

A STATEMENT OF FACTS, &c.

"They that would destroy ~~me~~, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty.—
Every day they wrest my words; all their thoughts are against me for evil.—
In God have I put my trust, I will not be afraid what man can do unto me."

DAVID.

REV. SIR,

It has been said by the wisest of men, that "Deceit is in the heart of them that imagine evil;" and every day's experience demonstrates the correctness of the assertion; for however advantageously the enemies of truth may be posted, yet the evolutions of Providence, sooner or later, generally exhibit the complex machinery of their schemes, and the unsoundness of their principles to the gaze of the world. But while the wheel of the Almighty's government is thus unfolding the mystery of his own designs, and developing and blasting the purposes of his enemies, the simple and upright are called to "possess their souls in patience;" looking for a better inheritance, and grasping, through a Divine principle, the glorious realities of another world. In this position, the Christian sensibly feels that the contingencies, varieties, and exigencies of human life have a tendency to exanimate all earthly enjoyments, and to create in the soul a perfectly scriptural independence of men and things; while he is directed by the enlightened views and correct principles, the exalted motives and stimulating energy of Divine truth. Upon this thesis we may

account, for the major part of the diversity of sentiment exhibited, in the daily occurrences of life ; and especially for that variety of position, which the religious community in general has assumed ; and although the fundamental principles of its faith, are presented in their native simplicity and dignity to the world in general, yet they are viewed under such widely different circumstances, that the apprehensions of the human mind are perfectly dissimilar upon the same object. Men form different opinions, and pursue various routes in order to accomplish the same end, while each imagines his fellow, to be directed by erroneous views, however he may be disposed to credit the purity and dignity of his motives ; so truly has it been said,

There are no fates that can controul
The sovereign freedom of the soul.

To apply these remarks to the unhappy proceedings, which you and the majority of the members of your Leaders' Meeting have been pleased to adopt with regard to me, it would appear, that while there is no demonstration of any other than a sincere desire to adopt measures, perfectly analagous to the laws, institutions, and usages of Wesleyan Methodism, in order to support its purity and dignity on your part ; there is no right to presume, much less to assert, that from the position I have taken, and still endeavour to maintain, that there is a broad and unqualified violation of its fundamental principles, and a departure from its usages on my part : you, or more correctly the party, by which you have suffered yourself to be guided, has seen fit to assume to itself a power, which according to my apprehensions of Wesleyan Methodistical Church Government, it cannot bestow ; and which, as far as it touches my conscience or conduct, shall never be conceded. Its fundamental principles are very clearly developed in the following sententious description, by Mr. Wesley himself ; not when he first set out from Oxford on his Apostolical Tour, or before he had had an opportunity of ascertaining what kind of a

Religious system was apposite to the moral necessities of mankind? but, on the contrary, after his plan had passed through the ordeal of criticism, from men of all ranks and of different opinions, both as it respects the doctrinal and political features of that plan, after he had spent sixty years in witnessing its application to men, in almost all circumstance in life, and after he had displayed a zeal and activity and diligence, in trying its power and suitabilities amongst his fellow men, which was never exceeded. His peculiarly discriminating mind then observed, "one circumstance more 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 Independants, it is no obstacle. Let them choose one mode of baptism or another, it is no bar to their admission; the Presbyterian may be a Presbyterian still. The Independent or Anibaptist 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 soul. Where this is, it is enough: they desire no more: they lay *stress* upon *nothing else*: they ask only, "Is thine heart herein as my heart? If it be, give me thine hand."

But to come to the facts of the case, for the procuration of *justice* in which, with the public mind, and with the Wesleyan Methodist Society in particular, it is the purpose of the following statements to obtain. I have been refused the privilege, of the reassumption of my class, after I had been urged to accept it, and that, for no other reason, than my refusal to ask the pardon of the Leaders' Meeting, for saying that some of its members were inconsistent men, expressing clearly at the same time the object to which that inconsistency was applied: viz. the Union Question.

