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# THE CREEDS OF CHRISTENDOM,

WITH

## A HISTORY AND CRITICAL NOTES.

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VOLUME I

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## § 109. METHODISM.

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## § 109. METHODISM.

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## CHARACTER OF METHODISM.

Methodism is the most successful of all the younger offshoots of the Reformation. In one short century it has become one of the largest denominations in England, and the largest in the United States, with missionary stations encircling the globe.

The founders were admirably qualified for their work, and as well fitted together as the Reformers. John Wesley was one of the greatest preachers and organizers, and in the abundance of his labors perhaps the most apostolic man that England ever produced. As a revivalist of practical religion he may be called the English Spener, as an organizer the Protestant Ignatius Loyola. His brother Charles occupies, next to Watts, the first place in English hymnology, and sang Methodism into the hearts of the people. Whitefield, the orator and evangelist, kindled a sacred fire in two hemispheres which burns to this day. Their common, single, and sole purpose was to convert sinners from the service of Satan to the service of God, by means of incessant preaching, praying, and working. For this end they were willing to spend and be spent, to be ridiculed, reviled, pelted and hooted by mobs, maltreated by superiors, and driven from the church into the street; for this they would in another age have suffered torture, mutilation, and death itself as cheerfully as the Puritans did before them. The practical activity of these great and good men was equaled only by that of the Reformers in the theoretic sphere. During the fifty years of his itinerant ministry, John Wesley traveled 'a quarter of a million of miles, and preached more than forty thousand sermons.'<sup>1</sup> Charles Wesley composed over six thousand religious poems,<sup>2</sup> in the study, in the pulpit, on horseback, in bed, and in his diary.

<sup>1</sup> Tyerman, *John Wesley*, Vol. III. p. 658 (Harper's ed.). Dr. Rigg (*The Living Wesley*, Hurst's ed. p. 208) remarks that Wesley rode ordinarily sixty miles a day, and not seldom eighty and ninety miles, besides preaching twice or thrice.

<sup>2</sup> Osborn's edition contains 7600 poems of Wesley, including those of John, who composed all the translations from the German.

ing hour! Whitefield, besides traveling through England, Ireland, and Scotland, made seven evangelistic voyages to America, turning the ship into a church, and 'preached in four-and-thirty years upwards of eighteen thousand sermons, many of them to enormous crowds, and in the teeth of brutal persecution.'<sup>2</sup> A day before his death he preached his last sermon of nearly two hours' length in the open air, 'weary *in* the work, but not *of* the work' of his Lord. Fletcher labored in a more restricted sphere, as Vicar of Madely, but just as faithfully and devotedly, visiting his people and the poor ignorant colliers early and late, in rain and snow, studying intensely, living all the while on bread and cheese or fruit, and exhibiting an angelic type of character, so that Wesley, from a personal acquaintance of more than thirty years, gave him the testimony that 'he never heard him speak an improper word or saw him do an improper action,' and that he never knew a man 'so inwardly and outwardly devoted to God, so unblamable in every respect.'<sup>3</sup> The pioneers of American Methodism were animated by the same zeal. Bishop Asbury, 'in the forty-five years of his American ministry, preached about 16,500 sermons, or at least one a day, and traveled about 270,000 miles, or 6000 a year, and presided in no less than 224 annual conferences, and ordained more than 4000 preachers.'<sup>4</sup> He was ordained bishop (1784) when the number of American Methodists fell below 15,000, and he died (1816) when it exceeded 211,000, with more than 700 itinerant preachers.

Methodism owes its success to this untiring zeal in preaching the gospel of the new birth and a 'full and free salvation' to the common people, in churches, chapels, and the open air, and to its peculiar methods and institutions—*itinerancy*, missionary bishops, presiding elders,

<sup>1</sup> When hardly able to articulate any more, he dictated to his wife these lines:

In age and feebleness extreme,  
Who shall a helpless worm redeem?  
Jesus, my only hope thou art,  
Strength of my failing flesh and heart;  
Oh could I catch a smile from thee,  
And drop into eternity!

<sup>2</sup> Tyerman, Vol. III. p. 78.

<sup>3</sup> See Wesley's Funeral Sermon on the death of John W. Fletcher, who was a French Swiss by birth (de la Flechère), born at Nyon, Canton de Vaud, 1729, educated at Geneva, died at Madely, 1785. His chief works is *Checks to Antinomianism*, against Calvinism.

<sup>4</sup> Stevens, *Centenary of American Methodism* (N. Y. 1865), p. 94.

lay helpers, class-meetings, camp-meetings, conferences, and systematic collections. Methodism, as Dr. Chalmers characterized it, is 'Christianity in earnest.' It works powerfully upon the feelings; it inspires preachers and members with enthusiasm; it gives every man and woman too a distinct vocation and responsibility; it 'keeps all at work and always at it,' according to Wesley's motto; it knows nothing of churches without ministers, or ministers without charges, as long as there are sinners to be converted in any corner of the globe. Methodism is better organized than any other Protestant denomination, and resembles in this respect the Church of Rome and its great monastic orders. It is a powerful rival of that Church. It has an efficient machinery with an abundance of steam, and is admirably adapted for pioneer work in a new country like America. It is a well-disciplined army of conquest, though not so good an army of occupation, since it allows so many 'to fall away from grace,' not only temporarily, but even 'totally and finally.' Till 1872 the laity was excluded from participation in Church government (and is so still in England), but was compensated by a large liberty in the sphere of worship, in class-meetings, band-meetings, love-feasts, which tend to develop the social and emotional element in religion.

#### METHODISM AND PURITANISM.

Methodism forms the third great wave of the Evangelical Protestant movement in England, and represents the idea of revival. The Reformation destroyed the power of the papacy. Puritanism aimed at a more thorough Reformation in Church and State, and controlled for a time the civil and religious life of the nation. Methodism kept aloof from politics, and confined itself to the sphere of practical religion. Puritanism was animated by the genius of Calvinism; Methodism, in its main current, by the genius of Arminianism. Both made a deep and lasting impression upon the national Church from which they proceeded, and moulded the character of American Christianity. The Methodist revival checked the progress of skepticism and infidelity which had begun to set in with deism. It brought the life and light of the gospel to the most neglected classes of society.

If evangelical Christianity to-day has a stronger hold on the Anglo-Saxon race in both hemispheres than on any other nation, it is chiefly due to the influence of Puritanism and Methodism.

