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THE
THE ROUND PREACHER;
OR
REMINISCENCES
OF
METHODIST CIRCUIT LIFE,
BY AN
EX-WESLEYAN.

SECOND EDITION

LONDON:
SIMPKIN, MARSHALL AND CO.

STATIONERS' HALL COURT.
BRADFORD: E. A. W. TAYLOR

MDCCCXLVI

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[ENTERED AT STATIONERS' HALL.]

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PREFACE

TO THE SECOND EDITION.

It is with mingled feelings that the Second Edition of the "Round Preacher" is issued. The extensive sale which the work has commanded is ample evidence that the subject is one of no slight importance. Notwithstanding the many criticisms which have appeared upon it, (favourable and otherwise) it has not been deemed advisable to make any material alterations, and for the best of all reasons, that facts, however clothed, are still facts, and cannot be overthrown. It is not by this intended to imply that the writer is unwilling to profit by the suggestions and hints which have been thrown out, but as another work is in preparation which may cast additional light upon the present, he will reserve the main portion of his apology until then. Still it may be advisable to notice what he conceives to be the mistakes of those who are not conversant with the workings of modern Methodism. The peculiar tendencies and workings of the system have heretofore been calmly stated, and deliberately

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discussed. But this mode of procedure has not borne the fruit that might have been expected. Nor was it likely—There is so much of the fanatical, and absurd in the system, that its real workings can only be seen when these are fully depicted. The masses of the people who are ensnared by Methodism are not aware of the improprieties they perpetrate, but when they see these portrayed they may, it is to be hoped, learn how shocking it is to offer such confused worship to the King of kings and Lord of lords. It was the strong conviction of this fact that induced the author of the "Round Preacher" to set down in their own language the scenes here described. The task he felt was an ungrateful one, and one which does as much violence to his own feelings as to those of others. But yet he believes that all thoughtful minds will not impute to him, that apparent recklessness on holy subjects, which he, no less than they, regrets. The blame rests with those that are parties in the scenes described, and who sanction them by their presence, and support, not with him who merely gives a faithful delineation of what he has seen, and heard.

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II. It has been further urged as an objection, that the making of the whole body responsible for the acts of individual fanatics, is unfair and ungenerous. Now as a general rule he candidly admits the truth of this

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objection. But it by no means applies for an instant to the subject of which this book treats. He has not taken individual instances, and sweepingly condemned the whole body because of them. In one sense there is individuality in the hook, in another none. He contends that he has done justice to the better informed, whilst he has nothing exaggerated, “or set aught down in malice.” The scenes here described are of daily occurrence, they are not partial.* Such sad confusion, irreligion, and semi-blaspemy obtain nowhere so much, as in Methodist Prayer-Meetings, Love-feasts, &c. And all these statements made on these points he defies any one to deny. And if such be really the case, it is not only needful, but an absolute duty, not only for the sake of those who are misled, but also for others who may be ensnared, to speak in no stammering language of such awful desecration. He has prepared cases illustrative of this. One only he subjoins, taken from a Provincial paper, written since this book was issued, and which shows most indisputably the truthful reality of the author’s statements.—

* Of course the characters will be taken by all judicious readers as merely the type of a class; the scenes compromise the whole body.

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MELANCHOLY EXHIBITION OF SUPERSTITION IN BIRMINGHAM

“For some weeks past, a person styling himself ‘the Rev. J. Caughey, formerly a minister of the episcopal church in America,’ has been holding a series of those religious meetings termed ‘revivals,’ in some of the dissenting chapels in Birmingham, and at which some very extravagant scenes are stated to have occurred. His audiences have been very numerous, and composed principally of females. On Sunday last, it was given out that Mr. Caughey would preach at a chapel in Islington, in that town. On this occasion the doors of the chapel were ‘litterally beseiged,’ and hundreds were unable to obtain admission. The rev. gentleman’s discourse consisted chiefly of violent appeals to the passions of his auditory, in the extreme of declamation, dealing out the most fierce denunciations against those who would not

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“seek their own salvation;” and concluded by inviting their attendance in the afternoon, when an effect would be given to the morning’s discourse. In the afternoon there was a similar rush to the chapel. Mr. Caughey, with several assistants, stood within the altar, and invited all who wished to be saved to come up to him. A party (chiefly females) obeyed the invitation; and then commenced a most indescribable scene; some were crying, some sobbing, some praying, and all appeared to be in a state of great excitement

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and alarm; which was also shared by the greater part of the congregation, some of whom were on their knees, others were standing erect, with their arms extended, and offering up prayers, while some were gesticulating violently, and muttering incoherent expressions. This extraordinary scene ended by one or two of the females being carried into the vestry in an apparently fainting condition. One happy couple (a man and his wife) were so touched, that they grasped the rails of the altar, and so remained for about three-quarters of an hour. One of the assistants knelt down in front of the female, and very urgently begged her to believe. Before a very long period had elapsed he stood up and cried out, “Glory! glory! she believes;” upon this announcement being made, the whole assembly within the altar took up the cry, and the phrases “glory! glory! hallelujah! Amen,” resounded through the chapel. The work having advanced thus far, Mr. Caughey descended from the pulpit to the altar, and intimated to the audience that the woman would be saved that afternoon—that this fact had been revealed to him by the voice of God; he further declared that her husband had been saved the previous week, and was then praying that his wife might be saved too. At this moment the assistant again cried out, that “she was saved;” whereupon the singing began afresh, and

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the poor creature, whose imagination had been dreadfully worked upon, was borne, in an apparently fainting state, from the altar in the arms of her husband. In this state she was taken to the vestry by the assistants, and the door having been closed and order somewhat restored, this concluded the service. In the evening Mr. Caughey delivered another discourse, when a similar scene was enacted. Now let it be borne in mind that this said Mr. Caughey meets with a ready reception, and is regarded as a

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most admirable revivalist. It is not therefore, unfair to hold the body responsible for these and similar acts, which they not only do not repress, but which they actually countenance.* The author has now only to express his thanks to those critics who have meeted out their praise to the work; and to request others who have been startled at its character, to hold their minds in abeyance, until they have perused the work just alluded to, as being in course of preparation.

* There is no need to take hold even of this particular, as the whole body are undoubtedly compromised by the character of their daily and weekly meetings.

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THE PREACHING COUPLE.

CHAPTER I.

“Attempt no more to abridge me of my liberty which I claim by the laws of God and man — leave me to be governed by God and my own conscience, then will I govern you with gentle sway even as Christ the Church” — *Wesley's Letter to his Wife*.

In the year 18—it pleased the Wesleyan Conference to appoint me to a small circuit in the West of England. No sooner did I hear of the appointment, than I wrote to the “Chairman of my District,” requesting him most earnestly to get it changed for a small circuit in the Liverpool District. I told him that I had received a very pressing invitation from that Circuit, which I had accepted. And this for two reasons; first, because such was the wish of my parents, and secondly, I was induced to

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do so, by a consideration for my own health, to restore which, nothing proved so effectual as my native air. In answer to my letter, “The Chairman of my District” assured me that he would use his utmost exertions to secure for me the desired appointment.

My father being a person of considerable property, and very liberal to the “cause,” possessed some influence in the Connexion. A few weeks before the Conference, he entertained at his house, two members of the “Stationing Committee,” who promised to use their interest to get me appointed to the town in question. The solicitations of father and son—the invitation of the Circuit—as well as the united influence of “the Chairman of the District,” and private friends, proved ineffectual. Neither prayers nor intreaties could move the inexorable Committee, or rather, I ought to say, certain

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leading members of that Committee; for I doubt not there were many belonging to it who sympathized with me, and would gladly have lent me their support, if they had had the courage

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to oppose the mightier of their brethren. But such a course of procedure would have endangered their own interests—a result by no means desirable.

When my father heard of my appointment, he exclaimed, "What! am I still a marked sheep? have they not yet paid off the grudge? Does the Leeds organ still sound harshly in their ears?*" It is surely hard," continued he, "that my sin should be visited upon my son—if indeed it were a sin to assert and maintain my rights against the aggressions of tyranny and oppression!"

My father had ventured to oppose the "Superintendent" of his Circuit in the too lordly exercise of his authority. From that time he was regarded as disaffected to the whole system of Wesleyan government; whilst in truth he was one of its firmest supporters. He had never joined the rampant faction; but had, on all occasions, opposed the spirit of innovation. And yet, he was accounted an enemy to the constitution,

* Appendix A.

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and was treated as a rebel. The ruling powers were displeased with him. In order to make him feel this most acutely, I was sent to a circuit three hundred miles from home.

Upon enquiry, I found that the Superintendent of my new circuit was an avaricious, vain, and envious man; his wife miserly and over-bearing. Her presumption knew no bounds; she had, in fact, gone so far as to take upon herself the exercise of the ministerial functions.

Before I went to my new appointment, I paid a visit to my parents. Scarcely, however, had three days elapsed ere I received a letter from Mr. Timothy Sleekface, my new Superintendent, ordering me to repair immediately to my circuit. In reply I informed him that my father was dangerously ill, and that I was engaged in settling some important family matters; but would hasten to my appointment as soon as I possibly could.

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Judge, therefore, of my surprise when, by return of post, I received the following letter from Mrs. Timothy Sleekface:

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“My dear Brother in Christ Jesus,

“My dear partner and fellow-labourer in the Gospel, received your letter of the 20th inst., and is much surprised at the very independent way of acting you seem to have taken upon you. We think it would have been more comely in a young man on “probation,”* if you had humbly asked your Superintendent’s permission to stay a few days longer with your parents. We are very sorry to hear of the illness of your father; but we cannot see how your presence can heal his sickness. My dear partner wishes me to say that you must leave the ‘dead to bury their dead,’ and allow others to transact worldly business. The Church calls you to your duty; souls are perishing daily around us: oh! hasten to save them, as an angel of mercy, ere they perish forever. Be assured that your God will take care of your father: leave him in his hands, and be quick to help us. Both myself and my husband have been labouring night and day, till our strength

* Appendix B.

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is well nigh gone. It is settled for you to lodge with us, and I and my dear partner will be to you as a father and mother. May the Lord give you journeying mercies, and bring you up among us ‘in the fulness of the blessings of the gospel of peace.’ My partner and daughters salute you; and, not forgetting to give you and your parents an interest in our prayers,

I remain

Your faithful fellow-labourer in the gospel,

Dorcas Sleekface.”

The perusal of this apostolical epistle awakened deep reflection within my breast. I could not but think that, had Mrs. Sleekface been following the example of her namesake, in providing clothes for the poor, her time would have been more profitably employed than in officiously writing to me. Knowing that it was a serious thing to incur the displeasure of my Superintendent, I set off for my circuit on the

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following day. I was full three days in travelling; I did not, however, make a convenience

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of the society on my way, by sponging on their hospitality. The first night, I slept at the house of a relative, and the second at a neat inn; but unfortunately was put into damp sheets, which gave me a severe cold. In the morning I called for the landlady, and said to her "You ought to see that your servants do not put people into damp sheets, for nothing is so dangerous."

"You don't mean to say, Sir," said the landlady, interrupting me, "that either you or anybody else, was ever put into damp sheets, or damp anything else at my house."

"I mean to say," I replied, "that my sheets were not properly aired, last night, and that I am now shivering with cold through it."

"Why, Sir, I put them down to the fire myself; didn't I, now, Boots?" said she, appealing to a stupid looking youth.

"Yes, ma'am, I seed you; and I know they mun be dry, for they quite smoked, and I took 'em away afeerd they should be gettin burnt."

"Had they been to the fire long when you took them away?" I asked.

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"No, they warn't at the fire two minutes; for I was afeerd on 'em gettin burned," replied he.

"They were evidently damp," I rejoined, "for it was steam that the Boots saw coming from them, and not smoke, as he imagines." The landlady however stoutly maintained that the sheets were all right, and, in a short time, she mustered all the servants to testify to the truth of her assertion. The cook said that she put them to the fire again after John had taken them away, and had turned them three times. The chambermaid said she had also turned them four times. The bar-maid asserted that as she passed through the kitchen she saw them scorching, and so removed them further off the fire. I made no answer, but ordered up my breakfast.

The boots remained in the room. "Pray Sir," says he, "if you woant think me too forrard in axin you a question, mayn't you be a methodist preacher a returnin from Conference?" I replied that I was a methodist preacher, but that I had not been to Conference. "I thought," said John, "as if you was

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ner a preacher, my eyes deceived me. Shake hands, brother, for I am one a' the Local brothers,* and preaches the gospel to poor perishing sinners. I get planned out once a three weeks, and the missus sometimes grumbles at me goin. She threatened to turn me away a while ago, becoz she caught me reading Mr. Wesley's notes in the shoe-cleanin place; and she called me a thief becoz as I robbed her on her time; but the Lord knows as I only reads a bit when I've nothin else to do, to pick up a bit a fodder for my Master's sheep, and I donner know any pasture so good as Mr. Wesley's. You think the same, I suppose, donner you, brother?"

"Well, for my part," I replied, "I think the Bible affords better pasture."

"Sartainly, very right, brother," answered John, "p'raps I ought to ha' sed as Mr. Wesley's is the best roads to the pasture: they are short and straight, and no gates to open, or stiles to get over. His is a sort a' railroad, and cuts

* Appendix C.

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through the hills—makes all a plain—stops but a bit at a place, and takes you through a chapter in no time."

The bell now rung for him. "That's for me," said John," but I've got just one particular thing to ax you—and it's this: Some a' a'ar society says as I ought to leave my place, for it's not consistent, they think, for a preacher to be a sarrant at a inn. Now I don't quite see as they do: I consider inns as necessary, and as openin a wide field for usefulness to a devoted man. Iv'e saved I known't how many men from drunkenness, as comes to this house; and the missus says, as if I interfere in her custom, I mun leave.—But I'm now a gettin too divartin. Now I want to ax you this, brother: if there hadna been a inn for our Saviour's parents to ha' gone to, they must ha' been lyin out all night, and ha' got cold. Now, as it was, they got a lodging; but, alas! a very sorry un. Now supposin there had been at that inn, a Boots like me, Joseph and Mary wud niver ha' lodged in the stable: they should ha' had a

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good comfortable bed, and I'd ha' taken good care as their shoes had been well polished." The bell now rung a louder peal, and John very reluctantly left me.

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I had not time to finish my breakfast before the coach started. I shivered with cold all the day, and was glad when we reached the place of my destination. A few friends were waiting the arrival of the coach to receive me: amongst them there was a ragged and greasy currier, who introduced himself to me as a leader,* shook me by the hand, and invoked the blessing of heaven on my labours. He left me for a moment, and returned bringing with him a coal-porter, whom he introduced as a local-preacher. "God bless you," said the porter, "the Lord has answered a'ar prayers, and brought you among us in safety, I hope you will hev many seals to your ministry." Whilst my hand was in the gripe of the coal-porter, I received a friendly tap on the shoulder, and a wretched looking old man, addressing me, said, "Well

* Appendix D.

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brother Sparks, how he's you! Is your soul a prosperin? I'm glad you be come to gee us a lift in this part of the vineyard, for things is in a very bad state; the devil has been a sawin the seeds a dividin among us, but you'll hear plenty on it from the super and his wife. I belong to the Levites, that sect as looked arter the temple, for I look arter the chapel cleanin out, and such like. I'm come to carry your luggage."

Escorted by three tradesmen, the currier, and the coal-porter, the last of whom, kindly offered me his arm, of which good service however I did not avail myself, I proceeded to Mr. Sleekface's. The Levite took me round to the back-door, in compliance with Mrs. Sleekface's orders, that I might divest myself of my travelling dress before I made my appearance in the parlour. The door of the kitchen was open, which gave me a glimpse of a young person cleaning the hearth, who, on my entering, ran away from her work. I asked the Levite why the servant maid fled away in such haste.

"Oh brother," said he, "it was'nt the sarvant-

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gal, but it was Miss Sleekface, who does all the work, her and her sister together, except by chance my wife now and then gives 'em a helpin hand, for some broken victuals. The preachers afore 'em nearly alla's has kept a sarvant, and I think they is soft if they don't, for they get pay for one from quarter day. I think, if I ar'nt wrong informed, that they get eight pound a year allowed for one. I was very sorry they

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was'nt for keeping one, as I thought as I p'raps might ha' got a'ar Mary the place. So you see as she gets eight pound a year by makin her daughters drudge the work. They are very industrious and pious gals, and as I hear will hev a big fortin, for the super is worth thousands a thousands. I was tel'd t'other day as he has got iver so many thousands in the funds, whether it's the chapel fund, or contingent fund, I don't know. I'm told as he is worth about a thousand a year. If I may be a givin you a bit of advice, brother," continued he, "I should recommend you to mak love to one on em, I should say the oldest, for she is the properest

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age for marrying, is very good-looking, and is pious, and has lots a' what your preachers consider the one thing needful. I know she would like to be married, for she has often told my wife so when they have been washin together."

The Levite was interrupted by the appearance of Miss Sleekface. She apologized for the absence of her father and mother, who, she told me, were gone into the Circuit to a Missionary Meeting. We conversed together for some time. I soon discovered that she was a girl of quick perception, acute discrimination, and tolerably well informed: but faulty in her pronunciation, and sadly deficient in her knowledge of syntax. An air of melancholy shaded her countenance, and the marks of sorrow were on her face; her form was slender and symmetrical, and her features regular and expressive: her bright dark eyes gleamed from under fine arched eyebrows, and the elevation of her forehead betokened intellect. Her person derived no grace from her dress, for it was vulgar and old fashioned, and her manners were stiff and

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awkward; but with a better manner and a more cultivated mind, she would be, thought I, the loveliest of women. Miss Esther appeared still more grief-worn. Her countenance was like dark marble, gloomy and cold. Her form was short and thick set, and her features were very irregular. She spoke more incorrectly than her sister, and was more awkward in her carriage. I saw many a tale of woe written on their countenances, and I longed to know the cause of their wretchedness.

I retired to bed before Mr. and Mrs. Sleekface returned home from their missionary excursion. I had a very restless night, for what with the clattering and scratching of the rats and mice amongst the lumber in my bed-room, the hard and uneven texture

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of my bed, the shivering cold all over me, and my sad feelings, I had scarcely any sleep all the night. When I rose in the morning I was weary, stiff, and cold. I met Mr. and Mrs. Sleekface at breakfast. It would be a difficult task, accurately to describe the personal appearance of this

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unique couple. Mr. Sleekface seemed about sixty years of age, was above the middle size, rather round shouldered, with his head inclining forward. His forehead was contracted, and retreating, and presented a rough and wrinkled surface. The crown of his head was perfectly bald, and shone with a burnished lustre, and at the back of it there hung a few long grey hairs, which over-thatched the collar of his coat. There was an unmistakeable cunning in his small pale grey eye, and no little grotesqueness in his huge nose, which overhung his mouth, as if the dreadful guardian of its entrance. He was dressed in a rusty suit of black, which had evidently undergone several operations of scouring and mending. The coat was of the most antique make, patched in several places, and the collar very greasy; the waistcoat which was not much better, sat loosely upon him, and was only half buttoned, leaving room for the insertion of his right hand. He wore small clothes, and sooty worsted hose, which but ill suited his thin and mis-shapen legs.

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Mrs. Sleekface was about the same height, but much more robust in her make, and appeared about ten years younger. Her features were large and irregular. Her forehead was well developed, but jagged and uneven, with projecting eye bones, under which there dwelt large and piercing eyes. If her nose had not been so flat, her lips so thick, and her chin so large, and so encumbered with fat, she would have possessed a good countenance. She dressed in a peculiar manner. She wore a plain net cap, with a very narrow single border, and a broad black ribbon crossed her head. Her dress was made close to the neck, with sleeves that fitted tight to her arms, so as not to impede their motion when preaching. A white neckerchief enclosing a stiffener propped up her chin which gave her a heavenly aspect.

As soon as I entered the parlour, this worthy couple shook me by the hand, congratulating me on my safe arrival, inquired very *feelingly* after my parents, and invoked the blessing of heaven on my labours. Mr. Sleekface bade me

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sit down by the fire, and make myself at home, reminding me in the most humane manner that we were all brethren, and assuring me with the greatest tenderness that he would ever act as a father to me. We drew up to the fire, which was rapidly decaying, having nearly done its appointed work, that of boiling the water.

“Now, Tabitha, dear,” said he, “make haste with breakfast: you are all behind with your work—here, it is half-past seven o'clock, and the breakfast is not ready. Why didn't you get up when I called you at half-past five? I shouted out, ‘Tabitha, arise,’ and you must have heard me. Miss Tabitha assured him that she did not remember his having called her; for being tired, and going to bed late the previous evening, she had slept very soundly.

“You ought not to sleep as do others,” replied the father, ‘but shake off dull sloth and take time by the forelock.’ Your grandmother used to say that an hour in the morning was worth more than two in the after-part of the day. And I remember your aunts (poor things!

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their spirits now rest with God) used to be made to get up every morning, both winter and summer, at four o'clock, and they milked half-a dozen cows a-piece before breakfast. I wonder how you fine ladies would like such sort of work now-a-days. Yes! and they were fine bouncing women, I assure you; very different to your poor sickly things of the present day. Call your sister Esther, to toast the bread, and I'll blow the fire, whilst your mother puts out the tea-things; and brother Sparks will please to read us a chapter out of the Bible for our edification.”

Preparations for breakfast were now rapidly made. A small round table was drawn near the fire, on which was placed a tea-tray, and on it was depicted the Apostles partaking of the Last Supper. It was furnished with a curious variety of crockery, and an old bruised metal tea-pot. Mrs. Sleekface measured out three small tea-spoons-full of black tea, and in doing this, she dropped a few particles upon the tray, every one of which she carefully picked up and deposited

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with the rest in the pot; she then placed it on the hob for five minutes, that the strength of the tea might be exhausted, and having filled the pot with water, she

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poured out two cups, and then filled up the pot again, saying that by so doing, “the tea was good to the last.”

The dry toast was heaped up on a blue plate, and placed beside a yellow pot containing some salt butter.

“Now, brother Sparks,” said Mrs. Sleekface, “draw up to the table; we offer you in the name of the Lord, the blessings which his kind providence has bestowed upon us. Now, dear,” addressing her husband, “will you ask a blessing?” Mr. Sleekface hereupon lifted up his hands towards heaven—closed his eyes—and offered up the following prayer:

“O Lord God Almighty, the maker and the preserver of the universe, who hast given bread for the use of man, and caused the land to flow with milk and butter, and tea to grow out of the earth to make his heart glad: bless, we humbly beseech thee, these the creatures of thy good-

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ness, to the nourishing of our bodies, the strengthening of our minds, and the edification of our souls. We thank thee for a good night's rest, a good appetite, and good food; may we eat and drink to thy glory, and at last, by thy infinite mercy attain to everlasting life, to eat manna in thy kingdom. Grant these and every other unmentioned favour, through our only advocate, thy Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ.”

“Brother Sparks,” said Mrs. Sleekface, “do you take sugar in your tea? I replied in the affirmative. “Esther, dear,” said she, “will you fetch out the sugar?” Miss Esther promptly obeyed her mother's command, and brought out some black looking sugar in a brown pot.

“I am sorry, said Mrs. Sleekface, “that we have not any refined sugar in the house to offer you. We never drink sugar in our tea, as we consider it a luxury that we are called upon to deny ourselves for the sake of Christ My daughters have not taken any for many years, and for two great reasons. In the first place, they thought as sugar was the produce

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of slave-labour, the consumer gave his sanction to slavery—assisted to uphold a system of murder and oppression, which ere long will bring down the vengeance of heaven on this country. If you had heard the heartrending account of the sufferings of

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the poor negroes, as related by those blessed returned missionaries, brother Hatton and Garden, at our last missionary meeting, you would say—God forbid that I should lend my sanction to such a system of cruelty! In the second place, they looked upon it as a needless luxury; and thought that the money which it cost might be better spent if applied to the support of the missions in foreign parts. And, dear brother Sparks, who can calculate the number of precious souls that have been saved from everlasting perdition, by the sacrifice of one small article of luxury; and that, too, of unnatural taste—bilious—which possesses no nutriment, and which spoils the taste of the tea? They have also been enabled, by the Spirit of God helping them, to deny themselves of butter.

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What they save by this pious sacrifice, they appropriate to the support of the gospel at home, namely in paying their ticket and class- money. And it is remarkable how they have advanced in piety since they have practised these acts of self-denial. Isn't it so, dears?" said she, addressing her daughters.

"Yes, mother," they both replied.

I did not agree with Mrs. Sleekface as to the qualities of sugar, but affirmed that it was highly nutritious that it agreed with most people and that children were from their infancy fond of it; which proved it to be of not so unnatural a taste as she imagined. I asked her if it were less wrong to eat brown sugar, the produce of slave labour, than refined. I showed her that, to be consistent, she ought not to take tea, for it was as great a luxury as sugar: in short, that she ought to live upon the very coarsest and scantiest of provision, and be clothed in the roughest and cheapest of raiment. I had decidedly the better of Mrs. Sleekface in the argument, which she did not at all like; whilst

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the daughters seemed evidently pleased. Mr. Sleekface furnished his "dear partner" with a few passages of scripture in support of her statements, but took no active part in the discussion.

"I fear, Mr. Sparks," said Mrs. Sleekface, "that we cannot offer you any fresh butter, for we always use the Dutch, and we think it much better than any English butter."

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“Why it must be better,” replied Mr. Sleekface, “or it wouldn’t be imported from a far country.” I suggested that probably it was imported, not because it was *better* than homemade, but because it was *cheaper*.

“We read,” said Mr. Sleekface, “that ‘salt is good,’ therefore salt-butter must be better than fresh.”

“Well, Sir, then,” I said, “it will equally follow, that bacon is better than fresh meat; yet very few persons prefer bacon to good fresh beef.”

Mr. Sleekface said no more, but began to hum over the hymn beginning “Refiner’s fire, go through my heart,”

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which I involuntarily changed into “refining fire, go through my sugar,” for it gave a disagreeable taste to my tea, and the sky-blue milk did not at all improve it. After breakfast, Mr. Sleekface read over a chapter in the gospels, and attempted to elucidate some of its difficult passages; after which his excellent wife offered up a long prayer, and earnestly besought the Holy Spirit, that we might “never give way to pampering the flesh,” nor “waste money in useless luxuries.”

When the family devotions were ended, Mr. Sleekface asked me to follow him into his study. No sooner had we sat down than Mrs. S. entered, and proceeded to draw a chair to the table, as if intending to join us in our conference, when Mr. Sleekface said “My dear, I am desirous to have some private conversation with our brother on matters connected with his soul’s health, and his ministry in the circuit.”

Mrs. S., with an air of offended dignity, replied, “I thought that you had retired for that purpose, and that it was my duty to

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follow you, to give our brother some instruction as to his ‘behaviour in the house of God.’”

“Well, my dear,” replied Mr. Sleekface, “you may do so at some other time. I must have a few moments with our brother alone.”

“Do you intend,” said Mrs. Sleekface, in a vehement manner, “to order me out of the room? Is my presence disagreeable to you? Have you matters to discuss, of which I must have no knowledge—in which I have no concern? Are we not husband and wife; and are not all *mine*, *thine*; and ought not all *thine* to be *mine*? How can you

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think of hiding any thing from me? Waiving the undoubted right I have to share your counsels, as your wife,—I claim the privilege on much higher ground, that of the apostleship. For am I not an apostle? Am I not a fellow-labourer with you in the gospel? It is on this ground—that I claim an undisputed right to share in all your deliberations concerning the circuit.”

After a hot contention, in which Mrs. Sleekface accused her “dear partner” of incapacity

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to manage the affairs of a circuit, and which accusation she substantiated, by quoting instances wherein he had greatly blundered, to the deep injury to the “cause,” she concluded her angry speech, by reminding him of the help she had so often given him in the composition of his sermons. Mr. Sleekface in spite of his “entire sanctification,” was betrayed into such a violent fit of anger as to make it expedient for Mrs. Sleekface to kneel down and offer up a prayer, that the Lord might appease his unrighteous anger, and bestow upon him a meek and quiet spirit. When she rose from her knees, she looked at him, to see if he appeared more calm, and whether he were disposed to suffer her to remain.

Mr. Sleekface spoke not, but pointed to the door. She, however, did not seem inclined to take the silent hint; and did not leave the room till he peremptorily commanded her to do so. Mr. Sleekface now locked the door against all further intrusion, and taking hold of my hand, thus addressed me:

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“My dear brother, let us, now that we are alone, turn our attention to the great duties of our high vocation. You are come among us, I trust, with a heart burning with love to God—with love to his cause, and to the whole world. I heard a good account of you at Conference. It was with some difficulty that you were obtained for this circuit: several preachers pleaded hard for your going to the place of your nativity, but the Lord thought it not good to send you there, for he put it into the heart of that great and good man, Mr. Bunting, to send you here, and as soon as he had given his opinion, every voice of opposition ceased, and you were put down for us. You will find here a wide field for usefulness. I am sorry to say that the enemy has been sowing the tares of discord among us. It has been a great trial to me I assure you. The

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Quarter-Days, and the Leaders'-Meetings have been scenes of uproar and violence. Both myself and my dear partner have been shamefully reviled. I thank God that I have been enabled to do my duty

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in expelling the offenders, and peace is again restored in our borders. The leaders of the faction have drawn away many unstable souls. They hold their religious meetings (or rather I ought to say their irreligious meetings) in a club-room. They will do no good, for there is a woe pronounced against them who make divisions in the Church of God. We must get back as many of the poor deluded creatures as we can, particularly the more respectable part, as our funds, I fear, will be low."

After making a few more remarks, Mr. Sleekface gave me a plan of the circuit. I conned it over, and found that I was planned in the circuit-town once in three weeks, and appointed twice as often as Mr. Sleekface to the smallest and most distant places. This discovery did not surprise me, as I had found it a common practice for the superintendents to appoint themselves to the best places. "You perceive, brother Sparks," said Mr. Sleekface, "that you are appointed to night at Drisfield, and brother Snuffler will expect you to dinner. It is about

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five miles off, and the walk will do you good; and the sooner you get ready for your departure the better, and may the Lord give you great success."

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CHAPTER II.

Q. Should women be permitted to preach among us?

A. We are of opinion, that in *general* they ought not.—*Minutes of Conference.*

I was soon on my way to Drisfield, and overtook an old man, with whom I entered into conversation.

"Well friend," I said, "whither are you travelling?"

"I am travelling to the land of Canaan," he replied.

"I hope you will arrive there safely," I rejoined.

"I mean to do so," said he, "for it would be an unpleasant thing to perish in the wilderness like our forefathers."

"Have some of your forefathers perished in the wilderness?" I enquired.

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“None to my knowledge,” he answered, “but I was alluding, in what I said, to them of the children of Israel, who perished in the wilderness. As you asked me where I was travelling to, it’s my turn to ask you where you might be going, but it strikes me as I know, for if I havener seen you before, I’ve seen the umbrella, for I judge as it’s brother Sleekface’s, for there is niver such another in the country, I warrant.”

“Well,” I replied, “you are quite right, for the umbrella does belong to that gentleman.”

“Don’t call him, I beg,” rejoined he, “or any other minister, a gentleman: carnal men are gentlemen, and not ministers of Christ, Mr. Wesley, in particular, warns his *helpers* against being gentlemen.”

“I think, Sir,” I said, “that Mr. Wesley charged them not to *ape* the gentleman.”

“It is wonderful,” answered he, “how one thing leads to another. I should judge, from you having got Mr. Sleekface’s umbrella, as you are the new preacher, and is going to preach at Drisfield.”

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I answered that he was quite correct in his conjecture.

“Well, I am right glad,” said he, “as I have met with you: I am the ‘Leader and Society Steward’ at Bigby, a village a little beyond Drisfield. You will preach, I expect, to-morrow night at our place, and I shall be glad to see you at my house for dinner. My name is Samuel Tucker, and if you’ll just say what you’d like to have for dinner, you shall have it, if possible. I have lots of fowls, and ducks, and pigeons, and bacon, and nice hams, and a bit of nice roasting beef in the house: now you shall have what you like of ‘em, and so just say, and adone with it.”

I knew very well that I should be obliged to fix upon something; so I said that I was very fond of fowl.

“You shall have some,” said Mr. Tucker, “of the tenderest my yard can produce. I hope brother and sister Sleekface is well.”

“Very well,” I replied.

“The last time,” said Mr. Tucker, “as I see

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Mr. Sleekface was at Bigby, and under very peculiar circumstances. He went with me to see a man in our village who has sold himself to the devil, and it is most horrible to see him at times. You will hardly credit the wonderful things as he does. Now and then he is as strong as a lion: he can carry a pair of five-barred gates as easy as Samson did the gates of Gaza. He can run faster than any common horse can gallop. I ride a decent nag myself, but I can come no where with him. Sometimes he'll lie for hours on the floor, as if he was dead: in fact he is very near it, for his spirit leaves his body, and goes forth on errands for the devil. He can tell what people is doing a long way off. He went to a house one day, and told them as a relation of theirs had drowned himself: in a day or two after, news came as a uncle of theirs had, and did it about half an hour before this man told em on it. He durs'nt go to a place of worship, except he is sent by his master to prevent good being done. If a man is under conviction for sin, he'll be alias at him; he'll go

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and sit aside of him at chapel, and do all he can to hinder him from getting good. There is a many men as he leads into all sort of sin; for they are afraid of offending him, if they don't do as he wishes em; and then he would torment em. Prayer has been made for him continually, but of no avail: the more he is prayed for, the worse he is. At times he'll talk sensible: he says as he is very miserable, but that he can't help himself. Mr. Sleekface doesn't know what to make on it. Mrs. Sleekface says as there is no doubt but that he is possessed with the devil, like those spoken of in the gospels, and that the evil spirit may be cast out by much prayer and fasting. I must turn off here," continued he, "for it's my nearest way home; and you must go straight forward, and you'll find yourself in a short time at Drisfield." He bade me good-morning; and left me.

I walked along, ruminating over the case of the man supposed to be possessed of an evil spirit, and soon found myself at Drisfield. A little girl pointed out to me where John Snuffler

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lived. The old man was sitting at the door of his cottage, smoking a short black pipe. "Is your name John Snuffler?" I enquired.

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“That is my name,” he answered; “I suppose you be t’ new preacher: come in and mak yoursen at home; and tak a seat, while I call in Molly; she is just agone into t’ back-yard to feed t’ pig.”

Molly came running in, rubbing her hands down her apron, to wipe off some of the wet and dirt, and exclaimed “God bless you, dear brother, how glad we be to see you: we’ en bin talking on you all t’ week, and now you be corned, you mun mak yoursen at home. How is that blessed man a’ God, brother Sleekface and his blessed wife? Surely we may say a’ her, ‘blessed art thou among women:’ we thinken her a better hand at prachin’ than her husband, and there is alias good done under her sarmons. The last time she war here, we had seven souls savingly converted.”

“Come, Molly,” said John, “let us be heving somut to eat.”

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“Let peatience her its perfect work,” said Molly.

“You may say so,” said John, “to them as isner hungry.”

“Well, if you bin so hungry,” replied Molly, “just be a gettin out the round table and the trenchers, and run over to Betty Sneaker’s for a haporth o’ treacle, while I tak up the dumplings.”

John very soon returned with the treacle, and we sat down to dinner. Molly placed on my trencher one of the largest of the barm dumplings. It was in vain that I tried to eat it, for it stuck to my teeth like wax, and dropped into my stomach like lead.

“I wonder where Jack and Jim be!” said Molly. “Poor lads, we’ve hed hard work to rear em. Polly, poor wench, is gone to glory o’ the meazles. Jack cotch’d em, and as we might hae em over all together, we put Jim to bed to em, and he cotch’d ‘em; and now, blessed be God, they is as strong as iver. Jack war very patient.”