To place the whole affair in its fullest and fairest light,

it will be necessary to state, that after the District meeting refused to interfere with the arrangement of the Committee, with respect to the removal of the Rev. John Barry, it immediately became a turning point with the official men in Montreal, upon which their consistency or inconsistency depended; for either the District Meeting did, or did not grant the Rev. John Barry liberty to repair to England for the purpose of justifying himself against the charges heaped upon him by the committee; and which it is perfectly useless to deny. If he had that liberty granted, the fault is entirely his own, that he did not avail himself of the privilege; but, if he had not that liberty granted, which I think you will not be disposed to question, it was then for the official men, to abide by their first principles, which have been so strongly set forth, in the various documents transmitted to the Wesleyan Missionary committee, and in particularly in the resolutions which were drawn up, expressly upon the anticipated removal of Messrs. Barry and Hetherington, and in which, the meeting stated it to be its conviction, that it was the intention of the Committee, to punish the above named gentlemen in such removal; and that, if it did not receive *ample satisfaction* upon this subject, from the Rev. Robert Alder, it would immediately memorialize the British Conference, and every Preacher in the British Connexion. Now, what is the result? The meeting was convened twice, for the purpose of obtaining this information; and although you well know, that many of the members were dissatisfied with the results of these interviews with the Committee's Delegate; yet there was not the least attempt made to abide by first principles. The Rev. John Barry was sent away; and even by a resolution of the District Meeting, it was stated that his removal was considered to be for the good of Methodism in the Canadas. Now, in the face of all this, I had the presumption to say, that some of the members of the Leaders' Meeting were *inconsistent men*, for which, I am required to do *penance*, or forfeit my connection with the Leaders' Meeting.

But to return to the narrative. I entertained views of the object of the Union, which were at variance with what you and some others did, believing that its ulterior object was to embrace all the Societies of the Lower Province; and I have not yet seen any substantial reason to alter my opinion. At this juncture, my worldly affairs assumed a very unpleasant position, which, in conjunction with the affairs of the Church, had considerable weight upon my mind, and I judged it right to resign my office as a Wesleyan Methodist Class Leader, distinctly stating, that I had two reasons for so doing; viz. the Union question, with its concomitant circumstances—and my business; and you well know you stated this to be a rash step, wishing me to resume my office; but feeling my mind disposed to relieve itself of this burden, I gave no positive answer. On the Monday following, in concert with the Leaders, you instructed one of the stewards to transmit me the sentiments of the Meeting,—which he did in the following note;

DEAR BRO. THOS.

In conformity with a resolution unanimously adopted, I have earnestly and affectionately to entreat you, to continue your offices as Leader and Local Preacher amongst us,—hoping you will see the reasonableness and necessity of this measure. Waiting your favourable attention,

I remain,

Very affectionately yours,

THOS. WORTHINGTON.

S. S.

Montreal, 29th May, 1834.

I received the above as an expression of respect from the Meeting, and there it rested; it never occurring to my mind, that an answer would be expected, to such a purely inofficial

document, and further, as you well know, it was my intention to continue to meet in the Class, and that the usual attention would be paid to its interest; therefore, instead of waiting to see the result of your own application, the Monday evening following, another Leader was appointed, and the next morning, the members of the Class were apprized of the circumstance, when two of them immediately waited upon me, earnestly requesting me to resume the office and continue their Leader, to which I consented, as I expressly stated, for the purpose of *keeping the Class together and preserving peace*. They immediately repaired to you, in order to express their wish, and also to state my willingness to accede to their desire. In this interview you expressed your satisfaction, and almost immediately waited upon me, to ascertain the correctness of their statement; when you will distinctly remember, that in order to *preserve peace* and save the Class from being *scattered*, I stated to you my willingness to take charge of them again. The same day, I had a visit from a member of the Leaders' Meeting, when a free and confidential conversation was entered into upon the subject, and to whom also, I distinctly stated the ground upon which I took the Class. The Monday evening following, when I am quite disposed to believe, that you imagined, there was nothing for you to do but to name the circumstance, and it would be settled; but you were, to use your own assertion, surprized at the contradictory statement, made by the individual above alluded to; a statement perfectly unfounded in truth. This, your recollection will distinctly present to your mind, brought out another interview with the same individual and yourself in order that you might fully comprehend me, and clearly understand each other, and when I fully satisfied your mind upon the subject. Supposing the matter to be entirely finished, I repaired to the next meeting. Here I will draw a veil over the treatment I received, and proceed to state, that the same evening, a special meeting, of a few individuals, prepared for the work, was convened, and a resolution was passed, after

being amended three times, according to your own acknowledgment, and in that state of perfection, recorded as an everlasting disgrace, to the knowledge, and wisdom, and candour of the men, who composed that meeting. The following evening, I received a copy of the Resolution, in the following document :

Montreal, 24th June, 1834.

