

The Church.

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Poetry.

ENGLISH HEDGES.

Not without deep memorial truth are ye,
Partitions of sweet thorn! which intersect
Our hilly counties, bidding us reflect
Full of our rural ancestry,
The ambitious thives of Saxon days;
Who with their modest manure well content,
Of corn and mead and fragrant bean-blend
And woolly pasture, lived in simple ways
And patriarchal virtues, ere the land
Of Norman rule was felt; or feudal right,
Baneful exotic! settled like a blight
On the free customs of the pastoral land.

Behold—a length of hundred leagues displayed—
That web of old historic tapestry
With its green patterns, bordered to the eye,
Is with domestic matters insidiously
Here hath a nameless site in some past age
In quiet uneven stripe or curious nook,
Clipped by the wanderings of a snaky brook,
Carved for a younger son an heritage.

There set apart, an island in a bower,
With right of road among the oakwoods round,
Are some few fields within a ring-fence bound,
Perennial a draught of national dower.

So may we dream, while to our fancy come
Kind incidents and sweet biographies,
Scenes fanciful, as flowing from the ties
And blissful bonds which consecrate our home
To be an early heaven. From shore to shore
That ample, well-stored rural doth ensure
Within its delicate meshes many a rare
And rustic legend, which may yield good store
Of touching thought unto the passer-by:
Domestic changes, families decayed,
And love or hate, in testaments displayed
By dying men, still in the hedgerows stay.

When Rome her British Eagles did recall,
Time saw the ages weave that web of green
Asiduously upon the rural scene,
Ere yet the lowly-raftered Saxon hall
Was watched from Norman fortalice. The fields
Escutechons were, borne by those equine thrives,
While herald spring went wandering up the lanes,
Dismantling with green and white the yemen's shields,
And as the Church grew there, beneath her eyes,
The breadth of hedgerows grew with her, not loth
To be, as freedom is, an undergrowth
Of that true mother of all liberties.

The Saxon hedgerows stand, though twice assailed;
Once greedily barons in their pride of blood,
Till peasant joys and pastoral duties fell;
Now upstart wealth absorbs both far and nigh
The small ancestral farms: who worth the day
When fortunes overgrown shall eat away
The heart of our old English economy!

The hedges still survive, shelters for flowers,
An habitation for the singing birds,
Cool banks of shadow grateful to the heads,
A charm unknown in any land but ours.

Ye modest relics of a simple past,
Ye fail and most enduring monument,
Ye still are here, when Norman Keop's rent,
And great cities, divided into a waste
Of cheerful tillage; ye unimpaired rise,
To nature and to human wants allied,
Therefore outliving works of lordly pride:
How rightly dear for what ye symbolize!
Long may the Saxon homely plow stand
A welcome trophy in the woman's eye,
The wisdom of our ancient polity
Written in leafy crypt of the land!

Rev. W. Fisher.

THE WRITINGS OF THE FATHERS.

Among the refreshing fruits of that Catholic spirit which is now starting into fresh vigour in the Church, we may reckon the increasing number of works on subjects more or less connected with ecclesiastical history and patristic literature. To the lives, characters, and writings of the chief saints or churchmen, we now recur in the spirit of the article, *I believe the communion of saints*. They are no longer treated as matters of mere curiosity, still less as literary monstrosities, as occasions of light and sarcastic remarks; but they are accounted worthy to exercise the highest powers, to employ deep learning, and to engage the warmest interest. At the end of the last century it would have demanded some moral courage to avow an exalted opinion of the moral and intellectual powers of some ancient saint, or some laborious schoolman; and to expend the labour of years in editing or translating the commentaries of St. Augustine or St. Chrysostom, or in reverently evolving the principles of the Church, and noting their effects on character, from the writings and conduct of a single father, however eminent, would have been accounted childish trifling. We looked down from too proud an eminence, forsooth, on those simple-minded men, to entangle ourselves in their vain speculations, or to interest ourselves in their individual struggles with heresy and with vice, with the world, the flesh, and the devil. Collectively they might be looked on as a vast phenomenon presented to the mind's eye; a wondrous vision of men toiling for their kind; suffering for mere abstractions; reasoning with the weakness and ignorance of babes, yet enduring with the fortitude of men; misunderstanding and perverting whatever came to them from the apostles themselves, and yet by some marvellous and mysterious power transmitting scattered rays of saving and divine truth: these we beheld tingling the spiritual horizon with a gorgeous but unreal splendour; till the glorious Reformation, like some optical refraction, reversed the distorted object into a bright body of pure, effulgent light, which went forth illuminating the nations, and rising over the whole world like another Sun of Righteousness.

