and at the 17th verse, St. Paul is said to have sent from Miletus to Ephesus for the Elders of the Church, and delivered to them an address, charging them, at v. 28, to “ take heed unto themselves and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers,” or bishops, as the original signifies. Those who are described in the 17th v. as elders are here addressed as bishops.

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In the 1st Ep. of Paul to Titus, ch. i. v. 5, the Apostle informs Titus that he had left him at Crete, "to ordain elders in every City, as he had appointed him;" and, referring to their qualifications, observes—"if any be blameless, &c." v. 6, and immediately subjoins the reason, v. 7, "for a bishop must be blameless as the steward of God:" here those who are to be ordained elders are denominated bishops. Again, in the 1st Ep. of Peter, ch. v. vs. 1 and 2, the Apostle calls himself an elder, and exhorts those whom he calls elders to "feed the flock of God, taking the oversight" or episcopal superintendence "thereof, not by constraint, but willingly." The first Epistle to the Philippians is addressed only to the saints, the bishops and deacons. Now, these were not bishops in the modern acceptance of the term: not diocesan bishops, because there was a plurality of them in the City of Philippi, and there is but one bishop in an extensive diocese in modern episcopal churches. Or if they were bishops in contradistinction to presbyters, why are deacons mentioned and presbyters omitted? Or if these persons were truly elders, why is not the *bishop* mentioned if such a person existed? The truth is, presbyters are here called bishops, and no one superior to them is mentioned, because no one superior existed in the Philippian Church. In Paul's first Epistle to Timothy, in the third chapter, he describes the qualifications of bishops and deacons, but makes no mention of presbyters. Now, if there had been a third order of Ministers, can we conceive that Paul would omit them, and speak at the same time of the inferior order of deacons? Certainly not.

2. Presbyters were required to possess the *qualifications* of bishops. Titus was to ordain elders, if any were "blameless," and is immediately informed that "a bishop must be blameless;" Timothy is informed that "a bishop must be blameless;" and not the least distinction is ever made between the qualifications of bishops and presbyters, while those of bishops and deacons are separately stated.

3. Presbyters possessed the *power and authority* of bishops. Presbyters *ordained*, for Paul says to Timothy—"Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery." And so far was the power of ordaining from being confined to a third and superior order, that we find, in the thirteenth chapter of the Acts, that "certain prophets and teachers," not Apostles or bishops, "laid their hands" on Barnabas and Saul, and "sent them away." Presbyters or elders also *ruled*, for Paul says—"Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour."

4. Presbyters performed the *duties* of bishops. Paul charged the elders of Ephesus to "feed" (and govern, as the original denotes) "the church of God;" in his epistle to Titus he calls a bishop "a steward of God," who is to "exhort" and "convince;" in his epistle to Timothy he says a bishop is to "take care of the church of God." In fact, the Presbyters were required to teach, to feed, to oversee, to rule; and no higher duties than these can be performed by ministers of any office or order.

5. The Apostles called themselves presbyters or elders, but not bishops and deacons. Peter speaking of himself says, "who am also an elder;" and John writes as an "elder unto the elect lady" in his second epistle, and as an "elder unto the well-beloved Gaius" in his third. The Apostolic function being the highest in the church, comprehended the authority of every other Ministerial office. The deaconship, a service of tables, had been voluntarily surrendered by the Apostles, and hence they never call themselves deacons: but they assumed the appellation of elder, and would doubtless have assumed that of bishop too, had it designated any distinct ministerial office or degree.

6. The collection made by the disciples in Antioch was sent to the elders in Jerusalem, to be appropriated by them to the relief of the brethren. Had there been any in Jerusalem superior to the elders, to them, unquestionably, the money would have been sent: but it was sent to the elders as the highest ordinary functionaries in the church.

7. *Elders are associated with the Apostles in the FIRST COUNCIL* at Jerusalem, generally denominated, the first œcumenical Council, but *no mention is made of bishops*. A controversy having arisen at Antioch respecting circumcision, it was determined (Acts xv. 2.) that "Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem unto the Apostles and elders about this question;" they were received of "the church and of the Apostles and elders," v. 4; the "Apostles and Elders" assembled "to consider of this matter," v. 6.; "it pleased the Apostles and elders with the whole church," to depute certain persons to the disputants, v. 22; the letters of the Council are written on behalf of "the Apostles, elders and brethren," v. 23; and in the 16th c., v. 4, we are informed that to the brethren at Lystra and Iconium were delivered "the decrees that were ordained of the Apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem." In all this important business, in this solemn assembly, there is not a word of bishops, for this obvious and satisfactory reason, that there were no bishops distinct from

the elders, no bishops analogous to those of the present day.

If then, the official appellations, the qualifications, the powers and duties of bishops pertained to elders; if the Apostles assumed the title of elders and not of bishops; if the funds of the church were placed under the control of the elders; if elders were members of the first Christian Council, without the slightest allusion to bishops, are we not fully justified in asserting that there was no essential distinction between the ordinary ministers of the primitive church, and that bishops and presbyters were originally identical? In process of time, however, the name of bishop was restrictively applied to the President or Chairman of the Presbytery, who was chosen to that office by the votes of his brethren, on account of his superior or peculiar qualifications. Such an officer was necessary where there were several Presbyters in a City; and as he was officially superior to his brethren individually, he was distinguished from them by the title of bishop. This was the origin of *parochial* episcopacy. As the church over which he presided extended its labours from the City throughout the surrounding country, the power and jurisdiction of the presiding Presbyter increased till he became in fact a *diocesan* bishop. Eventually to this Parochial and Diocesan Episcopacy was superadded Metropolitan Episcopacy; till, at length, the Universal Episcopate of Papal Rome crowned and completed the Hierarchical fabric. Such is, in few words, the rise and progress of Episcopacy, which will not appear at all strange or improbable to those who are acquainted with the principles of human nature, and the gradual increase and establishment of power. Besides, Ecclesiastical History and the writings of antiquity establish the correctness of the statement we have made.

The Wesleyan Methodist Family is divided into four branches, namely, the English, the Irish, the Canadian and American. The three first are strictly Presbyterian. The last is Episcopalian, on the principle of Presbyterianism. It lays for its foundation the broad and comprehensive principles we have stated; and, though it includes the distinctions of bishop, elder and deacon, and bears the designation of Episcopal, its distinctions are official, and not ordinal; human, and not divine, and therefore involve no essential principles incompatible with the Wesleyan Polity.

In the next place, the Wesleyan Polity is *Connexional*, not congregational. As the primitive christian churches were as closely connected as circumstances would permit; as a family, an army, a city, a nation or a kingdom, is one body, under

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one common government ; as the christian church resembles the human body, having "joints and bands," and one head, so the Wesleyan churches are as intimately united as national distinctions and geographical situation will admit ; and each of the four departments, instead of consisting of insulated and independent congregations, forms one compact and harmonious whole. Every class containing twelve members, or sometimes more or less, is united under one leader ; several classes in a town or chapel make one Society ; several societies or classes form one Circuit or Station, under the pastoral care of one Superintendent ; several circuits constitute one District, under the supervision of a Chairman : and the several Districts into which the whole field is divided, form one Connexion, under the government and direction of the Conference, which is the collective Pastorate or Presbyterate of the whole Church ; the President being the general overseer in the interim of the Conference. Our Book Room, our official periodical, our funds and institutions, and our Ministers are also connexional, and tend to cement and consolidate the whole organization. The English Wesleyan Connexion, which is the Parent of the whole Family, with the Irish and Canadian Connexions, form one body ; the two latter receiving their Presidents from the first : so, also, the several Conferences in the United States, and the societies under their care constitute the American Methodist Episcopal Church, governed by the Bishops and the General Conference. And to preserve the unity and harmony of these two great divisions of the Methodist Family—the Wesleyan and Episcopalian—there is between them a regular interchange of Delegates, and of the warmest assurances of fraternal affection, based on the avowed principle that the Methodists are one throughout the world, though mountains rise and oceans roll to sever them in vain ; though national distinctions and peculiarities prevent a closer external union ; and though unimportant and unheeded differences in ecclesiastical economy obtain among them. It is almost needless to add, that brotherly love, peace, strength and prosperity result from a state of things so truly delightful and scriptural.

The Wesleyan Polity *recognizes the conjunction of Divine and human agency, in the calling and qualifying of Christian Ministers.*

The preaching of the Gospel by a standing order of Ministers, is a Divine Ordinance, and not a human invention. "After that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." "Go ye," says the Saviour, "into all the world,

and preach the Gospel to every creature." "As we were allowed of God," says St. Paul, "to be put in trust with the Gospel, so we speak." "We have this treasure in earthen vessels."

And as this mode of promulgating the Gospel is of Divine appointment, so is it the undoubted prerogative and actual procedure of the Great Head of the Church to call, by His Holy Spirit, the men whom He "counts worthy" to the office and work of the Ministry. He called and appointed Prophets and Priests of old. He called the Apostles to be the first Teachers and Pastors of the Christian Church, and extraordinary messengers. St. Paul in writing to the Ephesians enumerates the ministerial officers as gifts of the Lord Jesus; and reminds the elders of the very same church, in his address to them at Miletus, that the Holy Ghost had made them overseers of the flock. These were ordinary pastors, and yet they were set apart by the Holy Ghost. Of certain prophets the Most High saith—"I sent them not, neither commanded them; therefore they shall not profit my people at all." If the Christian Minister be an Ambassador of the King of Kings, he must receive his appointment in the first place, from his Master. Our blessed Redeemer commanded us to pray the Lord of the Harvest that *He* would send forth labourers into his harvest. In consonance with these principles it is invariably inquired at the Ordination of every Minister in the Church of England—"Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon you this office and Ministry?" and the reply is—"I trust so." A similar question is propounded, and a similar answer returned at the ordination of every Methodist Minister. Those whom God calls He qualifies. He bestows on them the pardon, the peace, the holiness, the happiness which they are to preach to others. He worketh in them mightily. He makes them "able to teach others," "apt to teach;" "Not by might or by power, but my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts." He says to his ministers—"I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." But all this does not supersede a diligent use of the means of intellectual and moral culture on the part of Ministers. They are to search the Scriptures. They are to "study to show themselves approved unto God; workmen that need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth;" approved before God, unashamed before men. "Who is sufficient for these things?" "Our sufficiency is of God," as the source; and by diligent exertion, as the means.

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are thus divine, the agency of the Church is not excluded. The call is outward as well as inward. The Holy Spirit moves; the Providence of God prepares the way; and the Church endeavouring to discern the divine will, after careful examination, receives and ordains. The Church commits these things to those whom she judges to be truly called, "faithful" and "able," by "the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery."

The Wesleyan Polity *vests the appointment and ordination of Ministers in the Clergy, with the due concurrence of the Laity.*—While the agency of the Church in the selection of Ministers is acknowledged by all, the proper depositaries of the power of such an agency may not be readily recognized. It is conceded by all that the power of ordination is lodged in the Ministry: but shall the Laity have no voice in the selection of the candidates? In some churches they have not. It is confessedly difficult to adjust, safely and scripturally, Clerical and Lay agency in so important a matter. And yet the latter cannot reasonably be altogether excluded: nor was it in the primitive church; nor is it among the Wesleyan Methodists. Mr. Wesley asks—"Is mutual consent absolutely necessary between the Pastor and his flock?" and answers—"No question; I cannot guide any soul, unless he consent to be guided by me; neither can any soul force me to guide him, if I consent not." Though the Wesleyan Laity are not empowered to appoint or ordain a Minister, nor to determine the sphere of his labours (which with Itinerancy they possibly could not) their concurrence is essential to his reception on trial. Every candidate for the Ministry must first be recommended by his brethren who know him best, by the Stewards, Leaders, Exhorters and Local Preachers of the Circuit to which he belongs. Without this it is impossible for him to proceed a step. But here Lay-agency ends: all beyond is purely Clerical.

The Wesleyan Polity *makes ample and effectual provision for the perpetuation of an evangelical and efficient Ministry.* By such a Ministry, we mean a truly converted and pious Ministry; a duly-gifted Ministry; an intelligent Ministry; a useful, a fruitful Ministry. Methodism seeks not a noble Ministry, a great, a wise or a mighty Ministry, in the world's acception of the terms. She sees her calling; she knows that *not many*, though some such are divinely-called. She knows that "God hath chosen the foolish things of this world to confound the wise;" and "God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things that are mighty; and base things of the

world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not to bring to nought things that are ;” and all for this end ; “ that no flesh should glory in his presence : ” “ But he that glorieth let him glory in the Lord .” She is willing that “ a herdman , ” “ a fisherman , ” “ a tent-maker , ” as of ancient days, or other tradesmen, as in modern days, should be the “ Lord’s prophets , ” if such be the Lord’s will : but she requires these persons to be suitably qualified, to leave their trades and refrain from all secular engagements, and labour faithfully and efficiently in the Lord’s vineyard. Instead of despising learning and science, she highly values them ; she strongly and constantly encourages them ; she carefully fosters them ; and I may add, she possesses and uses them.— But she is far from requiring that every Minister *must* be a linguist, a critic, and an antiquarian ; yet linguists, critics and antiquarians have been given her. In England, a Wesleyan Theological Institution has been founded, not to make Ministers, but to assist and prepare those whom God has already called and the Church approved, by a sound theological and classical training, for greater and more extended usefulness. In the Episcopal and Canadian churches a course of grammatical, biblical, theological, historical, geographical, logical, rhetorical and philosophical study is prescribed to every Ministerial Probationer, and his diligence and proficiency in it annually tested and ascertained for four years previous to his ordination. But piety is absolutely indispensable. Piety and efficiency characterized the first Ministers of Methodism, and have continued through the first hundred years of her history. And to perpetuate them is the constant care of the church. In order to this, every candidate is examined respecting his religious experience and doctrinal views, in the presence of the Quarterly Meeting that recommends him to be received on trial. Anterior to his reception, he is again examined before a District Meeting, composed of Ministers, without whose recommendation he cannot be admitted ; and then his case is considered in the Conference. After this, his moral, religious and ministerial character is tried and observed, and annually examined, during four years. At the expiration of this term he appears before the Conference, and undergoes such a searching examination, and is obliged to answer explicitly such close and pointed interrogatories, that he must be either a truly pious man or a consummate hypocrite. Even after his ordination, he may be laid aside by the Conference, should they judge him unsuitable or useless ; and hence his character, conduct and qualifications continue to be sub-

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jected to the ordeal of an annual scrutiny. In such circumstances, the mask of deception can neither be long nor comfortably worn; a heartless and lifeless man must soon retire, especially as there are no pecuniary incentives to continuance; and faithful Ministers must be strengthened, united and encouraged in their work of faith and labour of love.