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No sooner had she spoken than the lads broke in upon us. “Now, my chicks,” said she, “shake hands wi’ the new preacher, and ax how Mr. and Mrs. Sleekface be, and how the cause is a prosperin in the part where brother Sparks is from.”

Hereupon the lads shook me by the hand, and put on a very grave look, and asked the prescribed questions; which I answered as quickly as possible, not liking to detain them from the dumplings, towards which their eyes were anxiously directed.

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“Jack is my lad,” cried out Molly, “and is to be a pracher. Jim is Dad’s lad, and we mun mak on him what we can. T’other day he war backing two lads a feighting, and so I fetched him in, and his father leathered him. He swore he war ony lookin on, and so warner hafe as bad as Moses, for he set his own brothers at one another again. Jack, you mun know, is a very good lad; he will be fourteen next birthday, if the Lord speare him. He has bin convarted two year—meets in class reg’lar and—

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often prays in the meetins. He has the most wonderfulest gift in prayer as never war known. And I caught him tother day a standin on the pigsty, a prachin to the pigs: he took for his text, ‘Come unto me all ye that is weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.’ ”

“How did you treat your subject, John?” I asked.

“Oh! I divoided it,” replied he, “into three parts, as a’ar prachers mostly does. *Firstly*, I told em to come: *Secondly*, Who to come to: *Thirdly*, What to come for. I niver prached wi’ such liberty in my life.”

“Do you think, Molly,” I said, “that Jack is really called to preach?”

“Yes, I do,” she answered, “as much as the apostles was; he is like John the Baptist—he is sanctified from the womb to it; and all the society thinks the same: Jack is alias about his Master’s work. The t’other day he heerd a gentleman a swearin in the street: the spirit moved him to speak a word in season to him. The gentleman, astead a’ bein thankful to him,

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for his kindness, scuffed and kicked him, and called him a impurent scoundrel. If we had money, we’d foller the law on him. Well, Jack, astead a’ returning evil for evil, kneeled down and prayed for his parsecutor agen the door a’ the house as he was gone in. Jim wanted him to fetch a warrun for him, and hev him afore t’ magistrate. Oh! Jim is a bad lad—sadly parsecutes Jack; but he caresner, but goes on his way rejoicin, a trustin in the Lord.”

“Muther, giv’s a bite o’ cheese,” said Jim.

“Where’s your manners, lad, and then,” said Molly.

“If yo’ please muther, for the sake o’ Jesus,” replied Jim.

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“That’s summat loike,” answered Molly, cutting him a large piece. “I’m sure I Conner eat this,” said Jim, pouting his lip, “its so dekeyed—full o’ leetle things.”

“You’r a saucy chap, Jim,” said Jack, “if you Conner eat what the treasury-woman in the

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gospel lived on; for she lived on mites, and she had ony two on ‘em left, and she cast them in the treasury.”

After preaching in the evening, when the lads were gone to bed, I gave the parents some advice, touching the education of their children, and then retired to rest.

There was only one bed-room in the cottage. It contained two straw-mattresses placed on some decayed bedsteads. It was customary for the preacher to sleep in the one occupied by the parents, whilst they slept in the one used by the lads. Jack was always put to sleep with the preacher, and Jim slept with his parents. An old coverlet was fastened to a curtain, and stretched across the room to form a partition.* A rush-light was placed on an old stool, in the middle of the room, and was fast expiring.

“Well brother,” says Jack, I’m glad to see you, (which was rather a mistake,) as you’ll be able to throw some light on a thing as has bin

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puzzlin me sin I come to bed. My mother, if you remember, said summat about John the Baptist; now I want to know how it war as John war a Baptist. I should think as there were no Methodists where John lived. I arner fond o’ them Baptists, and they warner much liked in a’ar Saviour’s time, for we read as John was cast into prison.”

As soon as I had corrected his mistake about John the Baptist, he proposed another question, when Molly cried out, from the other side of the partition. “Donner plague brother Sparks: go to sleep, you’d puzzle Solomon hissen if he war alive.” Jack asked no more questions till I got into bed, when he whispered to me, “What a blessing it is, brother, to enjoy the witness of the spirit. I want all the world to enjoy it, it would be a fine thing, wouldn’t it, brother?” Molly overheard the latter part of the sentence, and shouted out “You are at it agen, are you? if you donner give over, I’ll fotch you to us.” “That wonner be fair,” said Jack, “for in the t’other bed two or three is gathered together;

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and its where there is, as God is in the midst to bless em; and so if I leave you, you'll be we'out a blessin, brother Sparks." With these remarks Jack fell asleep.

The room presented a very *lively* and *animating* scene, for there were rats and mice running about and screaming, and hens rustling on their roost, over my head. Sleep was far from me, and I was glad when the morning light first glimmered through the holes in the thatch.

As soon as it was day, I arose and walked in the open air; I asked Molly, at breakfast, if Mr. Sleekface ever stayed with them all night. "Never stays all night," she replied, "we very seldom see him at all; we think as he doesner sarve us quite right, for we pay as much 'quarterage' as some other places as he goes a deal more to; but we donner mind, so long as he sends as good preachers as you."

I could not eat any breakfast, although the tea was good, and some newly-laid eggs were boiled for me. I felt very ill, and was obliged

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to lie down on an old settle. Molly would fetch the surgeon, although I wished her not. He was soon by my side. He went through the usual preliminaries, and then asked me if I objected to being bled. I told him, that I very much objected to it, unless it were absolutely necessary, but that I would leave myself in his hands. He bled me and bade me lie down quietly, till he came back. I obeyed his order, and felt somewhat relieved. He returned in about half an hour, in his gig, and desired me to prepare myself to return home.

"Must I really go with you?" I enquired. "Cannot I be allowed to fulfil my other appointment before I go home?"

"It will not be prudent for you to preach again in your present state," he replied.

"Very well," I said, "if that be your opinion, I will go with you immediately. I grew worse on the way, and when I arrived at Mr. Sleekface's, I fainted. I was for several days con-fined to my room. Miss Sleekface waited on me with tender assiduity. I can never forget

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her kindness. Continual prayer was made in my behalf by the society, and Mrs. Sleekface had faith to believe, that I should be able to preach in less than a week, though nearly a fortnight elapsed before I was able to come down stairs.

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CHAPTER III.

“WHATEVER PAINS IT COSTS, BREAK THE WILL, IF YOU WOULD NOT DAMN THE CHILD. LET A CHILD FROM A YEAR OLD BE TAUGHT TO FEAR THE ROD, AND CRY SOFTLY.”— *Wesley's Sermons*.

It happened that Mr. and Mrs. Sleekface, and Miss Esther, went to spend a day in the circuit: a good opportunity was thus offered for satisfying my mind as to the cause of the Miss Sleekfaces' unhappiness. As we sat talking after dinner, I said to her “How very ill your sister looks; she seems to me, to be wearing away to a skeleton.”

“Yes she is,” replied Miss Sleekface, “very ill indeed, and I fear that unless she alters soon for the better, she will die.”

“What is the cause of her affliction?” I asked.

“Many, and of long duration, are the causes

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of her affliction,” answered she. “I am the lonely participator in her sorrows; we weep together, and mourn over our wretched condition.” Her eyes began to fill with tears, and she heaved many burthened sighs. When she had suppressed the violence of her emotion, she proceeded as follows: “Both myself and my sister have been very unhappy from our childhood. You will be surprised when I tell you, that although we are members of society, and have met in class for years, and attended all the ‘means of grace,’ and *seem* very religious, yet, I am sorry to say, that it is all mere profession, the form of religion, which we have been obliged to assume for the sake of peace. We have been forced to it against our will. From our earliest years we have been under a system of most severe religious drilling. No sooner were we able to read than we had to get off by heart, long hymns, and chapters in the Bible, till we came to hate all hymn books and the Scriptures. We used to be compelled to attend my mother in her visits to the sick, and to go

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with her to all the ‘means of grace.’ We were never allowed to join other children in their innocent play, for fear of getting corrupted, and wearing out our clothes. For the slightest fault we were punished: if we were a minute or two longer in going on an errand than she had appointed—if we left a bit of fat on our plate,—if we smiled, or *was* inattentive at the means of grace, we were either shut up in a dark room for some hours, dieted on water gruel for a day, or else, set some long chapter to get off. Our home, you see, was to us a kind of penal settlement, and our mother appeared to us a hard-hearted task-mistress. My father often took our part, but my mother would not suffer him to interfere. She would tell him that he spoiled us by indulgence, and that she must be let alone in our education. My father always gave in to her, rather than have high words, so that she had entirely her own way with us. Poor Tom! she could’nt so well control him.”

“Was that a brother of yours?” I enquired.

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“Yes,” she replied, “my only brother; he died last year from an accident at some races which he attended. To return to my narrative. As we grew up, we began to be alive to what tended to our interests. My mother had often talked to us of the necessity of a change of heart, and had often expressed her alarm for our safety, telling us that we were every moment exposed to everlasting damnation. She would often say, how much better she could love us, if we were converted. We had witnessed many conversions, and it seemed to us a very easy thing to feign that state. One morning, soon after the thought struck me, I entered the parlour in great seeming distress, fell upon my mother’s neck, and wept aloud. ‘Oh! mother,’ I exclaimed, ‘I am such a great sinner, what must I do to be saved?’ My mother’s heart was gladdened when she saw me at her feet an inquiring penitent. She straightway ran up stairs, to fetch down my sister to witness my contrition. To her surprise she found my sister in the same state as myself. Esther was found

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kneeling at the foot of the bed, and in tears. My mother could no longer restrain her joy: she sung aloud the praises of the Lord, as she brought my sister down stairs. My father was called out of his study to join her in prayer, for our conversion. The door was locked, and they set to work. They prayed earnestly, gave us words of

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encouragement, directed us in the way of salvation, eagerly pressed us to believe, and eluded the Almighty for delaying the blessing. They prayed for a long time, but found us still in a state of unbelief, and wondered greatly at our dulness in comprehending the plan of salvation by ‘simple faith.’ Finding that we were to be kept on our knees till we were saved, and knowing that we should be as far off that state at midnight as we were then, we declared aloud our belief in Christ as a present Saviour. On this profession being made, we rose from our knees, and all of us sung ‘Praise God from whom all blessings flow.’

“Our parents have ever looked upon us from that time as converted girls. A new fount of

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affection seemed opened in my mother’s heart: she clasped us in her arms, and told us that she was now made happy. We have found great difficulty in carrying out the deception with effect. We found it very easy to counterfeit religious experience, from having been accustomed to attend the ‘Love-feasts,’* where we had become familiar with the language generally used to express Christian experience. The day after our supposed conversion, my sister looked rather downcast, which made my mother afraid that she had lost her hold on Christ. ‘Esther dear,’ said she, ‘I fear Satan has got the advantage over you, he will try to persuade you that your sins are not forgiven, but take no heed to his devices.’ Esther assured my mother that she had not lost the blessing she obtained on the previous day, and that Satan had never tempted her to believe her sins to be still unforgiven. This profession of stability reassured the mind of my mother, and after exhorting us to perseverance, she told us that we must

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prepare to accompany her to the ‘class.’ On our way there we called at Mr. Stroker’s. Mrs. Stroker is a member of society, but her husband is a worldly-minded man. They had company, and were in the parlour; my mother went in to them. As soon as she entered, she cried out ‘Oh! my dear Mrs. Stroker, I have such good news to tell you; my daughters are translated out of darkness into marvellous light.’

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“Mr. Stroker thought that she was alluding to the night, and so said ‘I suppose it is very dark outside, but I don’t think that we have any such marvellous light inside either, for this candle is but a sorry one.’ ”

‘However dark,’ replied my mother, ‘the room may be, I am sorry to say that your soul, Mr. Stroker, is much darker; I was not alluding in what I said to natural, but to spiritual darkness.’ She gave the company a lecture on justification by faith, and entire sanctification, to which they attended far less than to their pipes and brandy and water. She concluded

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her visit with a prayer, and we proceeded to the vestry. On our way there, my mother told us, that we need not speak our experience for a time or two. We were rather glad to be let off, although we had prepared our speeches before we started from home. We have been in society five years: I would I was *really*, what I only *pretend* to be. I feel to hate myself for thus acting the hypocrite. I know that I have greatly sinned.”

“Yes, Miss Sleekface,” I said, “you have indeed done very wickedly; you have incurred no ordinary measure of guilt, in having acted so profane a part. It is a mercy, that your hypocritical mockery has not provoked the vengeance of the Divine wrath upon you. Let me recommend you to become *really* what you are only in *pretence*. Did you not speak, in the former part of our conversation, of a brother who met with his death on a racecourse?”

“Yes, I did,” she replied; “poor Tom! his was a mournful end: he was in his twentieth [54]

year when he was killed. When a boy, my mother had much to do to manage him. He was a lad of noble spirit, but it was broken and spoiled by hard usage. Like all other boys, he was very fond of play, but seldom got any; for whilst others were playing, he would be kept in, reading the Bible to my mother, or going with her to the religious meetings. Occasionally he would run away, and hide himself, about meeting time, and then he would be punished for it. When he was eleven years of age he went to Woodhouse-grove School,* and there he made much greater proficiency in wickedness, than in learning. He was often punished with cruel severity. He got into great disgrace through belonging to a Quarter-day Club: it was a club composed of some of the older boys—a kind of secret society. They had a society-steward and

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a chairman to the club, and each member had a ticket, having Q. D. C. written upon it. At the meetings of this club, were concocted all schemes of mischief; they

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mimicked different ministers, had mock class-meetings, and love-feasts, and read novels and songs. The existence and doings of this society, were made known to the Governor. Tom got a hint, that the Governor knew something about the club: he forthwith called a meeting of it, and they broke it up; so when the Governor had him up before him, on being questioned about it, he was able to say that he did not belong to any such society, and that he wasn't aware of its existence. Though Tom got off cleverly himself, some of the other members did not get through their examination so well, and were found out. Tom was again had up, and questioned more strictly, and was made to confess himself to have been a member. He received a much more severe chastisement than the rest, for his prevarication, and was sent away from the school. He hadn't been at home very long, before he got converted, as my mother believed; but I knew that he was no more converted than myself. He was put apprentice to a surgeon—turned out a wild, profligate

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young man—and met with his death in the manner I told you.”

Our conversation was interrupted by a loud knock at the door. “Who can this be, I wonder?” said Miss Sleekface, “a person of some consequence, I should think.”

“Yes;” I answered, “it is some one who is making a noise in the world, I imagine. I will see who it may be.” As soon as I opened the door, I was saluted by a flashy looking man in spectacles, with rings on his fingers, and chains crossing his waistcoat at triangles; and a huge bunch of seals and keys suspended to a black watered ribbon. He introduced himself to me as Mr. Dollar, a local preacher from a neighbouring circuit. By the time he had told me who he was, he had made his way into the parlour.

“I hope I see you convalescent,” said he, to Miss Sleekface, shaking hands with her.

“I am come,” continued he, “to ask your mother, if she can so constitute her arrangements as to

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make it convenient to exercise her functions in our chapel, on the twentieth of the existing month, in behalf of our Sunday-schools.” “My mother,”—said Miss Sleekface, “is gone into the circuit to a Missionary meeting. I don’t know what her arrangements are for that day. When she returns, I will make known your request to her.” “May I be addressing Mr. Sparks?” said Mr. Dollar, directing his words to me. “Yes, Sir, I believe you are,” I answered. “I feel myself happy,” replied he, “in so opportunely meeting with you. Brother Jones informed me that you were come to the scene of our labours. I was deeply grieved when I heard from him, that the Lord had laid upon you his afflicting hand. I am glad to see you so far convalescent. I know, brother, what it is to be afflicted to be laid aside from the functions of the holy ministry. I was stretched on a couch of sickness for weeks. It was particularly inconvenient in my case; as I was hindered thereby, from preaching several *occasional*

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sermons, for which I had arranged. I am now engaged to preach anniversary sermons for a long continuity of Sabbaths. I have almost more extraordinary duty than I can well prosecute, for I do not possess the most vigorous and high-toned constitution, and I don’t like to tear myself away too frequently, from the sweet and golden ties of connubial bliss. But brother, you know,” continued he, “that when God calls, and the Church invokes, we must exhibit all promptitude in obeying.”

He delivered this grandiloquent address with the same energy and gesture as if he had been preaching from the pulpit. There was scarcely a sect or system that escaped his animadversion, or a public character who received not either his extreme censure, or his unbounded praise. “Calvinism,” he said, “was the invention of the devil, that made man into a machine, and God into a Moloch.” The Baptists, he considered to be under an “awful delusion,” and it was his opinion, that they could never become a “truly Missionary Church,” as they

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would “never flourish in dry countries.” The Pope he believed to be an “incarnation of the devil.” The Church of England, he observed, was a “vast machine of state policy, that had ruined more souls than it had saved.” The apostasy of Pitt he said was only “surpassed by his villainy;” and that Lord Sidmouth could only find his

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“parallel in the monster Nero.” He had read Locke on the Understanding; and for his part, he said, he “could not see any thing in it, that any man of ordinary mind might not have written.” Mr. Wesley he pronounced the “Prince of Divines,” and Methodism the “most stupendous system ever devised to save a lost and ruined world.” “Charles Wesley,” said he, “I can pronounce, without any fear of successful contradiction, to be one of the finest poets that our country has ever produced; and when Milton and Shakespeare are forgotten, the name of Charles Wesley shall be had in illustrious remembrance, and his hymns sung in the new heavens and the new earth.” Thus spake this

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oracle of wisdom. When he had delivered himself of the little he knew, which he imagined would show off his talents, he bade us adieu, leaving behind his benediction.

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CHAPTER IV.

“GOD DOES NOW GIVE REMISSION OF SINS AND THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST, AND OFTEN IN DREAMS AND VISIONS OF GOD.”—Wesley’s Journal.

I was so far recovered as to be able to attend the “Love-feast” in the Circuit-town. Mrs. Sleekface accompanied me to the vestry to give out the “notes of admission.” “Brother Sparks,” said Mrs. Sleekface as we went along, “we must be very careful to whom we give notes; there are some persons who are very fond of enjoying our means of grace, without being members of society, and contributing to its support; we must refuse such persons notes of admission, after the second or third time.” We had not been in the vestry five minutes, before a woman with three children applied for a “note.” Mrs. Sleekface looking sternly at her,

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thus addressed her: “If you wish, Mrs. Tibbs, to become a partaker of the blessed means of grace of our body, you must become a member of our society. Our rule is, to give a person a note of admission only twice or thrice; but you have had half-a-dozen. And besides, what do you bring three children with you for? unless it is to eat the cake. If every woman was to bring three children with her, the chapel would not

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hold half the congregation, and the cake would not go half round; and besides, I know your character is not over good.”

The last words, stung the woman into a rage, and she vehemently replied. “I’m as good as you any day; though you spout away in the pulpit, and tell folks as you are I knower how many miles *ahead* of sanctification. Give your children plenty to eat, and give the poor a trifle out of your stinking thousands, and then sinuate your lies about me.”

Regard to truth obliges me to record that Mrs. Sleekface did not acquit herself with her

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usual composure under this provoked attack; but she stamped her foot with rage, and her eyes gleamed with fury as she addressed Mrs. Tibbs as follows, “Revilest thou the minister of the Most High! How dare you utter such dreadful lies in the presence of God? Take care that the ground does not open and swallow you and your family up, as it did Corah and his company, for reviling the High Priest of the Most High. “At the mention of the ground opening, the poor children clung close to their mother, and screamed aloud.

“I didna ken,” replied Mrs. Tibbs, “that you was a minister of God. Who made you a minister? I should like to know Not St. Paul, I’m sure, for he doesn’t allow a woman to speak in public in the Church, and he cries shame on you for’t. If you had been living in the time o’ Christ, you’d ha’ *made* Judas a good wife, if you could agreed which should have carried the bag.”

Mrs. Sleekface could with difficulty restrain her passion, as Mrs. Tibbs addressed her in the

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above opprobrious language. When she finished, however, with so base an insinuation, she could no longer control it; and proved the truth of her own declaration, that she was very far *ahead* of sanctification. “Take,” cried she, in an exasperated tone, “this base and wicked woman from my presence, and remove her far from the tents of the righteous, lest we perish with her in her iniquity, for suffering her to remain near us.” The command of Mrs. Sleekface was promptly obeyed, and the delinquent was led forth by two local preachers.

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At two o'clock we left the vestry, to open the love-feast. The gallery of the chapel was quite crowded, and the body was half full. Mrs. Sleekface sat with me in the pulpit, and opened the meeting, by giving out the usual hymn and offering up a prayer. The seedcake and water were then taken round, and the collection being made, Mrs. Sleekface gave her "Christian experience" as follows: "We read, blessed are ye when men shall persecute you, and speak all manner of evil of you,

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falsely, for my sake. I thank God that I am accounted worthy of being persecuted for his sake. Since I came up to the Lord's house, I have been sorely abused by a wicked woman, because I would not give her a note of admission to this blessed means of grace. I knew her to be an improper person, and I told her so; for which she heaped upon me the most scurrilous language. May the Lord in his great mercy pardon her! (Amen was lustily responded.) I very sorry that my dear partner and fellow labourer is not with you according to appointment; but brother Sparks, our new preacher, will edify us by giving us his Christian experience, and by telling us of the Lord's dealings with him during his late affliction. Let every heart be engaged in prayer, and we shall have a glorious time. I bless the Lord," continued she, "that I am still persevering in the right way. I can truly say, that of late I have had the most wonderful revelations of his divine love. For fifteen years I have enjoyed the blessing of *entire sanctification* have been

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cleansed from all sin. Press on, brethren, to the attainment of this great blessing; don't rest till the last remains of sin are rooted out. Faith, mighty faith, is the instrument, the blood of Christ is the means, the Holy Ghost the agent, and this moment the time. (Glory! glory! was responded from all parts of the chapel.) I thank God, my dear partner enjoys it, and I hope my daughters are pressing on to its attainment. Now, brethren, speak short, and to the point, and give us your present experience, and don't wait for each other." After Mrs. Sleekface had made a few more remarks, she sat down amidst a general shout of Amen! and Glory!

I next addressed a few words to the people. As soon as I had resumed my seat, up rose a little old man, dressed in a suit of rusty black, and a neckerchief that once was

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white. He performed many curious motions with his arms, and spoke with great vehemence. He said:—

"I bless the Lord, for what he has done for my soul. It's now going a nineteen year since the Lord was pleased to speak peace to my soul.

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It was done as I was driving home the cows a-milking. I felt so happy, as I hardly knowed what I was doing; how I got home, or how the cows got home, I donner know. I remember I told the cows what the Lord had done for me, and I called on 'em to praise the Lord. Before I was converted, I was a very wild, bad fellow. I went to church regular, but it did me no good; I only got harder and harder, worsen and worsen. How could it be anyhow else, for I never heard a word about justification by faith, the witness of the spirit, and experimental religion! How many is there starving on the husks of dry morality? (Thousands, cried out a woman behind the speaker.) Oh! brethren, I mourn when I think of my poor father and mother that is dead. They was of the church-going moral sort, but know'd nothing of the witness of the spirit, and real inward vital godliness. They left the world under a cloud, and if that cloud has become thick darkness, whose fault is it but the church? I have had many fiery trials to pass through, since I set out in the good way, but

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the Lord has delivered me out of em all. I have been a preacher for twelve year, and have seen scores o' souls saved under my ministry. I have lately had to pass through deep waters. I have lost the dear partner of my bosom, and two dear children; but, bless God! they are gone safe to glory. My wife was fetched by two angels—for she see em coming for her, and my children died young. I mean to meet em in heaven; and may we all, preachers and people, meet there, for the sake of our blessed Lord and Saviour!" He thus concluded, and sat down quite out of breath.

A youth about fifteen years of age next addressed the meeting. He spoke as follows: "I've had a deal to do to maister the devil since I come here. He has been tellin me not to speak—that I should only go and make a fool o' mysen, and get laughed at; but I told him to mind his own business, and I'd mind mine. May the Lord give me courage to speak of what he has done for my soul! It's now about three months since the Lord spoke peace to my

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soul. I was awakened in a very wonderful way—I dreamt one night as I was on the brink of hell. I seed thousands of devils, and heerd the most dreadful wails. Among em I seed Jack Stubbs and Tom Roper, two chaps as war killed awhile ago, coming home drunk from the market. Jack Stubbs cried out, ‘Fetch him here, Tom!’ I screamed out, and waked my mother. She told me to go to sleep and hold my noise. I was miserable from that night, till I found pardon. The Lord has found something for me to do for his glory: I teach in the Sunday-school, pray at the prayer-meetings, and speak a word for Christ wheresomever I be. My companions laugh at me; but I go on trusting in the Lord. I am pressing on to perfection—and I mean, if I’ve good luck, to have it this afternoon. May the Lord help me to it, for his name and mercy’s sake!” The young disciple sat down amidst great applause.

Mrs. Sleekface again rose, and addressed a few words of encouragement to the promising youth. She spoke of the different methods

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which the Lord employed, in bringing his people to himself; and likened the case of the youth to the call of the prophet Samuel; and concluded by urging the people to adhere to their present experience, and to speak to the point, and not to wait for one another. The latter part of Mrs. Sleekface’s order was strictly obeyed, for no less than three persons were standing up at the same time, all eager to tell “what the Lord had done for their souls.” It was difficult to decide which of them was on their legs first. Brother Poser maintained that he was; sister Slipper affirmed that she had the precedence; whilst brother Jolls assumed his priority by commencing the history of his Christian warfare.

After some contention, Mrs. Sleekface determined the question in favour of sister Slipper. She was dressed in a red cloak, and close black bonnet, with a white handkerchief wrapped over her head, which half covered her face. As she spoke, she laid hold of the seat with her hands, shook her head, and frequently leaped up. Her oration was as follows:

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“How pleasant a thing it is to see brethren dwell together in unity. (‘Speak up, old gal,’ was shouted out from below.) It war a pity as a’ar good brothers should ha’

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made so much ado about speakin; but they was so full o' love, as they mun let it out. ('That's right, Molly,' said brother Jolls.) It isner the first love-feast as I'n been at; and I hope it wonner be the last. I think em the best mean o' grace as is, and class-meetins and the Supper o' the Lord next. It's five and thirty year, come next harvest, sin I fun pardon to my soul; and I'n hed a deal to pass through sin then. My husband very much parsecuted me; but it pleased the Lord to convert his soul, about twenty year ago, come Martlemas. Me and him has seen many ups and downs in the world. I'n often bin as I'n hed a deal to do to get a penny a week, and a shilling a quarter, for class money. But I alias war able to pay that, if I pinch'd mysen for't; for I war sure I should never be a loser for't I' the end, as the prachers alias tells us. Well, things took a turn: my husband

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got into work, Mary got a place, the sow pig'd, and did well, and I got a little weshin. I'n lived to see three children gone to glory, and all the rest is on their way there. I'n many a battle wi' the devil; but he can do nowt wi' me. If I war to die just now, I should go right off to glory. What a love-feast we shall hev in heaven. I often think how I should like to hear Abram, and Isaac, and Jacob, and the prophets and apostles relate their Christian experience. We shan't be short o' time there, sister, shall we?" (speaking to Mrs. Sleekface, who was motioning her to sit down.)

"I hope not, sister," said Mrs. Sleekface, "if they all speak as long as you."

"If I mun sit down, I mun," continued Molly, and there's an end on't; but I'n a deal more to say, for I havener got into the marrar of my experience yet."

"Our time, sister Slipper," said Mrs. Sleekface, "is so short, and there are so many more of our brethren yet to speak, that we must leave the marrow of your experience for some other

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time, and be contented at the present with the picking of the bones." Molly acquiesced in the decision, and sat down.

Many others addressed the meeting, much in the same manner as the preceding. And no wonder: for so great is the similarity that exists between experience and experience, that we might fancy they were all provided with stereotyped copies of the same. There was one address, however, well worthy of being recorded—that of

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an old soldier, who had served under the Duke of Wellington. He spoke as follows: “Fellow soldiers of the Captain of our salvation! I am glad of this opportunity of declaring what the Lord has done for my soul. For many years I have served my country and my God; and I am sorry to say, too many years I’ve served the prince of darkness. But of all the masters I over had, he is the worst. It seems a odd thing to leave a master that one has served for many years, and receive no wages. I did so, however, with the devil. He offered me the wage, but I refused to take it.

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(‘You did right, master sarjeant,’ cried an old man from the opposite gallery.) When I left his service, I enlisted in the First Life Guards, which is the Wesleyan regiment, that has the best officers, and the best discipline, of any regiment in the heavenly service. O! I often think that though there is many regiments, dressed in different uniforms, yet they all fight under the same great Captain, and against the same common enemy. Alas! that there should be such division in the heavenly army—regiment fighting against regiment, instead o’ forming a mighty phalanx, and making a onset on the powers of darkness. I wonder what would have become of the brave English in the battle of Waterloo, if the Scotch Greys had set to fighting the Dragoons, and the 28th foot had contended with the Lancers. Why, instead of winning the hard fought day, and wearing medals in memory of the victory, we should have been totally defeated, and have been now wearing the fetters of slavery.” The valiant soldier was about to proceed to give an account of the

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battle of Waterloo, but Mrs. Sleekface stopped him, and requested him to keep to his Christian experience. The son of Mars then went on to say, “I have been in the good way for upwards of ten years; and have never once turned back to the beggarly elements of the world. I owe the salvation of both body and soul to the Methodists. I went to one of the chapels, in Ireland, to make fun but came home to pray. It pleased the Lord to make me happy in his love when I was praying, one day, in the stable. I was made so happy that I cried out for joy. One of the officers was passing by at the time, and came to see what was the matter. I told him that the Lord had pardoned my sins, and I recommended to him the Saviour, and wished to pray with him. ‘Thompson,’ he said, ‘you are mad, man! what do you mean by such conduct to your

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officer?’ and went away offended. I knelt down, and prayed for him and the whole regiment. I told some of my fellow-soldiers, what the Lord had done for my soul I but they only laughed at me. I used to go out,

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when off duty, and preach in the open street; and I had many seals to my ministry. I then was made a local preacher: wherever I used to preach, the chapels was crowded, and I had many souls for my hire. I was at length called abroad, to fight for my country. When I went into battle, I prayed that the Lord would give me courage, and preserve me. I wished myself home again, for I remembered the commandment, ‘Thou shalt not kill.’ However I thought there was no harm in fighting in self-defence. I was forced into the thickest of the battle, and I see many brave men cut down round me, and I should have met with the same fate hadn't it been for Mr. Wesley’s hymns, and a pocket-testament, which I had stuck in my jacket; for a bullet was hindered from passing into my breast by the hymn book, and the thrust of a sword was turned back by the Testament. Here I am this day a monument of divine mercy. (A great sensation was caused by the soldier's wonderful preservation.) This is the Testament and hymn book, brethren,” continued

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he “to which I owe my life. (Pass em this way, cried a voice from the gallery, and they were passed on.) Put on, brethren, the whole armour of God, and fight manfully under the blood-stained banner of the cross. It does my heart good to see our sister in the pulpit. She reminds me of Queen Elizabeth, heading her forces, and leading them on to victory. May God ever prosper her arms! What may we expect, if our women, inspired with valour, lead on our armies to conquest? It ought to shame the cowards, whilst it gives more courage to the brave. May God grant that we may have the sound of a King in our camp, and the army of the aliens be entirely routed” He sat down amidst tremendous shouts of Amen! and Glory! As soon as the noise had subsided, Mrs. Sleekface addressed a few words to the assembly, and the meeting was concluded with prayer.

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“OUR PEOPLE ARE REQUESTED NOT TO INTRODUCE PIPES AND TOBACCO INTO THEIR HOUSES FOR PREACHERS, EXCEPT IN EXTREME CASES.”—W. Large Minutes.

Mrs. Sleekface, with unusual generosity, invited a few country friends to take tea with her. As soon as we had reached home, Mrs. Sleekface reproved her daughters for not having spoken at the love-feast. “It is impossible,” said she, “for you ever to make any proficiency in religion, so long as you are ashamed to confess Christ and him crucified before men. It is nothing but the pride of your heart which kept you back, and which, long ago, would have been entirely eradicated, had you pressed on to the attainment of entire sanctification. How dare you come away without declaring what the Lord hath done for your souls? I'm sure that the people of God have gone away very much disappointed.”

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“Yes, Mrs. Sleekface,” said Mrs. Joyful, “I'm sure they have; for I'd heard what a very gracious work the Lord had been carrying on in their souls.”

Miss Sleekface began to make an apology, for not having spoken; but her mother would not allow her to proceed, affirming “that no apology could be made to justify her sinful conduct, and that, instead of apologizing, she had much better be praying for forgiveness.”

“Who was that bad woman,” inquired Mrs. Joyful, “as so shamefully abused you in the vestry?”

“Her name is Tibbs,” answered Mrs. Sleekface, “she is a backslider, and I fear a very bad woman. When she was in society, she was very fond of going to anniversaries in the country, and all kinds of meetings, neglecting her family, and coming home at night with some brother or other, till at last her husband threatened to leave her, if she did'nt stay at home, and attend to her family. When she found she could no longer go gadding about to different

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meetings, she fell away and left the society, and this is the woman, forsooth, who has the impudence and wickedness to be my accuser.”

“She sartainly war abominable bad,” said James Steadfast. “I felt as if I could ha' kicked the saucy creature out o' the vestry. I shouldner ha bin surprised if the ground had opened and swallowed her up, for I'm sure she deserved it.”

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“Well, brother,” said Mrs. Sleekface, “the Lord is merciful, and he spared her, and may his long-suffering lead her to repentance.”

Whilst Mrs. Sleekface was preparing tea, the company amused themselves (as is their wont on such occasions) with repeating the odd sayings and curious speeches of some of the love-feast speakers, and indulging in sundry charitable criticisms thereon.

“I wish,” said John Slipper, “as sister Sleekface had let the soldier agone on with his ascription o’ the battle of Waterloo. It would a bin very interestin. How wonderful was his life presarved! There’s no tellin how many lives might a bin saved, if the soldiers had all on ‘em

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had Mr. Wesley’s hymns and a Testament about em. It would pay the king to give every soldier a copy o’ each.”

“A very good idea,” said brother Symons; “why we should become quite convincible in arms then: we should conquer the world.”

Sarah Meek observed that she thought as “Sister Grove’s experience was the deepest and the best.”

“I don’t think so,” replied brother Steadfast, “for I’ve heard her tell the same, almost word for word, twenty times, except what she told us about her sister, who was threatened by her husband, to beat her if she went to the chapel. It was certainly very wonderful how the Lord interposed in her behalf.”

“How was it?” said Julia Meek.

“Why,” replied the speaker, “when she got home from chapel, her husband was drunk, and he went to the fire-place to lay hold on the poker, to thrash her with, but the Lord made him so, that he could not catch hold of it.”

“It seems,” said brother Symons, “as old

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John Goater is as forward as ever in relating his experience; what a flaming address did he give, and perhaps to-morrow he’ll be in liquor. He is a great liberty man now,—says as Conference is a great engine of oppression, and that he would put it down if he could; and he says, as there is plenty more as thinks as he does. He says, as the rules is not properly kept, and as the preachers is the very first to break em.

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According to the rule, he says as all spirit dealers, and spirit drinkers, ought to be put out of society, and as the preachers have no right to be called reverend. If he would just look at home, and mend his own windows, and put the shutters to, before he throws stones at his neighbours, it would look much better of him.”

Mrs. Sleekface now announced that tea was ready, and we repaired to the sitting room. In expectation of company, she had provided for the occasion with unwonted liberality, half a pound of Dutch butter, a small "white bread" loaf, and half a pound of refined sugar. There

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were two plates of toast, sparingly buttered, for the guests, and some thick bread and butter for the Misses Sleekface.