Such, at the very best, was the view generally taken by the generation now passing away of the fathers of the Church; and, of course, their works were proportionally neglected. But now, how different! Besides the labours of the Oxford editors and translators, who are bringing large portions of the works of the fathers before the public, and the smaller and less elaborate biographical notices, such as those of Mr. Evans, which are acquainting us in a general way with the lives and characters of the primitive saints, we have the Bishop of Lincoln applying his great learning and industry in illustrating the works of three ecclesiastical writers, in as many separate volumes; and finding in Justin Martyr, in Tertullian, and in Clement of Alexandria, a fair exercise of his intellectual acumen and literary acquirements. We have Mr. Poole's Life and Times of St. Cyprian, in which the same desire is apparent to deduce theological and ecclesiastical principles from the career and writings of an individual, though the biographical form of his volume gives it a less scholastic appearance than the more systematic arrangement under certain heads of divinity; and we have, last for the present, (but not, we are sure, to be long the last,) Mr. Beaven's admirable Account of the Life and Writings of St. Irenaeus, in which the author avowedly takes the works of Bishop Kay as his pattern; and it is no undeserved, and no light thing of both to say, that it is not the least praise of the Bishop's writings, that they have stimulated Mr. Beaven to the present undertaking.

In his Preface, Mr. Beaven has given some sound and judicious remarks on the right use of the writings of the fathers; and has cursorily noticed and answered some of the popular objections to the appeal which is properly made to their evidence or authority.

We shall just notice two of the uses of the writings of the fathers which Mr. Beaven has enumerated, because we would draw from their authority, which must be so far admitted by all reasonable men, an inference or two which does not meet with so ready acceptance.

"We use them," says Mr. Beaven, "as evidence of the state of the Church, in their own and preceding ages, as regards discipline." And again—"We use the fathers as evidence of the doctrine which was taught by the Church, in their own and preceding ages." (Preface, pages vii. and viii.) Now it seems utterly impossible, except on such principles as would confound our use of all testimony whatever, to deny authority to the fathers as evidence on matters of fact; and it is clear that whether such and such a law of discipline, (as for instance, that Bishops were wont to excommunicate offenders and to restore penitents), was observed at any time and in any place, is as clearly a matter of fact, as whether Brutus was the murderer of Cæsar, or St. Cyprian was condemned by Maximus, and in pursuance of the sentence lost his head. And so again of the reception and inculcation of doctrine; it is a matter of fact that the doctrine of the divinity of our blessed Lord was taught by Athanasius, and promulgated by the Nicene Council; just as much as that any thing else occurred which is accepted as a part of history, secular or ecclesiastical, as that Trajan reduced Jerusalem, or that Irenaeus succeeded Pothinus in the see of Lyons. Now it would be monstrous to deny the integrity or the sufficiency of the fathers as witnesses of facts; it would be unreasonable and unworthy of common sense to withhold our credit because the facts are of a particular order; and most disingenuous to withhold it because they have doctrinal bearings, and a certain polemical value, which is the real reason why the evidence of the fathers is overlooked or unjustly weighed when it refers to facts of doctrine or discipline. Let us then be ingenuous and reasonable, and admit that what they thus record is true; as, for instance, that there were bishops in the primitive church to whose office excommunication and reconciliation pertained; and that the doctrine of the proper divinity of our blessed Lord was taught by St. Athanasius, and authoritatively promulgated by the Nicene fathers.

But it is impossible for the religious mind to rest here. Having got thus far, we must go on to ask,—Which then have the most authority, the government and the doctrine which were thus taught and maintained, at such times, and by such men, and when the Church was such as it was then, and in so many places simultaneously, without any other possible account of such perfect unanimity, but that all received the same deposit from the same divine source—Which have the most authority, this government and doctrine, or the fancies of an individual some two hundred years ago, and the "platform" of a society originating in impatience of control some fifty years past? The individual and the voluntary will surely not bear the comparison in point of authority; and when the comparison has been made with each individual fancy and voluntary rule and order in its turn, (with every heresy and schism that is, that ever existed,) every one must separately succumb, and the primitive doctrine and discipline must stand without a reasonable competitor.