## RELATION TO THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

Methodism is a daughter of the Church of England, and was nursed in the same University of Oxford which, a century later, gave rise to the Tractarian school in the opposite direction towards Rome. The 'Holy Club' of the fourteen Oxford students associated for prayer, holy living, and working, began, like Dr. Pusey and his friends, with a revival of earnest, ascetic, and ritualistic High-Churchism, and received the name 'Methodists' for its punctual and methodical habits of devotion. Wesley was at first so exclusive an Episcopalian that he shrank from street-preaching and lay-preaching, and, at least on one occasion, even rebaptized Dissenters. But his contact with the simple-hearted, trustful, and happy German Moravians (Peter Böhler, Nischmann, and Spangenberg) whom he met on his voyage across the Atlantic, in the Colony of Georgia, and after his return, led to his second 'conversion,' which took place May 24, 1738, and imparted to his piety a cheerfully evangelical and, we may say, a liberal Broad-Church character.<sup>1</sup>

He now entered upon his independent evangelistic career, yet with no idea of forming a separate denomination. His object was simply to revive experimental piety within the limits of the Anglican Church, as Spener and Francke had done before within the Lutheran Confession in Germany. Although badly treated by bishops and other clergy, he had no quarrel with the authorities in Church or State, but only with sin and Satan. His aim was to build the city of God and to save souls within the establishment, if possible; without it, if necessary. He

<sup>1</sup> 'At the first,' says Dr. Rigg ('Contemporary Review' for 1876, pp. 656 sq.), 'with Wesley faith had meant the intellectual acceptance of the creeds, together with the submission of the will to the laws and services of the Church. . . . Until he met with Böhler, he had not embraced, scarcely, it would seem, had conceived the idea of faith as being, in its main element, personal trust and self-surrender, as having for its central object the atonement of Jesus Christ, and as inspired and sustained by the supernatural aid and concurrence of the Holy Spirit. . . . Wesley confessed that Böhler's teaching was true gospel teaching. . . . Here ended his High-Church stage of life. Here began his work as an evangelist and Church revivifier. All dates from his final acceptance of Böhler's teaching as to the nature of faith.' Dr. Stevens says (*Centenary*, p. 31): 'Methodism is indebted to Moravianism for not only some of the most important features of its moral discipline, but for the personal conversion of both the Wesleys.' But Wesley was converted before as much so as Luther was when he entered the convent of Erfurt several years before he experienced his second or evangelical conversion to the doctrine of justification by faith alone. On the other hand, some of the Oxford Tractarians were converted over again, or backward, when they joined the Church of Rome.

performed indeed some uncanonical acts which led ultimately to secession, but he did it from necessity, not from choice. He never made common cause with Dissenters. He lived and died in the Church of his fathers. His brother Charles was even more conservative, and took great offense at his violation of the canons.

Had the Church of England been as wise and politic as the Church of Rome, she would have encouraged and utilized the great revival of the eighteenth century for the spread of vital Christianity at home and abroad, and might have made the Wesleyan society an advocate of her own interests as powerful as the order of the Jesuits is of the Papacy. Now, after a century of marvellous success, the founder of Methodism is better appreciated, and has been assigned (1876) a place of honor among England's mighty dead in Westminster Abbey.

The English Wesleyans continue to hold a middle position between the Established Church and the Dissenters proper, but tend latterly more to Free-Churchism.

## AMERICAN METHODISM.

In the United States the Methodists were made an independent organization with an episcopal form of government by Wesley's own act. As a Tory and a believer in political non-resistance, he at first wrote against the American 'rebellion,' but accepted the providential result; and, considering himself as a 'Scriptural Episcopos,' he ordained, on the second day of September, 1784, two presbyters (Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey) and one superintendent or bishop, viz., the Rev. Thomas Coke, LL.D. (a presbyter of the Church of England), for his American mission, which then embraced 83 traveling preachers and 14,988 members.<sup>1</sup> This was a bold and an irregular act, but a master-stroke of policy, justified by necessity and abundant success.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The first Methodist society in America was formed in 1766, in the city of New York, among a few Irish emigrants, by Philip Embury, a local preacher, and by his cousin, Mrs. Barbara Heck, a true 'mother in Israel.' Hence Methodism celebrated its centenary in 1866 with great festivities.

<sup>2</sup> He also ordained a few presbyters for Scotland and England to assist him in administering the sacraments, on the plea that the regular clergy often refused to admit his people to the Lord's table. At the Conference of 1788 he consecrated (according to Samuel Bradburn's statement) one of his preachers as a superintendent or bishop. He had long before been convinced by Stillingfleet's 'Treatise' and Lord King's 'Primitive Church' that bishops and presbyters were originally one order, and that diocesan episcopacy was not founded on divine

Bishop Coke, assisted by the Rev. P. W. Otterbein, of the German Reformed Church, ordained, according to Wesley's direction, Francis Asbury to the office of joint superintendent, and twelve others to the office of presbyters, at the first General Conference held in Baltimore (Dec. 27, 1784). These were the first Protestant bishops in America, with the exception of Dr. Samuel Seabury, who was consecrated a few weeks before (Nov. 14, 1784), at Aberdeen, as bishop of the Protestant Episcopal diocese in Connecticut. In a short time the society, thus fully organized, overtook older denominations, and kept pace with the rapid progress of the young republic.

The separation from the mother Church of England was complete, but her blood still flows in the veins of Methodism and shows itself in a half-way assent to her doctrinal standards (as far as they admit of an Arminian interpretation), to her liturgy (as far as it does not encourage sacerdotalism and ritualism or interfere with the freedom of worship), and to her episcopacy (as based upon expediency, and not on the divine right of succession).

BRANCHES OF METHODISM.

The Methodist Christians in England and America are divided into a number of distinct ecclesiastical organizations—the 'Wesleyans,' the 'Methodist Episcopal Church,' the 'Primitive Methodists,' the 'Primitive Wesleyans of Ireland,' the 'Bandroom Methodists,' the 'Methodist Protestant Church,' the 'Welsh Calvinistic Methodists,' the 'Free Methodist Church,' the 'African (Bethel and Zion) Methodist Episcopal Church,' etc. To the Methodist family belong also the 'Evangelical Association' (or 'Albright's Brethren,' so called from Jacob Albright, a Pennsylvania German, who founded this society in 1800), and the 'United Brethren in Christ' (founded by Philip William Otterbein, a German Reformed minister, d. in Baltimore, 1813).

The great parent body, however, are the **WESLEYANS** in England

right. In a letter to his brother Charles (1785) he calls the uninterrupted episcopal succession 'a fable which no man ever did or can prove.'—Rigg, l. c. p. 669. For a full discussion of Wesley's ordination acts, see Stevens, *History of Methodism*, Vol. II. pp. 209 sqq., and Tysman, *Johā Wesley*, Vol. III. pp. 426 sqq.

Bishop White, of Pennsylvania, was not consecrated by the Archbishop of Canterbury until Feb. 4, 1787, the consecration being delayed and nearly frustrated by certain impediments.

and the **METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH** in the United States. They far outnumber all the other branches put together. The Methodist Episcopal Church was divided in 1844 on the question of slavery into 'the Methodist Episcopal Church' (North), and 'the Methodist Episcopal Church, South,' but measures have been inaugurated (1876) for reuniting them. Similar schisms for the same cause rent other Churches before the civil war, but have been healed or will be healed, since the war has removed the difficulty. The Roman Catholic, and next to it the Protestant Episcopal Church, owing to their conservatism, were least affected by the disturbing question of slavery, and remained intact.