“I hope your tea is as you like it, brethren,” said Mrs. Sleekface.

“Mine is very niste,” said sister Meek. “I suppose as you did as you mostly do, put the tea in the oven to mash, before you went to chapel. It's a good plan, as it gets all the goodness out.”

“It is a very good plan,” answered Mrs. Sleekface, “if you take care and fill the pot up, at every half-cup, or if you don't you'll have it very weak at the last. If any of you, brethren,” continued she, “would like anything a little more substantial than toast, I can give you some nice cold bacon and potatoes.”

“I think I could relish a bit,” said John Steadfast, “for it's a good while sin dinner, and I've had a longish walk.”

“Fetch it out, Esther,” said Mrs. Sleekface.

When it was brought, she assisted him to a small piece, which he placed on a slice of

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bread, and held it in his hand, and carved off large mouthful.

“You had better,” said Mrs. S., addressing her daughters, “fill up your cups with water, for you know that strong tea makes you so nervous.”

“I've heard,” said John Steadfast, “as strong tea is a very bad thing for the nerves, so if you please, I'll hev a little more sugar and cream in mine to mak it a little more agreeabler. Brother Lodgers' is the place to go to to get cream; I took tea with him last Sunday after preachin, and the cream was as thick as treacle, and we had sich nice *fresh butter*; and then after preachin at night, I'd a famous good supper, and a

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glass o' gin and water afore startin, and sister Lodgers would mak me fill my pockets with apples, for the workman, she says, is worthy of his hire."

"How is that John Roper getting on there," inquired Mrs. Sleekface, "who left the society and joined the Independents? It was a good riddance to us when he left. I suppose he

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thought he should be a greater man amongst them, than us."

"Oh he is a very big chap among them," answered John Steadfast, "says as he is one of the elect; and as us methodists is workmongers and extracts all the glory from Christ." I says to him, 'John,' says I, 'don you believe, then, as a certain number is elected to everlasting life, and as all the rest of mankind is to be damned?' 'I believe,' said he, 'as a certain number is elected from eternity to everlasting life, and as none else but them will be finally saved, but as for them as is'nt elect, if they be damned, it's their own fault; for Christ has died for em, and mercy is offered em, and if they won't accept it, it's their own fault.' 'Not just so,' I said to him. 'It isn't exactly his own fault, as you say; for suppose the king should grant pardon to a prisoner as is confined in jail, it wo'nt be o' much good to him, till somebody is sent to tak off his chains, and open the prison doors, and let him go free. So with a sinner, it's not o' much good to him, to tell him

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as God gav his Son to die for him, to free him from sin and the devil, unless he sends the Holy Spirit to free him from slavery, to convince him of sin, and to convart and sanctify him. And beside,' I says, 'you are either one of the elect, or you are not. If you are, you are a lucky fellow; you are all *right* for time and eternity. But if you arner one o' the elect, you are one of the most unlucky fellows, and you are all *wrong* for time and eternity.' "

"The doctrine of election, I consider," said Mrs. Sleekface," to be one of the most soul- damning doctrines that can be preached. It completely paralyses all exertion, makes man go on comfortably in sin, till the effectual call comes; and when that is supposed to have been received, it leads the favoured professor to be careless and slothful, seeing that his salvation is as secure as the pillars of heaven. I have always striven in my ministrations, to guard my hearers against this delusive and

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unscriptural doctrine. It is a matter of deep regret that the more pious part of the clergy

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preach this soul-destroying doctrine, and this makes them have no right to the title of *evangelical* ministers. Whether John Roper be one of the elect, now, I cannot tell; I know that he wasn't when he left us, for he did'nt show any fruits of it. I suppose he preaches frequently, and gets three or four shillings on a Sunday, and a good dinner and tea; and John never was the man to object to a good meal. I shall never forget his taking tea with us, one day; I believe that he ate half a quartern loaf, and a quarter of a pound of butter; he quite emptied the cream jug, and took three lumps of sugar in his tea. Not that I care how much the man ate, only it looked so; and it goes to show that a good dinner or tea would never be disagreeable to him."

As soon as tea was over, the brethren, and two of the sisters, retired into the kitchen to smoke. Mrs. Sleekface furnished them with some dirty pipes, damp tobacco, and a quart of ale.

"I fear," said she, "that you will not find

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the ale very fresh; though I have kept it closely covered over since last night. We never keep any kind of liquor in the house, except a little elderberry wine, which we find good for the bowel-complaint, and whilst you are enjoying yourselves here I'll treat our sisters in the parlour to a little of it." Hereupon Mrs. Sleekface took half a bottle of the said wine, and a jug of cold water, and some wine glasses into the parlour, and mixed a glass for each of the sisters, observing "that unless a little water was put to it, it would get into their heads." The company were so loud in their praise of the liquor, that Mrs. Sleekface thought it advisable to propose an adjournment into the kitchen, to hold a prayer meeting.

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CHAPTER VI.

"I KNOW WERE I TO PREACH ONE WHOLE YEAR IN ONE PLACE, I SHOULD PREACH BOTH MYSELF AND MY CONGREGATION ASLEEP; NOR CAN I BELIEVE IT WAS EVER THE WILL OF THE LORD THAT ANY CONGREGATION SHOULD HAVE ONE TEACHER ONLY."—*Wesley*.

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It happened that I went into the vestry one Saturday morning, as the Levite, already mentioned, was cleaning it. "Well, brother Sparks," said he, (hastily cramming something into his hat,) "how bin you? I'm glad to see you a coming round again; you'n hed a bad bout on it. I was afeerd we should ha lost you. You mun excuse me, but I thinken you one of the best preachers I ever heerd in my life; and I'm not the only one as says so. My wife tells me, as Miss Sleekface says, you be sich a niste man, and one o' the cleverest preachers she iver heerd; and every body says the same.

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Twixt you and me, and the pulpit, donner you find the super and his wife rather a curious pair?"

I replied that they possessed some peculiarities.

"The gals," said he, "is noicetish lasses, but you mun mind your Ps and Qs, or else you'll be gettin into a row with the super and his wife, as the last young preacher did with Miss Ester. He wanted to marry her, but the super wouldner come it, coz he hadner ony o' the needful. She war very fond on him, my wife says, for she know'd all their secrets; for when a gal gets into love, she'll tell omost ony body as 'ul hearken to her pleasant tale. He made pretend to be fond o' her, but 'twixt you and me and the pulpit, he war fonder o' the money than her. As soon as the super got wind o' what war going on, he put a stop to the business, by turning him out o' the house, into lodging, and then got him sent away at Conference, though every body wanted him to stop; and brother, if you arner on the look out,

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and keep your weather eye open, he'll sarve you the same, if you havener got plenty of the mammon of unrighteousness, as he preaches so much agen."

"How did Mr. Sleekface manage to get the young man sent away, if the circuit wished him to stay?" I asked.

"Oh! him, and the 'Chairman of the District,' got him sent away atwixt em. The super made up some tale or another about not tendin his appointments; which, beggin the super's pardon, wasner quite true, for nobody iver kept his appointments better than him, though he hed as much agin work as the super. The steward's wife tel'd my old woman, as Mrs. Sleekface told her, as Mr. Pepper tried to get Ester away in a cart, and take her off to marry her: she said this arter he war gone. Brother Pepper

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sent word as it warn't true, so what to believe one hardly knows, sin doctors disagree. I rayther incline to hold wi' brother Pepper, for I'm sorry to say, as Mrs. Sleekface is'nt over particular about stickin to the truth,

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though it wouldner do for her to hear me say so; or else I should m'appen lose my place."

"James," I said, "you should never say anything of any one, that you would care about their hearing."

"Very true," replied the Levite, "that's Gospel, and no mistake; but how few is there as does so! There's this in it, I arner 'bearin *false* witness agen my neighbour,' I don know that. I wish that I could say the same o' Mrs. Sleekface, but that's impossible, if I mun hold to the truth. She beared false witness agen me most abominable, awhile ago, for she told the 'steward's' wife, as I stole the Sunday-school coal and candles; but there never was a greater falsity told about any poor honest man, as has bin in the society for above twenty year, and alias beared a better character than the super and his wife. She is omost sure to tell you about it, if she does you munner believe a word on it. There was summat stealed I know, but James Sneaker war the man as did it, when he com'd to help me at 'Quarter-Day;'

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and so you see the innocent gets inspected, and that scoundrel passes as an honest man. A nice feller he is, to be a prayer-leader, and a local preacher. I'm poor, but honest, thank God. I war rayther complainin t'other day to Mrs. Sleekface, what a big family I hed, and how hard I found it to get em food and raiment. 'You owt'nt to complain,' said she, 'coz you'n a big family, but to be thankful, for the Psalmist says—happy is the man that has his quiver full on 'em.' I told her as it war very well for Methody preachers to say so, as they got more pay, as they got more children, in this way givin encouragement to hev big families. I told her as the preachers obeyed the command 'multiply and replenish the earth. I OFTEN THINK AS IF CONFERENCE HED FAIR PLAY, IT WOULD SOON CONNELIZE THE WORLD. Let me see now, sin I'n bin a Levite, we'n hed some fruitful prachers; there war brother Smith, as hed seven children livin, and four dead,—there war brother Jones, as hed eight dead, and four livin; then I munner forget brother Stodding, as

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bed three wives, and four children by the first, two by the second, and five by the third. So you see as these hed their quivers pretty full o' arrows, but hed plenty to feather 'em, or else they'd a bin none so happy; and it isner in the natur o' things to be happy wi' a empty belly, whatever prachers may say to the contrary. I wish they'd try it for a wik, and see how happy they'd be on it Not many hours 'ud pass afore they'd crawl out for the loaves and fishes, I know."

The conversation with the Levite, was interrupted by Mr. Sleekface summoning me into his study.

"I've been thinking," said he, "of selling some of my books; so that, brother, if you want a little sound divinity, I can let you have some cheap. It's a chance not to be thrown away,—and now is the time for you to store your mind with useful learning; for when you get the responsible duties of a circuit upon you, you will find but little time for reading. I wonder what I should have done in my old age

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if I hadn't laid up treasures of knowledge in my young days. Why, I should have had my mind empty, instead of well-stocked. Now, we'll just look the library through, and if you see any thing you think will be useful to you, I'll put it you in dirt cheap."

"I don't mind," I answered, "buying a few books of you, if I see any thing that I want, and you will put them hi at a reasonable price."

"Well now, brother," said he, "if you want a first-rate commentary, here is one as good as any in the language, and a standard work in our body;— in good condition, and not often to be met with.—It's the commentary of the late Dr. Coke, that great and learned man. It's exceedingly valuable now, from its scarcity: it was published, if my recollection serves me, at nine guineas: and I should think as perhaps it's worth more now, from its scarcity. Suppose then, we say, seven pound ten for it, and that will be a great bargain. My wife says as I shall be very silly, if I sell it for less than ten

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pounds; but I don't wish to be hard with you. I'll take off this calico cover for you, and show it you to perfection."

Just as he was taking it off, Mrs. Sleekface entered the room.

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“Well, brother Sparks,” said she, “are you buying some bargains? You are surely not selling Dr. Coke’s commentary, are you, dear? that invaluable book, concerning which, old Joseph Taylor used to say every letter was gold.—Why, it can hardly be bought now for love or money. I believe it will soon be worth twenty pounds. For learning, piety, and sound theology, it is allowed, on all hands, to be unequalled. But show our brother some other books, and then he may choose. Now it strikes me, that nothing would be so generally useful to our brother as the possession of our own magazines; for they contain such a variety of useful matter as to form in themselves a complete theological library.”

“These are them,” said Mr. Sleekface, pointing to about thirty volumes, on the top shelf.

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“Now those we will let you have on very moderate terms—you are aware, of course, how very scarce they are and we have them from the beginning. Every preacher ought to possess them, if he is to be thoroughly furnished unto every good work;—but it is not once in twenty years that you can get them complete from the beginning. Now as to the price,—twelve times six are seventy-two, and seventy-two pence are six shillings; and then there is the binding, three or four shillings, but I rather think four. Now suppose we split the difference, and say three and six, and that will include the cover. So we shall have them come to nine and six a volume: thus you see, for about fifteen to twenty pounds, you will have a complete theological, biblical, biographical, and historical library. And you know, brother, you needn’t pay me just now for them all; you may pay me by instalments of five pounds at a time, unless your father would prefer paying for them altogether, and if so I would take you off two and a half, for ready money.”

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“Nay! dear,” said Mrs. Sleekface, “say three per cent.”

“What little money I have to lay out in books,” I said, “I must take to a better market, and must be content with purchasing those of less scarcity and value.”

“I’ll tell you what, brother,” said Mr. Sleekface, “it’s the worst policy in the world to buy cheap books, for they are always trash. Let me advise you to buy none but standard authors—such as have been well tried and approved, like those we offer

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you.” After much apparently deep thought, he said, “I am not a man that makes many words, in striking a bargain; and so I’ll tell you, at a word, what I will do, to induce you to buy—and I beg you’ll not stand in your own light. If you’ll take the commentary with them, I’ll say twenty guineas for the whole; but if I make such a sacrifice, I shall expect ready money. You’ll think of it, brother, and I beg you’ll not be blind to your own interest.

In looking through the books, I saw three

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leather cases, being labelled, ‘Sermons for first year,’ ‘second year,’ and ‘third year.’ “A very neat and convenient way of keeping your sermons, Mr. Sleekface,” I observed.

“Yes,” answered he, “I find it very handy; it saves me from preaching the same sermon twice at a place, for I go regularly through them. I am now going through the third year ones. I have not made a sermon for the last twenty years. I think this is one of the chief advantages of our system; for you know the same sermons do for each circuit. We can thus carry on a large trade with a small capital. Not that I use all my capital in my trade, for it’s no use having more employed than is necessary to carry it on respectably. I often think, brother, that you spend more time in sermonizing than you need. If you’d preach your old sermons, you would have much more time for pastoral duty, and helping me in the circuit business.”

“You must remember,” I said, “that it takes me much longer to make a sermon than it does

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yourself; and that I have not such a clever wife as yours, to assist me.”

“Indeed,” said Mr. Sleekface, “it’s precious little help which she has ever given me: she is much more indebted to me than I am to her. She has many a time preached my sermons. She has a wonderful memory, and can get off a sermon in a surprising short time, and deliver it without a single mistake. I know many preachers can do the same; and it strikes me most of the popular men in our connexion do it, and don’t always preach their own sermons either, and so pass for very first-rate men. Awhile ago, I and my partner went into a neighbouring circuit to preach for the benefit of some Sunday-schools. She was to preach in the afternoon, and I in the evening: this

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arrangement she didn't altogether like, as she prefers preaching to the largest congregation. Well, if she didn't take for her text, the very same passage that I meant to preach from. As soon as she gave it out, I pulled her by the gown and told her she had taken my text, and

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she had better take another; but she would go on, from it. Well, as she went on, I found that she preached a good part of my sermon, at least the most telling parts of it. I shouldn't have cared so much about her taking my text, if she hadn't introduced my matter; for then I could have done as brother Tipps, who 'travels' in London, does—I could have tacked the sermon to another text. I was very aggravated, for it was one of my best efforts, prepared expressly for school anniversaries. The text was, 'Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.' I divided my subject into three parts: first, the text contains a privilege to be enjoyed; secondly, a blessing to be obtained; and, thirdly, a command to be obeyed. On the first head, I showed what was meant by 'suffer'—its different uses in scripture, and its particular use in the text: secondly, I showed that although the privilege was offered to little children, that great ones were by no means excluded—and

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that 'little' was synonymous with 'young': thirdly, I showed how they must come—by prayer and faith,—and that 'come' didn't mean 'to walk', as some baptists possibly might say, in order to make it appear that the privilege was not granted to infants, and so fetch an argument against infant baptism. On the second head of discourse, I showed the different meanings of 'the kingdom of heaven', as it was sometimes applied to the church, at others to the work of grace in the heart, and also to the place of departed spirits and the dwelling-place of God—I showed that in the text it meant all of them; and didn't forget to give the Calvinists a hard rap. And then, on the last head, I noticed the various ways of forbidding children to come to Christ,—1st, by not praying for them; 2nd, not instructing them when young; 3rd, by setting a bad example; and, 4th, by not offering them to God in baptism. I read a very interesting account of the conversion and happy death of a little girl of five years of age, and didn't forget to warn the people against

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the delusive and dangerous doctrine of baptismal regeneration, as taught in the Church catechism; and concluded my discourse with a few words of application to the children and their parents, exhorting them above all things to give liberally. Such a sermon as this," continued he, "was just adapted to the occasion. I didn't know what to do: it was the only appropriate sermon I had, and the only one I had with me. The anxiety of mind quite knocked me up, so that my wife preached for me."

"How did she manage?" I enquired.

"O! she did very well," replied he; "she is never short of something to say; she is like a many other ministers, never at a loss for words, and preaches with great energy, and so hardly wants any ideas—at least most of the people don't care about them.

But it pleases the Lord to make use of the 'weak things of the world to confound the mighty', both with regard to her sex as well as her sermons." "It seems, then," I said, that "Mrs. Sleek-

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face does not confine her labours to her own sex, as our rule requires. I suppose she does not violate the one which enjoins her to obtain the consent of the superintendent of the circuit, since I presume you grant her that."

"Oh! those are a sort of obsolete rules, for they are never enforced; as she gets large congregations, good collections, and many souls saved, it matters not."

"Whose fault is it," I said, "that they have become obsolete, but those whose duty it is to see that they are not merely a dead letter, but a living and active power, put into force whenever occasion requires? I have seen enough of the evil of obsolete rules: they often prove a very useful auxiliary in carrying out the designs of tyranny. It's just like keeping a savage dog chained up, to be let loose upon any person whom either caprice or malice may mark out for its ferocious attack. Let every obsolete rule in our connexion be rescinded; and until this be done, the liberty of neither preachers nor people can be safe."

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"Stop! stop! not so fast, if you please, young man," said Mr. Sleekface, with great energy. "Go, and tarry at Jericho till your beard is grown, and then talk about reforming rules. Things are indeed come to a pretty pass, when beardless youths

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presume to dictate to their seniors in years, piety, and ability, about reforming the venerable and unequalled constitution of our body. It shows a very turbulent and disaffected spirit; and if I ever hear you utter any such factious language again, I shall feel myself in duty bound to bring it before the District-meeting: and then you will repent having spoken so rashly. I beg you will not make any such remarks to any of the society, or else you'll kindle the dying embers of faction, and they won't be very easy put out."

"If you ever hear me say any thing," I remarked, "which lays me open to the censure of the District-meeting, and you 'feel in duty bound' to report it, I hope you will act according to the dictates of your conscience. And if

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a man's wisdom increase in proportion to the growth of his beard, it would be advisable for some of the senior brethren to shave less frequently than they do."

"Sir, you are now becoming impertinent," said Mr. Sleekface, vehemently. "I'll thank you to leave the room."

I complied with his request, and employed the remainder of the afternoon in visiting some of the sick members of the society.

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CHAPTER VII.

"THE CONFERENCE DIRECTS THAT NO PREACHER SHALL BE ALLOWED TO RETAIN ANY PART OF THE JULY COLLECTION, FOR THE PURPOSE OF PAYING HIS OWN DEFICIENCIES."—*Minute of Conference.*

In passing the shop of Mr. Jones, one of the Circuit Stewards called me in.

"Brother," said he, addressing me, "you are the very man I want to see. Me and brother Jones has been talking about getting, if possible, the circuit-debt wiped off; but how it is to be done, we hardly know."

Mr. Jones was engaged in puffing off a print dress, as a most splendid article—colours as fast as the rocks of Gibraltar—the newest novelty out of London, and fit to grace a peeress of the realm. As soon as he saw me, he said, "Well, brother Sparks, how do you do? I

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hope your soul is prospering.” And with the same breath addressing his customer, he said, “It is a splendid article, ma’am, and will give you great satisfaction.” “Me and my brother in office has been talking about wiping off the circuit-debt, you know,” he remarked, addressing me, “but don’t know how it is to be done.” “I assure you, ma’am, it will wash; it will, indeed, ma’am,” said he to the woman; “I have sold I don’t know how many pieces of it, and the gentility says as it washes like a bit of calico, you know. But, ma’am, if you like, you shall see a little of it washed, you know.” Mr. Jones then cut a bit off the piece, and gave it to his apprentice, to give it to Mrs. Jones to wash—ordering him *sotto voce*, to tell her to wash it in *cold water*, and not to rub it *too hard*. “While my young man is gone,” continued he, “to get the print washed, can I have the pleasure of showing you any other article? If you want any thing in groceries, I can serve you better than any person in the trade, you know: for I have a brother in a large

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wholesale house in London, who picks me up very great bargains, and he has just sent me down about twenty chests of tea, of unequalled quality and cheapness. I can offer you tea at six shillings a pound, as good as you’ll give eight or nine for elsewhere in the town. I know, ma’am, that some of my neighbours make a great puff, but they can’t do it as I can, you know; for they havn’t the ready money to go to market with, as me, you know; and nobody on the spot to pick up bargains. I thought the other day,” said he, looking towards me, “as if we got up a sort o’ tea-meeting, and invite our country friends, you know, but not tell em exactly, as we shall want money from em, or else they won’t p’raps come; and then—” “That’s a cheap piece of Irish-cloth ma’am,” said he, addressing another customer, “every shred is linen, and if I had now to buy it, I should have to give as much for it as he is now offering it you for.” “I beg your pardon, Mr. Sparks,” said he; “I was going to say, you know, and then, we can just go round with a

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book, you know, and ask each person, what they will put their name down for?”

“That plan, I think,” said Mr. Watts, “would work admirably.” Mr. Watts was here interrupted by Mr. Jones calling out, “Has that lady got what she wanted?”

“We haven’t what she wanted,” the young man replied.

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“Fetch her back,” said Mr. Jones, “and I’ll make it.”

“What remark was you making, brother?” said he, addressing Mr. Watts.

“I was saying,” replied he, “as your scheme is a good one, provided we can get two or three leading men, to come out with something handsome, to begin with. *You* must come down with a good round sum, brother Jones.

“More likely *yourself*, brother,” replied Mr. Jones, “times is so bad with me; there’s no money to be got now. I work here from seven in the morning till ten or eleven at night, and can hardly pay for my bread and cheese. We must get Mr. Sleekface to come out liberal, you

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know. I wish we could bleed the old gentleman, it would do him so much good.”

“If you take too much blood from him, *you know*” said Mr. Watts, “you’ll kill him, *you know*”

“There’s no danger o’ that,” replied Mr. Jones, “just walk into the parlour: you’ll find Mrs. Jones there, and I’ll be with you as soon as possible.”

Mrs. Jones was a stout, vulgar looking woman, dressed in all the finery of the establishment. She had been for many years his housekeeper. For a long time, she had indulged the hope of one day becoming Mr. Jones’ happy bride. The day at length arrived, when it was no longer prudent for her master to defer it, and her sad heart was made joyful.

“How doo you doo?” said she, as I entered the room, hastening to shake hands with me, “we thought you had quite forgot us. You havn’t bin as weeks. Susy has bin often askin about you. Let me introduce you to my brother, which lives in the *First London Circuit*.

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I wonder where Susy is” continued she, “go and find her, Maria, and tell her as Mr. Sparks is here.”

“Miss Susy was soon found, and hastened to the drawing-room, so called. She entered in her most graceful style, and shaking hands with me, said, “Oh! Mr. Sparks, Ma and I were saying, a short time ago, that you must be offended, that you hadn’t been of so long a time. I have been wanting to see you, to show you some new

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music, composed by a musical friend of Pa's: it's called the 'Valley of dry bones,' and Pa and Ma think it is the finest composition they have ever heard."

Miss Jones reached the music, and showed it to me, as well as a kind and love-telling note, from the composer. After I had read the note, she whispered to me, "Mr. Dingy is all very well as a composer; and then I have said all. Ma is not very partial to him. I'll play the piece over, and see how you like it." The piano was well adapted to the subject, for the keys were just the colour of rotten bones, and

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they sounded about as musical as a valley of them in motion. Mrs. Jones and her brother were loud in their praise of the composition, and Miss Jones's execution.

"Well, Mr. Sparks," said Miss Jones, "how do you like it?"

"The music *may* be very fine," I replied, "but I cannot say that I admire the words."

The piece began as follows: "Oh thou fountain of wind and storm! blow with a stupendous blast, on this dark and fathomless valley of arid bones." The language throughout, was in the same bombastic style. I found by the aforementioned note, that it was the author's first attempt at an imitation of Handel; and that he had performed it with great eclât, at a sacred concert, which took place in the chapel where he was organist.

"A tune on the pieanna is very enlivenin," said Mr. Jones, who entered the room just as Miss Jones finished. "After fourteen hours' hard work behind the counter, and being bothered to death with faddlin ladies which ruins

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One's peatience with their whimmy fancy, and one's pocket with their banterin down in price, a tune, you know, brother, is indeed very encouraging. There's some nice things as Susy plays, 'The blue sea,' 'The oak tree,' and some others of the same sort. Mr. Sleekface calls em profane songs, as isn't fit for any professin Christian to listen to. Mrs. Sleekface happened to pop in the t'other day as Susy was playin 'The old manor-house,' and her pious feelings was quite shocked, you know. She called us carnal people, and I know not what, you know; and said, you know, as Susy couldn't be allowed to remain in society, if she played such worldly, profane songs. Well, I thought, you know, how very great strainin! I'll see if I can't make you appear a little bit silly some o' these fine days; and so when Mrs. Sleekface came to my house a

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few days after, you know, I talked to her about the ‘blue sea,’ in the same words, as the song does, you know; and then said to her, you know, ‘I fear we have been talkin very profane, and worldly, and

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deserve bein put out of society.’ ‘Why so?’ says she, you know.”

“Pa, we don’t know, till you have told us,” said Miss Jones. “I wish you would get off saying ‘you know.’ Both I and Ma have told you about it a hundred times.”

“It is silly, I admit, but it's only my way. I must try to break myself off it.”

“ ‘Why put out of society?’ says she. ‘Because,’ says I, ‘we have been talkin about the blue sea, about which Susy sings a song, which you call profane, you know. Now I think as if it’s not wrong to talk about the sea, as it's not wrong to sing about it.’ Well, you know, she hadn’t a word to say to it, but brought a passage or two of scripture forward, which wasn’t at all to the point.”

After tea, Mr. Jones, myself, and Mr. Watts were left alone. The spirits and pipes having been spread out, and the circuit stewards having mixed a strong glass each, Mr. Jones thus began the conversation: “I say, brother Sparks, we have known one

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another long enough to be able to talk a bit together about circuit matters. I want to know how it is, as we have been reported to Conference as having a many more members than we really have. It’s been done I don’t know how many times. I know the reason: it’s done to make em appear great and useful preachers, and as they may get good circuits. If it’s done again, you know, I’ll most assuredly appeal against it; for we have to pay ever so much more to Conference for it.”

“That’s how the great increase,” said Mr. Watts, “in society is made out at the Conference.”

“There’s a good deal,” said Mr. Jones, “both in the super and his wife, as I don’t like. They won’t let their daughters come up to see Susy, you know, for fear of her corruptin em; and when their mother comes to the shop, nobody will wait on her, if they can help it, for she’ll banter one down, in a penno’rth o’ tape, or a quartern o’ soap. This is what she says, you know—as preachers’ families ought, you know,

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to have their things at cost price. ‘Pr’aps you’d like to have your food and clothing given you,’ I said. The old man is always grumblin, you know, about the smallness of the ‘quarter-age’ and ‘board.’ He says as they have a right to the profits of their self-denial. This is how he argues, you know: ‘The preachers, before me, used so much coal and candles.—I have a right to use as much; but I don’t use as much, so I have a right to the difference.’ When he was arguin in this way to me, one day, I says, you know, ‘the preachers before you often broke windows, and crockery, and furniture, and had doctors’ bills and funerals; now you’ve kept free of all these expenses, and so you’ve a right to the difference.’ This gav the old gentleman a poser. I’ve found him out a makin a extra charge on some books as I have bought from him. I think he ought to be satisfied with the book-room allowance of ten per cent. I rather admired his givin out the other day in the chapel, as he could get any books, that any body might order, on the shortest notice, and

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on the most reasonable terms. He told em as well, you know, as they was bound to buy from the book-room, as the profits went towards supportin the cause of God. I don’t know what you may think, brethren, but I look on the superintendents as neither more nor less than tradesmen; which, you know, is quite contrary to a particular rule on that point.”

Mr. Jones was now summoned into the shop to convince a customer of the absurdity of supposing that the opposite grocer could sell cheaper coffee than himself. Finding that he would probably be detained some time, we left the house.

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CHAPTER VIII.

“IT BROUGHT FORTH ANGER, HATRED, MALICE, REVENGE, AND EVERY EVIL WORD AND WORK.”—*Wesley’s Lament over the Society.*

One morning as I sat alone with Miss Sleekface, I said to her, “I have discovered one of the causes of your sister’s unhappiness: she has been disappointed in her love.—James, the chapel-keeper, has told me all about it.”

“Since you have heard,” she replied, “I will tell you how it was. Mr. Pepper I believe was very fond of her, and my sister liked him very much; and he was every way worthy of her love. As soon as my father became aware of the attachment, he

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suffered him no longer to remain in the house, but sent him into lodgings, and at Conference had him removed. They corresponded for a short time, but it was put a stop to, by the command of my father.

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The reason why my father opposed the union was, because Mr. Pepper had no money. He quite expects us to do wonders in marrying, as we have such chances of doing well, owing to our travelling about so much. He is very anxious that he should be appointed to London or Liverpool, as he thinks we might meet with some wealthy merchant there for a husband. But I tell my father, that it is not very likely that any fine *wealthy* merchant will have us: it is possible that some *half-ruined* one might marry us for our money, and a pretty marrying that would be! Give me, I say, the man of my heart, though he hasn't a farthing, rather than the richest merchant in the world. I smiled at Esther, the other day, when talking about marrying; she said

Father and mother is a carious pair

For building castles in the air.

For surely it is nothing less than castle-building in the air, to expect that rich merchants, who drive their carriages, and live in never such grand style, will marry uneducated and

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unpolished girls like us. And besides, brought up as we have been, the parade and splendour of high-life would be only cumbersome to us."

At this moment the door opened; and who, to our astonishment, should enter the room, but Mrs. Sleekface, who had been listening on the outside for a long time.

"And so me and your father build castles in the air, do we?" said she, with a stern look. "Follow me into the study," continued she.

Miss Sleekface obeyed the bidding of her mother. What passed during that interview, I had no opportunity of knowing, for all intercourse between myself and Miss Sleekface was from that time strictly prohibited. On the following morning I was summoned by Mr. Sleekface into the study.

"Mr. Sparks," said he, "have you thought over my offer about those books which I spoke to you about, some time ago? I assure you, brother, that you can't do better

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than purchase them; they are dirt cheap. I begin almost to repent having offered them at so great a sacrifice;

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but as I have passed my word, I am not the man to draw back.”

“I assure you, Mr. Sleekface,” said I, “that I experience some difficulty in duly appreciating the liberal spirit which has induced you to make so great a sacrifice in order to serve my interest—a sacrifice of which I feel myself altogether unworthy. And, Sir, as you seem in some measure to regret having offered the books at so low a price, I will allow you most willingly to retract the whole, and give you an opportunity of making a more advantageous sale.”

As Mr. Sleekface was commencing his reply, his “dear partner” entered the room, and having taken a seat, thus addressed me:

“You have heard, I suppose, from Mr. Sleekface, what our intentions are, with respect to the sinister connexion which evidently subsists between you and our eldest daughter. We have had it on our minds a long time to mention the thing to you. We have observed with great anxiety a growing intimacy and attachment between you, which we have felt it our

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duty to check. We have had our eye upon your tender assiduities. We have to tell you, then, that any hopes which you may have fondly entertained of one day having Tabitha for your bride, can never be realised by you.” “Isn’t that our determination, love?” said she, addressing Mr. Sleekface.

“Most assuredly,” replied he.

“And moreover,” continued she, “we marvel much at your presumption, in daring to aspire to the hand of a young female whose fortune will be not less than six hundred a year. But you young preachers are always aiming at marrying ladies with large fortunes.”

“Have you done now, madam?” I inquired, “for if you have, I will speak.”

“That depends, Sir,” she replied, “but say what you have to say, and have done with it”

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I spoke as follows: “In answer, Madam, to your long and insolent address, I would use the language of your daughter, which you overheard, when so meanly listening at the door last night—

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‘Isn't father and mother a curious pair

For building castles in the air?’

All this ‘growing intimacy’—‘hopes fondly entertained of obtaining Miss Tabitha's hand’— ‘daring aspirations’—and ‘sinister connexion’, are all imaginary castles of your own building. I have never *wished* to have Miss Tabitha for a bride. I hurl back upon yourself the charge of *presumption*, for you have all along been *presuming* the existence of an attachment between myself and your daughter, without the slightest ground for any such supposition. You need not, I assure you, be alarmed about any ‘sinister connexion,’ which you imagine exists between us; for I have never had the least wish to form any alliance with her; and if I had aimed at such an object, I hope that I should have striven to compass it, by honourable and straight-forward means. I can tell you, for your satisfaction, that if your daughter had for her fortune ten thousand a year, and she would receive my addresses, and *you* would accept me as her suitor, I would decline the

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honour. I respect Miss Sleekface; I deeply pity her. She has many serious faults, blended with many excellencies. For the *former* I blame *not her*, as they are the effect of her education; whilst the wonder is that she possesses the *latter* in any degree. It is painful to see her fair form reduced to a shadow her noble mind and generous heart crushed and broken by those whose duty it is to have reared and fostered with loving care, a being so worthy of parental regard.”

“Do you mean, then,” said Mrs. Sleekface, earnestly, “to insinuate that we have not done our duty to her, as her parents yea, that we have acted with cruelty towards her? Surely, Mr. Sleekface, we are not to suffer ourselves to be thus vilely accused in our own house, and that by a low-born stripling, who is only on probation, ‘a proud, conceited, talking spark,’ or rather sparks, as uniting in himself the bad qualities of the whole species. We are not to be thus insulted, surely?” “Don't be too violent, my dear,” said Mr.

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Sleekface; “we are all too much excited. Mr. Sparks has spoken unadvisedly with his lips, and your tongue has gone a little too fast. Let us kneel down and pray the Lord to quiet our spirits, and give us a right understanding in all things.”

As soon as we rose from our knees, Mrs. Sleekface left the room at the suggestion of her husband. “I am very sorry,” said Mr. Sleekface, “that any unpleasantness should have arisen amongst us. My wife certainly was very rash, in accusing you of having formed any underhand connexion with our dear Tabitha; but I hope you will forgive her. And now as to the very rash assertion you made, I am willing to overlook it, knowing that you said it in the heat of the moment; and being, as we are now, quite calm, let us return to the settling about the books. I know that I am offering them to you much under their value, but do you think that I repent it? By no means, I am glad to have an opportunity of serving you.”

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“I feel obliged to you,” I replied, “for your kindness, but I have no wish to lay myself under so great an obligation; and besides, if you were to offer them to me at one half the price you have set upon them, I would not purchase them, for they would be dear to me at that sum.”

“Then we can’t trade, can we?” asked Mr. Sleekface with a troubled look.

“We cannot,” I answered.

“I have been thinking,” said he, “what were the exact expressions you used to my wife a short time ago. Didn’t you say, that we had broken the heart, and reduced to a shadow, the form, of our dear Tabitha? These, I’ve been thinking, are serious expressions, and involve the neglect of the most natural duties; in short, you charge us with inhuman cruelty. I didn’t think that the words conveyed such a bad meaning till *just now*. You have, indeed, as my dear partner said, insulted us in our own house, and it will not do to overlook such wicked language. Considering, therefore, all

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the circumstances of the case, I must insist upon your leaving my house this very day, and going into lodgings; and for the future you must have no sort of communication with my daughters.”