The Wesleyan Polity provides an *Itinerant Ministry*. This includes two particulars;—first, each minister travelling and administering the word and ordinances from place to place, through a large tract of country, and repeating this itinerant labour every two weeks, every four weeks, or every six, according to the extent of his circuit and the number of his colleagues—and secondly, an annual, biennial or triennial removal from one Circuit to another, at the pleasure of the Conference, or annual Ministerial Assembly. The first part of this plan provides for the religious instruction of neighbourhoods, townships, and large tracts of country, which, under the parochial or stationary system would be wholly unsupplied. Acting on this plan, the Methodist Ministers explore a Province or Kingdom throughout; become intimately acquainted with its inhabitants and localities; seize opportunities of usefulness, which otherwise would be wholly unknown, or, if known, unavailable; become pioneers to the Ministers of other churches; and are consequently useful to a surprising amount and extent. The second part of the plan tends to prevent or counteract secular attachments and injurious local partialities in the minds of Ministers; averts or abridges unsuitable appointments and connexions; allows special provision for special and temporary cases; augments and diversifies the sphere of a minister's labours; furnishes variety of talents and of instruction to the members; and makes all the Ministers the property of all the Church in a manner neither realized nor expected in any other denomination.* And then, where the denseness of population, the number of members, or peculiar circumstances require special and incessant pastoral instruction, supervision and care, the Itinerant system adapts itself to the case with elastic efficiency, and *stations* instead of circuits are formed. Itinerancy embraces, then, the advantages of concentration and diffusion, and by its power of adaptation, its comprehensiveness and utility strikingly in-

* The able and ingenuous author of "Spiritual Despotism" observes:—"To leave a congregation submerged in the stagnant pool of a single mind, for half a century, can never consist with its progress in knowledge or with its vitality. Nothing perhaps has more benumbed Christianity, or prevented its extension." He also acknowledges that in the Primitive Church there was an "interchange of the services of teachers among the congregations of a diocese."—Sec. iv. p. 134.

icates an agency of wisdom far above man. The Apostles and Evangelists were Itinerants; and what would they have accomplished had they not been? What would Methodism have done had it quietly and comfortably settled in a corner, instead of seizing and carrying forward as it has done, the unfurled flag of the Gospel, bearing the divine and glorious inscription—**TO EVERY CREATURE?** Let the fruits it has borne, and the systems it has outstripped answer the inquiry.

The Wesleyan Polity vests the supreme Legislative and Executive power in the hands of the Clergy, under suitable restrictions.—Of the propriety, necessity and reality of government in the Christian Church, we have already spoken. No body politic can exist without a head, to enact and administer laws. Power, lodged somewhere, is essential to the maintenance of order, peace and prosperity. If only the outlines of ecclesiastical government are delineated in the New Testament, some persons in the Church must be entrusted with power to complete the draught. And if there be power to enact laws, there must be power to enforce them. Now in the New Testament it is obvious that such power is committed to the Clergy: "Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine:" "Remember them who have the rule over you," or "remember your rulers," as Macknight renders it, which rulers are clearly indicated in the subjoined command—"Obey them which have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls as they that must give account:" "A man that is an heretic," says Paul to Titus, "after the first and second admonition reject." Bishops are required to take care, to take the oversight of the Church of God. The Angel of the Church in Pergamos is reproved for suffering in the Church those who had fallen into the errors of Balaam and of the Nicolaitaines; and the Angel in Thyatira for suffering the woman Jezebel to deceive the servants of Christ by her pernicious teaching. In consonance with these declarations of Scripture, the Ministers of the Methodist Church in Conference assembled, are empowered "to make rules and regulations for our Church;" and to admit, suspend, censure and exclude Preachers. The President, the highest officer in the Connexion, is to preside in the Conference; to station and ordain Preachers; and to oversee the temporal and spiritual business of the Connexion at large, being *ex officio*, Chairman of the District in which he travels or resides. Chairmen of Districts are to oversee all the temporal and spiritual business of the Church in their respective Districts; to preside in the District and Quarterly

Meetings ; in the absence of the President to take charge of all the travelling and local Preachers and Exhorters, and to change, receive and suspend Preachers, in the intervals of Conference, in their several Districts ; in short, " to take care that every part of our discipline be enforced." Superintendents of Circuits or Stations are to administer God's Word and Ordinances ; to form Circuit-plans ; to receive, try and expel members ; to take proper steps for the adjustment of disputes and difficulties ; to enforce prudently, the weekly and quarterly collections ; to make collections and yearly subscriptions ; to appoint class-stewards ; to overlook the stewards' accounts ; to license Exhorters ; to appoint and change the Leaders ; to assign to the local Preachers and Exhorters their work ; to examine the character and conduct of Leaders, Exhorters and local Preachers ; to oversee their colleagues ; and, in a word, " to enforce vigorously but calmly, all the rules of the Society."

But to guard against spiritual despotism or an abuse of power, the Wesleyan Polity imposes suitable limitations and restrictions. While the supreme legislative and executive power is rightly placed in the hands of the Ministry, it is so guarded by conditions and checks, as to prevent the evils which have accrued in other churches from absolute authority.

The Wesleyan Polity *provides suitable Local Officers and Courts for the management of local interests and affairs.* General principles and laws are adopted by the Conference ; but their local practical applications, and the choice of purely local measures are confided to regularly-organized local bodies. Trustees are appointed to hold and guard the property of the Church ; Stewards to receive and disburse the monies of the Circuits ; Leaders to meet and watch over their classes, and give due information concerning them to the Superintendent ; and local Preachers and Exhorters to aid the Itinerant Ministers in supplying the congregations with public worship. In the meetings of the Trustees, occasionally ; of the Leaders once a week, or less frequently ; of the local Preachers once a quarter ; of the Stewards and Leaders once a quarter ; and of the Special District Meeting, when necessary, the temporal and spiritual business of the Circuit is transacted. All these meetings are convened and properly controlled by the Superintendent, Chairman or President, and include the Clergy as well as Laity, so as to prevent factious or unlawful proceedings. By supplying such facilities for the examination of character ; for the appointment, suspension or dismissal of local officers ; for ascertaining the state of the work ; for meeting contingencies ; and for adjusting all matters, the Wesleyan

Polity leaves no interests neglected, while it unites the regular Ministers and all the subordinate and auxiliary officers in judgment, in affection, in employment and aim. Such an arrangement is expedient and just; and accords with the bonds of connexion and the characteristic features of the whole church.

The Wesleyan Polity is *Catholic, comprehensive and scriptural in its terms of Communion*. "There is only one condition previously required of those who desire admission into these societies—a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins." This desire is to be maintained in constant practical operation, and in careful conformity to several rules which are all simple and practical. A man may be an Arminian or Calvinist in his doctrinal principles; an Episcopalian, Presbyterian or Independent, in his views of Church government, and yet be an acceptable member of the Wesleyan Methodist Society. We dare not reject whom God hath received. If a man give sufficient declarative and practical evidence of acceptance with God, or of a sincere and earnest desire to obtain it, we dare not deny him fraternal recognition and union on speculative grounds. He who is entitled to a place in heaven, and who actually possesses a place in God's spiritual family on earth, should not certainly be refused a seat in the visible Church: else the less is more momentous than the greater, which is a contradiction in terms. But, though we thus waive all doctrinal tests, we are not latitudinarian in matters of faith. We are fully convinced of the vital importance of "the faith once delivered to the saints," and, hence, we are careful to secure soundness and uniformity of theological sentiment in the Ministry; but we cannot raise barriers to Christian membership which Inspiration has not raised. Our views and usages on this subject are, we believe, truly Apostolical. The reason assigned by St. Paul why a Christian should not be judged by his brother in minor matters is, that "God hath received him;" and this reason is invariably and universally applicable in reference to all believers. The experience of a century, too, has tried and proved our terms of communion, and displayed their soundness and excellence. Though we propose no doctrinal test of membership, our connexion is free from capital error, and singularly harmonious in religious belief. No separation has ever taken place on doctrinal grounds, though several secessions have occurred. On the other hand, the consequences of imposing severe and anti-catholic terms in other churches have been highly injurious. Sincere christians have been repelled from the communion of saints, or obliged to forego it, and sects and parties needlessly multipli-

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ed, to the great distraction, scandal and hurt of the Christian Brotherhood. Aware of all this, we extend the right hand of fellowship to every real practical Christian who claims it; we open a door sufficiently wide for the entrance of all true disciples of Christ, and yet so strait as to exclude every speculative and practical unbeliever. The desire on which we insist, in its proper practical operation, must naturally eventuate in the renunciation of every opinion incompatible with its fulfilment, under the gracious direction and government of Him who has declared that "if any man do his will he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God." Besides, every individual admitted into our Society sustains the relation of a Catechumen or probationer for three months or six, during which his conduct is closely but charitably observed; and at the end of that term he is either dropped altogether, continued on trial, or received into full communion and membership.

The Wesleyan Polity *guards and maintains the character of the Laity.* Between the disciples of Christ and the ungodly world, the Sacred Oracles draw a broad and palpable line of demarcation. The plantation or garden must be weeded and fenced; the city must be walled and fortified; the nation or kingdom must be bounded and guarded, till it encloses the whole habitable globe, by the success of its culture or the triumph of its arms. "The Church and the world," says the author of "Spiritual Despotism," "must needs be parted, until the Church shall have embraced the world, and the world have yielded itself to the Church." "It is an equal fault for a Church to have an open door and a promiscuous assemblage, like a market; or a door bolted upon an Augean stable."—Such, too, is the voice of Scripture: "A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject:" "If any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat:" "Put away from among you that wicked person:" "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly:" "If he will not hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." A neglect of discipline and of proper pastoral supervision, has issued in the degeneracy and corruption of the Christian Church. Hence the maintenance of order and purity is a prominent and principal point in the Wesleyan Polity. Each Steward and Leader is required to inform the Preacher of any that walk disorderly. The Preacher is required to institute a thorough investigation, and to administer with fidel-

ity, the discipline of the Church. There is also a regular quarterly pastoral Visitation of the classes, at which every member is examined, and continued, admonished, suspended or excluded, as his conduct deserves. The character of every Leader, local Preacher and Exhorter is subjected to a strict scrutiny in the meetings to which they respectively belong. Thus, adequate provision is made for guarding the credit and character of the Church.

The Wesleyan Polity *supplies a voluntary and efficient Financial System.* The prosperity of the Church is intimately connected with her revenues. If the Clergy are not to "entangle themselves with the affairs of this life," but to "give themselves wholly" to their official and sacred duties, their temporal wants must be duly supplied. Hence the Lord hath ordained that they who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel, that they who minister to the people in spiritual things should reap the people's carnal things. The claims of the Clergy are divinely authorized and enforced; they are the claims of justice, and not of charity. By what fiscal regulations, then, shall these claims be met? Certainly either by individual voluntary contribution, or by a legal enactment and provision. The latter mode was of course impracticable in the early ages of Christianity, till the civil authorities embraced the faith, and then it was adopted. Into a discussion of its merits we cannot now enter. Duly modified and guarded, we know nothing in the New Testament against it; for though the principle of supporting the clerical institute is enforced, the mode of its practical application is nowhere described.— If a legal provision for the Clergy do not involve an infringement of the organization, rights and interests of the Church, and do not supersede voluntary gratuities, we know no reasonable scriptural argument against it. We believe that voluntary contributions and state endowments should be combined in harmonious and effective operation in every christian land; and we believe such will be the case in the brighter and better days which await the Church. Individuals, then, will bestow "the gold of Ophir;" the kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents, the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts; for kings shall be nursing fathers, and queens nursing mothers in christian Israel. But Methodism seeks not a legal provision. It provides Ministers to teach, to feed and to rule; and it demands from the Church their pecuniary support.— And that support is generally given. Various causes may operate against an adequate and respectable provision, in some instances, but the steadily-maturing financial system of Me-

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thodism will eventually provide for all such cases. The principles of this system may be thus stated:—

1. *Each member* is required to furnish his quota of support, according to his ability; as each member receives the benefits of the Ministry. Such a distribution of the duty ensures its certainty and sufficiency, and nullifies the influence of local faction.

2. Each member is required to contribute *weekly*. Thus the duty is less felt by the poor, and the support is more regular, certain and constant.

3. Each member is required to contribute *quarterly*, at the quarterly pastoral Visitation and renewal of tickets.

4. Each member is appealed to *yearly or half-yearly*. The fruits of this appeal are appropriated to deficient circuits.

5. Each member is required to contribute *in the presence of his class-mates and class-leader*; and, quarterly, *in the presence of the Preacher*. By this arrangement examples of duty and liberality are exhibited, and penuriousness either ashamed into subjection or displayed in its unprincipled and detestable character, for the instruction of others.

6. In towns and cities a considerable revenue is derived from the *pew-rents* of those chapels which are unembarrassed with heavy debt.

7. The institution of *Funds* or other *Corporate Property* is an important and highly useful part of our Financial system. By this modification of the voluntary plan provision is made for seasons of commercial depression or agricultural scarcity; a remedy is provided for the attacks of faction; worn-out Ministers and their wives, widows and children are maintained; various casualties and contingencies provided for, and various general interests promoted. It has long been in successful operation in England, as a part of an admirable, comprehensive and matured system of finance; and it is about to be more fully applied and established here.

8. Our system of finances, thus briefly explained, is strictly *voluntary*. The duty of contributing is explained and enforced, but no ecclesiastical censure inflicted on those who imperfectly fulfil it. And though we believe that Christians in general have not yet learned due liberality in behalf of the support and extension of the Gospel, yet seldom, if ever, is the case of a person wholly and continually neglecting this duty known among us. To the singular excellence and efficiency of the Wesleyan fiscal regulations, protracted experience and candid observers have borne testimony.

The Wesleyan Polity unites Clerical and Lay Agency in all

Financial affairs. From the very commencement of the Christian Society, we find the Ministry more or less engaged in the regulation and adjustment of pecuniary matters. An Apostle was the first Treasurer of the Church. And though, afterwards, the Apostles relinquished the "service of tables," they did not surrender all right of interference with the temporal interests of the Church. They abstained from all executive interference which would infringe on the performance of their clerical duties. But they continued to give directions to the Church, and to adopt such prudential measures as from time to time they judged necessary; and we find that the collection of the Church in Antioch for the "relief" of "the brethren which dwelt in Judea," was sent for disbursement, to "the elders, by the hands of Barnabas and Saul." Gradually, however, the management of ecclesiastical revenues became a clerical monopoly, secularizing and corrupting the sacred order. It is true wisdom to prevent a recurrence of such evils. If the people are to provide for the support and enlarged usefulness of Ministers, they should possess some power of controlling, as well as facilities for knowing the mode of appropriating their contributions. In the English Wesleyan Connexion, all bills for Ministerial expences must first be received and approved by the Quarterly Meeting; and as the division of circuits involves pecuniary considerations, no circuit can be divided, nor a proposal for division entertained in the District Meeting till concurred in by the Quarterly Meeting of Stewards and Leaders. Lay Delegates or Circuit Stewards, too, are admitted into all our District Meetings while pecuniary matters are under consideration, to represent, by voice and vote, their respective circuits. The principle of uniting clerical and lay agency is also carried into the standing Treasurerships and Committees; such as those connected with the guarding of privileges, the Missionary Society, the Kingswood and Woodhouse-Grove Schools, the Chapel Fund, the building of chapels, the Children's Fund, the Contingent Fund, the Preachers' Auxiliary Fund, the Theological Institution, and Connexional Education. The same principle is carried into operation in this Province.

The Wesleyan Polity *employs every variety of suitable Agency.* Instead of confining itself to the public ministration of truth and other pastoral duties, it employs the Press for the diffusion of religious and useful knowledge, in the shape of weekly, monthly and quarterly Periodicals; Commentaries on the Sacred Writings; Works of Biography, Philosophy, Literature and Divinity; Catechisms and Tracts. It employs schools

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both week-day and Sabbath. It establishes Academies and Colleges, and has now a flourishing Theological Institution and a University. Under its influence the Naval and Military Bible Society and the Benevolent or Stranger's Friend Society were formed. Thus learning and science, temporal comfort and religious happiness, individual action and combined exertion, are included in its lengthened train of agencies, benefits and blessings. At every door of usefulness it enters. By every suitable means it endeavours to rescue, dignify and bless man. It appreciates and uses "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely and of good report."

