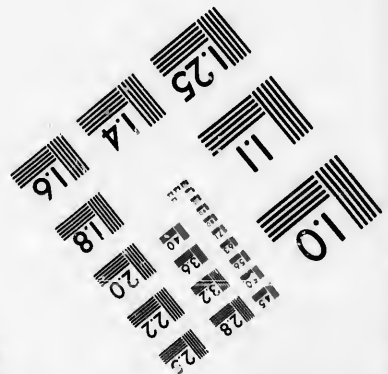
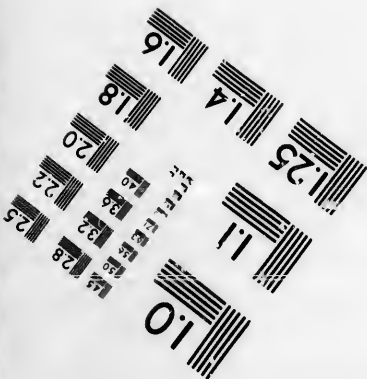
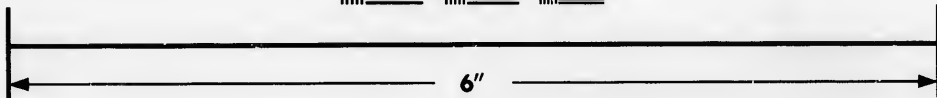
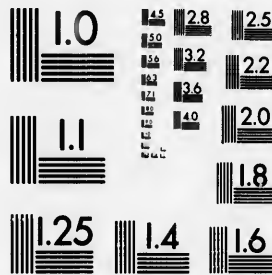


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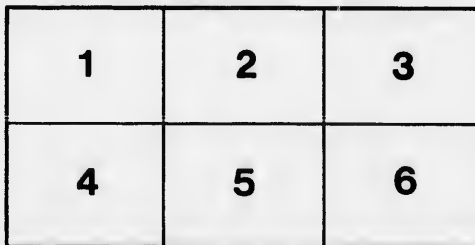
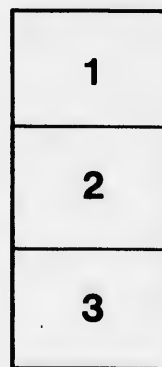
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TO

THE MEMBERS

OF THE

METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN CANADA:

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

THE REPORT

OF THE

COMMITTEE APPOINTED TO EXAMINE

INTO ALLEGATIONS AGAINST

THE CONFERENCE, ECONOMY, AND GOVERNMENT

OF THE

METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

BY ORDER OF THE CONFERENCE.

YORK:

1829.

Price—Seven pence half-penny.

1829

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TO THE MEMBERS
OF THE
METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH
IN CANADA.

DEAR BRETHREN:

In addressing you, for the first time since our organization into a separate and independent church, we, your servants for Christ's sake, feel deeply humbled under a sense of the divine goodness in supporting us through all our afflictions, in directing all our plans, and abundantly prospering our labours.

The year past has been, to our Zion, a year of peculiar heaviness, through manifold temptations, arising partly from the natural enmity of the world to the gospel of Christ, and partly from the passionate excitement of those who have gone out from us; that it might be manifest that they were not of us. But while our little bush has thus burned, it has, by no means, been consumed; but has continued to shine with increasing lustre and power, to the comfort, joy, and salvation of many hundred souls. Notwithstanding the scarcity of labourers to supply our extensive fields of christian enterprize, the varied difficulties with which we have had to struggle, and after making the necessary deductions for apostacies, secessions, deaths, &c., our church has yielded, this year, the nett increase of 553 members; making in all 10231 actual members of our church in this Province. Also the Sunday Schools, under our care, have increased in number, and, generally, in usefulness; the members of our societies have upon the whole become more established, and are, we trust, growing in the knowledge of Jesus Christ; and our Missionary Establishments have, beyond our most sanguine expectations, grown in interest, importance and usefulness; diffusing a

most salutary influence upon the neighbourhoods in which they are respectively located, and sending forth their converted native labourers, to call other benighted and uncivilized tribes to the knowledge of the truth. And, in every instance, these missionary excursions have been crowned with the most encouraging success. For such tokens of the divine approbation, in bringing to nought the counsels of evil men—in making the fields of His infant church bring forth fruit abundantly—in causing our very wilderness to bud and blossom as the rose—in raising up young men to go out and labour in the spirit and power of their worn out and departed fathers—for such expressions of parental care and goodness, we humbly offer our hearty thanks to Him who has said, “Lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.”