The differences between the various branches of Methodism refer to the episcopate, the relative powers of the bishops and the general conference, lay representation, and other matters of government and discipline which do not come within the scope of this work. The doctrinal creed is the same in all, with the exception of the Whitefieldian Methodists, who are Calvinists, while all the rest are Arminians.

NOTE.—The *Cyclopædia* of McClintock and Strong, Vol. VI. p. 159, gives the following list of Methodist denominations, with the date of their organization and estimate of their ministers and church members in 1872:

GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

| Denomination.                       | Date of Organization. | Number of Ministers. | Number of Church Members. |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Wesleyan Methodists.....            | 1789                  | 3,157                | 557,995                   |
| Welsh Calvinistic Methodists.....   | (1745)                | 207                  | 58,577                    |
| New Connection Methodists.....      | 1797                  | 260                  | 35,706                    |
| Primitive Methodists.....           | 1810                  | 943                  | 1,61,229                  |
| Primitive (Ireland) Methodists..... | 1816                  | 85                   | 14,347                    |
| Bible Christians.....               | 1815                  | 254                  | 26,241                    |
| United Methodist Free Churches..... | 1828-49               | 312                  | 68,062                    |
| Wesleyan Reform Union.....          | 1849                  | 90                   | 9,293                     |
| Totals.....                         |                       | 5,238                | 531,450                   |

AMERICA.

| Denomination.                                       | Date of Organization. | Number of Ministers. | Number of Church Members. |
|---|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Methodist Episcopal Church (in 1872).....           | 1784                  | 10,742               | 1,458,441                 |
| Methodist Church (Non-Episcopal).....               | 1866                  | 624                  | 75,000                    |
| United Brethren.....                                | 1800                  | 632                  | 78,716                    |
| Evangelical Association (Albright's).....           | 1810                  | 600                  | 20,000                    |
| African Methodist Episcopal.....                    | 1816                  | 600                  | 154,000                   |
| Methodist Episcopal (Zion).....                     | 1819                  | 694                  | 164,000                   |
| Canada Wesleyans.....                               | 1828                  | ....                 | 69,257                    |
| Evangelical Association (Zion).....                 | 1828                  | 147                  | 15,118                    |
| Methodist British American Wesleyan Methodists..... | 1824*                 | 225                  | 21,108                    |
| Methodist Protestant Church of Canada.....          | 1880                  | 423                  | 60,000                    |
| Methodist Episcopal Church of North America.....    | 1880                  | 423                  | 20,000                    |
| Methodist Episcopal Church, South (in 1871)*.....   | 1843                  | 2,855                | 600,900                   |
| Methodist Episcopal Church, South (in 1871)*.....   | 1844                  | 2,885                | 600,900                   |
| Free Methodist.....                                 | 1844                  | about 20             | 2,000                     |
| Primitive Methodists.....                           | 1860                  | about 20             | 2,000                     |
| Totals.....   |                       | 17,308               | 2,351,575                 |

\* This does not include the colored membership now separately organized as the *Colored Methodist Episcopal Church, South*.

## § 110. METHODIST CREEDS.

The American Methodists have three classes of doctrinal standards.

1. The Twenty-five Articles of Religion.<sup>1</sup> They were prepared by John Wesley, from the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England (together with an abridgment of the Book of Common Prayer), for the American Methodists, and were adopted by the Conference in Baltimore, 1784, with the exception of Article XXIII, which recognizes the United States as 'a sovereign and independent nation,' and which was adopted in 1804. These articles are now unalterably fixed, and can neither be revoked nor changed.<sup>2</sup>

2. John Wesley's Sermons and Notes on the New Testament. They are legally binding only on the British Wesleys, but they are in fact as highly esteemed and as much used by American Methodists, and constitute the life of the denomination. When eighty-one years of age (Feb. 28, 1784), Wesley, in his famous Deed of Declaration, which is called the Magna Charta of Methodism, bequeathed the property and government of all his chapels in the United Kingdom (then 359 in number) to the 'Legal Hundred,' *i. e.*, a conference of one hundred of his traveling preachers and their successors, on condition that they should accept as their basis of doctrine his Notes on the New Testament and the four volumes of Sermons which had been published by him or in his name in or before 1771.<sup>3</sup> These sermons are fifty-eight in number, and cover the common faith and duties of Christians,<sup>4</sup> but contain at the same time the doctrines which constitute the distinctive creed of Methodism.<sup>5</sup> The Notes on the New Testament are for the most part a popular version of Bengel's *Gnomon*.

<sup>1</sup> See Vol. III. pp. 766 sqq. Comp. also Emory, *History of the Discipline*, ch. i. § 2; Comfort, *Exposition of the Articles* (New York, 1847); Jimson, *Notes on the Twenty-five Articles* (Cincinnati, 1853).

<sup>2</sup> 'The General Conference shall not revoke, alter, or change our Articles of Religion, nor establish any new standards or rules of doctrine contrary to our present existing and established standards of doctrine.' This article can not be amended (*Discipline*, p. 51). The General Conference is the highest of the five judicatories, and the only legislative body of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

<sup>3</sup> Tyerman, Vol. III. pp. 417 sqq.

<sup>4</sup> Thirteen discourses are on the Sermon on the Mount, chiefly ethical; two are funeral discourses (on the death of Whitefield and Fletcher); one on the cause and cure of earthquakes; one on the use of money.

<sup>5</sup> On Salvation by Faith; Scriptural Christianity; Original Sin; Justification by Faith;

3. The Book of Discipline and several Catechisms, one published in 1852, another in 1868 (by Dr. Nast), are at least secondary standards for the American Methodists.

The distinctive features of the Methodist creed are not logically formulated, like those of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches. It allows a liberal margin for further theological development. John Wesley, though himself an able logician and dialectician, sought Christianity more in practical principles and sanctified affections than in orthodox formulas, and laid greater stress on the eccumenical consensus which unites than on the sectarian dissensus which divides the Christians. The General Rules, or recognized terms of membership, for the original Methodist 'societies' (not churches), are ethical and practical, and contain not a single article of doctrine. They require 'a desire to flee the wrath to come and be saved from sin,' and to avoid certain specific vices.

Nevertheless Methodists claim to have more doctrinal harmony than many denominations which impose a minute creed. There is a Methodist system of doctrine and a Methodist theology, however elastic they may be. But there is a difference of opinion among their standard writers as to the degree of originality and completeness of this system and its relation to other confessions. We may distinguish an American and an English view on the subject.