The Wesleyan Polity *affords suitable employment to every member, and thereby avails itself of the energies of all.* "Labour all, and labour always" is in fact its motto. By its system of training Ministers it brings into action noble energies, which otherwise might have continued dormant on account of educational or literary deficiencies. Those who are not called or adapted to the work of the Itinerant Ministry it employs in the capacity of local and occasional Preachers; or, if they cannot preach, they are permitted to exhort; or, they are appointed to the care of classes; or they may be highly useful as Stewards; or they may fill several of these stations at once; or they may be Sunday-school Teachers or Missionary Collectors; or, if unadapted to any prominent situation, they can still be useful in Meetings for prayer and christian fellowship. Hence no individual need be idle or useless, however humble his condition, however wanting in education or intellectual prominence. Each member of the body is useful in its place. Such facilities for usefulness are nowhere else so fully supplied. Methodism is alone, is prudent and wise, is conformed to pure primitive christianity, and is singularly successful in its employment of the energies of all its members.

The Wesleyan Polity *effectually guarantees the rights and privileges of every member, as well as the integrity of the whole system.*— This is done by constitutional restrictions, a balance of power and authorized checks. In England, the Conference in its legislative capacity, is restrained from altering the doctrines of the Connexion by Mr. Wesley's "Deed of Declaration," enrolled in Her Majesty's High Court of Chancery; and from abolishing Itinerancy by the trust-deeds. In this Province, without the concurrence of the people, as represented in the Quarterly Meetings, the Conference can effect no change in relation to doctrines; to the rights and privileges of the mem-

bers, as specified in the "Book of Discipline;" or to temporal economy. Similar restrictions are imposed in the Methodist Episcopal Church. Executive power is also restrained and guarded. The President of the Conference cannot ordain and station Preachers, except in agreement with fixed rules which supply ample checks. The Chairman of a district cannot change a Preacher contrary to his wish, or suspend or censure him without the concurrence of a Special District Committee, nor can he employ a Preacher whom the Conference have rejected without specific liberty. The Superintendent of a circuit cannot exclude a member for immoral or improper conduct, without trial before a Lay-Committee, and their verdict of condemnation; and even then, an appeal to the Quarterly Meeting, not directly from the Preacher's judicial decision, but from the verdict of the Committee is allowed. Nor can a Superintendent appoint or change Leaders contrary to the wish of the class, or without consulting the Leaders' Meeting; nor can he license Exhorters without consulting the Quarterly Meeting. And in forming a plan for the Local Preachers and Exhorters, he is required to consult the Local Preachers' or Quarterly Meeting. No person can be appointed to the office of a Local Preacher, or put upon the plan as such, without the approbation of the Local Preachers' or Quarterly Meeting.— No Local Preacher can be silenced or suspended without the concurrence of a committee, consisting of official members or of the Quarterly Meeting; and even then he has the right of appealing to the District Meeting. A Trustee who ceases to be a member of our Society cannot be ejected from his Trusteeship "while he is in joint security for money, unless such relief be given him as is demanded, or as the creditor will accept." But should a Superintendent, or Chairman, or President, practically disregard the constitutional restrictions and authorized checks, he is amenable for his conduct to the Conference; and, in the interim of the Conference he is amenable for immoral conduct, or for holding and disseminating erroneous doctrines, to a Special District Meeting or Committee. And in the English Connexion, should the Local Preachers, Stewards, Leaders or Trustees become factious, or attempt to interfere unconstitutionally with the Superintendent or Preachers; or should a majority of the Trustees, or of the Stewards and Leaders of any Society believe a Preacher to be immoral, erroneous in doctrines, deficient in abilities, or guilty of violating the rules relating to Baptism, the Lord's Supper and the use of the Liturgy, as laid down in the "Plan of Pacification;" in either of these cases, provision is made for summoning a

Special District Meeting, which is empowered to interfere and determine till the ensuing Conference. Thus the Wesleyan Polity effectually guarantees the integrity of the whole system, and the rights and privileges of every member.

Having attempted a delineation of Wesleyan Methodism in the preceding remarks, by explaining its Doctrines, Worship and Polity, we are now prepared to form a judgment concerning it. Our own deliberate and decided conviction of its positive and peculiar excellence has been already stated. Some, no doubt, are indisposed to form so high an estimate of it, though acknowledging its general excellence. Others, again, regard it with indifference, as they do Religion in general.— But there is yet another class of individuals who view it in a still different light as an unauthorized system, destitute of scriptural warrant and apostolic sanction. The party to which we allude exists in the Church of England. They assert the Divine right and direct obligation of Diocesan Episcopacy, and acknowledge no regularly-organized and duly-authorized Churches but the Roman Catholic and Protestant Episcopal. Every species of dissent at home, and of Presbyterianism abroad is discarded and stigmatized. This, we believe, is not the proper doctrine or spirit of the Church of England, nor of a large class of persons in her communion, generally denominated Low-Church or Evangelical. But its growing prevalence; its Popish, exclusive, schismatical spirit; its total want of Divine sanction; and its unchristian and unchurching tendency, render a refutation of it and a vindication of our ecclesiastical organization, clerical ordinations, and religious ministrations really necessary; and on no occasion, we conceive, can this be more appropriately done than the present. Instead of examining these views in connexion with the Presbyterian principle of our economy we chose to refer them to this stage of our remarks, under the form of an objection. They may be thus sketched:—

1. In the original Church of Christ 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 presides 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.

Such, in substance, were the views of Jeremy Taylor, Drs. Dodwell and Hickes; and such are the views, in the present day, of Dr. Hook, Vicar of Leeds, and the Oxford Tract Divines. It is proper to observe that the Episcopal form of church government is advocated by another class of persons, on the ground of expediency, antiquity and usefulness, as a prudential ecclesiastical arrangement. Such is the Episcopacy of the American Methodists; official, and not ordinal; human, and not divine; prudential, and not obligatory. With these we have no controversy. And if we controvert the High Church Succession scheme, it is in self-defence, and not from the love of debate or from hostility to the Church of England. We have civil, religious, literary and Methodistical reasons for esteeming our National Religious Institute. We cannot, it is true, subscribe to every thing in her worship and polity. But, for the sake of her pure, evangelical doctrines; her chaste, beautiful and impressive Liturgy; her erudite, able and eloquent divines; her profound and eminent scholars; her able and glorious host of confessors and martyrs; her invaluable institutions; her multiplied missions; her translations and expositions of Scripture; her defence of truth against infidelity, Popery and every species of corrupted Christianity; and her varied, extended and long-continued usefulness in every department of literature, science and Religion; for the sake of all these we cordially wish her, in truth and righteousness, God speed. We rejoice in her real prosperity as we do in that of every true Christian Church.—

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But we feel compelled to oppose the errors broached by some of her sons, and disseminated under the specious title of the "Apostolical Succession." We believe in an uninterrupted succession of faith and holiness, and of Ministers in the Christian Church, but we totally deny this Episcopal scheme. It is advocated on two distinct grounds:—

First—As a succession of the Apostolate or Apostolic office.

Second—As a succession of a Primitve Episcopate, analogous to modern, and distinct from the Apostolate.

If it be a succession it must, of course, be a succession of something; and to be primitive and divine it must be a consecution of some one of these; for it cannot be of both. But it cannot be a succession of the Apostolate, because this order was extraordinary and temporary, as is evident from the following considerations:—

1. The *indispensable requisites* of an Apostle were extraordinary and temporary. Such was seeing Christ in the flesh and after his resurrection. This was an essential requisite of an Apostle, because he was to be a witness of Christ's resurrection. "Wherefore," says St. Peter, speaking of the election of an Apostle to complete the college—"Of these men which have accompanied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us; beginning from the baptism of John unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection." Acts i. 21, 22. In the second chapter of the Acts, Peter says again—"This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses;" and in the third chapter he uses similar language. Hence, says St. Paul; "Am I not an Apostle?—have I not seen our Lord Jesus Christ?" and again—"last of all he (Christ) was seen of me also, as of one born an Apostle out of due time. For I am the least of the Apostles that am not meet to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God."

2. The *prerogatives and endowments* of the Apostles were extraordinary and temporary. They received their commission directly and immediately from Christ: therefore Paul claims this and says—"Paul an Apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father." The Apostles enjoyed plenary inspiration by which they knew the whole doctrine of Christ: therefore, says Paul—"I certify you brethren, that the Gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." The Apostles possessed the power of working miracles, and of conferring the miracu-

lous gifts of the Spirit by the imposition of hands : hence, says St. Paul, speaking of himself—"Truly the signs of an Apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds." If wonders and mighty deeds are the *signs* of Apostles, why are they not performed by their pretended "successors" for the authentication of their claims.

3. The *Duty and Work* of an Apostle was extraordinary and temporary. Instead of confining themselves to the instruction and government of any one Church, they visited, regulated and superintended all Churches. No Ministers possess such power now ; but are limited to a congregation, diocese or kingdom. The modern assertion of certain Apostles being Bishops of certain Churches is without foundation, and is refuted by the very terms and extent of their commission.

4. The *number* of the Apostles was limited ; clearly indicating the fact that their office was extraordinary and temporary, and not designed as an Episcopate for every city, diocese or kingdom. At first but twelve Apostles were chosen ; afterwards a thirteenth ; of any addition to which, we have no account.

5. No provision was made for the appointment of successors. Matthias was elected before the Apostles properly entered upon the apostolic office as witnesses of the resurrection. Judas, therefore, was never properly and perfectly an Apostle, for he was not a witness of the resurrection. And when the Apostle James was beheaded, we find no successor appointed. We read of the ordination of elders in the Churches, but never of the ordination of Apostles. Nothing can be more evident, then, than that the apostolate was a peculiar and temporary office, and the Apostles peculiar and temporary Ministers. A succession and continuation of these, therefore, is impossible ; and, before the claims of their pretended successors can be admitted, they must answer the arguments we have adduced ; they must clearly prove their pretensions by Holy Writ ; and they must be conformed to the Apostles, not only in moral excellence, but in indispensable requisites, in prerogatives and endowments, in duty and work, and in limitation of number.

We now proceed to shew that as diocesan episcopacy is not a succession of the apostolate ; neither is it a succession of an analogous primitive episcopate. Let it be remembered that as we deny this scheme, the *onus probandi*, or burden of proving, rests upon its advocates, not upon us. To prove a denial or negation is to prove nothing, which is perfectly impossible and absurd. We might therefore content ourselves

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with examining and answering the arguments of our opponents, if any there be, and then the whole fabric of episcopal hierarchy, deprived of its foundations and props, would necessarily fall. But as some of these arguments are adduced in support both of primitive apostolical and primitive episcopal succession, we reserve their consideration for another place. And though we cannot prove the negation of a proposition, we may prove its converse. This we have done in considering the alleged consecutive apostolate: we have disproved this hypothesis by proving its converse, namely, that the apostolic order was peculiar and temporary. We shall adopt the same course in refuting the doctrine of a continued, primitive, divine, diocesan episcopate. The following facts and principles deserve consideration:—

1. Presbyters and Bishops were identical in the days of the Apostles. This we have already proved by a variety of arguments; and it is, of course, fatal to the distinctness and divine right of Bishops, because it wholly demolishes their order.

2. Deacons, originally, were not Ministers, but Stewards, appointed to the service of tables. And though Philip baptized, it was by virtue of his office of Evangelist, not of Deacon. Yet Deacons are not Stewards, but Ministers, in the Protestant Episcopal Church. Thus, then, is her third order of Ministers demolished.

3. The historical evidence necessary to the proof of the succession scheme cannot be adduced. Dr. Hook says—“There is not a Bishop, Priest or Deacon among us, who cannot, if he please, trace his own spiritual descent from St. Peter or St. Paul.” This is resting the scheme on historic testimony; but, alas, the tables are imperfect, the chain is broken. Eusebius, the earliest uninspired ecclesiastical historian, acknowledges the darkness of his path in tracing this succession; and founds Timothy’s bishoprick of Ephesus, and Titus’s of Crete, on *report*. Who was first bishop of Rome no one can tell. Archbishop Cranmer says: “It is not even certain that Peter ever was at Rome.” It is therefore very convenient for Dr. Hook to say, “Peter or Paul;” and he might have truly added, “or some person else.” The second, third or fourth Bishop of Rome can no more be ascertained with certainty than the first. Cabassute says: “The whole question is very doubtful.” Prideaux says: “No certainty is to be had.” Howel says: “It is evident how very doubtful and uncertain is the personal succession of the Roman Bishops.” Dr. Comber admits, “There is neither truth nor certainty in the pretended personal succession of the first Popes.” And

yet through these Popes the Successionists must trace their spiritual descent! Well might Stillingfleet say: "The succession here (at the beginning) is as muddy as the Tiber itself;" and well might Mr. Wesley denominate the whole scheme "a fable."

4. This scheme of Diocesan Episcopacy is refuted by the fact that there was a plurality of Bishops in one city or church in the apostolic age. St. Paul called overseers or Bishops from Ephesus to Miletus; and addressed himself in his Epistle to the Church in the city of Philippi, to the Bishops and Deacons." These Bishops were certainly not diocesan Bishops.

Having thus examined the scheme of Diocesan Episcopacy on the two distinct grounds alleged by its advocates, we proceed to offer some arguments which wholly invalidate its claims on every possible basis:—

First, then, this scheme of succession is *contrary to the genius and spirit of the gospel*. It is bigoted and exclusive, while Christianity is Catholic and liberal. "Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and we forbid him, because he followeth not us. And Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, forbid him not." It attaches essential importance to an outward ceremony, the imposition of a Bishop's hands; whereas, the Gospel teaches us that "the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost;" that "he that in these things" (doubtful or disputable ritual observances) "serveth Christ is acceptable to God and approved of men;" and Paul says, "notwithstanding every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea and will rejoice." This scheme prescribes an unchangeable mode of Church government, while the Gospel does not; for, as the author of "Spiritual Despotism" observes, "Christianity, because intended for all places and times, was left, so far as relates to its exterior forms and its social constitutions, in a plastic state." "These adjuncts of Christ's religion (worship and polity) are so left at large as to admit of needful modifications. Christianity takes an elastic grasp of human nature. Juddison held it" (and the succession scheme would hold it now) "as the solid mould holds the metal that is poured into it." Again this scheme enjoins as law what the Gospel does not, by making diocesan episcopacy obligatory on the Church, and essential to its identity. No such law is to be found in the New Testament. On this subject the writer, whom we have just quoted observes: "Whatever in the New Testament relates to modes of worship, and to ecclesiastical constitutions, is couched in general

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terms. Moreover, those allusions to matters of fact, whence the apostolic practice might be gathered, are slight and indistinct, and not seldom ambiguous. Our inference is plain. Facts so obscurely conveyed must not be taken as if propounded to us authoritatively. It is not in any such form that LAW has ever been promulgated; no legislator has so tortured the ingenuity of a people. To insist upon some supposed primitive usage, known to us only through a process of ambiguous inferences; and, in doing so trample upon the unchangeable and always intelligible rules of christian charity, is to subvert reason and piety, and to leave no vital force in either." This scheme is also contrary to the Ministerial equality and humility taught and enforced by our Lord: Matt. xx. 20, 28; Mark, ix. 33, 37; Luke, ix. 46, 49, and xxii. 24, 27.