But, Dear Brethren, while much has been done to spread primitive christianity through this Province—while much is now doing—much more still remains to be done. And we gladly improve this opportunity in calling your special attention to several subjects of the highest importance in accomplishing the design of our Saviour, who wills the salvation of all men. And first, we would mention *Sunday Schools*. Nothing is of so great importance as early to apply the proper antidote to the inherent and overflowing corruptions of our fallen nature. It is much better and easier to *prevent* a disease, than to *cure* one—to *restrain* evil propensities, than to reform vices. How important then that the scriptural remedy be early applied to the moral diseases of the human soul—that children be early made acquainted with that word which is able to make them wise unto salvation. To do this, let Sunday Schools be every where established. These interesting institutions have been the happy means of converting thousands from the error of their ways, and of raising hundreds to the work of the ministry: Let there not be a family without such means of religious instruction. In every neighbourhood where six or a dozen children can be collected, let a *Sunday School* be established under the care of the most judicious persons that will consent to employ their time and talents in this benevolent and most useful department.

of christian labour, and let *every* one contribute his mite to purchase a *library* for the encouragement and instruction of the pupils; as also of the families to which they respectively belong. We hope that *every preacher*, on his circuit, will be attentive to this,—that every *Presiding Elder* will use the most effectual means of carrying it into successful operation—that every *father* of a family will feel its importance and act accordingly—and that no friend to the welfare of the rising generation will withhold his co-operating labours. Then, when we are sleeping with our fathers, our children, trained up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, will behave themselves wisely in a perfect way, will fill their respective stations in society with respectability, and be useful in their day and generation.

In the next place, the subject of *education* should command the attention of our brethren more generally than it has hitherto done. It cannot be denied, that while many of our brethren have felt the importance of educating their children, and have afforded them such advantages to acquire an education as their circumstances would allow, others, and not a few, are criminally negligent in this respect. We hope that such will no longer indulge this fatal indifference, which will leave their children half barbarians, when they might be respectable and useful members of the community. Let such remember that “a good education is better than a great portion”—that “it is not good for the soul, to be without knowledge”—that

“’Tis education forms the youthful mind;
Just as the *twig* is bent, the *tree* is inclined.”

Let such read Mr. Wesley’s sermon “*On the Education of Children.*” And it is hoped the time is not far distant, when a Seminary of learning will be established for the special purpose of *religiously* educating the children of the members of our church and such others as may be disposed to attend it. In the mean time, after much deliberation and every possible precaution, we have resolved upon the establishment of a weekly paper, which, we hope, will receive the patronage of every one that wishes well to our church, and to christianity generally. Such a periodical has long been wanted, and frequently called for. For want-

of it, our doctrines, economy, character, and operations have frequently been mistaken and misrepresented to our injury, and our brethren and friends have been deprived of much useful information. But it must now be peculiarly gratifying to our friends to learn that a medium of communication will soon be established, through which the doctrines, economy, character, rights, and privileges of our church may be vindicated—the victories of our Saviour's grace published abroad—and the cause of Missions, Sunday Schools, and Education, advocated and promoted. And whatever expences may be incurred, and demands made in commencing such an establishment, we trust they will meet with liberal receptions and receive an ample supply from the treasuries of those whom the Great Master has intrusted with a stewardship over many talents of this world's goods.

The cause of *Missions* should also, at all times, engage the attention, the prayers, and the liberality of the friends of the destitute and miserable. Many, whose names it is not proper to mention in this place, have contributed liberally towards the christianization and improvement of the Indian tribes. Their labour has not been in vain. It is recorded in the Book of God's remembrance above; and their shillings have gained pounds, and their pence, dollars, on earth below. Let such not be weary in well-doing; and let not others sleep, when they ought to be active and diligent in bringing other gentiles "to build in the temple of the Lord." The field is large and white for harvest—the labourers are few—and our means are small. O pray and assist, brethren, that under the blessing of the Lord our means may be increased—faithful labourers multiplied—and the thirsty land be made springs of water.

