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THE  
JUSTICE AND FORBEARANCE  
OF THE  
METHODIST  
NEW CONNEXION CONFERENCE,

AS THEY WERE ILLUSTRATED  
IN THE CASE OF W. TROTTER,  
GIVING  
A COMPLETE ACCOUNT OF HIS TRIAL BEFORE THE  
HALIFAX CONFERENCE,  
WITH AN APPENDIX,  
CONTAINING  
A FULL ANSWER TO SUNDRY TRACTS OR PAMPHLETS  
PUBLISHED BY J. H. ROBINSON AND T. ALLIN,  
IN VINDICATION OF THE CONFERENCE, AND IN OPPOSITION TO THE  
BRIEF REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS PUBLISHED  
BY JOSEPH BARKER AND WILLIAM TROTTER ;  
AND A MORE COPIOUS REPORT  
OF THOSE PARTS OF THE  
CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS  
*Which have been called in Question by the above-named Writers and others*  
FROM NOTES TAKEN AT THE TIME.

~~~~~  
BY W. TROTTER.  
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*"For the terrible one is brought to nought, and the scorner is consumed, and all that watch for iniquity are cut off. That make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just for a thing of nought."—Isaiah, xxxi, 20-21.*

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ROW, AND MAY BE HAD OF ALL BOOKSELLERS.

1841.

**TO THE TRAVELLING PREACHERS**  
**OF THE**  
**METHODIST NEW CONNEXION,**

ANY one of whom, without having violated any rule of the Body, or given any cause of complaint as to his moral conduct, or the performance of his ministerial duties, may, like the author, become obnoxious to the governing few, who can set aside, or execute the law at their pleasure, and may thus, in common with the writer, be unjustly separated from a community, for the welfare and prosperity of which, they have sighed and toiled, this little work is respectfully dedicated.

In the hope that the chains which bind them will soon be broken; and praying that they, with the whole Church of God, may be inspired with fortitude and resolution to throw off every yoke but the yoke of Christ, the writer of the following pages subscribes himself,

Their affectionate brother in the Gospel,

**W. TROTTER.**



# THE JUSTICE AND FORBEARANCE

## OF THE

### METHODIST NEW CONNEXION CONFERENCE,

&c.

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WHEN a man is to be tried, condemned, and punished, it is of the utmost importance that it be done justly : and in order that it be done justly, several things are absolutely necessary.

First, it is necessary that there be some law, human or divine, which the man has violated,—some plain, intelligible law, that he could not, without wilful inattention, misunderstand. If this point is not attended to, a man may be tried, condemned, and punished, for what he never knew, nor had the opportunity of knowing, to be a crime.

Secondly, it is necessary that the man should have due notice of his trial ; notice sufficiently long to allow him time to prepare his defence, and call witnesses to bear testimony in his favour. If this be neglected, he may be unable to clear himself of the charge alleged against him ; whereas, if he had time to call his witnesses, and prepare his defence, he might be able to prove himself completely innocent. Whether guilty or innocent, justice requires that time be allowed him to make the best he can of his own case.

Thirdly, it is necessary that he should be tried before a candid, impartial tribunal. Those who bring forward the accusation, may be presumed to be prejudiced against him ; and it would manifestly defeat the ends of justice, if the same parties were allowed to act the part of accusers, counsel, judges, and jury. That one party should accuse, another defend, and a third, unconnected with either, weigh the evidence, and decide accordingly, is one of the very plainest, and most important requirements of justice, in a case like this.

Fourthly, should the man be found guilty of the crime laid to his charge, the punishment awarded to him ought to be proportioned to his offence. Either the law which he has violated, must *itself* declare the penalty ; or else, if a discretionary power be left in the hands of the judge, he is bound to estimate, to the best of his ability, the amount of guilt contracted by the offending party, and to proportion his punishment to the extent of that guilt. But where the law itself does not pronounce the penalty, it is essential that it should state in whose hands the discretionary power to punish is lodged, and define the extent of that power. Without this, any one might assume the power to

punish, and might exercise that power without responsibility or restraint. Should any man pronounce a sentence which the law itself does not pronounce, he should be able to show his authority for thus acting without law ; and if he has no such authority to show, then he must be regarded as exercising a lawless, unjust, and arbitrary power.

Fifthly, it is absolutely essential that punishment should be administered without respect of persons. If a certain crime, committed by a certain person, deserve a certain punishment, it is obvious that the same, or a greater crime, committed by another person, must deserve equal, or greater punishment. And if one man be severely punished for a slight offence, while others guilty of greater crimes are suffered to escape, it is sufficiently clear that the fountains of justice are corrupted, and every thing like truth and equity trampled under foot.

Whether the late Conference of the Methodist New Connexion acted on the principles now laid down ; whether they have fulfilled the requirements of strict impartial justice, above specified, it is one object of the following pages to inquire. The writer of this publication believes himself able to prove, that he was discontinued from the ministry without having broken any law to which he was amenable, and without having sufficient notice of his trial ; that the same persons acted the part of accusers, witnesses, counsel, judges, and jury ; that there was no law of any kind requiring his expulsion ; that there was no principle or law investing the Conference with power to expel him ; and that, while he was thus expelled *without law, and against law*, numbers who have violated the *plainest and most important laws*, have been suffered to pass with impunity.

But strict, impartial justice, does not fully meet the claims of Gospel principle. The Gospel would never have us sink below strict, impartial justice, but it often calls us to rise above it. To "suffer long" is the attribute of Christian charity ; that we "forbear one another in love" is the requirement of the Gospel ; and the Apostle says plainly, "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness ; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." 'Tis true the Gospel does not require us to bear with one individual, so as to injure another ; nor does it forbid us to put away from the communion of the Church, such as cannot be retained without staining its purity and disgracing it before the world. Nay, more, it *requires* us to separate ourselves from all such ; but even here it would not have us to go rashly and precipitately to work ; it requires us to proceed with caution and deliberation. Even "an heretic we are not to reject," till "after the first and second admonition." We are first to endeavour to reclaim our erring, offending brother, and only when he proves himself to be incorrigible, and renders it absolutely essential to the purity and welfare of the Church that he should be separated from her communion,—*only then* is that awful step to be taken.

Whether, in the case of W. Trotter, the late Conference of the Methodist New Connexion did exercise all that forbearance and long-suffering which the Saviour inculcates, and the Gospel uniformly requires,—whether, supposing him to be in fault, he was duly admonished by his brethren, and allowed time for reconsideration and repentance,—whether, in short, it was not till he had proved himself to be an obstinate and incorrigible offender,—till he had shown that it was essential to the purity, and integrity, and prosperity of the Church that he should be removed ; whether it was not till then, that the solemn sentence of expulsion was passed upon him, is another of those questions that the following pages are designed to answer.

My reasons for entering on the discussion of these questions are various. If I know any thing of the state of my own mind, I have no earthly, selfish reason for pursuing this course. As far as earthly accommodations are concerned, I have all that I desire ; and if it were otherwise, I know of no advantage that could accrue to me from such a course as this. With regard to my character, I am not aware that any reflections have been cast on that, even by those who took a leading part in effecting my expulsion. I have not heard of a single doubt that has been expressed by any one, either as to the purity of my religious sentiments, or the integrity of my moral character. I believe that I have no unkind, revengeful feelings towards any of those who pleaded for my discontinuance. I may be mistaken ; I know that we are all peculiarly liable to mistake the character of our own feelings in cases of this description. But I am strangely misled indeed, if I cherish any thing in my heart, but feelings of kindness and affection towards my brethren who voted against me in the Halifax Conference. With several of them I am still on terms of intimacy and friendship ; and I believe there is not one amongst them from whom I would not avert any evil which it was in my power to turn aside ;—to whom I would not communicate any benefit it was in my power to impart. It is not to gratify any vindictive, resentful feelings, that I enter upon this discussion.

One reason that has induced me to lay a statement of my case before the public is, that in several respects it is perfectly distinct from the case of Joseph Barker, with which it has always hitherto been associated. My views of the proceedings of Conference in his case are before the public, and are consequently well known ; but there are several points in which his case differs widely from my own. He had been accused and tried before ; I had never been accused of a single offence of any kind, by any party, before ; much less brought to trial. The soundness of his doctrinal views had been suspected, unjustly and without foundation, I am persuaded ;—but still *he had been* suspected of unsoundness in the faith. But my orthodoxy was never called in question by any one ; by some of the oldest preachers in the Connexion, my views on doctrinal subjects had been pronounced

peculiarly sound. Joseph Barker was accused at the last Conference of setting aside the ordinance of Water Baptism, and of denying the permanent obligation of the Lord's Supper, and these constituted the pretence of the ruling party in Conference for expelling him from the body. But my views on these subjects were not different from those generally held in the Connexion. Something approaching to due legal notice of his trial had been given him; but of the two principal charges against me, I received no notice till the morning on which my trial commenced. So that there are several particulars in which my case differs widely from the case of Joseph Barker; and it seems to me as though these particulars were deserving of a separate and distinct consideration by the Connexion and the religious public.

Another reason by which I have been led to publish a separate statement of my own case is this; those who have written in favour of Conference, take little or no notice of my case, and seem to manifest a disposition to cover it up in darkness and oblivion. Their reasons for doing so, may be easily supposed. There are stronger feelings in people's minds on the subjects of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, than on the subjects of the Beneficent Fund and the Book-room; and by operating on those feelings, they hope more easily to allay the storm that their proceedings have raised, than they could do, by attempting to vindicate their conduct towards me. They wish, in short, to make the impression on people's minds, that nothing but a regard to the ordinances of Christianity induced them to expel Joseph Barker: on this principle, my case is utterly inexplicable; and therefore they pass it over in silence, or say as little about it as they possibly can. But the public ought not to be hoodwinked thus; and a distinct and separate account of my own case, seems to be more likely than any thing else to set the other case in its true light. But few, I am persuaded, will believe, for a moment, that it was a conscientious regard for the ordinances of Christianity, that induced the Conference to expel Joseph Barker, when they come thoroughly to understand all the particulars of my case.

The interests of truth and religious liberty, and as far as the Methodist New Connexion is, or has ever been, identified with these,—the interests of the Methodist New Connexion, are the considerations which serve mainly to induce me to publish this little work. I believe that the principles of truth, and justice, and freedom, have been most awfully sacrificed by the majority of the late Conference; and I believe that the interests of the Connexion cannot be promoted by keeping these things in the dark. I know that I have been represented by some as the enemy of the Connexion; but when those who thus represent me, have done and sacrificed, what I have sacrificed and done, for the welfare of the Connexion, I shall deem it time enough to say any thing to prove my attachment to it. The circuits in which I have been stationed can bear testimony on this point; and until their written testimonials (not those required by rule merely, but

others, freely and voluntarily adopted by them,) are proved to be unworthy of credit, it will be altogether unnecessary for me to say any thing on the subject. It is true that I distinguish between the Connexion and those who have placed themselves, or have been placed by others, at the head of its affairs. It is true that I distinguish between the Connexion, and some who arrogate that name exclusively to themselves, or to the measures which they propose. But I believe that, in this respect, I sympathize with a vast majority of the people. I believe that they, as well as myself, understand by the Connexion, the grand leading principles on which it was founded, and by which it has been distinguished; not the Annual Committee and the Conference for the time being, and the measures which they may choose to sanction or adopt. This publication may not tend to promote the objects, and raise the reputation of the late Conference, and the Annual Committee for the last year; but I am fully persuaded it will tend, as far as its influence may go, to promote the great principles on which the New Connexion was professedly founded, and by which it has been avowedly distinguished.

I shall now proceed to lay a plain, full statement of my case, from first to last, before my readers, and then add such observations as truth and justice may seem to require.