DEAR BROTHER DIXON,

Having been requested by the Leaders' Meeting, to transmit you a copy of the annexed Resolutions, we now beg to wait upon you with them, for your governance; hoping they will meet with your attention, and waiting the favour of your reply,

We remain, dear brother,

Very respectfully,

Your most obedt. servants,

JOHN HILTON,
THOS. WORTHINGTON, } Stewards.

(COPY.)

Res.—That Mr. DIXON be received again, by this Meeting, as a Leader, to take charge of the class recently given up by him; *provided*, he *satisfy* the Meeting, as to the change of his views respecting the inconsistency of the Leaders, as expressed by him in various conversations, and that he can cordially unite with them as formerly.

Res.—That the stewards be requested to send a copy of the above resolution to Mr. DIXON, requesting an answer to the same in writing, by six o'clock on Wednesday evening.

T. W.

Now, Rev. Sir, to this document I immediately returned the following answer, which I here subjoin, first remarking, that the old objection being removed, another is brought into existence, and upon what authority, will be hereafter shown :

Montreal, 25th June, 1834.

REV. AND VERY DEAR SIR,

In replying to the resolution, passed last night amongst the Members of the Leaders' Meeting, and which I have just received; I address myself to you, as the regular and legal organ of the same. I stated last night, that I should not enter into any further explanation with the Meeting, upon the subject, as I had already done it to you, to a perfectly reasonable extent; and if your statement of that explanation is not deemed sufficient, I have nothing further to say, than, that I pity the captiousness which has refused it. As to the pledge required by the resolution, being made the hinge upon which my reassumption of the Class is to depend; it is perfectly inquisitorial. When I first entered the Leaders' Meeting, it was with very little less than compulsion; for knowing the disposition of my own mind, which was neither to be bought nor sold, I feared collision—and upon reflection, I fearlessly assert that I have acted an independent part, although in doing so, I have not unfrequently been brought into painful opposition with the Meeting, and even with yourself personally; yet, I am happy to believe, with perfect good feeling on both sides. But it appears that now, a new spirit in Methodism is to be introduced into the Leaders' Meeting in Montreal, and that, too, savouring very strongly of the spirit, displayed at Seville and Goa, by which, the *views* of its members are to be tested. But my mind being still influenced by the same principles, and under the influence of which, I still intend to act, I do

not feel myself called upon to offer any thing, to the meeting assuming this character, in the shape of satisfaction with respect to my views upon any measure, which may have come before me, or may yet be presented for my consideration, as I intend to hold my *views* perfectly independent of synods, or meetings, or kings, or counsellors; and shall, therefore, reserve to myself the right of expressing my sentiments, upon public men or their measures, when and where I shall deem it necessary or prudent. I, therefore, respectfully request you, either to lay this statement before the Meeting, or otherwise to inform the members thereof, that I cannot receive their resolution for my governance, as they have required.

I am, Rev. and dear Sir,

Yours, very affectionately

THOS. DIXON.

To the Rev. W.M. CROSCOMBE.

Upon the first of these documents I will now offer a few remarks, from which, will be seen the justness and reasonableness of the last. The just and ostensible reason for so much delay upon this business, was answered and reanswered, explained and reexplained, till captiousness itself could object no longer; when, apparently as sudden as the lightning's glare, a stream of light burst upon the meeting, and the mental vision of its members, received such a purifying influence, that a new discovery was made, and with so much additional penetration, it was ascertained that I had insulted the meeting, violated Methodistical laws and usages, and even dared to speak my sentiments, and that too, to two, or probably more, of the Leaders themselves, upon their public conduct.

Such proceedings, of course, are insufferable in a system, where good government is supported. It might, probably, do in Russia or Turkey, with a simple expression of censure; but here, it must be visited with a perfect exclusion from the

Meeting in St. James' Chapel, until its members are *satisfied* with the offender's change of VIEWS about their public conduct. But what would constitute this satisfaction? Whether a simple confession of error with a promise of amendment, or a public recantation posted through the walls of the City, or a thorough paced bastinado, it does not even condescend to state. This of course is a matter reserved for its future legislation. Thus, were I ever so much disposed, I must perform what I even cannot conjecture would be required.