But especially, dear brethren, let the flame of divine love be preserved and increased in your own souls. "Let the love of Christ dwell in you richly in all holy conversation and godliness. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you with all malice." Let the using, distilling, and merchandising of *ardent spirits*, be abominated in your habitations. Let your buildings be put up, and your bees (if

you have any) be conducted without the needless and (what a great physician calls) "heaven-daring and soul-destroying" practice of using spirituous liquors. Be provoked to this good work of sobriety and temperance by the example of the converted natives. They have put up a large building at Grape Island, another at Rice Lake, another at Lake Simcoe, two very heavy buildings at the Credit, and a large Chapel at the Grand River, without using a drop of ardent spirits. May such worthy examples be imitated by every inhabitant of this province!

"But above all things, brethren, put on *charity*, which is the bond of perfectness. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love. Love as brethren. For this is the message that ye have heard from the beginning; that ye should love one another."

Dear Brethren, "ye are in our hearts to live and die with you." We rejoice when you rejoice—we weep when you weep—if you live, we live also. Pray for us, that we may minister, as of the ability which God giveth; behaving ourselves holily, and justly, and unblameably among them that believe; and walking in wisdom towards them that are without; that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ. We beseech you, brethren, to know them that labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake; and be at peace among yourselves. And now may the God of peace and consolation grant you to be like-minded one towards another, according to Christ Jesus; that ye may, with one mind, and one mouth, glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We are, DEAR BROTHERS,

Your affectionate Ministers

And Servants in the Gospel of

Jesus Christ, our Saviour,

WILLIAM CASE,

President.

JAMES RICHARDSON, JUNR.

Secretary.

By order of the Conference.

Ancaster, September 4th, 1829.

REPORT
OF THE
COMMITTEE ON ALLEGATIONS,
&c. &c. &c.

The Committee appointed to examine into Allegations against the Conference, Economy and Government of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada, beg leave to report as follows: (which report they recommended to be published in connexion with the pastoral address:)

In looking over the first section of the discipline of certain persons who style themselves "Canadian Wesleyan Methodists," your committee regret to find indirect but gross impeachments against this Conference—most unfair representations of the government of our church—and most cruel calumnies against those laborious, faithful and long-suffering servants of the church, the late venerable Dr. Coke and Mr. Francis Asbury.

In their sixth "reason" for secession, it is indirectly stated, that the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in this Province, are "under a foreign jurisdiction and controul."—Than such a statement, nothing can be more untrue: for it is well known to almost every member of our church, that during the session of our last Annual Conference in Earnestown, 1828, we organized ourselves into a separate independent church, adopting almost unanimously, the following preamble and resolution: "Whereas the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America, has heretofore extended over the Ministers and Members in connexion with said church in the Province of Upper Canada, by mutual agreement, and by the consent of our brethren in this Province; and whereas it has been and is the general wish of the ministers and members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Upper

Canada, to be organized into a separate and independent body, in friendly relations with the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States; and whereas the General Conference has been pleased to comply with our wish in this respect, and has authorised any one or more, of the General Superintendents of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, with the assistance of any two or more Elders, to ordain a General Superintendent for the said church in Upper Canada (whenever such Superintendent shall have been elected by this Conference;) be it therefore resolved, that it is expedient and necessary, and that the Canada Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, do now organize itself into an *independent* Methodist Episcopal Church in Upper Canada, with a General Superintendent, to be known by the name of the "*Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada.*"

So complete was our separation considered, that, immediately upon the passing of the above resolution, Bishop Hedding (who had previously read off the appointments of the preachers) arose and observed, "Brethren, I have no longer any controul over you; before you proceed to further business, you must elect a Chairman to preside in your Conference." And since that time the ministers and members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada, have been no more under a "foreign ecclesiastical jurisdiction," than this Province is under the *civil* jurisdiction of the United States. All the deliberations and acts of this Conference are, in every respect independent of any "foreign controul."

In the *fourth* "reason" given by certain persons for their secession, it is positively asserted—"That the *itinerant preachers* claim, hold, exercise and engross *all* the power and authority of governing, directing, controuling, and managing the societies and circuits, and making, revising, and repealing laws, and administering the discipline, *exclusive* of the class-leaders, local preachers, and lay members." On this extraordinary statement, your Committee would remark.