I ought to state at the commencement, that, soon after the Conference of 1840, I had some conversation with my friend Joseph Barker, on the subject of the Beneficent Fund. In the course of this conversation, he stated to me several objections that he had to the arrangements under which that Fund exists at present. Several of these objections appeared to me to be very weighty, and a few of them I had myself entertained for a considerable time. Some time after this conversation took place, he sent me a letter that he had written for the Corresponding Member of the Annual Committee. In this letter he stated at length his objections to the present arrangements of the Fund, and proposed such alterations as he thought the principles of the Gospel required. The letter, in fact, contained the substance of his observations on the subject, in the pamphlet entitled "Both Sides of the Question." He requested me to read the letter attentively, and suggest any improvements in it, that might seem desirable to me. He requested me also, if I saw nothing in the letter requiring alteration, to forward it to Thomas Allin, without delay. The sentiments expressed in the letter exactly corresponded with my own views, and accordingly I sent the letter by post to Thomas Allin. As a number of communications from Joseph Barker were forwarded by me to the Annual Committee, and as the letter in question bore the Bradford post mark, I have no doubt but it would be understood, by the Annual Committee, to express my views as well as those of Joseph Barker.

On the evening of Sabbath-day, the 10th of January, 1841, I delivered a lecture in Ebenezer chapel, Bradford, on the Use of Money. The sentiments I expressed on that occasion were not



only Scriptural, but strictly Methodistic. They were in the fullest possible accordance with the published sentiments of John Wesley, the honoured founder of Methodism. As I believed the views that were announced on that occasion to be important, and as I supposed they would be new to a great many that were present; and as I was peculiarly solicitous that the subject should be clearly understood, at the close of my lecture I offered to answer any question on the subject that might be sent to me the following day. A number of questions were forwarded to me, and I answered them at large, on the Monday evening. Soon after, I was requested to publish my lecture, along with the questions and answers. This I agreed to do, and while the work was preparing for the press, I received from a friend an additional question, requesting me to insert an answer to it, in my intended publication. The question and the answer were as follows:—

“If it be wrong for private Christians to lay up a little money against sickness or old age, must it not be wrong for preachers of the gospel to do so? And if joining Benefit Societies be wrong, is it not also wrong for preachers to pay into the Preachers’ Beneficent Fund? To this question I answer, 1.—I am not aware that there is one rule in the Gospel for Preachers, and another for private Christians. I should rather suppose that preachers ought to be exemplary patterns of all those virtues which the Gospel requires private Christians to cultivate and exercise. 2.—If preachers are to act differently in this matter from private Christians, the reason for the difference must be found, not in any exemption of preachers from the rule by which private Christians are bound, but in some difference that there may be between the institutions which they respectively support. 3.—I do not think that common Benefit Societies and the Preachers’ Beneficent Fund are exactly alike in all respects. There is no mixture of Christians with worldly men in the Beneficent Fund, and it is supported in part by free-will offerings. 4.—But still, inasmuch as none can be relieved from that fund but those who contribute to it; and inasmuch as the object in contributing to it is plainly, not to relieve our brethren, but to entitle *ourselves* to relief; and inasmuch as relief is distributed without regard to the circumstances and necessities of those who receive it; it seems to me that this fund is liable to all the most serious objections which have been urged against Benefit Societies, &c. And until I am convinced, that to lay up treasures for ourselves on earth is not wrong, or that contributing to that fund is not laying up for ourselves treasures on earth; until I am convinced of one of these, I believe that I cannot feel free to contribute to that fund. I am not ignorant of what may be the consequences of this declaration; but I have deeply and seriously considered the subject, and in the fear of God, and with a single eye to his glory, I freely state my views and convictions. I do not judge my brethren; I would have every man to be fully persuaded in his own mind; but when any one is thus fully persuaded that any given practice is un-

scriptural and wrong, it cannot be continued by him without incurring guilt. What I have said and written, I commend to the blessing of the Almighty, praying that whatever is defective may be forgiven, and that whatever is in accordance with his will may be rendered conducive to the promotion of his glory, the illumination and reformation of his church, and the salvation of the world."

A little before the publication of my lecture, while it was preparing for publication, a circular was issued by the Annual Committee on the subject of the Beneficent Fund, soliciting increased subscriptions to that Fund from the Circuits, and urging the preachers to increased exertions on its behalf. One of those circulars was sent to me, and another to Friend Barker. In answer to this circular, I forwarded to Thomas Allin the following letter, inclosing copies of my lecture, Friend Barker's tract on Benefit Societies, &c., and Thomas Smith's three small tracts on the same subject. I give the letter entire, in order that my readers may be in possession of the whole case :

3 Mo. 12., 1841.

DEAR FRIEND,

I received your circular respecting the Beneficent Fund, but you will see from the enclosed tracts that I cannot do any thing in its favour. I think that needy and deserving preachers should be supported, both while they labour, and when they are past labour ; but I cannot approve of money being given to the needy, and the opulent, the well-deserving and the ill-deserving alike.

Besides, I cannot conceive what need there can be for such a large capital. I could never have imagined that in addition to the four thousand pounds in the Book-room, the Connexion had upwards of four thousand pounds more lying idle in the Beneficent Fund. Eight thousand pounds, a sum sufficient to shake the whole kingdom, and to make an impression upon the whole civilized world, doing almost nothing at all ! I wonder that the Connexion has been preserved in existence. Such unfaithfulness in the employment of the Funds of the Connexion is truly awful. I am sorry to differ from my brethren, but I cannot have any part in any scheme for thus laying up treasure on earth, and burying our Lord's money in the earth. What money I have, must do good ; and I cannot ask money of others, but for religious and benevolent objects.

Your's affectionately,

JOSEPH BARKER.

P.S. Please accept the whole five little tracts.

To this letter the following note was appended.

DEAR FRIEND,

From one of the enclosed tracts, you will perceive that I stand in precisely the same position as Friend Barker. Either to contribute to the Beneficent Fund myself, or to solicit subscriptions for it from others, would be a violation of those principles which I sincerely hold, and which appear to me to be as plainly

taught in the gospel as language can teach them. With feelings of the greatest kindness towards all who judge differently from myself on this point, and with kindest regards to yourself and family,

I remain, your's respectfully,

W. TROTTER.

April 3, 1841.

To this communication I received no reply; and I heard nothing further of the matter till I was favoured by a friend with a copy of the circular sent to the officers of the Connexion, convening the meeting at Manchester, of which so much has been heard. From that circular, it appears that the opinions which had been expressed relative to the Beneficent Fund constituted one topic of consideration at that meeting.

Whether my case came specially under the consideration of the Manchester meeting or not,—and whether the members of that meeting unanimously concluded that I must either withdraw from the Connexion, or be expelled, as they did in the case of Joseph Barker, I have not had the opportunity to ascertain. It would seem, however, that *my trial* had been resolved on, if not my expulsion. About a fortnight before Conference I received the following letter:—

Altrincham, May 14th, 1841.

DEAR BROTHER,

I write to inform you that the Annual Committee deem it their duty to direct the attention of Conference to your printed and written statements relative to the Beneficent Fund. In consequence of this, *and of your known connexion with Mr. Barker*, Conference may deem it requisite not only to attend to that particular case, but also to ascertain, if possible, how far you retain that approval of the laws, &c. of the Connexion, the profession of which secured your introduction into our ministry.

With sincere prayers for your welfare,

I remain, your's affectionately,

T. ALLIN.

My readers are doubtless, most of them, acquainted with the proceedings of the Conference in Friend Barker's case. Those proceedings I opposed from first to last. I spoke in Conference two or three times, and freely expressed my sentiments on the subject. His trial terminated on the Saturday evening; and as soon as the proceedings in his case were closed, I enquired when my case would be brought forward? I was informed that it was not yet decided when my case should come on, and I was desired to ask again on Monday morning. Thus terminated the proceedings of that eventful week: a week which, I fancy, will be long remembered by all who took part in its transactions, whether on one side or the other.

The Sabbath was to me a solemn, happy day. I had time to reflect on the position in which I stood; on the steps by which I had been conducted to that position; and on the probable con-

sequences of the whole. I did seriously consider all these things, and my mind was deeply impressed with the importance of the crisis at which I had arrived. I reviewed the whole affair; I waited on God, and afresh sought counsel and direction at his hands. The result of all these exercises was a more firm and deeply-rooted conviction, that what I had done was according to the will of God, and that I could not recede an inch or an hair's breadth, without belieing my convictions, betraying my trust, and displeasing God. I knew the consequences. My friend was expelled, and I expected to be expelled myself. I had no earthly help, no earthly hope; but I sought protection and consolation from above, nor did I seek in vain. I was favoured with the most comfortable and satisfying assurances of the Almighty's approbation, and I felt, I think, as I never felt before, the truth of those admirable lines,

"Sufficient is thy arm alone,  
"And my defence is sure."

On Monday morning the Conference again assembled; and whether they supposed that the extreme course which had been taken with my friend, had broken and subdued my spirit;—or whether they were afraid of the consequences of expelling two together, I cannot tell; but they did seem very much disposed, on Monday morning, to come to some settlement of the affair; and had I been willing to make any concession,—to compromise my principles in the least, I have no doubt but I might have retained my place in the Connexion. But I had nothing to concede; and I could not agree to any compromise of principle, without defiling my conscience, destroying my peace, and endangering my soul's salvation. That the opinion I have just expressed, relative to the dispositions and intentions of the ruling party is not without foundation, will be pretty obvious from the following facts.

During the morning sitting on Monday, John Ridgway presented to Conference, a plan of arrangements which he had drawn up for expediting business. "He thought that the cases of Messrs. Nelson, Sturgess, Gowenlock, and Trotter, might be gone through before breakfast!" I rose, and requested that my case might be deferred till the next sitting. John Ridgway replied, "O yes, there can be no objections to that; only *I thought there was so little in your case, Mr. Trotter, that it involved so little,—that it might soon be disposed of!*" Whether this was his opinion after breakfast, when it was found that I could not be induced to bend to the wishes of the ruling party, the reader will soon have an opportunity to see.

As I was retiring from the chapel for the breakfast hour, John Bakewell called me aside, and addressing me with an air of great kindness, wished to know if we could not in some way settle this affair. I gave him to understand that I had no objections to a settlement of it, if a settlement could be effected without any sacrifice of conscience; but I distinctly informed him that I could

not be a party to any plan of settlement, that would involve a compromise of principle. He then stated that, holding the sentiments I did, I could scarcely be expected to contribute to the Beneficent Fund myself, for a time; and that therefore they would not insist on that; but if I was appointed to a circuit as a preacher, I must agree to collect subscriptions for that, as well as the other funds; and I must promise to have no connexion with the New Periodical and Book-room, either by writing for the periodical, or circulating the publications; that I must, in short, renounce all public connexion with my friend Joseph Barker. I told him plainly, that to these terms I could not agree; that I had seen no reason to change my views on the Beneficent Fund, since I wrote on the subject to the Annual Committee; that I believed a New Periodical and Book-room were called for by the existing state of things, both in the church and in the world; that I did not believe that the New Connexion Magazine and Book-room would be injured by our proceedings, if the managers of these institutions faithfully performed their duty;—that I regarded myself as under the most solemn obligations to promote the interests of the New Periodical and Book-room to the utmost of my ability; and, that as to renouncing all public connection with Joseph Barker, until I discovered something in his character and conduct, which I had not discovered then, I could not think of doing any such thing. He told me that if these were my views and intentions, I had better resign. I replied, that I could not resign with a clear conscience; that I did not believe there was any thing in my sentiments or conduct to render my separation from the Body necessary; and that if we were to be separated, it must be done by others, not by me. This is the substance of the conversation that took place between John Bakewell and myself.

At the commencement of the forenoon sitting, my case was introduced by Thomas Allin, the corresponding member of the Annual Committee. He stated that the only charge against me was, for opposing the Beneficent Fund; that I had both ceased to support it myself, and declined to solicit subscriptions for it from others. In proof of these statements he read the extract from the Appendix to my Lecture on the Use of Money, and the communication that I had addressed to the Annual Committee, both of which have been already laid before my readers. This, he stated, was the whole of the case against me.

When he had presented his statement of the case against me, I was called upon by the President. I rose and said that the statement of Thomas Allin was perfectly correct; that I had ceased to contribute to the Beneficent Fund, and that I had declined to solicit contributions to it from others. That I wished distinctly and fully to admit the facts which had been alleged against me, and that I considered this was all that I had to do, in that stage of the proceedings; but, that if any attempt was made to show that I had acted criminally in so doing, then I might perhaps have something to say in reply.