Neither will the pious mind rest here. Paramount in authority will account the doctrine and discipline which are attested, as a matter of fact, to have existed at such and such times, and under such circumstances; but they will also, it may be argued, be so paramount, not merely from circumstance, but *essentially*—that is, from their origin. The same holy fathers who relate the fact that such things were done and taught, record another fact: that they who so did and taught declared that they did and taught thus on the credit of the assertion, that each one of their predecessors had received the law and the doctrine from his predecessor, until at last the teacher and lawgiver was an inspired apostle, or it may be, the Lord Jesus himself. Now Poly carp was not ignorant of the fact, and that he received a doctrine from St. John. Irenaeus was not ignorant of the fact, and would be a sufficient witness of it to Irenaeus, that he received a doctrine from Poly carp, under the very notion that it was the teaching of St. John; and so with regard to others in every like case; and when such traditions were soon recorded, as they were for instance in the works of Poly carp and Irenaeus, allowing all that we can reasonably allow for human frailty, we have still a very high assurance indeed of their veracity, and of their consequent authority. Poly carp and Irenaeus must have been very weak, (of which we will not admit a thought,) to have made such a tradition from the apostle St. John. And what they delivered honestly and well, was to their successors, and to us, as far as record is extant, but little removed from revelation. Thus setting the authority of the fathers at the lowest, we neglect their teaching at our peril; and it is marvellous how large a body of teaching is contained in their authentic works, to which, in a greater or less degree, the remarks here made apply.

Indeed, the number and size of their writings is one of the things capiously objected to the use of the fathers. Mr. Beaven has encountered an objection from their *scantiness*; we must say a few words on the objection, equally unreasonable from their *multitude*. It is objected, then, that no man can read and digest them all, and that, therefore, they are practically useless; since it is to the consent of the fathers, and not to the individual opinions of any of them, that we would appeal in matters of faith.

But no one thinks it necessary to read all the works of all the fathers, nor yet a part of the works of each of the fathers, to arrive at their view of the truth; any more than the most Protestant thinks it necessary, before he teaches the peculiar doctrines of his sect, to have read all the works of all the authors whom his school may chance to swear by, or all the critical and lexicographical compilations, all the travels, histories, and such like, on which his interpretations and mystical applications of Scripture may be based. The Anglo-Catholic has the authoritative deduction from the whole body of theology, primitive, and of all times besides, on the most important subjects, in the liturgies and articles of his Church; and when he is placed in the position of a teacher, he has only to obey a positive law, to keep himself within the limits of a Catholic interpretation of Scripture, when he is led to the treatment of other subjects. Let a young clergyman give the obedience of faith, which is their due from him, to the authoritative formularies of the Church; and the defence which they may well claim to the homilies, and other works of our greatest divines of scarce inferior weight; let him, besides this, apply himself, just so much as he may without a flagging interest, to the writings of the fathers, and in his preparations for the pulpit consult the commentaries of St. Jerome or Theodoret; or, it may be, adapt to his purpose, (which will often be little more than to translate) the sermons of St. Augustine or St. Chrysostom, and he will long within the seven years which is judged sufficient to acquire any trade or *mystery*, have acquired a sufficient body of sound theology from these sources, to be a practical refutation of the objection which we are labouring to overthrow. And besides the actual positive knowledge, he will have acquired a tact, an habitual sense and feeling, by which he will be enabled

to say, almost with absolute certainty, whether such and such an interpretation is in harmony with a Catholic spirit. He may then fairly trust himself to his own prayerful study and painful exposition of the sacred text, not doubting that he will keep the right way, while he brings out of his own treasury things new and old. Nor need he hesitate to judge of the opinions of others, by the standard of which he has acquired the use. A connoisseur refers a painting to the school of Raffael or of Coreggio, without having seen every work of every pupil of those great masters; and with almost absolute certainty, as no one who understands the subject will question, even declares that a particular piece is by the hand of the master himself. He distinguishes not only between the Roman, the Venetian, the Spanish, and the Flemish schools, but between the works of particular persons in each school; and with equal certainty he separates the productions of one age from those of the ages preceding and following it. He does not confuse Leonardo da Vinci with Titian, nor Michael Angelo with Le Brun, nor Gerard Dow with Salvator Rosa. Now it is not more, it is even less, than this, that we require, when we say that one who takes on himself to teach, according to the Church, should at least be able to distinguish by their very aspect, between the figments of modern schools, and the recent pronouncements of a defined theology by the primitive fathers; between the heresies revived from the ashes of Manes, or Montanus, or Arius, or Sabellius, and the Catholic faith once delivered to the saints, and by them ever reverently handed, and most carefully transmitted.

To the student thus applying his mind to the subject, even the heresies of ancient times, ugly and venomous though they be, bear yet a precious jewel in their head. They witness with an indirect, but not uncertain, evidence of the truth of the Church. They are, as well as the assertions of ecclesiastical writers, evidence of the fact, that such and such was the doctrine or the discipline of the Church at the time they arose. If the Gnostic had to assert against the Church that there are two antagonistic first principles, the manner of his assertion does, by implication, attest that the Church held the unity of God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. If Arius has to conceal or disguise his false doctrine against Christ's proper divinity, in all the ambiguous windings of a thousand explanations and subterfuges, we collect that the Church so held that all-important doctrine as to hunt the opposite error out of all its recesses, to oppose the light of truth to every dark subterfuge, and the uncastigated, though necessary subtleties of a heaven-directed wisdom, to the cunning craftiness of a satanical sophistry. This is one of the methods by which the divine alchemy produces good out of evil; one of the ways in which dissent has ever witnessed to Catholic truth; one of the things which teach us the application of the apostle's declaration to the Corinthians, "There must be heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest." (1 Cor. xi. 19.)