Secondly,—This scheme of succession is *contrary to the Scripture test of a true Minister*. Christ tells us that we are to know false prophets or teachers by their "fruits:" but high Episcopalians say we are to know them by their want of an episcopal successor's imposition of hands. The Apostle Paul recognizes the same test, and appeals to his ministerial usefulness as a proof of his apostleship: "If I be not an Apostle to others yet doubtless I am to you:" and then he assigns the proof: "For the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord." A successionist would never think of such a proof, but on the contrary exclaim: "I am doubtless an authorized Minister of the Gospel, for, like Dr. Hook, I can, if I please, trace my spiritual descent from St. Peter or St. Paul, though, it is true, I am not certain from which; and, as he also says, 'it is very seldom that as the Clergyman of the parish,' I 'feel it to be worth while to enter into the controversy with a dissenting teacher.' 'I know my superiority, and that I have nothing to gain by the contest.'" St. John's test of a Christian Minister is—"He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God." He commands us to try the spirits, and gives us this standard of judgment—"Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God." St. Paul says—"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences *contrary to the doctrine* which ye have learned; and avoid them." How plainly applicable is this to the conduct of the Successionists! They cause divisions and offences in the Church of Christ, contrary to Scripture doctrine: they are therefore the true schismatics.

Thirdly,—This succession scheme, rightly understood and pushed to its consequences, *divests by its own principles, the Clergy of the Church of England of all Ministerial authority, and makes*

that Church schismatical and unauthorized. The ordination of the English Clergy was received, originally, from the Popish Bishops. Now it is easy to prove that there have been monstrously iniquitous, heretical, simoniacal and even infidel Popes. Prideaux makes mention among the Popes of "38 usurping Nimrods; 40 luxurious Sodomites; 40 Egyptian Magicians; 41 devouring Abaddons; 20 incurable Babylonians." The Church of England, it is well known, regards the Church of Rome as Anti-Christ, the scarlet Harlot, and mystical Babylon. The Homily against idolatry, calls her, an "idolatrous Church," "the mother of whoredom," and "a foul, filthy, old withered harlot;" and yet the Church of England is her successor! We hesitate not to affirm that if the English Church has no better, no higher authority than the mother of harlots and Anti-Christ could confer, she has no authority at all; and yet this is the inevitable consequence of the scheme of succession; for, let it not be forgotten that a stream must partake of the nature of the fountain whence it flows, and that a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit.—But this is not the only difficulty which this scheme involves. It destroys itself in another manner. Every Bishop at his consecration swore obedience and fidelity to the Pope, as his Lord; and swore to retain and maintain the Papacy of Rome. When, therefore, the English Bishops threw off the yoke of the Roman Pontiff, they broke their solemn oaths; and by violating the conditions of their ordination deprived themselves of whatever power their consecration had conferred; for nothing is plainer than that when men violate the conditions of an agreement it becomes entirely null and void. In addition to all this the Pope of Rome excommunicated those Bishops, and stripped them of all ecclesiastical power; consequently, they ceased to be Bishops and Ministers, and entirely lost the boasted succession. To this we know it may be answered that the Episcopal office is inviolable; and, therefore, once a Bishop, always a Bishop. If so, then, a Bishop can never be deprived of office, whatever may be his errors or immorality. He may become a thief, a murderer, a blasphemer and an atheist; but still he is a true successor, a Scriptural Bishop, an authorized Ambassador of a holy and sin-hating God! Who can swallow such monstrosities as these? This was not the opinion of Dr. Barrow. After enumerating several acts of impiety in the conduct of Bishops, he says—"They by such behaviour, ipso facto, deprive themselves of authority and office; they become thence no guides or pastors to any Christian; there doth in such cases rest no obligation to hear or

obey them ; but rather to decline them, to reject and disclaim them." The council of Chalcedon in the fifth century, of Constantinople in the seventh, the council of Placentina in the eleventh, and the council of Lateran, all teach that they who become Ministers by simony were not Ministers at all. Yet by simony many Popes obtained the Pontificate ; consequently they were no Bishops at all, and had no power to ordain. But the doctrine of "once a Bishop, always a Bishop" is as contrary to Scripture as it is to reason and pure Protestantism. If the Jewish High Priesthood was transferred from the house of Eli because of the impiety of his sons ; and, if Judas, an Apostle, fell from his office, not by suicide, but as St. Peter says "by transgression," by betraying his Lord and Master, surely a minister of the Christian Church, even the highest, forfeits his office and authority by wickedness and infidelity. From all this it follows that the wicked Popes and Bishops of the Roman Catholic Church were not Christ's ministers at all ; that they had no ministerial authority to confer, not being scripturally in the "succession" ; that those whom they ordained were not Christian Ministers ; and that, therefore, neither the Church of Rome nor the Church of England is in the succession ; both being unauthorized and unscriptural Churches. Or, view it on another ground:—The English Bishops lost their office and authority by violating their vows and by the Pope's sentence of excommunication ; and hence the Church of England is a self-constituted, unauthorized Church, and Dr. Hook and the Oxford Tract Divines are out of the succession. Such are the consequences of this unscriptural scheme ; such the inferences deducible from making Episcopal ordination the test of ministerial authority.

Fourthly,—This scheme of succession is *contrary to the opinions and testimonies of the earliest and most revered Fathers in the Christian Church*—as Clement, Ignatius, Justin Martyn, Irenæus, Tertullian, Origen, Cyprian, Firmilian, and Jerome, the most learned of the Latin Fathers.

Fifthly,—It is contrary to the doctrine of the Church of England at the Reformation ; to the opinions of Wickliffe, Erasmus, Cranmer, Calvin, Beza, Melancthon, Claude, Grotius, Vitringa, Mosheim, Usher, and several others ; as we could satisfactorily prove by quotations from their writings, did our limits permit.

Sixthly, and lastly,—This scheme of succession is unsupported by the Word of God. To convince you of this we will read the passages of Scripture generally quoted in its support, and you can judge whether they authorize diocesan

Episcopacy as the Successionists hold it. "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost : teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you : and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. "Whether any do inquire of Titus, he is my partner and fellow-helper concerning you : or our brethren be inquired of, they are the messengers of the Churches, and the glory of Christ."—2 Cor. viii. 2, 3. "Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labour, and fellow-soldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants."—Phil. ii. 25. "As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine."—1 Tim. i. 3. "Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands."—2 Tim. i. 6. "For this cause I left thee in Crete that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee.—Titus, iv. 5. The remaining passages which are alledged in behalf of diocesan Episcopacy are those which relate to the Angels of the seven Asiatic Churches. Such then is the Scripture warrant for the scheme of succession ; such the *Law* binding Episcopacy on the consciences of Clergy and Laity through all generations ; such the ground on which every Presbyterial Church is stigmatized and denounced. If, then, the principles of modern diocesan Episcopacy as a divine institution, and of the High Church succession scheme be so completely devoid of Scriptural sanction and historical proof ; if they be in direct opposition to various principles of Scripture, to the testimonies and views of the purest and remotest christian antiquity, and to the opinions of the most able, learned and celebrated Divines ; if their legitimate and inevitable consequences be dangerous and absurd ; and if the essential principles of Presbyterianism be warranted by Scripture and History, it follows that there is in the frowns, menaces and assaults of our opponents no real cause of alarm or fear ; that our walls, towers and bulwarks are strong and impregnable ; and that the government of our city is Scriptural and Protestant.

II. THE ORIGIN OF METHODISM.

The inquiring and intelligent Traveller who visits some noble and celebrated city, and examines its situation ; its buildings and public works ; its military and commercial advantages ; its municipal institutions ; and all things else pertaining

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to it, will naturally be desirous of learning the time and circumstances of its origin, and the facts of its history. So, also, will the citizen who shares its immunities and loves its prosperity; especially at some remarkable epoch of its existence; and deeper, stronger, and more lasting will his emotions be, than those of any tourist. Thus it is with us, my brethren, to-day. A century has elapsed since "the city of our solemnities" was founded. We have now looked upon her and gone round about her and through her; we have marked her bulwarks and considered her palaces: and because she is "beautiful for situation," and "the joy" of thousands; because she is scripturally founded, constructed and governed, we "take pleasure in her stones, and favour her dust." Deeply affected with her excellence, we eagerly inquire into the occasioning and characteristic circumstances of her origin. The facts and principles which furnish the appropriate answers are interesting and important, and are supplied by numerous official and authentic documents. Our limits, however, will not permit us to narrate them particularly and fully. Our walk round the city, and our perambulation of her streets; our inspection of her bulwarks, towers and palaces; and our defence of the style of her architecture, and the principles of her government, have occupied so much time as to compel us to be brief. We hope, however, that our historical sketch will not be uninteresting or useless.

Methodism, then, arose *not from opposition to the Doctrines, Ritual or Polity of the Church of England, or of any Dissenting denomination.* Our city was not founded because other cities existed, or from feelings of rivalry, jealousy or dislike. The Rev. John Wesley, the Founder of Methodism, was warmly attached to the National Religion; believed and taught its theology; observed its worship; and carefully conformed to its rules of government, till circumstances arose which left him no alternative but a neglect of eminent means of usefulness, or a partial deviation from the canon law. And though he rightly chose the latter, it was not from hostility to the Church, or a love of eccentricity, but from an imperative sense of duty, and the constraining influence of love for souls. Nor did he cease his connexion with the Church, or his earnest efforts to maintain as much conformity to her as duty and usefulness allowed, till he finished his course. His early clerical colleagues and assistants, in the formation of Methodism, were all imbued with the same spirit. And hence, the entertainment of feelings of hostility by any Methodist towards the Church of England, or any other true branch of the Christian

Family, whatever may be its motives or grounds, is a palpable departure from original Wesleyan Methodism.

Methodism arose *not from hostility to the Church of England as a National Ecclesiastical Establishment*. Hence, Mr. Wesley was no Dissenter. He never condemned a national altar, a national temple, a national religious Institute. His own declaration on this subject is quite sufficient. "We are not Dissenters," says he, "in the only sense which the law acknowledges, namely, those who renounce the service of the Church. We do not, we dare not, separate from it. We are not Seceders, nor do we bear any resemblance to them. We set out upon quite opposite principles. The Seceders laid the very foundation of their work in judging and condemning others : we in judging and condemning ourselves. They begin every where with showing their hearers how fallen the Church and Ministers are : we begin every where with showing our hearers how fallen they are themselves." Mr. Wesley, then, was no theoretic Dissenter ; nor are his followers in England such Dissenters to this day. In this respect, Methodism is a new and peculiar thing in the land.

Methodism was *not the result of ambition*. No intelligent, impartial and pious person can think it was after a careful perusal of Mr. Wesley's works and his authentic memoirs, and an intimate acquaintance with the nature and history of Methodism. Ambition is a disease and impulse of an unregenerate heart. Mr. Wesley's heart was renewed and sanctified, as his profession, life, labours and usefulness evince. Ambition has a plan ; Mr. Wesley had none. Ambition is reserved and shy ; Mr. Wesley was communicative, frank and open ; giving a reason and even a minute explanation of his proceedings, both spontaneously and by request. Ambition of wealth grasps and accumulates ; Mr. Wesley expended the chief part of his income for religious and benevolent purposes, living frugally and economically ; and continued to do so through life. Ambition of honour becomes inflated and haughty with success ; Mr. Wesley was courteous, meek and condescending in his greatest prosperity. Ambition of power becomes harsh and tyrannical, as it augments its strength and extends its sphere ; Mr. Wesley was kind, gentle and paternal in his government of his Societies and Preachers, when his authority was most extensively and unanimously acknowledged. Whoever ascribes ambition to Mr. Wesley is ignorant of the man, and is without reason. Fidelity and even strictness in the enforcement of truth and the application of wholesome discipline, by a Christian Pastor, must not be con-

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founded with ambition and tyranny. If Mr. Wesley had ambition, it was solely to be useful, and the desire of his heart was given him.

Methodism arose *when some extraordinary and powerful religious agency was needed in England.* "Darkness covered the land and gross darkness the people." The infidelity of Voltaire was spreading through Society, and irreligion and vice holding deadly and general sway. The late Rev. Richard Watson in his life of Wesley observes—"Infidelity began its ravages upon the principles of the higher and middle classes; the mass of the people remained uneducated, and were christians but in name, and by virtue of their baptism; whilst many of the great doctrines of the Reformation were banished both from the Universities and the pulpits. A great proportion of the Clergy, whatever other learning they might possess, were grossly ignorant of theology, and contented themselves with reading short, unmeaning sermons, purchased or pilfered, and formed upon the lifeless theological system of the day.—The body of the Clergy neither knew nor cared about systems of any kind. In a great number of instances they were negligent and immoral; often grossly so. The populace of the large towns were ignorant and profligate; and the inhabitants of villages added to ignorance and profligacy brutish and barbarous manners. A more striking instance of the rapid deterioration of religious light and influence in a country scarcely occurs, than in our own, from the Restoration till the rise of Methodism. It affected not only the Church, but the Dissenting Sects in no ordinary degree. The Presbyterians had commenced their course, through Arianism down to Socinianism; and those who held the doctrines of Calvin had, in too many instances, by a course of hot-house planting, luxuriated them into the fatal and disgusting errors of Antinomianism." The Rev. Thomas Jackson in his book, entitled "The Centenary of Methodism," states that, "It was unquestionably the most unevangelical period that had ever occurred in this country, since the Reformation was completed, in the reign of Elizabeth. Infidelity was extensively prevalent, both in the form of downright blasphemy and of philosophical speculation." With these statements agree the testimonies of the writers of that time, both in the Church of England and among the Dissenters. Bishop Burnet, twenty six years before the rise of Methodism, says—"I cannot look on without the deepest concern, when I see the imminent ruin hanging over this Church, and, by consequence, over the whole Reformation. The outward state of things is black enough, God

knows ; but that which heightens my fears rises chiefly from the inward state into which we are unhappily fallen." And then he gives a most deplorable account of the extreme ignorance of the Clergy. Bishop Gibson, fifteen years later, states that in those great cities, London and Westminster, "profaneness and impiety are grown bold and open," and gives a most painful account of abounding iniquity. Bishop Butler, three years before the rise of Methodism, acknowledges the prevalence of Infidelity ; and Archbishop Secker, two years afterwards, acknowledges, "that an open and professed disregard to religion is become, through a variety of unhappy causes, the distinguishing character of the present age," and that "it has already brought in such dissoluteness and contempt of principle, in the higher part of the world, and such profligate intemperance and fearlessness of committing crimes in the lower, as must, if this torrent of impiety stop not, become absolutely fatal." To the same effect are the testimonies of eminent Dissenting Ministers.

Methodism became the very effective moral agency which England needed. This is simply a matter of fact and of historical record, the truth of which is obvious to all, and is established by multiplied and convincing evidence, though too many have neither sufficient candour nor fairness to acknowledge it. If the state of the nation, of the Universities, Clergy and Laity of the Establishment, and of Dissent, of the higher, middle and lower classes, was such as has been described ; if a great and glorious amelioration has been effected ; if no adequate agency for this has been provided, except Methodism ; and if the progress, fruits and extended influence of Methodism convincingly attest its high excellence and success, it incontrovertibly follows that Wesleyan Methodism has been the favoured and adapted instrument of reviving and restoring, in the English nation, the sanctifying and saving power of the glorious gospel. Dr. Southey, whom no man will accuse of unduly eulogizing Methodism, states in his "Colloquies," that "there never was less religious feeling, either within the Establishment or without, than when Wesley blew his trumpet, and awakened those who slept ;" and that "no fear of misrepresentation or of obloquy, shall ever deter him from declaring his belief that Wesley and Whitfield were chosen instruments of Providence, for giving a great impulse to religious feeling when it was needed most." But we appeal to the confessedly authentic records of Methodistic History ; to the abundant and incessant Ministerial travels and labours of Mr. Wesley and his Assistants ; to the ignorance, error, iniquity

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and hostility which they everywhere met and encountered ; to the decrease and subsidence of these through the blessing of God upon their labours ; to the thousands who were awakened and saved by means of their ministry ; to the various agencies which they put in successful operation for the diffusion of knowledge and piety ; to the powerful impulse given by all this to the Establishment and Dissent, issuing in their present encouraging and delightful activity and usefulness. We point to all this ; and whatever unfriendly and suspicious silence may withhold ; or evil-eyed and evil-minded jealousy insinuate ; or shameful ignorance deny ; or bitter and unchristian bigotry distort and pervert ; or envenomed hatred falsify, we confidently assert that to the British Empire and to the world, Methodism has been "an Apostle," a divine Messenger, for "the seals of her apostleship" are all these "in the Lord."