John Bakewell then rose and said, that at one time he had loved me as his own brother;—that from that circumstance the Conference might judge how surprised and grieved he was at the position in which I had placed myself, and how painful it was to him to take the part which he was then taking. He related, in substance, the conversation that he had held with me that morning, and said, that there was one feature in my character which he had always admired, and which he saw no less occasion to admire then, than at any former period in our acquaintance. He said, that he referred to the frankness with which I avowed my principles, and the explicitness with which I declared my intentions. But then, he observed, that, in his opinion, holding such sentiments as I did hold, and forming such purposes as I did avow, I was under a moral obligation to retire from the ministry, in a Connexion from which, on certain points, I so widely differed. He said, that he had declared to me his opinion on that subject, but that his views and mine did not coincide; that I seemed to regard it as my duty to leave the Conference to expel me;—that he could not but regret that I had come to such a conclusion, and that he would have me to consider, whether the Book, for which I professed such reverence, did not itself require me to retire from the ministry amongst them. That viewing the Beneficent Fund, and the Book-room, and the Magazine, in such a light as I did, I must regard them as unclean things, and the Scriptures required us to come out from amongst the ungodly, and to touch not the unclean thing.

When John Bakewell had concluded his remarks, there was a pause in the proceedings; and a wish was expressed by some, that I should more largely declare my views to the Conference. When called on by the President, I rose and said,

“In reply to what Friend Bakewell has just advanced, I would beg to remind the Conference that institutions may be imperfect and not unclean; and so far from it being a minister’s duty to withdraw from a body, when he discovers imperfections in some of its institutions, it seems to me to be his bounden duty to remain, and labour to the utmost of his power to remedy their defects, and to bring every institution connected with the Body to full perfection. But as there was another subject referred to by the corresponding member, in the notice of trial that I received, besides my withdrawal from the Beneficent Society; as he said that ‘in consequence of *my known connexion with Mr. Barker*, Conference might deem it requisite not only to attend to that particular case, but also to ascertain, if possible, how far I retain my approval of the laws, &c., of the Connexion, the profession of which secured my introduction into the ministry,’—and as I feel it to be alike due to the Connexion and myself, that a statement of my views on this point should be submitted to the Conference, I shall, with your permission, respected President, proceed at once to read a statement, that I have drawn up in writing. I have written my thoughts for two reasons; first, I expected that,

under the excitement which I at present feel, I should not be able to do justice to my own sentiments; and, secondly, I thought that it would cut off all possibility of misunderstanding on the subject, if, instead of trusting myself to speak extempore, I wrote my views beforehand."

Having obtained permission of the President, I proceeded to read to the Conference the following paper. It has been published already in the Brief Report of Conference Proceedings, but I insert it here entire, in order that this little work may contain a full history of the case.

"RESPECTED PRESIDENT,

From my heart I abhor every thing like guile and deception. I believe that it is the duty of every man to appear in his true character, and to declare the sentiments which, after mature examination, he is led to adopt, on all important subjects. I have been charged in some quarters with inconsistency, if not with insincerity, because at the last Conference I declared my attachment to the Connexion, and since then, during the past year, expressed the views which I have expressed relative to the Beneficent Fund. I have been informed also by the Corresponding Member of the Annual Committee, that "in consequence of my known connexion with Mr. Barker, the Conference may deem it requisite to ascertain, if possible, how far I retain my approval of the laws, &c. of the Connexion, my profession of which secured my introduction into our ministry."

In order that I may correct the misunderstanding above adverted to, and satisfy the Conference on the subject referred to by the Annual Committee, I have drawn up the following statement. I choose to make this statement in writing, in order that I may retain a copy myself, and furnish a copy to you, that there may hereafter be no misunderstanding on the subject.

And first, with regard to the avowal of my attachment to the Connexion which I made at last Conference. I do not remember the exact phraseology I used on that occasion, but I do distinctly remember, that I made no declaration of unqualified approval of the laws, institutions, and regulations of the Connexion. As far as I can recollect, my statement was to this effect, "That the great leading principles of our system of church government appeared to me to be in stricter accordance with reason, justice, and Scripture, than any others with which I was then acquainted. And further, that *as far as the rules and regulations of the Body commended themselves to my own mind as being in agreement with the word of God*, I was determined to abide by them and support them. I cannot vouch for the verbal accuracy of this statement, but I have no more doubt that I inserted such a qualification as the above, than that I made a statement at all.

In strict harmony with this declaration has been my subsequent conduct, and in strict harmony with this declaration are my present views and purposes. I still think that what I then regarded

as the fundamental principles of our system of church government, are in stricter accordance with reason, justice, and Scripture, than any others with which I am acquainted. And I *have* supported the rules and regulations of the body, as far as they have commended themselves to my own mind, as being in agreement with the word of God. Should I be permitted to remain in the Connexion, I still feel disposed and determined to do so ; but more than this I cannot profess ; more than this I cannot promise ; more than this I cannot do.

The principles which I regarded at last Conference, as the fundamental principles of our system of church government ; the principles of which I then declared my approval, are these :—The sufficiency of Scripture as a perfect rule of faith and practice—the right of each individual to judge for himself as to what is required by Scripture—the equality of preachers and people, and the equality of the people themselves with each other ; so that amongst us no man should be called master, but all be brethren. These were the principles which I then regarded as the fundamental principles of the body, and my approbation of which I then declared. I still regard these principles in the same light, and I believe every deviation from them to be a departure from the fundamental principles of the Connexion. These principles I still love, admire, and cherish ; and whether permitted to remain in the Connexion or not, they are the principles by which I hope to regulate my conduct as long as I live.

In the exercise of the right to which these principles entitle me ; a right which I distinctly reserved to myself, by the qualification I inserted in the statement of my purpose to support the rules and regulations of the body, which I made at the last Conference ; in the exercise of this right, I say, I have ceased to be, myself, a subscriber to the Beneficent Fund ; I have also declined to solicit subscriptions from others. I have stated the former of these facts in the Appendix to my published Lecture on the Use of Money ; and I have stated both facts in a communication to the Annual Committee. The reasons by which I was induced to pursue this line of conduct, I have elsewhere stated ; and all that I have to say in addition now, is in vindication of my conduct in publishing the fact in the Appendix to my Lecture.

It is asked, If you wished for an alteration in the rules of the fund, why did you not seek it in a constitutional way ? I answer, 1. A statement of my views on that subject had been previously made to the Annual Committee ; my name, indeed, was not appended to that communication, but it passed through my hands ; it bore, if I mistake not, the Bradford post mark, and “in consequence of my known connection with Mr. B.,” might have been supposed to have my concurrence : and it did fully express my views on that subject. To the proposals contained in that letter, the Committee gave a decided negative ; and had I been disposed to seek alterations in the rules of the Fund, I was already acquainted with the views of the Committee, on the



alterations I should have wished to propose. 2. But it was not so much with a view to the obtaining any alterations in the rules of the Fund, that I wrote and published the paragraph objected to : it was principally in order to set myself right with the public on the general question, in the discussion of which I had been led to take a part. In the course of my ministerial duties, I had delivered certain sentiments on the subject of our laying up for ourselves treasures on earth. Anxious that the subject should be thoroughly understood by my hearers, I offered to answer questions thereon, proposed by any individual who might give me reason to suppose that he was a sincere inquirer after truth. In consequence, I received a number of questions as to the application of the principles I had laid down, to Benefit Societies and similar institutions. I answered those questions freely, and was afterwards requested to publish my lecture, as well as the questions and answers. I agreed to do so ; and a friend who was acquainted with my intentions, proposed the question relative to the Beneficent Fund. I had previously made up my mind to subscribe no more to the fund myself, but I had no design to make my intention public, till I received the question just referred to. I had no course left then, but either to withhold my sentiments from the public altogether, or to neutralize their effect by an apparent inconsistency between my sentiments and my practice, or else publish my intentions to the world. I could not, consistently with a sense of duty, conceal my views on the general subject. I could not publish those views, and allow it to be supposed that by contributing to the Beneficent Fund, I acted at variance with them ; and I therefore published my sentiments in that form in which they appeared. I certainly did not *denounce* the Fund ; but I calmly, kindly, and freely stated my convictions and purposes. Whether to do this be a greater liberty than I ought to use, I leave it to every candid man to judge.

I have said that I still approve of the fundamental principles of the Connexion. I do so ; but I could not honestly withhold the declaration, that I believe that there has been, especially at the present Conference, an awful departure from these principles. Some of the instances in which I believe such deviations to have taken place, I now proceed to enumerate.

The principle that the Scriptures are a sufficient rule of faith and practice, seems to me to have been departed from by substituting a human creed for the Scriptures as a test of orthodoxy, to detect, try, and convict those who are supposed to have fallen into error. I know that my esteemed friend and brother, Joseph Barker, was permitted to appeal to Scripture in defence of his views on baptism. But then, it has been declared again and again, in the present Conference, that this was not admitted as a right, but conceded as a privilege ; that it was an act of grace, of mercy, not of justice. In short, it has been stated, that instead of his trial occupying three days, it need not to have occupied

more than three minutes ; and that all that the law required was<sup>d</sup> to prove that he held such opinions, and to proceed at once to enforce the sentence. A law that will admit of such a procedure, in such a case, seems to me to be at variance alike with the principles of Christianity, and with the fundamental principles of the Methodist New Connexion.

And then, besides, though friend Barker was allowed to appeal to the New Testament to prove that his sentiments were true, the Conference did not appeal to the New Testament as the ground of its decision on his case. He was expelled, not because the New Testament requires the church of Christ to expel those who do not administer the rite of baptism, or who question or deny the permanent obligation of the outward elements of the Lord's Supper, but because *our rules* require it, or because it is supposed that we could not otherwise exist as a Connexion. It certainly does appear to me, that if a Connexion cannot exist without rejecting those as ministers whom God has called into the ministry, whose labours in the ministry God has blessed, and whose only offence is that they do not put the same interpretation on our Lord's words relative to baptism and the supper that we do, it ought not to exist all.

The right of each individual to judge for himself as to what is required by Scripture, I have always understood to be another fundamental principle of the New Connexion. I am not now going to argue the subject ; I shall not at present attempt to prove, either that this principle is a just and Scriptural one, or that it was ever recognized as a fundamental principle in our community ; I only state my full and entire conviction of both ; and that this was one of the principles, my approval of which I declared, when received into full Connexion. From this principle we have most fearfully departed. A minister has been discontinued simply because he does not understand the Gospel to require, in two particular instances, what the majority of this Conference believes it to require. I do not mean that this is the only reason which has influenced the members of the Conference ; —I am afraid they have been influenced by others : but this is the reason assigned in the resolutions by which his expulsion has been effected.

The equality of preachers and people, and the equality of the people with each other, I have always regarded as another fundamental principle of the Connexion. This has been our boast ; that we are not divided into masters and servants, but that we are all brethren. How far we have wandered from this principle I shall leave the Conference to judge, after stating two cases in which it seems to me to have been entirely lost sight of. Joseph Barker wrote an article on Creeds ; the Conference took the matter up, and he was censured for writing that article. He reiterated his sentiments on the subject, and he was again called to account for his conduct by Conference. The republication of his articles on Creeds constituted one of the charges of which he

received notice before Conference. Joseph Townsend, a layman, writes a pamphlet on the same subject. In that pamphlet he expresses views perfectly identical with those of Joseph Barker; only he declares them at greater length, and in stronger terms. No notice is taken of *his* conduct; he is allowed to sit in Conference without any charge being alleged or proceedings taken against him. Is this equality between preachers and people? The degrading statements that have been made about preachers eating of the people's bread, and drinking of their cup, while they do not comply with their wishes, show full well, that so far from any thing like equality existing between preachers and people, the preachers are regarded as the hired servants of the people; hired, not to obey Christ's commands, and do Christ's work, but to submit to the people's will, and do what they think proper to require.

And then as to equality among the people themselves, any candid man may judge how far this exists, by reading the circular of the Annual Committee commented upon in the Mossley resolutions. That circular requests that the Hanley and Manchester resolutions may be submitted to the "*private and confidential* consideration of the most *intelligent and influential* friends." Is this equality? The boasted equality of the New Connexion? You may put what colouring you please on that transaction; it will still appear to be one of the most partial, uncandid, unfair proceedings that ever stained the pages of ecclesiastical history. You may wash it with much soap, and still it will not be clean. And while the Conference sanctions this proceeding, instead of visiting the authors of it with the censure that they deserve, I ask again, where is the boasted equality of the New Connexion?