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I did not deign to give Mr. Sleekface an answer, but left the room, and as soon as possible packed up my things and took my departure. I had no difficulty in procuring lodgings. Mr. Jones was very anxious for me to take up my abode at his house, but I declined the offer, for a very good reason. A report had been circulated in the society, that I paid ‘particular attention’ to Miss Jones. This originated in my going to Mr. Jones’s occasionally, and was confirmed by my having walked home once or twice with Miss Jones from chapel, and was stamped as true by the authority of Mrs. Snipe, who stated at a tea-party, in the presence of a number of ladies, that the matter was quite settled, and we should be married at the next Conference. A report of this kind being current, I thought it prudent to eschew

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all occasion of giving it any appearance of truth. Nor had I forgotten a remark, that Mrs. Jones made one evening, when I was taking supper there.—“That she should have no objection for Susy to be a travelling preacher’s wife, provided she liked the man, and he had a chance of taking good circuits.” I could almost fancy at times, from her very familiar way of addressing me, that she looked upon me prospectively as her son-in-law. And then Mr. Jones, with unheard-of liberality, made me a present of half-a-dozen cambric handkerchiefs, which Miss Jones neatly hemmed and marked with her red hair. It was a common saying in the society,

‘There is no man like Jones

For scraping the bones.’

And it was very true; for no hungry dog ever bestowed more pains on cleaning a bone, than he did in cleaning out the pockets of his customers. Not a morsel of meat would he suffer to be lost: he would, with the help of a candle, diligently search around the floor of the

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shop, after it was closed, and pick up every morsel either of string, or paper, and every bent pin. He also counted over the copper in the till, lest the apprentice early in the morning should appropriate a few pence to his own use. He never suffered either his apprentices or journeymen, to go out after the shop was closed, for fear, as he said, “lest their hearts should get corrupt, and turn out bad, and then he would have the blood of their souls on his garment;” whereas his chief motive was, to keep them

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from running into expenses, to defray which, they might find it difficult without borrowing occasionally from their master. Such was the character of the man, who made me a present of the handkerchiefs. Judge ye, then, whether Mr. Jones would have made me such a present, if he had not some idea of my becoming his son-in-law, of which I had no more idea than of becoming his father-in-law; and so I resolved at once that I would not lodge at his house. He was much surprised that I declined his kind offer, and Mrs. Jones expressed

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her deep regret, at not being favoured with the holy privilege of a minister's daily converse.

I was soon comfortably fixed in my new lodgings. I had plenty of fire, and candles, and soap, and other articles of need, with which I had been but sparingly supplied at Mr. Sleekface's. During the rest of the year I had no communication with either Mrs. Sleekface or her daughters. They never came to chapel when I preached. Whenever I met Mrs. Sleekface in the street, she passed me, with her eyes turned towards heaven, as if praying for me. The family left the circuit at the following Conference. I have never seen any of them since that time. Mr. Sleekface, at the earnest request of the Conference, (for it knew not where to station him,) at length consented to become a supernumerary. He regularly received the usual allowance from the "preacher's fund." He settled down in Liverpool, judging it a good mart for the disposal of his daughters. He succeeded in his design, without much difficulty. A half-bankrupt merchant, who was a class-leader,

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married Miss Sleekface; and a lawyer, whose credit was tottering, married Miss Esther. These were the only two occasions wherein Mr. Sleekface can be said to have helped a person in distress; and certainly his assistance came very timely to these unfortunate individuals. The merchant soon lost his wife's fortune by rash speculation, and Mr. Sleekface had to save him from going to jail. The lawyer made better use of his money, and contrived to get the management of Mr. Sleekface's affairs into his own hands; which he turned to good account. It is needless to add that Mr. Sleekface's "gray hairs were brought down with sorrow to the grave."

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A THOUSAND A YEAR.

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A THOUSAND A YEAR.

CHAPTER I.

“THE METHODIST KNAVE IS THE WORST OF KNAVES.”— *Large Minutes*.

The sun was just breaking through the clouds, and gave promise of a fine day, as I stepped on board the steamer bound for one of the isles in the English Channel. We had both wind and tide in our favour; so we sailed along in gallant style. We had merry hearts, and cheerful voices on deck, and a good substantial breakfast regaled the hungry in the cabin. The sun by degrees chased away the clouds, fringing them with gold, as they retreated before his piercing rays; and then, melting away, the heavens presented a measureless

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canopy of unspotted azure. The serenity of the sky, strongly contrasted with the turbulence of the sea. The waters were much agitated. I watched the waves rising in ineffectual battle with the prow, and retreating from the encounter in foaming rage, along the sides of the vessel, and losing themselves in the wide expanse behind. As we sailed along, my fear and distrust gradually left me, and I became assured that no danger need be apprehended. “Are these,” thought I, “the perils of the deep, that I was told were so fearful—and the dread of which made my loving mother so much afraid, and my father’s heart sink within him, lest he should see my face no more? Could they but see us riding in such triumph over the waves, how would it dispel the disquietude of their minds!”

As these thoughts were passing within me, I was saluted by a middle-aged, pale, small-eyed gentleman, who said to me, “This is a fine sight, is it not, Sir?”

“Very,” I replied.

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“Were you ever on the great deep, before?” he inquired.

“Never,” I answered.

“Then, Sir,” said he, “you never before saw the wonders of the Lord. The sea is the Lord’s, and he made it; the waves thereof do toss and roar, but he stilleth them. He made Leviathan to play therein; and *man* has made the steam-ship to take its pastime

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therein. It strikes me that steam is a wonderful power. If it had been told to my old grandfather, that we should be able to face wind and tide, and go at twenty mile an hour, by steam, O how he would have laughed at it, and called it all moonshine! I consider, Sir, that steam and teetotalism are the two great wonders of the age—steam in the temporal world, teetotalism in the spiritual; and it is a very striking fact, as they both have to do with water. And as water once destroyed the world, God is about to fulfil his rainbow promise, now, to save it by water. It is quite wonderful, that even professing Christians, and, more than all, ministers of the gospel, should

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be so blind as not to read this great lesson, written in such large characters.”

By this time, what with the queer notions of this singular gentleman, and the vibratory motion of the vessel, I began to feel a trifle squeamish; and was about to take a little brandy and water, as remedial of my disagreeable sensation, when he laid hold of the bottle, and asked me, what I was going to drink.

“Weak brandy and water,” I replied.

“Touch not! taste not! handle not!” said he, emphatically, “or you take poison into your mouth. Call the fluid by its proper name, ‘liquid fire and distilled damnation,’ and then take it, if you dare.”

“Leave your hold of the bottle,” I said, sharply; “for I’m sick.”

“I dare not, if you were dying,” he answered, “for I shall be guilty of helping you to poison yourself.”

I snatched at the bottle, but I could not wrest it from him. All at once I fell sick, and he fetched me some water to drink. When I

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had recovered, he said to me, “Pray, Sir, is your name Mr. Sparks?”

I answered in the affirmative.

“Well, I thought,” said he, “that likely it was. My name is Mr. Grumpy. I am a leader in the circuit, where you are stationed; and I believe that it will be your lot to take up your lodgings at my house. Oh! brother, you’ve no pleasant times before you, I can tell you: you’ll have a pretty kettle of fish to fry, I assure you, and over a very hot fire. Most of the preachers have burnt their fingers over it, and you’ll do the same, if you don’t mind. You know, I doubt not, to what I allude: it’s the row with these

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Warrenites: you'll hear enough about it, when you land, without my telling you now."

Just as Mr. Grumpy said this, the cook passed me, carrying in his hand some scrapings of a ham, and some yellow-looking cabbage, the sight of which brought on the sickness with redoubled violence. Mr. Grumpy led me into the cabin; and when we reached the bay, the same humane individual awoke me, and announced

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to me the glad news. He helped me from the floor, and assisted me on to the deck.

"You have had a comfortable nap," said he; "the cold water did that for you. Come with me, and look after your luggage, and we'll soon be at home, and a cup of good tea will quickly make you all right." "A cup of cold water is a better remedy," I said, smiling.

"Cold water when sick," he replied; "but tea is the best to sooth the stomach after sickness."

Being in company with Mr. Grumpy, I was saved from being pestered, like the other passengers, by lodging-house keepers, and inn-waiters, and porters, poking cards into their faces, and teasing them with importunity. Mrs. Grumpy met us on the pier, and into her care Mr. Grumpy delivered me, whilst he tarried behind to bring home with him a few passengers, whom he had prevailed upon to take lodgings at his house. As we went along, the saintly Mrs. Grumpy made many apologies for not

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having my apartments in readiness; and asked me if I should object to take tea in the public room.

"Not at all," I answered.

And forthwith entering the room, I took my seat near a gentlemanly looking man, who for some time had been engaged in a vigorous defence of the English Church, against the fierce attacks of a Local preacher. I only heard the concluding sentences of the earnest vindication, which were as follow:—"You say," remarked the gentleman very earnestly "that the Church of England decrees rites and forms that are not sanctioned by Scripture. If you mean to say, that there are rites and forms in use in our Church, which are not expressly mentioned in Scripture, I agree with you. But if on the contrary you mean to affirm that our Church has ordained any

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ceremonies, or forms which are *condemned* by Scripture, this I entirely deny. But permit me to use the *argumentum ad hominem*, and ask are there no matters of discipline in use, in your Connexion, but those for

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which you have the express warrant of Scripture? Do you for instance read in the Word of God, of District-Meetings, or Quarter-days, or Theological Institutions, or the Wesleyan Conference? Did the Pastors of the different Churches, which the Apostles founded, take Circuits, and change them every two or three years? Did they give tickets of admission in- to the Christian Church, and exclude those who were unable to pay for them? Pray never more have the presumption to assert that the forms and ceremonies of the Church are un-scriptural, so long as your own system is so entirely opposed both in spirit and character, to the constitution and discipline of the Apostolical Churches.

Then again, you indulge in bitter invective against the Church because “of its alliance with the State; and you tell me to look at its overgrown wealth, and how the sons of the nobility, and gentry enter the ministry merely for a living.” Perhaps all the while you forget your own body, in a very important sense, is allied

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to the state. The Conference depends on the Christian magistrate for the protection of its property. The Poll-Deed, which gives the Conference possession of all the Chapels, &c., in the Connexion, is lodged in the High Court of Chancery; and only within a few years the Conference has appealed to the decision of that Court, in the maintenance of its secular claims. Such is the nature and the extent of the dependence of your own body on the temporal power, for the enjoyment of its property. And then, as to the overgrown wealth of the Church, why if all its revenues were to be equally divided amongst the Clergy, there would not be more than about a £140 a year for each; a sum, be it observed, much less than is received by most of the Methodist Preachers.

And further with respect to those sons of the nobility and gentry, who you say enter Holy Orders for a living. Let me ask, are there no sons of cotton-weavers, and mechanics, and small shopkeepers who go into the Methodist ministry for a living? The pecuniary attractions of an

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Itinerant life are much greater to such men, than those held out by the Church to the class of men, who enter the Clerical office. The prizes in the Church are only few; and great is the outlay of tune and capital, before any one can become a competitor for them; whilst the chances are, that he comes in for a blank. But in the Methodist Ministry all are prizes; there are no blanks. If you can only become an Itinerant preacher, your fortune is made. You are handsomely educated, housed, fed, clothed, and buried at the expense of the Connexion—and at your death, your widow and family are provided for from the same source. And do you mean to tell me that all these advantages of a Circuit life are lost sight of by the candidates for the Methodist Ministry? There is no wonder that the supply of *devoted* young men, should so far exceed the demands of the Connexion; the competition is hot and active for the life provision afforded by the Itinerant System.

And again. With regard to the similarity, which, you pretend to say, exists between the English Church and Popery. I maintain that

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our Church resembles the Roman Catholic, only in those points, in which that Church is Scriptural and Apostolical; whilst your system resembles it in some of its very worst features. What are your Class Leaders and Preachers but so many father-confessors, to whom the people are obliged to make their weekly and quarterly confessions, at a certain fixed price. And do you not forbid your preachers to marry for four years?—What is this but celibacy? And as to the matter of Papal dispensations, is there nothing in methodism similar? With respect to tradition, methodism and popery are very much alike. For Romanists interpret the Scriptures according to the traditions of the Church; and the methodists, according to the traditions of John Wesley. And how much your local preachers resemble the preaching friars; and your *legal* conference is not unlike the College of Cardinals; and your President may fairly be compared to the Pope. And if you come to visions and apparitions, and such like fanaticism, methodism, any day, will bear a comparison with the Church of Rome.

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“I AM SORRY TO CONFESS THAT THERE ARE SOME AMONG THE PREACHERS OF A MOST VIOLENT, UNGOVERNABLE SPIRIT.”—*Wesley*.

As soon as breakfast and prayers were over, Mr. Slice, one of the “circuit stewards,” called upon me. In the course of conversation, he asked me, if I were a teetotaler? On my answering him, that I was not, he kindly offered to send me as a present, a gallon of brandy, and a dozen of wine, but I begged to decline the gift. No sooner was Mr. Slice gone, than Mr. Abel Stone, the other circuit steward, made his appearance. Our interview closed, with an engagement to dine with him, at his country house, at three o’clock. As soon as he had left me, I set off to pay my respects to the family of the superintendent. Mr. Jones had not reached

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home from the Conference. I was a native of the same place as himself, so that I was very well known to the family by name. As I approached the fine house, I thought, “Well this is a great improvement upon his residence at 75 Dusty Row, where he lived before he went out to ‘travel.’” And when I was introduced to the family in the drawing-room, and beheld the Misses Jones dressed in dashing muslins and fine scarfs, and showy aprons, and decked with brooches and rings, again I looked back to former times, and thought ‘preaching is better than cotton weaving.’ And as I looked round the room so elegantly furnished, I turned my eyes to 75 Dusty Row, and contrasted the bright coloured carpet, the mahogany chairs, the luxurious couch, the handsome pier glass, the grand piano, the richly framed pictures, the array of chimney ornaments, with the miserable furniture of Mr. Jones’s dwelling before he “received his call.” Oh! would not old Jenny Jones lift up her hands in wonder, could she but see, what a fine house her son Richard

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lives in? and would she not return God thanks (as in duty bound) for all his mercies? I had heard Mr. Jones’s father say, what a fine and rich wife his son Dick had got. He had only heard so, for he had never seen her. He used to say, with tears in his eyes, “My Dick has got so proud, sin he got married, he hardly ever comes to see *us*, and niver axes me to go over to see *him*. He writes p’raps once a year, and I gets somebody to read me his letter. If I knowed how to write, I’d tell him my mind. Pride cometh before destruction, and he’ll be catchin it some o’ these days.”

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Though a stranger to Mrs. and the Misses Jones, I was well known to Mr. Jones. I knew indeed far more of him than they themselves did; for he had diligently kept from them, as far as he was able, his origin and family connexions. Mr. Jones had opposed my appointment to his circuit. He was afraid of my disclosing, that which he desired to be kept secret. He did not wish a word to be known about Dusty Row. The echo of "Sloucher

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Dick" (the nickname he had acquired in his factory) would sound gratingly on his ear. He was anxious, that not a word should be whispered concerning poor Polly Smith, a dressmaker, whom he forsook when the chance of a better match offered. Mr. Jones knew well, that I was cognizant of all these unpleasant matters, and he was greatly afraid that I should disclose them. It was not to be wondered at, therefore, that he opposed my appointment.

When I returned to my lodgings, Mr. Grumpy said to me, "I hope you found Mrs. Jones and family well; they are very dashing sort of folks. A pretty example those girls set the society, dressed as fine as peacocks, and as proud as Lucifer. How many poor creatures are hard put to, to pay a penny a-week, and a shilling a quarter, to support such howdacious pride. Now-a-days," continued he, "there's a very neat way o' bribing people, under the pretence of offering presents. Be on your guard, brother, that's all. You understand."

Mr. Abel Stone now drove up to the door in

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his phaeton. I took my seat, and was soon at Glacier House, his country residence. It was a neat and elegant mansion, built on the slope of a hill, overlooking a rich landscape, which stretched down to the sea. Mr. Stone, senr., met me at the door, and shaking me by the hand, said, "Glad, right glad, am I to see the servant of the Lord, who sheweth us the way of peace. Welcome, thou messenger of the Highest to my house."

He led me into the dining-room, and introduced me to a Miss Stearnes, an elderly and emaciated looking person. She spoke to me in a whisper; her mind seemed at times to wander, and she took at intervals, a draught of some kind of fluid, out of a

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pint bottle, which she carried in her pocket. I felt anxious to know something of her history, but had no opportunity of asking Mr. Abel any questions concerning her.

“Well,” said Mr. Stone, “how do you like your lodgings, brother Sparks? I fear you will not find Mr. Grumpy one of the most pleasant

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men to live with. He is a very disaffected man at the bottom; though he never takes an active part with the factious. We thought that, by placing you to lodge at his house, you might bring him to a better mind. He is a zealous teetotaler, but that you need’nt mind. It will, however, give you a key to many remarks which you may hear him make about certain parties in the wine and spirit trade. I fear that your path, in this circuit, will be but a thorny one. We have among us many disturbers of our Zion, and I have heard that the man who is turning the Connexion upside down, is coming here also. These things, brother, grieve my inmost soul. I fear that we shall have a division; but it will do good, as it will separate the chaff from the wheat.”

Much was said both by father and son, to impress me with a sense of their piety and zeal. There was something so inexpressibly bland in Mr. Abel’s voice, and such an enchanting smile upon his face, and such extreme gentleness in his manners, that an inexperienced

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person would soon have been possessed in his favour. Not so with me: I had seen such gentlemen before, and was not to be deceived by a smooth outside. The old man possessed a very solemn countenance; a smile never crossed his dark brow, and he spoke in a deep and grave tone.

“I hope you had a pleasant visit at Glacier House,” said Mr. Grumpy, as I entered my lodgings, on my return from thence.

“Oh! middling,” I replied.

“Did you see Miss Stearnes?” inquired he.

“Yes, I saw her,” I answered, “pray who is she?”

“Oh! there’s a long tale,” said Mr. Grumpy, “hanging to that question, which I will tell you, if you’ll walk into this room. This Miss Stearnes, then,” said he, “is a lady who is worth more than a thousand a year. The house in which Mr. Stone lives, and

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the land all about it, is her property. It was left to her by her father, and she was his only child. Mr. Stearnes took old Stone into his family as a

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shoe-black, and he got on to be his groom. Being a steady youth, he was very fond of him. At his death, he became Miss Stearnes' butler, and then a sort of bailiff or steward. He was then appointed a local-preacher, and got married. Miss Stearnes placed unbounded confidence in him; she could do nothing without his advice: he was a sort of a major-domo. He soon got on in the world. If there was a bit of land offered for sale, he was sure to bid for it, or buy it. He built ever so many houses, and people began to remark that he seemed getting on too fast to be doing the thing quite honestly. In time he acquired such power over Miss Stearnes, that he made her do just what he liked; he kept the keys in his possession, and all the money; so that, at last, she came to be a poor pensioner on the rascal's bounty for her very food and clothing. She has been for many years a poor weak creature, and so he took advantage of her weakness, to raise himself to power. Why, sir, he has gone so far as to hinder her very relations from coming

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to the house, to see her. He stints her in every thing save brandy, and that he allows her to drink till she raves again, hoping, no doubt, that she will soon kill herself, and then he'll come in for the property, for he has made that all right, no doubt."

"It was brandy, then," said I, "which I saw her drinking so frequently out of a bottle, which she took from her pocket."

"No doubt," rejoined Mr. Grumpy, "she is drinking it night and day." "The son," continued he, "is as great a rogue as the father; and he is so very mealy-mouth'd over it. I'll tell you a little thing which he did, just to show up that smooth-faced hypocrite. One of my lodgers bought groceries and spirits of him. When he was in his shop one day, Abel says to him, 'When you go away, you may as well take a little brandy with you.' Well, and so accordingly he goes to the shop, on the morning of his departure, and Abel says, 'You had better take a quart or two with you, for I can put it into two bladders, and fasten them round

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your body, and covering them over with your cloak, you will easily escape detection.’ Abel did so, but he got nabbed, and forfeited the brandy. This is the oily-mouth’d, angel-faced, Mr. Abel; who ought to have been rather named Cain, for he kills his brethren by wholesale with his poison. A nice man he is, to be one of the chief pillars of the church; but it’s no matter, so long as there’s plenty of precious metal in its make, and will stand boring pretty freely; the preachers will let it stand, though all the rest is made up of rotten-wood, hay or stubble.”

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CHAPTER III.

"THE ROMISH CLERGY CALL THEIR HERETICS, ENEMIES OF THE CHURCH; THESE PREACHERS, CALL THOSE WHO STAND IN THE WAY OF THEIR OWN SCHEMES OF AMBITION AND POWER, ENEMIES OF THE WORK OF GOD, INCARNATE DEVILS",—*Wesley.*

On the return of Mr. Jones from the Conference, a special “leader’s-meeting,” was convened, to report to the members, the important decision to which the supreme court of judicature had come, with respect to the case of Dr. Warren. The supporters of Methodism, *as it was*, and the supporters of it as it *should be*, looked to this meeting, for the final adjustment of their quarrel. Each party mustered in full force. Mr. Jones occupied the chair, and after singing and prayer, he thus addressed the meeting:

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“My Christian brethren: It is to be hoped, that the important and solemn business of this meeting will be carried on, and concluded in a Christian spirit, without any of the ill feeling and noisy uproar, which have so much disgraced our previous meetings. I have summoned you together, to acquaint you with the decision of the Conference on Dr. Warren and his allies. There was a time when I entertained a feeling of regard towards the unfortunate Doctor, but I can now feel nothing else, but the most unmitigated contempt and disgust, (cries of shame! shame! from the opposition.) I am not ashamed to say it, that I do feel a most thorough contempt for any man who can eat his own words, as he has done. He has said, scores of times, that a ministry ought to be well educated; and accordingly he was the first to promote the establishment of the Theological Institution. All went on very well with him till the

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appointment of President; and when he found that truly great and good man Mr. Bunting, (great groans from the opposition,)

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Yes, I say again," continued the speaker, "that great and good man, Mr. Bunting, (increased groaning,) was appointed President, instead of himself, he then turned round and opposed its establishment, and said that learning was a bad thing; that it would make the preachers proud, and so on. ('That couldner be, for they are so already,' cried one of the opposition,) He who, to the disgrace of himself and the cause, wore a red rag fastened to his coat laps, to get the degree of L.L.D. tacked to his name, declaims against pride and learning. Oh, 'tell it not in Gath, publish it not in Askelon,' that one of our body could so far degrade himself. There is no doubt but he has been made the stalking horse of a faction, whose object is to change and subvert the whole system. He has been hurried along by the violent pressure of a seditious mob, to lengths which he never meant to go, when he set out with them; and now he is as bad himself, as the very worst. ('No foul play,' cried the opposition.) It is not foul play, as you

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meanly insinuate," continued the speaker, with awful vehemence. "I would say the same if he were here."

"Mr. Chairman," said Mr. Abel Stone, rising with great emotion from his seat, "permit me. Sir, to say half a dozen words. I am really quite surprised that some of my brethren are so void of good breeding (ironical coughs) as to interrupt a person when speaking, and especially our superintendent, to whom we are commanded to be in subjection, and to honour, as being placed over us by the Lord."

The speaker's voice was now quite drowned by the noise, and he was obliged to resume his seat.

Mr. Tiggs, a bookseller, one of the disaffected, rose to address the meeting; but the chairman insisted on his sitting down. "I will not be put down by no man: *righteous Abel* has had his say, and I will have mine." ('You shall!' cried out the opposition.) It was finally settled, that he should be heard after the Chairman had concluded his address.

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Mr. Jones then proceeded to say, "Inasmuch as Dr. Warren has joined the subverters of our Zion, and has spoken many things of a wicked and calumnious nature, the Conference, in the solemn discharge of its duty to God, and his church, has suspended him from the Ministry, (great groaning.) The Conference has come to the resolution to suffer no such innovations in the polity of our vast body, as the disaffected wish to bring in; and the superintendents are earnestly required to exercise their rightful authority, in removing from our Zion, all those who go about sowing division and strife. It must never be forgotten that ours is quite a voluntary society, and if any person is not satisfied therewith he can leave it, and join any other Christian communion. This is the natural course. But do we find the discontented acting thus? No, quite the contrary. They stay among us, and by falsehood and misrepresentation, strive to make others as discontented as themselves; and when they have got a sufficient number to form a society, they then leave,

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and take them off with them. Thus they draw unstable souls into the dreadful sin of schism, and make divisions in the church of God. For a local-preacher or a leader to abuse the power given him by the connexion, to work its downfall, is a species of the blackest ingratitude, of the most enormous wickedness. (Oh! oh! from the opposition.) May the prayer of our hearts be, 'Give peace in our time, Oh Lord, and scatter them who delight in war.'

The speaker now sat down amidst mingled cheers and groans.

As soon as the noise had subsided, Mr. Tiggs addressed the meeting as follows: "I hope of your clemency that you will hear me, brethren, whilst I make a few remarks upon the speech of the Chairman, and state what we, who are called the disaffected, object to, in the management of the concerns of our body. I consider that you, Mr. Chairman, have spoken very uncharitably of Doctor Warren. You said that he 'eat his own words, and that he began to oppose the Institution, as soon as that *great*

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and good man Mr. Bunting, was made President.' His opposition began before that juncture, and when he found that the greatest tyrant in the Connexion was to be the President, he opposed it with all his might. And he did quite right. As to your insinuation, that his opposition sprung from disappointment of the office, it is truly

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worthy of the quarter from whence you got it. I have been thinking, how very suddenly you changed your opinion about the Doctor. So long as he agreed with yourself and the Conference, in opinion, you had the greatest regard for him, but no sooner did he differ from you, than you felt towards him the most unmitigated disgust; and now you pronounce him the worst of a seditious mob. And for the charge of sedition, I allow that he is a seditious man, after the manner, which you call sedition; that is, one who exposes the crying abuses of the Connexion, and calls for their reformation. St. Paul was called a mover of sedition, because he brought the gainings of the craftsmen into danger. Wickliffe,

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and Luther, and Ridley, were seditious men; because they exposed the disgraceful corruptions of the Romish Church. And Mr. Wesley himself was a mover of sedition,—for he spoke out against the corruption in the Church in his time. (Hear, hear, from the opposition.) Then again, as to the enormous sin which those commit, who abuse the power given them by the Connexion, to work its downfall, the same charge stands against Mr. Wesley; for did not he abuse the power given to him by his Church, in endeavouring to work its downfall, if showing up its abuses had such a tendency. Again, *you* say, ‘it is the duty of the discontented to leave the society,’ we *think*, that it is their duty to continue, and reform abuses. You sir, have been declaiming against the awful sin of *schism*, which the disaffected cause those to commit, whom they draw away from your communion; and then, in the next breath, you insist upon it that it is their duty to commit this ‘enormous wickedness.’ In this, as in all things else, we wish to

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take our great founder as our example, who never left the Church, and said that he never would, till he was put out. It is really quite amusing to hear the Conference declaim so vehemently against the sin of schism, when every minister belonging to that conclave is himself a schismatic from the Church. Let them all go back, from whence they have come out, and then such talk against schism will come with some sort of grace. (Great applause from the opposition, and silence on the ministerial side.) And as for Mr. Abel Stone’s speech, it was perfectly in character with that honey-mouth’d and asp-tongued hypocrite.”

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“I cannot allow,” said the Chairman, “such abusive language to be applied to our brother.”

“Abusive, did you say?” continued Mr. Tiggs, “I’ll soon make that all right. If I read the rules of our society rightly, no person is allowed ‘to buy or sell, or drink, spirituous liquors—except in case of great necessity, for a medicine’—under pain of expulsion. Now here Mr. Abel Stone is selling ardent spirits hourly,

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as a common beverage. And is it only in our own isle, that this rule is so openly violated? No, it is general throughout the connexion. This rule is daily violated, and superintendent after superintendent winks at it. And do I wonder? By no means; for they themselves drink as much or more than the members, and so sanction the forbidden traffic. If Mr. Wesley’s sermon be reckoned sound doctrine, spirit dealers are ‘poisoners-general of his majesty’s subjects; they drive people to hell, and their houses are stained with blood.’ Rid the society of such men as these, before you go to expel good and honest men, whose only sin is, that they speak the truth. (‘Hear, hear,’ from the opposition.)

“Again, it is worthy of remark, that whilst there is ample provision made in the trustdeeds for securing to the society the preaching of Mr. Wesley’s doctrines, at least so much as is contained in fifty-four sermons, and his notes on the New Testament, there is not any provision made for securing to the people his discipline.

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The Conference may make almost any changes it thinks fit in the constitution of the body, and nothing on earth can hinder it. Yes, the Conference may usurp what power it pleases, may encroach upon the liberties of the people, and no power can stay its tyrannical oppression.” (‘Well done! at them again, old fellow,’ cried the opposition. (‘Put him down,’ shouted the ministerial side.) Putting down Mr. Tiggs would have been dangerous, for his party was much the stronger. “I say that the Conference” continued the speaker, with great energy, “with Pope Bunting and Cardinal Newton at its head, is the mightiest engine of spiritual oppression that has been in the world since the overthrow of the Papacy.’ What do we see? Why we see a hundred men (for that number composes the legal conference) joined hand and heart to enslave half a million of people, and they will succeed in doing it, unless a few stout hearts are

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willing to be denounced as seditious men, and join in opposing them. The only way to bring them to their senses is

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to stop the supplies; but even then, that would succeed but partially, for they would have enough to live upon by the sale of Conference property. The chapels of the rest of the dissenters (for it's all moonshine to say we are not dissenters from the Church) belong to those who are the trustees of them. And it is nothing but just. The churches of the Establishment belong to the people. Whilst, in our body, the most monstrous anomaly exists.—All the chapels in the connexion, with the houses and land belonging to them, are in the possession of the Conference; and the trustees of all this property, whilst they are held responsible for the debts upon them, have no more real interest in them than the Great Mogul. I must not pass by the renowned 'plan of pacification,' drawn up at Leeds. I look on it as the greatest imposture ever palmed upon the world. ('Put him out, put him out,' cried the ministerial side; but the opposition put themselves in a defensive attitude, and all was quiet.) I say, then, that it is a perfect farce.

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It pretends to provide for the equitable management of the funds, by making the committees to consist half of laymen and half of preachers; but takes care to reserve in its own hands the appointment of the laymen, and to have a preacher for the chairman; so that virtually, the Conference has the management of the funds in its own power, for they take care to have no one as a committee-man that does not meet their own views. ('Very good, very good,' cried the opposition.) Again, this celebrated plan professes to leave the appointment of the stewards in the hands of Quarter-Day; but, mark yet it places their nomination in the hands of the superintendent, so that they can only elect the man whom he approves. Again, that magna charta of liberty pretends to protect the members and leaders from any unjust exercise of power by the superintendent, in 'requiring the offence to be proved *at*, or *in conjunction* with a leader's meeting;' but then the power of punishment is left with the superintendent, who can either pass over the offence

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or else inflict an unjustly severe punishment

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“I shall only mention one more grievance, and that certainly one of the worst. ‘If you have any grievances,’ says the Conference, ‘make them known to us by means of petitioning, and then you shall have them remedied.’ Now this seems all very fair. But how does it work? Why in this way. No petition can be got up without the consent of the superintendent. Petitions have been got up, and taken to the leader’s meeting to be passed; and when the superintendent has found what was about to be done, he has vacated the chair, and pronounced the meeting as dissolved. It was by degrees that the Papal power encroached upon the liberties of Europe, till it came at last to place its cloven foot upon the necks of princes, and to hold nations in bondage; and it is by degrees that the Conference is encroaching upon the religious liberties of the connexion, till at length it will bind the members in fetters of iron, and there shall be no man to loose them.” Mr. Tiggs here sat down, amidst mingled groans and cheers.

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The Chairman now rose to speak, but the opposition would not hear him a second time. He was highly indignant at this treatment, and vacated the chair. “This meeting,” said he, “is dissolved, and all its proceedings in my absence will be illegal.” With this, he pushed his way to the door, to make his way out; but, to his annoyance, found it locked. Some one of the opposition had secured it, in order to prevent the chairman playing upon them the trick of dissolving the meeting before they had stated their grievances.

Mr. Jones was naturally an irritable individual—hard to be pleased, at the best of times, and one whom the slightest provocation would exasperate. His limbs trembled, and his teeth chattered with rage, as he stammered out—“Who has locked the door? Who *has*? I wish I knew. He shall suffer for it, that he shall. Unlock the door, *this instant*. I say, *this instant*! What a state of things! What dreadful audacity—to dare to imprison the minister of God!”

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Mr. Jones and his friends made some ineffectual attempts to shoot the lock. When he found that he could not possibly get out, he resumed his seat, and the uproar soon subsided.

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Mr. Snuffler, one of the Missionary treasurers, next addressed the meeting. He said—"Mr. Chairman": I rise with emotions of the most acute kind. I have heard and seen things to-night, Sir, which have truly horrified me. The audacious individual who has dared to lock you in, Sir, little thinks that he is liable to an action for false imprisonment; and, Sir, I shall be glad to come forward and help you to bring that insolent and seditious person to punishment. (Great groaning.) You may groan; you'll have enough of groaning some time. The abusive language which has been used this evening would disgrace a low pothouse. My feelings have been harrowed up, Sir. ('No doubt,' cried the opposition, 'so very tender.' 'Is your father out of the workhouse, yet, Tommy?') It was in vain for Mr. Snuffler

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to proceed, for the groaning was quite over-powering; so he sat down.

Several on both sides strove to obtain a hearing, but without success. When, however, a Samuel Flood, a shoemaker, asked for an audience, it was granted, for all were anxious to know which side he would take. He spoke as follows:

"Mr. Chairman,—I don't intend to make a long speech. I have carefully kept myself aloof through the whole of this contest. I have watched for a long time the movements of each party, I have read carefully what has been written on both sides, and I have made up my mind upon the matter. It seems to me that the plan of admitting lay delegates into Conference would be highly advantageous to the connexion, and would put an end to these unhappy disputes. It would be but carrying out the system of committees, only I would have every delegate nominated by the circuit, and not by the preacher. ('Hear, hear,' from opposition.) For it is not to be denied that there are local

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preachers and leaders in every circuit as competent to manage the affairs of the connexion as any of the travelling preachers. For what is fairer than that the money payers should be the money managers; that those who give their time, and labour, and property to support the society, should have a hand in making the rules for its government. If you look into the sixteenth chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians, you will find that the Apostle proposes that there should be associates with himself in the management of the public money; persons elected for that

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purpose by the contributors themselves. And we find that this was done to guard his character against any imputation that might be brought upon it in the management of the public trust. I would that the Conference had a like regard to its character. What are the travelling preachers more than any of us? Why nothing, except that they have much less work, and get better paid for it; ride or walk into the country more frequently, and drink a little wine and spirits.

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(‘Right, brother, right!’ from the opposition.) Why, I ask, then, should they lord it over God’s heritage? Let the Conference be open: let the close borough system be broken up. (‘Down with the rotten boroughs!’ from the opposition.) I shall not touch upon those points so ably dwelt upon by my excellent brother Tiggs, but confine my remarks to a few things which he had not time to introduce. I would ask the chairman, whether the rule which forbids the use of instrumental music, and the performance of a kind of concert, in chapels, is not shamefully violated? and the violation passes unnoticed by the superintendents. (‘Yes, it is broken!’ from the opposition.)