An ingenious attempt has recently been made to raise the Methodist creed to the importance and dignity of a fourth confession or symbolical system alongside of the Roman Catholic, the Lutheran, and the Calvinistic, and far above them. According to Dr. Warren, Catholicism makes salvation dependent upon a meritorious co-operation of man with God, and is essentially pagan; Calvinism makes salvation dependent exclusively on the eternal decree and free grace of God, and views Christianity from the stand-point of the Old Testament; Lutheranism derives salvation from the personal relation of man to the means of grace (the Word and Sacraments), and views Christianity from the stand-point of justification by faith alone; Methodism makes salvation exclusively dependent upon man's own free relation to the illuminating, renewing, and sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, and represents

Free Grace: the Witness of the Spirit (three sermons); on Christian Perfection. It is singular that there is not one sermon on the Freedom of the Will.

the stand-point of Christian perfection. Calvin retains the Christians under the dispensation of the Father, Luther under the dispensation of the Son, Wesley leads them into the dispensation of the Spirit. The first confines salvation to the favorite number of the elect; the second binds it to the baptismal font, the altar, and the pulpit; the third offers it freely to all. Calvin's ideal Christian is a servant of God, Luther's a child of God, Wesley's a perfect man in the full stature of Christ.<sup>1</sup>

English Methodists claim for their system a humbler position, and represent it, in accordance with the intention of the founders, as a liberal evangelical modification of the Anglican creed, with some original doctrines to which they attach great importance.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Syst. Theol.* Vol. I. pp. 90, 99, 119, 140, 149, 166. Dr. Warren (who is now President of the Methodist University in Boston) wrote this able book (which is as yet, 1876, unfinished) while in Germany, and under the stimulus of the generalizing theories of some German divines. Zinzendorf had made a somewhat similar distinction between the Lutheran, Reformed, and Moravian types of doctrine (*Lehrtrögen*), but comprehended them all in his brotherhood. James Martineau, from the Unitarian point of view, represents Luther, Calvin, and Wesley as the representatives of the orthodox gospel in three dialects (*Studies of Christianity*, London, 1873, pp. 399 sq.).

<sup>2</sup> Professor William B. Pope, of Didsbury College, Manchester, one of the leading Wesleyan divines, makes the following statement concerning the creed of the English Methodists (in the Introduction to his translation of Winer's *Comparative View of the Doctrines and Confessions of the various Communities of Christendom*, Edinb. 1873, pp. lxxvi.-lxxxviii.): 'It may be said that English Methodism has no distinct articles of faith. At the same time it is undoubtedly true that no community in Christendom is more effectually hedged about by confessional obligations and restraints. Reference has been made to the distinction of creeds, confessions, and standards. Methodism combines the three in its doctrinal constitution after a manner on the whole peculiar to itself. Materially if not formally, virtually if not actually, implicitly if not avowedly, its theology is bound by the ancient ecumenical Creeds, by the Articles of the English Church, and by comprehensive standards of its own, the peculiarity of its maintenance of these respectively having been determined by the specific circumstances of its origin and consolidation—circumstances with which it is not our business here to enter. In common with most Christian Churches it holds fast the Catholic Symbols; the Apostolical and Nicene are extensively used in the Liturgy, and the Athanasian, not so used, is accepted so far as concerns its doctrinal type. The doctrine of the Articles of the Church of England is the doctrine of Methodism. This assertion must, of course, be taken broadly, as subject to many qualifications. For instance, the Connection has never avowed the Articles as its Confession of Faith; some of those Articles have no meaning for it in its present constitution; others of them are tolerated in their vague and doubtful bearing, rather than accepted as definitions; and, finally, many Methodists would prefer to disown any relation to them of any kind. Still the verdict of the historical theologian, who takes a comprehensive view of the estate of Christendom, in regard to the history and development of Christian truth, would locate the Methodist community under the Thirty-nine Articles. He would draw his inference from the posture towards them of the early founders of the system; and he would not fail to mark that the American branch of the family, which has spread simultaneously with its European branch, has retained the Articles of the English Church, with some necessary modifications, as the basis of its Confession of Faith. Setting aside the Articles that have

### § 111. ANALYSIS OF ARMINIAN METHODISM.

#### THE SEMI-ANGLICAN DOCTRINES.

The Twenty-five Articles represent the doctrines which Methodism holds in common with other evangelical Churches, especially with the Church of England. They are an abridgment of the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion, with a view to simplify and to liberalize them. Wesley omitted the political articles, which apply only to England, and those articles which are strongly Augustinian, especially Article 17, of Predestination (which teaches unconditional election to salvation and the perseverance of the elect), Art. 13, of Works before Justification (which are said to have the nature of sin), and Art. 8 (which indorses the three Creeds). On the other hand, Art. 10, of Free Will,

to do with discipline rather than doctrine, the Methodists universally hold the remainder as tenaciously as any of those who sign them, and with as much consistency as the great mass of English divines who have given them an Arminian interpretation. That is to say, where they diverge in doctrine from the Westminster Confession, Methodism holds to them; while this Confession rather expresses their views on Presbyterian Church government. It may suffice to say generally on this subject, that so far as concerns the present volume [of Winer], every quotation from the English Articles may stand, if justly interpreted, as a representative of the Methodist Confession.

Finally, we have the Methodist Standards, belonging to it as a society within a Church, which entirely regulate the faith of the community, but are binding only upon its ministers. Those Standards are to be found in certain rather extensive theological writings which have none of the features of a Confession of Faith, and are never subscribed or accepted as such. More particularly, they are some Sermons and Expository Notes of John Wesley; more generally, these and other writings, catechisms, and early precedents of doctrinal definition; taken as a whole, they indicate a standard of experimental and practical theology to which the teaching and preaching of its ministers are universally conformed. What that standard prescribes in detail it would be impossible to define here. . . . Suffice that the Methodist doctrine is what is generally termed Arminian, as it regards the relation of the human race to redemption; that it lays great stress upon the personal assurance which seals the personal religion of the believer; and that it includes a strong testimony to the office of the Holy Spirit in the entire renewal of the soul in holiness, as one of the provisions of the covenant of grace upon earth. It may be added, though only as an historical fact, that a rigorous maintenance of this common standard of evangelical doctrine has been attended by the preservation of a remarkable unity of doctrine throughout this large communion.

Dr. Whedon, the editor of the 'Methodist Quarterly Review,' in a notice of Pope's *Winer* (October No., 1873, pp. 680 sq.), enters 'his firm, fraternal protest against being recorded before the eyes of the world as training under the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England,' and says, 'The entire body of Methodists of the United States no more hold the Thirty-nine Articles, doctrinally, than they do the Westminster Confession. They reject a large share of both for the same reason, namely, that they are, in their proper interpretation, Calvinistic. Nor does this Confession express their views on Presbyterian Church government: for the Confession affirms the divine obligation of Presbyterianism, and the large body of American Methodists believe in the right of a voluntary episcopacy.'

which teaches (with Augustine, Luther, and Calvin) the natural inability of man to do good works without the grace of God, is literally retained (Meth. Art. 8).