I wish to be distinctly understood. If I am to remain in the Connexion, it must be with the understanding that I hold the principles which I have already stated, and which I have always regarded, and have always been taught to regard, as the fundamental principles of the Connexion. It must be with the understanding, that I believe those principles to have been to a great extent abandoned, and that I shall embrace every suitable opportunity of stating my convictions, and that I will use all proper means to bring about a return to first principles. It must be with the understanding, that I regard the recent decision in friend Barker's case as unscriptural, illiberal, unconstitutional, and unjust. It must be with the understanding, that I differ from the majority of this Conference widely as to the character of the proceedings against him: that I deem them, and shall feel myself bound to declare, that I deem them unchristian, unkind, cruel. That I shall feel myself bound to declare that in seeking for evidence as evidence was sought for; in laying a number of charges before the world that were not brought forward on his trial; in throwing out a number of insinuations, and making a number of statements, affecting both the purity of his doctrinal sentiments

and the integrity of his moral character ; which, had they been susceptible of proof, *ought* to have been, and doubtless *would have* been, the ground of proceedings against him ; as well as in finally expelling him for holding sentiments, and pursuing a course, which do not at all disqualify him for being a faithful minister of the New Testament ; that in these particulars the committee, some of the speakers in this Conference, and this Conference itself in the last particular, have acted unkindly, unjustly, and dishonourably. Whether I remain in the Connexion or not, such are my convictions, and I shall feel bound to publish them to the world. The principles on which my friend Barker has acted, are the principles on which I am resolved to act myself. To reject every thing that I believe to be false, to receive every thing that commends itself to my judgment as true ; to avoid every thing that in my judgment God prohibits, and to do whatever I believe God requires ; in short, to act at all times, and under all circumstances, as a sense of duty dictates, whatever may be the requirements of any earthly authority. These are my principles and intentions. If, holding these principles and declaring these purposes, you can allow me to remain in the Connexion, well. If not, I must submit to be removed. All I wish is, that there may be no misunderstanding in the case. That if I remain, I may know, and the Conference may know, and the Connexion may know, on what grounds I remain ; that if I am discontinued, I may know, and the Conference, and the Connexion, and the public may know, on what grounds I am discontinued."

While I was reading this paper, I was several times interrupted by members of Conference ; some crying shame ! shame ! and at one time, when I was reading that passage that relates to the circular of the Annual Committee, five or six members of Conference rose from their seats together, and cried, "Really Mr. President, this cannot be endured !" When the storm was a little allayed, I stated that if the President forbade me to proceed, I should cease reading ; but that if he allowed me, I should certainly proceed, till I got to the end of the document. I stated that it would not require much time to read it, and that I did not intend to trouble them with any remarks afterwards.

W. Shuttleworth said, he saw what I was about. I was reading a book that had been written for the public, not for the Conference, and that it was intended to have its effect out of doors. There were some others who made remarks similar to those already recorded ; but at last, the more shrewd and foreseeing amongst the leaders of the Conference, perceiving the light in which their conduct would be viewed, if they prevented me from reading the document, advised that I should be allowed to proceed ; and permission being granted by the President, I read the remainder, without much further interruption. When I had finished the reading of the paper, and had resumed my seat, John Bakewell rose and delivered a second speech, of which the following is the substance :—

He said that they heard a great deal about conscience, and about men's right to act on the dictates of their conscience ;—but it was possible to make mere matters of opinion into matters of conscience. There was such a thing as having a diseased conscience. (“Yes,” said W. Shuttleworth, interrupting the speaker, “there is an evil conscience.”) Yes, rejoined J. B., there is such a thing as an evil conscience ; and he intimated a fear that Friend Barker's conscience and mine were of that description. He observed that every man had to relinquish a portion of his natural rights, in order to enjoy the rights and privileges of civil society. That it was all perfect nonsense to represent the Conference as interfering with the right of private judgment by requiring its preachers to conform to its regulations ;—and that the long extracts from Jeremy Taylor and others, which had been read by Mr. Barker, had no more to do with the subject, than with the man in the moon. He said that the Connexion did not compel Mr. Barker and Mr. Trotter to leave the Wesleyans and to join them ; that the Connexion did not force him (J. Bakewell) to leave the Baptists and join them. That the Connexion did not force any one to come out from amongst the world, and enroll himself as a member in the Body ; that in every case it was freely and voluntarily done by the individuals themselves ; and that for those individuals to complain of the Body, for requiring them to submit to its laws, and conform to its usages, was alike unreasonable and unfair. He said that while he gave me full credit for acting on the conscientious convictions of my mind, he claimed, from me, equal credit for himself, and for those who acted with him. He was consequently as much surprised as grieved, by the insinuation that the Conference had other reasons than those specified in their resolutions, for the decision they had come to in the case of Mr. Barker ; “that insinuation,” said he, “I indignantly repel.” In reply to what I had said respecting the preachers being regarded as the hired servants of the people, he observed that while there had perhaps been a lack of delicacy in some of the remarks which had been made about the preachers eating the people's bread, and so on, still it was not true that the preachers were regarded as mere hirelings. At the same time he declared his conviction, that when ministers receive their support from the people, they were bound to render their services to the people ; and that when a man receives support for defending certain principles, it is dishonest for that man to oppose them.

He intimated an opinion that my sentiments and projects were of an excessively levelling turn, and that they were calculated to alienate from each other the higher and lower classes in society. In confirmation of this he stated, that he had been conversing the day before with a shrewd Yorkshireman, who had once been an ardent admirer of mine, but whose views respecting me had undergone a total and a painful change, in consequence of the sentiments on the use of property, which I had for some time laboured

to propagate. He said, that this friend of mine had informed him that, in his neighbourhood, my sentiments were embraced by the most disaffected, idle, and discontented of the inhabitants; that they regularly assembled in crowds opposite his door, extolling the publications of Joseph Barker and William Trotter; and that, highly as he had respected me, this circumstance had compelled him to change his views.

John Bakewell concluded his remarks by moving my discontinuance from the ministry. The motion was seconded by W. Medcalfe, of Manchester.

Thomas Allin then proposed to me a number of questions, manifestly intended to draw from me statements, that might be used to my disadvantage afterwards. My object in writing down my thoughts beforehand, and reading what I had written to the Conference, was to obviate the necessity for making statements, under the influence of mental excitement and agitation, which might have been unguardedly expressed, and which might, in consequence, be perverted from their true, legitimate meaning. When, therefore, Thomas Allin proposed the questions just noticed, I referred him to what I had written and read. "Am I then to understand," said he, "that Mr. Trotter would have an ultra-calvinist allowed to occupy our pulpits and disseminate his doctrines amongst our people?" I referred him to my declaration, and said that I had spoken there with sufficient plainness. "But I beg through you, Mr. President, to press my question," said Thomas Allin: "Does Mr. Trotter mean to say, that no man of good moral character should be excluded from a religious body, however erroneous his sentiments may be?" I again expressed my conviction, that my views were stated with sufficient plainness in my declaration; I said, that excited and agitated as I then was, I was not in a fit state of mind to explain my opinions; and as I had done so already, with sufficient explicitness, in the document I had read to the Conference, I should decline entering into any further explanations then. Notwithstanding this, Thomas Allin repeated his questions again and again, in different forms of language, and only ceased to do so, when he found that his efforts to entangle me were all in vain.

David Oldham also asked me, if I thought there could be a union without a compact; if I thought it possible for men to be united together in church-fellowship, without some terms of agreement. After he had repeated his questions several times, I told him that, on the grounds already stated, I should decline answering his questions also; and he then desired me to bear them in mind, and answer them, in any account of Conference that I might feel disposed to publish. I assured him that all these matters should be attended to in due course, if Providence should spare my life. I believe that no unprejudiced person could have witnessed the course taken by Thomas Allin and David Oldham, without perceiving that they did all within their power, to extort something from me, which might afford them some pretext for

passing the strange resolution, which they did pass in my case. But no such pretext was afforded them. My written declaration was all that they had, on which to ground that resolution; and whether my written declaration contained anything capable of such a construction as that which they put upon it, will be the subject of inquiry by and bye.

John Ridgway, of Staffordshire Potteries, next addressed the Conference. He said, that to decline supporting the Beneficent Fund, was to act at variance with one of the first principles of duty, the principle of justice. That when in connection with this I was found avowing my determination to support a rival Periodical and Book Establishment, it was time to take alarm; there was treason in the camp, and vigorous measures were called for to suppress it! And then, he observed, that there was not only my withdrawal from the Beneficent Fund to be considered, but the unconstitutional way in which I had published my sentiments on the subject. He considered that the defence of my conduct which I had set up, did not mend the matter at all, but made bad, worse. He said, that if I was allowed to proceed in this way, there was no rule that might not be broken; no usage that might not be set aside. If *he* had been in my place, and had imbibed my sentiments, the first thing he would have done, would have been to resign his situation. And then he said,—it was a little matter to be sure;—but there was something very indecent, in a young man like me, addressing those so much superior to myself, as *John* and *Joseph* and *Thomas*; he wondered where common modesty had gone to! Or, if I was really sincere and conscientious in doing so, *I ought to go to my own place!!* He was representing me as an enemy to the Book-room, when I rose for a moment to explain; and stated, that so far from being hostile to the interests of the Magazine and Book-room, I had done my best to promote the interests of both; and that the circulation of the magazines had considerably increased in the circuit where I had been stationed that year;—he said that he did not think more highly of me for that; that there seemed to him a strange inconsistency in my conduct; that I strained at a gnat and swallowed a camel. He observed, that if I had gone less into detail in what I said respecting the trial of Mr. Barker it would have been more modest and becoming. “Here,” said he, “he sets himself up as a reformer; charges us with departing from our first principles, and declares his determination to do all he can to call us back to first principles! Can this be tolerated? Are these charges just? Can we retain a man amongst us who prefers these charges?” He had hoped that agreeing with them on the subjects of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, I might have been induced to reconsider and retrace the steps that I had taken with regard to the Beneficent Fund, and thus be retained in the Connexion. But when he heard me reiterate my statements relative to the Beneficent Fund, declare my determination to contribute to the New Periodical, and help in conducting the opera-

tions of the new Book-room ;—when he beheld me thus setting up myself as a dictator to the whole Connexion, he felt that it was right for them to clear themselves of me, and of all such men, and he was satisfied that God would sanction and approve the deed !

Joseph Townsend objected to the construction put on what I had said in the resolution moved by John Bakewell. He said that it was not fair to infer from what I had written, that I thought a man should be at liberty to think and speak and act as he pleased. There were certain essential points that could not be misunderstood, and *that*, he believed, was my opinion as well as his ; and he requested me, for the satisfaction of the Conference, to state whether it was my belief, that such a latitude should be allowed, as would admit unbelievers, or any one, into the Church ? Whether, in short, there were no errors for which I would have men expelled from the Church ?

In answer to these questions I distinctly stated that I *did not* mean my declaration to be understood in the sense which was put upon it by my opponents ; that in my view *there were errors in sentiment*, as well as delinquencies in practice, which rendered it necessary for the persons holding them, to be separated from the communion of the Church.

Notwithstanding this explicit declaration, the mover and seconder of the resolution persisted in pressing it,—the mover of it stating, that my two declarations were not consistent with each other, thus choosing to interpret my words for me, instead of leaving me to interpret them myself ; and without any further discussion, and without a copy of the resolution being put into my hands, it was passed by a large majority of the Conference. Several of my friends were absent from the Conference, during the whole of the discussion, and amongst the rest, the delegate from the circuit in which I had been stationed the year preceding. The resolution, as it passed, stood as follows :—

“That Mr. Trotter, having affirmed his disapproval of the Beneficent Fund, and his determination not to support it, and having declared his intention of promoting another Periodical and Book Establishment, most directly opposed to the interests of our Book-room, and having also declared his conviction that every minister has a right to promulgate any opinions which he may entertain, however contrary to the principles of the community of which he is a member, and that the community has no right to interfere or to remove him for such proceedings, views which, in the judgment of the Conference, are incompatible with his engagement with the Connexion, and with the whole tenor of its laws, the Conference is compelled to determine that Mr. Trotter cannot consistently, or honourably, continue a minister amongst us, and as he refuses to resign, the Conference, with great pain, discontinues him from our ministry.”