Really, Rev. Sir, I cannot forbear attempting to illustrate such practical impossibilities, such absurd, ridiculous, and monstrous requirements! As a celebrated Polemical writer has very ironically, yet very happily illustrated a favourite doctrine of his opponent, by representing a Monarch, as requiring one of his subjects, a cripple, without legs, to run a race, and then hang him, because he could not perform it. Now, to this most unreasonable request, I returned the answer already inserted; an answer couched in terms, which at the time I wrote it, I considered apposite to the subject and fit for the occasion; and which I do not yet see any reason to alter. You will recollect the comments passed upon the letter in question in the meeting, were such, as to make the most of it; and the illiberal criticisms, and supercilious contempt, poured upon its sentiments and language, were such as it will by no means bear; and which at all times is reflected, in the eye of good sense, with considerably greater force upon its authors, than upon the object to which it is intended to apply. And the members of that meeting, in conjunction with yourself, would have appeared to incomparably greater advantage, in bringing your critical acumen, grammatical attainments, and legal skill to bear upon its contents, if you had stood upon the ground of reason; and not that of ridicule and rhapsody. Its language is such as conveys a strict and definite meaning. A good share of weight has been attached to the word *inquisitorial*; but such strictures do not speak very loudly in defence of the etymological wisdom of their authors; for there cer-

tainly is a great dissimilarity betwixt a principle, and the consequences to which it may be pushed through perversion. Hence, it does not follow, as a logical conclusion, that whenever our ears are saluted with the word Inquisition, that we are instantaneously to fasten our minds with leonine eagerness upon the inhuman butcheries which were practised in Spain ; but simply to the establishment of an *arbitrary court or power* : and in the connection in which the phrase is placed in my answer, it is etymologically correct and properly applied to proceedings, conducted by an arbitrary assumption of power, on the part of a body of men, controlling the right of private opinion, and the natural freedom of the human mind. But criticism apart, I am quite disposed to question the Methodistical legislative power which has so deliberately propounded a new *Test Act*, not for the detection of heresy, or the correction of men's opinions in religion ; but for the detection of *private views*.

It has, therefore, Rev. Sir, now become your duty, in conjunction with the forensic skill of the Leaders' Meeting, to produce the *principle* or *law*, fundamental, or incidental, upon which the pledge, in the resolution referred to, is based ; for you are confessedly the administrators, and not the *makers* of law. But such a demonstration you well know, can never be produced for the justification of that measure ; and, were it possible to exhibit such a law, it would be an anomaly in the system, which does not require uniformity in matters of *faith*, much less, in such significant, and yet with some persons, dignified and important *punctilios*, as admission into the Leaders' Meeting is made to depend ! But the spirit and phraseology of the resolution is at perfect variance with the laws and usages of any public body, with which I am acquainted, either in Church or State not excepting, the Papal court of Inquisition, which I dare venture to affirm, never attempted to stretch its imaginary uncontrollable power to such an extent, as the meeting in St. James' Chapel has done ; for that was applied to matters of faith ; this to the consistency of men. And still fur-

ther, I am disposed to believe, ~~that the~~ history of the world, does not afford its parallel ; ~~not~~ all the musty statutes of the Pharoahs and Alexanders—Caesars and Neroes—Popes and Conquerors—under which the world has groaned. That the resolution in question, was passed either to support the dignity of the Leaders' Meeting, or out of personal feeling to myself is evident ; but, that the latter was not the ostensible cause of its promulgation, I am perfectly disposed to credit, while the former, will, therefore, have to bear the weight of responsibility, which immediately and remotely stands connected with it. A more unhappy expedient was never resorted to, as the principle it involves, will fully illustrate. It is benignity and justice, that supports the dignity of a tribunal, or the stability of a throne ; and not the dogmatical inculcation, of a mere insignificant something or nothing, which ever you may choose to name it.

Political machinery can only operate, beneficially and permanently, when it is based upon the immoveable rock of equal moral rights. Witness the instability of despotism in every kingdom and institution in the world. It stands only, while the sword and the cannon, present an inaccessible front ; while the governments and institutions, based upon respect for the moral liberty of the human mind, are surrounded with a halo of Glory, which commands the respect and admiration of those under their control. Supported by reason and justice, they rest immoveably secure, though storms and earthquakes rock the earth. Such, I aver, is Wesleyan Methodism, when conducted and governed agreeably to its fundamental principles, and under all the vast variety of circumstances in which it has to be administered, and by which its intrinsic worth, and admirable fitness, to the moral necessities of mankind are to be exhibited ; these *great principles* must be brought to bear upon all occurrences for which, there is no express provision in its recorded laws. Destroy the moral liberty of Wesleyan Methodism and you annihilate its substance, while you attempt the preservation of its shadow ? As well might you attempt,