Methodism was founded and built by true Christian Ministers. The two Wesleys were regularly-ordained and acknowledged Clergymen of the Church of England. Some others of the Clergy co-operated in their great and glorious work. Search the pages of Ecclesiastical History, and you will find that God has generally chosen Ministers to revive his work and reform his Church. So it was in the glorious Protestant Reformation. Thus God puts honour on the Christian Ministry, and confirms his own ordinance ; deprives opposers of excuses and objections which they might otherwise urge ; and rebukes unauthorized men who make schisms and divisions in the Christian Body. Our City was not built by men of secular vocations, aims and principles ; but by men whom God evidently thrust forth to accomplish his designs ; by men whose deep and solemn conviction was, "woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel," and who feeling such responsibility and obligation, could not refrain from publishing the glad tidings of salvation. And they were eminently men of God. By a way which they knew not, God led them to a heartfelt, a saving and experimental knowledge of his redeeming love. Hence, they told and published what they had felt and seen. And God acknowledged the message of his servants by the accompanying demonstration and power of his Spirit. He gave them and their labours the indisputable seal of his approbation and blessing ; thus leaving their gainsayers, in every age, without justification or excuse.

Methodism was formed by suitable and Scriptural means.—These, as enumerated and explained by the Rev. Thomas Jackson, were—"field-preaching ; the formation of Societies ; the employment of Preachers who had not received Episco-

pal Ordination ; the institution of an Itinerant Ministry ; the erection of separate places of worship ; the publication of books ; and the adoption of a simple and impressive mode of preaching." All these are lawful and Scriptural. Preaching the Gospel is a divine ordinance ; forming societies is apostolical and necessary ; the imposition of hands in ordination is but a form or circumstance, and not essential, though proper, and Presbyterial ordination or appointment we have already justified ; Itinerant preaching we have shown to be primitive and excellent ; the erection of places of worship is perfectly proper ; the value and power of the Press are proverbial ; simplicity in preaching is both commendable and necessary, if the unlearned and "poor have the Gospel preached to them ;" and impressiveness and energy, animation and zeal in the ministration of divine truth are not only allowable and becoming but obligatory and necessary, if the soul, heaven and eternity be transcendently important, if the Gospel be the appointed means of securing them, and if Christian Ministers are to warn, beseech and persuade. Methodism was not formed by error and unrighteousness ; by unprecedented or unscriptural means. The tools of the builders ; their scaffolding ; and all their architectural implements, were as lawful and excellent as the City which they reared.

Methodism was reared in the face of hostility and persecution. The pulpit and the press ; the tongue and the pen ; vile insinuation, misrepresentation and slander ; menaces and personal violence, were employed to retard and subvert the work of God. Clergymen and laymen, mobs and individuals engaged in the unholy and satanic attempt. "The greater part of the Ministers" spoke of Mr. Wesley and his co-adjutors "as if the devil, not God, had sent them. Some repelled them from the Lord's table ; others stirred up the people against them, representing them, even in their public discourses, as fellows not fit to live ; Papists, heretics, traitors ; conspirators against their King and country." Mr. Watson says—"The real danger was in fact so great from the brutality of the populace, the ignorance and supineness of the Magistrates, and the mob-exciting activity of the Clergy, one of whom was usually the instigator of every tumult, that every man who went forth on the errand of mercy in that day took his life in his hand, and needed the spirit of a martyr, though he was not in danger of suffering a martyr's death by regular civil or ecclesiastical process. To be pelted with stones, dragged through ponds, beaten with bludgeons, rolled in mud, and to suffer other modes of ill-treatment, was the anticipation of all

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the first Preachers when they entered upon their work ; and this was also the lot of many of their hearers. Some lives were lost and many shortened ; and the most singular escapes are on record." Now the word of God teaches us to regard persecution, not only as a natural expression of human and satanic hostility to the cause, the truth and the people of the Most High ; but as a sign, under certain circumstances, of discipleship and piety. "They that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution ;" "If they have persecuted me they will also persecute you. If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more they of his household." Persecution, the "offence of the cross," however, is such a sign, and an occasion of christian joy, only when it accuses "falsely," and assails for "Christ's sake ;" and is properly endured. And thus it was with the Founder of Methodism and his fellow-helpers. The accusations were "false ;" the ill-treatment was unmerited ; the persecution was inflicted for "Christ's sake," for the sake of his truth, on account of the piety, zeal and labours of his servants ; and it was endured with patience, forbearance and meekness.— Hence it was a sign to those who suffered it, and to their "adversaries." Our City, like Jerusalem, was built in "troubulous times ;" but the Lord "built the City," and it rose to completion. We have no pleasure in referring to original acts of persecution ; but we could not wholly omit them and do justice to Methodism.

Methodism was *not the execution of a premeditated scheme ; but a gradual Providential formation.* When Mr. Wesley commenced his evangelical and efficient Ministry in England, he had no intention of preaching in the fields ; on the contrary, when he adopted this measure, it was at the suggestion and persuasion of Mr. Whitfield, and with some reluctance ; "submitting," as he himself says, "to be more vile ;" for previously he would have "thought the saving of souls almost a sin, if it had not been done in a Church." And when he took this step he had no design of forming Societies, till circumstances arose which required the measure. Then he thought not of appointing Leaders and Stewards ; and when these offices were instituted he had no design of employing Episcopally-unordained Preachers. When he took one step he seems to have had no knowledge or design of the next. When he commenced itinerating, it was not on a settled and extensive plan, but as circumstances required and doors of usefulness were opened. When he permitted the first Preacher, Mr. Maxfield, to serve him as "a son in the Gospel," it was owing to the remon-

strance and advice of his excellent mother, by whom his previous repugnance and displeasure were subdued. The unexpected increase of Preachers rendered the formation of a plan of Itinerant labour necessary. But when this was done he had no thought of extending Methodism to America ; for this was effected by others, without his knowledge or suggestion. This absence of a plan ; this gradual and undesigned procedure ; this conformity to circumstances, may be regarded by some as an objection to Methodism, but to us it is a delightful and encouraging consideration. It proves that Mr. Wesley was no ambitious schemer ; it proves that no selfish or factious spirit impelled him to exertion ; and it indicates an Agency, in the formation of Methodism, higher than human. To confirm these statements we shall quote some observations from Mr. Wesley himself, and from his biographer, Mr. Watson. Mr. Wesley, speaking of the Methodists, in his "Plain account," observes—"As they had not the least expectation, at first, of any thing like what has since followed, so they had no previous design or plan at all ; but every thing arose just as the occasion offered. They saw or felt some impending or pressing evil, or some good end necessary to be pursued.—And many times they fell unawares on the very thing which secured the good or removed the evil." Mr. Watson, speaking of Mr. Wesley, says—"He arrived in London in September, 1738. His future course of life does not appear to have been shaped out in his mind ; no indication of this appears in any of his letters, or other communication : so little ground is there for the insinuation which has been so often made, that he early formed the scheme of making himself the head of a party." Afterwards Mr. Watson observes—"Mr. Whitfield pressed Charles (Wesley) earnestly to accept a College living ; which, as Dr. Whitehead justly observes, 'gives pretty clear evidence that no plan of Itinerant preaching was yet fixed on, nor indeed thought of : had any such plan been in agitation among them, it is very certain Mr. Whitfield would not have urged this advice on Mr. Charles Wesley, whom he loved as a brother, and whose labours he highly esteemed.'" Again, he remarks—"The Founder of Methodism walked 'step by step' it is true, but only as Providence by an arrangement of circumstances seemed to lead the way ; and would make no change but as a necessity, arising from conscientious views of the prosperity of a spiritual work, appeared to dictate." Elsewhere, he observes—"The origin of these classes was, however, purely accidental." Nothing is more evident, then, than that Methodism was not the execution of a premeditated

scheme, but a gradual Providential formation, and is, therefore, emphatically, **THE CHILD OF PROVIDENCE.**

Lastly, Methodism was *not schismatical in its origin.* Mr. Wesley was certainly not schismatical in his spirit and designs; nor can his saving souls and doing good be called schismatical by any one who fears God. The end for which he lived and laboured was to benefit men and glorify God; and though the means he used for securing this end involved some ecclesiastical irregularities or deviations from Church order, they were authorized by the facts that they contained nothing unscriptural in themselves; that they were necessary to his purpose; that Providential circumstances rendered them lawful and essential, and that the seal of God's sanction and blessing was plainly affixed to them, as their fruits declare. If Mr. Wesley was not schismatically hostile to the body to which he belonged, considered as a Church or a National Establishment; if he was not schismatically ambitious; if, when Methodism arose, England required some extraordinary and powerful moral Agency to awaken and save her, and if Methodism really became that Agency; and if the means Mr. Wesley used were all Scriptural in themselves; if his measures were not the result of a plan, but a gradual provision for undesigned, unforeseen, unavoidable and therefore Providential circumstances, how can it be truly and charitably affirmed that he was guilty of schism? Was the observance of ecclesiastical order and discipline of more importance than the saving of souls? Is the former to be preferred before the latter? Is it better to obey a lukewarm, a fallen, a *practically* corrupt Church, than to diffuse religion throughout a nation? Of the Churchmen who charge Wesley with the sin of schism, we inquire, why did not your Clergy render Mr. Wesley's irregular measures unnecessary, and wholly prevent them, by personal and ministerial piety, fidelity and exertion? Why did they exclude Mr. Wesley from their Churches, and thereby compel him either to preach in the fields and erect chapels, or lose his own soul and suffer the souls of others to be lost, by neglecting his duty? Why did they not take the pastoral care of the fruits of his labours, agreeably to his own desire, and thereby render the formation of classes and the appointment of Leaders unnecessary, instead of neglecting and persecuting those who were converted? Why did they not so live and preach themselves as to render Episcopally-unordained and Itinerant Preachers unnecessary? Or because they were asleep, were others to be the same? Because they did nothing, were others to be idle? Let our accusing friends

of the Church of England know that their own Church, their own Clergy rendered every ecclesiastical deviation on the part of Mr. Wesley necessary, and that the blame, if there be any, rests upon them and not upon him. Had Luther, Calvin, Melancthon and Zuinglius; Wiclif, Cranmer, Latimer and Ridley, preferred ecclesiastical order and obedience before the diffusion of truth and the salvation of souls, we should now be fed with Latin Masses and a wafer-god. These noble Reformers broke their solemn ordination vow in throwing off the Papal yoke, and assailing the Romish Church with every possible lawful weapon, for the sake of obeying God, doing good, and saving souls. Our Episcopalian opponents rightly eulogize them, and yet censure Mr. Wesley for accomplishing the same ends, by means in themselves Scriptural, and which Providential circumstances, openings and arrangements fully authorized; while, at the same time, he remained a warm and steady friend and member of the Church, suffering no deviation from her discipline, except what his great purpose and principle of doing good rendered necessary. If the Providence of God opened doors of usefulness was Mr. Wesley to refuse entering because they had not been opened by the Church? If God called men to preach his Gospel, were they to disobey the call because not authorized by the National Church? We must obey God rather than men. If saving souls and doing good be at variance with human ecclesiastical arrangements, we must choose the former. If ever there was a true Reformer, since the apostolic age, Mr. Wesley was one. God qualified him to be one: God opened his way to be one: God made him one, and crowned his labours with success. That England needed one is beyond dispute. But to make the whole matter as plain as possible, let us institute a comparison between Mr. Wesley and all Schismatics and pseudo-Reformers, carefully noting the points of difference. And, first, they widely differ in their *circumstances*: Wesley found the Church and the nation in a state of fearful ungodliness and danger. They often find the reverse; they find neither vital error in doctrine, nor prevailing immorality in practice. Wesley was prevented by others from doing good in the ordinary way, and compelled to deviate from the established order of things: they are not. They also differ in their *principles of action*. Wesley aimed solely at usefulness: they at wealth, power, distinction or honour. Wesley was influenced by zeal for God and love for souls: they by attachment to names, forms, parties or unimportant opinions. They also differ in their *actions*. Wesley, like Luther, was guided by

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Providential circumstances, as they arose : they by a preconceived plan. He took no steps from time to time but such as he saw necessary for doing good : they take every step necessary for carrying out their premeditated scheme. He abstained from all uncharitable censures on his opponents : they deal largely in such censures, as a part of their means. He deviated no farther from the established order of things than duty required : it is a part of their work and purpose to deviate without respect to such a principle. Wesley laboured to benefit the Church to which he belonged, as his great design : they labour to injure it. Wesley remained in the Church to which he belonged : their first step is to leave it. He laboured to persuade his followers to support and continue in the Church of England : they labour to persuade their followers to oppose the Church to which they formerly belonged. They also differ in their *qualifications*. He possessed adequate physical, intellectual, literary and moral qualifications : they are frequently deficient in strength of intellect, clearness of understanding and soundness of judgment, and in due literary attainments ; and always in religious qualifications ; wanting the love, the meekness, the forbearance, charity and fervent piety which every Reformer should unquestionably possess. Such, then, is the difference between Mr. Wesley and schismatics, which every discerning and impartial man can see ; and such are the grounds and reasons of our belief that Wesleyan Methodism is Providential and not schismatical in its origin.

Some chronological facts relating to the origin of Methodism should be known and remembered. Mr. Wesley first preached in the open air near London, Monday, April 2, 1739. The Methodist United Society was first formed in London in the latter end of 1739. Classes were first formed at Bristol. Thomas Maxfield was the first Preacher. The first Chapel erected by the Wesleys was in Bristol ; the first opened was in London. The first Conference was held in June, 1744.

III. THE PROGRESS AND PRESENT STATE OF METHODISM.

From the time, circumstances, and principles of the origin of Methodism, our attention is directed to its progress and present state. The History of such a City must be as interesting as its structure and origin.

To understand properly the spirit and progress of Methodism, it is necessary to mark its original *diminutiveness*. Two individuals, John and Charles Wesley, laid the foundations of "the City of our solemnities." "Eight or ten persons" were

the first Citizens. A Foundry became the first Chapel. Methodism, in its commencement, resembled the "grain of mustard seed," or the cloud which was little as "a human hand."

Mark the *difficulties* which Methodism has had to surmount. These have been partially stated under the head of persecution. The powers of darkness have fiercely assailed her.—Ministers and members of the Establishment, and of dissenting denominations have cried, "down with it, down with it, even to the dust." The Pulpit and the Press have cried, "away with such a system from the earth: it is not fit that it should live." Magisterial authority has risen against her. Single effort and combination have essayed to destroy her. Misrepresentation, falsehood, calumny and bigotry have armed against her. But her greatest difficulties have arisen from within. Many of her sons and citizens whom she nourished and brought up have become ungrateful and rebelled against her. Forgetting their parentage, the place of their birth, their kindred, their indebtedness to Methodism for all they possessed, they have formed foul and wicked conspiracies to effect her overthrow; and because they have found themselves unable to succeed, or were arraigned for trial, have forsaken the City, and built hostile and unprosperous hamlets, whence they have issued in armed bands, to destroy her. Others have ignominiously and ungratefully skulked away, hurling a javelin or kindling a flame as they retired; or they have publicly renounced their *Alma Mater*, and forgotten at once their iterated professions, solemn obligations and real interests.—Others, again, have gone directly to the ranks of the enemies, and leagued themselves with "the armies of the aliens." But "upon all the glory" there has been "a defence."