“Then, again, Sir, I put it to you,—whether the rule which prohibits any preacher engaging in secular concerns, even to the ‘selling of pills,’ is not shamefully violated by the superintendents, who all sell books, and plans? (‘Yes, it is,’ cried the opposition.)”

“Further, I would ask whether those preachers

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who smoke, or drink spirits, or take snuff, are dealt with as the rules require? (‘By no means,’ shouted the opposition.) I wonder what Mr. Wesley would say, if he were to rise from the dead? Oh! he wouldn’t say a word, but shake his head, shocked that his rules should be openly broken. And if he were to put to the present preachers the same questions which he used to put to the helpers, in his time, I wonder how many would be able to give a true and satisfactory answer? (‘Not one! cried out the opposition.)

“I want to know, Mr. Chairman, how it is that the Conference makes fifty-three only, of Mr. Wesley’s sermons, and not the whole one hundred and thirty-five, the test of doctrine? I know why, I imagine. It is because it would have been inconvenient to

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have included the fifty-fourth. Because, in it he says, ‘We will not form any separate sect, but, from *principle*, remain what we always have been, true members of the Church.’ It would not do for every candidate for the ministry to be obliged

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to subscribe to such a statement: he would look too ridiculous be carrying perjury a little too far.

“I submit these questions to the Chairman for him to answer to his own conscience. Only one answer can be given by him, ‘Verily, we are indeed guilty in these matters.’ Let us either renounce the name of Wesleyan, or else conform to Mr. Wesley’s rules. (‘Hear, hear,’ from the opposition.) It is really a painful sight, to see the law-makers the greatest lawbreakers. The Conference shows great earnestness in upholding Mr. Wesley’s rules, when they support their authority; but make no bones of departing from them when it suits their convenience. Innovations are to be strenuously opposed when they tend to abridge their power, but countenanced when they fill their coffers, and augment their lordly authority. One must be blind not to see these things, and dumb not to speak of them. It requires no long reach of foresight to see what will be the ultimate consequence of all this

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pride, worldly policy, and tyranny. Verily, nothing less than the entire overthrow of the constitution.” With the utterance of this prediction, Mr. Flood sat down, amidst loud cheers and groans.

The door was now unlocked, but by whom neither Mr. Jones nor any of his party had any knowledge, and the meeting broke up.

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CHAPTER IV.

“HOW LITTLE BROTHERLY LOVE! WHAT GOSSIPING EVIL SPEAKING! WHAT WANT OF MORAL HONESTY!”—*Wesley’s Lament over the Society.*

It were much to be wished that the good old lady Dorcas were now alive, that she might attend one of those precious meetings which are called after her name! How would it cheer her heart, to see both young and old of her own sex, engaged in making garments for the poor! Probably, too, she might not disdain the excellent tea and muffins, and other good cheer, which make these meetings so very pleasant! But

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as she listened to the uncharitable and unprofitable conversation of the company, how would her heart be grieved at seeing time so misspent, and character so maligned. One can imagine the good old woman, with tears in her eyes, thus addressing the party: “Alas!

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how, in this world, is the good mixed with evil, and how often does the evil prevail over the good! You are employed in a good work—that of making raiment for the poor; but alas! how greatly is it marred by that which is evil. What do I see? I see Christian women as busy in cutting up their neighbour’s character as in cutting out a coat; as quick in inventing a calumny as in threading a needle; as clever in varying and exaggerating a report, as in altering and enlarging a garment.

“Is it thus ye fulfil the command ‘Speak evil of no man’? Were things thus at Joppa? No! There the women behaved as those professing godliness. Their conversation was ‘to the edifying of one another.’ We met not there in large parties, and at stated times, to make ‘coats and garments’ for the poor; but made them at our own houses, whenever we had a little spare time, and so every day was blessed by some little work of charity. As ye call this meeting after my name, I may surely ask that ye follow my example.”

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It was at one of these meetings that I received the intelligence of Miss Stearnes’ death. The president of the society, Mrs. Jones, told the company, that there was no doubt but she had killed herself by drinking neat brandy, as she drank a bottle and a half a day; and she assured the party that Mr. Stone was not able to prevent her taking so large a quantity.

“I am quite sure,” said Mr. Snibbs, “that Mr. Stone has always behaved with the greatest kindness to Miss Stearnes. It would be a very strange thing if he had done to the contrary, since she has left him all her property.”

Her illness was very short. She was taken ill in the morning, and before noon was a corpse. No one besides Mr. Stone went near her, to minister to her wants. He did not, he said, send for a doctor, because he thought she would rally in a very short time. He gave her medicine, and she died.

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She was buried in the grave of her father, in the quiet church-yard, and her funeral sermon was preached on the following Sunday in the

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chapel. A short account of her conversion, personal excellencies, virtues, and pious deeds had been drawn up, and was read over by Mr. Jones, after the sermon. Few eyes were dry; for a fate so mournful, touched their hearts with pity. Mr. Stone had erected near, a small mural monument, made after the most approved fashion of modern days, on which were inscribed the following beautiful verses, composed by himself:

Reader, if you have never thought

One moment upon death,
And ne'er for saving mercy sought,
Hear what poor Mary saith:

“I sought the Lord in early life;

I found him at the cross:
I've clung to it, in every strife,
Just like the Man of Ross.

My happy fate was sudden death,
Which brought me sudden bliss:
O! give to God your every breath,
And heaven you will not miss.”

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THE VILLAGE COBBLER.

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THE VILLAGE COBBLER.

CHAPTER I.

“WHY ARE WE NOT MORE HOLY?

CHIEFLY BECAUSE WE ARE ENTHUSIASTS; LOOKING FOR THE END, WITHOUT USING THE MEANS.”—*Wesley*.

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“I hope we shall have a profitable and interesting Quarter-Day,”* said my superintendent, as we proceeded to the vestry, to attend the Local-preachers’ Meeting. “I hope,” continued he, “that it will pass off a little more orderly than those of late have done. A little knowledge, it is said, is a dangerous thing; but it is my opinion, that a little power is much more dangerous. It is the union of these two which makes our local preacher’s meetings so very unpleasant. I cannot bear,” said he, with

* Appendix, H.

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a contemptuous curl of the lip, “the impertinent dictation of cobblers and weavers, who do not even know the mere alphabet of divinity and who have taken out a patent to murder the king’s English. I’ll teach some of them their place to-day, if they presume to speak impertinently, and interfere with my office. They have a little power, and so take a pride in exercising it on all occasions, to the annoyance of their superiors. And yet, it will not do to deprive them of it, for the possession of a little power is so pleasing to the human heart. This is the great secret of our success as a body. Be it our care to place a proper check upon its exercise; to mark out our men; to put a bridle on the refractory, and thus to hold a tight rein.” Mr. Chine stood for a moment at the vestry door, and said, in a low tone, “But more of this, at some future time. Think over what I have said, and you will find that it is all true.”

With this, he opened the door, and we entered. After singing a hymn, and offering up a prayer, Mr. Chine, as the chairman of the

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meeting, called over the names of the local preachers in succession. He asked each one, if he had punctually fulfilled his appointments, made the collections prescribed in the plan, and faithfully taught the people? When the chairman came to the name of Simon Cove, a tinker, one of the brethren rose and said,

“I have to bring a charge against brother Cove, of having advanced, in a sermon, a doctrine which I consider to be unscriptural, and quite contrary to Mr. Wesley’s sermons. He preached from ‘Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.’ In the course of the sermon, he said, that workmongers was worse than infidels—and that St. James never wrote that ‘a man is

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justified by works, and not by faith only', for either St. Paul or St. James must be a liar; but as that couldn't be, it must have been put in by the Papists, or else a wrong transition, as he called it, like a deal more of the Bible; but not knowing the riginal, he couldn't speak to that. He also said that faith is of man's own working;

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and that he could believe what he liked, and just when he liked."

"Do you mean to say," said the chairman, "that you heard him utter such sentiments?"

"Yes, Sir, I did," replied brother Sneape, "and brother Slink is there, and he will say the same."

"Brother Slink," inquired the chairman, "did you hear brother Cove utter the sentiments attributed to him by brother Sneape?"

"Yes, I did," answered brother Slink, "I heard the very words. He is one of the 'Derby Faithites', who hold that faith is not the 'gift of God', and have lately separated from our body, in that place. I once heard a Mrs. Foam-at-mouth preach in one of our chapels in Leicestershire, and she preached that doctrine. I heard a deal about them when I was in those parts. There are several men and women, who travel about the country, preaching and kicking up a perfect bedlam, wherever they go. But here comes brother Cove, and he can answer for himself."

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"Brother Cove, you are rather late," said the chairman.

"I couldner come sooner," said he, "for I'd a job or two that I hed to get done; but my heart has been wi' you."

"Well, brother," said the chairman, "I am sorry to inform you that a very serious charge has been made against you. You are charged with having preached erroneous doctrine. Didn't you preach on the fifteenth, at Smigby, from 'Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ'? You said, I understand, that 'saving faith is of man's own origination'—that 'workmongers are worse than infidels'—and that 'the passage wherein St. James says that "a man is justified by works, and not by faith only," was not written by him, but is a false *transition*, or, more correctly, a false translation; or else 'was put in by the Papists.'"

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‘If we reject those suppositions,’ you observed, ‘we must conclude that either St. Paul or St. James tells a lie.’ What have you to say to these things, brother?”

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“I preached from that text,” replied Simon, “and possible might, in discoursin, say somat like it; but it’s impossible to remember all one says in sarmons, at the spur o’ the moment. I do remember makin some remarks about St. James; and I believe I said as one on em couldner be speakin the truth, if the texts was all right; but raather than think either o’ the apostles to be a liar, I took to your way o’ explenin texts, namely that o’ supposin it war a wrong translation, as yo call it. And my idea of a translation, I tak from scripter; for we read as how Enoch war translated, ‘for he was not, for God took him.’ So to translate from the riginal is to take things out as doesner suit the views o’ folks, and to put things in as does. So as we may say as justification by faith war translated out o’ St. James, so as it isner to be found, for the Papists took it. I said Papists, becoz you said as they hed altered a deal o’ the Bible.”

The chairman explained to Simon wherein he erred in his notion of the translating of the

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scriptures, and made a bungling attempt at reconciling the apparently opposite statements of St. Paul and St. James.

“Let us hear, brother Cove,” said the chairman, “your views on saving faith.”

“Well, I’ll tell you,” replied Simon, “what ray views is: Faith is nothing but belief. If a man tells me, as two and two makes four, I believe it. If you tell me as the Papists has altered the scripters, I believe it. If a man tells me as Lunnun is a big place, I believe it; or as Boney war a comin to murder us, I believe it; and as the Duke o’ Welleton saved us, I believe it. So, if I’m tel’d as the devil war comin to murder us, but as Jesus stopped him on the road, and has saved us, I believe it; and in believing it I hev life I am justified, or I am saved. That’s my doctrine, and it’s commonsense doctrine; and it’s as simple as a child may understand. Now what is there so mighty hard in this, I want to know, as a man mayn’t as easy do as tak his breath?”

“Is that, brother,” said the chairman, “what is called the Derby faith?”

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“You may call it,” said Simon, “Derby faith or whatever faith you like. I call it scriptural faith—saving faith. It’s sich faith as has saved hundreds in a wik in Derby and the neebourin circuits. I wish Demas the lawyer war here, or some o’ them blessed women, as labours in the Gospel; they’d soon put you straight on the point. Why, I’ve seen sich wonderful things done by their prayers, as caps all in the old magazines, or our blessed founder’s journal. Why, there were war a young man, a local-preacher, in a neebourin town, who was gien up by all the doctors: he couldn’t stir a inch in bed, and war just a dyin. Well, they met together in the house, and prayed for him, and they believed as God would raise him up; and no sooner hed brother Bloater cried out, ‘The Lord is doin it!’ than he got out o’ bed, dressed him, and walked down-stairs, and come into the room where they war prayin: and that same man got quite well, from that time, and is now a travellin preacher. And I’ve seen scores o’ souls saved by the same faith, and in as little

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time as brother Bloater war healed. This is your sorts o’ faith for me, and not your poor dead stuff as saves a soul a month, and hardly that.”

“By their works ye shall know them,” said brother Slink, addressing the chairman. “The proceedings of these Faithites, as brother Cove praises so, are most scandalous. That Demas the lawyer, as he says would soon put us right if he was here, is about one of the greatest rascals under the sun. He is a robber of the church of God, for he has often charged half as much for the trust-deeds of little chapels as the chapels have been worth; and has got from the poor their savings, to take care of em; and has got into debt every where he could, and now is run away to America, and took another man’s wife with him. The last time I heard anything of him, was, that he is preaching among our body there, and has had as many as fifty souls saved of a night. He is particularly useful at the camp-meetings, which are held there among the mountains, which are so large

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that the tents look like a town. He has been at them for two or three weeks together, and has done wonders.”

“We have heard quite enough,” said the chairman, “about Demas, who hath loved the present world. We must be getting on with the business of the meeting. Brother

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Cove,” continued he, “you must call upon me in the course of the week, that I may converse with you upon the subject.”

Simon was about to rise, to reply to the speech of Mr. Slink, but was prevented doing so by the chairman, who reminded him that his case was disposed of.

The chairman proceeded with the calling over of the names, and when he read out that of William Gager, a brother rose, and said,

“Mr. Chairman, I do not rise to bring any very heavy charge against our excellent brother. I only wish to remark, that it would be better if he would avoid all curious expressions and queer ideas in his sermons, as leads the people to laugh, and our enemies to ridicule.

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For example: I heard him preach, one day, from ‘When I am weak, then am I strong’, and he begun his sermon by saying ‘Come now, Mister Paul, you musn’t think o’ gammonin us in this way, ather; it’s raather too barefaced a contradiction.’ At another time, he said, ‘I wish Jacob had a nettled hissen well, when he was a gettin the herbs for the pottage.’ And last Sunday, when preaching from ‘Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us’, he said, ‘Pull off your clompin boots and clinkin pattens, and go barefoot, you idle fools, and run like good uns.’ And then speaking of besetting sins, he said, ‘You havener hafe the sense as a hare hes; when a pointer sets him, he cuts off like lightnin, and doesner stop to play with the dog, as you do with your sins.’ I believe brother Gager to be a very good man, and he is eminently useful; but he would be still more so, was he to avoid all laughable sayings in his sermons.”

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The chairman expressed himself as quite concurring in the remarks of the previous speaker, and recommended brother Gager to lay aside every ridiculous and laughable expression, and to take Mr. Wesley’s sermons for his model.

The chairman called over the rest of the names; and the only one against whom a serious charge was alleged, was a John Mortar, for a breach of promise of marriage, to a Mary Jordan. The case was stated as follows, by Thomas Taper:

“Mr. Chairman, it is my peanful duty to charge brother Mortar with the committin of a very sad offence—neamly, that o’ brekin his promise o’ marriage to a young

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woman o' the name o' Mary Jordan, a stay-maker, livin in Hodgson street; a member o' the Society, and a very worthy, industrious, and pious young woman. He has kept company wi' her for more than five year; has gone to her father's house night after night, and takken his supper with the family. He has gone with her constantly to all the means of grace; and she hes

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often walked with him to his appointments. She hes letters from him, to prove that he had engaged hissen to her, and her father will testify to the fact of his askin him for his consent to the marriage. Iv'ry thing went on right till he got a notion o' goin out to 'travel', and then he gradual got cooler tawarts her; he went to the house seldomer, did not walk with her so oft, and changed his tune to her. She ax'd him one day, with tears in her eyes, what she had done to offend him, as he war so changed in his behaviour to her, and so seldom came to see her. He said that he couldner come as he did formerly, for he didner get away from the factory so soon as he war used to do, and that he had to read at night to prepare for his future ministry. Things went on, and got worsen and worsen, and omost broke the poor gels heart. At last he sends her a letter, which I'll read to the meetin. It is as follows:

'*CORKER ALLEY* janwary foreteen one thousand eight hunderd and thirty my very darlinest

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mary you very probable is made aware, that i am to be proposed next district meetin to go out to travel, i beleve it is the way of Providence and i dursent opose it and i am very sure as you will be the very last, to inder me, pershuing the Heaven appointed path, it is at my everlastin gipardy, to disobey the Heavenly calling Now you know, as i can't Marry for four years, after i go out And i know as you wonte like to Wate so long So that it will be better for our Engagement to be disolv'd and you wonte be many days before you get a person, Who you can love, and Who will love you Be sure of this as its the Lords Will that it should be so—i am sure you wonte like to travel changein from place to place, its a unplesant life for Preachers Wives trust in the Lord and he will provide a good husband for you, and make you happy, i Love you as much as i ever did and shall Love you till i die its a bad Job but cante be

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Helped we must both say—the Lord’s Will be done i remane your affexonate Lover
and Everlasting Friend in Christ Jesus

JOHN MORTAR.’

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“This, Mr. Chairman and brethren,” said Mr. Taper, “is the cool way in which this heartless fellow proceeds to dissolve the connexion after a four years’ standing. Sister Jordan received this letter when she was from home, and I needner tell you how greatly it affected her. She is nearly worn away to a skeleton with trouble. She is quite willin to hev him, and suffer the inconvenience of travellin; but he won’t hear any thing on it. It is quite time that this jilting system was put a stop to, with the young preachers. They get engaged, before they go out to travel, and when they come to be called ‘Reverend’, they all at once become great men, and of course must look out for some young lady with a large fortin, and desart the poor house-maid, or dress-maker, or stay-maker, who they were engaged to when in humbler circumstances.”

“As our brother Mortar,” said the chairman, “is not present to answer for himself to the grave charge which you have brought against him, the case must stand over; and I will take

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an opportunity of seeing him, respecting the matter. You may rely upon this, that if the case be such as has been represented, he will not pass the District-meeting unless he engages to marry her.”

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CHAPTER II.

“I SPEAK AS PLAINLY AS I CAN; YET I FREQUENTLY MEET WITH THOSE WHO HATE BEEN MY HEARERS MANY YEARS, WHO KNOW NOT WHETHER CHRIST BE GOD OR MAN.”— *Wesley*.

“We will now proceed,” said the chairman, “to examine those of our brethren, who have finished the period of probation, as to their fitness to be admitted on ‘full plan.’ Brother Carson, and Hodges, and Booter, will you please to come this way?”

The candidates having placed themselves in a row, close to the chairman, the examination proceeded as follows:

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Chairman. “Will you favour us, brother Carson, with your Christian experience; and declare unto us your call to the ministry?”

Hereupon, brother Carson represented himself as having been a most vile and worthless sin-

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ner, till it pleased the Lord to convert him at a prayer-meeting, on the 15th of January, 1828, at twenty-five minutes after eleven o'clock. From that time, he said, he had continued in the “good way,” and he believed that he was called to preach the gospel, and that it was at his everlasting peril to disobey the command of God. The other two declared their conversion, but could not tell to a quarter of an hour when it took place. Brother Hodges was able to prove his commission to preach by very strong evidence. For he had not only been inwardly and irresistibly moved by the Holy Ghost, to take upon himself the office of the ministry, but he had also been favoured with a direct appointment from God, through the agency of an angel, who appeared to him in a dream. Brother Booter was equally clear in his “acceptance” as brother Hodges, but could not adduce the same supernatural proof of his ministerial call.

Chairman. “Brother Carson, what are your views on the Trinity?”

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Answer. “I believe as there be three Persons in one God Father, Son, and the Holy Ghost, and these three be one God.”

Chairman. “Brother Hodges, how do you know that there are three Persons in the God-head?” *Answer.* “Becoz, the scripture says there is; their names is down, and that proves it.”

Chairman. “That does not exactly prove it, as you suppose. I want to know how you prove that these three names mean three Persons? The Socinians, I must tell you, say that there are not three Persons in the Godhead, but that the names, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are names, not of Persons, but of operations of the Godhead.”

“Well, I look at it,” said brother Carson, “as a great mystery, and that’s all about it. I tak the Bible as I foind it, and I know I shanner be far wrong; and donner trouble my head about personality, and sich like vene philosophy.”

Chairman. “You are very wrong, brother.

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in calling it vain philosophy. It is of the highest moment, to have right views on the Trinity.”

Mr. Chine then proceeded to adduce several scriptural proofs of the doctrine of a Trinity of Persons in the Unity of the Godhead.

Chairman. “Brother Booter, will you state your views with regard to the person of Christ?”

Answer. “He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.”

Chairman. “You don’t quite come to the point I want you. What I wish to know is, whether you look upon Christ, as a mere man?”

Answer. “He was God manifested in the flesh; of the seed of the woman, according to the flesh, but of the Divinity, according to the Spirit.”

Chairman. “If, then, Christ was ‘God manifested in the flesh,’ therefore equal with God, how do you reconcile that scripture, where Christ himself says, ‘The Father is greater than I’?”

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Answer. “I can’t tell; it seems a contradiction or it may be a wrong translation.”

Chairman. “I know that it is rightly translated.”

“P’raps,” said Carson, “you’ll gee us the riginal.”

Chairman. “I have not got my Greek Testament here.”

“Well, if I may gee my opinion,” said Carson, “it’s easy enough to be explenated; for isner a father alias greater than a son? But if I conner explain it, what matters it? I should be no better for’t. I wonder whether I should be able to mak a better pair o’ shoes, if I knowed how the leather war made?”

Mr. Chine attempted to reconcile the seemingly opposed passages; and then asked brother Hodges to state his views of the “character and office of the Holy Ghost.”

Answer. “The Holy Ghost is the third and last Person in the Trinity, and his duty is to sanctify the heart of man, and fit him for heaven. Bless the Lord! I feel him a sanctifying me just now.”

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Chairman. “Brother Carson, what is the extent of Christ’s death?”

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Answer. “It extends to all mankind. ‘For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive again.’ ‘Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.’ This is pleen enough for owt,—as Christ died for all mankind.”

Chairman. “The Calvinists are brought, at length, to acknowledge that Christ died for all mankind: they however put in this restraining clause—‘although we admit that Christ died for all mankind, yet the benefits of his death are applied by the Holy Spirit only to the elect’ Do you agree with this view?”

“Sartinly not. I think as it’s makin worsen of a bad cause. If it doesner mak God exactly a liar, it maks him a good deal that way on. For, suppose a gentleman comes into my shop some mornin, and says, ‘Richard, I want you to mak shoes for ivry barfoot lad in the parish.’ Well, I gets ‘em made, and gets all the lads to come to my shop, some noight to

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hev ‘em. Well, this gentleman, we’ll suppose, is gon from horn, and so he sends down his brother, to gee the lads the shoes: and he looks among the lads, and m’appen picks out two or three, or hafe a dozen on ‘em. ‘Now Richard,’ says he, ‘fit these lads:’ and so I fits em, and very glad the lads is wi’ ‘em. I begins to fit the tothers, but he stops me, and says, ‘Oh! them isner elected,’ and so the poor lads goes we’out ony, grumblin at me for hevin deceived em. (It seems odd, ‘says I to him, ‘ as your brother should ha’ order’d me to mak shoes for all the barefoot lads in the parish, and you only let hafe a dozen or so hev ony. I Conner see why they mightn’t as well hev ‘em as not, now they be ready made for ‘em.’ Now he mun anther say, as his brother didner mean what he said when he gee’d the order, —and then I mun conclude him to be not over particular about the truth; or else he mun say as his brother left the disposal on em in his hands, and then I mun conclude his brother to be a vary silly feller to lay out his money so badly, and a vary

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wicked feller to deceive me and the poor lads so sorely; and I mun conclude him hissen to be a vary unaccountable and hard-hearted feller, to send lads home barfoot and a cryin, when there’s plenty o’ good shoes made for ‘em. And so I think as if I read as ‘God so loved the world, as to gee his only Son to die for it,’ I of course conclude as there’s salvation bought for it—for ivry sinner; and I tell ivry body so:

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but I arter foind out, as only them as is elected is to partak on it, and all the rest to go we'out. I reckon mysen to ha' been deceived, and hes been, we' out knowin it, a impostor. And if there be mercy bought for all, why not all be partakers on it? Why save some, and damn the rest, when there's mercy bought for all, and mercy offer'd to all? It's a million times a worser case nor the shoes, and so I donner believe a word on it. If the doc- trine o' election be scripteral, I donner quite see the sense o' the stillness o' the man in the gospel, who hedn't on a wedding garment. We read as when he war kotch'd we'out one on, he

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found nowt to say, but war quite speechless. He know'd nowt about election, or eternal decrees o' reprobation; or else he'd ha' said, in answer to the question, 'Friend, how comest thou in hither, not having on a wedding garment?'—'Why ax sich a question? It would ha' bin a much more wonderfuller thing if I hed come in one, when they war all locked up in the closet o' election, and there war no gettin in howsoever I knock'd and kick'd, becoz my name warner down in the book for one.' He know'd nowt about election, and so war speechless."

Chairman. "Your illustration, brother, is a most apposite one. The doctrine of unconditional election, coupled, as it ever must be, with that of reprobation, is abhorrent to every feeling of humanity, is repulsive to reason—contradicts every letter of the scriptures, and is awfully repugnant to the Divine character. If Christ, brother Booter, died then, for all mankind, I want to know how the benefits of his death are applied to the sinner."

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Answer. "By the means of faith. 'For being justified by faith, we have peace with God.' "

Chairman. "Brother Carson, is faith all that is required to save a sinner?"

Answer. "When a man believes, he is saved. It's simple faith as does the job, and good works comes arter."

Chairman. "Will you, brother Hodges, give me your views upon Christian perfection?"

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Answer. “I believe as it’s the privilege of every Christian, to live without sin, to have the very last remains of the carnal mind destroyed. We are commanded to be perfect, even as our Father which is in heaven is perfect.”

Chairman. “Do you agree with what brother Hodges has advanced, brother Carson?”

Answer. “Sartanly. I hold sinless perfection. For God can as easy keep a man from sin as not, if he likes. I war talkin t’other day to what they call a Evangelical Parson, about perfection, and he said as it war a awful doctrine, as it made men proud, and as the remains o’ sin would be left in the heart till death. So

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I says to him,—according to your doctrine, the more holier a man is, the more prouder he is; and if God can destroy the remeans o’ the carnal mind at death, he can as easy do it afore death. I told him to read Mr. ‘Fletcher's Checks,’ and he’d soon put him right”

Chairman. “Your views, brother, are very sound on that important doctrine—a doctrine which Mr. Wesley considered as the grand distinguishing feature of Methodism.”

The candidates were ordered to retire into the adjoining room, whilst the meeting decided upon their qualifications for the ministry. The chairman had the pleasure of announcing to them, on their return, that they had received the unanimous approbation of their brethren.

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CHAPTER III.

“ ‘TIS A POINT WE CHIEFLY INSIST UPON, THAT *ORTHODOXY*, OR RIGHT OPINIONS, IS AT BEST BUT A VERY SLENDER PART OF RELIGION—IF ANY PART OF IT AT ALL.”—*Wesley.*

Mr. Chine appointed brother Carson to preach his “trial sermon,” on the following Wednesday night, and requested me to hear him. He was not without honour in his own native village, for the chapel was crowded. I went prepared to hear an extraordinary sermon, and to take it down in short hand. The following is as close a copy as it was possible to take. The text was,

“ *‘Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there?’*

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“There seems to me to be a very odd and new way o’ makin sarmons now-a-days, or raather o’ unmakin em,—neamly a cuttin on em up into I knowner how mony different peaces,

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what they callen divoidin. Now I Conner chop up a text in this way, as if I war choppin tatoes for pigs. I shall tak the text as it stands, and try to compound it as quick as I con, and then mak some practical remarks.

“The prophet axes a question, ‘Is there no balm in Gilead?’ Now I needner tell ony on you what balm is: yoe know it’s what we putten into bread, to mak it light—to leaven it. Bread would be nasty, bitter, heavy stuff, if barm warner put in it. Now onybody we’ hafe a ee may see how this replies to the gospel. Doesner the scripiter say as a little leaven leavens the wholl lump?’ The wholl lump o’ what? Why, o’ wheat. The wold is a great moighty corn-field. This corn-field mun be shear’d, and the wheat put in the garner o’ the church; and it mun be threshed by the Holy Spirit, and gran by repentance, and kneaded by faith, and the barm put into’t, and made into loaves; and then baked in the oven o’ divine love, and made into a kind o’ shewbread, shewing forth the praises of him ‘who

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has called us out o’ darkness into his marvellous light.’ And as my Sally has tried tatoes, and I knowner what, to mak bread light, but couldner come it, so you may try the pleasures o’ the wold, or the flesh, to mak your hearts happy and light, but yo’ll foind as they’ll mak em sadder and sadder, and as nowt ul do but the precious ‘balm o’ Gilead.’ I’ve heerd a’ar Sally say mony a time, ‘Is there no barm I’t town to day?’ and the reply has been, ‘No, not a drop;’ and she’s hed to put off the bakin to some other day. But if ony body here axes ‘Is there ony balm o’ Gilead here?’ I tell em there’s plenty; and they may hev it without money and without price.

The balm o’ Gilead is very good,

So it is, I think I hear yon say;

The test o’ ages it has stood,

And there’s plenty here to-day.

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“I mun now pass on to the next question, ‘Is there no physician there?’ I can answer you in the firmative. There is a physician there—Jesus Christ, the Good Physician. Now if ony

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body wants a doctor, they’ll get the most clever mon as possible, as is noted for his cures; and he is thowt none the worser if he is kind and feelin. But all the doctors in the wold put together, isner hafe so clever as the Gilead Physician, nor hafe so kind-hearted. For Jesus Christ is ‘touched we’ the feeling of a’ar infirmities.’ No earthly doctor can be in this way. They may tell yoe as they be sorry for yoe, but at the bottom they be glad as yoe be so badly, for the worser yoe are the better it be for they, and they’ll be iver so long o’ gettin yoe well. But if yoe be gotten the tick-rolaroo, and the doctor felt the peane as yo feel’n it, they’d be gettin yoe well as soon as possible. Now the Good Physician is afflicted in a’ar afflictions, suffers in a’ar sufferings; so as in gettin his peatients well, it’s gettin hissen well—when they be in health, he be in health. The Good Physician understands all about us, for he made us. Who so likely to put a watch right when it goes wrong, as a watch-maker? Who so able to put the soul right, when it goes

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wrong, as the soul-maker? Doctors, you know, often conner tell what’s the matter we’ their peatients. It war just so, in the case o’ a’ar Sally: none o’ t’ doctors know’d her compleant, and they physic’d her till they kill’d her, and omost ruin’d me. But, thank the Lord, she war badly in her soul, and we called in the Good Physician, and he got her well in less ner hafe a hour. Doctors, yoe know, conner cure all: folks is a dyin ivery day. Squire Stubbs as lives by us, tried all the doctors about a’ar parts, and none could do him ony good. He then went to Lunnun, to try the doctors there, but it war no use; they physic’d him, and he soon went off. But there niver war a case yet, as war above the hand o’ the Good Physician. We hear now-a-days a great deal about ‘cure alls.’ You’n heerd about Morison’s pills, they war to do wonders—to do iv’ry thing, but rease the dead: but that’s all moonshine; iv’ry dog hes its day, and they’n hed theirs. But the balm o’ Gilead is a pacific for iv’ry disease—a unfealin cure for iv’ry compleant. Some say as

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the age o' miracles is past, but I say as it isner. For isner it no miracle to rease the dead? But them as war dead in trespasses and sins, the Good Physician has quickened.

“But I mun be gettin on, and inquire, ‘If there be sich a Good Physician, and sich good balm, why isn’t the dowter of my people healed? Now, it’s to be obsarved, as the prophet doesner say the son o’ my people, but the dowter o’ my people; and this seems to me to be the reason.—Women, yoe know, is the weaker vessel; they is subject to more peans and aliments than men, and so the prophet wonders more as they doesner come to be healed. Why, then, doesner folks come to be healed? Some donner come, coz they donner, know as they be sick. I go to a woman, and say, ‘Mary, yoe is sadly diseased wi’ sin.’ She says, ‘Dick, yoe be mistaen. I donner feel bad: yoe thinken me worsen than I be.’ I recommend her to go to the doctor. ‘Not so, auther, Dick,’ says she, ‘it ul be time enough for that when I’m badly.’ Then I go to a mon

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and I says, ‘James, yoe be diseased we’ sin.’ He says, ‘I know I be, and I shouldner mind bein healed.’ That’s good, thinks I, there’s some chance o’ Jim’s rekivery. ‘Yoe Conner do better,’ says I, ‘than call in my doctor.’ I thowt it better to tell him what sort o’ doctor mine war, what physic he’d gee him, and what rigeement he’d put him in. When it come to, I foind he doesner loike the bitter hearbs o’ repentance, and wouldner come into his rigeement; so as nowt could be done for poor Jim. How many is there, as is in this way—wonner gee up the sweet things o’ the wold—wonner come down to a wayter gruel diet—and woll be peatients o’ the worst doctor in the world. Which on yoe, I want to know, would employ a doctor as alias kills his peatients? Why none on yoe would. And yet yoe be really employin a doctor as hes kill’d ivery peatient as hes iver ta’en his inscriptions. I know as he gees noice physic. But whosomiver heerd o’ noice physic? Yoe may be sure there’s some trick i’nt; for all physic is nasty. Will you hev noice physic,

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and be kill’d, or nasty physic, and be healed? Now all on yoe as is for the killin physic, stand up. (No one rose.) Oh! I see as none on yoe loikes the devil’s physic. Now all on yoe as is for the healing physic, stand up. (All stood up.) The Good

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Physician is now a goin round for peatients; he wonner charge you for visits, nor for physic, and h'ell gee yoe no more physic than's nessessary, and h'ell heal all on yoe afore yoe go out o't chapel.

"I mun now be a drawin ray discourse to a close. I ax agean, 'Is there no balm in Gilead? is there no physician there?' I thank God as there is, a Good Physician, and plenty o' balm and quite fresh. His sarvants is goin' round the town iv'ry day, cryin out, Barm! barm! barm! And thear's places built in iv'ry place, whear it may be hed—ony—quantity and free gracious for nowt. Thear's the Baptist barm-shop; the Calvinist barm-shop; the Establish'd Church barm-shop; and, thank God, the Methodist barm-shop. I say as the Methodist barm-shop is the best. For the Baptists mixes

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water we' their barm; and the Calvinists wants a ticket o' election, afore they'll gie yo ony; and the Church keeps theirs kivered up in formal pots and kettles, till it goes fusty and bad. Yoe mun alias remember as t' Church barm-shop isner ony better than a'ar'n, coz it's established; for it's ony establish'd by a human cretur like wursens. The Methodists has got a license to sell it to iv'ry body as axes for't, and it's quite fresh and undulterate. And if ther's ony tee-totalers here to-night, let me tell em as they needner fear this barm, as it's quite unferment, and it ul do em no harm. We've plenty o' barm here to-night, and the Good Physician is here, and we shall hev a prayer-meetin arter this sarvice is over, and the Good Physician's assistants, a'ar brothers and sisters, ul go round we' the barm. Now is the accepted time—now is the day of salvation. Death is at the door, and afore to-morrow mornin yoe may be in hell, and thear's no Good Physician there—no barm there. Yo'll be gettin worsen and worsen. Hell ul be your hospital—flames of fire your

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bed—brimston and smoke your physic—the devil your physician—and damn'd spirits your attendants. May the Lord in his mercy save us from sich a case!" *And all the people said Amen!*

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“ONE MAY BE INTEMPERATE IN SPEAKING, AS WELL AS IN EATING. AND AS AFTER WE HAVE FASTED LONG, WE ARE APT TO EAT TOO MUCH, SO ARE WE TO SPEAK TOO MUCH, AFTER WE HAVE BEEN LONG SILENT.”—*Wesley*.