And we may observe also, that however some portion of the heresies exposed by St. Irenaeus may have their counterpart in the errors within and without the Church, in the present day they have, as a whole, become matters of mere history, and often of obscure research. They have no existence, no name, no avowed disciples in the present day, nor have had for ages past: indeed, the work of St. Irenaeus seems to have given them a mortal blow, as Mr. Beaven tells us, and to have destroyed them, at least, in their manifestations. Transmigrations they may have, but they are not the same. St. Irenaeus taught his *Erasma*, or Thought, had—but as repeatedly they have fallen beneath the strong arm of the Church and of the Lord of the Church. Meanwhile the Church herself continues, and ever hath continued, visibly the same;—the same in personality, the same in character. Still, however, heresy and schism will prevail in some form or other; this is even the promise to the Church, strange though the promise sound; for, as St. Paul saith, (in a passage which we quoted above, to vindicate the view which we would take of heresy, and which we now quote again, to mark that we have still for ourselves retained the same point of observation, and would still present it to our readers in the light in which it is placed by the Sacred Scriptures), "there must be heresies among you, that they who are approved may be made manifest." That one sect will give way to another, as one wave of the sea is swept away by its successor; but still the sea will rage, and the waves thereof toss themselves: but though they rage horribly, the Lord is mightier than they, and the Church is fixed on a rock for ever. The parish church, or the noble minister, looks down upon so many different convents, frequented by so many different sects, with many errors, as many leaders, and as many names; that those will be swept away, as it has always been, and others will arise. As of old there were Manichees, and Gnostics, and Apollinarians, and Priscillianists, and Novatianists, and Donatists, and divers others, which are now known only by the reports of elder ages, while the Church has outlived them all, individually and collectively; so now there are Independents, and Swedenborgians, and Quakers, and Ranters, and Wesleyans, and Southcottians, and Baptists, and Inghamites, and it may be a hundred others; but who shall say, where one and all of them shall be in a few generations, or what new and strange sects may occupy their places? Only we know that in the midst of heresies the Church shall stand, for it is founded on a rock for ever, and it hath the promise that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

And here we leave Mr. Beaven, well assured that he will not here close his patristic labours, if God give him life and strength; and not less convinced that whatever flows from his pen, will be worthy of the attention of the ecclesiastical student.

THE OLD PATHS.

A LETTER TO A COUNTRY CONGREGATION FROM A MISSIONARY OF THE CHURCH.

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH, MATILDA.

Brookville, April 6, 1843.

Dearly Beloved Brethren,
At the request of a highly esteemed, and by you and me, for his work's sake and his own sake,—your minister,—I address you on a subject which, on other grounds, could make no claim to special notice. I allude to a letter handed to me immediately after a funeral at Matilda, and written by a teacher of one of the subdivisions of one of those unhappy schisms which are weakening the influences of true religion, wasting the energies of Protestantism, bringing contempt on our holy faith, furnishing plausible arguments to the grand sophistry of Poperly,—countenancing the sophistries of infidelity, and thus (albeit unintentionally, but still most surely and effectually) doing the will of the adversary.

The letter was directed to "Rev. E. Denroche, Matilda," and runs thus:
"Rev. and Dear Sir,
"The regular successors of the apostles are holding a protracted meeting in this vicinity, where souls are being converted to God. There is a prayer meeting at the house of George Brouse, Esq., this day, at two o'clock P. M., to which meeting you are by this note cordially

invited to attend to, for the purpose of getting your soul converted to God, if you had experienced that change. I have no doubt you would make an able minister of the New Testament, and become one of the regular successors in fact.

"I remain, Rev. and Dear Sir,
"Yours affectionately,
"DANIEL BERNÉY, W. M. M."

Had I not most reasonable grounds to fear that the "note" of this total stranger was neither sincere in its nature nor kind in its intention, I should have replied to it. But being convinced, from its internal evidence and from incidental circumstances, that the spirit which dictated it was not prepared to be benefited in the smallest degree by such a reply as I must have returned, I determined to take no notice of the matter;—in short, to "answer him not."

Whether the inferences leading to this determination were fairly and fully deducible, you, brethren, may soon judge.