The foregoing is as full and as accurate a report of the proceedings in my case, as I am able to furnish. In Joseph Bar-



ker's case I took down every particular ; and I believe that there was scarcely a sentiment advanced on either side, of which I did not secure a report. But I was not able to do this so effectually in my own case. My attention was engaged with what the speakers on the opposite side advanced ; and while I was attending to what they said, and answering their questions, it was sometimes impossible for me to write down what passed on either side. But I did what I could ; and I believe that all who were present will acknowledge that the report I have presented is, in spirit and substance, correct ; that while it does not pretend in every case to be a verbal report, it is still a correct representation of what was said ; that nothing is here attributed to the several speakers but what they did express ; and that nothing of any considerable importance is omitted. To the best of my knowledge, the report I have given is strictly accurate ; and I know of nothing that was said of any importance, that is not included in the report.

I shall now proceed to make a few observations on some things that were stated by the speakers in Conference, to which I had not an opportunity of replying then ; and nothing further will remain to be done, but to inquire, whether the propositions laid down at the commencement of this work be true.

J. Bakewell said that it was possible to make matters of opinion into matters of conscience ; but whether is it worse to make a conscience of matters of opinion, or to regard every thing as matters of opinion, and make a conscience of nothing ? And then, candid people will be disposed to ask whether my views on the Beneficent Fund were regarded as of greatest importance by the Conference or myself ? I saw nothing in these views to prevent me from freely and comfortably co-operating with my brethren in all other matters. *The Conference* deemed them so important, as to require my expulsion from the body. And yet John Bakewell can speak of matters of opinion being made into matters of conscience. Matters of opinion may be made into matters of conscience, but when so made,—what is to be done ? Is the individual to pay no regard to his conscientious scruples. Or if he does sacredly regard them, is no regard to be paid to them by his brethren ? Such was not Paul's doctrine on this subject. It was purely a matter of opinion in his days whether men should eat flesh or herbs. But some made it into a matter of conscience ; and what did the Apostle teach on the subject ? Why first, that to him who thought a certain action sinful, it was sinful. Second, that each was to be fully persuaded in his own mind, *and none were to judge their brethren.* But so great was the regard which the Apostle paid to the consciences of his weaker brethren, that he declared, "It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak." And on another occasion he said, "Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my bro-

ther to offend." How stands this case then? Just thus:—I am fully persuaded that with my views, and under existing arrangements, for me to support the Beneficent Fund, would be to do wrong, and incur guilt in the sight of God. "Well, but," says John Bakewell, "you make a matter of opinion into a matter of conscience." Be it so; what does the Apostle command under such circumstances? Why, that you bear with your weak brother; that you respect his conscientious scruples; and even, if necessary, that you refrain from using your own liberty, lest you should be a cause of stumbling to your brother. "No," says John Bakewell, in effect, "you make a matter of opinion into a matter of conscience; you cannot be tolerated; you must be expelled"! Whether John Bakewell or the Apostle Paul be right, judge ye!

The same speaker said that a man has to relinquish a portion of his natural rights, in order to enjoy the rights and privileges of civil society. But does he mean to assert, that a man should give up the right to judge for himself as to what God requires at his hands? That is the question at issue, and unless he means to assert that, he asserts nothing to the purpose whatever.

He said that the Connexion does not force people to become its members and ministers. But does he infer from that that the Connexion is entitled to require men, as a condition of membership, to relinquish the right to judge for themselves what is true and good, and to act on the convictions of their own minds? If this be not fairly deducible from the fact, the fact itself says nothing in favour of John Bakewell's principles, or in defence of Conference measures.

He "indignantly repelled" the insinuation that Conference had other reasons for expelling J. Barker than those assigned in their resolutions. But whether this were really the case or not, is sufficiently proved by my own expulsion.

John Bakewell said, that when ministers receive their support from the people they should render their services to the people; and that when a man is supported for defending certain principles, it is dishonest for him to oppose them. Yes, but ought ministers to be supported for any object but that they may learn and teach the whole religion of Christ? And when a man honestly labours to do this, does he not fulfil all the obligations under which he is laid? To say to a man,—“You shall be our minister, and we shall do our best to support you: but it must be on condition that you preach such and such doctrines, and those alone”—is the way to fetter men's souls and debase their moral principles and feelings; it is the way to have a subservient, hireling ministry, but it is not the way to secure the services of those who do every thing as unto the Lord, and not as unto men.

John Bakewell thinks that I am of a levelling turn, and that my sentiments are calculated to sow the seeds of discord between the higher and the lower classes of society; but these objections

are fully answered in my publications on the right use of property, and require no further notice here.

The conversation that he said he had held the day before with a shrewd Yorkshireman, who was once a great admirer and friend of mine, if it had been correctly represented, would have produced a very different impression on the Conference, from that which it was intended to make, and which it did actually produce. I believe that it was the universal impression on the minds of the members of Conference, that notwithstanding the high regard which my friend had entertained for me, my sentiments on the subject of property, had completely changed his views respecting me, and that however painful it might be to him, he saw that my separation from the Connexion would be just and unavoidable. This was not said in so many words, but the whole tale was told in such a way, as to produce this impression. But nothing could be further from the truth. I have since ascertained who it was, that Friend Bakewell had conversed with the day before; and it turned out to be a person who is still one of my most intimate friends; and he had actually got into the company of John Bakewell and others, on the Sabbath, on purpose to urge and intreat them to do all they could to preserve me to the Connexion. He did, in the course of conversation say, that he differed from me on the subject referred to above, and made some such remarks as those above detailed; but so far from thinking there was any necessity for my removal from the Connexion, his object, in conversing with them, was *to prevent* my separation from the Body. So much in reply to John Bakewell's speech.

With regard to the questions proposed by Thomas Allin and David Oldham, as to my views on the extent to which Christians should tolerate differences of sentiment amongst each other, I intend to give my views on this subject to the public, in a Lecture on the Right of Private Judgment, which I expect to publish shortly. It will either appear in a separate form, or in the columns of the Christian Investigator. All the objections to my views on that subject, with which I have met, will there be considered at large, and answered. It would obviously be impossible to enter on the discussion of such a subject here; and I must therefore refer my readers to my intended publication, for a solution of the difficulties suggested by David Oldham and Thomas Allin.

For the character of John Ridgway I have entertained a high regard; and I still cherish the hope that, in the part he took at the late Conference, his judgment was overpowered by the clamorous solicitations of those, whom he had for years restrained from pursuing the course which they have at last adopted, and which they have succeeded in persuading him to sanction. But his speech was of the most overbearing and intolerant cast, and I confess that I listened to it with surprise.

He said, that to decline supporting the Beneficent Fund was to

fail in one of the first principles of duty, the principle of justice. Justice—to whom? To the members of that fund? Nay, for if I rendered no support, I claimed no assistance; and how it can be proved, that to refuse to be a member of an institution, in which men voluntarily unite together, to provide for their own future necessities, and which cannot impose any obligation, except by the voluntary consent of those who take such obligations upon them, I cannot, for one, imagine. What injustice there can be in a preacher saying, “I wish for none of the advantages flowing from the Beneficent Society, and as I have other, and what appear to me better, ways of expending my property, I decline to contribute to its funds,”—what injustice there can be in this, I fancy John Ridgway himself would be at a loss to show.

But, he said, there was treason in the camp, and it was time to take the alarm. That is, there were two or three individuals who ventured to think for themselves, to act on the honest convictions of their minds, and to declare those convictions to their brethren. Well, if this be treason to man, it is allegiance to God; and if it be matter of alarm to those who are conscious of having usurped an authority to which they are not entitled, it will be matter of thankfulness and joy to all right-minded, true-hearted friends of Christian freedom and of Christian truth. “Treason in the camp!” How it sounds for one sinful worm, when he finds another daring to differ from him in opinion, to raise a cry of treason in the camp! When shall we learn that lesson, which the Redeemer so frequently urged on the attention of his disciples, “Be not ye called of men Rabbi, for one is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren!”

He said, that my defence of my conduct in publishing my sentiments on the Beneficent Fund, did not mend the matter at all, but made bad worse. I fancy that most of my readers will differ from him on this point: I imagine there are not many who read the vindication of this part of my conduct, contained in the document I read to the Conference, but will perceive, that whether my views on the subject were correct or not, I was bound to publish them; that, situated as I was, I could not have refrained from publishing them, without incurring a charge of inconsistency, that would have been alike fatal to my character and my usefulness.

If I was allowed to proceed in this way, John Ridgway said, there was no rule that might not be broken. It is yet to be proved, however, that I have broken any rule of the Connexion at all. I believe that I shall be able to prove that I have not broken one.

He thinks that it is not modest for a young man like me to call people John and Thomas and Joseph: and I think it would have been considerably more prudent in him, to have withheld that remark. Numbers of people will be very difficult to persuade, that there is any thing immodest in calling men by their own proper names: and numbers will conclude, that nothing but mortified

vanity could cause any man to be offended by such a practice. It is a little thing, as John Ridgway said; but when such little things are magnified into terms of church membership; when a man, high in character, and station, and office, like John Ridgway, can say, that if a man conscientiously declines to call any man *master* on earth, and addresses people by their proper names, "**HE OUGHT TO GO TO HIS OWN PLACE!**"\* when such things as these transpire, I think it is high time for any man, whether young or old, to rise and bear testimony against the encroachments of presumption and pride; and plead for strict and literal obedience to the Saviour's command, both in the spirit and in the letter.

John Ridgway seemed to be determined to think evil of me. If he thought me an enemy to the Book-room, *that* was a serious reflection on my character; and when I corrected this mistake, and showed that I had acted as the friend of that institution, he said that he thought no better of me for *that*! So that, whether friend or foe, it seems I must be in the wrong!

He thought, if I had gone less into detail in my observations on the character of Joseph Barker's trial, it would have been more modest and becoming. Yes, this was my great offence. I could not be induced to desert my friend; I bore testimony against the unhallowed proceedings of his persecutors; and that was the grand reason why I had to share his fate. Well, it affords me no little satisfaction, that there—at the time—in the presence of the men, of whose conduct I complained—I bore testimony to the real character of the proceedings against him: I declared my conviction that they were "*unchristian, unkind, cruel.*" My testimony, at least, on this point, has been consistent and unwavering.

John Ridgway says, I set myself up for a Reformer, and seems to be displeased with me for doing so. Just as though any man could be a faithful minister of the New Testament, without being a Reformer. Is it not the duty of every Christian minister to point out every evil that exists, and labour for its removal? To point out every defect in men's spirit and behaviour, and seek to have these defects supplied? And if there be evils in a community, is he to be silent on these? If there be defects in the institutions of the Body to which he belongs, is he to make no efforts to have these supplied? Are we to be told that a man is qualified to be a preacher of the Gospel, and yet that he is not qualified to discharge the duties of that office? If a man is fit to be a minister, he is fit to be a Reformer; and if I was not fit to point out the evils and imperfections which I perceived in the Body, and to seek their removal, then the Conference of 1840 did very wrong in solemnly receiving me into full connexion as a preacher, after passing through a probation of four years.

He hoped that I might have been induced to reconsider and

\* That is, he should leave the Connexion and go to the Society of Friends, who act on that plan.

retrace the steps that I had taken, and that I might thus be retained in the Connexion. Yes, I suppose this was his hope, when, in the morning sitting of Conference, he said "*There is so little in your case, Mr. Trotter—it involves so little*, that I thought it might soon be disposed of!" But when he found that I could not be induced to submit myself to the higher powers,—that the yoke could not be placed upon my neck,—“he felt that it was right to clear themselves of me and of all such men, and he was satisfied that God would sanction and approve the deed!” And this is the liberal, philanthropic, noble-minded John Ridgway! The renowned advocate and promoter of civil and religious liberty! How the best of men, may, for a time, be led astray! “How important that he who thinketh he standeth should take heed lest he fall!”

