



“You will know them by their fruits.” Mt. 7:16

The Wesleyan Reformation

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by Thomas J. Dodd, D.D., 1891

III WESLEY THE REFORMER

WESLEY was a great moral and religious reformer. We would emphasize these adjectives because his design, from the first, had been, not the establishment of a new sect or Church, but the reformation of the Church of which he was a communicant; and the reformation sought was one purely of a moral and religious nature. Nothing had been more remote from his intention than the promulgation of peculiar views in theology, or the formation of a new creed. He was “sick of opinions,” he tells us, and all that he desired “was to spread Scriptural holiness throughout the land”—holiness as seen in the improved moral condition of the people, and in the establishment of a purer life in the ministry and laity of the Church itself. “He hoped,” says Mr. Southey, “to give a new impulse to the Church of England, to awaken its dormant zeal, infuse life into a body where nothing but life was wanting, and lead the way to the performance of duties which the State had blindly overlooked, and the Church had scandalously neglected.”

And this hope he did most effectually realize. Shut out from the pulpits as if his presence were a profanation; maligned, persecuted by both the higher and the inferior clergy, as well as by the civil magistrates and the mob, he nevertheless wielded a power which, in the course of a few years, created a radical change in the moral and religious character of those who had opposed, equally with those who had allied themselves with his endeavor.

It would be a great mistake to estimate the work of Wesley merely by the Churches that originated in his revival. These, great and influential as they have been as factors in the world’s advancement, are but a portion of the work accomplished by him. It must be borne in mind that just as Martin Luther not only established Protestantism in Europe, but likewise effected a partial reformation of the Romish Church itself, so John Wesley, while he planted Methodism, both in England and America, upon a basis broad, enduring, and commanding, did actually revive the defunct hierarchy which turned him from its doors, and produced a reformation in life and morals throughout the entire English Nation. As, since the days of Luther, no Julius II or Alexander Borgia has occupied the papal throne, so in England, since the time of Wesley, bishops have not had their card-tables, or rectors and vicars their fox-chases; no George II (1683-1760 a disliked German King of England) has wielded the scepter, no Walpole (Sir Robert Walpole 1676-1745 first Prime Minister of Britain) has been a premier of the realm. “If we were asked,” says a recent Unitarian organ of Great Britain, “to name the chief instrument in the hands of Providence which has contributed most of late to the moral elevation of our people, we would not hesitate for a moment to say Methodism. The great awakening of our country to the importance of a righteous, sober, and godly life, took place last century through the labors of John Wesley.”

Not only in England, but in America likewise, this reformation was effected. We make no reference at

present to the ecclesiastical organizations which originated in Mr. Wesley's labors—only to the effect of those labors upon the general moral and religious condition of the people.

It would be well to inquire into that peculiar state of things which preceded and opened the way for the Wesleyan Reformation; and whether we consider the character of the English or of the American people, we shall find it difficult to comprehend how, on the one hand, the reformation could have been delayed so long; or how, on the other hand, a reformation so radical and so extensive could have been accomplished in so short a period, and in face of circumstances so adverse.

In our own country there were many reasons why the demoralization could not be so great as in the mother country; yet so different was the moral and social condition of our people from what we are now wont to behold, that to those who are accustomed only to hearing or reading of the better days of our fathers, a correct view of certain features of those earlier times must be very surprising. Not until Mr. Wesley had labored for near half a century was the first English Bible printed in America;[75] not that Mr. Wesley was directly or ostensibly instrumental in having such publication made, nor that the want of such publication indicates that our people were a race of savages; but that a foreign press was our sole reliance for the Word of God; that when William Bradford, of Philadelphia, in 1688, and nearly a century later John Fleming, of Boston, proposed subscription editions of the Bible, the latter on condition of receiving three hundred subscribers to the work, both efforts clearly failed, is proof that at least little interest was taken in the subject. In those days it was no discredit to the fine gentleman that a large portion of his time was passed in drunkenness. The pious deacon, equally with others, used freely the products of his own distillery, sharing it liberally with the parson when he came around; and in one of the Colonies at least, the legislation was such as almost necessarily to promote drunkenness; as when, for instance, the employer was allowed to pay off his employees in strong spirits, which the latter must accept under prohibition of selling to others—the employees, therefore, drinking the liquor to keep from losing the reward of their labors! The fine gentleman was, likewise, a devotee to the gaming-table, and the equally fine lady was no stranger to the sport—the gentleman's honor, at the same time, being so sacred that the least imputation of stain could be removed only by another gentleman's blood, the duel being fought with little more regard to the rectitude of the thing than if it were a game of chess; while the fine lady felt honored by the attentions of those who "had slain their man," and not rarely was she the willing occasion of the deed.

The condition of the Church, if we may judge from the latter of a Virginia clergyman to Mr. Wesley, was in full accord with that of the social state.

"Virginia has long groaned," wrote Rev. Mr. Jarratt in 1773, "through a want of faithful ministers of the gospel. Many souls are perishing for lack of knowledge. ... We have ninety-nine parishes in the Colony, and all except one, I believe, are supplied with clergymen; but alas!—you well understand the rest. I know of but one clergyman of the Church of England who appears to have the power and spirit of vital religion." [76] The zeal and fidelity of these ministers of the gospel are seen in the fact that, when the War of the Revolution began, the larger portion of them abandoned their flocks to the wolves, and betook themselves to the more secure and peaceful shelterings of the mother country.

In addition to the comparatively low moral state of society, and the indifference of the Church, and, what was equally unfortunate, the hard, despotic religion of some of the sects—infidel sentiments were making no slow advance among the people. French ideas were affecting the minds, especially of the more intelligent classes, so that in many parts, atheism and infidelity were almost the fashion of the times. That the general tendency of things was adverse, both to theoretical and practical morals, as well as to religion, no one can deny; neither can it be denied that the influence of Wesley had much to do with checking the downward progress. Webb, Pilmoor, Williams, Rankin, Asbury, and others, followers of Wesley, had come to the Colonies, and this meant a zeal and devotion in the cause of good morals and religion, such as the Colonies had never known. The Colonies had known zeal in what appeared to

them to be principle, or adherence to conviction in the line of theological or ecclesiastical dogma. The Mayflower and Plymouth Rock, the persecution of Romanists and Quakers, and the banishment of Roger Williams, with sundry enactments of Sabbath legislation and other like instruments—safeguards to piety—had long borne ample testimony to this kind of zeal; but to the men of whom we write, all such things were as remote from their views or purposes, as had been the renewal of the Salem witchcraft horrors, or the extermination of the Indians.

A Living Faith Sent to America

Faith in God and repentance of sin these men had come to preach, and in an incredibly short time the whole land was made to hear their voices. The itinerant was abroad from New Brunswick to the farthest South; and while he had but little to say in learned phrase of the questions at issue between disbelievers and the followers of Jesus, he was, wherever he went, a bold denouncer of sin, and he earnestly pleaded with men to repent. And they did repent. In the cities, in the villages, in the wild woods: men called upon God.

By the time our Federal Constitution had been formed there was hardly a county in the land, which had not had its “society.” Its preachers, and leaders, with their lay members, if these may be so designated where all alike were equally without ecclesiastical sanction, all zealously at work for the uprooting of sin from the people. Not theological essays, not arguments for Church or creed—only the appeal to forsake sin and cling to righteousness—was the burden of their preaching; and today those organizations which are doing most in the land to suppress vice, to elevate the ignorant and the poor, to educate the Indian and the Negro, to enforce the sanctity of the Sabbath, to guard public legislation in the ways of morality and religion, together with the generally staid and conservative character of our people, must be ascribed largely to the influence, direct or indirect, of John Wesley and his followers.

Much more marked was this influence in England. From a variety of causes, morality and religion were there at a much lower ebb.

In order to understand this period of English history, we should bear in mind that, for more than two centuries before the birth of Wesley, the condition of the English, like that of the other European nations, had been anything but favorable to the cultivation and growth of true religion. When we consider how much of the superstition and of the empty, unscriptural ecclesiasticism of Rome had remained in the Church; how the little genuine religion of the sixteenth century had been chilled by the theological controversies following and arising out of the Reformation, and afterwards by the puritanic asceticism and hypocrisies of the days of Elizabeth (Elizabeth I 1533-1603 -ruled well for 44 years -supported the establishment of the Church of England -daughter of King Henry VIII) and the first James (James I 1566-1625, succeeded Elizabeth ruled for 22 years), and then, again, by the political and religious disturbances of the reign of Charles, followed by the profligacy of the court of the son, who, after the Commonwealth (under Oliver Cromwell), had succeeded to the throne,—when these things are considered, it can not be surprising that, at the time Wesley appeared upon the scene, there should have been no very high standard either of practical morality or of theoretical truth in matters either of a social or of a religious nature. Indeed, atheism and infidelity had well-nigh usurped the place of a correct evangelical belief; and in practical life, whether of the nation at large or of the Church, it may be said that iniquity abounded. The court was still displaying the licentious aspect of the reign of the second Charles; the clergy were almost equally lax, both in life and doctrine, and many of them shamefully ignorant of the first principles of the religion they professed to teach. Few writers, either contemporary or of subsequent days, who have had occasion to touch upon the subject, have failed to represent the times as most sadly out of joint. “England, at the period of which I now write,” says Edward Wortley Montague—himself a witness of what he declares “was the ape of France; and as almost any crime which Juvenal enumerates or Suctonius describes or man imagines, was practiced

with open impunity by the Gauls, so it came to pass that in our own country also it was thought unfashionable to be decent and good breeding to be impudent.”[77] Behold a picture of the society of those days, drawn by Thackeray: “As I peep into George II’s St. James, I see crowds of cassocks rustling up the backstairs of the ladies of the court; stealthy clergy slipping purses into their laps; the godless old king, yawning under his canopy in his chapel-royal, as the chaplain before him is discoursing. Discoursing about what? About righteousness and judgment. While the chaplain is preaching, the king is chattering in German as loud as the preacher; so loud that the clergyman actually bursts out crying, because the defender of the faith and dispenser of bishoprics would not listen to him. No wonder that the clergy were corrupt and indifferent amidst this indifference and corruption! No wonder that skeptics multiplied and morals degenerated!”... “I am scared when I look around at this society, at this king, at these courtiers, at these politicians, at these bishops, at this flaunting of vice and levity.”[78] (The British of this era were the ones who provided an unending litany of unspeakable offenses to the residents of the Thirteen colonies to motivate rebellion.)