Those of you who were present on that solemn occasion are aware, that a number of the teachers and other maintainers of Methodism entered our Church, and with eye and ear witnessed me earnestly and deliberately exhorting you to eschew the sin of schism, as hateful to God, contrary to Christ's will, forbidden by His Spirit, injurious to the truth, and detrimental to charity. "These persons must have heard me affectionately and solemnly warning you to the effect that you should not suffer the seed of Satan—of him whose motto is, "Divide and conquer,"—to be sown among you. They must have heard it enjoined upon you, as faithful members of Christ, answerable to God for the souls of your children, to give no countenance whatever, by example or otherwise, to the practice of this or any other "abominable thing which God hateth" —nor to give heed to seducing spirits"—and unscriptural doctrines—not to listen to "the voice of strangers," nor to "heap to yourselves teachers having itching ears;" but to "abide faithful" to your vows, faithful to your Saviour, as living members of His own Body the Church—as sound in doctrine, pure in practice, "renewed in the spirit of your minds from day to day," and "growing up into Him in all things which are the Head." They must have heard you seasonably though not ably cautioned never to mistake a ready tongue (that flippantly talking about high and holy things so much in repute among Dissenters) for evidence of real godliness—for "the witness of the Spirit," or the test of truth—to preach Christ in your conduct and conversation—to shew forth the gospel not only with your lips, but also in your lives—to pray together and to read God's word together—as opportunity offered, to receive at the hands of your God-commissioned minister the divinely-appointed memorials of the Lord's love—to bring your infant children into the covenant of grace, through a baptism and ministry, both of divine appointment—to recollect that the DISPENSATION of sacraments, the holy mysteries of the faith, was not committed to all Christian men, women and children, but to persons in the first instance specially chosen of Christ, and afterwards to those by them specially set apart to "minister in holy things," who, again appointing others, were thus to preserve valid ordinances through a valid ministry—to be assured that, how plausible soever the pretensions of any assuming to themselves the title of ministers of the Church of Christ, yet if they could neither prove their commission from Him, either by *succession* (as belonging to the apostolic ministry), or by *miracle* (as belonging to some newer sort of ministry authority of God), they act without warrant and on mere presumption—they "run without valid sacraments. These same persons heard me say, while you carefully avoided those who oppose themselves to the Church and to the doctrines thereof,—the doctrines maintained and defended by the Reformers and that holy army of martyrs who laid down their lives for truth's sake—to entertain feelings of charity towards the errorists themselves, and to manifest those feelings in acts of personal kindness towards them whenever it lay in your power so to do. They heard me beseeching you to "be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord"—steadfast in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in the breaking of the bread and in the prayers"—steadfast in being "holy in all manner of conversation"—steadfast in "walking worthy of the high vocation wherewith ye were called," and while steadfast in "marking them that caused divisions and in avoiding them," to "do good unto all men."

Now, it seems to me *morally impossible* that any one of common understanding, after listening to these, or such like remarks, could *REALLY BELIEVE IN HIS HEART* that the person who uttered them would himself, in the next moment, be induced to commit the crime against which he had most particularly and strenuously raised his voice, and to plunge headlong into the hottest flames of fanaticism—not for the purpose of "plucking" some "as brands from the burning"—not for the purpose of "converting" poor deluded souls from "the error of their way"—not for the purpose of testifying a real heartfelt love for the souls of the Methodists by exposing to them the true nature, working and tendency of the delusive system which leads them captive—the thorough monstrousness of modern Methodism, to wit, its absolute entire opposition to that Methodism commenced by Church of England Clergymen a hundred years ago, (by men whose blood it was to have lived and to die within her pale)—its undisguised or ill-disguised hostility to that Church, its carnal character, its multiplied divisions, its Popery, its lying miracles, miraculous conversions, visions and dreams; its system of a confession, compulsory on pain of excommunication; its proselytism, promoted by means the end could never sanctify; its Jesuitism, its deceptions, traps and clapnets, class, camp, prayer, protracted and revival meetings; its midnight orgies, with all the accompanying evil and "appearance of evil"; its consequent neglect of household duties, and even of the golly obedience due to the notions of parents or husbands; its pharisaic, spiritual pride and censoriousness; its exclusively arrogating to itself the character of being the perfection of purity, the quintessence of identification, yea, as on earth, pre-eminently the holy of holies; its dependence (for extension) upon nervous and animal excitement; its Scimitar and Arias tendencies; its palpable persecution of those who forsake the error; its bigotry, strife, envyings, slanders, divisions, subdivisions; in a word, "the shame of its nakedness;" no, not for any one of these purposes, nor yet for the purpose of "trying them who say they are apostles and are not,"—no—but "for the purpose of being converted"—converted into a Methodist teacher! As surely as Mr. Daniel Bernéy, W. M. M., and those privy to the getting up of the "note," are satisfied of their own existence, and convinced that they have heads on their shoulders, so surely must they have been *MORALLY CERTAIN* that there was not the shadow of a probability that he to whom it was addressed could be swayed thereby for any such wicked purpose—to run after a person who either did not think it prudent, or not worth his while, to "hide a thief" and "speak face to face" the matter of his note. He must have known that a few minutes would have left me at leisure to hear any such remarks as he might have thought proper to make.