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to alter the course of nature, without altering her laws, as attempt to destroy the right of private opinion on the government, usages, and institutions of Methodism, without destroying the fundamental principles on which it is founded! Truly, Rev. Sir, the resolution in question, is such a display of legislative discrimination, as the world has never witnessed since the Press, that great conduit of knowledge, has brought its machinery into active operation. It is on the narrow basis of monopoly and exclusion, you would erect a standard to test the growing knowledge of the Body? If, in the contingences of Methodism, legislation is necessary, you must know, that it is only on the broad basis of *Immutable Justice*, you can raise a lasting and beauteous Temple to the service and embellishment of the connexion. It has been wisely said, that "reason is the silken thread by which, the Law Giver leads his people," and it is by this powerful means, that a unity of interest is exhibited and maintained, from the first minister of an Empire, to the remotest source of its support. Upon this principle, Wesleyan Methodism was first established, and upon this only, can its ample base be rendered permanently eligible for to lodge in security, and its roof to shelter, with interminable tranquility, its united family from the rankling inclemency of rejection and exclusion. But the recent effort to the contrary, on the part of the Leaders' Meeting, is an assumption of power to which, the conscientious supporters of Wesleyan Methodism, can never submit, without destroying thier immunities, and finally overthrowing the system itself. But to return to the narration of facts in this case. Two nights were successively occupied in discussing the alleged impropriety of my answer, and on the morning following the last evening's discussion, you will remember calling to inform me, that my answer was not satisfactory. The particulars of that conversation, it is perfectly needless to state, further, than that you remarked very freely to me, the impropriety of stating in my Class, my opinion about the Leaders; and, when I decidedly negatived this charge, you appeared perfectly as-

tounded, and observed that this had been confidently asserted in the meeting. You will also remember the remonstrance into which I entered with you, about the impropriety and irregularity of calling special Meetings, without specially notifying the members, of which they ought to have been composed; and also the injustice displayed, in not allowing me to answer my accusers, face to face, to which I could obtain no satisfaction, but that you had no *charge* against me. Expressing a wish, to meet the Class yourself next morning, in order to ascertain the correctness of my statement, not as you observed because you disbelieved me; but that you might satisfy the Meeting upon the subject.

To facilitate your enquiries into this most intricate affair, I remained at home, and left you with the class perfectly uninfluenced by my presence. On the Monday morning immediately succeeding, you waited upon me, and brought with you the following note, to which you wished me to give you a written answer, preparatory to the meeting that evening, and which I here subjoin; first remarking, that I then told you, if justice was not done me, I would use such means as were left at my own disposal; in order to justify myself in the face of the world. The Note is as follows:

Montreal, 30th June, 1834.

DEAR BROTHER,

Apprehending that some mistake may have existed, in the minds of some of the brethren composing the Leaders' Meeting of last Monday evening, relative to the report I made to them, of your willingness to unite with them as formerly. May I take the liberty of requesting you, to say, for my own satisfaction, whether I was correct in stating, that you were willing to take charge of the Class you formerly led, as a Methodist Class Leader, and to unite with the Leaders' Meeting, in cordial cooperation, as far as your judgment would allow? Your indulging me in this request, will greatly oblige,

Yours, most truly,

WM. CROSCOMBE.

Mr. Thos. Dixon.

According to your request, I returned you an answer, as follows :

Montreal, 30th June, 1834.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

In reply to your note of this morning, wishing to know, for your own satisfaction, whether the statement which you made to the Leaders' Meeting: viz. "That I was willing to take charge of the Class I formerly led, as a Methodist Class Leader, is correct,"—I have to say, that it is perfectly so; and if any statements, have been made in that meeting to the contrary, they are at perfect variance with the facts of the case.

I am, Rev. and Dear Sir,

Yours Affectionately,

THOS. DIXON.

To the REV. WM. CROSCOMBE.