Minor doctrinal changes were made in Art. 2 (Art. 2), where the clauses 'begotten from everlasting of the Father,' and 'of her [the Virgin's] substance,' are omitted (either as doubtful or lying outside of a creed);<sup>1</sup> in Art. 9 (7), where the last clauses, which affirm the continuance of original sin in the regenerate, are left out (as inconsistent with Wesley's view of perfection); in Art. 16 (12), where 'sin after justification' is substituted for 'sin after baptism' (to avoid the doctrine of baptismal regeneration); in Art. 25 (16), of the Sacraments, where the words 'sure witnesses and effectual,' before 'signs of grace,' are stricken out (which betrays a lowering of the doctrine of the Sacraments); in Art. 34 (22), where 'traditions of the Church' are changed into 'Rites and Ceremonies.'

These omissions and changes are significant, and entirely consistent with Methodism, but they are negative rather than positive. Wesley eliminated the latent Calvinism from the Thirty-nine Articles, but did not put in his Arminianism, nor his peculiar doctrines of the Witness of the Spirit and Christian Perfection, leaving them to be derived from other documents of his own composition.

#### THE ARMINIAN DOCTRINES.

The five points in which Arminius differed from the Calvinistic system are clearly and prominently brought out in Wesley's writings, though mostly in the form of popular and practical exposition and exhortation. He put the name of Arminius on his periodical organ, and struck the keynote to the Arminian tone of Methodist preaching. The Arminian features of Methodism are, freedom of the will (taken in the sense of *liberum arbitrium*, or power of contrary choice) as necessary to responsibility; self-limitation of divine sovereignty in its exercise

<sup>1</sup> Emory, in his *History of the Discipline*, inserts the clause, 'begotten of everlasting from the Father,' as adopted in 1784, but omitted in 1786 and in later editions, perhaps by typographical error. A Methodist correspondent (Rev. D. A. Whedon) suggests to me that Wesley may have made a distinction between the eternal *Sonship* and the eternal *Generation*, and may have maintained the former, but questioned the latter as referring to the manner rather than the fact. Prof. Pope, the latest Methodist writer on Dogmatics, avoids this question as belonging to the transcendental mysteries (*Christ. Theol.* p. 272).

and dealings with free agents; foreknowledge as preceding and conditioning foreordination; universality of redemption; resistibility of divine grace; possibility of total and final apostasy from the state of regeneration and sanctification.

Calvinism and Methodism agree in teaching man's salvation by God's free grace, in opposition to Pelagianism and Semipelagianism. But Calvinism traces salvation to the eternal purpose of God, and confines it to the elect; Methodism makes it dependent on man's free acceptance of that grace which is offered alike to all and on the same terms. Calvinism emphasizes the divine side, Methodism the human.<sup>1</sup> Herein Methodism entirely agrees with Arminianism, and is even more emphatically opposed to the doctrines of absolute predestination, limited atonement, and the perseverance of saints than Arminius was, who left the last point undecided.

Wesley began the thunder against the imaginary horrors and blasphemies of Calvinism which has since resounded from innumerable Methodist pulpits. He defines predestination to be 'an eternal, unchangeable, irresistible decree of God, by virtue of which one part of mankind are infallibly saved, and the rest infallibly damned; it being impossible that any of the former should be damned, or that any of the latter should be saved; and then he goes on to show that this doctrine makes all preaching useless; that it makes void the ordinance of God; that it tends directly to destroy holiness, meekness, and love, the comfort and happiness of religion, zeal for good works, and the whole Christian revelation; that it turns God into a hypocrite and deceiver; that it overturns his justice, mercy, and truth, and represents him 'as worse than the devil, more false, more cruel, and more unjust.' This, he says, 'is the blasphemy clearly contained in the horrible de-

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Warren, l. c. p. 140, states the difference in an extreme form, which would subject Methodism to the charge of downright Pelagianism: 'Nach der Methodischen Auffassung des Heilsverhältnisses Gottes und des Menschen hängt das Heil oder Nicht-Heil eines jeden Menschen lediglich von seinem eigenen freien Verhalten gegenüber den erleuchtenden, erneuernden und heiligenden Einwirkungen des heiligen Geistes ab. Verhält man sich gegenüber diesen Einwirkungen empfindlich, so wird man hier, und einst dort, selig werden; verachtet man sein Herz gegen dieselben, so wird man hier, und auf ewig im Tode verbleiben. Mit dieser Grundanschauung hängen alle sonstigen Eigentümlichkeiten des Methodismus, seine Lehre von der christlichen Vollkommenheit, und dergleichen, eng zusammen. Seinem innersten Geist und Wesen nach ist er eine Auffassung des Christentums von Standpunkte der christlichen Vollkommenheit oder der völligen Liebe.'

ree of predestination, and for this I abhor it (however I love the persons who assert it).<sup>1</sup> To this decree he sets over the other decree, 'I will set before the sons of men life and death, blessing and cursing; and the soul that chooseth life shall live, as the soul that chooseth death shall die.' The elect are all those who 'suffer Christ to make them alive.'<sup>2</sup>

The vehemence of this opposition to the doctrine of predestination must be explained in part from the subjective and emotional nature of Methodist piety, which exposes it much more to an antinomian abuse of this doctrine than is the case with the calm intellectual tendency of Calvinism.

On the other hand, however, the 'evangelical' Arminianism of Wesley, as it is called, differs from the Dutch Arminianism, as developed by Episcopius and Limborch, and inclines as much towards Augustinianism as Arminianism inclines towards Pelagianism. In this respect it resembles somewhat the Lutheran anthropology of the Formula of Concord, though it differs altogether from its christology and sacramentalism.

<sup>1</sup> Sermon liv., on Free Grace (Rom. viii. 32), preached at Bristol. It follows immediately after the eulogistic funeral discourse on the Calvinistic Whitefield. His brother Charles wrote a polemical poem on 'The Horrible Decree,' in which his poetic genius left him, as may be inferred from the following specimens:

'O Horrible Decree,  
Worthy of whence it came!  
Forgive their hellish blasphemy,  
Who charge it on the Lamb.'

'To limit Thee they dare,  
Blaspheme Thee to Thy face,  
Deny their fellow-worms a share  
In Thy redeeming grace.'

In another poem, on 'Predestination,' he prays:

'Increase (if that can be)  
The perfect hate I feel  
To Satan's Horrour-Divorce,  
That genuine child of hell!  
Which feigns thee to pass by  
The most of Adam's race,  
And leave them in their blood to die,  
Shut out from saving grace.'

How infinitely superior to these polemical effusions is his genuine hymn:

'Jesus, lover of my soul,'

which a Calvinist may sing as heartily as a pious Methodist will join in his antagonist's ('Top-lady's):

'Rock of Ages, chief for me.'

1. Methodism holds a much stronger view of original sin than Arminianism, and regards it not simply as a disease or weakness,<sup>1</sup> but as a total depravity that unites man altogether for co-operation with the grace of God towards conversion. Wesley, Fletcher, and Watson describe this natural corruption in consequence of Adam's fall in the darkest colours, almost surpassing the descriptions of Augustine, Luther, and Calvin; but they deny the personal responsibility of Adam's posterity for his fall or the doctrine of original guilt; and herein they agree with the Arminians and the Quakers.