Mark the *rapidity and extent* of the progress of Methodism. In one hundred years the original City has been peopled with hundreds of Watchmen and Officers, and hundreds of thousands of Citizens. Unconfined to national limits, she has sent her Builders and Artificers into other and distant countries; and Cities have been built, truly resembling the original in situation, walls, towers, bulwarks, palaces and government. Three such Cities have been erected, in addition to the first. They contain numerous officers and inhabitants, and are steadily prospering. One of them even exceeds the original in population: but the latter excels in the extent, population and prosperity of her Missionary territory, and her noble exertions to cultivate and support it, and to erect throughout it fortified and beautified towns. Her Colonies and Commerce, if we may so speak, extend to every quarter of the globe. Her pow-

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er and influence are felt in Sweden, Malta, France, Spain and Germany, in Europe, as well as in Great Britain and Ireland, and the isles adjacent ; in the Friendly Isles, New Zealand, Van Dieman's Land, New South Wales, Ceylon and Continental India, in Asia ; in South and West Africa ; in the West Indies, Newfoundland, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Upper and Lower Canada, in America ; among all complexions, and under all forms of civil government. If the seed of Methodism was small as that of mustard, the Tree is now of such magnitude as to afford shelter and safety to the fowls of heaven. If the cloud arose, little as a human hand, now it spreads along the skies, hangs o'er all the thirsty land.

Mark the *present state* of Methodism. Its *numbers* include the following items :—In the English Wesleyan Connexion, three hundred and eleven Wesleyan Missionaries, aided by Catechists, Local Preachers, Assistants, Superintendents of Schools, Schoolmasters and Schoolmistresses, Artisans, &c., to the amount of about two thousand eight hundred ; the number of Scholars in the Mission Schools is forty-nine thousand two hundred and sixty-six ; of stations, about two hundred and four ; of members, above sixty-five thousand ; making a total of “ more than one hundred and eighty thousand persons who are directly receiving spiritual advantage by means of the Wesleyan Missions.” The Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church include some thousands of Indians and of the scattered white and black population. The Missions of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Canada include one thousand four hundred and ninety-five members of Society. The Methodist Connexion in Ireland has eighteen Mission stations. In the English Connexion, the number of Ministers, Itinerant and Supernumerary, is one thousand and nineteen ; and of private members, three hundred and twelve thousand ; the Local Preachers being about four thousand ; sixteen thousand have been added during the last year ; and twenty thousand are now on trial. In Ireland there are one hundred and sixty-six Preachers, and twenty-six thousand two hundred and forty-four members. In the Wesleyan Church in Canada there are about one hundred Ministers and fifteen thousand one hundred and ninety members. In the Methodist Episcopal Church there are three thousand one hundred and six Itinerant Ministers ; two hundred and sixteen superannuated Ministers ; five thousand seven hundred and ninety-two Local Preachers ; and six hundred and eighty-six thousand five hundred and forty-nine private members. The total population of the whole Wesleyan Family throughout the world is about

one million, one hundred and sixteen thousand, six hundred and seventy-seven ; or about five thousand Ministers, and one million one hundred and eleven thousand seven hundred and eighty-two members. The *income* of the Wesleyan Missionary Society in 1837, was £83,648 10s. 6d. There are about three thousand Wesleyan *Chapels* in England, and between six and seven thousand in the United States of America. Exclusive of Wales, there are in Great Britain about three thousand three hundred and thirty-nine *Sunday Schools*, including three hundred and forty-one thousand four hundred and forty-two children, employing fifty-nine thousand two hundred and seventy-seven Teachers, and supported by an annual expense of about £17,800. The English Wesleyan *Periodicals* are, the Magazine, Missionary Notices, Youth's Instructor, Cottager's Friend, and the Child's Magazine. There are also numerous Periodicals in the Methodist Episcopal Church.— The Wesleyan *Literary Institutions* in England are, a Theological College and two Seminaries ; in the United States, six Collegiate Institutions, and one University, besides many minor and private establishments ; and in Upper Canada, one Academy. Supposing the number of actual members in the Methodist Family to be to the regular hearers in the ratio of one to four, there are between four and five millions of souls under the influence of that very Methodism which one hundred years ago included but two Ministers and eight or ten members. "Behold, what hath God wrought !" "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad." Surely, "the Lord hath chosen Zion ; He hath desired it for his habitation." "This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes."

Mark, then, my Brethren, the *Hand of God* in the progress as well as in the origin of Methodism. "He that glorieth let him glory in the Lord." The Work has been wrought, not by might or by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord. It is the Lord that peoples Zion with converts. It is He that raises up Ministers. It is He that supplies openings to the laborious Missionary. It is He that disposes the hearts of the people to contribute their substance to the erection of Chapels, to the cause of Missions, and to our several Funds. It is He that provides Teachers for our numerous Sunday Schools. It is He that preserves us from heretical opinions and heretical divisions and secessions. It is He that maintains the connection and uniformity of the whole Family. It is He that raised us up in Canada by means of Episcopal Methodism, and united us to the esteemed, revered and beloved original Body in England ; and may he strengthen and perpetuate that Union !

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He has clothed our "Priests with salvation," and our Saints have shouted "aloud for joy." Our eyes behold "Jerusalem, a quiet habitation." On this glad day we worship, we praise, we glorify the God of our fathers, in unison and fellowship with the sable sons of Africa, the red men of our forests, the inhabitants of the distant and scattered islands of the ocean, and the favoured sons of Europe and America. O may the Holy Spirit be *now* largely shed upon us and upon the whole Family, the whole Church, and the whole world, in his reviving and sanctifying influences! May the Lord *now* do good in his good pleasure unto Zion! And "blessed be his name forevermore; and let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and Amen."

IV. THE CHARACTER OF METHODISM.

In the foregoing examination of Methodism we have considered her component parts, somewhat in detail. We have looked upon her foundations and observed her walls; we have marked her bulwarks and considered her palaces; we have walked about her and through her, learning her principles of action and of government; we have searched into the circumstances and principles of her origin; we have rapidly traced her history through the changes and occurrences of one hundred years; and now, with a comprehensive range of vision, we "look upon Zion the City of our solemnities;" and, regarding her as *a whole*, regarding her structure, constitution, origin, progress and present state, at one view, we proceed to inquire, what are her distinctive CHARACTERISTICS, what are the prominent features of a city so populous and flourishing, and so attentively and earnestly observed by millions of our race. Though the pencil of Apelles be requisite to a full and just delineation, an humble hand may be permitted to form a rough draught of an object greatly admired and beloved.

First, then, Methodism is truly *Scriptural*. Her doctrines are the unadulterated truths of the Book of God. Her Worship accords with the same unerring standard, and with the practice of the Church in the ages when the multiplied and cumbrous ceremonies of human wisdom and policy were least known and observed. The principles of her Government are founded on the direct or inferential warrant of Inspiration.—The proofs of her Providential origin are clear and convincing. The Hand of God in her progress is so apparent as to be inevitably discerned by all but the inattentive or sceptical. Her abundant and diversified usefulness plainly indicates the principles of her movements and the source of her success.

The Lord has built the City, and taught the Builders he employed, as he taught Bezaleel and Aholiab, the heavenly and magnificent plan, and endowed them richly with energy for its execution.

Methodism is *spiritual and holy*. Her walls, towers and bulwarks are not designed for display, but for the defence of truth and righteousness. Her Polity is not an idle form, but a conservative, regulating, purifying and stimulating economy.— Her Worship is not a mere routine of ceremonies, but an adapted and effective means of holiness and happiness. Her Palaces are “a refuge” for “the saints of the Most High.” God has set Watchmen upon her walls that never hold their peace, day or night. The great end of her construction, constitution and continuance is the saving of men’s souls, and the glory of the Divine Name. All that she contains are but means to this end. Possessing the form, she preserves the power of godliness. Hence her inhabitants are experimental and practical Christians. Peace unspeakable pours through her “like a river” and waters every part. The voice of joy and gladness is heard through all her dwellings. She is “a habitation of justice, and a mountain of holiness.” “Upon the top of the mountain the whole limit thereof round about is most holy.” “Holiness to the Lord is her appropriate and constant motto, and the unvarying “law of the house.”

Methodism is *rational and enlightened*. She knows her purpose, and the means of its accomplishment, and the indissoluble connexion that subsists between them. She is, then, no blind enthusiast, expecting the end without the use of the means. The charge of enthusiasm has been preferred against her, but is wholly unfounded. Mr. Wesley, (or his brother, the sweet singer of our Israel,) was certainly no enthusiast. He chose his end, and he gloriously achieved it by suitable scriptural exertion. His followers have ever trod in the same path. And, in proof of the right reason and sound principles by which Methodists have ever been guided and influenced, we point to the journals and memoirs of their Ministers; to the valuable commentaries and various works which they have published; to their accredited periodicals; to their noble and incessant efforts for the advancement and diffusion of Literature and Science; and to the general intelligence of the Methodist people. We point to a Benson, a Coke, a Watson, a Clarke, a Drew and a Fisk, and ask, were these blind enthusiasts? We point to thousands whose dormant energies were awakened, and the rough, unshapen marble of whose minds was fashioned and polished by Methodism; we point to the

Wesleyan Pulpit and Press ; to Wesleyan Schools, Academies and Colleges ; to Wesleyan Societies and Missions in every quarter of the globe ; in a word, we point to *the system itself* ; we have endeavoured to delineate it, and as it spreads it through the ramifications of Society, and through the nations of the earth, and ask is all this enthusiasm ? If so, we glory in enthusiasm. But we have learned to call things by their proper names, and to denominate all this Christianity in its enlightened and active operation ; and we challenge the slanderers of Methodism to prove their assertions, or enlighten their ignorance, and confess and forsake their stale, libellous and malignant charges. Meantime the members of our Societies are prepared to silence every gainsayer by "giving to every man that asketh them *a reason* of the hope that is in them, with meekness and fear."

Methodism is *united and strong*. Our Wesleyan Zion, though apparently consisting of three Cities is in fact but one ; one in name, and in close and holy union : and though national distinctions have unavoidably created an independent City, bearing the designation of *Episcopal Methodist*, it contains no momentous discordant principle or institution, but faithfully exhibits the family-likeness, and maintains cordial and fraternal intercourse with the original City. The unity of Methodism consists in identity of doctrine, worship and polity, of spirit, enterprise and aim. Some trivial diversity may obtain in the ornamental columns of the "palaces," or in the cornice of the entablature, but not sufficient to affect the style of the architecture. And the inhabitants and officers of all the Cities speak the same language, and feel as brethren. Their fears, their hopes, their aims are one, their comforts and their cares. In whatever place or circumstances the Providence of God brings them together, they promptly recognize their common origin and citizenship, and cordially exchange fraternal salutations. Their joys and sorrows, their woes and burdens, their conflicts and triumphs, their increase and wealth are one and mutual. The voice of the Missionary Watchman sent forth from either of those Cities, expressing his toils, dangers and success, and calling for co-operation from the dense forests and dreary shades of America ; from the lonely and distant sea-girt isle of the ocean ; from the cannibals of Fejee ; from the savages of Caffreland ; from the wilds of New Holland ; from the castes of India ; or from the bluff shores of the Baltic, finds a responsive chord in the breast of every Methodist. The tidings, the publications of one City are re-issued by the other, and thus fellowship and union are increased

nd preserved. From such union naturally arises strength. The materials thus combined are cognate and sound. The principle of cement is tenacious, permanent and celestial. The union has been strengthened and consolidated by years. And now our "Jerusalem" appears "buildd as a City that is compact together." But, above all, a divine defence is thrown around "the glory." "Salvation has God appointed for walls and bulwarks;" that salvation is steadily enjoyed; and, hence, we have, emphatically, "a strong City." The experience of a century has tested and displayed its might. Ere the walls were erected "Sanballat the Horamite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabian" heard of the work and "laughed the builders to scorn, and despised them, and said, What is this thing that ye do? will ye rebel against the king?" and "they were wroth, and took great indignation, and mocked them," and essayed to prevent them, but were unable. And when they and "the Arabians and the Ammonites and the Ashdodites, heard that the walls were made up" and the towers and palaces commenced, "they were very wroth, and conspired all of them together to go and fight against Jerusalem and hinder it." They and all the armies of the aliens leagued with the Prince of the power of the air, fiercely assailed the City, and, by all the stratagems and weapons peculiar to their mode of warfare, attempted to demolish it. But the officers and citizens, clad in panoply divine, rushed to the ramparts and boldly met the shock of battle. The banner of the cross which for seventeen hundred years had "braved the battle and the breeze" waved triumphant o'er their heads. Inspired by its thrilling history and connexions, the soldiers quenched with their shields the fiery darts of the enemies, and hurled against them such a well-directed shower of javelins and other missiles as spread death through their ranks, and compelled them to retire in haste and confusion, covered with shame and defeat. Those adversaries, however, strengthened by recruits and other mercenary allies, have, at different intervals returned to the fight under the banners of "Reason," "No Enthusiasm," "Mother Church" and "The Apostolical Succession," malignantly shouting, "Down with it, down with it, even to the dust;" but the whole host of infidels, Papists, bigots and "Successionists" have been driven back in the utmost anarchy and alarm, leaving the gallant citizens in secure possession of their walls, towers, bulwarks and palaces. "Sedition, privy conspiracy and rebellion" within, have sought to fire the City and lay it in ruins; but they have been seasonably discovered, disgraced and ex-

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elled. Despite of all her foes, the City has continued and prospered to the present day, and by her victories and achievement proved herself impregnable ; though the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, nor is the strength carnal by which those weapons are wielded. The Lord has kept the City, and the watchmen have not waked in vain. And now, lest our Samson-lock should be shorn, or our strength wasted, we "wait upon the Lord," and our strength is abundantly and unceasingly renewed. And while "the arms of our hands are made strong by the mighty God of Jacob," we rejoice that our beloved Zion exhibits the excellence, the pleasantness and profitability of brethren dwelling together in unity ; and resembling therein the odoriferous "ointment upon the head of Aaron" which descended to "the skirts of his garments ;" and "the dew of Hermon, and the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion" where "the Lord commanded his blessing, even life for evermore."