“Well brother Sparks,” said Richard, as I walked home with him, “what thinken you o’ my sarmon? Its bin made vary useful. I’n prached it on siv’ral annivarsary occasions, and I’m teld as its a vary good un.”

I pointed out to him its many faults, and asked him, if the few lines of poetry, which he introduced, were of his own composition.

“Sure they war,” replied he. “I’n made a good bit o’ powtry, which folks, as understands powtry, thinks vary superior; and I mean to publish a little book on it, when I can get a bookseller to gie me somat loike its valley.”

“Now there goes agean, Dick,” said Sally;

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“yoe wholl use sich foine words: who can tell, I wonder, beside powets and sich loike, the meanin o’ ‘superior’? Yoe preachers, brother Sparks, dun mak use o’ sich brek-jaw wods, as I’n omost a mind to ax you the meanin on ‘em. Its just loike geein a dog a big bone as hes no meat on’t.”

“Well you know, Sally,” said Richard, “if prachers hasner ony meat to gee the people, they mun gee ‘em bones; and m’appen if yoe could smosh ‘em yoe might found some marrow in ‘em.”

“Aye! and m’appen break your jaws o’er ‘em,” rejoined Sally.

“Brother Sparks,” said Richard, “did I iver till you the way I got a congregation at Stoleby t’ other day?”

“Never,” I answered.

“Well, I’ll tell you,” replied he. “I goes there, and runs down the street, and shouts out Foire! foire! and all t’ town run arter me; and when I got ‘em together, I gee out my text, ‘Where their worm dieth not, and their fire is

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not quenched,’ and there were a jeal o’ good done.”

“I cannot,” I said, “commend your method of gathering a congregation. It was certainly done under a false pretence. It was ‘doing evil that good might come.’ ”

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“I think,” said Richard, “as it war followin the example of Paul, who ‘become all things, to all men, that he might save some.’”

“Nay Dick,” said Sally, “that wonner do. Paul didner do evil that good might come, for he says as them as does so ‘their damnation is just.’”

“Well, Sally,” said Richard, “you’n rayther the upper hand on me this time. If I didner do quite right in that case, I war o’ t’ right side t’ other day, in what I said to the great man at the hall. Yoe mun know, brother Sparks,” continued he, ‘as I mak shoes for th’ sarvants at t’ hall. So as I war goin down there one mornin for orders, I meets his lordship. ‘Well, Richard,’ says he, ‘how do you do? and how is Sally?’ ‘Very well, thank you, Sir,’ I said;

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(for I didner loike to say lord, as it seems to me loike blasphemy) ‘both in body and soul. I hope you and your missus is the same.’ ‘Very well,’ said he, ‘in body; but how in soul, I Conner speak to.’ ‘Why, Sir,’ says I, ‘isner the soul o’ much more vally than the body?’ ‘For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul.’ That’s a scripter,’ says I, ‘as maks things look serious.’ ‘Very true, Richard,’ he said, and war for leavin on me. ‘Please Sir,’ I said, ‘I want to ax you a question afore we part. Its this—whether you’d be so good as to hold a plate, at a’ar annivarsary, next Sunday?’ His lordship smiled, and said. ‘Certainly not.’ ‘Well then,’ says I, ‘wholl you gee us a trifle to the good cause?’ and he gee me hafe a suvrin. Sally blamed me for’t and said as it war vary brazen’d; but howiver, my brass pead me very well; for I got it changed for gold. The spirit moved me, and I dusner ha’ done different.”

“Well Dick,” said Sally, “I think as it war not well thowt on— though as it happened it

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Turn’d out vary well. Its a word in season, as is called vary good.”

“You’re alias foindin fault we’ me,” said Richard. “Sally loffs at me, brother Sparks, coz as I say as the stars is wolds, and loikely enough inhabited, for I Conner see, o’ what good they’re on, if they arner. And I think as m’appen they be fallen like a’rn: and folks is surprized at me thinkin so. But I say, as if it warner wrong for God to let a’ar wold fall, it mayner be wrong for him to let others fall. And if the glory o’ God

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is more show'd in the redemption of a'ar wold, than if it hed niver fallen, I donner see why the glory o' God mayner be more show'd by t' t'other wolds fallin. And m'appen Christ died for other wolds beside a'arn, for we read 'as all things shall be gathered unto him, of things in heaven, as well as things on earth;' and m'appen Christians, when they die, go to preach the gospel to the inhabitants o' the stars, and I thinken sometimes, what lots o' methodists there is in t' other wolds."

"Prither, Dick," said Sally, "donner gee

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way so, to sich silly stuff, what dun you know about other wolds?"

"Not a jeal, Sally, I know," answered Richard. "I wish I did know about 'em. I carener how soon I leaven this, for its a vary poor un. I often think, brother Sparks, as just in one hafe hour in heaven, I shall know a jeal more o' stronomy than the great Sir Isaac Newton knowed; for he only seed through a glass darkly, but I shall see face to face. I wonder what wold I shall be sent to? M'appen to Jupiter, as its a big place. I mean to prache a present salvation to them Jupiterians, for there's nowt loike it. And I think, brother, my balm o' Gilead sarmon, we' your improvements, wonner be a bad un to gee em, first start. And arter I'n prached for awhile among the Jupiterians, I shall turn my attention to those Satanites. I fear them is a very bad set. But if owt is to save em, its the doctrine of present salvation. If that's prached faithful, it ul soon drive Satan out, I know."

"Yoe be talkin," said Sally, "about what yo'll

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do when yoe getten to heaven, takin it for sure as yo'll get there. I donner think its so well to mak so sartain on it. Paul warner so sure o' getten to heaven; for he war afeerd lest arter prachin to others, himsen should be a castaway; and I shold think as m'appen Paul war as a good a mon as thee. And beside, yoe donner read about the Apostle wishin to be off to t' t'other wolds; but his wish war 'to depart and to be we' Christ which is far better.' "

"Well, well, Sally," said Richard, "m'appen I'n too much takken up we' philosophy, and sich loike; but howiver, there's one thing as does unkimmon puzzle me, its this—whether we shall know one another in heaven. Most prachers says as we shall, as it ul be sich a source o' pleasure. I know vary well as it ul be a vary pleasant thing to

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meet we' one's friends there. It wholl be a delightful thing Sally, to foind yoe in heaven. But it ud be a vary sad thing, to foind yoe *not there*. I should be un- kimmon glad, to foind a'ar Tom and Sal, we' little harps in their hands, weatin at the door
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O' heaven, to induce us in, but when I comes to ax em, 'Hev you seen Jim and Harry?' for em to say 'No, we hevner seen owt on em,' that I thinken would be rayther a damper. If we know as *some's* there—we mun know as *t'other's* not; and so I thinken as its better for us to know nowt about it."

"I wish, Dick," said Sally, "as you'd let sich mysteries alone; yo'll puzzle me so till I shall go off my head. Its that stronomy book as puts these things into your head. I wish it war bunt."

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GREAT ATTRACTION !!

THE CONVERTED NEGRO MISSIONARY

AND INDIAN CHIEF.

WESLEYAN MISSIONARY ANNIVERSAY,

FOR THE BILTON BRANCH DISTRICT.

ON SUNDAY APRIL, 15, 1839

TWO SERMONS WILL BE PREACHED

FOR THE ABOVE SOCIETY

IN THE MORNING AT BONE STREET CHAPEL,

BY THE REV. R. OLDTON,

AND IN THE EVENING AT SIX BY THE

REV. DR. BELLEMONT.

ON MONDAY AFTERNOON A SERMON WILL BE PREACHED

BY THE

REV. PAUL WESLEY

The Converted Negro Missionary,

AND IN THE VENING, A MISSIONARY MEETING

Will be held, when the Chair will be taken at Six o'clock by

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JOHN HOCKING, ESQ.

As this is the **First Appearance** in this neighbourhood of the **Negro Missionary and Indian Chief**, no doubt there will be a very crowded attendance. In order, therefore, to accommodate the friends of Missions with comfortable seats, it has been agreed to admit the congregation by tickets.

Tickets for Gallery, 2s, Middle of the Chapel, 1s, Side Seats, 6d.

To be had of MR. GULL, Draper, 91, Mount Street, and of the Rev.

J. SINKER, at the Chapel-house.

Missionary Breakfast in the School-room on Tuesday Morning,

AT EIGHT O’CLOCK—TICKETS, 2s.

SEVERAL MINISTERS ARE EXPECTED TO ADDRESS THE MEETING

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THE MISSIONARY MEETING.

CHAPTER I.

“I LOOK UPON ALL THE WORLD AS MY PARISH.”—*Wesley*.

“I’ll tell you what, brother Sparks,” said John Steanes, Esq., showing me this placard, “it’s my opinion that it will excite no little sensation. It quite cuts out both the Church and the dissenters. It is, indeed, a formidable affair; it is almost as long as the musical festival placards. It has been drawn up with admirable judgment. It almost reminds one of a play-bill, for they are often headed ‘Great Attraction.’ I shouldn’t wonder if the super took the idea from that, and no bad idea either. We must learn lessons from the wisdom of the children of this generation, and use them to promote the service of the Lord. This Indian Chief, and Converted Negro will make a great noise in the town and neighbourhood. The ticket system

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will pay admirably. I think they are full little, for the mere sight of the Chief is worth quite that. It will be a grand treat for the country-people. Whilst the world finds its happiness in attending races, and theatres, and other places of amusement, the Christian finds his happiness in attending love-feasts and anniversaries, and missionary meetings.”

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“If the house of prayer,” I replied, “has been turned into a theatre, and if the lessee is anxious to arouse attention, and to attract a full house, I must acknowledge that the placard is well calculated to effect that object. It must also be granted that he has obtained a very efficient company of performers, and will probably meet with considerable success. I look upon missionary meetings, as now conducted, as an humble attempt at the revival of the religious drama of the thirteenth century, and as intended to supply the ‘professing Christian world’ with a substitute for the bewitching and corrupting performances of the play-house. The design has been well carried out, and has

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met with liberal support; for the union of the tragic and comic parts of the drama has made the missionary stage irresistibly attractive; and they whose conscience would not suffer them to go to the theatre to witness the performance of a Macready, resort unhesitatingly to the chapel, to see that of an Indian Chief; and they who hold it wicked to be amused by the comic talent of a Matthews, deem it a religious duty to be diverted by that of a Dawson. The stage is most certainly on the decline—both the sacred and the profane. Missionary meetings are losing their interest; for the people are growing weary of the same kind of performance; they are eager for novelty, and do not like the old things over and over again. If they are to be kept up, there must be an annual supply of foreign performers, and half-martyr’d missionaries, laden with the relics of heathen superstition, and the curious products of foreign countries. I am no advocate for the house of God being turned into either a theatre or a museum. I am sick of continual excitement.

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I fear that our anniversaries partake too much of the nature of wakes and fairs, or nice picnic parties. They are usually occasions of jollification. There is a pleasant ride, or a still more pleasant walk; plenty of good things to eat and drink, the company of agreeable friends, and good sermons; all for the small charge of one shilling in most instances, and frequently scotfree. A day’s pleasure cannot be procured at a much cheaper rate. If we do not take heed, I fear that our solemn feasts will become an abomination to the Lord.”

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“I must confess,” said Mr. Steanes, “that there is some truth in your remarks. I’ll give them my serious consideration. I must now be leaving you, and I shall be happy to see you for dinner on Monday, at two o’clock.”

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CHAPTER II.

“FOR THE METHODISTS IN EVERY PLACE GROW DILIGENT AND FRUGAL; CONSEQUENTLY THEY INCREASE IN GOODS. HENCE THEY PROPORTIONABLY INCREASE IN PRIDE, IN ANGER, IN THE DESIRE OF THE FLESH, THE DESIRE OF THE EYES, AND THE PRIDE OF LIFE.”—*Wesley*.

As I sat in Mr. Steane’s drawing room, waiting the announcement of dinner, the thought struck me, had John Wesley been expected to dine here to-day, instead of Mr. Paul, how very differently would the ladies have been attired. They would have left at home their ornaments of gold, and precious stones, and costly apparel, and would have appeared “in a *cheap* as well as a plain dress,” in conformity with the rules of the society. His expected presence would have checked rather than stimulated Mr. Steane’s vulgar passion for display, for he would have remembered, how with “dim eyes, and shaking

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hands, and tottering feet,” he had advised his people “not to spend one pound, one shilling, or one penny, to gratify either the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, or the pride of life.” The Indian Chief and Mr. Paul Wesley were evidently quite dazzled with the array of richly adorned female beauty, and the splendid furniture of the apartment. Their surprise was much increased when they entered the dining-room, and beheld the massive silver service, the variety of courses and fanciful dishes, and the liveried servants. It was certainly a very splendid entertainment. It consisted of four courses of the costliest and the most delicate dishes, prepared by cunning cooks; and champagne and sparkling moselle, and hock, were more plentiful than water. The champagne excited a brisk conversation during dinner; and it was kept up in full glee at dessert, by claret and burgundy. Mr. Paul Wesley showed great prudence in the selection of his food. He invariably partook of the dishes that were most in demand. As the day was very hot, ices

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were much in request. Mr. Wesley observed this, and must of course try one himself. The first spoonful set his teeth chattering. He grinned and unfolded his red lips, in the most frightful manner, and with difficulty restrained himself from screaming. He drank “sampaigne” with several ladies, which Mr. Oldton observed, was far better than taking Tom-Paine with them.

During dessert, Paul was heard to say, “Poor pussy! poor pussy!”

“What, are you a Puseyite?” said Mr. Oldton.

“Yes, brother,” replied Paul, “me be a very great pusseyite since me come to England.”

A servant, who was in the room, chanced to hear Mr. Wesley’s confession, and forthwith conveyed the intelligence into the kitchen, that Paul was a Puseyite, and that he had been converted to Puseyism since his arrival in England. The report soon spread abroad, and the next day there appeared an article in the newspaper, headed, “Frightful spread of Popery, under the name of Puseyism.” The article ran

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as follows: “We understand on undoubted authority, that a Wesleyan converted Negro Missionary has imbibed Puseyite principles. So greatly does he sympathize with that archheretic and semi-papist, that he is continually exclaiming, in a low and pitiful tone, ‘Poor Pusey! poor Pusey!’

What will the end of these things be? It is very much to be feared that there are a great many Jesuits among the methodists and other dissenters.” The ‘undoubted authority,’ on which this flaming notice was founded, was that of mere idle rumour, and was, as is generally the case, totally false. The mistake originated in the following manner—Mr. Steanes’ cat had ventured into the dining-room. Mr. Wesley being kindly disposed towards that domestic animal, stroked him down very affectionately, exclaiming at the same time, “poor pussy! poor pussy!”

This exclamation of Mr. Wesley’s gave rise not only to a newspaper lie, but also to a very earnest conversation on Puseyism. Mr. Oldton was of opinion that the Puseyites were Jesuits

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in disguise; dishonest, malicious, and persecuting men. Dr. Bellemont considered them to be the Pope’s legates, and the agents of the devil. “The hopes of

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Protestantism,” he said, “are placed SOLELY IN OUR HANDS. Our Connexion is the only bulwark against the progress and ascendancy of Rome, in this kingdom. The crisis is coming on, and may we not be found wanting! It may be delayed for a few years, but it will assuredly come. The Evangelicals will leave the Church, and the Puseyites will remain, for they have the Prayer-Book on their side, and then will the days of the bloody Mary be again revived.”

An old preacher observed that he had lately been reading an elaborate treatise on the Greek Church in Russia, and he found that the doctrines of the Puseyites approached more nearly to those held by that Church than the Roman. “In my opinion,” said he, “it will be in the end found that Newman and Pusey are agents of the emperor Nicholas, and have secret designs of establishing the Greek Church in the kingdom, and enslaving us to that tyrant.”

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“One thing is quite clear to me,” said Mr. Oldton, in a low tone, “that sooner or later there will be a division in the Church. The more pious and evangelical part of the laity will be driven out by the overbearing intolerance of the clergy; and *these we must try to catch*. I know that there are numbers in the Church, who are yearning for a wider field of usefulness and for increased means of grace. Our body offers them precisely what they desiderate; and if we can introduce Mr. Wesley’s abridgement of the Church Service into all the town-chapels, and wear the gown and bands, you may rely upon it, that we shall reap immense advantage from the division, whenever it occurs.”

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CHAPTER III.

“NO PERSON TO CALL ANOTHER HERETIC, BIGOT, OR ANY OTHER DISRESPECTFUL NAME, ON ANY ACCOUNT.”—*Wesley*.

When we got down to the “house.” it was so crowded that it was with great difficulty that we made our way up to the stage. Pit, Gallery, and Boxes, were filled: and the lobbies and aisles were crammed to suffocation. There were scores outside, who had purchased tickets, and could not even approach the doors. They complained loudly and bitterly of their ill treatment. They demanded a sight of the Indian Chief, and the Converted Negro. In order to quiet them, the manager sent word that the Indian Chief

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should make his appearance in a short time. Throughout the manager's speech, and the reading of the report, the clamour outside was unabated. Every one knows what chairmen's speeches at Missionary-meetings

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are; they are all full of confessions of unworthiness to fill so responsible a situation, and acknowledgements of their appreciation of the honour conferred upon them, with a few compliments to the ladies, to the speakers, and to themselves.

The dulness of the report was relieved by the announcement, of the sums collected by the ladies; and, as a proper reward of merit, their names were duly read out. The audience were delighted when they heard read over, "A drop in the ocean, by a friend to Missions, five shillings." "The produce of a year's bones and rags, saved by John Snoll, fifteen shillings." "Produce of self-denial of comforts, seven shillings." Immediately after reading of the report, its adoption was proposed to the meeting. No opposition was offered. These preliminaries disposed of, the manager informed the assembly, that it was deemed expedient for the Rev. John Sloane, and the Indian Chief to leave the platform for a short time, in order to address the multitude in the chapel-yard.

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The Indian Chief bowed to the congregation as he left the stage, and was conducted by Mr. Sloane through the vestry to the field of engagement. His appearance was hailed with loud cheers. A ring was soon made, and the wonderful man amused the spectators no little, by performing sundry evolutions with his tomahawk, and exhibiting the Indian wardance. He delighted them with a large display of various idols of worship, specimens of coarse manufacture, and native costumes. A great number of the congregation, finding that there was much more amusement going on outside the chapel than within, left their places, and joined the party in the yard. The disappointed ticket-buyers eagerly availed themselves of this circumstance, as a favourable opportunity for endeavouring to effect an entrance into the chapel. A rush towards the doors was suddenly made, and there was a violent struggle between those who had just left the chapel, and those who were just about to enter. Mr. Sloane was quite alarmed, and endeavoured to

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put an end to the conflict; but could not succeed. But what he could not do the Chief accomplished, for no sooner had he uttered one of his hideous warcries, and brandished his tomahawk over the heads of the contending parties, than they fled in all directions, and peace was restored. After a speech had been delivered by Mr. Sloane, a local brother and leader went round with their hats, and gathered the pence. This disturbance in the yard had caused no little interruption to the proceedings in the chapel. One or two of the less gifted speakers addressed the meeting, during the commotion. When all had become orderly and quiet, the manager called upon the Rev. Dr. Bellemont to address the meeting.

The reverend gentleman forthwith run his fingers through his hair, looked at his watch, stepped forward to the front of the stage, bowed to the manager, then to the house, and thus he spake:

“Mr. Chairman, and Christian friends. It

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affords me, Sir, I assure you, no ordinary pleasure, to see you occupying the chair on this occasion. This is not the first time that you have lent your influence and abilities to promote the magnificent cause of Missions. And what, I ask, can confer upon any human being such high dignity—such ennobling honour—such grand distinction, as the becoming a coworker with the Almighty in the advancement of the comprehensive and sublime scheme of the regeneration of a fallen world? (Hear hear) Gabriel the archangel would gladly wing his rapid flight from the empyreal abodes of glory, to occupy the place, Sir, which you this evening fill. (Great cheers) It is an honour that would be eagerly caught at by principalities and powers. It hath however pleased God, to confer upon man the high honour of co-operation with him in the salvation of a fallen world. He has passed by the nature of angels, and has taken man up into his eternal counsels. (Hear, hear.) Our Saviour has given forth the command ‘Go and preach the gospel to every

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creature.’ As if he had said, ‘I have left the bosom of my Father, where I enjoyed the infinite beatitude of the Divine nature, and the supreme administration of regal power, dwelling in unapproachable glory, encircled by the august assemblage of bright and holy spirits, and have descended, step by step, from the lofty heights of

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uncreated glory to this darksome earth; and having shrouded my glory in a form of clay, I have penetrated the darkest “caves of human sorrow, and have descended to the deepest abyss of human degradation and misery, to *purchase* for a lost world its *redemption*. Hasten then, at my bidding, and proclaim to this perishing world the words of salvation. Take the blood, and sprinkle it on the condemned sinner, that the destroying angel touch him not. Rest not in your career of mercy, until the last son of Adam shall have heard the tidings of salvation.” (What with the eloquence of this passage, and the violent shaking of the speaker’s head, and the impetuous flow of words, the people were electrified.)

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When the stamping and cheering had ceased, the reverend Doctor proceeded to say, “Have we, Christian brethren, fulfilled the parting command of our Lord? We have not obeyed his injunction; and think ye, that we shall escape retribution? We cannot slight the command of God with impunity. The blood of perishing millions stains the skirts of our garments, and will bear witness against us at the day of judgment. The men of Tyre and Sidon, of India and Africa, shall be the accusers of the Christian. England, exalted to heaven with privileges, shall be cast down to hell: and the millstone which shall hang the heaviest, and sink the nation the lowest in the pit of perdition, will be the sin of having neglected to send the bread of life to the famishing millions of the human race. (Hear, hear.) Why I ask is it that a small speck in the sea should be made the seat of so much greatness? should possess such unlimited dominion and power? Why is it that her dominions extend from sea to sea, ‘so that the sun never sets upon her territories’?”

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God has given to our country this power and influence to be used for his glory, to be subservient to the interests of his kingdom, to spread the knowledge of his gospel. But alas! this power is exercised for purposes other than was intended. It is used to extend our commerce, to spread mere civilization, and to widen our dominions. (Hear, hear.)

“If the State be thus guilty of dereliction of duty, we may surely expect that the Church is not remiss in the performance of its obligations. Alas, Sir, the different sections of the Church are doing little else than seeing how much they can hate and

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speaking evil of one another. Instead of cooperating, they are separated into fierce divisions. No great good can be accomplished till the middle wall of partition which bigotry has reared, has been broken down, and crumbled in the dust. (Hear, hear.) Yes, Sir," said the speaker, turning to the manager, to bid him listen to something good, "the strong iron-breasted wall of Apostolical Succession must be demolished to the earth. This great

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wall of Babylon must be levelled to the ground. (Great applause.) It is a matter, Sir, of deep regret, that the *authorised clergy* of this kingdom should have been so lukewarm in the missionary cause. For who can tell the great things which might have been accomplished by the successors of the apostles! (Ironical cheers) They would have been able to have wrought superhuman signs and wonders, like unto the apostles; and who can tell the millions of heathen who would have been converted to the truth by men possessing miraculous power! It surely is a wondrous phenomenon to find men attempting, in these days of enlightenment, to propagate a dogma so monstrously iniquitous—so insanely absurd—so awfully arrogant, as that of the Apostolical Succession. (Hear, hear.) They alone are the conductors of Divine grace; through them alone does the stream of electric energy pour itself which is to agitate and quicken the valley of dry bones. (Great applause.) It is the talismanic touch of one of these conductors which constitutes one man a

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successor of the apostles, and another a lawful priest, and makes them that they can with a word turn the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ; the baptismal font into more than the pool of Siloam, and absolve from sins. These, Sir, are the dreadful dogmas that are taught in the high places of the Church; and they are eagerly embraced by the young and ambitious of the clergy. It requires no great foresight to see the ultimate effects of these doctrines. The Roman Church sees them and rejoices. The Pope, restless on his pontifical throne, is ready to start forward and grasp the sceptre of this empire, and again light up the fires of martyrdom throughout the land. (Great cheers)* We have an arduous task before us—to fight against infidelity, popery, and heathenism. But God is on our side; let us not be afraid, though the heathen rage, and the infidel

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* Rest awhile, my gentle Doctor; take your breath, and cool a little, and collect your thoughts, and inform the audience, on what authority you found your statements with respect to the doctrine of Apostolical Succession.

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and the papist imagine a vain thing. I shall not detain you by depicting to your imagination the horrors of heathenism, as that will be much better done by those who have to follow me. The fields are white already for the harvest, and woe be to us if we send not labourers to reap them.” The reverend Doctor now sat down, amidst thundering applause.

The manager, as soon as the cheering had subsided, rose and said, “I have the great pleasure of introducing to your notice, Tom-a-haw-ra-ja, a converted Indian Chief, who will address you.”

The great lion of the meeting then stalked forward, and exhibited the same performance as in the yard, except the wardance; for the stage was too narrow, and too many of the performers were troubled with corns, for that to come off. In lieu of it, however, he uttered several of his wildest war-cries, which made the house ring, and the ears of the audience tingle. He delivered a short address in broken English, wherein he declared the time and

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place of his conversion, and his determination when he returned home, to turn his wigwam into a chapel, and convert the whole of his tribe to the Christian faith. He then read over the motion which he had in his hands, but of the meaning of which he had no distinct idea; and, bowing to the company and the manager, he said, “Me tank you white lady and gentleman for you give ear to my words, and for bein so please with my doings. I shall tell my people when I go back, what fine things me see, and how me like the white lady, and what the good Jesus be doin in this land, and me be glad if any of you Christian brother or sister would come to my country, and my people shall do some kind to you as you do some kind to me. And now, my white brothers and sisters, and you too my black brother, to you all me must say, as my gud father, Mr. Bunting, told me to say, ‘though me cannot sake hands with you all, me do so in my heart.’ And dis be all I have to say.” He then with some difficulty,

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retreated to his seat, amidst the most deafening cheers from all sides of the house.

The manager, as soon as silence was regained, rose and said, “I have the pleasure of introducing to you, an old and tried friend, Mr. William Lawson, whose praise is in all the churches.”

Mr. Lawson, having fitted his wig, and hitched up his small-clothes, thus addressed the meeting:

“Mr. Chairman, and Christian Friends,—It is not so easy a thing as some people imagine, to speak before a large audience. When a speaker has got ready a cut-and-dried speech, and has delivered it forty-nine times, he won’t find much difficulty in delivering it the fiftieth. To such a man, speaking generally is no hard thing. (Hear, hear.) There may be a case, however, when he will be considerably bothered—when his cut and dry won’t quite answer; as when a previous speaker takes part of his speech, or exhausts his pet subject; or when he has delivered his crack speech at the place

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before. Now, Mr. Chairman, this is my case. I have spoken here so often that I am quite fast for something new; and the very subject on which I had collected a few thoughts has been quite exhausted by a previous speaker. He has robbed me, not only of my subject but of many of my thoughts, and stands indicted at the bar for grand larceny. (Hear, hear.) There are however, two subjects which he has left me, for he could not very easily have taken them off without leading to detection and conviction: those are, my brethren, the Indian Chief and the Converted Negro Missionary. (Hear, hear.) How it was that he left them, I know not; whether he had more valuable spoil to capture, or whether he was put off his design by some alarm, or whether it was his dread of the tomahawk, which deterred him, I know not. Whatever was the cause, he has left them untouched, and now I have no lack of matter for a short speech.

“The presence of our two foreign brethren reminds me of that infidel argument which has

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been brought forward time after time, to overthrow the Mosaic account of the origin of mankind from one pair. The infidel used to ask, how the black man, and the

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yellow man, and the brown man could all come from a white man? What a fool to put such a question! If one of these knowing gentlemen would walk with me some fine morning over my farm, I'd soon show him in the different breeds of sheep, horses, and oxen, full as great a variety as he can find in the different races of men. Learned men are now come to the conclusion that every variety in the human family is easily to be accounted for, by the influence of climate and other outward circumstances, and that mankind are sprung originally from one common stock. (Great cheers.) We hail you, brother Wesley, and you, brother Ha-re-badger, as allied to us by the same blood, though your colour is darker. Should I be changed into a brute, I wonder, if I were to black my face? (Hear, hear.) When we were for sending the gospel to the poor degraded negro, 'It's no use

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doing that,' said these wise men, 'you may as well preach it to the ourang-outang, or the black bear. What use is it, to talk about saving the souls of those who have none to save?' We have taken the wise in their own craftiness; we have tried the experiment; we have applied the load-stone of the gospel, and have fetched out the immortal gem. (Hear, hear.) We have found the jewel the same—the casket only a little darker. (Hear, hear.) We have proved the gospel applicable to all nations, of what-ever colour, of whatever clime. It is the great civilizer, as well as christianize!' of the world. There is a deal of talk, now-a-days, of civilizing the savages, by merely human means. Let the plan be tried, and we shall soon see how it will work. I say that it will not answer. (Hear, hear.) They'll soon get to see that civilization is but another word for unjust possession. (Hear, hear.) Your fine civilizers have generally proved robbers and destroyers. Plant the cross among them, gather them round it, preach Christ to them; and you'll soon see the dark

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visage melt into softness, the cruel eye weep with tenderness, the savage breast subdued into gentleness, the weapons of destruction turned into implements of agriculture, and the war-cry changed into the song of peace. (Great applause.) As I was coming along by the railroad this morning, I could not help drawing in my mind a parallel between railroads and Missionary operations. The different Missionary Societies, I thought, are like so many railway companies, established to convey

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passengers from different parts of the world to the land of Canaan. And, thank God, I don't know any company that's so nourishing as our own. We have stations in almost every part of the world, (Hear, hear.) and some of them on a very large scale; and many long lines of railway, and a variety of carriages, of the first class, and the second class, and the third class, and more passengers on our lines than are to be found on any others. (Hear, hear.) Thank God, we have powerful engines, and they don't require much time to get up the steam; and

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There's no company on whose lines there is such fast travelling as the Wesleyan. (Hear, hear.) Now, brethren, I know many of you would be very glad if any body would tell you of a profitable way of investing your money. If I were to say to you, 'If there is any gentleman present who has a few thousand pounds which he wishes to invest, if he will meet me in the vestry after service, I can tell him of a plan whereby he may quickly double it,' how delighted would some of you be, and how anxious to hear the plan. Now I have to propose to you a scheme, which, if you will engage in it, will pay you, for every pound you may embark in it more than ten pounds. I propose then to establish a railway in China. (Hear, hear.) The sum required to form it will be about five thousand pounds, to be raised in five pound shares. It's a safe speculation—not the least risk; and will ensure large premiums. (Hear, hear.) Mr. Chairman, I must put *you* down for a share, I suppose.”

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“I must see the prospectus first,” answered Mr. Hocking.

“Well, Sir, then,” continued Mr. Lawson, “I will have one sent you, and I hope that there will be found a great number of persons in this large town, who will buy shares. I mean to take a share or two; and if I'd plenty of money, I'd take fifty shares, so sure am I of its answering. We are met to-night to promote the general interest of the Wesleyan Railway Company. The directors are about fast on some lines, for want of money. Don't suffer the work to stand still for want of funds. There's no lack of steam; no, bless God, he will always see that there is plenty of that. What we want is money to keep the engines, and carriages, and stations, and lines, in repair; and to make new ones. And oh! brethren, what a large splendid place must the New Jerusalem terminus be! How delightful it will be to stand, and watch the different

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trains come in, and to see some poor African, or Chinese passengers get out of our carriages, and hear them

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praising God for a methodist rail-road. How glad shall we then be to be able to think—I had a share in that line, and so a share in their salvation.” The speaker now sat down, amidst the most deafening applause from all sides of the house.

When the cheering had subsided, the manager proposed to the meeting the motion which had been moved by the Indian Chief, and *not* seconded by Mr. Lawson. He said “I have the satisfaction of calling upon the reverend Paul Wesley, a converted Negro Missionary, to address the meeting.”

The reverend gentlemen, having advanced to the front of the stage, and laid hold of the rail, spoke thus: “Mr. Chairman, and dear English friends, I feels it to be a hard task, uncustom’d as I am to public speech before a big number of white laties and gentleman. (Hear, hear.) But as de former speaker did say, dat though me be black man, yet me be brudder to you all. (Hear, hear.) I wish me be a Romish Priest, den me would transubstantiation poor black

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man into a fine white man, and den you would gib attentive ear to my word. (Hear, hear.) Me read in de Bible, dat de great God, made of one blood all nations dat do live on de earth; so though me be black man, de same red blood runs in my veins. (‘Let us see it,’ cried out a man in the pit.) Look here” said the speaker, seizing his under lip, and pulling it down to the extremity of his chin, “you see de red blood as bright a red, as de white man. And if you see de blood dat run down de back ob de poor negro, when flogged by de slave driver, you no more doubt ob de blood not being red. What dreadful afflictions has been put upon de black man. I see many time, poor children and poor women lying bleeding on de road. (Great moans.) Dis patch on my head was from de blow ob a slave driver. And I hab a bad place on my arm, vich I will sow you. (Mr. Wesley was about to take off his coat, but Mr. Oldton stopped him.) I bless God dat ever de Missionary come to my country. Me be knowing noting about Jesus Christ, if he neber come

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to teach poor negro. ('Speak up, Mr. black man,' cried a voice from the lobby.) Me try to speak up, Mr. white man; and me tell you, dat de devil not like me going to hear de Missionary. He tell me dat he would have noting to do wid me, if I go to de chapel. 'Vedy well,' I said, 'me don't care 'bout dat; me vill go to de chapel, for me find it good to my soul.' (You hab no soul,' said de devil. 'De Missionary tell you a lie when he say you hab a soul: he want to make you tink you hab, dat he may get you to de chapel, and he murder you some dark night.' 'Missionary a good man,' I said, 'he no murder black man: he tell me about Jesus Christ—how he die for me, and now is gone to heaven.' 'He none die for black man,' said de devil, 'he die but for de white man: the Missionary tell you lie.' Den I kneel down and pray, and said, 'Oh Jesus Christ, dat is in heaven, tell me if you die for de black man; tell me if you die for me; and I seem to hear a voice say, Jesus Christ do die for de black man, and me felt so happy, dat I

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shout out 'blessed Jesus, die for poor negro!' and I go to tell de Missionary as me feel dat Jesus die for me; and he sing, 'Praise God from whom all blessing flow,' and he tell me dat me be converted. (Hear, hear.) It be a day vich me neber forget, when me was mancipate from slavery; but dat is noting to de mancipate from sin, and de devil. Me vant de poor negro to know dat Jesus die for him. Oh, Christian people, send him de gospel, make a big railroad in de black man's country, to take de poor negro to de heavenly Canaan. Put on de steam, and let de smoke come out of your pocket; (Hear, hear.) and den wen you meet de black man train, at de big station, the negro tank you for de railroad, and you sail, sine forth as a star ob de first mangitude, in de kingdom of heaven." Mr. Wesley read over the motion, and resumed his seat amidst a mingling of cheers, stamping, and clapping of hands, that could only be surpassed by the dinning plaudits excited by a brilliant piece of acting at Drury Lane.

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"It is my pleasing task," said the manager, "to introduce to your notice, two very old and intimate friends Mr. Oldton, and the collection." (Immense cheering.)

The reverend orator arose and stood, with a half-jocose and half-benevolent countenance, waiting for the plaudits to cease. When silence was obtained, he said, "Mr. Chairman, and my Christian friends.—I believe, Sir, that I should, through the

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kindness of my old friends, succeed very well, if it were not that I am always compelled to stand godfather to the collection. (Hear, hear.)