2. Methodism teaches the freedom of will as a gift of preventent grace, which is given to every man as a check and antidote to original sin; while Arminianism, with its milder view of the fall, allows man a certain freedom of will in a weakened state as an inherent and inherited power of nature.

3. Methodism lays greater stress on the subjective experience of conversion and regeneration. Its preaching is essentially radical evangelistic revival preaching, which rouses the sinner to a sense of his danger, and the paramount necessity of an immediate, sudden, and radical change of heart and life.

#### THE ORIGINAL DOCTRINES OF METHODISM.

To these modifications of Arminianism must be added a few doctrines which Methodism claims as its own contributions to the better understanding of the Christian system.

1. The doctrine of the *universality of divine grace*, not only in its intention, but in its *actual offer*. Herein Methodism resembles the Quaker doctrine of universal light. It is assumed—on the ground of Paul's parallel between the first and second Adam (Rom. v.)—that all men are born into an order of saving grace, as well as into an order of sin. Adam brought a universal seed of death, but Christ brought a universal seed of life, which is available for all who do not reject it.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Episcopius calls the *peccatum originis* an *infirmitas* or *calamitas* or *malum*, but not a *malum culpe* and *malum pene*. Limborch calls it *malum naturale*, not *peccatum nostri respectu*. See Winer, *Comp. Synb.* pp. 60 sqq.

<sup>2</sup> 'No man living,' says Wesley, 'is without some preventing grace, and every degree of grace is a degree of life. There is a measure of free will supernaturally restored to every man, together with that supernatural light which enlightens every man that cometh into this world.' 'That by the offense of one, judgment came upon all men (all born into the world) unto condemnation, is an undoubted truth, and affects every infant as well as every

For by virtue of the universal atonement, man, though born in sin, is held guiltless until he arrives at the point of personal responsibility.

While Romanism and Lutheranism save those only who are brought into contact with the Church and the Sacraments, Calvinism those only who are elect from eternity, Methodism brings the opportunity of salvation to all men in this present life, though in different forms and degrees, so that they are actually saved if they do not incur the guilt of rejecting salvation by unbelief. Hence all children are saved if they die before they commit actual sin. Though born in sin, they are not held guilty before the age of responsible agency. They are saved by the same power of the universal atonement which saves adults; though there is a difference of opinion as to the regeneration of infants before death.<sup>1</sup> On the same ground all heathen may be saved who do not neglect their opportunities. Ability and opportunity are the measure

adult person. But it is equally true that by the righteousness of One, the free gift came upon all men (all born into the world—infants and adults) unto justification.' D. D. Whiedon (*Biblioth. Sacra*, 1862, p. 278): 'Under the redemptive system, the man is born into the world, from Adam, a depraved being. It is as a depraved being that he becomes an Ego. But instantly after, in the order of nature, he is met by the provisions of atonement.' 'Every human being,' says Warren, 'has a measure of grace (unless he has cast it away), and those who faithfully use this intrusted gift will be accepted of God in the day of judgment, whether Jew or Greek, Christian or heathen. In virtue of Christ's mediation between God and the fallen race, all men since the first promise, Gen. iii. 15, are under an economy of grace, and the only difference between them as subjects of the moral government of God is that, while all have grace and light enough to attain salvation, some, over and above this, have more and others less' (Vol. I. pp. 146 sq.). Pope (pp. 239-248) distinguishes this doctrine from the Augustinian, Pelagian, Semipelagian, Tridentine, Lutheran, Calvinistic, and Arminian, and says that there is no doctrine which 'so irresistibly and universally appeals for its confirmation to the common conscience and judgment of mankind.'

<sup>1</sup> Dr. D. D. Whiedon (*Biblioth. Sacra*, 1862, p. 278) remarks on this point: 'That the dying infant is saved, and saved by the atonement, we all agree. But his precise condition, as affected by the atonement, while a living infant, seems to be a somewhat undecided matter. Probably a large majority of the Methodist Episcopal Church here, for some time past, held, without much discussion, that the living infant was both unjustified and unregenerate, and yet upon his death he obtained both blessings. This making death the condition of justification and regeneration appears to many hardly logical, and not without danger. Mr. Wesley's earlier expressions of opinion indicated a holding of the churchly doctrine of baptismal regeneration in infancy. His later indications of opinion indicate that he held all infants to be members of the kingdom of heaven; and he also held that regeneration is a condition to membership in the kingdom of heaven; but he does not expressly draw the inference that all infants are regenerate. Fletcher maintained the doctrine both of infant justification and regeneration. Dr. Fisk held to infant justification. Our baptismal service first declares, in its Scripture lesson of infants, that "of such is the kingdom of God," and yet declares "that none can enter into the kingdom of God unless he be regenerate." But neither here is the inference expressly drawn. The subject is a matter of calm discussion, and perhaps the number of those holding the doctrine of infant regeneration has decidedly increased.'

of responsibility, and God requires no more from man than he empowers him to perform. Christ's atonement covers the deficiency of ability in the case of infants, and the deficiency of opportunity in the case of the heathen.

Fletcher distinguishes three dispensations in this general economy of grace: the dispensation of the Father, embracing the heathen and Mohammedans, who know God only from his general revelation in nature, providence, and the conscience; the dispensation of the Son, for those who live within the limits of Christendom and the reach of the gospel; and the dispensation of the Holy Spirit, for those who have an experiential knowledge of the regenerating and sanctifying Spirit. Wesley, Watson, and Pope teach essentially the same view of the universality of grace.

2. The next distinctive doctrine of Methodism is the *Witness of the Spirit* or the *assurance* of salvation (Rom. viii. 15, 16). It is a double and concurrent witness of God's Spirit and of our spirit concerning our justification. The former is objective and divine, and antecedes; the latter is subjective and human, and follows. The Holy Spirit bears testimony to our spirit that by faith we are the children of God. This testimony is immediate and direct, and follows the work of justification and regeneration. On the ground of this testimony the believer feels *assured* of his *present* acceptance with God, and has a *hope* of his *final* salvation, but he is at the same time guarded against carnal security by the fear of a total and final fall from grace. Hence there are so many backsliders, who constitute a special class among Methodists.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Comp. the three sermons of Wesley on the Witness of the Spirit (x.-xii.), Vol. I. pp. 85 sq. He traced this doctrine to his contact with some Moravians on his voyage to Georgia (1735), whose childlike trust and serene cheerfulness led him to exclaim: 'I, who went to America to convert others, was never myself converted to God.' He meant conversion from legal bondage to evangelical freedom and a sense of assurance of pardon. He subsequently visited Count Zinzendorf and the Moravians in Germany to study their discipline (1739), and Watson (Vol. II. p. 271) distinguishes four views on the testimony of the Spirit, and thus states his own, which agrees with Wesley's: 'It is twofold; a direct testimony or "inward impression on the soul, whereby the Spirit of God witnesses to my spirit that I am a child of God; that Christ hath loved me, and given himself for me, that I, even I, am reconciled to God" (Wesley's *Sermons*); and an indirect testimony, arising from the work of the Spirit in the heart and life, which St. Paul calls the testimony of our own spirit; for this is inferred from his expression, "And the Spirit beareth witness with our spirit, etc." This testimony of our own spirit, or indirect testimony of the Holy Spirit by and through our own spirit, is