A New Public Civility

How different the English people of today! Different, as if a new religion, a new system of morals, a new Deity, new principles of self-respect and personal responsibility, had been working among them for a century or more; and the British court, with its ruling ideas of manners and morals, is no more like that of Charles II, or of the great royal head when Wesley came into prominence, than is the American Congress like the senate of Nero or Caligula. (These later British although still remarkably brutish, did not sow as many seeds of rebellion in the vast frozen wilderness which is Canada.)

The effect of Wesley’s efforts at reformation was almost immediate. He had not preached more than a score of years before the improvement of British society was most marked. Montague, from whom we have just quoted, died in 1761; yet he had lived long enough to testify, evidently with no small degree of satisfaction, that Wesley had “*stemmed the tide*” of degeneracy, and introduced a better state of things. “These three kingdoms,” writes another contemporary of Wesley, “have been pervaded by the influence of his ministry, and by the ministry of those who have labored with him, in a manner that is astonishing. Its power has been felt, not only in the cities, but even in the smallest villages; it has reached the bottom of the mines.” “In the nation at large,” says Mr. Green, the historian,[79] “appeared a new moral enthusiasm, which, rigid and pedantic as it often seemed, was still healthy in its social tone, and whose power was seen in the disappearance of the profligacy which had disgraced the upper classes, and the foulness which had infected literature ever since the Reformation.” We need not give a more extended account of this portion of Mr. Wesley’s work. It is enough to say that today (the time this heritage article was written -obviously things have gone to the dogs again since then) no nation of the globe exhibits a more virtuous or intelligent court; a more upright legislature, including both the lords and commons; a more sober, earnest, industrious working class; a more learned or highly respected ministry,—than are these different classes in Great Britain.

Indeed, that generally staid, sober, reliable character, which today marks the English people, is, in no small degree, due to influences set to work by this Revival. Not that this character was created by such influences, but that the character which had for generations distinguished them among the nations, was thus conserved and improved. But for this great moral awakening, it is a very serious question whether England could have risen above even the political degeneracy which French thought had been rapidly introducing. In the days preceding their Revolution (1789-1799) the Encyclopedists (a group of French writers of the 1700s who called themselves “the philosophes) had published to the world, in their peculiarly forcible and fascinating style, opinions that antagonized all government; tended to subvert the foundations of society; and did actually, in their own land, for a period, demolish the very Church of God. Under this influence large numbers, in all the leading nations, began to question, if not indeed

to despise, everything that was deemed sacred except their own ideas of human rights, which rights they would have had to consist largely of the liberty to rebel against all authority, human or divine; to challenge every public or private virtue; to denounce every instrument of society, government, or religion that stood in the way of their own anarchistic ideas. The extent to which such principles were advancing in England can not now be appreciated without a more extended study than we can here make of the subject. What we would say is, that nothing had more power in checking their advancement than the Wesleyan Revival. Mr. Lecky is, we believe, the first writer who has called attention to this fact. While he allows that many causes interfered to save the nation from what seemed to be the inevitable result, he yet tells us that among these causes, "a prominent place must be given to the new and vehement religious enthusiasm which was at the time passing through the middle and lower classes of the people," by which enthusiasm he means the zeal aroused by Mr. Wesley and those who, to greater or less degree, had shared his spirit.

The like testimony is borne by Mr. Overton,[80] canon of Lincoln and rector of Epworth: "It was of incalculable benefit to the nation that just such a power as Methodism existed at the time when otherwise the revolutionary torrent would have swept away multitudes in its course. In fact, Methodism was a sort of safety-valve, through which many let off their superfluous steam. Many a man who, under different circumstances, would have been haranguing about the rights of man, was happily preoccupied with a far more noble subject: the love of God. John Wesley and John Fletcher... did not live long enough to see the more destructive effects of the revolutionary spirit in France; but they fully impressed their loyal and conservative spirit upon their followers; and none of the Methodists showed the slightest trace of sympathy with revolutionary principles in England. ... As to the Evangelicals, they were anti-revolutionary to a man, and contributed much towards keeping the upper classes free from the contagion."

Let us now turn aside to note, for a moment, some of the more positive—at least, more visible—effects of Wesley's life upon the advancement of the world at large. We shall thus observe a number of new activities, without which at the present day it would appear that the world had scarcely emerged from barbarism. Instead of the incendiary ideas of the French, and the cold indifference of the other nations, new ideas of the dignity and worth of human nature, and of the ties binding into one the different classes of society, have, during the last century, not only found their way into the public mind, but have left their lasting impress upon the legislation of the nations. It is very noticeable how prominent the word philanthropy has become in the more recent accounts of the work of Wesley.

We now call attention only to those measures which, though the outgrowth of Christian effort, and really the highest manifestations of the religious life, are yet generally classed among enterprises of a civil or political nature; or, at best, as moral or humanitarian. Indeed, it would seem as if, before the days of which we are speaking, very seldom had anything like a broad, unselfish policy been dreamed of as affecting the welfare of the race at large, or as benefiting man solely upon the basis of his humanity. Philanthropy, in the true sense, would seem to have been a new term in the lexicon; the statesman had had but little use for it, and the average theologian had had less. But, as a consequence of the Revival by Mr. Wesley, "many philanthropic efforts," according to Mr. Lecky,[81] "soon became topics of Parliamentary debate;" or, as Mr. Green has it,[82] "a new moral enthusiasm" appeared—"a new philosophy reformed our prisons, abolished the slave trade, and gave the first impulse to popular education."

Let us take these words of the historian, and see to what extent they are true. Mr. Wines, in his "State of Prisons," agrees with the writer just quoted, in making Wesley one of the earliest laborers for the reform of prisons.

Prison Reform

Debtors and criminals of the worst character were mistreated alike in the gaols. "A new philosophy," says Mr. Green, "reformed our prisons." Until a comparatively recent date, it is almost incredible the way in which both the British and American prisons were conducted, and the general severity with which criminals of all kinds were punished. "The criminal laws were savage, and they were administered in a spirit appropriately relentless.

The feeling of the time was so entirely in favor of severity that Edmund Burke said he could obtain the assent of the House of Commons to any bill imposing the punishment of death. ... Our law recognized two hundred and twenty-three capital offenses. ... If a man injured Westminster Bridge, he was hanged. If he appeared disguised on a public road, he was hanged (highwaymen usually disguised themselves). If he cut down young trees, if he shot at rabbits, if he stole property valued at five shillings, if he stole anything at all from a bleach-field (a fish-drying facility?), if he wrote a threatening letter to extort money, if he returned prematurely from transportation,—for any of these offenses, he was immediately hanged." [83] But that which most nearly concerns us now is the prison life of those days. The fact that the jailer received no salary; that his remuneration came from fees, "extracted at his own pleasure, and often by brutal violence, from the wretches who had fallen into his power;" that the food which the prisoners ate, the straw they slept on, with every other sorry comfort enjoyed by them, was purchased at the extortionate price demanded; and even acquittal of the offense charged secured no release until further fees were paid for the opening of the prison doors, such facts render unnecessary any description of the life within the cells. Speaking of Newgate prison, Mr. Wesley says: "I know not if to one of a sensible, thinking turn of mind, there could be anything like it this side of hell."

From Mr. Wines's book, just referred to, it may be seen that the matter was no better in our own country, either as regards the severity of the penal code, or the treatment of those under arrest.

Now, while it will not do to say that the reform of the foregoing evils has by any means been yet accomplished, nor to say that Mr. Wesley had labored specially or conspicuously for such reformation as has been made, yet the work of reform has been carried to such an extent as to have become a chief consideration with all leading governments; and Mr. Green is certainly correct in tracing the advance to the life and work of Wesley.

It is the name of Howard which will most adorn the page of history which treats this subject; but it must not be forgotten that thirty years or more before Howard began his efforts, John Wesley, with his confreres of the Holy Club, had devoted themselves in earnest, personal effort to the amelioration of prison horrors; and by their pious labors, followed by the revival of which Wesley was the head and front, prepared the way for, and rendered practicable, what had doubtless otherwise been an abortive though noble effort of the great philanthropist.