In opening the meeting that evening, you will distinctly remember expressing your conviction of the injustice with which I had been treated, in proceeding to such lengths in my case; while false statements, and contradictory reports, had constituted the ground, on which the meeting had based its proceedings. In this stage of the business, an attempt was made to ascertain, if I could not be admitted on just and honourable principles, without any further discussion upon the subject; to which you replied, you could see no reasonable objection. Here the champions for the dignity of the meeting, rose to vindicate its insulted honour, and object to such a rash proposition! However, the meeting finally concluded this discussion, by unanimously adopting a resolution, the purport of which, was to bring me face to face with my accusers. You, Rev. Sir, being requested to apprize both parties of the resolution, and request them to appear before the meeting on Wednesday evening, taking the just and necessary precaution, to notify every member of the meeting to attend. Here I cannot forbear remarking, that this was the first offer of common justice, the meeting had agreed to give me from the com-

mencement ; and that too, to ascertain from a personal statement, what I had distinctly averred, upon four different occasions, and on a fifth to yourself, and the individual previously alluded to, in order to settle the business. After which, I wrote you the above letter. And now, to conclude the scene, it is resolved that I shall appear, to answer the captiousness of the meeting. But alas, what *frivolous pretexts* are resorted to in order to cover the intentions of designing men ! Being now brought to the last turning point, it was suspected, that my presence before the abettors of these proceedings, might turn out unfavourably to their cause, overthrow the fabric already built in their own minds ; and, therefore, with a fair show of honesty, in passing the last named resolution, they appear to have resolved to contract secretly, what they had openly done. Next comes the meeting on Wednesday evening, when to the surprise of many of its members, in opening the Meeting you observed, that you had received new light upon the subject since Monday, and that, if I had not named my sentiments to the Class collectively, yet I had done it individually ; and there being now not the least doubt upon your mind, with respect to my guilt ; you had, therefore, come to the determination, of suspending the resolution at the previous Meeting ; and when an effort was made to open out the subject again, you peremptorily observed, “ I will have no more discussion upon the subject.” Here the affair terminated with the Meeting and you assumed the authority of finishing the business yourself.

I would now observe, Rev. Sir, that you surely cannot candidly state this to be entirely and independently your own act ; or rather, had you not the secret approval of the propounders of these proceedings ? If you had not, I am inclined to believe that some of the members of the meeting, would have been throwing some insurmountable obstacle in the way to your of this power, and convincing you, that to suspend at your pleasure, a formal, and unanimous resolution of a Leaders’ meeting, was an assumption of power, to which, as a Methodist Preacher, you were not entitled. Again, may I not ask

you from what source did you derive this new light? for it is evident, that you must have obtained it, either on the Monday night, or very early the next morning; for I certainly ought, to have been apprised of the purport of the resolution, at the first opportunity; but as this was not done, it is then a fair presumption to suppose that this *new light* was imparted to you, from the old fruitful source, even before your select vestry had left the Chapel, on the Monday evening, and just after you had publicly pronounced such proceedings as unjust, and my alleged accusation as unworthy of notice. Surely "truth and righteousness have fallen in our streets: none calleth for justice, neither any pleadeth for truth!" The object of the meeting is unmasked, and the first resolution is now insisted upon; for, as you observed, "I ought to make an *apology* to the meeting;" or in other terms, to ask their pardon. But, as the principle upon which the resolution is based, and the terms in which it is couched, have already been noted, it is needless to remark further, than that, as it is *unwarranted* by *Methodistical law or usage*, and so perfectly at variance with the great and *fundamental principles* of the system, its own aspect exhibits its arbitrary folly. It is not only uncalled for by the doctrine or discipline of Methodism; but it is a perfect anomaly in the gloriously rising institutions, which, in this day of knowledge and liberty, are bestudding and beautifying the civilized world. Here I candidly acknowledge my refusal to comply with the necessary apology to the meeting, for committing, what I still consider to be, no crime; and what I shall continue to claim as my privilege, and enjoy and exercise it when and where I may deem it expedient. A privilege, which has recently been acknowledged by the Missionary committee, to be the right of its Preachers, whose private opinions they disclaim any intention or legitimate power to control, and by a parity of reason its members also. Are you, and the directors of the Leaders' meeting to enjoy the privilege of saying what you think fit or proper about the

members of other public institutions of the body, and I to have my sentiments and privileges controlled and directed by the very men who claim such freedom for themselves? "Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things."

But to proceed with my narrative. I was informed of the decision of the last meeting, the same night, and the next morning I wrote you the following note:

Montreal, July 5, 1834.