1. That the same power or authority, which is now possessed and exercised by "the itinerant preachers," has

been possessed and exercised by them ever since Methodist Societies were organized in America. And the great benefits of their possessing and exercising this authority, are obvious, from the extensive spread of scriptural christianity throughout this continent by means of their judicious and persevering labours.

2. The power possessed by "itinerant preachers" in this Province, is by no means equal to that which was possessed by "itinerant preachers" in *England* in the days of Mr. Wesley. For, in England, the preacher in charge of a circuit or station, in addition to many other judicial acts, suspended and expelled persons from society, *without any committee to try them.*

3. It is the indispensable duty of every "itinerant preacher" to take heed to the flock, circuit or society over which God, in his Providence, has made him overseer.

4. So far from the "itinerant preachers managing the societies and administering the discipline, exclusive of the class-leaders, local preachers, and lay members," the "itinerant preachers" have not the power to administer a single rule of the discipline, either in receiving persons in, suspending or expelling them from the society, *exclusive* of the local preachers, class-leaders, or lay members. No person is received into our society without the consent of the class before which he presents himself; no member can be expelled or suspended from our society, otherwise than by a committee of, or the society to which he belongs; and whenever such suspended or expelled person *appeals*, he cannot be deprived of his membership, until that suspension or expulsion is sanctioned by the *Quarterly Conference*, which is composed of *local preachers, exhorters, class-leaders, and lay members.*

5. Equally untrue is it, that the "itinerant preachers exercise and engross *all* the power in revising, repealing, and making laws." The conference, possessing a disposition directly opposed to any thing like *despotism*, and wishing to recognise and establish, in its fullest extent, the important, inherent, unalienable principle of natural right, that the "governed of any community should have a voice in making, repealing and altering those laws by which

they are governed," passed at its last session in Ernestown, 1828, the following resolution, which is an established rule in our discipline :

"No new rule or regulation, or alteration of any rule or regulation now in force, respecting our temporal economy ; such as the building of meeting houses, the order to be observed in them ; the allowances to the ministers and preachers, their widows and children ; the raising annual supplies for the propagation of the Gospel, (the missions excepted) ; the making up the allowances of the preachers, &c., shall be considered of any force or authority, until such rule, regulation or alteration, shall have been laid before the several Quarterly Conferences throughout the whole connexion, and shall have received the consent and advice of a majority of the members (who may be present at the time of laying said rule, regulation or alteration before them) of two thirds of said Conferences.—Nor shall any new rule, regulation or alteration, respecting the doctrines of our church, the rights and privileges of its members ; such as, the receiving persons on trial and into full connexion ; the condition on which they shall retain their membership ; the manner of bringing to trial, finding guilty, and reprovng, suspending or excluding disorderly persons from society and church privileges, have any force or authority, until laid before the Quarterly Conferences and approved of as aforesaid."

6. These constitutional rights, vested in the several Quarterly Conferences, give a much greater balance of power to the "lay members" of the church, than *lay delegation* would give them. For, in the first place, according to the discipline of those who call themselves "Canadian Wesleyan Methodists," the conference is composed of an *equal* number of *lay delegates* and *preachers*. In order to make the *lay delegates equal* in number to the preachers, there cannot be more than one or two elected to represent each circuit ; whereas there are from fifteen to sixty members of the Quarterly Conference on each circuit, all of whom are directly or indirectly elected by the societies to which they belong. Secondly, in those Conferences which, are partly composed of "lay members," the "itinerant prea-

chers" can easily carry almost any measure they please, contrary to the voice of the great majority of the societies' representatives; for if all the *lay delegates* except one, are opposed to a measure advocated by the "preachers," the measure of course, will be decided in favour of the "*preachers*." So that if the "itinerant preachers" should wish to raise their salaries, or increase their power to any extent, they could do it by getting one single delegate to support them—which they would find very little difficulty in doing. But, according to the discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada, should *all* the "itinerant preachers" wish and vote for such measures, they could never be of any force or authority, until they had been sanctioned by a *majority of two thirds of the Quarterly Conferences throughout the whole connexion.*

7. In addition to the above considerations, Your Committee would farther observe that no person can become a member of the itinerant connexion, until after he has been recommended by the class of which he is a member—by the *Quarterly Conference* of the circuit to which he belongs, and by the *Local Conference* of the District in which he resides. Yet it is affirmed by those "who have gone out from us," that the local preachers, class-leaders, and lay members are excluded from the councils of the church!!