Methodism is *comprehensive*. It is such both in its ends, its means and its sphere. Its primary and ultimate object is to glorify God in the salvation of mankind. But while steadily pursuing this, it contemplates every subordinate purpose compatible with its lofty and sacred character and calling. It clothes the naked : it feeds the hungry ; it visits and comforts the prisoner, the sick, the stranger and the poor ; it fosters temperance, and wars against inebriety ; it aims at the elevation, expansion and cultivation of the intellect, while it instrumentally renews and regulates the heart. But it stoops not to the quarrels of worldly parties, to secularities and selfish interests. Aiming at a lofty, a beneficent, a god-like and comprehensive end, it enlists every variety of suitable agency ; it presses into its service every sanctified energy and instrument. The *gifts* of all its members, from the most shining and commanding to the most humble and obscure ; *knowledge*, in all its departments and gradations ; *piety*, in all its variety of fervour and maturity ; *combination*, in all its surprising power and efficiency ; *individual zeal*, spreading through the intricacies and details of life ; the *Pulpit*, with its sacredness, guarded prerogatives and authority ; the *Press*, in its immeasurable and wide-spread potency ; *Funds*, for contingencies, for the erection of *Chapels*, for the support of worn-out Ministers and their wives, widows and children, for instructing and supporting the children of Itinerant Ministers, for training and preparing accepted candidates for the Ministry, for Sabbath and Day Schools, and for Missionary operations ; the *co-operation of Clergy and Laity* ; *measures* for securing the competency, piety and effi-

ciency of the Ministry, and the purity of the membership, for the investiture and exercise of general and local legislative and executive power, for imparting the truth to every hamlet and neighbourhood, for supplying the Societies with due variety of ministerial talent, for raising the necessary pecuniary supplies, and for guarding connexional integrity and individual rights; *shipping*, to facilitate and secure the conveyance and interchange of Missionaries and their supplies; *extemporaneous and Liturgical devotion*; *Scriptural Presbyterianism* and *expedient official Episcopacy*; *small local Associations* and *comprehensive Assemblies*; regular and intimate *intercourse*, both lay and ministerial; in a word, the *conjunction of the divine blessing and human exertion* are included in the comprehensive grasp of Wesleyan agencies and instruments. In its purposes and means it embraces whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely and of good report. Its selected or designated field of benevolent exertion is marked by the same noble comprehensiveness. The whole Family of man is the sphere of its labours. In all the diversities of climate, torrid, frigid and temperate; in all the varieties of civilization and barbarism, of rudeness and refinement, of poverty and wealth, of honour and obscurity, of feebleness and power, of ignorance and intelligence, of dense association and scattered population, of comfort and privation, of courteous reception and rude repulsion, it plants the standard of the cross, and seeks to promote glory to God in the highest, and peace and good will among men. Good of every kind, consistent with its vocation, it labours to bestow; means of every species, accordant with its genius, it gladly employs; fields of beneficence wherever accessible, it enters and cultivates. It rushes in at every open door. It preaches Christ in the countries where his name has long been known; and into "the regions beyond" it presses with an ardour inextinguishable, and an energy divine. So vast are its views, its spirit and its aim, its labours and success. Nothing narrow or mean properly belongs to it. "Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces."

Methodism is *plastic*. It is capable of accommodating itself to all varieties of circumstance and character, and of moulding the subject of its influence according to its own characteristic spirit and principles. It can *adapt* and be formed. This is strikingly distinctive of the genius of Methodism. Its original depositaries found unexpected events and circumstances successively arising, which demanded specific and peculiar measures. Instead of rendering their system rigid and

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inflexible, like the unyielding oak, liable to be overthrown by the sweeping tempest, they imbued it with the spirit of Christian accommodation, and conformed it to inevitable and Providential circumstances. They so constructed it as to become all things to all men, if by any means it might save some. Mr. Wesley commenced his career of christian benevolence, heroism and zeal, with a tenacious attachment to the Ritual and Polity of the Established Church, and without the slightest intention to deviate therefrom. His ecclesiastical views and predilections were unbending; but his spirit and his purpose were plastic. And when the salvation of souls demanded unforeseen ecclesiastical irregularities, his spirit, like St. Paul, immediately submitted, and he and his system became endowed with the quality of sacrificing every thing which really interfered with the glory of God and the happiness of mankind. His plastic spirit led him to the fields, the highways and hedges, to carry out there what was impracticable elsewhere—the faithful promulgation of the truth of God. The same spirit prompted him to form Societies; to appoint Leaders, Stewards and Itinerant Preachers, and to erect Chapels, because all these measures were means of benefiting men which the openings and leadings of Divine Providence clearly indicated, authorized and required. The same plastic power has distinguished Methodism and its clerical depositaries since the death of its revered Founder, and displayed itself in the “Plan of Pacification,” and in the various efficacious and maturing measures which have been from time to time adopted. Methodism varies its exterior as occasion demands. And, while it thus benignly and wisely adapts itself to the great purpose of its institution, it is endowed with the power of shaping and moulding the subject of its influence. It thoroughly imbues the minds and hearts of its disciples with its own principles and spirit. It seizes every energy and gift, and shapes them into Methodistic mould for the welfare of the Church. It places every member at his proper post, and increasingly qualifies him for the duties of his station. It lays its plastic hand on every species and degree of suitable agency, and turns them into instruments of good. The force of its grasp, and its power of transforming are accordant with the comprehensiveness of its genius, sphere and design, and its consequent necessities. Because the vastness of its plan embraces every kindred and tribe and language and nation and climate and character and people, it is endowed with the power of accommodating its provisions and exertions to the high and the low, the great and the small, the rich and the poor, the learned and

unlearned, the savage and the sage; and, in recompence for this benevolent accommodation, it is invested with the power of filling up its ranks, and replenishing its stores with the talents, energies, qualities and resources of every country under heaven.

Methodism is *decided and firm*. It is plastic, because comprehensive; but it is also unchanging in its essential principles. Its doctrines have undergone no variation since first embodied. Its terms of communion and general rules have never been changed. The distinctive features of its worship and government have been always the same. From the beginning of its career it has preserved inviolate its high design, its vital piety and its beneficent spirit. Under the menaces or brandished weapons of its foes it has never covered or quailed. External hostility or internal treachery has never yet wrung from it an unworthy concession. Aliens and rebels have sought to make inroads on its constitution and integrity, but have been utterly defeated. An ignoble crowd of rebellious children cried "stop the supplies," but she shook her head and despised their clamour. She has modified her exterior, but preserved her genius. She has never retreated or yielded an inch. "Stand fast in your liberties and possessions," is her decisive cry. When summoned to surrender, she has but armed for the battle, and concentrated and disposed her forces. Every conflict and every triumph have increased her consciousness of rectitude and strength, and rendered her more inflexible in the maintenance of her rights. Accustomed to hostility, she thinks not of yielding to cowardice, clamour or treachery, but plants her standard and mans her ramparts. Assured by Inspiration that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against her," she stands to her purpose and her plans, her principles and her arms, and confidently abides the result of every trial.

Methodism is *Catholic and fraternal*. While it claims to be a branch of Christ's Church, it does not foolishly pretend to be the whole. While it professes to be one of God's instruments for saving souls, it does not idly and selfishly suppose itself all. It knows there are other religious agencies in operation; and it recognizes their excellence and success with readiness, with frankness, with gratitude and joy. Like Paul of old, it rejoices whenever Christ is preached. And to every legitimate branch of the Christian Church it cordially extends fraternal recognition, salutation and fellowship. Waiving unessential peculiarities of doctrine, worship and polity, it hails as a brother every orthodox and right minded Protestant de-

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nomination, and bids it God speed. And if it refuse to recognize Socinianism, Pelagianism, Universalism, Popery and schism, it is not from a want of Catholicity and liberality of spirit, but from a conscientious regard to capital truth and essential unity. It cheerfully places every unimportant distinction on the altar of brotherly love and concord, but it cannot sacrifice the very life of Christianity for any end whatever. There are limits and bounds to Christian liberality; and all beyond is licentiousness. On such forbidden ground Methodism never treads, but seeks to live peaceably and fraternally with all who hold the head, and build on the true foundation. Nor does its fraternal Catholicity stop here. It gladly assists other Churches in their labour of love. It seizes every opportunity of cultivating acquaintance with them, and it desires a cordial coalition of all God's moral agencies in assailing the common foe. The enemies of our Church are the enemies of all. The triumphs of our Church are but the success of the common cause. Piety and truth are everywhere excellent. If God be glorified it matters not by whom. If souls be saved, the agency and plan are quite unimportant. We can as sincerely rejoice when a soul enters heaven from another branch of Christ's fold as when one enters from our own. One God is to be honoured. One enemy is to be destroyed. "One faith" is to be promulgated. One Spirit is to be given. One heaven is to be reached. One path conducts us thither. And if many instruments are employed, let us rejoice in the fact; and, from the multiplication of diversified means by the several Churches, be encouraged to hope that the speedier issue will be given to the arduous and protracted struggle between the Church and Satan. Meantime we trust our beloved Methodism will never dwindle down to a mere barren sect. Retaining the exalted and expansive spirit which has distinguished it from its rise, it will increasingly be blessed and made a blessing.

Methodism is *loyal and patriotic*. A system which wields the energies, fixes the principles and forms the character of multitudes throughout the empire, must bear a decided aspect towards the civil government. That aspect is neither indifference nor hostility, but christian loyalty. Methodism invariably teaches that "the powers that be are ordained of God;" that they are entitled to honour, tribute and obedience by the injunctions of conscience and inspiration, and that they that "resist" or rebel "shall receive to themselves damnation." Methodism "fears the Lord and the king," and is not "given to change," but "leads a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." But while it thus recognizes the

divine appointment and the divinely-sanctioned authority of civil government, and inculcates the consequent duties, it by no means acknowledges absolute and unqualified civil power. It insists on restrictions both civil and religious. The authority and law of God are supreme and absolute, and supersede all opposing power, whether it be parental, ecclesiastical or civil. The "fear of God" occupies the first and highest place in the catalogue of Christian duties, and is at once the source and the rule of "honour" to "the king" and of every other duty to man. And as the law of God limits the authority of rulers, so also do the constitution and laws of the empire.—At the installation of every civil officer, from the highest to the lowest, in either the executive or legislative departments, imperial or colonial, the duties and bounds of his office are solemnly recognized, and his stipulations of fidelity sealed with the solemnity and obligation of an oath. Beyond the appointed limits he has no authority at all, and no claim to obedience. Absolute authority generates tyranny, and divests the people of all rational liberty. Total absence or inadequacy of civil authority causes anarchy, crime, and popular despotism.—Hence the necessity of adequate power, and of just and well-defined limits, in order at once to render civil government efficient and the people free, and to guard against every species of tyranny and licentiousness. Methodism knows these principles and limits, and is, therefore, neither a rebel nor a slave. When God commands, it heeds not the antagonist authority of man. When the constitution and laws enjoin duties, Methodism performs them; when they confer rights, Methodism acknowledges them; and when they draw lines of circumscription, Methodism observes them. This is its loyalty. Methodism is loyal, but not base or blind. Methodism is free, but not arrogant or licentious. Its loyalty is the operation of principle; of fervid affection and of enlightened conscience, and is, therefore, uniform and steadfast. The source whence it issues can never be affected by the fluctuations of passion, avarice or ambition, and the stream flows smoothly and constantly on. The experience of a century has illustrated these views. When a Cromwellian machination threatened popular religious rights, Methodism lifted up its voice, and, in connexion with others, repelled the attempt. And when colonial rebellion dared to raise its head, Methodism indignantly tramped it to the dust. Methodism loves its country with true patriotic ardour, and claims, by its integrity and consistency, equal and impartial protection. But Methodism is no partizan, no secular politician or noisy declaimer. Let its loyalty and civil

relations be well understood. As a system of religious truth, and an ecclesiastical organization, it inculcates and performs civil duties, in the sense already given ; exercises its *corporate* civil rights ; and guards and maintains the interests of religion against civil aggression. With questions of civil polity it has nothing more to do. Whether executive or legislative authority shall be enlarged, abridged or modified anew ; whether the mutual relations of the several branches of the government shall be changed or maintained ; whether internal improvement and police and foreign commerce and relations shall be altered or not, are questions with which neither Methodism nor any other religious system has the least right to interfere. Its vocation and office are higher and nobler. Its high design and duty are to promulgate and establish religion ; while civil government attends to its calling and work. The members of our Societies, in their civil capacity, as citizens and subjects, are entitled to interfere constitutionally with civil affairs ; but our members as *Methodists*, our Ministers as *Ministers*, our Societies as a *Church*, our system as *Methodism*, are, or ought to be, wholly unconnected with secular or party politics, and are degraded and desecrated whenever professedly or practically identified with "potsherds" or parties. Should Methodism descend from its elevated and holy position to mingle in the squabbles of secular politicians, either to build up or to displace a party in power, or to modify or perpetuate a scheme of civil government, it would undoubtedly betray its trust, sacrifice its character and energy, and sink to the nullity which its unfaithfulness deserved. But while it "fears God and honours the king," walks by "the same rule, and minds the same thing," it will continue to prosper as it has hitherto done.

Methodism is *efficient*. It is not only theoretically beautiful, but practically excellent. Small in its origin ; opposed and impeded in its progress ; originally without plans and finances ; cast upon its own resources and efforts and the blessing of God, it has proved mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strong holds. Its efficient *wisdom* is displayed in the glorious structure which has been reared ; in its compactness, solidity, unity, beauty and polity ; in the schemes it has devised, the alliances it has formed, and the commerce it maintains. Its efficient *strength* is exhibited in the difficulties it has surmounted, the victories it has achieved, and the important and comprehensive plans it has carried into successful operation. "A little one has become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation." Methodism has been an apostle

to thousands, for the seals of its apostleship are they in the Lord. Its efficiency has been convincingly manifested in turning souls from darkness to light, and from the power of satan unto God ; in taming and christianizing fierce and unruly man, warlike and brutal savages and cannibals ; in reclaiming and dignifying the vicious and besotted ; in conferring temporal comfort, religious enjoyment, and personal, domestic and social happiness. It has comprehensively acted and succeeded, as well as comprehensively designed. Its patriotic ardour ; its love of literature and science ; its fondness for biblical and theological investigation and exposition ; its humanity and philanthropy ; its faith in the promises ; its love for souls, and zeal for God's glory, have not evaporated in useless profession and mere splendid speculation, but have watched and toiled and triumphed ; and their multiplied and extended fruits carry irresistible conviction of Methodistic efficiency to every intelligent and unbiassed mind. "The right hand of the Lord is become glorious in power," and hath "gloriously triumphed."

Lastly, Methodism is *active and diffusive*. While others folded their arms and slumbered and slept, Methodism both laboured and blew its trumpet and awaked them. Sloth and inactivity are foreign to its spirit. The greatness of its purpose ; the vastness of its plans ; the good it has effected ; the pledges it has given ; the design of its institution, and the commands of its divine Author, forbid idleness and repose. So does its very spirit. It weeps over the desolations and miseries of our race ; hastens to their relief, and provokes other Churches to love and to good works. While a single soul is unsaved it cannot be inert. On the wings of faith and love it speeds to every nation with "the everlasting Gospel." Success cannot satisfy ; dangers cannot daunt ; obstacles cannot retard ; paucity of means cannot discourage or restrain. While there are "regions beyond," its march is onward. If its "charity" began "at home" in the construction of its fortifications and palaces, and in driving back the aggressor, that charity soon heightened and expanded into the most active benevolence. It has in turn become the assailant, and is now habitually and characteristically aggressive. Its armies scour the plains, and explore the mountains ; drive back to their fastnesses the powers of sin and satan ; push the battle to their very gates ; sap their foundations and destroy their walls. Nor shall Methodism cease to contend and conquer till the armies of the Church occupy every niche of the globe. "Methodism," said the eloquent Dr. Chalmers, "is Christianity in

earnest ;" and in earnest it shall be, till exalted to the skies. Born from above, thither constantly it tends ; taking in its way the conquest of the world. Though trouble, danger and persecution even unto death await it, we doubt not its fidelity. In conjunction with other Churches, it shall continue to diffuse the truth of God, until the stone which was hewn without hands expands into a mountain and fills the whole earth.