Freeing The Slave

"Abolished the slave-trade." Such was another result of the work of John Wesley. The Methodist effort in behalf of the slave has been conspicuous from the first. It is a remarkable fact that Mr. Wesley's earliest utterances upon the subject of slavery were made in the same year [84] that Granville Sharp began the agitation for the abolition of this curse to civilization and religion. Fifteen years before the organization of the Society for the Suppression of the slave-trade; sixty years before the abolition of slavery in the British dominions; almost a century prior to its extinction in the United States, Mr. Wesley had written of the traffic in slaves as "that execrable sum of all villainies," and one of the last acts of his life was writing letters of sympathy and encouragement to Wilberforce, who had now succeeded in bringing the subject before Parliament: "Go on in the name of God and in the power of his might, till even American slavery, the vilest that ever saw the sun, shall vanish away." (Slavery has

existed throughout history in various forms -seldom lifelong, hereditary or cruel) He had previously written to Thomas Clarkson, who was devoting his life to the movement, and promised all the aid he could afford in the accomplishment of his noble purpose. Mr. Wesley lived to see only the faintest beginnings of the enterprise into which he had so earnestly thrown his soul. But his influence was not lost. His brethren in America had caught his spirit, and began to labor for the extinction of what one of their earliest Conferences declared to be “an evil contrary to the laws of God, man, and nature;... contrary to the dictates of conscience and of pure religion.” The influence of Methodism in the extermination of slavery in our own country, is too well known to demand, or even admit, further consideration.

Her pulpits, her prayers, her silver and gold, her blood, were freely offered in behalf of freedom; and today, even in those parts where slavery had most numerous advocates, and was by many, in all sincerity, held to be of divine origin, few can be found who would have the “institution” restored if they could—none who would contend for the divine appointment of slavery. In England and her vast empire, it was Wilberforce and Clarkson who broke the shackles of the slave; in America it was John Wesley and his preachers.

American Methodism has the honor of being the first ecclesiastical body which, through the long ages of Christian progress, took legislative action in behalf of universal human freedom. Apart from his labors in what is most strictly called the cause of Christ, Wesley’s name and record are on high. (The terribly costly American Civil War was about “States’ Rights”. Slavery was just the issue of the moment.)

With Wilberforce, Clarkson, Howard, and other benefactors of the race, his name will reach the remotest ages, and his work will abide while sun and moon endure.

Mercy for The Unlettered

The Wesleyan movement “gave *the first impulse to popular education.*” So says the great English historian; so says Mr. Stopford Brooke, in his valuable little work on English literature.

We have already noted Mr. Wesley’s efforts in this direction. These efforts were of the most liberal character, they were neither sectarian nor ecclesiastical; their aim was higher than mere zeal for Church or sect could have inspired. Education regarding the doctrines and usages of the Church had for centuries been the work of pastors; but Mr. Wesley, as already said, was at the farthest possible remove from the mere ecclesiastic. He was both taller and broader than the Churchman; in the truest sense of the term, he was a Christian man and a Christian teacher. He placed a higher estimate upon men than membership in the Church; set principle above sectarianism, religion above the National Church; and hence in his labors for the intellectual elevation of the race there was the breadth, liberality, and philanthropy of the generous citizen or patriotic statesman, *rather than the aims of one seeking to enlarge the power of a single ecclesiastical organization.* (Now -this is rare indeed!) Mr. Wesley was the first man in Great Britain who personally adopted measures **for the education of the masses.** Long before the subject had come to be seriously considered, either by statesman or philanthropist, he had devoted himself earnestly to the work. He announced no theories upon the subject, expended no rhetoric, laid no measures before Parliament or ministers; indeed, it was a peculiarity of the man that he did not theorize, and before he called upon others, either in public or private, to lend aid to any enterprise, he had himself devoted his energies, and had accomplished much before the world became aware that the idea had originated. Without word of exhortation, or even of announcement to others, quietly, resolutely, he went to work; he taught, wrote and published books; gave books when the people could not buy; and to such as could and did make the purchase he reduced the cost to a minimum, thus anticipating, by more than a century, the great work now done by many of the large publishing houses

in supplying the people with good, healthy literature, and popularizing learning in the same way as he had popularized religion. Besides this, early in the course of his Revival he had established at Kingswood, a school, not only for the education of sons of the ministers, and the training of young men for the preaching of the gospel, but likewise for those of maturer years who desired to make up the deficiencies of their earlier days. The course of study in this institution was of the broadest, most comprehensive range, such as in Wesley's own estimation would make a better scholar than nine in ten of the graduates at Oxford or Cambridge; just such a course as, adapted to advancing thought and scholarship, will most probably, at some future day, be seen to be the best for the theological schools of the country; a course of wide, general culture, including the Scriptures in their original tongues, with other works bearing upon moral and religious education, but without the sectarian or distinctively theological features.

From the establishment of that Kingswood school to the present day, the followers of Wesley have, in the main, been not only forward but foremost in providing for the education of the people. Just as ordinarily the Methodist preacher has pioneered the way into new communities with his hymnbook and Bible, and has been the first to erect a place of worship, so he has generally built the first schoolhouse and secured the first teacher, and in the selection of teachers has usually shown more of the broad spirit and true desire to promote learning, than mere regard for denominational expansion. Others have done more for the higher education of the wealthier, more intelligent classes; but among the poor, the ignorant, and the sparsely settled tracts of our country and of the world, it is Methodism that has wrought with earliest and most earnest effort; and today, in our own land at least, her institutions of learning—institutions of all grades and for both sexes—are far more numerous than those of any other religious body.

The Mercy of a Sober Mind

More than to any other one man is the cause of temperance indebted to Mr. Wesley. Unless we are mistaken, Mr. Wesley, in the General Rules of his societies, made the first authoritative ecclesiastical utterance upon this subject. His Rule forbids "drunkenness, buying or selling spirituous liquors; or drinking them, unless in cases of extreme necessity." [85] This position was taken when the use of intoxicating liquors was no more matter of censure by the Church than the present use of tea or coffee. By reference to one of his sermons—"On the Use of Money"—it will be seen that the great reformer had carefully pondered the whole matter, and had come to conclusions which, even today, the Churches in general have not been able to adopt and enforce.

"We may not sell anything," he says, "which tends to impair health. Such is eminently all that liquid fire, commonly called drams or spirituous liquors.

All who sell them in the common way, to any who will buy, are poisoners general. They murder his majesty's subjects by wholesale; neither does their eye pity or spare; they drive them to hell like sheep." In 1812, near seventy years after the adoption of this Rule by Wesley, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church adopted a report urging its ministers to preach upon the subject, and condemning not only "actual intemperance," but likewise "such habits and indulgences" as lead to intemperance; and in 1833, just ninety years after Wesley's legislation, the first National Temperance Convention was held in Philadelphia. Since that time various measures have been adopted, divers organizations have been formed, and, in several of the States, different forms of prohibitory law have been passed; while in many of the European nations, and even in India and China, the like efforts are making for the extirpation of the evil. Yet even today the Churches that arose from Mr. Wesley's Revival are, we believe, the only ones embodying it among their organizational laws that both the buying and selling, as well as the drinking, of spirituous liquors shall not be engaged in by their members. A prohibitory law has thus been one of the fundamental principles of the Wesleyan Churches

from the beginning. More than this, we believe that, if the facts in the case were carefully tabulated, it would be found that in the different social or legislative organizations for the suppression of intemperance, the followers of Wesley greatly outnumber those of any other ecclesiastical body; and that, in the ranks of the clergy especially, his preachers have generally excelled both in zeal and number. Without intending any invidious comparisons, we would venture the remark that, if the power now thrown into the various movements for the annihilation or reduction of intemperance by this portion of the Christian world were withdrawn or annulled, the cause would hardly have vitality enough to make a respectable effort for the next half century.

So far we have considered only the general results of Mr. Wesley's life—results affecting the English and American nations at large, and the progress in them of moral and religious ideas. Let us now take a view of the work accomplished more specifically in behalf of the Church itself.

First, we should see what was the condition of the Church at the time Mr. Wesley entered upon his career of reformation. Nothing could show more clearly the need of the great Revival than the manner in which, for many years, both the laity and ministry received Mr. Wesley's labors. It would hardly be an exaggeration to say that he could have met with no greater discouragement or more determined opposition had he been attempting to Christianize the tribes in the heart of Africa. While he was doing his utmost to benefit both Church and people, both Church and people were subjecting him to the bitterest persecution. He is the last of the world's great reformers who have had to suffer physical injury for the good they have effected. Not only oaths and curses, but stones, clubs, dragging by the hair, trampling in the mire, were no unusual experiences of Wesley and his helpers during a large portion of his life. Mobs pelted him with stones; windows were shattered while he preached; men, women, and children were dragged along the streets; and more than once, Wesley himself narrowly escaped with his life. Not only mobs, but magistrates of the law and dignitaries of the Church, joined in these disgraceful deeds. But the most cruel part of all was the persecution arising from false charges, slanderous imputations, and scurrilous attacks from those to whom he would naturally have turned for friendly aid and sympathy. "Papist," "infidel," "bigot," "heretic," "atheist," were mild expressions of their opposition, on the part of many. "Lurking, sly assassin," "most rancorous hater of the gospel," and like euphonious names, was he called by the saintly Mr. Toplady, as he argued questions of grace and salvation and wrote "Rock of Ages!"

Such treatment was not because Wesley was seeking to overthrow cherished doctrines of the Church, or establish new or heretical opinions. His crime was that he endeavored to infuse life into doctrines which the Church had always professed—the old doctrines of the prayer book and homilies—doctrines for the realization of which in their hearts and lives, both clergy and laity constantly, in solemn style, prayed as they bowed before the altars of the Church. The robed priest and mitred bishop, with the noble lord and lady, could kneel and implore, "O God, the Father; O God, the Son; O God, the Holy Ghost; have mercy upon us, miserable sinners;"[86] but when Wesley preached that the "miserable sinners" needed mercy, and must renounce their sins if mercy they would obtain, his doctrines were contemptuously styled as "most repulsive," "highly offensive and insulting." Bishops, archbishops, and all, could mumble "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me;" or, "Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy name;" but when Mr. Wesley preached that the people, in order to be saved, must perfectly love God, and worthily magnify his name, he was driven out as an unclean thing, subjected to dishonor and insult, such as could have been looked for only at Billingsgate (an infamous British prison) or in Botany Bay (where the convicts went to in Australia).