REV. SIR,

Understanding that you have decided upon my case last night, in a very summary manner, I have respectfully to request you will return me my Class-book, as it is now my only remaining guarantee against claims of another description, which might possibly be made upon me under these circumstances; you will, therefore, have the kindness to take a list of the names it contains, and return it by the bearer, according to your promise. I have also respectfully to request that you will immediately call a District meeting, for the purpose of ascertaining, whether I have been dealt with in justice or not? I hope you will favour me with an answer to this request, during the course of the day, which if not done, I shall be left at liberty to take such steps as I may deem expedient, for obtaining what you, conjointly with the Leaders' meeting, refuse to grant me. Waiting your reply,

I am, Rev. Sir,

Your obedient servant,

THOS. DIXON.

To the REV. WM. CROSCOMBE.

On the following day I received your answer. An extract of which I here subjoin:

Montreal, 4th July, 1834.

DEAR SIR,

"Relative to our having disposed of the business, res-

pecting yourself, in a very summary manner, I need only remark, that had you waited a few hours longer before you formed your opinion, you would have been put in possession of correct information, as to what we did, and why we did it. In fact, nothing was done save the withdrawal of a proposition submitted at the previous meeting. I need not inform you that any member of a deliberative body has a right to do this when he deems it expedient. I can scarcely think you are serious, when you request me to call a District meeting for the purpose of ascertaining, whether you have been dealt with in justice or not? Suppose the District were now in session, what right would they have to meddle with the internal affairs of the Montreal circuit? It would be a singular circumstance to record in the history of Methodism, that a special District was summoned, to ascertain whether the Leaders' meeting, of the Montreal circuit, did justice in accepting the resignation of one of its members, who had previously thrown up his Class-book! Should the circumstance, by any possibility, ever be named in a Canada District meeting, I apprehend that the Preacher in charge, in conjunction with the Leaders' meeting, will be thought to have exercised too much lenity towards you, rather than too little. Allow me to indulge the hope, that you will speedily discover the folly of allowing yourself to be drawn aside from the path of duty and usefulness, by the impetuosity of your natural disposition, or the advice of misguided friends."

Yours truly,

WM. CROSCOMBE.

Mr. Thos. Dixon.

To this Letter I wrote you the following answer :

Montreal, 5th July, 1834.

REV. AND DEAR SIR.

I duly received your favour last night, and I now tender you my thanks for the return of my Book, and also for the advice you have so kindly given, to which I shall attend,

as far as I conceive myself to have erred. As to any steps I have taken, they are purely the results of my own convictions and opinions, and not attributable to the advice of any misguided friends whatever.

I am, Rev. and Dear Sir,

Yours truly,

THOS. DIXON.

To the REV. WM. CROSCOMBE.

Here the whole correspondence has ended.—And it certainly would have been well, had it ended sooner. It now remains for me to remark, that in order to cover up the whole with the seal of consistency, you have retired into a perfect subterfuge. You observe “that nothing was done, save the withdrawal of a proposition submitted at a previous Meeting : any member of a deliberative body has a right to do this when he deems it expedient.” I very much question the correctness of this doctrine ; for when a proposition is submitted to a Meeting and unanimously adopted, it certainly becomes the property of that meeting, and therefore, no longer under individual control ; but admitting this right, it then remains the exclusive privilege of the member who submitted the proposition to withdraw it himself, and not the place of the Chairman without ever asking his permission. But this is not the real state of the case, your statement is purely fallacious ; and however necessary sophistry may be to support a bad cause, it is far from being needful to elucidate the truth. The fact is, that it was not a mere proposition, but a formal resolution moved, seconded, and put to the meeting by yourself, when its unanimous approval was obtained ; and on the Wednesday evening after the meeting was opened, the majority of its members were perfectly astounded at the line of conduct you had adopted. Really, Rev. Sir, such conduct cannot be contemplated without dread for the interests of society—a chairman of a meeting, to suspend one of its resolutions at his sovereign pleasure, is beyond all precedent since the world existed ! And