SUCH IS METHODISM. Her foundation is the rock of ages. Her "place of defence" is the "munitions of rocks." Her fortifications, her walls, towers and bulwarks, are strong and durable. Her palaces are stately and elegant. The style of her architecture is neither Gothic nor Grecian, but celestial. Her origin is not selfish or schismatical, but Scriptural and Providential. Her history is highly interesting and instructive. Her citizens are free and noble ; they are "kings and priests." Her officers are ordained in peace and righteousness, and are vigilant and active. Her government is enlightened, comprehensive and efficient. Her armies are disciplined, brave and effective. Her colonies and commerce extend to every quarter of the globe. Her resources are accumulating with steadiness and rapidity. Her population is increasing by thousands every year. Her prospects of extension, of usefulness and prosperity are brightening and enlarging. Her centennial exertions indicate her soundness and vigour, and portend approaching triumphs. Her "light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon her ;" and thousands are coming to her light, and to the brightness of her rising. Her "walls are salvation," and her "gates praise." She is emphatically "sought out ; a city not forsaken." Every weapon formed against her has prospered, and every tongue that has risen against her has been silenced or condemned. And this shall continue to be her heritage, for her righteousness is divine. "Glorious things are spoken of thee, O City of God."

V. CONCLUDING PRACTICAL REMARKS.

The practical reflections which the preceding portraiture of Methodism naturally suggests deserve consideration. They arise from the relative aspects under which Methodism is viewed. To omit them on an occasion like this would be wholly inexcusable ; as an exposition of any religious subject without a practical application is seriously defective. Nor can it be deemed inappropriate or impertinent to extend the application beyond the precincts of the City. If a word of ad-

vice to the friends and enemies of Methodism be at any time seasonable, it is surely now, at this epoch of our history, and when about to commence the second century of our existence. In depicting Wesleyan Methodism, no bitterness or unkindness towards any denomination has been consciously indulged; and in these practical remarks, however plain and pointed, nothing unchristian or unfraternal is in the least designed. By the enemies of Methodism we mean no distinct association, but those of every class who are foes in principle or practice. Our friends are ascertained and enumerated with similar latitude of meaning.

1. The ENEMIES of Methodism should learn wisdom and prudence from the foregoing sketch. Its solemn and explicit lesson is, *cease your hostility*. You are fighting against God. Methodism bears the clear and obvious impress of heaven. It is divine truth embodied, practised and applied. It is the cherished and prospered offspring of Divine Providence.—“And now I say unto you, refrain from these men and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of God ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found to fight against God.” Your hostility is impious; and as such must prove utterly unsuccessful. “Ye cannot overthrow” Methodism. Its constitution, origin, history and character bespeak divine approval and defence. Mightier than you have opposed it in vain. You may possibly inflict injury or pain on a few individuals; but the daughter of Zion laughs you to scorn. You may triumph in your own imagination, but you can neither overturn nor retard Methodism. You may magnify your interests, your opinions and your party, but you cannot succeed. You may denounce Methodism as unscriptural, dangerous, disloyal, schismatical or unauthorized, enthusiastic or superstitious, but you labour in vain. Methodism shall accomplish her high design: Methodism shall fulfil her glorious destiny: and you and your arrogance shall be brought down to the dust. “The enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs; they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away.” Avert the divine displeasure by timely repentance and amendment. Let God work as pleaseth him; but cease ye to oppose Him.—Shame and confusion and eternal overthrow await the enemies of the Redeemer. And while God doth what pleaseth him in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, go ye and learn wisdom.

2. The FRIENDS of Methodism, in other denominations, should learn *to be cordial and constant in their fraternal regard*. There is nothing in Methodism to awaken suspicion, or to

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create shame. Her principles, profession and practice during one hundred years attest her Catholicity and liberality of spirit, and her fraternal disposition towards all true Christians. From your friendship toward Methodism you have nothing to fear. Regard her, not as a rival or a foe, but as an affectionate and zealous ally. Banish every emotion of jealousy or dread. Our object is not to diminish the ranks of other Scriptural Churches, or merely to multiply our numbers, but to save souls and glorify God, by gathering into the fold those who are without, in harmony and alliance with all God's servants. If we cannot see eye to eye in minor matters, let us unite more closely in essential faith, practice and experience. There is much land to be possessed. Millions are yet unsaved. Instead of magnifying our differences, or indulging rivalry or jealousy, let us remember the multitudes who are in darkness and danger; and let us pity them, pray for them and labour for them till they are saved by grace and holiness, and truth prevail throughout the earth.

3. Towards the CHURCH OF ENGLAND, Methodism maintains a peculiar aspect, and speaks in peculiar terms. Her tender and respectful language is, *suffer us to esteem and love you as peculiar reasons require*. We have had our birth and spent our infancy within your pale. Our Founder and Father, under God, belonged to you. We wish to regard you as more than an elder brother. Our origin and history, our doctrines and worship, are so related to you as to awaken in our heart peculiar emotions of friendship and love. But these feelings must subside, and all peculiar affection be destroyed, if you treat us as an enemy. We are not your enemy. We seek to live in peace and love with you; but we cannot crouch at your feet, or descend from the proper dignity of our position to secure the favour of any. We love you as a parent, or as an intimate elder relative; but we fear you not as a foe.— Place yourself in an attitude of hostility, and we bid you defiance. We will gladly live in fraternal amity with you on honourable terms, but never on any other. We can surrender no rights. We can make no unreasonable sacrifice. We cannot return to the imbecility of infancy. We have grown to manhood, and can be joined to you only by appropriate ties. Enmity, indifference or friendship must subsist between us: the choice is yours. If you continue to denounce us as schismatics, unscriptural and unauthorized, we stand to our arms and defend our possessions; and if we act on the offensive in the heat of conflict, you must ascribe it to yourselves. You have heaped insult upon us in innumerable instances; you have

reviled and opposed us with bitterness and severity ; you have drawn the sword without provocation or cause, but we are willing to forgive all if you will terminate hostilities, and agree to terms. Instead of denouncing and assailing all dissenters and non-conformists, take your place as a Christian Church—assail the common foe, and we shall bid you God speed. We will rush to your aid. We will join in the battle-cry. We will rejoice in your success, and celebrate your triumphs. Let us bury in oblivion the unpleasantness of the past ; live in amity as brethren ; and continue to accomplish our common end, till all diversities pass away, and all true Christians become one in the presence and kingdom of our common Lord.

4. To **METHODISTS** themselves, the foregoing exposition and defence especially apply. As citizens of our Zion you are solemnly reminded, at this period of our history, of your ecclesiastical connexions and obligations. To you Methodism speaks in language the most paternal, earnest and impressive. Regard the practical import and tendency of all that has been said, and let the stirring reminiscences and prelibations of this epoch impel you to greater diligence and fidelity in future.

Understand and appreciate Methodism. Be not satisfied with the mere enjoyment of citizenship, but labour to understand the foundation, architecture, government, immunities, connexions, commerce, origin, history and prospects of the City. Frequently walk about Zion, and go round about her, telling the towers, marking the bulwarks, and considering the palaces. Be an enlightened citizen. Ascertain the character, position and designs of our enemies, and our means of defence. Ponder the advantages you possess, and let your heart be deeply affected with their real and peculiar excellence. Contrast your own City with others ; and be duly aware of the fact that every change of residence must prove injurious.—Mark with especial attention the occasion, the design and the true genius of Methodism. Remember it is purely A **RELIGIOUS INSTITUTION**, intended to “spread scriptural holiness over the land.” And remember that one of its prominent and distinctive characteristics is, “**ANTI-SECTARIANISM, AND A CATHOLIC SPIRIT.**” Be Catholic Christians. Love all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Make due allowances for the prejudices and infirmities of others. Distinguish between chaff and wheat ; and rejoice in the piety and usefulness of other Churches. Cultivate towards other believers the spirit that distinguishes the celestial regions—

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as you hope to dwell there—the spirit of love, of brotherly kindness and affection.

Praise and glorify God for Methodism. The Lord has built the City and peopled it with officers and citizens. He has cast your lot in it. When He drew the lines of His Providential arrangements, He allotted unto you a “pleasant place” and “a goodly heritage.” The purpose of all is that “He might be glorified.” Devoutly and ardently thank Him for His loving-kindness. You owe all to Him. He might have cast your lot in a heathen City, in a Mahommedan City, or within the bounds of corrupted Christianity: but He has not done so. He has appointed your habitation in a *Protestant* City, and that City is **METHODISM**. Say not in your heart, “See what the Methodists have done;” but, “See what the Lord has done by means of Methodism: He hath done great things for me, whereof I am glad.” “Glorify him then in your body and spirit, which are His.”

Enjoy all the benefits of Methodism. Learn all her doctrines; attend all her ordinances; study and obey her laws and regulations; hold fellowship with her saints; and especially hold communion with her Divine Ruler. Repair regularly and constantly to her temples, to “inquire” of the Lord and to “behold his beauty.” It is your privilege and duty to be a holy and happy citizen. Facilities for improvement and enjoyment are amply supplied; and you are responsible to God for the use or neglect of them. “Rejoice in the Lord; and again I say rejoice.”

Be zealous and useful. Love every inhabitant of the City, and be ready to do him good according to your power. Love Methodism as a whole, and advance its prosperity by exemplifying its heavenly and Catholic spirit. Let your light shine clearly before all. Remember the population consists of individuals, and upon individual conduct and exertion the character and welfare of the City depend. “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem.” Give liberally of your substance for her support and enlargement. Remember there are millions without her gates enslaved by the enemy. Contribute to their redemption. Bring your gold and your silver joyfully and liberally to extend the conquests and blessings of Zion over all the earth. “Take heed and beware of covetousness.” “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.” “Lay up treasure in heaven.” The glory of God in the salvation of yourself and others should be your grand and single end. Exert yourselves then to the utmost in your several stations to promote the welfare of Zion, by discharging all your duties

and by endeavouring to gather in the outcasts, till all are redeemed. Tell to all around and to "the generation following," especially to your children, what God has done in and by Methodism.

Be joyful and confident in the prospect of the future. Be diligent and faithful, and you have nothing to fear. "They shall prosper that love Jerusalem." Past and present blessings are a pledge for future. The happy lives and triumphant deaths of our fellow-citizens, in every age and climate, since the erection of the City, should animate and encourage us. God has been "the help" of his people "in ages past," and is our glorious hope for years to come. He will never leave nor forsake us or our beloved Zion. Our "tabernacle shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken."—"Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Zion." We are called to hope and triumph, not despond or fear. Our enemies are mighty, but we have a strong City; and "the best of all is, God is with us." He has caused his work to appear unto his servants, and will disclose his glory unto their children. His beauty shall continue upon us; he will graciously establish the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands he will gloriously prosper. He calls us to be joyful in Him, as our king; and assures us of the universal diffusion and triumphs of his Gospel. His right hand and his holy arm will subdue the people under Him, and scatter his foes as dust before the whirlwind. "Great is the holy One of Israel in the midst of us;" and greatly should we "cry out and shout."—Trusting in the blood of the everlasting covenant, we have nothing to fear. Our toils and conflicts—our light and momentary afflictions shall soon be succeeded by a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. "Alleluia: the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." And "this God shall be our God for ever: He will be our guide even unto death."

"Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

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NOTES.

I.

PRIMITIVE DEACONSHIP.

Of the origin of Deacons, as a distinct class of officers in the Christian Church, and of the appointment of the first seven, we are informed in the sixth chapter of the "Acts of the Apostles." A careful perusal of that chapter is sufficient to convince any unprejudiced person that the deaconship was originally and primarily a secular office, or a sort of stewardship for the management of secular interests and affairs. This is clearly evinced by the following facts:—1. The occasioning cause of the appointment of Deacons was a murmuring respecting temporal affairs, or the "daily ministration." Nothing whatever was said respecting a lack or a partiality of religious instruction and aid. 2. The reason assigned by the twelve for the appointment of Deacons establishes the distinction we have mentioned. "It is not meet that we should leave the word of God and serve tables." The employment of the Apostles was, therefore, to *minister the word of God*; that of the Deacons, to *serve tables*. 3. The Apostles plainly contradistinguish the apostolate and deaconship in the third and fourth verses. They direct the brethren to select seven men to be appointed over "this business," namely, the "daily ministration" or "service of tables;" for there is nothing else in the context to which the words can refer. "But *we*," say the Apostles, will "give ourselves to *prayer* and to *the ministry of the word*." Language could not more explicitly distinguish and determine the secularity of the deaconship, and the spirituality of the apostolate. It is not said of Stephen, one of the Deacons, that he preached the word or baptized, but that he "did great wonders and miracles among the people." Philip, another Deacon, preached and baptized, but he held the office of evangelist as well as of Deacon, being expressly styled "the evangelist:"—Acts, XXI. 8. A Deacon might hold some other office, or might occasionally exhort and teach without being regularly set apart to the work of the ministry. The fact that the Apostles laid their hands on the Deacons cannot prove any thing in opposition to the views we have given, as the imposition of hands was employed for conferring the Holy Ghost on private members of the Church, as well as for ordaining ministers, and was in fact a ceremony used on various occasions and for various purposes.

The term *Deacon* signifies Minister or servant, and, like many other words, is variously applied. The Apostles are called Deacons or Ministers, but always in such a connexion as to guard and determine the sense. Christ himself is called the "Deacon of the circumcision:"—Rom. xv. 8. But Christ and his Apostles are never designated Deacons in the same sense as the seven already mentioned. Every Minister of the Gospel is a Deacon, but every Deacon is not a Minister of the Gospel. When, therefore, we assert that Christ and his Apostles are never styled Deacons, we have reference only to the signification of the term Deacon in its specific appropriation to those who served tables.

II.

THE APOSTOLATE.

The term Apostle signifies a messenger or a person sent, and like the term Deacon, may be variously applied. The obvious primary use of the term is to serve as the distinctive appellation of an extraordinary class of ecclesiastical officers. When St. Paul speaks of himself as being "born out of due time," and as being "the least of the Apostles," it is evident he has reference to the peculiarity and limitation of the apostolate. As a man, as a Christian, and as a Christian Minister, he was "not a whit behind the very chief of the Apostles," but as an Apostle he was "the least," and was "born out of due time." What is said of the Apostles sitting with Christ on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel, and of "the names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb" being in the "twelve foundations" of "the holy Jerusalem," clearly shows that the apostolate was peculiar and not ordinary—temporary and not permanent, and limited to a specific number of persons. It would be absurd to assert that every messenger in the Church, or every person called an Apostle, is an Apostle in the proper sense of the word; and yet this is the way in which some attempt to disprove the peculiarity and temporary duration of the Apostolate. Paul calls Epaphroditus an Apostle or messenger, in his epistle to the Philippians, ch. iii. v. 25, and he is therefore elevated by the advocates of the succession scheme to the rank of a proper Apostle. But Paul's own words refute the error, for he calls Epaphroditus "*your* (the Philippians') messenger," not the messenger of Jesus Christ, "and he that ministered to my wants." Because the Church at Philippi despatched this person, as their messenger, to St. Paul, with a contribution, he is therefore a proper Apostle! Shame on the cause that needs such support, and shame on the men who employ it! Although each of the twelve was a messenger, yet every messenger is not a proper Apostle. By attending to this distinction we may easily refute those successionists who delight in multiplying the Apostles mentioned in the New Testament to the number of seventeen or twenty, for the purpose of establishing a contracted, an exclusive and unchristian scheme, and who are, in effect, perpetually crying—"The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are we;" while their language and actions sufficiently indicate the absence of the Proprietor and Occupier of the Christian temple, from their paltry and inelagant edifice.

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PRINTER'S NOTE.—In the course of the work a few trifling typographical errors may be discovered, which can easily be corrected by the reader.