No period in the history of the Church has been more repellent than that now under consideration. Bishop Burnet, so often quoted in this connection, declared that he could not look on without the deepest concern when he saw the imminent ruin hanging over the Church, while Southey testifies of

“the rudeness of the peasantry, the brutality of the town population, the prevalence of drunkenness, the growth of impiety, the general deadness of religion” as being “obvious and glaring.” Green, the English historian, speaks of the clergy as “the idlest and most lifeless in the world.”[87] But after the account given of the general demoralization of the nation, we need say no more as to the condition of the Church. That near the beginning of the present century (1800s) a change was made for the better, and that the change was due to the influence of John Wesley and his associates, is admitted by all impartial students of the history of those times. George III is said to have confessed, in his old age, that to the brothers John and Charles Wesley, with George Whitefield and the Countess of Huntingdon, the Church of England was more indebted than to all other men.[88] The philosophic Lecky declares that while the splendid victories by land and sea during the ministry of the elder Pitt (British minister of Defence) make the most dazzling episode in the reign of George II, their importance in English history is but secondary as compared with the work of Whitefield and Wesley.[89]

The power of the revival was liberally attested a few years ago when the Ecumenical Methodist Conference met in London. Said the Rev. H. Dawson, of the “Baptist Union,” in his fraternal address: “We rejoice that you have kindled the lamp of truth in obscure hamlets and villages. ... We are thankful for your spiritual conservatism, that in every pulpit in this land Christ is preached.”[90] Said Dr. Kennedy, Congregationalist: “We unite with you in fervent thanksgiving to God for the rich blessing which has rested on the spiritual successes of Wesley, and on the communities which bear his name, or which, without assuming the name, have sprung from the great spiritual movement with which his name is identified.”[91] The testimony of the Christian Union (of England) is that “the greatest religious reformation of modern times is unquestionably that wrought by the Methodist denomination.

A century and a half ago, religious fervor in England, and we might almost say, religion itself, had well nigh died out. If we wish to know what Wesleyanism has done for England—we might say, for the world—the Methodist Ecumenical Conference, now being held in London, will answer that it has wrought the greatest of all religious reformations, and has won millions of souls to the kingdom of Christ.”[92]

Mr. Green, in speaking of the effects of the Revival, has noted only the power exerted upon the better classes of society.[93] This is doubtless because its influence upon the lower strata is so well known and so generally acknowledged. Mr. Lecky, with his usual comprehensiveness of view, has not failed to do justice to this most prominent feature of Wesley’s work: “The doctrines which he taught, the theory of life he enforced, proved themselves capable of arousing, in great masses of men, an enthusiasm of piety which was hardly surpassed in the first days of Christianity, of eradicating inveterate vice, of fixing and directing impulsive natures that were rapidly hastening toward the abyss. It planted a fervid and enduring religious sentiment in the midst of the most brutal and neglected portions of the population; and whatever may have been its vices or its defects, it undoubtedly emancipated great numbers from the fear of death, and imparted a warmer tone to the devotion and greater energy to the philanthropy of every denomination, both in England and the Colonies.”[94] From the same author, again, is quoted by the canon of Lincoln the assertion that the Revival “gradually changed the whole spirit of the English Church—infused into it a new life and passion of devotion, kindled a spirit of fervent philanthropy, raised the standard of clerical duty, and completely altered the whole tone and tendency of the preaching of its ministers.”[95]

In two ways, says Dr. Overton, was this power brought to bear upon the Church: “First, by adding to it a body of most earnest, active, self-denying men, of blameless lives, who would have been an honor to any religious community, and who were deeply attached to what they considered to be the teaching of the Church; and, secondly, by directing the attention of those who held aloof from the movement to truths which had been too much placed in the background.”[96] It must be understood that this effect upon the clergy was largely in spite of themselves; but this only shows to the greater advantage the

power of Mr. Wesley upon his Church and countrymen.

At the beginning of the Revival, almost every clergyman in the kingdom, either directly or indirectly, opposed the movement. Wesley himself assures us that at that time he knew of only ten clergymen in England who preached what he considered evangelical doctrines; and so great was the opposition he encountered that, in a short while, there was scarcely a pulpit into which he was admitted. When, however, some twenty years afterwards, he addressed his circular calling for a union of all who preached these doctrines, the number of such had grown to half a hundred; and he lived to see the day when these doctrines prevailed so widely, and had so wrought upon both the clergy and laity of the Church, that when, as an old man full of years and wisdom, he passed to and fro through the kingdom, his way was thronged with admiring, grateful friends, and more of the pulpits were thrown open to him than he was able to fill, and, as he himself expresses it, “the tables were turned,” and he had grown into “an honorable man.” What a fire of zeal he had enkindled! What an array of talent he had set to work!

Not to mention the names of Fletcher, Whitefield, Charles Wesley, Coke, Adam Clarke, Perronet, and others, who actively cooperated with him in his great work, how many there were who, though rejecting his irregular methods, had yet caught his evangelical spirit, and zealously labored for the establishment of a purer, loftier form of religion. Henry, Grimshaw, Berridge, Romaine, Newton, Venn, Scott, Cecil, Milner, Walker, Rowland Hill, and others, along with such among the laity as Lady Huntingdon, Wilberforce, Lords Dartmouth and Teignmouth, Hannah More, and Cowper, all of whom distinguished themselves in the literature of the nation and of the Church, and by their writings—poetical and prose—by their sermons, works of a devotional nature, commentaries on the Scriptures, and histories of the Church, awoke the zeal and fervor of the nation, and advanced religious thought to a level never before attained. Even the Dissenting bodies, which had largely become Arian and Socinian, returned to evangelical principles, both in zeal and doctrine. Formalism, more or less, everywhere gave way to the living truth; “decency” and “order,” so-called, yielded largely to the methods of common sense, and of the love of God and man, in spreading the gospel over the world.

Lay preaching, in some form or other, has since the days of Wesley, been no unheard of thing among all the Churches; extemporaneous preaching has, to a great degree, taken the place of the written and read theological essay; the schoolhouse, the marketplace, the hillside, is now used for a sanctuary, where no “consecrated brick-pile” is to be had, and thus the “groves” have again become “God’s temples,” as of old. The weekly prayermeeting; two services on the Sabbath day, instead of the one of the morning alone; the classmeeting, in at least a modified form, and under different names; and so the watchnight service, the protracted meeting, and the revival,—are not now peculiar to Wesley’s followers. The Sabbath school is an institution of all who worship God, even of the Jews and Romanists; each of the denominations has its publishing house and literature, its weeklies and quarterlies; evangelists—only a different name for a less regular itinerancy—are sent forth by all, even the Catholics; the standard of ministerial qualification has been practically modified in accordance with the demands of a growing Christian population, and, as we believe, of reason and the Word of God; and, withal, an enlarged, revived hymnology has made divine service to be more of a true spiritual worship than it has been since the days of David and Asaph, and in the psalmody of all the Churches the songs of Newton, Beveridge, and others, but especially of the brothers John and Charles Wesley, are almost as familiar as the rhymes of the nursery.

See now the various organizations for Christian enterprise that have risen, more or less directly, either from, or in connection with, the work of Wesley.

The first religious publishing house, the first Sabbath school, the first free Medical Dispensary, arose from his labors. The first Tract Society was organized by him and Coke several years before the great Pater-noster Row establishment, which itself was the work of Rowland Hill, a Calvinistic Methodist. The first Bible Society, called the Naval and Military, and afterwards the British and Foreign Bible

Society, were, the one directly, the other more distantly, the results of Wesley's efforts. The first Protestant Missionary Society was planned in 1787, numbering among its original subscribers such men as Wilberforce and the Earl of Dartmouth. The London Missionary Society and the Church Missionary Society originated, the former in the labors of Melville Horne, one of Wesley's Church of England preachers, the latter in the efforts of John Venn, son of a Methodist minister;[97]—all in some sense or degree, the work of Wesley, along with a system of bands, classes, lovefeasts, societies, conferences all of them being somewhat of the nature of mutual spiritual insurance companies, in which each member both gives and receives spiritual strength, warmth, and vitality, such as no other institution of the modern Church has known; a system which, at the time of Mr. Wesley's death, had so grown that it numbered more than five hundred preachers and near one hundred and forty thousand members of societies, and had its organizations in England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, the Channel Islands, the West Indies, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Prince Edward's Island, Canada, the United States; while today, just one hundred years after his death, the societies are fully equipped now become Churches in, besides the countries just named, France, Germany, Switzerland, Norway, Sweden, Belgium, Africa, India, China, Mexico, Brazil, Australia, Japan, Ceylon, New Zealand, and almost every important island of the seas,—making, according to a recent estimate which includes Sunday School scholars and other attendants upon public worship, about twenty-five millions of the world's population now under the direct influence of Wesley's teachings;[98] and the number is growing so rapidly, says Mr. Herrick, that “the statistician and the census taker can hardly keep their figures up with its progress.”[99]

IV Wesley: Champion of Freedom

We now come to what we consider the most important and the most radical part of the work of Wesley—the most radical, as being the widest departure from established understanding; the most important, because, unless we are greatly mistaken, calculated to do more toward the extension over the world of the religion of Jesus, as taught by Jesus himself, than any movement the world has known since the close of the first century.