The resolution that was passed, contains one of the most gross, palpable, and I had almost said, wicked misrepresentations, of which any man, or body of men, could be guilty. I have already stated that a copy of the resolution was not given me while it was under discussion, and though it was twice read over, my attention was so occupied with what had been said, and my mind was under the influence of so much emotion and excitement, that I had no idea that the resolution *so awfully* misrepresented my sentiments, till after the trial was concluded, and a copy of the resolution was sent to me. “And having also declared his conviction that every minister has a right to promulgate *any opinions which he may entertain*, however contrary to the principles of the community of which he is a member, and that the community has no right to interfere or to remove him for such proceedings!” Why, according to this, a man might preach deism or atheism, he might oppose the Messiahship of Jesus, he might plead for fornication, and drunkenness, and theft, and still “the community have no right to interfere or to remove him for such proceedings!” And could those who passed that resolution really believe that I had declared such sentiments as these? Or must they not wilfully have misrepresented my views? Where was there the shadow of a foundation for such statements as these? Was it in that part of my declaration, where, speaking of certain insinuations that had been thrown out against Joseph Barker in the Conference, and certain statements that had been made respecting him, affecting “*the purity of his doctrinal sentiments*,” I say of these statements that, “had they been susceptible of proof, *they ought to have been the ground of proceedings against him?*” Is it there that I plead for the unbounded, irresponsible freedom, or rather, for the unlimited licentiousness of which the resolution speaks? Or is it where I speak of the absolute sufficiency of the Sacred Scriptures as a perfect rule of faith and practice, and declare my conviction that this doctrine was one of the fundamental principles of the Connexion? “No, it is where you assert the right of each individual to judge for himself, as to what is required by Scripture.” Well, and can you assert any thing else? Can you assert that

each individual *has not* a right to judge for himself as to what is required by Scripture? If so, make the assertion, and then we know *who* and *what* we have to deal with. "Well, but if every one has a right to judge for himself as to what is required by Scripture, must not every minister *have a right to promulgate any opinions which he may entertain, however contrary to the principles of the community of which he is a member?*" No, that does not follow. As Joseph Townsend said in Conference, there are certain essential points that cannot be misunderstood by any one, who loves the truth, and is disposed to submit to its influence; and is it not possible to distinguish between the errors which originate in a love of truth, and which are of necessity trifling and temporary, and those which originate in a love of sin, and which in consequence are seriously and permanently destructive? A man who loves the truth, and is solicitous in all things to conform his life to its dictates, may err on such subjects as baptism, and election, and predestination, and a hundred others which it is needless to enumerate; but can a man who sincerely loves the truth, and is anxious to serve and glorify God, and who reads the New Testament with attention, come to the conclusion, that the Gospel is not of divine authority? that Jesus is not the Son of God? that repentance and faith are not the terms of salvation? that drunkenness is allowable? that theft is innocent? that adultery is pure and commendable? No, if a man receives such notions as these, it must be, because he has impure and improper reasons for embracing them. On all these subjects, and a multitude besides, the testimony of Scripture is so plain, and full, there is such a mass of almost irresistible evidence in favour of the truth, and such an utter absence of all difficulties attending the reception of it, that no man with an honest mind, and a pious heart, can err on these points. I have never pleaded for the toleration of errors on such subjects as these, in the Christian Church; there is nothing in what I have said or written on the subject, to lead any one to suppose that I was favourable to the toleration of such errors as these; and every one who reads my declaration will perceive that I only plead for the allowance of such differences in sentiment as are compatible with purity of motive, uprightness of mind, and full, sincere, submission to the will of God. This is evident through the whole of that document. Do I express my disapprobation of Conference for expelling Joseph Barker on the ground of the differences between him and them, on the subjects of Baptism and the Lord's Supper? It is because those differences of sentiment, supposing him to be in error, did not prevent him from being a good man, a faithful, useful, efficient minister of the Gospel. Do I declare my own intentions for the future. It is as follows: "To reject every thing that I believe to be false, to receive every thing that commends itself to my judgment as true; to avoid every thing that in my judgment *God prohibits*, and to do whatever I believe *God requires*; in short, to act at all times, and under all circumstances, *as a sense of duty dictates*, whatever may

be the requirements of any earthly authority." From these extracts, as well as from the general spirit of the document, it is plain, that the liberty for which I contended, was not the liberty to hold and propagate *any opinions* whether compatible with a good conscience, and an uncorrupted mind, or not; but such sentiments as we are led to adopt, by searching the Scriptures under the influence of the Spirit of God, impelled by an intense anxiety to learn and do God's will. The liberty for which I contended, was the liberty to search the Scriptures for ourselves; the liberty to lay aside what we thereby discovered to be wrong, and to do what we learnt by the diligent study of the Scriptures to be our duty. And I hope, if spared, to prove at large, in my Lecture on the Right of Private Judgment, that my sentiments on this subject are true and scriptural; that God would *not* have us to expel any one from communion with us, that we have *every* reason to believe labours to learn and to fulfil his duty; that there is no heresy spoken of in Scripture but such as originates in, is inseparably connected with, and inevitably leads to, sinful tempers and vicious practices: and that while, after the first and second admonition heretics are to be rejected, we are not authorised in rejecting any man that we believe Christ has received. Such, and such alone, were the sentiments I expressed in Conference, and if any doubt had remained on any mind, as to what my sentiments were, that last doubt must have been removed by the statement which I made in answer to Joseph Townsend's question, "that there were errors in sentiment, as well as delinquencies in practice, which rendered it necessary for the persons holding them, to be separated from the communion of the church." And yet, after all, the Conference could pass a resolution which charges me with "having declared my conviction that every minister has a right to promulgate *any opinions which he may entertain*, however contrary to the principles of the community of which he is a member, and that the community has *no right* to interfere, or to remove him, for such proceedings!" For this dreadful, and I fear, wilful, misrepresentation of my sentiments, may God forgive the Conference.

I must now proceed, briefly, to review the whole case, and inquire whether the propositions laid down at the commencement of this work be true.

1. The first of these propositions was, that I had transgressed no law to which I was amenable. There are but two laws to which I could be regarded as amenable; the law of Christ, and the law of the Connexion. It has never been intimated, I believe, that I had violated any of Christ's laws. The law of Christ requires that a preacher "be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; one that ruleth well his own house, not a novice, lest' being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must have



a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil." 1. Tim. iii. 2., 7. Preachers of the Gospel are further required to be "examples of the believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity." They are called to "give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine." In short, they are required "to meditate on these things, to give themselves wholly to them, that their profitting may appear to all." 1. Tim. iv. 12. 15. Such are the requirements of Christ's law; but in none of these particulars was I accused of being defective. No one ever attempted to prove, that I failed in one of the qualifications required by Christ of his ministers; that I neglected a single duty enjoined on his ministers, by the great Head of the Church. So that it could not be for any violation of the law of Christ, that I was expelled from the Body.

And I was as innocent of breaking the laws of the Connexion as I was of breaking the laws of Christ. The law of the Connexion is as follows:—"The qualifications necessary for a Circuit Preacher are, sound experience in Divine things, exemplary piety, acceptable ministerial talents, the fruits of ministerial labours, a willingness to bear the hardships of an itinerant life, a firm purpose to conform to, as well as enforce, the discipline of the Connexion, a holy resolution to be faithful and persevering in all ministerial duties, and an unreserved dedication of time and talents to God, for the promotion of his glory and the salvation of precious souls." General Rules, sec. 9. 1. Such are the qualifications requisite for Circuit Preachers, as laid down in the General Rules of the Body, and I was not accused of deficiency in any of these qualifications. There is not a single rule of the Connexion, with the violation of which I have been charged by any one.

"What," says some one, "Were you not accused and convicted of non-conformity to the discipline of the Connexion? Is it not a rule of the Connexion that every preacher shall contribute to the Beneficent Fund? Is it not a Rule of the Connexion that no one shall publish any thing controverting our existing rules, without first subjecting it to the inspection of the Annual Committee? And is it not a rule of the Connexion, that if preachers publish their sentiments, it shall be, not by means of a separate Periodical and Book-room, but by means of the Periodical and Book-room established and authorized by the Connexion?" These are important questions. Let us look for a moment at each of them.

And, first, with regard to the Beneficent Fund. *It is a Rule of the Beneficent Society, that all the preachers in the Connexion shall be members of that Society, and contribute to its funds. But the Beneficent Society itself, is a separate institution, perfectly distinct from the Connexion, and without any authority to pass laws that shall be binding on the ministers of the Connexion. Just look at the constitution of the Beneficent Society,*

and you will see in a moment, that it cannot pass laws to bind the ministers of the community. Who are the members of this Society? "All the Circuit Preachers, who now are, or who hereafter shall be, in the Methodist New Connexion, and all annual subscribers of half a guinea, or benefactors of five guineas and upwards." Rules of the Beneficent Society,—Rule 8. How, and by whom, are the Rules made and altered? "That it shall be competent for this Society to vary or alter these rules, and make new ones, provided such alteration, or intended new rules, be inserted in the Minutes of the preceding Conference, and be agreed to at the following Annual Meeting of the Society, by at least three-fourths of the members then assembled." Ibid.—Rule 36. And how is this Annual Meeting composed? Why, simply, of as many of the preachers, and subscribers, and benefactors, as are present at the Conference. Ibid.—Rule 9. And are we to be told, that a meeting composed of as many preachers, and subscribers of half a guinea, and benefactors of five guineas to the Preachers' Fund, as happen to be at the Conference, has power to pass laws which shall bind the conduct of the preachers, and the violation of which shall expose them to expulsion? Absurd! Why, if this were the case, then a man has only to subscribe half a guinea to the Beneficent Fund, and he becomes permanently an irresponsible ruler in the Connexion. If this were the case, where is the boasted representation and liberty of the Methodist New Connexion?

The state of the case is simply this:—The Beneficent Society is neither more nor less than a common Benefit Society among the preachers, composed of persons who contribute to its funds, and governed by internal regulations of its own. If any of its members break its laws, it has fines and penalties whereby to enforce them; but its regulations are no more to be regarded as of equal authority with the general rules of the Body, than the bye laws of a leaders' meeting, in some country society, are to be regarded as binding on the whole Connexion. Just look at the 12th Rule, which specifies the penalties consequent on neglect of payment, and you will see that this is the case. "That every Circuit Preacher in the Methodist New Connexion, whether on probation or otherwise, shall become a member of this Society; and shall pay to the Treasurer thereof, in advance annually, at the time and place of the meeting of Conference, if married, one guinea and a half; if unmarried, one guinea, for his annual subscription; but if such subscription be not paid within one calendar month next after the sitting of Conference, then a forfeit of two shillings and sixpence shall be paid for such neglect, and the same for each calendar month afterwards, during which such subscription, and also forfeits, shall be unpaid; and should both remain unpaid at the next Conference, then such preacher shall lose a year's standing in the Society; and should he still neglect his payments, and incur the same forfeits till another Conference, without discharging them during the sittings thereof, then, and

in such case, he shall be excluded all benefit arising from the Society, and whatever subscriptions he may have paid shall be forfeited."

There is not a word here, about expulsion; and very properly not. The Beneficent Society is simply an association for mutual protection from want, like any other Benefit Society; and to withhold its assistance, is the utmost penalty that it can inflict, for the breach of its regulations.

If it had been intended that to contribute to the Beneficent Fund should be the indispensable duty of the preachers, and a condition of continuance in the ministry, it would have been stated in the general rules of the Connexion; and as long as there is not the slightest hint of any thing of the kind to be found there, it is plain that in withdrawing from the Beneficent Fund I have not violated any law of the Connexion.

I have now answered the second question as well as the first. There *is* a rule requiring the preachers, when they publish any thing controverting the acknowledged principles and existing rules of the Connexion, to submit it beforehand to the inspection of the Annual Committee. But then *I have* published *nothing of the kind*. I have showed to the satisfaction of the candid, and I imagine, *to the conviction* of all, that in controverting the rules and principles of the Beneficent Society, I no more controverted the principles and rules of the Connexion, than if I had published a pamphlet, in opposition to some bye-law agreed upon at the quarterly meeting of some particular circuit.