I could not conceive that Mr. Bernéy's note was in reality an honest and kind one. Its want of sincerity and good feeling—its invitation given when he must have well known that it could not be accepted, and

its random censoriousness, based on some supposed gift of "discerning of spirits," compelled me to consider its author's conduct as a *gratuitous bravado intended to annoy*; while at the same time I ascribed the proceeding to Methodism in its natural working, rather than to the man himself—considering it a sin of the system rather than of the individual. Impressed with these convictions, I left the "note" unreplicated; and now only notice it thus much for your satisfaction and at the request of your minister. If Mr. Bernéy and his friends regard his proceeding as a clever thing and a good joke, let us leave them in undisturbed enjoyment of a pleasure that savours much more of the malevolent spirit of modern Methodism than of Christian conversation. We need not envy them their feelings, nor doubt whether persons of sound judgment and sound religion will be at any loss to estimate it just as it deserves. If, again, Mr. Bernéy and his brother Wesleyan Methodist Ministers consider his conduct as a *sort of retaliation*, (deeming his "affectionate" thrust a fair hit at one in whose mission two teachers of Methodism were not long since convinced of error and converted from it), I can heartily forgive him and them, and pray that they, and others, may yet be convinced of the culpability of their present position, and of the folly of those who *BLINDLY DETERMINE NOT TO BE CONVINCED*, but to be to the last the advocates of party,—the partisans of systematic division,—the unrelenting opposers of a Church, Protestant against all error, Catholic in doctrine, and Apostolic in descent. But they may rest assured that, with the blessing of Him who said to His Apostles, "Lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world," the humblest contributor to the furtherance of conversion—not Methodist conversion—but conversion to "Christ and the Church"—will take willingly, yea, joyfully, if they *must* come, the sneers of those who retain the name of Wesleyan while their every principle almost, varies from the principles of the two *Wesleys*—while they set aside their founder's most awful warnings, and laugh at his sermon expressly levelled AGAINST SCHISM—that sin, which is a tower of strength to the Papacy, and a sheet anchor to Infidelity. As long as the eyes of men are opened to this simple and undeniable fact—that at a time when the Church, even on the testimony of her enemies, was *far less* efficient than she has been for the last quarter of a century, Wesleyan Methodism proclaimed itself the most consistent, most devoted, and most attached portion of that Church (the united Church of England and Ireland); but that now, Methodism ranges itself with her bitterest enemies—With papists, heretics, and infidels—denies that her members, clergy or laity, are converted,—sets up an opposition altar and a hostile ministry—the members of which, controlled by a system of Protestant Jesuitism, are compelled, by the supposed necessity of building up their would-be-Church, to "compass sea and land" to proselyte to their connexion: As long as men's eyes are being opened to the fact that these teachers do not scruple to malign the ministers of the Church, and thereby undermine their proper influence,—do not scruple to build themselves up on the ruin they themselves have made, that they may, after "creeping into houses," lend aside silly, unstable, and unsuspecting souls: as long as men are opening their eyes to the iniquity of a system, which deprives its ministers, blunts their better feelings, and drives them into the continual commission of pious frauds: as long as men are rubbing the scales from their eyes—are being convinced of the melancholy truth that modern atomism is essentially defective in honour, humility, charity, and such like indispensable ingredients of true religion; and are consequently seeking out "THE OLD

"into the way of peace,"—so long will the faithful children of the Church help them on their way to Zion, and rejoice in seeing them become fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of faith.

I shall not comment at any length on Mr. Bernéy's judgment declaratory of my presumed unconverted state—a judgment evincing more haste than clarity, considering that he has never been acquainted with me. "It is a little thing to be judged of him or of man's judgment." Would that they who fancy themselves possessed of the discerning of spirits, were converted to an obedience of Christ's command: "Judge not and ye shall not be judged," a text seemingly in little repute with the admirers of Methodism as it is. If Methodist conversion was *Christian conversion*, there would be more of the spirit of that text evinced in the converted; more of the "hoped all things;" nor would the world witness so frequently the awful falls of many boasted "converts" to the soul-deluding system.