We refer to Wesley's influence over general habits of theological thought and systems of faith among the Churches. The first thing to be said along here is, that just as French ideas were checked and the English people saved from the revolutionary tendencies of French political agitations (the French Revolution and its ruling principality: the guillotine) by the Wesleyan movement, so was the German theological spirit prevented from working out its legitimate and almost necessary results upon the English and no less upon the American mind. It is by no means an impertinent inquiry, how this was brought about; how England and America escaped that infection of wild, rationalistic thought which has rendered the name of Germany almost synonymous with a lifeless, soulless faith, (in that same time period) if not indeed synonymous with irreverence or infidelity itself. This disposition which so broadly marks the German mind—the disposition unduly to exalt rational inquiry at the expense of revealed religion—began, not in Germany, but in England!

Herbert wrote the *Tractatus de Veritate* a century or more before Germany gave birth to writers of *a like way of thinking*. Herbert, Tindal, Hobbes, had made their systems famous long before either Baumgarten, Michaelis, or Semler had disturbed the faith of the orthodox, and the thought of these English thinkers *was far more radical* than that of the Germans named. The latter, within the (Catholic) Church and as disciples of Jesus, sought to *make religion more conformable*, as they supposed, to the natural reason of man, while the English school came out openly, and attacked *the very foundations of all revealed truth*. And the effect of the writings of these men and of their successors had become most manifest and deleterious about the time of the organization of Wesley's first Conference. It was about this time that Hume published his famous argument against miracles. It was about this time that Bishop

Butler said that “it had come to be taken for granted that Christianity was not so much as a subject of inquiry,” and that Montesquieu declared that “there was no religion in England, and that the subject, if mentioned, *excited nothing but laughter.*”

It is no meaningless question, therefore, why England, which was so foremost in atheistic and infidel belief—so far ahead of Germany, both as to time and tendencies—should have so thoroughly, and so almost suddenly too, shown to the world a far different character. What turned the tide, and caused the English mind, all at once as it were, to turn back against the current *which had been setting in for a century and a half or more*? It is manifest that these questions, answered for England, are answered equally for America. We have no doubt that Mr. Lecky, had the subject presented itself as he was writing the words last quoted from him would have answered these questions as he did the like when considering the influence of France upon his countrymen. At any rate, one need not hesitate to give such answer. It was the power of living, practical godliness—“Scriptural holiness”—that so occupied the British mind, and so controlled British thought, as in an almost incredibly short time to have radically changed the British character. It was the preaching, the pastoral oversight, the personal instruction of both young and old, by John Wesley, assisted by his numerous co-workers, both in and out of the Establishment; the unwearied traveling to and fro through the kingdom in the organization of his societies, and the enforcement of supreme love to God and love of neighbor as the sum total of moral and religious life, it was this, the work of Wesley, that drove back across the Channel the insane political and religious frenzy of the French, and which, while it did much to nullify the anti-Christian influence of the English deists, kept back, across the German Ocean, the rationalism of Semler and his school, and has now, for almost a century, kept English thought to a level of sobriety and consistency in social, political, and religious interests that has made the English government the most stable, her literature the purest, her theology the soundest, her morals the most nearly correct, of all the European nations (of the time).

Methodism, by her zeal and fury, offensive as it was to many, presented the counteracting forces, if not of a new faith, at least of a more vivid, realistic conception of the established faith forces which, beginning with the lower and middle classes and at length working their way upward, eventually carried the Anglo-Saxon mind back to the true idea of the Lutheran reformation, rather than forward with the wild vagaries of French and German thought. Luther himself had not worked along the line of what is now known as the fundamental principle of Protestantism—“the Bible, the Bible alone, for Protestants.” Both he and his followers had only substituted for the authority of Rome the authority of creeds and Diets, and had exalted theological definitions into the place originally held only by the plain teachings of Jesus. It was but natural that the German mind, under this influence, should experience the two extreme reactions of, first, spinning out and weaving theological discussions until the network had strangled the living faith of Jesus; and, secondly, of making a determined intellectual revolt against all authority, both human and divine, in matters of religion. Mr. Wesley’s influence counteracted both these evils, both in England and America the one, by *emphasizing life and character* as the all in all of the religion of Jesus; the other, by *submitting the sacred Scriptures to the judgment of enlightened reason*, guided by reverent faith in God, and refusing to be controlled by traditional faith or ecclesiastical decisions.

John Wesley was the most pronounced advocate of freedom the Church has known since the days of Paul—not freedom as guaranteed by the civil law to those not members of an Established Church, but freedom within the Church, and to be allowed by the Church itself. Freedom as regards the law—equal privileges to all religious bodies—is but a small part of the freedom of the gospel of Christ. The great question now demanding settlement with many is to what extent freedom in belief shall be exercised as regards the teachings of the Church of which one may be a member. Of course, this is a question for the Churches themselves, and not for the civil authorities, to settle. The civil authority has long since, at

least in the leading European nations, equally as in the United States, granted the largest freedom it could possibly bestow. What is needed is for the various Churches to determine how far, notwithstanding their prescribed formulas, each member shall have the privilege of dissent from such formulas, and be master of his own creed. Freedom for the members of any one ecclesiastical body to unite themselves with the members of a different body is fully granted; and the beliefs of the different bodies are fully recognized as evangelical so long as they are confined to the members of these several bodies; but just so soon as a belief prescribed by one body finds its way into a different body—as when, for instance, a member of a Calvinistic Church becomes Arminian in belief, or vice versa—the belief becomes a heresy; and until quite recently such a thing could not be endured. Mr. Wesley was the first theologian of whom we know who endeavored to remove this glaring inconsistency, and who himself set the example of calling no man master in the determination of his own faith.

There are few greater errors than that which credits Martin Luther with the establishment of religious freedom in the world. Luther did not seek toleration, even before the civil law, of beliefs differing from his own; neither by his followers was more attempted than to free themselves from the dominion of Rome. The principle of Protestantism, that the Bible alone is the rule of faith to Christian believers, was, in the earlier days of the Reformation, only an assertion of independence from the Romish Church.

Freedom in the modern sense seems not to have been dreamed of by Luther; it was not announced in the theses tacked upon the church door at Wittenberg; it was not contended for at the Diet of Spires. The principle there established was, “that each community should be controlled in religious matters by the reigning prince,” and it was because of protest against the repeal of this sorry semblance of freedom that the friends of the Reformation received the designation by which they are now known. (Mosheim.) Nowhere in all history is seen less of true religious freedom, or even of toleration, than among the Lutheran Churches of Germany during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Each civil potentate ruled the Church in his own dominous with a despotism equally galling as the tyranny of Rome. And so it was, to greater or less degree, in other nations. In the parts of France which were conceded to the Protestants, the civil power was immediately used to suppress the Romish worship. When the English Government manifested a disposition to relax its tyranny over the “banned and proscribed people of Ireland,” the Protestant bishops raised a solemn protest, declaring that to give them toleration “was a grievous sin;” while the persecutions of the Nonconformists in Scotland were a shame to human nature; and even our own earlier American annals are far from being stainless as regards such foul enormities. In Sweden, today Sweden, the first of the nations that adopted the principles of the Reformation, and where the Lutheran religion is, in most regards, most nearly what it was in the days of Martin Luther—there is no religious freedom that deserves the name. Within the memory of men still living, and by no means old, a number of ladies were exiled because they had embraced the Romish faith; and we can all bear witness how the world was amazed, not more than half a dozen years ago, that the Evangelical Alliance was not permitted to meet in Stockholm, after the invitation had been given and accepted.

What a contrast between Luther and his followers on the one hand, and John Wesley with his societies on the other! It will be remembered that, as we have shown, Mr. Wesley passed his life in the Church of England, telling us that while he considered it a sin to separate from the Church, he regarded it no less a sin not to vary from the Church in such matters as his judgment could not approve. In him, therefore, and in the societies under his care, we have the notable instance of more than a hundred thousand of the laity and several hundred preachers of the gospel, all members of the Church, yet all following their own judgments in matters of both faith and practice Mr. Wesley himself doing all in his power to have them retain their connection with the Church, at the same time encouraging their right *to do their own thinking* and obey only their consciences.

At the very outset he lays broad and deep the principle that we are to “think and let think,” and no one

idea does he seek more frequently or more diligently to impress upon his people. We have already heard him speak upon the subject; but we can with equal pleasure hear him further: "I do not mean, be of my opinion. You need not. Neither do I mean, I will be of your opinion. I can not; it does not depend upon my choice. I can no more think, than I can see or hear, as I will. ... I do not mean, embrace my modes of worship; or, I will embrace yours. This is also a thing which does not depend either on your choice or mine. We must both act as each is fully persuaded in his own mind. Hold you fast that which you believe is most acceptable to God. I will do the same." [100] Hear his definition of religious liberty: "Religious liberty is a liberty to choose one's own religion; to worship God according to our own consciences. Every man living, as a man, has a right to this, as he is a rational creature. The Creator gave him this right when he endowed him with understanding; and every man must judge for himself, *because every man must give an account of himself to God*. Consequently, this is an inalienable right; it is inseparable from humanity, and God did never give authority to any man or number of men, to deprive any child of man thereof, under any colour or pretense whatever." [101] "Be true to your principles touching opinions, and the externals of religion. Use every ordinance which you believe is of God; but beware of narrowness of spirit toward those who use them not. Conform yourselves to those modes of worship you approve, yet love as brethren those who can not conform. Lay so much stress on opinions that all your own, if possible, may agree with truth and reason; but have a care of anger, dislike, or contempt towards those whose opinions differ from yours. Condemn no man for not thinking as you think; let every man enjoy the full and free liberty of thinking for himself; let every one use his own judgment, since every man must give account of himself to God." [102]

It was upon such principles as these that he organized his Conferences.