"Well, but did you not oppose the discipline of the Body in reference to the Book-room? Is there not a rule requiring the preachers, when they publish their sentiments, to do it, not by means of a separate Periodical and Book-room, but by means of the Magazine and Book-room established in the Connexion?" To this question I answer, 1. No, there is not such a rule. The 7th rule, section 10, General Rules, reads as follows: "Whenever any preacher shall prepare a work for the press, *it is recommended* that he tender it, in the first instance, to the Committee of the Book-room for publication." But to this recommendation no regard is paid. The preachers have always taken the course which seemed best to themselves in the publication of their books, and no one has complained of it, till Joseph Barker and I began to do as others had done before us. 2. The Magazine is not half large enough to contain all that we were wishful to publish; and a work *was* offered to the Book-room for publication by my friend, and refused. 3. We *did* offer to make use of the connexional periodical, but we were not allowed to do so. 4. There *was* no alternative left us then, but to withhold our sentiments from the public altogether, or to establish a new Periodical and Book-room. 5. I had not taken any part in the formation of these institutions when I was tried before the Conference; I had only declared *my intention* to assist in conducting them. 6. If I had really assisted in conducting them, there was no law of the Con-

nexion to forbid me ; there was nothing but a recommendation to take a different course ; and that recommendation had never been much regarded by any of the preachers. You see, then, with how little reason it is supposed that I violated any law of the Connexion in reference to the Periodical and Book-room.

With regard to my declaration in favour of the right of private judgment, and liberty of conscience, it is not pretended that I violated any rule of the Connexion by that. The resolution which so awfully distorts and misrepresents my sentiments on that subject, speaks of them as "views, which, in the judgment of the Conference, were incompatible with my engagement with the Connexion, and with the whole tenor of its laws ;" but no reason is assigned for this opinion ; and I suppose that a vast majority of the Connexion are of opinion that my "views" on that subject, when correctly represented, are the very views in which the Connexion had its origin, and by the advocacy of which it was at first distinguished. This, I believe, I shall be able to prove at large, in my Lecture on the Right of Private Judgment. Suffice it now to repeat, that even my most inveterate opponents do not pretend to produce any particular rule of the Connexion, that was violated by the declaration of my sentiments on that point.

If I am not mistaken I have now proved, 1. That I have not even been charged with violating any of the laws of Christ. 2. That in withdrawing from the Beneficent Fund I have not broken any rule of the Connexion. 3. That in publishing my views on the subject of the Beneficent Fund I did not controvert any principle or rule of the Connexion. 4. That in avowing my intention to promote the interests of a new Periodical and Book-room, I did not violate any connexional law ; and 5. That I violated no rule of the Connexion by declaring myself in favour of liberty of conscience, and the right of private judgment. If so, the first proposition laid down at the commencement of this work is true,—that I had transgressed no law to which I was amenable. And whether it be just to discontinue a man from the ministry, who has violated no law, I leave for candid, judicious men to determine.

2. My second proposition was, that I had not sufficient time allowed, to prepare my defence. Of the first charge, that relating to the Beneficent Fund, I did receive notice about fourteen days before Conference. But of the other two charges I received no notice whatever. Not a word was spoken or written to me on the subject of the new Book-room and Periodical, till the morning on which my trial commenced, when John Bakewell asked me whether I could promise to have nothing to do with them, either by writing for the periodical, or assisting to circulate the books. This was the first intimation I received of having to be tried on this point ; and indeed I was not tried on this point. No attempt was made to prove my conduct wrong, and I was never called on

for any defence of my conduct in this particular. And yet one of the grounds on which I was expelled, according to the resolution itself, was, that I had "declared my intention of promoting another Periodical and Book-establishment, most directly opposed to the interests of our Book-room." As to the other offence referred to in the resolution, my declaration in favour of the right of private judgment, I could not receive notice of trial for that, as the offence was not committed till after my trial commenced. The only charge of which I received notice was the first ; of the second I was informed an hour and a half before the trial commenced ; and of the third I received no notice at all.

3. My third proposition was, that on my trial before the Conference, the same persons acted the part of accusers and witnesses, of counsel, judges and jury. It is well known that this would not be tolerated in any civil or criminal court ; and yet such was the course adopted by my opponents in the Conference. Thomas Allin sent me notice of the first charge, stated the case at the commencement of the trial, spoke on it afterwards, cross questioning me like a practised counsellor at the bar ; and then, at the close of all, voted for my expulsion. John Bakewell conferred with me before my trial, spoke at length against me on my trial, moved the resolution by which I was expelled, and then, to crown all, held up his hand for his own resolution. So of John Ridgway, David Oldham, William Shuttleworth, and all who took any public part in the proceedings against me. A great deal was said about decency during the debates ; but whether this was decent, not to say just or fair, let all candid people judge.

4. My fourth proposition was, that no law could be found requiring my expulsion from the body. Of course, as I had broken no law, no law could sentence me to be expelled. But even supposing that the rules of the Beneficent Society should be regarded as the rules of the Connexion, the rule that I had broken did not require me to be expelled. We have seen that the rules of the Beneficent Society cannot be regarded as the rules of the Connexion ; but suppose they could, *they* do not threaten expulsion as the penalty of withdrawal from the fund. The only penalty they threaten is the forfeiture of all benefit arising from the society. In reference to the other two charges there was nothing pretending to be a law, on which my accusers proceeded. So that it was *not the law of the Connexion* that sternly demanded my discontinuance, and compelled the Conference, however unwilling they might be, to cut me off ! No, they did it freely, of their own accord, without any thing like necessity being laid on them to do so, by any rule of the Connexion.

5. By what power then was I expelled ? By the power of Conference alone ! And whence did the Conference derive its authority to proceed to such extremities ? This is a question deserving of serious consideration. The reader will remember that it was laid down as an incontrovertible and universally-

acknowledged principle, that where the law does not *itself* declare the punishment due to offenders,—where a discretionary power to punish has to be exercised,—it is requisite that the law should plainly specify in whose hands this power shall be lodged, and how far it shall extend. The truth of this principle will scarcely be questioned by any one. Let us just see how it applies to the case before us.

We have already seen that there was no law of the Connexion requiring me to be expelled; and yet the Conference in the plenitude of its power, proceeded to expel me. Whence was that power derived? Where is the rule investing the Conference with power to try, convict, and expel a preacher for declining to support the Beneficent Fund, for intending to assist in publishing a periodical and other religious books, and for expressing sentiments favourable to liberty of conscience, and the right of private judgment? Why, you may search the General Rules from beginning to end, you will not find a single clause capable of receiving such a construction! The fact of the case is, there was no rule authorising the Conference to bring me to trial at all; much less to proceed to such extremities as these. If the rules had said nothing about the mode of bringing a preacher to trial; if there had been nothing said respecting the judicial power of Conference, then we might have inferred that it was taken for granted, that the Conference had power to try, censure, and expel men at pleasure, and that it was not deemed necessary to notice it in the rules. But the rules *do* describe the course to be taken in bringing a preacher to trial, and they *do* define the extent of judicial power possessed by Conference; and they show most decisively, that the late Conference far exceeded its constitutional power, and exercised an arbitrary, lawless, self-assumed authority, in bringing to trial those, against whom nothing was alleged by the circuits in which they had travelled. The rules on this subject are as follows:—"The Quarterly, or a Special Circuit meeting, shall be competent to inquire into any charge brought against a Circuit Preacher, in regard to immoral conduct, preaching false doctrine, or gross neglect of duty; but no such charge shall be entertained, unless the Preacher has had seven days' previous notice of its nature, and the time of bringing it forward. In conducting this inquiry, the meeting shall hear the charge and evidence in the presence of the Preacher who is accused, and also his defence against the same, after which, it shall determine, in the fear of God; and if necessary, it shall suspend the said Preacher until the ensuing Conference. When circumstances allow, the Superintendent Preacher or Circuit Stewards shall previously consult or obtain the assistance of the Annual Committee, and in all cases shall give an early account of its proceedings to the corresponding member of this Committee." General Rules Section 5—Rule 15. "The Conference shall be a final court of appeal for our Circuit Preachers in their own right, and for our other officers and members by the reference of

the respective Quarterly Meetings. Before deciding on any case submitted to its consideration, the Conference shall give full opportunity to the parties concerned to hear and repel the charges brought forward, and shall impartially weigh the evidence on both sides, that righteous judgment may be administered in the fear of God." Ibid. Section 14—Rule 7. These are the rules, and the only rules to be found in the collection, to regulate the mode of trying Circuit Preachers. Besides these, there are no others. There is not a rule to be found empowering the Conference to try a preacher who has not been previously tried by the Circuit in which he is stationed, and whose case has not been referred to Conference, either by the Circuit or himself for final decision. As a final court of appeal, the Conference possesses power to decide all cases that may be brought before it; but until a case has been elsewhere considered, and referred to Conference for its decision, the Conference possesses no judicial authority whatever; or if it does, it is a self-assumed authority; it is not invested with such authority by the laws of the Community.

And if the Conference had no authority to try, it could have no authority to condemn and punish me. And yet, we have here a body of men assembled together in Conference,—men, whose only authority for sitting there, was the rule of the Connexion, according to which they had been appointed, and whose authority extended no further than the Rules of the Connexion specify; we have these men proceeding to try a minister, against whom no charge was presented by the circuits in which he had travelled, or by any circuit in the Connexion; a minister against whom no breach of any law to which he was amenable could be proved by his most determined opponents;—we have these men trying this minister without paying the least regard, even to the forms of justice, the same persons acting the part of accusers and counsel,—of judges and jury; we have them at the close of this mock trial, passing upon him a sentence of expulsion, for which there was not the slightest warrant in the Rules; we have them thus exercising an authority to punish, and to punish to the last extremity, where the rules do not so much as give them the power to try; and we have them doing all this under the pretence of deep anxiety for the welfare of a community, every important principle of which they set at nought, and trample under their feet! Seldom has Heaven looked down on such a scene of injustice and intolerance as this!

6. Nor is this the worst. I have now to lay before my readers the proof of my sixth proposition:—That while I have thus been expelled *without law and against law*, numbers who have violated *the most important laws* have been suffered to pass with impunity. This proposition I shall be able to sustain by a series of facts, that will at once astonish and appal the reader. I should not give these facts to the public if I were not persuaded that they are necessary, to place the conduct of the leading men in the Connexion in its true light. My

object is not to injure the persons whose characters may be more or less involved in the statements I make ; but to show, that while resistance to the wishes of the ruling few, is deemed by them an unpardonable offence, a man may *do almost any thing*, and be allowed to pass unnoticed, if he only submit himself to those, who have placed themselves at the head of Connexional affairs. If I were to furnish all the facts with which I am acquainted, in proof of this, I should almost fill a volume ; the few I select shall be such as rest on unquestionable authority.

Rule 8,—Section 2. General Rules declares, that “members omitting to meet in class four times successively, without assigning a satisfactory reason to the Leaders’ Meeting, or to the preacher where there is no Leaders’ Meeting, shall be visited and admonished ; and, if they afterwards wilfully neglect for the same period, *they shall be considered as having withdrawn themselves from us* ; when the leader shall state the circumstance to his class for its information.” Now I know a person, G. B., of Halifax, who has regularly absented himself from his class for months together ; his conduct has been brought repeatedly under the notice of the Leaders’ Meeting when I have been myself present ; I have contended for the enforcement of the rule in his case, but could never succeed ; the Superintendent of the Circuit at the time, has done the same, but all in vain. So far from being “*considered as having withdrawn himself from*” the *Connexion*, as the rule directs, he has been appointed by Conference to offices of the greatest importance and responsibility ; he has been Secretary to the Irish Missions, and one of the deputation from the English to the Irish Conference ; and he is one of the “influential” men who are always consulted by the Annual Committee, on every matter of importance. This person was once appointed by the Conference as a deputation to wait on J. D., of Sheffield, another rich and influential man, to persuade *him*, if possible, to meet in class. This man, J. D., had neglected his class meeting for a great length of time, but instead of being considered as having withdrawn himself from the *Connexion*, as the rule directs, he was appointed a member of the Annual Committee ; he also was sent as a deputation to Ireland ; and a deputation was appointed by Conference to wait on him to endeavour to induce him to meet in class ! And yet these leading men in the *Connexion*, who wink at these glaring violations of the Rules, can pretend to have a great regard for class meetings, and could even bring it forward as one charge against my friend Joseph Barker, that he was unfriendly to class meetings, a charge so totally destitute of all foundation, that even the parties who had originated it for the purpose of creating a prejudice against him, were obliged to withdraw the slanderous imputation. And these same men, who thus trample on the regulations, for which they profess so much respect, have discontinued me, without proving against me the violation of one single rule ! Is this even-handed justice ?