I am not without some doubts that, were the Wesleyans now living, Mr. Bernéy and other Wesleyan Methodist Ministers would dispute their conversion; for both JOHN and CHARLES were strenuously opposed to schism, and to the impolicy of "setting up" preachers of Methodism as ministers of God's sanctuary. In a sermon preached by John, at Cork, in Ireland, a couple of years only before his death, he used these words: "In 1744, all the Methodist preachers had their first conference; but none of them dreamed that the being called to preach gave them any right to administer the sacraments. And when the question was proposed, 'In what light are we to consider ourselves?' it was answered, 'As extraordinary messengers, raised up to provoke the ordinary ones to jealousy!' In order here, one of our first rules was given to each preacher. 'You are to do that part of the work which we appoint.' But what work was this? Did we ever appoint you to administer sacraments, to exercise the priestly office? Such a design never entered into our minds; it was the furthest from our thoughts. And if any preacher had taken such a step, we should have looked upon it as a palpable breach of this rule and consequently as a *recantation of our consecration*; for, suppose (what I utterly deny) that the receiving you as a preacher at the same time gave an authority to administer the sacraments, yet it gave you no other authority than to do it or any thing else where I appoint. But where did I appoint you to do this? No where at all. Therefore by this very rule you are excluded from doing it; and doing it you renounce the first principle of Methodism. Now as long as the Methodists keep to this plan they CANNOT separate from THE CHURCH."

I believe one reason why God is pleased to continue my life so long, is to confirm them in their present purpose *not to separate from the Church*. I wish all of you, who are vulgarly called Methodists, would seriously consider what has been said; and particularly you whom God has commissioned to call sinners to repentance; it does by no means follow from hence that you are commissioned to baptize or administer the Lord's Supper. Ye never dreamed of this till ten or twenty years after ye began to preach. Ye did not then, like Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, SEEK THE PRIESTHOOD ALSO. O! contain yourselves within your own bounds; be content with preaching the gospel. * * * * * Ye yourselves were first called in the Church of England; and though ye have, and will have a thousand temptations to leave it, and set up for yourselves, regard them not; BE CHURCH-OF-ENGLAND-MEN STILL; do not cast away the peculiar glory which God has put upon you, and frustrate the design of Providence, the very end for which God raised you up." * * * * *

The above extracts are taken from a sermon preached by the Rev. John Wesley, at Cork, in Ireland, about two years before his death; and are to be found in his Works, vol. vii., London, 1781. Mr. Wesley, writing afterwards to the Editor of the *Dublin Chronicle*, somewhat over a year before his death, thus strongly and solemnly recorded his impressions. "Unless

the almost dying advice of John Wesley to his Irish followers. Mr. Bernéy is an Irishman, I have heard. Let us now see what were the wishes of Charles Wesley, John's brother and associate. The following is extracted from a letter of his to an American clergyman: "I never lost my dread of a separation; or ceased to guard our societies against it. I frequently thought of them, I am your servant, as long as you remain members of the Church of England; but no longer. *Should you ever forsake her, you renounce me*. Some of our lay preachers very early discovered an inclination to separate, which induced my brother to publish reasons against a separation. As often as it appeared, we beat down the schismatical spirit. If any one did leave THE CHURCH, at the same time he left our Society. For fifty years we kept the sheep in THE FOLD, and having fulfilled the number of our days only waited to depart in peace."

The poor Wesleyans, were they now on earth, would undoubtedly, in the opinion of Mr. Bernéy, need to attend some of his prayer meetings "for the purpose of getting their souls converted to God!"

Mr. Bernéy unequivocally asserts that the teachers of modern Methodism are "the regular successors of the apostles." "The regular successors of the apostles are holding," says his note, "a protracted meeting in this vicinity." The Methodist teachers were holding the meeting alluded to, and none others; therefore they are the persons described as "the regular successors of the apostles. Therefore, also," where the writer of the note says, that, if I was converted, "he doubts not I would become one of the regular successors in fact," he of course means—a Methodist teacher in fact. After this, he surely need not wonder if we glance at the pretensions of the Wesleyan Methodist ministers to be considered "the regular successors of the apostles" "in fact." So, our facts.