Upon the opening of the first of these (in 1744), he "desired that all things be considered as in the immediate presence of God; that we meet with a single eye, and as little children who have every thing to learn; that every person may speak freely what is in his heart, and that every question which may arise should be thoroughly debated and settled." See a portion of the Proceedings of this Conference:

"Question. Need we be fearful of doing this the overturning of our first principles?

"Answer. If they are false, the sooner they are overturned, the better. If they are true, they will bear the strictest examination. Let us pray for a willingness to receive new light to know every doctrine whether it be of God.

"Question. How far does each of us agree to submit to the judgment of the majority?

"Answer. In speculative things, each can submit only so far as his private judgment shall be convinced. In every practical detail, each will submit so far as he can without wounding his conscience.

"Question. Can a Christian submit any farther than this to any man or number of men upon earth?

"Answer. It is undeniably certain he can not, either to bishops, Convocations, or General Councils. And this is that broad principle of private judgment on which all the Reformers proceeded. Every man must judge for himself, because every man must give account of himself to God." [103]

But let us see what has been the effect of Mr. Wesley's life and labors upon the theological thought of the world upon its creeds and confessions of faith, and upon the general advancement of the Churches toward the one universal kingdom of God.

The great truths which Wesley made the basis of his Revival were such as the world could not long resist. **The supremacy of conscience over authority**, of *the Word of God over the decisions of Councils*, and the superior value of *right states of heart and life as compared with established doctrines*; eternal life dependent solely upon the sinner's choice, and God's grace freely given to assist that choice; God, loving all mankind; Jesus, dying for all, and actually redeeming every soul that longs

for God, these were just such truths as the unbiased mind naturally believes of God, his Sovereign and Redeemer; just such as, unprejudiced and uncontrolled by adverse authority, one naturally finds in the Word of God; and nothing but a radical change in human nature could have checked their progress in the world.

What has been their progress? What course has their progress taken? Truths which awake response in the hearts and convictions of all mankind must not only ultimately command the assent of all, but eventually cause all other truths to sink into comparative insignificance and neglect. In other words, such truths as Wesley preached for more than half a century were bound, in the very nature of things, to bring about these two great results:

1. forcing themselves, more or less, into the creeds of *all classes of Christian thinkers*
2. *promoting unity of faith* and a common sympathy among all who adore the same God and Savior. Now, note whatever may be the written declarations of the various creeds of evangelical Protestantism, the real belief of the evangelical Churches is now essentially one with Wesley's teachings.

How unquestionably true is this of the Calvinistic Churches! As expressed in their Confessions, no system of thought could be more at variance with the Arminianism of Wesley; *yet as entertained today by their ministry and laity, it would be difficult to say wherein the essential difference lies.*

Right in the face of the Westminster [104] protest against confusing the Divine foreknowledge with predestination; in face, equally, of Calvin's [105] protest against confounding predestination with the permission of God,—the vast majority of Calvinistic thinkers do thus explain their doctrine, so that real Calvinism rarely appears except as it stands in the written creed, and the prospect is that before long it will have no place there at all. Within the last decade the Congregational Churches have, by regularly appointed commission, expunged the Calvinistic elements of their faith; the English Presbyterians have determined to revise their Confession; and the present agitation of the subject in the United States is very significant. Says Dr. McCosh, "the most eminent minister and educator in America:" "Our theologians do not accept it [the Confession] as a whole. Among the theological seminaries, some reject one part, some reject another; all reject something." Dr. Philip Schaff the great scholar of the American Calvinistic Churches, the highest authority on the subject of creeds—says: "The doctrines of the Confession are not believed by ninety-nine hundredths of the Presbyterians, nor preached by any, so far as I know. They certainly could not be preached in any pulpit *without emptying the pews.*"

The fact is, the "Five Points" hold about the same place in the religious faith of the world that the old astronomy holds in the history of science. Long continued habit makes us still speak of the rising and setting of the sun, but we no longer believe in the phraseology thus employed. And so "predestination," "election," "reprobation," "non-elect infants," are still terms familiar to our eyes and ears, but this is about all that can be said of them; they no longer express the faith at one time associated with them.

Now, it would be somewhat extravagant to assert that this great change of belief is due entirely to the influence of Mr. Wesley; but that his teachings have had much to do in bringing about such change, will hardly be called in question. The "Calvinistic Controversy" was conducted chiefly by Mr. Fletcher on the Arminian side, and by Mr. Whitefield and his friends on the side of the Calvinists, and was of comparatively short duration; yet it aroused attention, as had not been done before, to the inconsistencies of the Calvinistic view, and made men think upon the subject who before had accepted the doctrine upon the authority of the Confession and of the Fathers.

And, then, the continual preaching of the great truths which made the staple of the Wesleyan religion, Sabbath after Sabbath, to hundreds of thousands and, recently, to millions of men and women, has not been without effect upon the whole world of religious thinkers.

Two leading ideas—(1) that man, feeble and sinful as he is, has yet something to do, something which he can and must do, toward his own salvation; and (2) that God has provided redemption for every man, and as a kind, loving Father, desires that every man shall come to him and live forever—have so modified Calvinistic thought that the Westminster fathers, could they return to the earth, would recognize but few of those who profess to keep the “faith once delivered to the saints.” Not unreasonably, therefore, has a living Presbyterian divine [106] asked: “What is it that keeps Methodists and Presbyterians apart? Is it anything essential to the Church, or even to its well being? ... I am persuaded that our differences are merely intellectual (metaphysical), and not moral or spiritual; in short, not material.” Not only Calvinists and Arminians, but even those bodies that have differed yet more widely, are evincing a marked tendency toward unanimity of view in all that is really fundamental to the Christian faith. “Whether they be Unitarians or Trinitarians, they are generally one as to this that Jesus Christ was the ideal and perfect man, whose likeness is the model toward which all are to strive; and, farther, that in his person there was expressed so much of God’s own nature as can be revealed under the limitations of human flesh. ... To all who so regard him, he rightfully becomes, not only a Guide to be wholly trusted, but a Leader to be followed, a Savior to be loved; in life a Divine Friend, and in death a sure hope.”[107]

As to the natural moral state of man, all are agreed upon the necessity of Divine assistance in overcoming evil; and as to repentance and conversion, there is no variance concerning what the new life is that follows them this new life being admitted to be the same thing in all who love the Lord Jesus Christ. As to the Holy Scriptures, there is a like agreement in so far as are involved essential faith and the true Christian life. There is general acceptance of the Bible as at least containing the word of God, and as being the ultimate standard of appeal; “an incomparable treasury of moral teaching, a transcendent insight into spiritual truth, a veritable disclosure of God to men.”

Not only does this tendency to harmony exist, but a most manifest tendency no less to lose sight comparatively of all other truths or doctrines, and to make prominent the one great idea of faith in Jesus Christ as the sole foundation of the Christian life—faith, in the sense of a simple coming to Jesus, using all diligence to keep his commandments, and trusting through his mercy for salvation from sin.

“To found a Church on dogmatic definitions of theology,” says the editor of the Christian Union,[108] “is as alien to the spirit of the new Testament as to found it on allegiance to the bishop of Rome. We shall never get either unity of the Church, or liberty within it, until it is founded on simple allegiance to Jesus Christ as a Divine Teacher, Savior, and Master.” The same writer had but a short while before this said, in answer to the question, How much creed is essential in order to be a disciple of Christ?—“One need believe in nothing except in Christ himself—as one at whose feet he desires to sit, from whose lips he wishes to learn, and whose life and character he is resolved to follow and to imitate.” We are ready to welcome to all the privileges and prerogatives of Church membership any one who, whatever his theological opinions, gives evidence of possessing, or of earnestly choosing, as superior to any other good, the spirit of Christ.”

Says Dr. R. D. Hitchcock, late president of the Union Theological Seminary:[109] “The question [What is Christianity?] is put and pressed today as never before. And sectarian answers are behind the time. No creed of Orient or Occident, ancient or modern, has spoken the final word. Scientific theology still has its errand and its rights. Though the more we refine, the more we differ, the time will come when the more we differ, the more we shall be agreed; differing in the smaller, agreeing in the larger things; far apart in the spreading branches, knit together in the sturdy trunk.” Indeed, for many years these sentiments have prevailed to such an extent that they have practically formed the basis for membership in all the leading Protestant Churches. “Many of the Presbyterian Churches, especially those of Old School origin, admit to lay membership on simple evidence of repentance and faith in Christ, without requiring acceptance of any creed of any kind, long or short.”[110]

The Baptist Churches admit to membership on the basis of experience of sins forgiven; the Protestant Episcopal Church requires acceptance merely of the Apostles Creed; the Christian Church,[111] while very inconsistent in demanding a particular form of baptism, in other matters leaves each one, whether of the laity or of the ministry, to interpret the Scriptures for himself; some of the Congregational Churches require only the evidence of repentance and faith in Jesus. Plymouth Congregational Church prescribes no doctrinal test whatever, but receives into membership simply upon acceptance of Jesus Christ as a Divine Master and Savior, and consecration of life to his service, and a covenant to walk in fellowship with the Church. Admission into the Methodist Churches has, from their origin, been free to all who “desire to flee from the wrath to come and be saved from their sins.” In consequence of these liberal interpretations of the gospel, the Churches are coming together and cooperating in their efforts to convert the world, as they have never done before. Christian workers in the mission fields are laboring in union upon only great fundamental principles, and more and more each year is growing the disposition to teach the heathen only the essential, saving truths of the gospel. The term evangelical is, without any written or stipulated covenant, used of a large number of Churches, many of whose beliefs in all that is not of the nature of saving faith are as diverse and contradictory as could well be imagined, and fraternal greetings are cordially interchanged when their great representative bodies hold session. Young Men’s Christian Associations, composed of all, without regard to creed, who are endeavoring to live the Christian life or in any way lift themselves to a higher moral plane, are compassing the globe with their reading rooms and other agencies for good. And the Evangelical Alliance holds its annual sessions in different parts of the world, embracing all whose faith attaches to the great cardinal principles of Christian truth. No less an authority than Dr. Briggs, of Union Theological Seminary, proposes a “General Council of the Church of Christ in America,” to be composed of representatives from all the evangelical Churches the ground or basis for which Council being the grand possibilities in the removal of barriers, stumbling blocks, causes of friction and strife, and in the furtherance of peace, concord, and Christian love;[112] while the Protestant Episcopal Church, having the Church of England as ally in the noble cause, would found a basis of union for all these Churches on terms to which, with but slight modification, all might assent: (1) The Holy Scriptures as the rule and standard of faith; (2) The Apostles and the Nicene Creeds; (3) Baptism and the Lord’s Supper for ordinances; (4) The historic episcopate locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the unity of his Church.