Among other impeachments against our church government, the "manner of trying members is" said to be "productive of great injustice." Your Committee are not aware that there has ever been a fondness on the part of our "itinerant preachers" for expelling any blameless person from our communion. They have frequently been charged, even by those that have gone from us, with an exorbitant desire to proselyte, rather than thin the ranks of our societies—with negligence in executing the discipline, rather than unjustly excommunicating innocent persons.—Your Committee know of no person more proper and fit, to select a committee to examine into cases of dispute or dissatisfaction than the preacher in charge of a circuit or station, who from the shortness of his residence (let alone his supposed principles of piety and justice) must be more free from local prejudices and individual partialities than

any other person; and if at any time the excluded person is dissatisfied with the decision of the committee or society that has examined into his case, he has in all cases a right to an appeal to the Quarterly Conference, which is unquestionably composed of disinterested persons—and in any such cases, if the preacher is suspected of acting corruptly, he is liable to a charge for mal-administration, and to be tried and judged accordingly. But, that persons laid under disciplinary censures should complain—perhaps in some instances loudly complain of it—your committee has no doubt. For

“No man e'er felt the halter draw,
With good opinion of the law.”

That objections and anathemas from any source should be gravely thrown out against our ecclesiastical economy, which has already been instrumental in the hands of God in transmitting thousands from the blossoming wilderness of this infant Province, to the celestial regions of eternal blessedness—may appear strange and unaccountable to any reflecting mind; that such objections should be made by persons who have themselves been through its instrumentality, raised from a state of ignorance and impiety, to all the knowledge, respectability and influence they ever possessed, must appear still more strange and unaccountable. But what must be the feelings of every christian, and especially of every Methodist, when he sees the ashes of departed worth disturbed in their silent repose—when he sees the graces of those who are resting in Abraham's bosom blackened with the vituperating tongue of calumny—when the characters of such self-denying heralds of the love of God, as Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury, are forced through the ordeal of insulting accusation, and that by persons who might well count it an honour to sit at their feet and learn the plainest sentiments of humility—the first principles of charity—and the most uncompromising obligations of gratitude. If “our Fathers” are not allowed even beneath the clods of the valley to rest from the tongue of slander, what may not their less worthy sons expect?

What other object could have been aimed at than to degrade the names of Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury, and their

successors in office, in denying that Mr. Wesley was the author of our Episcopacy, and to support this denial by quoting a letter from Mr. Wesley to Mr. Asbury, and applying it to purposes entirely foreign from those of its venerable author. In this letter Mr. Wesley, by way of reproof, prefers a general charge against Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury, viz: aspiring to be great. But that Mr. Wesley had been misinformed or was mistaken on this point, has not only long since been proved by the humble, unassuming, godly conduct of Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury to the day of their death, but is now admitted by the most violent of their *honest* enemies. Where is the *honest* man who, at this day, will assert that Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury—men who tore themselves from their parents, friends and country, traversed the uncultivated wilderness of America to preach the Gospel to the poor—Where is the honest man we say, who will now assert, that such “strangers and pilgrims” studied “to be great,” “strutted along,” “sought to be something,” “assumed a power superior to that which Mr. Wesley himself professed to possess?” Have not the lives, labours, and triumphant deaths of Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury, more than shown that Mr. Wesley was mistaken in his impression; and what but the most pitiable prejudice, if not the most unprincipled injustice, would *now* apply to those deceased “Fathers” of the church—reproaches which wrong information or erroneous impressions first drew forth—reproaches which the humble toil, sweat and blood of Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury have long since wiped away?

But this letter is perverted to the still worse purpose, if possible, of showing that Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury thrust themselves into an office to which they had not been called; an office with which they had no business. But does it answer this purpose? Your Committee think not. Does Mr. Wesley blame Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury for filling the office, discharging the duties and exercising the authority of bishops? Certainly not. But what gave Mr. Wesley great concern was that they “suffered” themselves “to be called Bishops;” and he assured them that “men” should never with his consent “call him bishop.” “Mr.