“Supported, however, by the remembrance of past favours, I will address myself to my task. It is now, Sir, thirty years since I first raised my voice in behalf of the glorious cause of Missions. (Hear, hear.) I have travelled since that time many thousand miles, and delivered many hundred speeches, for the benefit of Missions. And, Sir, do I repent my labours? Am I growing weary in the good cause? Oh! no, Sir. When I see two such splendid trophies

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of Missionary enterprize as are now on this platform, my heart expands afresh with earnest zeal, and heaven- inspired energy for the salvation of the poor degraded heathen. (Hear, hear) Let the mouth of the infidel and the scorner be for ever stopped, who would tell us that the Negro is a being only half a remove from an irrational brute. We, Sir, have had a full and demonstrative proof this evening, that a man of colour possesses all the faculties and capabilities of a rational being. (Hear, hear.) I, for one, Sir, am not ashamed of calling a man of colour my brother. I give to both my foreign brethren the right hand of Christian fellowship, (Mr. Oldton here shook hands with Mr. Wesley and the Chief.) and give them too, Sir, the hearty shake of Christian love. (Great cheers.)

“I am happy, Sir, to inform you and this congregation that a strong Missionary feeling is excited in the Presbyterian church of Scotland. I have been over there, Sir, lately; and can tell you that Christian charity is there prevailing;

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bigotry, that scourge of the church, is giving way before the benign influence of Christian love. (Hear, hear.) I had the privilege, Sir, of pleading the cause of Missions in the pulpit of the illustrious Chalmers; (Hear, hear.) and I wore, too, the mantle of that great man. I preached, Sir, an hour and a half with more than ordinary freedom; and we got, Sir, at the collection, the noble sum of one hundred and ten pounds, fifteen shillings, and fourpence halfpenny. (Hear, hear.)

“I have also been in Ireland lately, Sir; and there, too, there is a revived Missionary feeling. (Hear, hear.) When I think, Sir, of that fine and rich country—the Eden of Europe, I am ready to weep! How long shall the enemy triumph—how long shall

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Popery desolate that fair region? The doom of the Babylonian harlot is sealed, and though the Puseyites may try to prolong her life, yet all will be in vain; her fate is irrevocably sealed. (Hear, hear.) I was very much struck, the other day, Sir, with a remark made by an old woman, who came up

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to me, after I had done preaching at a village in Staffordshire. ‘Brother Oldton,’ said she to me, ‘there are a sort of devils abroad now, which can only be cast out by much prayer, and strong faith, and great self denial.’ There is a deal of truth in this remark. Sir. If we expect to see the Papacy demolished—idolatry overthrown, and pure Christianity universally established, we must pray more earnestly, and exercise much stronger faith, and practise greater self-denial. (Hear, hear.) I was very much pleased a few weeks ago, with an instance of self-denial, in the case of an old man in Cornwall. At a Missionary Meeting, at which I had the pleasure of attending in that county, a poor collier rose up, and said, ‘From this time, I shall give up tobacco, and give what I spend in that luxury, to save the poor heathen from perishing.’ (Hear, hear.) Retrench, my brethren, your luxuries; deny yourselves even of your comforts. (Hear, hear.) This is the practical proof of our love to Christ, and of our love to souls, when we give out of our penury.

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Your love, my friends, to the noble cause of Missions has ever been conspicuous. You have ever given abundantly of your money, and now you are about to give of your own selves to the Lord. It delights me, Sir, to inform you that our excellent brother Cropper has come forward, and offered himself as a missionary to the benighted tribes of Africa. (‘But he shanner go!’ cried out a poor weeping woman; ‘he’s been suaded to it, and he shanner go: he is my only child, and all I’n got to trust to for a livin.’) We cannot imagine,” continued the speaker, “the painful feelings which must agonize the heart of an affectionate mother, when about to be separated, perhaps for ever, from her only child. I can sympathise with you, dear sister, in your heavy distress. It is indeed a severe trial for you. If you cast your care upon the Lord, be assured that he will enable you to bear it, with cheerful submission. The prospect of your son, being employed in the glorious work of evangelising the perishing heathen, should make you rejoice rather than

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weep. For his will be the distinguished honour of unfurling the blood-stained banner of the cross, amongst the degraded and polluted sons of the apostate Ham.”

Turning to Mr. Cropper, the speaker proceeded to say, “Magnanimous is the resolve of your high-toned mind, generous is the impulse of your benevolent spirit, glorious is the object at which you are aspiring, and illustrious is the recompense that shall crown your career. Go on, then, brother, for yours is the noblest enterprise—the most glorious work that can engage the thoughts and exertions of a human being. (‘Go on yorsen, if it’s sich a grand thing,’ said the heart-broken mother, as she left the chapel.)

“I am grieved to say, Sir,” continued the speaker, “that the expenditure of our Society has, within the last year, gone far beyond the income; and unless some great and extraordinary effort is made, the Committee will be obliged to break up some of the stations, and take off some of the carnages. But, Sir,

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know the feeling of this congregation too well to think for one moment that they will allow this to be done. (Hear, hear.) They will one and all come forward, and furnish to the Connexion and to the world, a convincing proof of their firm resolve to meet to the utmost of their ability the increasing demands on their Christian liberality.” The reverend orator resumed his seat amidst long-continued applause.

The Chairman rose, and ordered the collection to be made, and advised the people to keep their places, to prevent confusion.

The collection being made, a vote of thanks was proposed to the chairman for the very able manner in which he had discharged the responsible duties of his office. A second vote of thanks was proposed to the deputation for their most valuable assistance. A third vote of thanks was proposed by Mr. Oldton to the ladies, for the zealous discharge of their duty as collectors; in doing which, he said, “The ladies, Sir, demand from us our warmest thanks. They are ever the foremost in every

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good work. We could not carry on our missionary operations without them. They are the secret springs of the machinery. May God bless them in their work of love.”

The benediction was pronounced, and the meeting broke up.

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The whole company of the performers, and a great number of wealthy friends, took supper at Mr. Steanes'. The entertainment was of a most sumptuous description, and the evening was passed in drinking spirits, smoking pipes, cracking jokes, and talking big things of the Connexion, the whole concluding with a hymn and prayer.

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THE CONVERTED SQUIRE.

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THE CONVERTED SQUIRE.

CHAPTER I.

“I THINK, VERILY IF THE GOSPEL BE TRUE, I AM SAFE.”—*Wesley*.

The conversion of James Rivers, Esquire, is accounted an event so wonderful, that I cannot do better than give the history of it in the convert's own language. It was at a love-feast where I first heard it. The substance of it is as follows:

“Dear Christian brethren and sisters.—If ever there was a poor sinner, that need be thankful, I am he. I was born in sin, and shapen in iniquity, and I went astray from my mother's womb. I was not blessed with pious parents. They were of the moral church-going

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sort; as good as their neighbours, and so, of course, all right. The watchmen on the walls of the Established Zion were all asleep, and their lamp of truth was out. And they would have been in this state now, had not our blessed founder and his colleagues gone round the walls, and blown a loud blast with the gospel trumpet, and roused them from their slumber. I grew up a wild harum-scarum fellow; took pleasure in nothing but hunting, racing, and all sorts of mad sports. I gambled away my money to the ruin of my soul. I went by the name of madman Rivers, and I must have been mad. I often think I was possessed with a legion of devils. Every body began to think that all hope of my amendment was cut off—and I was safe to go to hell. And the devil, I've no doubt, had got ready a pretty warm place for me, and had written over it in flaming letters, ‘This is taken for James Rivers, who is expected here soon.’ But I was not quite such sure game for the infernal poachers as they imagined. May God grant that the spiritual game-

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keepers may be always on the watch, and drive the poaching devils out of the heavenly pre- serves, down to their infernal prison. Well, to come to the point. I was going down the village one Sunday, and in passing our chapel, I stopped at the door to listen. The preacher was speaking from the parable of the prodigal son. The word came home to my heart. I thought I was that prodigal son, I had wasted my property in riotous living. I determined to go to both my earthly and Heavenly father, and crave forgiveness. I went straightway home, opened my heart to my father, and promised amendment. He frankly forgave me all that was past. I then went up-stairs, and knelt down to pray; and was overwhelmed with grief. I prayed aloud for mercy, but all was of no use; I felt no peace of mind. I went to chapel the next Sunday, and stayed the prayer-meeting: many fervent prayers were offered up for my conversion, but they were not then answered. Another week went on, and sometimes I thought I had got the blessing,

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and then at others I thought I had not. I had given up racing and hunting; and sold my hunters, and sporting-books, and all my dogs, except *one*. I kept a greyhound back. I would not give up all for Christ, and so he wouldn't have me for his disciple. Let me ask if there is a soul here, that is seeking for liberty, and cannot find it. I tell you, whoever you are, that there is some idol to which you cling, and which you must give up before you can be saved. Well, you must know, that one morning about five o'clock, I was wrestling in prayer for deliverance, and I was enabled to give up the grey-hound; and then, praise the Lord! I entered into liberty. I sang aloud the praises of the Lord, and quite raised the house. My father thought I must be insane; all wondered at me; and I am still a wonder unto many. I am going on to perfection. Thank God, the last remains of sin are destroyed. I have disappointed the devil and the infernal poachers; and I hope the place he prepared for me will ever remain unoccupied, having written over it,

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'To be let.' ('Unfurnished,' cried out a man in the congregation) And now, glory be to God, I have a mansion prepared for me in heaven—a mansion of light and glory. My name is written on the door, so that you will all know it; and I can't conclude my long address in a more christian-like manner, than by giving an invitation to both

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young and old, to my heavenly mansion, assuring them of a hearty welcome and a cordial reception.”

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CHAPTER II.

“I CAME TO MR. DELAMOTTE'S, WHERE I EXPECTED A COOL RECEPTION. BUT GOD PREPARED THE WAY BEFORE ME, I WAS WELCOMED *IN SUCH A MANNER*.”—*Wesley*.

Mr. Rivers immediately upon his conversion, became a regular attendant upon the Wesleyan ministry, and a member of the society. His father being a consistent Churchman, was very much opposed to his joining the Wesleyan society, or attending the chapel. When he found, however, that all his efforts to dissolve his connection with a people whom he regarded as schismatics and wild enthusiasts, were all in vain, he quietly submitted to it, and comforted himself with the reflection, “Well, it is certainly better for him to be a wild religious enthusiast, than a profligate and reckless gambler, and I must wait awhile, and he will become more sober-minded.”

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It was a grand thing for Methodism at Standfield, that Mr. Rivers joined the society. The “cause” had been for many years at a very low ebb. There was a heavy debt upon the chapel; the Sunday-school had sadly fallen off, for want of money to purchase books; and the required quarterage was with difficulty raised. Mr. Tozer the superintendent, regarded the extraordinary conversion of Mr. Rivers as an interposition of Divine Providence, to raise up an instrument, to revive and support the declining cause at Standfield. Mr. Tozer and his colleagues made no delay in doing their part in carrying out the gracious designs of Providence, so clearly indicated to them. Accordingly, Mr. Rivers was soon appointed to the offices of class-leader, Sunday-school treasurer, and society-steward. He stood as a king on the little hill of Zion, and ruled in the midst of the society. He caused the chapel to be cleaned and painted; made for himself a large square pew, and lined it with crimson cloth; gave the society a velvet pulpit cushion, and a handsome bible; and

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proposed purchasing an organ to improve the singing. Immediately on his accession to his various offices, the funds were doubled. His influence drew many to the chapel

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who had never before passed its threshold; and through his exertions, numbers were added to the society.

It occurred to Mr. Tozer, that he was in some measure thwarting the designs of Providence in neglecting to make Mr. Rivers a trustee to some of the circuit chapels. There were great advantages to be obtained by this step—it would bind the Squire more fully to the society, invest him with *fancied* power, and would prove a profitable speculation to the several trusts. He was pushed forward into every position and engagement which might afford a vent for his impetuous zeal and ready liberality. He was eminently serviceable at missionary meetings; for the bare announcement in the hand-bills, that “the chair would be taken by James Rivers, Esq., of Standfield Hall,” drew crowds of people to see the man

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who had acquired such great notoriety. The singularity of his manner, and his odd speeches afforded great amusement on all missionary occasions.

The clear-sighted representative of the Conference saw, with unerring precision, that the services of Mr. Rivers might be made useful to the connexion generally, in replenishing the treasury with money, and the class-books with names. Mr. Tozer, therefore, took the earliest opportunity of impressing upon the mind of Mr. Rivers that the Lord designed him for a wider sphere of usefulness than any he had hitherto occupied. “For what purpose,” said he, with a divinely amiable tone, “brother Rivers, have you been called out of darkness into the marvellous light of the gospel, but in order to let that light shine out to others? You have been snatched, as a brand from the burning, that you may be made an instrument of snatching others from the fire. Look around, and see the thousands there are, who are hurrying on to destruction, and no one to stay them

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from ruin. Oh! surely we cannot witness this, and be unmoved. Woe be unto us, if sinners perish, whom we might have saved. God calls you to go forth, and stand between the living and the dead, and stay the plague. Say not within yourself, I am not qualified for so responsible an office. Every needful qualification you possess; you have a heart burning with love for souls, and in the abundance of the heart your mouth will speak. I shall propose you at the next quarter-day, as a fit and proper

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person to be received on the Plan. I commission you, however, to preach at Morton next Sunday, and you must call upon me and tell me of your success.”

Mr. Rivers listened with the most profound attention to Mr. Tozer’s address, and thus replied:

“I am glad, brother, that you have spoken to me on the subject of the ministry. I have had it a long time on my mind to speak to you on the subject. I did not do it, for fear you should think that I wanted to run before I was

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sent. I have for some time felt a deep impression on my mind, that it was my duty to call sinners to repentance. This conviction has troubled me much of late. I prayed to the Lord that, if it was his will that I should preach, he would open the way for me. I asked him to get you to mention the subject to me, and it seems that he has done so. I feel my unworthiness and insufficiency for so great a work, but I look to God for strength. Suppose we pray a bit, brother.”

Having risen from their knees, Mr. Rivers said, “I feel, brother, as if anointed with the unction of the Spirit, for the office.”

“Yes, brother,” replied Mr. Tozer, “our prayers ascended to the throne, and the blessing has been given: you, brother, will prove a polished shaft, in the Almighty’s quiver.”

“I called upon you,” said Mr. Rivers, “to pay you my subscription of five guineas to the Auxiliary fund; and I have been thinking over what you said about Kingswood and Woodhouse Grove schools, and I will subscribe five guineas

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annually to them. And, if we can raise a missionary meeting annually at Standfield, I will give a sovereign at the collection, in addition to my regular subscription.”

“What a pleasure it is, brother,” said Mr. Tozer, with a heavenly smile, “to give of one’s money to promote the cause of God.” How apt we are to forget that property is a talent for the use of which we shall have to give an account. What a sad thing it is, that so many professing Christians should seem to entirely lose sight of this serious fact. You, my brother, feel the force of it: you are resolved to employ your property to further the cause of Christ, and in this way to lay up treasure in heaven.

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“Now I think of it, brother,” continued Mr. Tozer, with an anxious look, “I have a little matter to mention to you, about which I wish for your advice. It is with respect to the horse which the Circuit has lately bought for our use. I was deputed by the Quarter-day to purchase a nag for the use of myself and my colleagues. No sooner did brother Nibbler, one of our local

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brethren, hear of it, than he waited upon me to inform me that he had a mare, that would be just the thing for me. ‘Not,’ said he, (that I want to part with her, for never was I so well suited, and never shall be again: yet as you are in need of one, and may find it difficult to get suited, I will let you have my brown beauty; and you shall have her, too, at a cheap rate, seeing that she is wanted for the promotion of the cause of God.’ I agreed that he should bring up his brown beauty for inspection. He accordingly brought her up, and she certainly looked uncommonly well. He assured me she was only four years old, perfectly sound, as quiet as a lamb, and went well in harness. Being no great judge of horse-flesh, I trusted to his honesty, and paid him sixteen pounds for her. She turns out to be very unsound, an undateable age, and frightfully unmanageable in harness. I have seen brother Nibbler respecting her, and he asserts that she was perfectly sound when she left his hands, that he never told me her age, and that he did not say

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a word about her being quiet in harness. The finest part of the business is, that he threatens to report me to Conference, as having damaged his character. This is how the case stands. I should like you to see the brown beauty, and advise me how to act in the matter. I have been very much blamed by some of the brethren for making so bad a bargain. They ought rather to blame themselves, for deputing so bad a judge of horse-flesh to make the purchase. I don’t suppose that we shall be able to obtain any compensation in a court of justice, even if I could consent to go to law before unbelievers. The only satisfaction to be gained, is by expelling him from the society, which shall speedily be done. What has grieved me most in this unfortunate affair, is the very unkind, yea, cruel remark, that was made by one of the circuit stewards, respecting the affair. He said that I ought to make up the loss to the Circuit, out of

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my own pocket. A likely thing, with my large family and slender means! How to get out of the difficulty I

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know not. It is true that Conference is near, and I shall then leave the circuit. In that way I shall get out of it; but I had rather go away with the matter amicably settled.”

“Be not alarmed,” replied Mr. Rivers, “I will see the matter peacefully concluded. I have a horse that will just suit you, which you shall have in exchange. I will sell the old hack, and give whatever she fetches to the missionary cause.

“I have not forgot, and I hope I shall never forget, the sermon you preached a short time ago at Standfield, on the right use of riches. May God give me grace to employ all my talents to his glory.”

“As you are about to engage in the work of the ministry,” said Mr. Tozer, “you had better purchase some Wesleyan divinity. You should have Mr. Wesley’s works, and Mr. Watson’s, and Mr. Benson’s Commentary: these are indispensable. I can order them for you, from the book-room. I have a second-hand copy of Mr. Benson’s Commentary, which I could sell

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you cheap. But as you want to go now, we will talk over the matter of the books some other time.”

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CHAPTER III.

“MY SISTER RECEIVED THE ATONEMENT ON ST. PETER’S DAY. AT THAT HOUR, ONE WHO HAD LONG CONTINUED IN SIN, FROM A DESPAIR OF EVER FINDING MERCY, RECEIVED A FULL CLEAR SENSE OF PARDONING MERCY, AND POWER TO SIN NO MORE.”—*Wesley*.

Mr. Rivers preached on the following Sunday, at Morton, to a large congregation. He returned with a heart gladdened by success. No doubt now remained on his mind, as to his call to the ministry, for God had given witness to his divine mission by signs and wonders such as had never been seen before in Morton chapel. Seven persons professed to have received the blessing of pardon, and he left a great many under deep conviction, “wrestling for the liberty of the gospel.” His fame soon spread through the neighbouring circuits, and he received numerous “invitations” to preach

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occasional sermons. His renown spread with wonderful rapidity throughout the whole king- dom. Each day brought additional applications for his services, in behalf of embarrassed funds. Mr. Tozer became quite convinced that Mr. Rivers was called to do the work of an Evangelist, and he accordingly advised him to dedicate himself to it. This advice was readily taken, and speedily acted upon.

It was during one of his excursions, that I heard him preach the following

SERMON

“ ‘The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.’ ”

Isaiah was a good man; he prophesied of the coming of Christ. Why! he has told us of what we never could have known, hadn't he declared it. Just read what he says about the life and death of Christ. I am sure you will think that he must have known him, and all about him. How very grand are some of the things which he says! How he feels for

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his kindred according to the flesh! At the beginning of the chapter, he seems to wish that they may be comforted.—‘Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received at the Lord's hand double for all her sins.’ Here's comfort for you! to tell the people that all their iniquity was pardoned; yea, that it was doubly pardoned. Here's mercy for you! that gives twice as many pardons as sins committed. It is like giving two good shillings for one bad one. Take then, your bad shillings, which you and the devil have forged, and change them for good ones. Here's a chance for you to make your fortune! It's a safe speculation. Take a share in the Christian joint-stock banking-company, which is established by royal authority, and has a capital of untold millions. It's established to save those poor souls from ruin, who have been cheated by the forgers of hell. Make haste! delay not! the policeman is after

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you on his white horse, and if he finds any false coin upon you, you will be convicted of forgery, and be transported for life to the bottomless lake. Bring this night all your sins, and you shall receive at the hands of the Lord, double for them. I have made the

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exchange, and a good bargain I have made. The Lord had hard work to bring me to it. I was a very rough one; but he filed me down, and smoothed me. I was a very crooked one; but, bless his name! he softened the metal in the hot fire of repentance, and then straightened me. And now, here I am! doing what? scampering over hedge and ditch after a fox? No! bless God, I'm pursuing the devil full cry; and I'll chase him down to his infernal cover.

“It is now high time to be coming to my text. But stop! let us sing a verse.

The verse having been sung, Mr. Rivers then proceeded, saying

“Well, now for it! We remark in the first place, that the glory of the Lord is revealed in nature. The sun, moon, stars, fruitful seasons,

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plants, flowers, all things in nature, are full of his glory. But in man the glory of the Lord shines the most. He is nothing now, to what he was in paradise. I should like to have seen Adam and his sweet companion in the garden of Eden, before they fell from their high estate. It must have been a most delightful place to have lived in, but it seems they were not satisfied with it; they must try the forbidden fruit. O, Eve! why didn't you keep your fingers off? surely there was enough of pleasant fruits in the garden, without taking of the forbidden tree! But she must be prying and meddling, and so she tried it, and then she gave some to Adam, and he tried it, and then it was all over: the curse of God fell upon them and all their posterity. Now you pray, whilst I preach.

“This leads us, secondly, to notice the glory of God in redemption. Well, you know, when they had eaten of the forbidden tree, they were conscious that they had sinned; and were frightened, and skulked behind the bushes, and durstn't face the Almighty.

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the Lord walked in the garden as usual, and called Adam out of his hiding-place: he came forth trembling. ‘Adam,’ said the Almighty, ‘have you eaten of the forbidden tree?’ He confessed that he had, but laid the blame on his wife. Eve was then questioned in the same way, and she laid the blame on the serpent. If the serpent had been questioned, he would, no doubt, have laid the blame on the devil. And if the devil had been questioned, I suppose he would have boldly taken all the sin and

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blame upon himself. God had said, ‘the day that thou eatest of the fruit, thou shalt surely die.’

“They waited in great fear, the infliction of the punishment. The Lord, however, had devised a plan, whereby he was able to be just, and yet the justifier of the ungodly. You know what plan that is: It was that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head; and the seed of the woman came in due time—Jesus Christ, the great serpent-bruise. He has given the old serpent many hard blows:

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may God grant that he may give him a good one to-day. When he was in the flesh, he drove the devils out of their man-houses; and on the cross, he gave the serpent a blow on the head, from which he has never recovered; and soon he will quite crush him. Keep your faith up, whilst I pass on to the third part of our subject,—namely, glory in heaven.

“Heaven, I understand, is a very fine place. Now we do not and cannot know much about it. St. Paul was there, but we are no wiser for his going, except that he tells us that he cannot tell us anything about it. What a wonderful man Paul was! How mad he was against the harmless Christians, breathing out threatening and slaughter against them. He was fine and glad as he went to Damascus, hoping to get a feast of blood there. But the Lord had something better for him to do than going about murdering his people. The Lord met him on the road, and fetched him down to the ground; and he cried out. I wonder what you fine ear'd Christians would have said, if you had

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been passing by, and heard him cry out. Methinks you would have told him to get up and hold his nose, and get on his horse, and act like a rational being. Bless the Lord! we had some crying out for mercy this afternoon; six or seven were wrestling for liberty: bless their precious souls, how they did sweat to get loose. And, bless the Lord! he set them at liberty, and made them happy in his love. And he is here this evening, as willing, and as powerful as ever to save you from all your sins. You in the gallery, and you below, look to Jesus, and keep your faith up.

“Glory in heaven! There will be many in heaven, that Isaiah never knew, and the Apostles never knew, out of all nations under heaven. See how they crowd the

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throne. I hear the rumbling of the chorus now. There will be many there as the Lord saved under me. And if you will go full lengths with his love, he will save you. Many of you are on the brink of hell. May the Lord have mercy upon you! Now sing a verse; I am out of breath.”

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After singing the verse beginning “I’ll praise my Maker whilst I’ve breath,” he proceeded as follows:

“What does St. Paul say? Why he says, that the afflictions of the present life are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed. He was a good calculator; he knew what he was about; he was not a man that beat the air; he held the scales in his hand; he put into one, all his afflictions and sufferings, and into the other the crown of righteousness, and the crown bump’d the scale. ‘Now I’m off,’ said he; ‘come world, come devil, come fire, come sword; I care for none of you,—I’m more than a match for you all, through Him that hath loved me and given himself for me.’ And do you think that Paul repents his bargain? Not he, indeed. He is now singing the praises of the Lamb, close to the throne: I hear the rumbling of the chorus now. When I get there I will sing as loudly as any of them. I shall go up the golden streets, and meet Abraham and shake hands

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with him, and ask him, how he felt when he went up to Mount Moriah, to offer his darling son Isaac, and make some inquiries after the health of Lazarus. Then I shall meet David, and get him to give me a tune on his harp with solemn sound, and ask him to introduce me to Elijah, and give me a sight of the chariot of fire, in which he mounted up to heaven. I shall then get an angel, perhaps Gabriel, to take me to the mansion where the three Hebrew children live, and talk to them about their state, when in the fiery furnace. I shall drink of the fountain of life, play a tune on my harp to try my instrument, and get up as near to the throne as possible.

“I was a great rebel: God had much to manage me. Glory be to God, I am a thorough Methodist,—blood, flesh, bones, all Methodist. I wish you were all converted to God. Why won’t you? You may if you like. Yes, every one in this chapel may be converted this very night.

“You remember the case of the Philippian

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jailer. Paul and Silas, you know, were at Philippi, and Paul cast an evil spirit out of a damsel, who brought much gain to her masters by divination. Now when her masters perceived that the gains of their craft were all gone, they were enraged at Paul, and got him cast into prison, being thrust into the dampest and darkest cell. Paul will tell me all about it when I get to heaven. Well, Silas says to Paul, 'These irons rather hurt, Paul, and I fear this damp cell will give us cold.' Paul says 'Never mind Silas, so long as our hearts are warm and free, let us sing a verse.' And they sang praises to God. Not much to sing about, I dare say, some of you think. Then Paul says 'Now Silas, let us pray a bit.' 'I am quite willing,' said Silas, and so Silas began to pray with great power and freedom, and Paul joined him with much fervour till they both got out of breath and made a sudden stop, and the silence was broken by a rumbling kind of noise. Then Paul says, "what's up Silas? That's a queer sort of noise I hear, and some how or other the prison seems

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to tremble. Don't you feel it shake? "Just so," says Silas, "for it makes my chains very much to rattle." And no sooner had they spoken, than a great earth-quake shook the prison, and their chains fell off, and the doors of the prison flew wide open. The jailer came to the apostles, trembling, and cried out, 'What must I do to be saved?' and Paul replied, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.' 'Let us kneel down,' said Paul, 'and pray for our friend the jailer.' And they prayed with power, and to the point. 'The blessing is coming,' said Silas. 'It is come!' said the jailer: 'how mighty happy I am. You must go home with me,' said he, 'and get some refreshment.' So they went with him. The jailer called up his wife; no pleasant thing to be called up in the middle of the night, out of a warm bed. When she saw her husband bringing to his house the two prisoners, she was displeased with him; but when she found what they had done for the soul of her husband, she received them with joy. 'Now my dear,' said the jailer, 'let us

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have something to eat and drink for the servants of the Lord, and so she fetched out the best meat she had in the house, and drew them some drink from the best tap. After they had eaten and drunken, Paul says, 'we must have the whole household

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saved, before we depart;’ and so they set to praying again, and young and old were all made happy in the love of God, and they were all baptised. And if there is any Baptists here, I should like to be asking where they got the water from, if the household was dipped? (‘From the same place,’ said a voice from the crowd, ‘as the wife fetched the drink from.’)

There is one point in the text, to which I must for a short time call your attention, namely, the universal spread of the Gospel; for the text says, ‘that all flesh shall see the revealed glory of God.’ There does not seem much appearance at present of the fulfilment of this prophecy. The whole world is lying in wickedness. The devil is deceiving the nations. The old whore of Babylon is filling

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Parliament would be houses of prayer, and the members would hold a sort of missionary meetings in them. The prisons would be turned into chapels, and the police would become ministers of the gospel. Peace and love would reign around. Who is there in this chapel, that is not a well wisher of his country? If, then, you wish to see your country great and happy, come forward and give something to promote so good an object. We want money for the chapel. If we have not chapels, we cannot have preaching and public worship, through which our land is to be made glorious.

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Some of you are going to give cop- per, others will give silver, and I hope some will give gold, but I fear that many will give nothing at all. If the devil tries to button up your pocket, knock him down. Now go round, and collect, and take your time.”

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CHAPTER IV.

“THE FIRST NIGHT I PREACHED HERE, HALF MY WORDS WERE LOST THROUGH THE NOISE OF THEIR OUTCRIES. LAST NIGHT, BEFORE I BEGAN TO PREACH, I GAVE PUBLIC NOTICE, THAT WHOSOEVER CRIED SO AS TO DROWN MY VOICE, SHOULD BE GENTLY CARRIED TO THE FURTHEST CORNER OF THE ROOM BUT MY PORTERS HAD NO EMPLOYMENT THE WHOLE NIGHT.”—*Wesley*.

As soon as the tinkling of the money had ceased, Mr. Rivers addressed the congregation respecting the prayer-meeting, which was to take place immediately on the close of the service. He said, “I hope that none of you will leave this chapel in an unsaved state. You who are still in your sins and in your blood, must by no means leave till your sins are pardoned, and the favour of heaven smiles upon you. The devil will want you to leave, for he

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does not like prayer-meetings; they damage his kingdom too much for him. He found it so this morning, for we had seven precious souls converted. And if you will stop, we shall have some more saved. And as for you, my brethren, who have been saved by the grace of God, you must by all means stay; for we shall want you to give us a helping hand to some of these poor sin-sick folk who are waiting for the moving of the waters, that they may be healed, for some of them are so heavily laden with sin that it will take at least half-a-dozen strong-faith'd Christians to lift them into the pool. We will sing a verse whilst our brethren prepare for their work; and when all things is in readiness, my faithful servant John, who has been my coachman for many years, will address a few words to you.” Whilst they were singing “Come to Jesus,” preparations were being made for the prayer-meeting. Mr. Rivers descended from the pulpit, and established himself within the Communion-rails, placing his hat and top-coat upon the Communion-table.

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Whilst the people were seating themselves, Mr. Rivers went into the vestry to get a little port wine to invigorate him for the work that was before him. Long forms were placed near the Communion-rails for the use of the penitents. The travelling preachers stood with Mr. Rivers, against the Communion-table, and several local preachers and leaders seated themselves near to them. In a small seat near the pulpit, was stationed a pressgang, whose business it was to fetch obstinate penitents up to the consecrated forms, using physical force, if moral suasion failed.

The body of the chapel was densely crowded, and many were in vain trying to force their way in. The pressure was so great, that many cried out Mr. Rivers thought that they were calling out for mercy; so he exclaimed "Bless the Lord! there are signs of good doing; I hear some poor sinners crying out for mercy." Some of the females fainted, and it was difficult to persuade Mr. River's coachman that they were not in a trance. A great number were

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obliged to leave the chapel, on account of the excessive heat. Mr. Rivers in vain attempted to stop them, asking them if they could not bear so little, how would they bear the fire that would never be quenched? A local preacher, who stood near the door, closed it, and called the chapel-keeper to lock it. "A good hit," said the chapel-keeper, "for we shall in this way lock the sinners in and the devil out; so that we must have them all saved."

As soon as the confusion and noise had in some measure subsided, Mr. Rivers addressed the people as follows:

"Let every heart be engaged in prayer. The powers of darkness are here; but prayer will drive them out. Perseverance is the watch- word of the saints. I met with a woman the other day who had a deal to do to master the devil. She could not find peace to her soul, the devil so greatly buffeted her. She prayed in her bed-room, but there the devil persecuted her; she then went into the cellar to pray, but there the devil followed her: she then

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went into the barn, and the devil was there at her right hand. At last she got into a barrel, and there the devil couldn't come, and she obtained the pardon of her sins,

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and was made happy in the love of God. Let us persevere in this way, to night, and we shall have great rejoicing in our camp."

After the address, Mr. Rivers offered up the following prayer:

"Oh Lord, God of hosts, who didst lead thy ancient people out of Egypt, and didst drive out of the land of Canaan the heathen nations; go forth this night with thy saints, and lead them on to victory. ('Amen, Amen.')

May the devil and his infernal hosts be driven back to their own place. ('Glory! glory!')

Oh! snatch the prey from the teeth of the mighty. Break the chains of the captive. ('Break' em Lord.')

Oh Lord, we must have every soul here saved this night. ('We mun.')

May the word preached this night be as a nail fastened in a sure place, so that the devil with his hammer and infernal pincers may not be able to wrench it out.

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('Amen!' 'Glory!')

We bless thee, we feel thee drawing near. ('We do! we do!')

Send us a Philippian earthquake and shake these hard hearts, through Jesus Christ. Amen."

"And now," said Mr. Rivers, "our excellent brother, the Rev. Jonathan Decoy, from the Methodist Episcopal Church of America, will deliver a short address, and may the Lord bless his soul, and loosen his tongue, and bring home his words with mighty power to the hearts of all the sinners in the chapel."

Mr. Decoy did not hear Mr. River's announcement, as he was in the gallery, administering a severe rebuke to some young men and women, who were making merry sport of the tumultuous doings that were going on in the body of the chapel. A middle aged lady, of good fortune, one of the reverend gentleman's converts, (who followed him, from place to place, to facilitate the fulfilment of a dream which indicated to her, that she was to become his wife) conveyed to him the purport of Mr. River's speech. Mr. Decoy forthwith proceeded

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to the front of the gallery, and delivered the following address.

"My dear British friends: as this is my first visit among you, in this immediate vicinity, I must needs tell you from whence I come, and whither I go; and why I am found in this chapel this evening. Whence do I come then? I come from the glorious and noble and free land of America. ('Well done, Jonathan!')

said a voice from the

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corner of the chapel ‘very glorious, and free! when they won’t pay their debts! Go and convert the Pennsylvanian rascals.’) I must tell you my Christian brethren,” continued the reverend gentleman, “that the Holy Spirit is being poured out upon the people of America, in such overpowering effusions, as to surpass all the predictions of the word of God. Prophecy tells us that the spirit shall descend like the gentle dew upon the grass, but blessed be God, he is descending like the falls of Niagara. (‘I wish a few drops would fall upon those Pennsylvanian rogues,’ said the same voice in a lower tone) I wish a

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good many drops,” continued Mr. Decoy, “may fall upon the individual who has the impiety to interrupt me in my address. May the Lord have mercy upon him! Brethren, pray for him, and we will have him converted, before he leaves this chapel. I am just reminded of a vision I had last night. I saw a man of the middle size, dressed in black, with a drab top-coat on, stand up in this chapel, and lift up his voice against me, and I saw the saints of the Lord gather around him, and as they prayed for him, the spirit of the Lord fell upon him, and he was changed from a persecuter and blasphemer to a converted and happy Christian. This perverse bawler, undoubtedly is the man, that I saw in my vision; so gather round him, faithful Christians, and pray for him, and he is sure to be saved.”

There were several gentlemen collected in the corner, from whence the voice proceeded, so that it was impossible to tell which was the guilty party. One of the persons answered to the description, of the man, whom Mr. Decoy

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had seen in the vision; he was accordingly fixed upon as the transgressor, and was immediately hemmed round by a troop of praying saints. It was to no purpose, that he either avowed his innocence or attempted to make his escape. All were convinced of his guilt, all were determined on his conversion. Nothing, therefore, remained for the unfortunate gentleman, but to patiently bide his time.