And the House of Bishops has declared that, “in all things of human ordering or human choice, relating to modes of worship and discipline, this Church is ready, in the spirit of love and humility, to forego all preferences of her own.”[113]

That the declarations here made are not mere rhetorical glow, has been shown by similar exhibitions of broad, unsectarian sentiment on other occasions. At the Congress of Churches a few years ago, at Hartford, a member announcing himself as a High Church Episcopalian, and even a Puseyite—now a bishop in a Western diocese—gave them to understand that he considered the ordination of every minister in the assembly just as valid as his own. The president of the Council, also an Episcopalian, declared that the Episcopalians must soon come to an exchange of pulpits with the other Churches; while at the late Lambeth Conference, composed of Episcopalian bishops from all parts of the world, the question of exchange of pulpits was formally raised and voted upon. The measure was lost by an overwhelming majority, but not until it had received the support of the bishops of Zealand and Ripon of the English Church, and of Bishops Whipple and Potter of our own country.[114]

At the recent Council of the Plymouth Church, met for the installation of Dr. Abbott to the pastorate, Dr. E. W. Donald declared: “I want to say in the most explicit terms—in words that can by no means be twisted into something that they do not mean—that I stand as an Episcopalian minister and High Churchman, if you please to call me so, and I extend to Dr. Abbott and Dr. Bliss my greetings, as

ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ, in every respect spiritually competent to preach the Word of God and to administer the two sacraments which alone belong to the Church.”[115] The Council here referred to is one of the most significant facts in the history of the Church of Christ. It was composed of distinguished representatives from six leading Protestant denominations—Presbyterian, Baptist, Episcopalian, Reformed, Methodist, and Congregational—all of whose doctrines, except as to great cardinal points, differed from each other and from those of the pastor whom they were to install, as widely as they differed from some of the dogmas of Rome herself; and yet, agreeing upon the broad basis of faith in Jesus Christ and consecration to his cause, every member of the Council, with a single exception, gave the right hand of Christian fellowship to the pastor, many of them making elaborate speeches of congratulation, all of them advising the Church to proceed with the installation, though they had just listened to a declaration of faith, which, in the days of their childhood, had closed against its professor the doors of any evangelical Church in Christendom. “The Council in this respect,” says the editor of the Christian Union, “emphasizes what is far more important than any mere theological departure; namely, the catholicity which cordially recognizes the right of private judgment in the ministry, within lines of personal loyalty to Christ and consecration to his work.” All of which, from the first quotation from Dr. Briggs, is but a varied way of saying what John Wesley had already said one hundred years ago: “We believe, indeed, that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God; and herein we are distinguished from Jews, Turks, and infidels. We believe the written Word of God to be the only and sufficient rule both of Christian faith and practice; and herein we are fundamentally distinguished from those of the Romish Church. We believe Christ to be the Eternal and Supreme God; and herein we are distinguished from the Socinians and Arians. But as to all opinions which do not strike at the root of Christianity, we think and let think.”[116] As to erroneous opinions being entertained: “It matters not whether they are or not. (I speak of such opinions as do not strike at the root.) It is scarce worth while to spend ten words about it. Whether they embrace this religious opinion or that, is no more concern to me than whether they embrace this or that system of astronomy. Are they brought to holy tempers and holy lives? This is mine, and should be your inquiry.” “It is no little sin to represent trifles as necessary to salvation. ... Among these we may undoubtedly rank orthodoxy, or right opinions.” “There may be some well meaning persons... who aver... that if they have not clear views of those capital doctrines—the fall of man, justification by faith, and the atonement made by the death of Christ and of his righteousness transferred to them—they can have no benefit from his death. I dare in no wise affirm this. Indeed, I do not believe it. I believe the merciful God regards the lives and tempers of men more than their ideas. I believe he respects the goodness of the heart, rather than clearness of the head; and that if the heart of a man be filled (by the grace of God and the power of his Spirit) with the humble, gentle, patient love of God and man, God will not cast him into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels, because his ideas are not clear, or because his conceptions are confused.”[117] “We do not lay the main stress of our religion on any opinions, right or wrong; neither do we willingly join in any dispute concerning them.” “One circumstance is quite peculiar to the people called Methodists; that is, the terms upon which any person may be admitted into their society. They do not impose, in order to their admission, any opinions whatever. Let them hold particular or general redemption, absolute or conditional decrees; let them be Churchmen or Dissenters, Presbyterians or Independents,—it is no obstacle. The Presbyterian may be a Presbyterian still; the Independent or Anabaptist may use his own mode of worship. So may the Quaker, and none will contend with him about it. They think, and let think. One condition, and one only, is required—a real desire to save their souls.”[118] “The distinguishing marks of a Methodist are not his opinions of any sort.

His assenting to this or that scheme of religion, his embracing any particular set of opinions, his espousing the judgment of one man or of another, are all quite wide of the point. Whosoever, therefore, imagines that a Methodist is a man of such or such an opinion, is grossly ignorant of the whole affair he mistakes the truth wholly. ... By the fruits of a living faith do we labor to distinguish ourselves from the

unbelieving world from all those whose minds or lives are not according to the gospel of Christ. But from real Christians, of whatsoever denomination they be, we earnestly desire not to be distinguished at all; not from any who sincerely follow after what they know they have not yet attained. No; whosoever doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother and sister and mother. And I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that we be in no wise divided among ourselves. Is thy heart right as my heart is with thine? I ask no farther question. If it be, give me thy hand. For opinions or terms, let us not destroy the work of God. Dost thou love and serve God? It is enough. I give thee the right hand of fellowship. If there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, let us strive together for the faith of the gospel, walking worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; remembering there is one Body and one Spirit, even as we are called with one hope of our calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”[119]

Truly says Dr. Bradford: “Today the Jesus who walked among the hills and valleys of Palestine has more followers than ever; and today his words, He that is not against us is for us, have more weight than ever. Christians now do not quarrel about his divinity, thus denying it; they do not waste time over the hopeless question of how God and man can be one and the same; in the midst of so many mysteries they expect that the unparalleled personality of Jesus Christ will also be mysterious. And they are bowing before the bloodstained cross of the Savior of the world, crying, “Master, we will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.”[120]

The Wesleyan Revival is generally admitted to have been the most important religious movement of the Eighteenth century, but we have not been able to see why this limitation should be made. We have no record of any other movement, since the original apostolic labors, which has exceeded it either in magnitude or in the character of its results. The revolt of Luther against the Church of Rome was in opposition to a stronger and more dangerous power, and was attended with more noise and demonstration among the nations, as being a more violent disruption of the old condition of things; but we do not consider it an extravagant assertion that a candid comparison of the two movements would give the advantage, in many regards, to that of Wesley. Luther himself is said to have complained on his dying bed, that while the people had been reformed as to their beliefs, they had not been reformed in their lives and tempers, which was equivalent to a confession that, so far as real religion was concerned, the world was but little or none the better for his having lived and labored. That true religion, improvement in heart and life, came afterwards, as an indirect result of Luther’s work, is a fact too obvious to call for statement; but the unprejudiced reader of history must confess that neither in Germany nor elsewhere was the moral and spiritual condition, either of the Churches or of the nations, much improved until several generations after Luther; and when at length the improvement came, it was brought about by Wesley and his associates.