Wesley's objection to the title *bishop* (says his biographer Mr. Moore) arose from his hatred of all display." But did not Mr. Wesley, upon this occasion (in writing to Mr. Asbury) a little forget what he had written in his address to the societies in America after their separation from the Mother Country! "They are *now at full liberty* simply to follow the scriptures and the primitive church; and we judge it best that they should stand fast in the liberty wherewith God has so strangely set them free." But the association in Mr. Wesley's mind (continues Mr. Moore) between the assumed title (*bishop*) and the *display* connected with it in the later ages of the church was too strong. He could not at that moment (when he wrote to Mr. Asbury) separate the plain laborious bishop of the American societies, where there is no legal establishment, from the dignified Prelates of the Mighty Empire of Great Britain." (Life of Wesley, Vol. 2nd, p. 2 and 3, Amer. Ed.)

Although your committee readily admit, that in respect to *Spiritual Authority*, there are but *two* orders in the Apostolic Church—but two orders in the Methodist Episcopal Church; yet, in respect to ecclesiastical *jurisdiction*, there are *three*, corresponding to those in the New Testament, called Deacons, Elders, and Evangelists. That the power of ordination is vested in the hands of *elders*, the fourth section of our discipline acknowledges; but that *Mr. Wesley* appointed persons to fill an office in our church distinct from, and the jurisdiction of which is more extensive than that of an ordinary *elder*, cannot be conscientiously denied by any person acquainted with the early history of Methodism. In a letter addressed to the American Societies in the year 1784, Mr. Wesley observes, "I have appointed Dr. Coke and Mr. Francis Asbury to be joint *Superintendents* over our brethren in North America; as also Richard Whatcoat, and Thomas Vasey to act as *elders* among them by baptizing and administering the Lord's Supper." (Moore's life of Wesley, Vol. II. p. 194.) From this it is evident that Mr. Wesley considered the duties and charges of a Superintendent and an elder to be very different, or he would not have distinguished them in the manner he has in the above extract. The truth and propriety of

this remark will appear still more obvious from the following testimony of Mr. Wesley's intimate friend and fellow-labourer, the Rev. Henry Moore. "At the Conference held in Leeds in 1784, Mr. Wesley declared his intention of sending Dr. Coke and some other preachers to America. Mr. Richard Whatcoat and Mr. Thomas Vasey offered themselves as Missionaries for that purpose and were accepted. Before they sailed Mr. Wesley abridged the common prayer book of the Church of England and wrote to Dr. Coke, then in London, desiring him to meet him in Bristol, to receive fuller powers; and to bring with him the Rev. Mr. Creighton. The Doctor and Mr. Creighton accordingly met him in Bristol; when, with their assistance, he ordained Mr. Richard Whatcoat and Mr. Thomas Vasey, *Presbyters* for America; and being peculiarly attached to every right of the Church of England, he afterwards ordained Dr. Coke a *Superintendent*, giving him letters of ORDINATION under his own hand and seal," (Life of Wesley, vol. II. p. 193.) These letters of ordination may be seen in the Rev. S. Drew's life of Dr. Coke, p. 66.

To the above, your committee would add the authoritative testimony of the English Wesleyan Methodist Magazine for 1825, "Mr. Wesley in point of fact did *ordain Bishops* for the American Societies; though he intended them to be called Superintendents. Whether the *name* (Bishop) had or had not the sanction of Mr. Wesley is now of the *least possible consequence*, as the *Episcopacy* itself was of HIS OWN CREATING,"—(*English Wesleyan Methodist Magazine* for 1825, p. 183.) From these indubitable testimonies it is abundantly evident, that notwithstanding the contradictory assertion of certain individuals, the Episcopal Office of the Methodist Church in America was created by *Mr. Wesley* himself. It now remains for your committee to show that the "authority attached to that office was the same when Mr. Wesley first created it as it is now." For this purpose your committee would refer to Dr. Coke's biographer, a Wesleyan Methodist minister in England, of talent, learning and piety. Mr. Drew observes; that "Dr. Coke in conjunction with Mr. Asbury published, during the visit to England on which he was solemnly

ordained by Mr. Wesley to the office of a Superintendent, a small volume respecting 'the doctrines and discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America.'" In the fourth section of this book, the ordinations, powers, duties and responsibility of Bishops or Superintendents are clearly pointed out and explained. From this it appears that the authority vested in the hands of Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury by Mr. Wesley, by and with the consent of the American Conference, was precisely the same with that which is possessed by the Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America at the present time. Fully to ascertain this your committee recommend a comparison to be instituted between the authority of Bishops, as stated in the discipline of 1784 published at the time of Dr. Coke's ordination, (an analysis of which is given on p. 109, of Dr. Coke's life) and the authority of Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church at the present time, as stated in the fourth section of our discipline; and your committee feel assured that such an examination will result in the full conviction that the authority of Bishops has always been the same, from the time of Dr. Coke's ordination, by Mr. Wesley, to the present day.