Regular successors of the apostles are they who have received regular unequivocal authority in the Church of God, the one body of Christ, to ordain certain men to minister in holy things; and also, to convey the same special trust and commission of ordaining to persons consecrated by them for that very purpose. The power of ordaining presbyters and deacons was not conveyed to all ministers, but was entrusted to select persons. Thus, for instance, St. Paul did not charge the Elders, or presbyters, of Ephesus, to "lay hands suddenly on no man," not to receive an accusation against an elder but before a competent number of witnesses; but he charged their superior, by whatever title he may be called—he charged Timothy, the Bishop of Ephesus, and Titus, Bishop of Crete, to ordain elders and deacons. The power of ordaining was limited to that superior order of ministers to which Timothy and Titus belonged: an order not known in the Church by the title of Bishop, but known, during the lives of those whom we strictly call the apostles, by the title of *Apostle*—a title applied by St. Paul himself to Timothy, Titus, Silvanus, and others. Now, the fact is, that the same power of calling to the ministry, a power conveyed by the first apostles exclusively to Titus, Timothy, and certain others (whether we call these apostles, successors of the apostles, angels of the churches, or bishops)—did they in the same manner convey exclusively to certain others. Presbyters, though members of an apostolic ministry, were, according to the testimony of all antiquity, without any commission to ordain. They were not the "successors of the apostles," though eligible to be raised to that burdensome dignity; nor were they invested with the peculiar powers of the apostolate. This system is properly *Director*, for it was developed by the apostles. It has been followed in the Church without any interruption for full fifteen centuries; is continued down to the present time; and will continue always, even unto the end of the world. The advocates of Presbyterianism—that is, of the conceit that presbyters may have an official right to ordain without the intervention of a bishop—have been repeatedly challenged, and all without effect, to produce if they can any well authenticated instance of such ordination in the Church, during the first fifteen centuries, being regarded as a valid and true ordination. It is a fact also that there is no historic evidence of any presbyter broaching so wild an idea prior to THE HERETIC AERUS, a SEMI-ARIAN, who, aspiring after being made a bishop, was disappointed in his scheme of ambition, and was cast out of the Church for his heretical views, both as to doctrine and discipline. It is also a fact, notorious and indubitable, that no bishop, or, to use Mr. Bernéy's words, no "regular successor of the apostles" has ever yet conveyed to a Methodist, whether presbyter, or preacher, or teacher, the sacred commission and power to ordain; and consequently that the Methodist regular succession is not an "apostolic succession," and Methodist teachers, and Wesleyan Methodist ministers, are not "the regular successors of the apostles in fact," however they may be so in fancy. Thus we see that the emphatic assertion of Mr. Bernéy is contradicted by facts that furnish evidence, incontrovertible and conclusive, against them "who say they are apostles and are not" in fact. There is another fact which is in itself a plain proof that one of the grand apostles of Methodism, Dr. Thomas Coke, a man who would have persuaded himself and others, that John Wesley had consecrated him to the episcopate, was given to a BELIEVER (after all his efforts to persuade himself into the delusion) IN THE VALIDITY OF THE ORDERS HE HIMSELF CONFERRED. He did not believe that he had that "regular succession" which would empower him to ordain as a bishop; and though really a presbyter, he could not swallow the presbyterian notion. He therefore applied to Bishop White, of the United States, to ordain his ministers, to give himself a valid consecration, and to receive the Methodists into the Church. John Wesley had previously said, "How dare you be called a

I have more reason for it than ever I yet saw. I WILL NOT leave the Church of England as by law established WHILE THE BREATH OF GOD IS IN OUR NOSEB." (See Jackson's "Church and the Methodists," page 26. Jackson was himself a Methodist.) The following expressions are to be found, scattered through the writings of John Wesley:—"When we forsake the Church, God will forsake us."—"They that are law twenty Schismatics than separate from the Church."—"You cannot be too watchful against evil speaking, or too zealous for the poor Church of England."—"I live and die a member of the Church of England, and none who regard my judgment or advice will ever separate from it."—"I DARE NOT separate from the Church; I believe it would be sin so to do."—"How strange is it that men will not only adopt the name of a poor fellow creature, whereby to designate their religious creed, but will select or retain the name of one, whose words and writings are so thoroughly opposed to the sin of separation—to the sinful schism of those who call themselves 'WESLEYANS!' while they are, 'in fact,' ANTI-WESLEYANS!"

See "Sermons on the Ministry, Worship, and Doctrine of the Protestant Episcopal Church," by G. T. Chapman, printed at Burlington, U. S. 1832. The seventh sermon contains these remarks of the Rev. Charles Wesley, with others; and also a statement of Dr. Coke's application to Bishop White, of the Protestant Episcopal Church, for the purposes of a union of the Methodists with the Church—a valid consecration of himself to the Episcopate, or Apostolate,—and a valid ordination of those, on whom he had presumptuously laid his unauthorized, unconsecrated, hands. The Rev. Dr. Chapman does not seem to have recollected, when addressing to Coke's consciousness of his not being a true bishop, but merely a Methodist "superintendent," that he afterwards applied in writing, to Lord Liverpool, to have him consecrated as a Bishop for India; saying that, if the Prince Regent and the government would consent, he "would return most fully and faithfully into the bosom of the Established Church, and submit to all such restrictions in the fulfilment of his office as the government and the bench of Bishops at home shall think necessary." Such is the source of Methodist ordinations, rather superintendentes.

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When the church-door was first opened, And the pious men first were gathered,

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(From The Englishman's Magazine.)

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