The only argument we make in support of a statement, apparently so hyperbolic, is an appeal to facts given on preceding pages, and a repetition, with emphasis, that the work of Wesley was the revival of true religion, personal consecration to God, and a holy life, as distinguished from all regard for rites or doctrines. Viewed in this light, where shall we find a greater work than that of Wesley? Where find a religious movement that has conferred greater blessings upon the Church, or upon the world at large? We have seen the low ebb to which religion in the English Church had fallen at the time Wesley began his course, *and we have no reason for believing that in any other land the state of the Church was any the less discouraging*. So far as regards religion—religion as contrasted with mere moral life on the one hand, and mere dogma or ecclesiasticism on the other we would find it difficult, if indeed at all possible, to point to any period, or to any country, in which there was a better state of things than in

England during the first third of the eighteenth century. Review the ages preceding the days of which we now speak. Go back through the licentious and turbulent reigns of the House of Stuart; the bitter theological strifes and bloody persecutions of the Tudor dynasty; the exterminating wars of the Roses, and the long century of conflict between the French and English kings,—and we find ourselves passing into the midst of the darkest era, whether for England or the rest of the world, of which history has preserved the record. The deeper now we penetrate into this period, the thicker, grosser, becomes the darkness, until we come to the days immediately succeeding the apostolic fathers, or perhaps the apostles themselves. Where, in this long course of centuries, shall we see any more of the religious life than Wesley saw in England? *Where or when shall we find one who did more than he to spread abroad and establish in the world the true idea of the religion of Jesus, and the practice of its precepts?* (as of 1891) If history tells us of such a one, we can not recall the fact. Impartial consideration of the subject will show that, since the deaths of Paul and John, the world has had no one that has done so much as Wesley to clear religion of its errors, its human additions and corruptions; so much to show the true relation of doctrines to practical life, and the relative values of the various doctrines; so much to discriminate between essential and nonessential truth or error, to set in true light the rights of the individual conscience, to arouse dormant zeal, inspire broad philanthropic charity toward all mankind; so much to make religion rational, comprehensive, and practical, as well as devising a wonderfully successful method of sending it abroad throughout the world, and bringing the nations into the kingdom of God.

A birds-eye view of the work of Wesley, as seen today, may now be taken.

Considered apart from the failings and infirmities of many of those who represent it before the world failings and infirmities which must be expected, in some degree, wherever men are found—considered as the system which Mr. Wesley designed and preached, we see:

A religion which seeks to control the heart and life into practical obedience to the law of God; making men not only better Churchmen but better citizens, better men of business, better neighbors; better husbands, fathers, brothers, friends; better in all spheres and relations of life; esteeming all doctrines as of little worth except as they make men, women, and children—especially the poor, the ignorant, and the depraved—happier, wiser, better.

A religion high above all rites, dogmas, or forms of polity; centering itself wholly upon simple faith in Jesus; recognizing the true Christian character of every sect that worships Jesus, and of every man who seeks to live as Jesus taught, and opening wide its portals to all, of whatsoever class or creed, who are willing to prove such purpose, first, by “doing no harm,... especially that which is most generally practiced,” and, secondly, by “doing good... of every possible sort, and as far as possible, to all men.”

A religion which recognizes the right of every man to interpret for himself the Scriptures of God, fixing the responsibility for life and doctrine upon the individual conscience; teaching that “no man, or number of men, can decide for others,” and that every man must give account for his belief, not to Church, Conference, or Synod, but to God; submitting to authority “in speculative things,” “only so far as his judgment shall be convinced;” “in practical matters,” “so far as he can without wounding his conscience.”

A religion which has so wrought upon the world at large that almost every government of the earth has, in some form, felt its power. Prison reform, temperance reform, popular education, care for the poor and friendless, abolition of slavery and of the slave trade, universal suffrage, and equal rights of all to share the government, along with divers political, social, and humanitarian reforms, are now working out most beneficial results among all the leading nations; and besides all this,— A religion from which have arisen three immense ecclesiastical bodies, with numbers of smaller ones that have sprung from them, reckoning their memberships by millions, in all portions of the globe; fully equipped with rules

of discipline, institutions of learning, missionary societies, and divers other agencies of good; the largest ecclesiastical bodies known to history that have made their way from the beginning without State patronage; the only ones whose fundamental law provides each congregation with a pastor and every pastor with a flock, at the same time sending out shepherds into the waste places to gather into flocks and folds the scattered sheep that have no shepherd; the only ones, since the first schism from Rome, that have originated in the effort to make men better, rather than more orthodox or more or less ritualistic; the only ones whose requirement of the ministry, as regards belief, is the sole condition of a vow to “instruct the people” committed to their care, and to “teach nothing, as required of necessity to eternal salvation, but that which they themselves shall be persuaded may be concluded and proved by the Scriptures.”[121]

Notes:

1. Works, VII, 244, (New York ed., 1831)
2. Works, V, 345. This was written four years after he made the General Rules which forbade the drinking of spirituous liquors. Mr. Wesley, so far as we know, did not explain his inconsistency, we attempt no explanation.
- 3 Sermon on "The More Excellent Way."
- 4 Works, VII, 90.
- 5 Works, VII, 90.
- 6 Stevens' Centenary of Methodism, p. 132.
- 7 Stevens', p. 133.
- 8 Works, VII, 552.
- 9 Works, V, 335.
- 10 Works, V, 173.
- 11 Works, IV, 269.
- 12 Works, V, 239.
- 13 Works, V, 11.
- 14 Works, II, 443.
- 15 Telford, p. 358.
- 16 Works, VII, 84.
- 17 Works, VII, 81.
- 18 Umlin's Wesley's Place in History, p. 95.
- 19 Smith's History of Methodism, p. 726.
- 20 England in Eighteenth Century, II, 685.
- 21 Whitehead, 490, 552 (J. E. Potter & Co.)
- 22 Works, V, 187.
- 23 Telford's Life of Wesley, p. 338.
- 24 Works, III, 619.
- 25 Works, V, 182.
- 26 Works, V, 223.
- 27 Herrick's Heretics of Yesterday, p. 300.
- 28 English Thought in the Eighteenth Century, II, 407.
- 29 Stevens' Hist. M. E. Church, IV, 458.
- 30 Moore, Life of Wesley, Vol. II, 259.
- 31 Heretics of Yesterday, p. 314.
- 32 Umlin's Wesley's Place, etc., p. 50.
- 33 Works, V, p. 761.
- 34 Works, III, p. 32.
- 35 Myles's Chronological History of Methodism, p. 24.
- 36 Whitehead, 225.
- 37 Whitehead, 225.
- 38 Works, V, 11.
- 39 Id.
- 40 Works, VII, 186.
- 41 Works, V, 12.
- 42 Works, II.
- 43 Works, IV, 215.
- 44 Works, VII, 186.
- 45 Matthew, xxvii. 9.
- 46 Life of Wesley, I, 190, 195, 552, see Index to Vol. III
- 47 Tyerman, I, 552.
- 48 Sermon, CXI.
- 49 Southey's Wesley, p. 177. (London, 1864.)
- 50 "Notes" on Acts x, 35.
- 51 Notes on Acts x, 35.
- 52 Works, II, 485.
- 53 Works, III, 353.
- 54 Works, VI, 554.
- 55 Works, VI, 740.
- 56 Tyerman, III, 636.
- 57 Works, V, 12.
- 58 Works, V, 8.
- 59 Works, V, 89.
- 60 Works, I, 348.
- 61 Works, I, 348.
- 62 Works, III, 283.
- 63 Works, I, 349.
- 64 Works, II, 20.
- 65 Notes on New Testament, Acts x, 35.
- 66 Works, IV, 203.
- 67 Works, VII, 404.
- 68 Works, VII, 396.
- 69 Works, V, 335.
- 70 Tyerman, III, 26.
- 71 Works, V, 481.
- 72 Works, II, 182.
- 73 Letter to Dr. Middleton.
- 74 Works, VII, 223.
- 75 Bible Society Record, May 23, 1889.
- 76 Stevens' Hist. M. E. Church, Vol. I, 183.
- 77 Autobiography of E. W. Montague, Vol. I, p. 62.
- 78 Lectures on the Four Georges, p. 73 of "Half-Hour Series."
- 79 History of English People.
- 80 Evangelical Revival in English Century, p. 141.
- 81 Lecky's England in Eighteenth Century, Vol. II, p. 690.
- 82 History of English People, Vol. IV, p. 149.
- 83 Mackenzie's Nineteenth Century, pp. 77, 78.
- 84 1772
- 85 Such was the original Rule. In 1790 the Methodist Church

- changed the Rule to "Drunkenness, or drinking spirituous liquors, unless in cases of necessity." In 1848 the Methodist Episcopal Church restored the words "buying or selling." (Sherman's History of the Discipline, p. 114.)
- 86 The Litany.
- 87 History of England, IV, 149.
- 88 Overton's Evan. Revival, p. 98.
- 89 England in the Eighteenth Century.
- 90 Proceed. Ecumen. Confer. P. 610.
- 91 Id, p. 612.
- 92 Proceed. Ecum. Confer. P. 625.
- 93 History of English People, IV, 149.
- 94 Lecky's England, etc., II, 653.
- 95 Overton's Evangelical Revival, p. 143.
- 96 Id, p. 144.
- 97 Tyerman's Wesley, Vol. I, 11.
- 98 Telford's Life of Wesley, p. 363.
- 99 Heretics of Yesterday, p. 295.
- 100 Sermon on Catholic Spirit.
- 101 Works, SVI, 401. (London, 1809.)
- 102 Works, V, 253.
- 103 Myler's Chronological History of Methodism, p. 24.
- 104 Confession of Faith, chapter iii, 11.
- 105 Institutes, Book III, 23.
- 106 Dr. Briggs in "Whither?" p. 243.
- 107 Christian Union, Dec. 3, 1883.
- 108 May 9, 1889.
- 109 As quoted by Dr. Briggs in "Whither?" p. 277.
- 110 Christian Union, March 9, 1889.
- 111 Followers of A. Campbell.
- 112 Whither? P. 237.
- 113 Christian Union, Dec. 26, 1889.
- 114 Christian Union, Dec. 26, 1889.
- 115 Id, Jan. 23, 1890.
- 116 Works, V, 240.
- 117 Works, II, 485.
- 118 Works, VII, 321.
- 119 Works, Vol. V, 240, 245.
- 120 Christian Union, December 26, 1890.
- 121 Methodist Discipline—Ordination of Elders.