To the above unquestionable evidence may be added the testimony of one of the oldest and most faithful, pious, and useful fellow-labourers of Mr. Asbury, the late venerable Wm. Waters. In a letter to a friend he states the following fact. "All must know that names do not alter the nature of things. We have from the beginning had one among us who has *superintended* the *whole* work. At first this person was solely appointed by Mr. Wesley; and called the General Assistant at a time when there was none but European preachers on the continent. But why was the name of General Assistant ever changed? All that will open their eyes may know why. The Methodists in England and in America formerly did not call themselves a particular church; but a religious society in connexion with different churches, but mostly with the Episcopal Church. After the revolutionary war the Episcopal Clergy became very scarce, and in far the greatest number of our societies, we had no way of receiving the ordinances of baptism and

the Lord's Supper. It was this that led many of our preachers to take upon them the administration of the ordinances. Mr. Rankin, who was our first General Assistant, after staying the time in this country he came for (four years,) returned. This was at a time when we had no intercourse with England; and Mr. Asbury, the only old preacher that determined, in those perilous times, to give up his parents, country, and connexions, was finally and unanimously chosen (by the preachers assembled in conference) our General Assistant. He continued such until the year 1784 when Dr. Coke came over; and not only the name of General Assistant was changed to that of Superintendent, but we formed ourselves into a separate church. This change was *proposed* to us by Mr. Wesley after we had craved his advice on the subject; but could not take effect till adopted by us; which was done in a deliberate formal manner, at a conference called for the purpose, in which there was not a dissenting voice. Every one of any discernment, must see from Mr. Wesley's circular letter on the occasion, as well as from every part of church government, that we openly and avowedly declared ourselves Episcopalians; though the Doctor and Mr. Asbury were called *Superintendents*. After a few years (1788) the name Superintendent was changed to that of Bishop." "When the title 'Bishop' (says Dr. Emory of N. Y.) was introduced into the minutes it was sanctioned by the conference as meaning precisely the same thing with *Superintendent*." (Defence of our Fathers, P. 49. in a note.) "But from *first to last* (continues the Rev. W. Waters) the business of General Assistant, Superintendent, or Bishop has been the same; only since we have become a distinct church, he has, with the assistance of two or three elders, ordained our ministers. His business is to preside in our conferences and in case of an equal division on a question, he has the casting vote; but in no instance whatever has he a negative. He has also the stationing of the travelling preachers; under certain limitations, which power as it is given him by the General Conference, so can it be lessened or taken from him any time the conference sees fit. But while he superintends the whole work, he cannot interfere with the

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particular charge of any of the preachers in their stations." (Waters' Life. P. 103. 104. 105.) Your Committee presume that these authorities without adducing any more, (which they could easily do) are quite sufficient to wipe from the names of the Superintendents of the M. E. Church, the filth of envious insinuations, and to shield their characters from the attacks of incensed calumny; as also to show that their authority is the same now as it was in the days of the venerable founder of Methodism. As to the advantage of our Episcopal Government and its apostolic purity, Your Committee feel a peculiar pleasure in introducing the following sentiments of eminent Wesleyan Methodists. The oldest surviving cotemporary and bosom friend of Mr. Wesley, the Rev. Henry Moore, observes, "Mr. Wesley gave to those *episcopoi* (bishops) whom he *ordained*, the modest, but highly expressive title of *Superintendents*, and desired that no other might be used. That the Lord has greatly blessed this boon to the American Societies, is evident by their great and continued increase. The numbers in the various societies when Dr. Coke went over, were about fifteen thousand. Six years after they had increased to nearly seventy thousand; and in the year 1820, they were two hundred thousand. That our brethern in that office are true *scriptural bishops*, I have *no doubt at all*; nor do I wish that the *title* should be relinquished as it is grown into use, and is known by every person in the U. S. to designate men distinguished only by their simplicity and abundant labours." (Moore's Life of Wesley, Vol. II. P. 198. 203.) "At the British Conference held in Liverpool, in 1820 (says the amiable Dr. Emory) we heard the profoundly learned Dr. Adam Clarke, and that most able and eloquent divine, the Rev. Richd. Watson, express themselves publicly before the conference in relation to our Episcopacy to the same effect, as a true, actual, scriptural Episcopacy, of the most genuine and apostolic character." (Defence of our Fathers, p. 48.) From the foregoing referenes and authenticated facts (which might very easily be multiplied), your Committee presume that every unprejudiced mind must be satisfied that the Methodist Church in Canada is not directly or