for the meeting to preserve its *consistency*, it must now require an apology from you, for attempting to destroy its existence. Your strictures upon my request for the convention of a special District meeting, are a positive reflection upon the chronological, and forensic information you possess of your own system; and without needlessly wasting time, in directing your attention to circumstances which have become matter for provincial history in your native land; as, Beverly, Otley, Leeds, and others, I would ask you to revert to the history of the connection in the years 1795 and 1797, and then take a survey of its progression through the last generation; after which, I am persuaded, the circumstance would not assume the character of singularity at the least. The rest of the paragraph about my resignation is a sophistical subterfuge, as the previous detail of facts will show, and so glaringly defeats its own end, that it would be useless to lay it open further, leaving you to explain your own *solecism*, in “accepting the resignation of one of its members who had previously thrown up his Class Book.” With respect to the correctness of your apprehensions upon the decision of my case, by a Canada District Meeting, I am not disposed even to question, for knowing very little of its transactions, save the proceedings and decisions at its last session; I shall, therefore, draw no conclusion respecting it, were it certain that a Canada District meeting would have to consider the whole affair. One of the charges stated in the latter part of your letter, I have already answered in my reply of the 5th Inst., and the other I shall leave the public, and especially the members of the society to answer, as I can scarcely be expected to be an impartial judge of the “impetuosity of my own natural disposition;” but as the proceedings of the business are here sufficiently detailed, to present the *true state of the case* to the public, let the meed of praise be awarded to them whose conduct justly claims it. And now let the Leaders and yourself review the whole affair, your own *vacillancy* and their *wilful tyranny*, and in the face of *reason* and *justice* and *Methodism*

answer to God, and that section of the church to which you belong, for your rightfulness and consistency. I have been publicly anathematized, and privately calumniated; held up to public contempt, as a distractor of society, and subverter of concord: an enemy to God and foe to the church: in short, as a monster in human shape: an exanimated branch doomed to everlasting fire! Alas! what infatuation must have possessed my mind to commit such an unpardonable sin against the Leaders in the St. James' Chapel; and what is worse, I have continued to persist in my apostacy, while my day of grace was protracted. Surely the iron sinew in my neck, has become as adamant. I am the dupe of the God of this world, and hastening to my own destruction, with awfully rapid strides! But after all, there is some little consolation for those heretics, whose consciences are so stedfast, as to refuse to acknowledge themselves guilty of crimes which they have never committed,—that it is written “happy are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you for righteousness’ sake: for great is your reward in heaven. Be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled: but serve the Lord God in your hearts; and be ready always to give an answer, to every man that asketh you, a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear. Having a good conscience; in that, whereas they speak evil of you as of evil doers,—they may be ashamed, that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.”

To conclude, I fearlessly aver I have committed no crime—I have injured no man’s private character in this case; but have felt myself imperatively called upon, to resist the innovations of tyranny, which supposes that misery and death are the best marks of its absolute power and the *fairest ornaments* of its throne. I have been treated with the greatest injustice, inasmuch, as I have never been allowed to defend myself against the accusation of a crime of such magnitude,—a privilege enjoyed by every *murderer* under the British government. Here, Rev. Sir, I would ask you is this Methodism? Is

Yours truly, Wm. L. Garrison.

this the golden rule of the gospel? Or will it bear comparison, with the lowest standard of *Heathen* honesty and justice? Is this that magnanimity of soul, and unshrinking conduct, which so strongly marked the life of Christ and his Apostles, in steadily adhering, with singleness of eye to stern integrity and truth; and in declaring that our law *condemned* no man until he was *heard*? The rights of God, of *conscience*, and of my fellow men, demand the resistance of such arbitrary proceedings. I ask not for mercy, or indulgence of which you talk so largely, but for *justice*. If I have transgressed, let the public express their disapprobation of my conduct. But in contending for justice, and struggling with the oppressions of life, I am resolved never to give up the contest, or tamely abandon myself, and renounce my mental enjoyments. Liberty of conscience is what God has given me, and through his assistance I will maintain it to the hour when he shall call me to account for the use of what he has for a season, so kindly bestowed: "Holding fast, the form of sound words, which I have heard, and in the faith, and love which is in Christ Jesus."

I am, Rev. Sir,

With the sincerest respect,

Your Obedient Servant,

THOMAS DIXON.

Montreal, 8th July, 1834.

The following Errata have unavoidably occurred in the preceding pages, from the hurry in preparing them for the Press:—Page 7, line 18 from bottom, for *Anibaptist* read Anabaptist.—p. 8, l. 5 from top, for *inconsisting* read inconsistency. Same p. l. 16 from top, and *in particularly* read and particularly.—p. 15, l. 10 from bottom, for *significant* read insignificant.—p. 17, l. 10 from bottom, for *thier* read their.—p. 20, l. 41 from top, for *contract* read counteract, and l. 4 from bottom, for *your* read your exercise of.