Herein the Methodist doctrine differs from the Calvinistic doctrine of assurance which is based, not on subjective feeling, but on the divine promises and the unchangeable decree of God's election, and which covers not only the present state, but the whole process to its final completion, conditioned by the perseverance of saints as the final test of genuine conversion.<sup>1</sup>

3. The last and crowning doctrine of Methodism, in which the Quakers likewise preceded it, is *Perfectionism*. It is regarded as a mighty stimulus to progressive holiness, and forms the counterpart of the doctrine of apostasy, which acts as a warning against backsliding. It is derived from such passages as Matt. v. 48; Phil. iii. 15; Heb. vi. 1; x. 14; 1 John iii. 6; v. 18. Methodist perfection is not a sinless perfection or faultlessness, which Wesley denied,<sup>2</sup> but a sort of imperfect perfection, from which it is possible to fall again temporarily or forever.<sup>3</sup> It is entire sanctification or perfect love (1 John ii. 5; iv. 12), which every Christian may and ought to attain in this present life. From this state all voluntary transgressions or sinful volitions are excluded, though involuntary infirmities may and do remain; in this state all the normal qualities are possessed and enjoyed in their fullness. As to the attainment of perfection, it comes according to the prevailing view from gradual growth in grace, according to others by a special act of faith.<sup>4</sup>

considered confirmatory of the first testimony.' Pope (p. 465): 'Assurance is the fruit, not the essence of faith. . . . Perfect faith must be assured of its object. . . . The internal assurance of faith is a privilege that all may claim and expect; seasons of darkness and depression and uncertainty are only the trial of that faith of assurance.'

<sup>1</sup> The Westminster Confession, Ch. XVIII, says that true believers 'may in this life be certainly assured that they are in a state of grace, and may rejoice in hope of the glory of God, which hope shall never make them ashamed.' This assurance is 'founded upon the divine truth of the promises of salvation, the testimony of the Spirit witnessing with our spirit that we are the children of God.' It is not of 'the essence of faith,' and may be 'shaken, diminished, and intermitted,' yet revived again in due time and keep us from utter despair.

<sup>2</sup> In his sermons on Temptation, Vol. II, p. 215, and on Perfection, Vol. I, p. 356; Vol. II, p. 168: 'The highest perfection,' he says, 'which man can attain while the soul dwells in the body, does not exclude ignorance and error and a thousand infirmities.'

<sup>3</sup> Meth. Catech. No. 3, p. 37: 'It is the privilege of every believer to be wholly sanctified, and to love God with all his heart in the present life; but at every stage of *Christian experience there is danger of falling from grace*, which danger is to be guarded against by watchfulness, prayer, and a life of faith in the Son of God.'

<sup>4</sup> Wesley has two sermons on Christian Perfection, one on Phil. iii. 12 (Vol. I, p. 355), and one on Heb. vi. 1 (Vol. II, p. 167). He distinguishes, (1) angelic, (2) Adamic, (3) absolute

## § 112. CALVINISTIC METHODISM.

WHITEFIELD.

George Whitefield labored with Wesley until 1741, when they parted on the question of predestination and free will; the former taking the Calvinistic, the latter, with his brother and the majority of Methodists, the Arminian side, and henceforth they pursued different paths, like Paul and Barnabas. Personally they became cordial friends again, and their friendship continued until death. This should not be forgotten when we read the bitter predestinarian controversy which their friends and followers carried on and renewed from time to time. When Whitefield heard of the dangerous illness of Wesley, who had already written his own epitaph, he sent him an affectionate letter (Dec. 3, 1753), saying, 'I pity myself and the Church, but not you. A radiant throne awaits you, and ere long you will enter into your Master's joy.' When Whitefield died in Newburyport (Sept. 30, 1770), Wesley preached his funeral sermon (Nov. 18) at Whitefield's Chapel in Tottenham Court Road and at the Tabernacle, near Moorfields, on the text Num. xxiii. 10, 'Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!' Without alluding to their temporary separation, he speaks of him in the highest terms as an eminent instrument of God, who in the business of salvation put Christ as high as possible, and man as low as possible, and who brought a larger number of sinners from darkness to the light than any other man. He praises his 'unparalleled zeal, his indefatigable activity, his tenderness of heart towards the afflicted, and charitableness to the

perfection—all of which he denies to man in his present state—and (4) the relative perfection, which he claims for him under the gospel dispensation, namely, perfect love to God. From 1 John iii. 6 and v. 18, he reasons, 'A Christian is so far perfect as not to commit sin' (Vol. I, p. 365). He affirms that several persons have enjoyed this blessing of freedom from sin without interruption for many years, and not a few unto their death, as they have declared with their last breath (Vol. II, p. 174). Pope says (p. 527): 'The Spirit is imparted in this fullness for the perfect consecration of the soul to the Trine God: this is called the love of God perfected in us. The commandment requires from us in return the perfect love of the soul to God and man; and this perfection, promised to faith working by love, is abundantly attested as the possible and attained experience of Christians.' Pope distinguishes the Methodist theory of perfection from the ascetic, the fanatical, the Pelagian, the mystical, the Romanist, the imputationist (modern Calvinistic), and the Arminian (p. 535); and he mentions five characteristic marks of the Methodist doctrine, the chief of which is entire consecration to God in perfect love (p. 540).

<sup>1</sup> See the whole letter in *Tyerman, J. Wesley*, Vol. II, p. 175.

poor, his deep gratitude, his most generous and tender friendship, his modesty, frankness, patience, courage, and steadfastness to the end.<sup>1</sup>

Whitefield was free from sectarian spirit and cared little for organization. His sole purpose was to convert sinners to Christ, and to revive Churches to new zeal and energy.<sup>2</sup> His labors were crowned with signal success. The day of judgment alone will reveal the number of his converts, and the amount of good which he kindled by his flaming sermons among Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and other denominations, as well as among the crowds of ungodly people who were attracted by his eloquence.<sup>3</sup>

But although most of his converts fell in with existing denominations, a considerable number of them formed three separate organizations. One of them, called 'the Whitefield Methodists,' were lost among the Independents. The other two still remain.