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indirectly under a "foreign ecclesiastical controul;" that the "itinerant preachers" by no means "engross all the power of either making or administering the laws;" that our *Episcopacy* originated with *Mr. Wesley*; that our *Episcopacy* is the same now as when he created it; that it has been eminently useful in promoting the interests of the Church and Religion in America; that it is considered pure and scriptural by the most learned, pious, and experienced Methodist Ministers in England, and that we now, as a Church, stand on the very same foundation as we stood upon in the days of the great and excellent *Mr. Wesley*.

While your Committee would cherish feelings of the warmest affection towards those who may widely differ from us in many ecclesiastical regulations—while they would at all times encourage the most friendly reciprocal relations towards every Christian denomination—while they would do good to, and pray for, their enemies—they cannot but deprecate, in the strongest terms, that aspiring spirit of faction which frequently makes its appeals to the worst feelings of our nature, and seeks the favor of the most despicable characters; which makes public interest a pretext to gratify private hatred, and to promote selfish purposes; which is alike prodigal of the good names of departed saints, the characters of living christians, and the peace of religious communities; which, under a pretended attachment to early institutions, aims at nothing but its own aggrandizement; which lives in animosity, feeds upon strife, and fattens upon contention.

On the other hand Your Committee congratulate every friend to christianity upon the peace and harmony that generally reign throughout our church. So far from the "primitive simplicity of Methodism being destroyed" we rejoice to recognize all its distinguishing features and almighty energy, in the union which cements our ministry and membership; in the steady advances our Zion is making in this Province; in the revivals of religion that are progressing in many places; in the Sunday Schools that are springing up in almost every neighbourhood; in our Missionary Societies which are yearly increasing the treasures of the Lord; in the marvellous and blessed victories

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of Divine Grace over tribes upon tribes of the most miserable of the human race; and in that spirit of intelligence which is manifestly marching forward by means of ministerial labours, circulating libraries and judicious periodicals.

In conclusion, Your Committee would say in the language of the *Methodist Magazine* for 1827 (p. 402) "now we challenge our opponents to show that any one cardinal doctrine has been altered by any of these means; that any one of the primary principles of Methodism, as taught by John Wesley has been sacrificed; that the grand object of all these labours has been lost sight of by the introduction of any one of these places, means, regulations, or whatever else you may please to call them. So far from this, they have been held with a tenacity which some have construed into bigotry, and defended and propagated with a zeal which some others (and not a few) have branded with enthusiasm. And were we not fearful of being charged with too great a partiality for our own peculiar views, modes of thinking, and plans of operation, we would say that such is the strength, the beauty and compactness of this spiritual building, that we may bid defiance to its enemies to undermine its foundations, or in any effectual way to mar its beauty, because we think its "builder and maker is God," and that it is "built upon the sure foundation of the Prophets and Apostles, JESUS CHRIST *himself* being the chief corner stone." Let then the friends of the cause move forward in the strength of JEHOVAH—Let them fearlessly adopt every means sanctioned by the precepts of Christ for the advancement of his kingdom—Let them not be frowned down by the haughty contemners of church order; nor laughed out of countenance by those who have placed themselves "in the seat of the scornful;" nor yet frightened from their posts by the threats of those who have exchanged the weapons with which they formerly so successfully fought against "the world, the flesh and the devil," for those with which they now fight "for the mastery" in a cause less defensible."

All which is respectfully submitted.

THOMAS WHITEHEAD,

Chairman.