“Blessed be God,” said Mr. Decoy, continuing his address, “we are having thousands, every week, added to our societies in the United States. People leave their business, shut up their shops and their houses, and retire into the mountain districts, and hold camp-meetings, for weeks together, spending their time in prayer and

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praise, having all things common, like the first Christians. It must be left till the day when God writeth up the people, for it to be known how many thousands have been born there. If I stay over the summer in this country, I mean to try if I can't get up some of these glorious meetings; and I doubt not but

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that we should find them blessed with the most plentiful effusions of the Holy Spirit. I must tell you, my dear Christian friends, that my labours in this country have not been in vain. It has pleased the great Head of the Church to give me some thousands of precious souls for my hire, since my arrival in this country; and my Master tells me, that he has given into my hands, some hundreds in this town, and I am to have fifty souls saved this very night. In the gallery there are some wicked young people, who if they go out of this chapel unsaved, will never have another offer of mercy. I see a man standing near the pulpit, who is an adulterer. I tell him that unless he immediately repents, he will undoubtedly perish. I warn every man, woman, and child, in this chapel, as they fear the fiery streams, and sulphureous clouds of the pit of hell, over which they are now standing, and into which they may at any moment be hurled, not to depart from this chapel unsaved."

Mr. Rivers requested the people to kneel

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whilst his servant John addressed a few words to them and prayed. John was soon upon a seat in the middle of the chapel, and addressed the attentive audience as follows:

"Christian brethren and sisters; I feel it good to be here. I'n bin at maany a good meetin, but to none so good as this. I'm glad to see a'ar good brothers and sisters gettin all on em *agate* for their work. As we war coming here, my exallent master observed to me, how very dull things was among you, and as we mun bring down some fire to liven you a bit. Thank God, we'en done it for you, in some sort. May we feel conshumed in the fire o' divine love. What we wanten is more faith. If we bed but a mustard-tree full o' faith, we might move the kingdom of the devil into the midst of the sea."

When John had delivered this short address, he thus prayed:

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“Oh, Jesus Christ! I see you at the right hand o’ the Father, a-pleadin for poor sinners, and showing your five bleedin wovnds. Oh!

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plead fectual for us poor sinners, (‘Amen!’) and let the Sperit now come among us. We wanten iv’ry soul in this place to be saved; and we believe as we shall hev em saved, if we pray in faith. (‘We shall! we shall!’) Come down now, oh, thou mighty to save, and if you Conner come, send your son, and shake this chapel. May the prison doors fly wide hop’n, and tak the prisoners out, and give em a great salvation. (‘Amen!’ ‘glory!’) May Satan fall as lightnin from heaven!” (‘Turn him out Lord with the pole of thy love.’)

No sooner had these words escaped his lips, than, losing his equilibrium, he fell backwards, near a cluster of weeping penitents, who were groaning for a present salvation. Two women and a man were hurt by his fall, whom Mr. Rivers consoled, by reminding them how much better their case was than that of the men on whom the tower of Siloam fell; “and perhaps,” said he, “you are much greater sinners than they.”

A local preacher, a school-master, thinking

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that the accident might be improved to the edification of the people, addressed the audience thus:

“The Psalmist tells us,” said he, “that there is nothing done under the sun, but the Lord doeth it; therefore the falling down of our brother was not without the divine permission, and no doubt is intended for good. It may be that, as we read in the Romans, through the fall of the Jews, salvation came to the Gentiles, so by the fall of our brother, salvation may come to some precious souls this night. It is perfectly wonderful, considering the distance which he fell, that he is unhurt. He might have broken some of his bones, or fractured his skull: from these he has been preserved, and he stands before us uninjured. It is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes. Let us return God our devout thanksgiving, for his merciful preservation of his servant.” Kneeling down, he thus prayed:

“Oh! thou Almighty and eternal Being, who art exalted above the celestial spheres,

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(‘Amen!’) and rulest over the planetary systems, and dost take cognizance of the earth on which we live; (‘Amen!’) we return thee our energetic thanksgiving, for protecting our dear brother from injury. (‘Glory!’) We thank thee for every elucidation of thy goodness; inspire our hearts with ennobling gratitude; and may we be thy dedicated servants, (‘Glory!’) so long as we live on this terraqueous globe. Shower down upon our brother Rivers the full glory of the new dispensation, and make him pre-eminently useful in the salvation of immortal souls. (‘Amen,’ ‘Amen!’) May the Paraclete be sent into our hearts, whilst we remain at the footstool of thy sovereign mercy. (‘Amen!’ ‘Glory!’) Grant these, and every other unmentioned favour, through the alone advocacy of thy well- beloved Son.” (Grant em’ oh! Lord.)

A verse having been sung, John Stubbins was called upon to pray. It seemed that John was well known to be a man to be near whom, when engaged in public prayer, was very dangerous; for no sooner was he called upon, than

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all within the reach of his arms moved away, beyond the limit of their swing. He thus prayed:

“Oh, Lord! we bless thee we are not in hell, burning in red-hot fire, and choked with brimstone, and tormented with devils. (‘Bless God, no!’) We bless thee we are not cut down as cow-cumbers of the ground. (‘Praise God!’) We bless thee that there is some souls here, as is near the kingdom; they be gettin their head and shouders through the door, and the devil is trying to pull em back. While we shove, do thou draw, and save em from the roaring lion. (‘Amen, and Amen!’ ‘pull on, lads!’) Convert ivry soul here present. Send us the extreme unction. (‘Amen!’ ‘Amen!’) God of heaven, save our highly-favoured country, and hasten the Million, for thy name and mercy’s sake.” (‘Amen!’; Amen!’ ‘Glory!’ ‘Glory!’ was shouted out, till the chapel rang again.)

The local preachers, together with the male and female leaders, were all now engaged in different parts of the chapel, searching out the

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penitents, and bringing them up to the forms which had been placed for them against the communion rails. Many weeping individuals were led up to the sacred spot.

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There were a few whom they could not persuade to “take up the cross.” Some of them, the pressgang, under the command of Mr. Rivers, forced to the place of healing.

There remained only two places to be filled up. Mr. Rivers perceived a cluster of persons in the gallery, and heard cries and sobbings, as if some of them were in distress. He immediately despatched John thither to bring them down to the penitent form. John forthwith departed to execute his master’s orders. He found, in a dark corner of the gallery, a fair young woman, suffused in tears, and loudly sobbing. John went to her, and with his hand he lifted up her head, saying unto her, “Daughter of Israel, why weepest thou so much?” She answered him only by sobbing louder and louder, and enveloping her face in her handkerchief. John, after a slight struggle, [324]

pulled away the covering from her fair features, sat down beside her, and spoke to her of the love of Christ, and the joy and the peace in believing. Her agitation by degrees subsided. She sobbed less violently, and the tears trickled more slowly from her bright eyes, as John imparted to her the consolations of the gospel.

John had been gone a long time, and no penitents were brought to the form. Mr. Rivers was at a loss to know what could detain him; accordingly went into the gallery to ascertain. As soon as John heard the footsteps of his master, he began to pray still more earnestly for the salvation of the maiden, and whilst his master stayed, she obtained the pardon of her sins. Mr. Rivers going to the front of the gallery, announced the delightful fact to the congregation, and gave out “Praise God from whom all blessings flow,” which was sung with exultation.

At this time the body of the chapel presented a most stirring scene.—Some were praying aloud, surrounded by groups of responding hearers;—

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others were addressing different sets of attentive listeners;—whilst Mr. Rivers was engaged in crossing the forms, from one party to another, praying a bit with some, and talking to others. The mingled sounds of screams, groans, shouts, and beating of the forms, made such a confused din, as to drive any one distracted.

The penitent forms were quite full. The penitents had either a brother or a sister kneeling by their side, directing them in the way of salvation. The spiritual helpers

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had one uniform method of instruction, in the form of interrogation. The questions were after the following manner, and the answers given by the penitents were much the same:

Helper. Do you know that you are a sinner?

Penitent. Yes, I do.

Helper. Do you feel that if you had your deserts you would now be in hell?

Penitent. I feel that I should.

Helper. Do you know that Christ died for you?

Penitent. Yes, he died for all mankind.

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Helper. Do you believe that Christ is able and willing to save you?

Penitent. I know he is.

Helper. Do you believe he is able and willing to save you just now?

Penitent. I hope he is.

Helper. There is no hope about it; we are quite sure he is. Do you feel that he is now saving you? The penitent will generally hesitate at this point, and decline for a time to answer that he feels Christ *to be* saving him. He will generally only admit that he believes Christ *will* save him. This answer is considered by the helpers to be very hopeful; and they then press the penitent to go the next step, and to believe that he *has* saved them.

Helper. A step farther, and you have it. Believe that Christ has saved you. After many awful throes and struggles, a woman at length cried out, "Bless God, I believe it, I believe it saves me. I feel the blood applied."

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Another woman, kneeling by her, rose up, and danced about with frantic joy, shouting out "The chains is broken, the load is gone! I'm a sinner saved by grace."

The work of conversion spread along the forms like an electric fluid, and all the penitents were quickly saved, except two country-men, whose case seemed almost hopeless. The helpers strove in vain to drill into them the plan of salvation, "by simple faith." "Why don't you believe?" said the helpers. "It's the easiest thing in the world." "You don't half try." The result was that after long prayer and earnest

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pressing to exercise faith, they declared that they believed, and so were made happy in the love of God.

Mr. Rivers now shouted out, "Thank God! the money is all gone." This will require some explanation.—Mr. Rivers put into his right-hand trowsers pocket as many shillings as there were penitents at the forms; and as each one was saved, he transferred a shilling from his right-hand pocket to his left. When he shouted

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out "Thank God, the money is all gone!" he had transferred the last two shillings to his left-hand pocket, and his right-hand pocket was now empty, as all the penitents were saved.

"I knew," said Mr. Rivers, "that we should have them all saved, and it is our own fault if we haven't ten times as many saved every Sunday night. You only got the first-fruits; you must now look for the harvest. You must keep the fire burning, by strong prayer; and the blood of Christ flowing, by mighty faith; and you'll soon have the chapel crowded with inquiring penitents. You must remember that the devil will be at work with the first-fruits. *Get them to the class this very week.* And may God shine upon you, and give you his blessing."

A hymn was sung, and the meeting separated at half-past eleven o'clock; a somewhat late period for servants and young people generally. This is not the least evil of the system.

[NP]

THE MYSTERIOUS VISITOR.

[NP]

THE MYSTERIOUS VISITOR.

"For as many as belong to God, and Jesus Christ, these are with the Bishop; and as many as repent them of their sins, and return to the unity of the Church, these also will be God's, that they may be alive in Jesus Christ. Be not deceived my brethren, if any one follow a schismatic he inheriteth not the kingdom of God."—*Ign. Epist.*

It was on an evening in December, that I was sitting alone in my study, reading Bishop Jewel's masterly defence of the Church of England; when I was startled by the entrance of an aged personage, of grave and dignified mien. There was a sweet serenity, and an intellectual dignity in his countenance, and a

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singular melody in his voice. I rose from my seat, to salute him, when he thus accosted me:

“I trust, Mr. Sparks, that you will excuse a stranger intruding upon you in the midst of your anxious studies. You will, I think, deem any apology for my abrupt appearance, altogether unnecessary, when you understand who I am, and the object of my visit. Although you have never seen me before, you have read my writings, and I am come to explain some things in them, which appear to you to be obscure or contradictory, and to converse with you on the condition and prospects of the Connexion.”

As the unknown visitor uttered these words, his countenance underwent a gradual and mysterious change, discovering features somewhat familiar to me. I at length thought that I recognized the features of Mr. Wesley. I was greatly startled, and a mingled feeling of fear and veneration possessed me. The suavity of his manner, and the benignity of his countenance allayed my apprehension, and having collected my spirits, I ventured to address him.

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AUTHOR.

Is it Mr. Wesley?

MR. WESLEY.

The same.

AUTHOR.

As the object of your visit is to converse upon the condition and prospects of the Connexion, I should have thought that you would have chosen the president of the Conference, as the fittest person with whom to hold intercourse.

MR. WESLEY.

Alas! he is a man of too high thoughts, and proud designs—swayed too much by ambition, and love of power, to be a meet person for my communion. I cannot hold intercourse with a man who treats with contempt my authority, and tramples underfoot my rules. I have selected you because you have ever striven to conform to my rules, and have always lifted up your voice against every departure therefrom. It

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gladdens me to find you eagerly enquiring after truth, and resolved to follow it, whithersoever

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it may lead you. If you pursue the path, it will conduct you where I would wish you to be. Do you wonder how I know so much of your state of mind? Your wonder will cease when I tell you that the invisible world is in much closer connection with the visible than is generally imagined. The stroke of death does not terminate all that occupied our thoughts on earth. Around them we still fondly linger, and watch with interest those plans on which our labor was expended.

AUTHOR.

“As the tree falls, so it lies,” is the language of inspired record; and I have ever thought that the spirit in the intermediate state finds its punishment or its reward in those habits and affections which it indulged on earth. May I ask whether departed spirits hold intercourse with our world?

MR. WESLEY.

My object in appearing to you, is not to make revelations of the condition and employment of the invisible world. What you know

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not now, you will know hereafter. Indulge not in any fanciful speculations, concerning the future state, for you cannot but err. What was my hypothesis of the restoration of the brute creatures, but a mere vagary of unrestrained imagination? Ever keep in mind that what a man soweth, that shall he also reap. This is the true key to man's future condition. Would that I had been more careful, as to the kind of seed which I have sown! To watch the growth and propagation of one single grain of the bad seed which I unfortunately scattered, and to note its fatal fecundity, as I am now able to observe it, occasions me great sorrow; for as yet all tears are not wiped away from all faces, for the works of the departed are yet to undergo a trial, so as by fire. When the spirit is loosened from the bondage of the flesh, it puts forth its nascent energies, and the sphere of its operation becomes greatly extended. It gathers into its enlarged comprehension the doings of its earthly life-time, and draws from this source the chief food for either bitter or sweet reflection.

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AUTHOR.

I gather from what you have observed, that departed spirits are conscious of all that passed within them, and without them, during their residence on the earth; and that they are not unconscious of what is going on in our world.

MR. WESLEY.

It is impossible for me to give you any conception of the wonderful power which the memory exercises, recalling in vivid reality the long forgotten transactions of an earthly probation. The mind cannot, however it may strive, detach itself from the earth. The ties of kindred are not dissolved by death. The father's affection and solicitude for his family, are rather increased than diminished by his separation from it. The patriot's love for his country is not extinguished when he dies, but it glows with increasing ardour. The Christian's love and zeal for the Church, expire not when the soul leaves the body, but burn with a brighter and a purer flame.

AUTHOR.

I am led to conclude from these remarks, that
[337] you are perfectly conscious of what is passing in the Connexion, which is called after your name.

MR. WESLEY.

You do well in styling it the Connexion, called after my name. I have been an anxious observer of all that has passed within it, ever since my departure, and have found my very worst fears more than realized. *Oh! Sir, one false step in a person's career may be productive of irretrievable mischief, and one false step will almost infallibly lead to many others;* at least such is my experience. You will perhaps wonder to hear such a confession from the lips, of one, to whom you have been taught to ascribe little short of infallibility. When the veil of human flesh, which at once corrupts and blinds the understanding, is cast off, the soul sees things as they really are and its judgment of them is guided by the unerring standard of eternal truth. But enough for the present. Duty calls you away. Farewell.

The apparition vanished leaving me some- what agitated. After a time, I regained my composure.

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SECOND COLLOQUY.

“He cannot have God as his father, who has not the Church as his mother.”—*St. Cyprian*.

A few evenings after this interview, I was sitting in my study, reading Mr. Wesley’s “Further thoughts on separation,” when my new acquaintance from the world of spirits entered the room.

MR. WESLEY.

When you compare my conduct with what I have said, in the work, which you are reading against the evil of separation, it may appear to you that my acts have been inconsistent with my words. Whilst I am heard to condemn separation from the Church, as a heinous sin, I perhaps may appear to you to have given my sanction to schism, by having made provision for the establishment of a separate community.

AUTHOR.

I must acknowledge, that there has appeared
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to me, some degree of inconsistency in your proceedings.

MR. WESLEY.

When you reflect upon my position, and the object which I contemplated in my arrangements, you will not think me so inconsistent. Immediately before my death, I made provision for the permanent maintenance of the discipline of the societies, which I had formed. The societies you know, before my death, had grown very numerous, many chapels had been built, and a great number of preachers were employed. I found that many both of the helpers and people were much opposed to the constitution and discipline of the Church, and would undoubtedly separate themselves from it. Finding that such would be the case, in spite of all that I could do to the contrary, I deemed it advisable to draw up a code of laws for their government. It was as if I had said, I see plainly that after my decease, you will, contrary to my wishes, form yourselves into a separate communion, take then these rules for your discipline,

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and let them ever be a standing witness against your hardness of heart, and opposition to my wishes.

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AUTHOR.

I think that I have now a clue to your conduct. You seeing that some would separate from the Church, thought it adviseable to give the stamp of your authority to a set of rules for their regulation, rather than leave them to draw up a code of laws for themselves, knowing that where all are striving for the mastery, legislation is very difficult.

MR. WESLEY.

Precisely so. But, Sir, I erred in bringing myself into such a position, for I ought never to have disobeyed the canons of my Church, or opposed the authority of her Bishops. I set up for a great reformer and had abundance of zeal, but far too little knowledge. I see, now, that I might have done much more good in a regular than I did in an irregular way, whilst all the evil would have been avoided. Had I remained [341]

at Oxford, and gathered round me some of those who were designed for holy orders, and assisted them in their preparation for the ministry, with God's help, I should have accomplished a much greater revival of religion in the Church, and there would have been avoided the sin of irregularity in myself and of schism in others.

AUTHOR.

I have often thought, that if you had acted like that excellent man, Mr. Simeon, you would have been a greater blessing to the Church, and would have achieved a mighty work in an unexceptionable manner.

MR. WESLEY.

When I admitted the assistance of lay-preachers, I called up a spirit which I found it impossible to allay, and very difficult to control. I was reluctant to employ an unordained person, but at length yielded to the force of circumstances and suffered the innovation. Like Saul, "I forced myself, therefore, and offered a burnt offering." [342]

AUTHOR.

It appears that the reading of Lord King's book on Episcopacy, and Stillingfleet's Irenicum, first convinced you that the office of presbyter and bishop belonged to the same order, and that consequently you had power to ordain ministers.

MR. WESLEY.

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It does not require very strong arguments to convince us of the truth of that which we wish to believe. I was half determined to take upon myself the power of ordination before I read those books. I had, however, some scruples of conscience which kept me back. No sooner had I read Lord King's account of the primitive Church than they were removed. I now felt unshackled and at liberty to confer ordination on whomsoever I thought fit.

AUTHOR.

I think you gave Lord King's book a too hasty perusal.

MR. WESLEY.

Much too hasty. I ought to have examined

[343] ancient author's for myself, and then I should have detected his mis-quotations and false reasonings. And with regard to Stillingfleet's Irenicum, I ought to have weighed that work far more carefully than I did. When the author wrote it he was only twenty-five years old. I ought to have inquired whether he maintained in his old age, the opinions which he held in his youth. Had I done this, I should not have judged the Irenicum to be unanswerable, for the author showed in after life the weakness of its arguments. If I had stayed at Oxford and given my attention to the Fathers' of the first three centuries, for whom I professed such veneration, I should never have been led astray either by Lord King, or young Mr. Stillingfleet. Or if I had read carefully the works of Andrews, Field, Hammond, and Taylor, I should have been preserved from my wayward career, and arrogant presumption. My brother Charles, throughout, was a much more consistent Churchman than myself. He often warned me of the evil tendency of my measures, and greatly blamed

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me for attempting to exercise Episcopal authority in the case of Dr. Coke, for he rightly asserted that there was not a single instance recorded in history, of a Presbyterian possessing the power of exercising Episcopal authority.

AUTHOR.

It has been represented of late, that your opinions respecting separation from the Church, changed a few years before your death.

MR. WESLEY.

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How dare any one make such an assertion, when I said only a year and nine months before my death, that I would not leave the Church of England by law established, while the breath was in my nostrils; and only a few months before my death I avowed that I live and die a member of the Church of England, and that none, who regarded my judgment or advice would ever separate from it. And the last prayer that I uttered on earth, I now repeat, Bless the Church and King, and grant us truth and peace through Jesus Christ our Lord. I am glad that you are about to become a member of

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that branch of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church established in this Kingdom. I hope that your example may be followed by many of the preachers; but, alas! there are no grounds for such a hope. Each year the gulph of separation becomes wider. Hostility to the Church, reigns predominant amongst the members of the society, and many of the preachers have no friendly feeling towards her. Judging at least from late events and present signs, I am of opinion that the time is not far distant, when the Conference as a body, will join the ranks of Dissent, Infidelity, and Popery in their exterminating warfare against the Church. But every blow which they may strike at that goodly fabric, will be found to recoil with destructive violence upon themselves. That Church, whose corner-stone, is Christ himself, whose foundation is composed of Apostles and Prophets, whose walls are built of a glorious company of martyrs and confessors, and whose pillars are the successors of the Apostles, may justly be reckoned invincible to every attack

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of human malice, or Satanic violence. The gates of hell shall never prevail against it

AUTHOR.

You think then that there is no prospect of the breach, between the Church and our body, ever being healed.

MR. WESLEY.

I do not see how it can be. All hope of reunion is now vanished; and if you weigh the matter well, I think you will agree with me in this opinion. In the first place, very few of the preachers would submit to episcopal ordination, for it would amount to a tacit acknowledgment, that they had been all their life unauthorised teachers; this, their

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pride could not brook. In the second place, there would not be a competent provision for the maintenance of one half of the travelling preachers, for of course, all the country chapels must be given up, as there would be in the villages, a sufficiency of Church room. Then it would be found that the preachers of the greatest influence in the Connexion, would be greatly op-

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posed to the change, unless they were made Bishops, or at least Arch-deacons; for they would little relish changing their position of supreme governors, to that of being governed. You must also remember, that the system would have to undergo an entire change, to bring it into conformity, with the discipline of the English Church, a change which would be zealously opposed by the office-bearers, as it would curtail their power and influence. The members too would be just as little favourable to the measure, as it would deprive them of their accustomed doses of excitement. The societies I feel persuaded, will ever remain in a schismatical state; and if the preachers will assume the title of reverend and presume to arrogate the functions of the Priestly office, let them not commit this wickedness, under the sanction of my name. Let them cease to call themselves Wesleyan Methodists, and let them assume the more appropriate title of Anti-church Methodists.

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THIRD COLLOQUY.

For let him know that he must endure any thing whatever, rather than rend the Church of God.—*St. Dionysius.*

It was a clear and frosty evening and the moon poured her silvery light over the deep valley, through which I was walking in my way home, from my country appointment, when I beheld a tall personage coming towards me, and on a nearer approach I discerned the noble features of the mysterious visitor. Having saluted me, he turned and walked by my side.

MR. WESLEY.

Little probably did you expect to meet with me in this solitude. I am however, no stranger to these mountain districts. I have on many a dark night accompanied you through wood and dell. Little do men know, of the great benefits which they reap from the blessed ministry of spirits. And you my dear friend are unconscious of the

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escapes from peril which I have achieved for you. You have not forgotten the night when coming home from your appointment,

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you missed your way over the mountains. You little imagined, that for more than a mile, you were walking along the edge of a dreadful precipice, and that a single false step would have plunged you into a deep ravine. It was myself that conducted you along it with safety, and led you into the right path and brought you to your home. If your eyes could be opened as were those of the Prophet, you would see the air thronged with good and evil spirits; and the heavens, would present to you a mighty arena of strife, and the object of contention, you would find to be the soul of man. But to resume the subject of our former conversation. Have you not observed, how the Conference has of late changed its ground, with respect to the Church. When it suited the purpose of its members, they took pains to prove that I died a Churchman, and that they, following my advice had never dissented from it; but it now serves their end, when they wish to repel the charge of a departure from my principles, to prove that I did not continue a Churchman to the day of

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my death. It is folly for the Conference to say that they do not dissent from the Church, indeed, they are begining to see the absurdity of such an assertion, and to take a more consistent stand. Inasmuch as societies are separated from the Church, they are guilty of schism, and schism is a much greater sin than people in the present day are willing to believe.

AUTHOR.

Though schism in this age of unrestrained Latitudinarism is held to be rather a virtue than a crime, it was not so esteemed in ancient and better times. What a horrible bigot should one be thought in the present day, if one spoke out against the evil of schism as Cyprian did, and declare with him “Nee perveniet ad Christi premia qui relinquit ecclesiam Christi.”*

MR. WESLEY.

That language is not stronger than that used by St. Augustine, when he declared, that there can be no more grievous sin, than the sacrilege

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* “Neither will he attain unto the rewards of Christ, who leaveth the Church of Christ.”

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of schism. Though I kept from open schism myself, I cannot but be painfully conscious that I have been the occasion of others falling into it. If I had but considered the inevitable tendency of my measures, I must have foreseen that they would end in producing a separation from the Church. I reaped enough of the bitter fruits of my own irregular proceedings, to have assured me that strife and contention, and every evil work, would ensue, to those who walk in the sparks of their own kindling. And has not the whole history of the Connexion verified its truth? What continual wars, and fightings, and separations have marked its progress. It has ever been a house divided against itself, and it cannot stand. Its foundations are constantly in danger of being uprooted, by the sudden burst of the ungovernable passions of the mass, seeking to be released from all restraint. That power, and influence, which the Conference gives to the people, to gratify their pride and ambition will prove in the end, its own destruction. The possession of a little

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power, creates an appetite for more, and when the demand for its increase is met by a stern refusal, a quarrel ensues, which ends in a separation. Never was a truer sentence uttered, than that of an old father of the Church when he says, “Pride is the Parent of schism.” Divisions will arise amongst sects, they are their natural offspring. In societies where there exists no common bond of union, and no divinely appointed fountain of authority, and no uniform and binding principles of faith, they must in the very nature of things, fall to pieces and be scattered.

AUTHOR.

I think that our Connexion, bids fair to out- last most of the other sects, from its possessing greater uniformity of discipline and faith, and a more complete system of centralization.

MR. WESLEY.

No doubt that it will endure much longer, but it cannot stand for any great length of time; and I will show you why it cannot. The preachers have lost all that primitive simplicity

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and devotedness which distinguished their predecessors. The present generation of preachers are for the most part ambitious, proud, worldly-minded, covetous, and slothful. The people see that they are so, and they are losing their respect for them, and are loath to pay their money to support them, in their idleness and pride. The members of this society are many of them grown rich, and their riches are fast corrupting them, from the simplicity of the Gospel. The discipline of the society is but little enforced, when the rich are concerned, and my rules are openly violated both by preachers and people.

The Conference is an arena for political strife, where Whigs and Tories, engage in bitter, and acrimonious contentions, to the destruction of all peace and amity. The Presidentship has become the object of eager ambition, and earnest strife, and to obtain it, alas! how often do the competitors condescend to use wily stratagems, and unworthy devices, too much resembling the tricks of a Parliamentary

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Election. And how are the minds of many of the preachers hurt by being lorded over, by a dominant faction, composed of a few ambitious spirits, who have arrogated to themselves all authority and power. And what are the grounds I would ask, on which these spiritual Potentates, found their pretensions to such tyrannical sway? On what save their imperfect knowledge of the Greek Testament, a smattering of Divinity, a ready tongue, and an American Degree. There are many both preachers and people, pious and devoted men, who view with sorrow, the growing enormities of ministerial avarice, tyranny, and pride, and who forebode the entire, and speedy overthrow of Conferential domination. And be assured, that not many years will have passed over, before this prediction, shall have been fulfilled.

The Anniversaries and Public Meetings, are scenes of worldly show and dissipation. The vauntings of the Centenary Meetings, were beyond all endurance; whilst many of the donations made at them, were but the robbing of creditors, for burnt-offerings.

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The speeches delivered at the meetings, convened for the purpose of opposing the Church Education Scheme, were full of calumny and abuse; whilst the method of getting up the petitions against it, embraced every artifice of fraudulent dexterity.

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And now, the Conference bids the world behold its might, and its greatness, in having so many thousands of people under its control, in the stateliness of its chapels, and public-buildings, and in the influence, which it *fancies* itself to have over the councils of the nation. They have become vain in their imaginations, and they have provoked the indignation of the Lord, by their vanities; and that destruction, which followeth after pride, shall be their portion. Get thee speedily, my dear friend, from amongst them; lest thou partake in their over-throw. And mayst thou be a faithful minister of that Church whose descent is from the Apostles and whose ascent is towards heaven. Adieu, dear friend, till we meet in the mysterious abode of *separate* spirits.

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As he spoke these words, an expression of inconceivable sweetness glowed in his countenance and he held forth his hand, which I attempted to grasp, but it offered no resistance, for the *body* was a phantom; and it vanished from my sight. I stood for a time motionless, a sort of horror crept over me, and it was with difficulty that I drew my breath. In a short time, I recovered myself, and walked along meditating on what I had seen and heard.

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APPENDIX.

NOTE A.

My father was suspected of sympathizing with a disaffected party at Leeds, who took offence at the introduction of an organ into one of the chapels and left the Society, and formed themselves into a party known at the time by the name of the “Conformists.”

NOTE B.

The term of probation lasts four years. When ended the novitiates are received into “full connexion,” by the imposition of hands. The candidates on rising from beneath the manipular canopy, receive from the President a neatly bound copy of the Scriptures, which he enjoins them to study, and commissions them to preach. The hearts of the young men bound with gladness, for they are now no longer forbidden to

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marry, having finished the period of their gloomy celibate. It certainly looks rather ridiculous, to confer ordination upon those who for four years, have assumed the title and discharged the duties of the ministerial office. It would seem that the learned Bishop, the author, of “The Enthusiasm of Methodists and Papists compared,” has omitted to notice the striking resemblance between Methodism and Popery, shown by the comparison made in the text of this work. This is the more to be regretted as there is no doubt from his talent and knowledge of the subject, that it would have been admirably treated.

NOTE C.

Local Preachers are an inferior order of ministers, who are engaged during the week at the plough, the loom, or the counter, and on the Sundays go forth into the Circuit, and deal out to admiring congregations, an equal amount of enthusiasm and heresy. Of by far the greater part of this class of Preachers, it may be said, that their vulgarity and ignorance, are only surpassed by their impudence and vanity.

NOTE D.

The Leaders are very important office-bearers in the society. They are the *tax-gatherers*, and *father-confessors* of the connexion. For to these class leaders,

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the members each week relate their “Christian experience” and pay their pence, the neglect of which for a quarter will deprive them of church-membership. At the end of each quarter, they are met by an Itinerant Minister, who hears from them in succession their “experience for the quarter; makes a few remarks to each upon their “short comings” in grace, or in copper, deals out the tickets, receives the silver, and concludes with a prayer, and then departs giving a reproachful glance at the poor man who is behind in his payments, and a smiling look and a hearty shake of the hand to the rich man, whose liberality exceeds the requirement of the rules. Although a penny a week, and a shilling a quarter, are as much as each member are required by the *rule* to pay, it is, however, expected that every one should increase his contribution, if his circumstances permit. Well may the preachers be so lavish in their praise of class-meetings, as such rich means of grace, since they are such a rich source of wealth. It would be very interesting to know what kind of tickets of admission, into the Christian Church, the Apostles gave to the members of the

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different Churches which they formed, and the price set upon them as well as the number of poor persons, they expelled from their societies for default of payment.

We read of no other rite

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than that of *Baptism*, as entitling to the privileges of the Christian Church, and of no weekly collections *from* the poor, but *for* them.

NOTE E.

It is hardly necessary to observe, that the preachers for many years past, have been provided with very different lodgings in their country appointments, to those which fell to my lot at poor John Snuffler's. In most villages where there is a society, there is a good house, and a well-furnished table, to which the preachers are welcome.

NOTE F.

Lovefeasts are held quarterly in each Circuit-town, and are presided over by an Itinerant Preacher. They take place after the Quarterly visitation, and no member is admitted unless he can show to the door-keepers, the last Quarter's ticket, which is indicated by a certain capital letter. The fear of exclusion from these highly-prized "means of grace," acts as a powerful incentive to the renewal of the tickets.

NOTE G.

The Kingswood and Woodhouse Grove schools, are seminaries for the education of the sons of the Itinerant Preachers. They are supported by voluntary contributions, and collections which are made annually in every chapel throughout the Connexion.

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NOTE H.

The Quarter-day is the day on which the salaries of the Itinerant Preachers are paid, the account of the Circuit audited, and other business of the society trans- acted. On this day also the Local-preachers meeting is held.

NOTE I.

The probable value of property in chapels, houses, land, &c., belonging to the conference, may be taken to be above THREE MILLIONS.

The annual means of the Connexion from its multifarious sources, is little less than a HALF A MILLION.

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The number of public collections towards connexional purposes average from THIRTY to FORTY annually. Private collections at class meetings, &c., above SIXTY. To all those must be added the continual demands made upon the richer members for annual subscriptions to the various funds, &c., non-compliance with which, inevitably stamps them as devoid of vital godliness. In a tract entitled "Modern Methodism a Schism," the following calculations are given of the salary of a Wesleyan Methodist preacher, and that of a *Modern* Methodist preacher:

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Salary of a *Wesleyan* Methodist preacher with six children,

	£.	s.	d.
Himself and Wife £ 12			
each per annum ...	24	0	0
Six Children at £4 each			
per ann., if required	24	0	0
Food for himself and			
horse wherever he			
goes in addition ...			
	£48	0	0

Salary of a *Modern* Methodist preacher with six children,

	£.	s.	d.
House Rent, Rates and			
Taxes ...	21	0	0
Interest on Furniture,			
Repairs of do. and			
Tenant'd repairs of			
house ...	5	0	0
Coals and Candles	7	0	0
Medicines and Medical			
Attendance ...	5	0	0
Postage and Stationery...	2	0	0
Servants' Wages...	8	8	0

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Preacher's and Wife's

Quarterage at £4. 4s.

each... 33 12 0

Board Money at 14s. a

weeek... 36 8 0

Allowance for Six Children

at £6. 6s. per ann 37 16 0

One child at Kingswood

25 0 0

One Boy between 8 and

14, Educated at Home 12 0 0

One Girl above Eight

8 8 0

201 12 0

Allowed besides fr each

Confinement of the
Wife, £3. 3s.

Horse-hire, and Travelling

Expenses wherever
he goes

The Superintendents

have also a Commission
of £ 10 per cent.
on Books sold.

Deduct Payments

For one Boy at Kingswood,

£4. 4s. One boy

at Home, £1. 1s. ... 5 5 0

Leaving a clear Income

Independent of Horsehire,
Travelling Expenses,

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Commission on

Books sold, &c. of ... £196 7 0

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The preacher's and wife's board money varies in different places from 10s. 6d. to 20s. a week.

What exhibitions of solemn mockery have I witnessed about the time of conference, preachers pretending by their prayers to leave their circuit appointment in the hands of God, whereas all the while they have been scheming to appoint themselves where they would have the best pay.

It will be seen from this what a very comfortable maintenance a Methodist preacher enjoys, and that too, be it remembered, for *life*. One can easily imagine what an act of self-denial it must be for mechanics and such like, to doff their working dress and leave their laborious occupations, and go to one of the seats of Methodist learning. There clean washed and ministerially attired, they spend two or three years in a pleasant way, at the expense of the connexion, learning to hold their knife and fork, and tie their neck-cloth, to read and spell and cobble a sermon; to *wonder* at the curious figures in Euclid, and the mysterious symbols of the Greek Alphabet, and above all their own genius and learning. When thus proficient they come forth, dubbed with the title of reverend, pass for being deeply learned, and receive a handsome salary for life.

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Truly great is the Mammon worship of the Wesleyans! Well may the ministerial craftsmen be so loud in their praise, and so zealous in their defence of Methodism, since by it they gain their wealth.