#### THE COUNTESS OF HUNTINGDON'S CONNECTION.

Selina, Countess of Huntingdon (1707-1791), a lady of true nobility of heart and intellect as well as rank, devoted, after the death of her husband and four children, her time and fortune to the spread of vital religion among the nobility and the court as well as the common people. She purchased halls and theatres in London, Bristol, and Dublin, built over sixty chapels, supported ministers, founded a college at Trevecca, in Wales, and stirred up others to similar liberality. She dispensed with her luxurious equipage and sold even her jewels for the benefit of this work. She took Whitefield, with whose Calvinism she sympathized, under her special patronage, and made him her chaplain, and exercised a sort of leadership over his congregations.

<sup>1</sup> *Sermon LIII.* Vol. I. pp. 470 sqq.

<sup>2</sup> In this unselfish zeal he has a worthy successor in our day in Mr. Moody.

<sup>3</sup> 'Whitefield's preaching was such as England never heard before—theatrical, extravagant, often commonplace, but hushing all criticism by its intense reality, its earnestness of belief, its deep, tremulous sympathy with the sin and sorrow of mankind. It was no common enthusiast who could wring gold from the close-fisted Franklin and admiration from the fastidious Horace Walpole, or who could look down from the top of a green knoll at Kingwood on twenty thousand colliers, grimy from the Bristol coal-pits, and see as he preached the tears "making white channels down their blackened cheeks."—Green, *History of the English People*, p. 718 (Engl. ed.). Dr. Abel Stevens, an Arminian Methodist, calls Whitefield 'the most eloquent, the most flaming preacher that the Christian Church has known since its apostolic age, whose eloquence sanctified, wakened the whole British empire' (*Centenary of Amer. Methodism*, p. 24).

Hence they became known as the 'Countess of (or Lady) Huntingdon's Connection.

Whitefield bequeathed to the Countess his benevolent institutions and lands in Georgia, and this resulted in a mission to America.

The ministers of this connection are almost identical in doctrine and Church polity with the Independents, but in public worship they use to some extent the Anglican Liturgy. Their principal institution is Giesunt College, in Herts.

#### THE WELSH CALVINISTIC METHODISTS.

##### *Literature.*

*The History, Constitution, Rules of Discipline, and Confession of Faith of the Calvinistic Methodists in Wales.* Drawn up by their own Associated Ministers. Third ed. Mold, 1840.

JOHN HOUGHES: *History of Welsh Methodism* (in Welsh). Liverpool, 1856, 3 vols.

WILLIAM WILLIAMS: *Welsh Calvinistic Methodism. An Historical Sketch* (in English). London, 1872.

Whitefield's preaching through Wales, and the kindred labors of Howell Harris, of Trevecca, Griffith Jones, Daniel Rowlands, Howell Davies, and William Williams—most of them clergymen of the Established Church who joined the Methodists—produced a powerful and extensive revival, and resulted in a new connection in 1743, and more fully in 1785, when the Rev. Thomas Charles, of Bala, one of the most zealous and useful preachers of his day, joined it.<sup>1</sup>

For many years the Welsh Methodists existed without a settled form of government or doctrinal confession.

In 1823 it was unanimously agreed at the Associations of Aberystwith and Bala to issue in the Welsh language such a document, together with a sketch of the origin and early history of the denomination. An English edition was published in 1827.

The Confession of Faith consists of forty-four chapters, and accords substantially in spirit and arrangement with the Westminster Confession, though it is far inferior to it in ability and accuracy.

The articles in which it differs from the Wesleyan scheme are Arts. V, XII, and XXXIV, which are as follows:

<sup>1</sup> Charles graduated at Oxford as A.B. in 1778, labored seven years as a clergyman of the Established Church, united himself with the Calvinistic Methodists in 1785, and drew up in 1790 a series of Rules for conducting Associations or Quarterly Meetings. He was one of the founders of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

V.—*Of the Decree of God.*

God, from eternity, according to the counsel of his own will, and for the manifestation and exaltation of his glorious attributes, decreed all things which he should perform in time and to eternity, in the creation and governing of his creatures, and in the salvation of sinners of the human race; yet in such a manner that he is neither the Author of sin, nor does he force the will of his creatures in the fulfilment of his decree; and this decree of God is not depended on any thing in a creature, nor yet on the foreknowledge of God; but rather God knows that such and such circumstances will take place, because he has ordained that it should be so. God's decree is infinitely wise, perfectly righteous, and existing from eternity; it is a free, an ample, a secret, gracious, holy, good, an unchangeable and effectual decree.

XII.—*Of the Election of Grace.*

God from eternity elected and ordained Christ to be a Covenant Head, a Mediator, and a Surety to his Church; to redeem and to save it. God also elected in Christ a countless multitude out of every tribe, tongue, people, and nation, to holiness and everlasting life; and every means were employed to effect this purpose most securely. This election is eternal, righteous, sovereign, unconditional, peculiar or personal, and unchangeable. It wrongs none, though God has justly left some without being elected, yet he has not wronged them; they are in the same condition as if there had been no election; and had there been no election, no flesh had been saved.

XXXIV.—*Of Perseverance in Grace.*

Those whom God has made acceptable in the Beloved, whom he has effectually called, and whom the Spirit sanctifies, can not completely and forever fall from a state of grace, but they shall assuredly be supported unto the end, and they shall be saved. Their perseverance depends not on their own will, but on the unchangeableness of the purpose of God, the election of grace, the power of the Father's love, the sufficiency of the propitiation of Christ, the success of his intercession, union with him, the indwelling of the Spirit within them, the seed of God implanted in their souls, the nature and strength of the covenant, and the promise and oath of God. Founded on these things, perseverance is certain and unfailing. Though they may, through the temptations of Satan and the world, the great power of their indwelling corruption, and the neglect of using the means for their support, fall into sins, and remain in them for some time, and thus displease God, grieve the Holy Spirit, injure their grace, lose their comfort, harden their hearts, sting their consciences, draw a temporal judgment upon themselves, harm others, and disgrace the cause of God, yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith to salvation, though their falls will be felt most bitterly by them.

Those who continue to live quietly in sin, and comfort themselves that they are in a gracious state, show evident signs that they are self-deceivers. For by perseverance in grace is meant the continuing to enjoy and to inherit external Gospel privileges merely; but a continuance in holiness, diligence, watchfulness, a holy temper and walk, and a scrupulous observance of every duty. There is nothing more opposed to sin than a perseverance in grace; and whosoever shall thus continue in grace to the end shall be saved.

## § 113. THE CATHOLIC APOSTOLIC CHURCH (CALLED IRVINGITES).

*Literature.*

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H. W. J. THOMPSON (the Tertullian of this modern Montanism, and its most learned minister in Germany, who wrote *Lectures on Catholicism and Protestantism*, 1848, on the *Canon of the N. T.*, 1845, on the *Church in the Apostolic Age*, 1852, and other excellent works).

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## EDWARD IRVING.

Edward Irving, the herald and pioneer of the 'Catholic Apostolic Church,' was born at Annan, in Scotland, 1792, and died in the vigor