Rule 11.—Section 2, directs that “Any member guilty of causing disturbances, of indulging in slandering or tale-bearing, shall for the first offence be reprov’d; for the second be suspended, and for the third be expelled.” How far this rule is enforced we shall soon have an opportunity to see.

It is well known, I believe, that the Connexion has for years been filled with slanderous reports against Joseph Barker, and that none have more industriously laboured to circulate these reports, than the preachers themselves. Some of these have been of the most malignant, and some of the most ludicrous character.

One case of each kind I shall adduce.

Soon after the Huddersfield Conference of 1839, W. S. paid a visit to the Mossley Circuit from which Joseph Barker had just removed. The proposed object of his visit, as he said, was to bring about a reconciliation between contending parties. On this occasion, amongst others, he made the following statements. 1. That Joseph Barker was doing great mischief by his *wicked* way of advocating Tee-totalism. 2. That he was making money, *for his own use*, to the amount of three or four pounds a week. 3. That he, Joseph Barker, was *wicked, malignant, covetous, selfish*; that, in fact, he was a *Yorkshireman*. 4. That he, W. S., *never saw any piety* in Joseph Barker. 5. That he, W. S., would not allow Joseph Barker, through the medium of the Magazine, to publish his *Unitarian stuff*. Such were the statements made by a minister of the gospel, and editor of the connexional periodical, respecting a brother minister, and made too, under the pretence of promoting peace. My information rests on the very best authority, and I shall let any one know that may choose to inquire, who my informant is.

The other case I adduce, not so much on account of its intrinsic importance, as because it was clearly proved before the Conference.

During the year prior to the Huddersfield Conference, it had been extensively reported that Joseph Barker, while in the Mossley circuit, had buried one of his children that had died, in his own garden, without a coffin. James Robinson, the delegate from Mossley, to the Huddersfield Conference, happened to be the very man who had made the coffin for the child, which had been interred in his own grave, in Mossley chapel yard, in the regular way. James Robinson, in speaking of the dishonourable means that were employed to prejudice people’s minds against Joseph Barker, referred to this report, and stated that there was a preacher then sitting in Conference, who had propagated this report. On being called on to name the preacher, he did name C. A. as the person, and when C. A. would have denied it, he referred him to Mark Hirst, the delegate from the Dewsbury circuit, where C. A. had been stationed that year, and who confirmed the statement of James Robinson. Well, thus convicted before the Conference of “slandering and tale-bearing

ing," what was done with C. A.? Was he censured for what he had done? Was he reprov'd? No such thing; his conduct was passed over, as though there were nothing blameworthy about it.

And then, as to causing disturbances :—On Good Friday last, Joseph Barker preached in High-street chapel, Huddersfield. On that occasion a child was brought to him to be named, and he took it in his arms and named it, and besought the blessing of the Almighty upon it. This gave great offence to T. W., the Superintendent preacher. Some time afterwards, I was in Huddersfield myself, and called on T. W. In the course of conversation he told me that the mother of the child that Joseph Barker had named, was quite troubled about it, and that she would never be satisfied till the child was baptized in the regular way. Determined to sift the matter to the bottom, I went the next morning to see the mother of the child myself; and I took a friend with me, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word might be established. I asked the woman, if she was dissatisfied about her child being named by Joseph Barker; she answered "No, how could I be? He told us beforehand that he did not sprinkle children, and that if we wished ours to be sprinkled, there were other ministers present who would do it; but we told him that *he* should do it; and do it in his own way. And more than that, she said; while the third hymn was being sung, he called us to him again, and asked us if we would rather have it done in the regular way; and we told him NO, *he* should do it. How could we be dissatisfied? *Mr. W. has been to see me*, she said, *and has tried to make me dissatisfied*; and he has been to my mother, and told her that as the child was not properly baptized, it could not inherit any property; but my mother told him that the registration had done away with that." Now here was an aged minister, endeavouring to sow the seeds of disturbance between this young woman and her mother; and endeavouring to do this too, by what must have been a wilful perversion of the truth; for he must have known that the child's legal privileges were not at all affected by such a circumstance. And yet this minister, who thus violated the 11th rule, section 2, General Rules, and who at the same time violated one of the plainest obligations of morality, was one of the principal persons to promote the expulsion of another minister, against whom not the slightest shade of immorality was alleged, and against whom the breach of a single rule could not be established! And is this even-handed justice?

Rule 2, Section 10, it is ordained that the Circuit Preachers "shall visit each family, the Heads whereof are Members of Society, at least once in each quarter; more diligently attending to the sick, the aged, and the negligent." Where is the preacher that does this? Is there one in ten? Is there one in twenty? Is there one in the Connexion? And yet what preachers are ever called to account for the breach of this rule? What preach-

ers in full Connexion have been censured or discontinued for the neglect of it? It seems that visiting the flock of Christ over which they are overseers, is a matter of very trifling importance, compared with supporting the Beneficent Fund! Oh justice! whither hast thou fled?

Rule 4, Section 10, it is ordained that "no Circuit Preacher shall carry on any worldly business, unless it be selling the books of the Connexion." So much importance is attached to this rule, that in the notice of trial received by J. Barker during Conference, the second clause affecting the Institutions of the Connexion stands thus, "II. For having announced the formation of a Book Establishment, *thereby engaging* in worldly business, contrary to rule (section 10, Fourth General Rules)." Who will believe, after this, that other preachers are allowed really to engage in worldly business, without molestation; and that some of those who took a leading part in the proceedings at the late Conference, are amongst the number? And yet such is the fact, of which abundant evidence might be furnished if it were necessary. Two or three cases shall suffice at present.

J. H., a travelling preacher, is well known, in some circuits, to have made a common practice of selling German silver, cutlery, and other articles. And if trading in German silver, cutlery, &c., is not engaging in worldly business, how can worldly business be distinguished from any other sort of business?

T. Allin himself, while he was a travelling preacher, engaged in building speculations in Manchester, by which he became involved in serious difficulties, and had to seek help from friends in order to avoid both ruin and disgrace. He is now advertized on the cover of the Minutes of Conference as superintending the general arrangements of his daughter's school; and though he is now superannuated, and may thus deem himself exempt from all obligation to attend to the rule in question; and though, if he had still been labouring in a circuit, I should have seen nothing wrong myself in the fact of his superintending the general arrangements of his daughter's school; had that school been such as a Christian man and a Christian minister could with propriety sanction; yet there is one fact connected with the affair, that ought to be known to the public. I believe it is not generally known that *a dancing-master has been accustomed to attend that school!* And yet this is the fact. It was made known to the friends in the Mossley Circuit, prior to the Conference of 1840. They received their information from a young female in the Ashton Circuit, and the matter was brought before a Circuit Meeting in Mossley, and the delegate to Conference was about to be instructed to make inquiry at the Longton Conference whether the report was true, when a friend of Thomas Allin's who was present, and could not believe the report, engaged to question Thomas Allin on the subject himself, if the meeting would let the affair alone. In correspondence with that friend, *Thomas Allin acknowledged that the report was true; that dancing was really taught in his daughter's*

*academy!!* I never heard of the circumstance myself till after the last Conference, when I was on a visit to Mossley and the neighbourhood. Since then, I have been informed by a respected friend in Mossley, that Thomas Allin says, that the practice is now given up, because it grieved the minds of some ; *but that he still justifies the practice.* Now, must not the leading preachers of the Connexion have been acquainted with this fact? And if so, where was their consistency, to allow such a violation of all the dictates of Christian feeling and decorum as this, to pass unnoticed. Thomas Allin himself knew, that he had sanctioned the practice of teaching a number of young females a habit, that has sapped the morals, blighted the reputation, and destroyed the souls of thousands, and which has been, in consequence, discarded by all those who hold any thing like strict views of morality and religion ; and yet he can pretend that he has been influenced by a deep concern for the honour and interests of Christianity, in the efforts that he has made to secure the expulsion of *one* whose whole public life has been devoted to the most laborious exertions to promote the revival and spread of Christianity ; and another whose character is acknowledged, *even* by his adversaries, to be without a stain.

Where is the justice of the New Connexion? A man may trade in German silver, may indulge in ruinous building speculations, may superintend the general arrangements of a school where dancing is taught, and none of these things are deemed engaging in worldly business. But if a man proposes, without any hope of gain, to supply the Connexion and the public with religious books at a cheaper rate than heretofore, though he offers to give any security for all the profits, if any, being devoted to religious and benevolent objects, his project is termed "engaging in worldly business," and he receives notice of trial on account of it ; and another minister, for declaring his intention to assist in furthering this project, is expelled from the Body ! I ask again, Is this even-handed justice ?

But we have not heard the worst yet. Would that we had ! I have two or three other cases to mention still, that in some respects are worse than the preceding.

G. H., also a travelling preacher, was called to account at the late Conference for being upwards of fifty pounds in debt to the Book-room, without being able to discharge the claim, and it was clearly proved that this was the case. And yet he has not been removed from the ministry. He had, of course, the same salary as other married preachers, who can on that salary comfortably maintain larger families than his ; and yet, in addition to this, he uses upwards of fifty pounds, received on behalf of the Book-room, which he is unable to refund at the Conference. But this extravagance or negligence, (the one or the other it must be,) is deemed a trifling offence, nay, no offence at all, compared with a determination to think and act for one's self, without slavish submission to the authority of men.

A. J. was known to drink spirits for years before he retired from the ministry ; and it is generally known, I believe, that he was compelled to retire at last in consequence of his habits becoming a matter of public rumour in the town where he resided at the time. I was informed that such was the case by W. R. W., one of the oldest preachers in the Connexion, and the preacher who succeeded A. J. in the circuit from which he was removed. But how was he removed ? Was he brought to trial, and made the subject of proper discipline on account of his offence ? No, he was superannuated by a vote of the Beneficent Society, and the resolution in his case stands as follows. "That Mr. J., at his request, and through increasing infirmities, be superannuated, with the best wishes of his brethren, for the happiness of his declining years." Thus a man, whose habits render it expedient that he should be removed from his circuit, is permitted to retire on the very highest allowance made to superannuated preachers ; while another minister, who has neither violated any moral obligations, or Connexional rule, is discontinued ! And this is the justice of the leading men in the New Connexion ! Surely it was high time for some one to plead for reform !

T. J., another travelling preacher, was suspended by a special circuit meeting of the Hull circuit, for taking an improper liberty with a respectable married female. He was suspended with the full consent and concurrence of the Annual Committee. And yet, who would believe it ? Thomas Allin, the corresponding member of that Committee, did his utmost, *after the suspension of T. J.*, to station him in the Staly Bridge circuit, which was then without a preacher ! And T. J. *was never discontinued !* When it was found that he could not be stationed in the Staly Bridge circuit, Thomas Allin advised him to resign ; and he did so ; and his resignation was accepted ; and thus the affair was hushed up, without any expression of disapprobation from the Conference. The only notice of the case in the minutes of Conference is as follows : "Q. What preachers have desisted ? A. T. J." So that in the minutes of Conference this preacher's name will appear, as long as the minutes themselves endure, without any mark of disgrace whatever ; while Joseph Barker's name and mine will stand in those minutes just as long, in connection with a mark of the greatest opprobrium that the Conference can fix upon any man. "What preachers have desisted ? T. J." ... What preachers are discontinued ? "Joseph Barker and William Trotter." And this is the justice of the Methodist New Connexion !

But one word more with reference to these cases. Some may be disposed to ask, "How was it that you never published those cases before ? Does it not appear as though you were influenced by a revengeful spirit, to let those matters sleep till now, and now, when you have been expelled yourself, to publish them to the world ? Were not these cases as important before your expulsion as they now are ? And if you had published them at all, ought

they not to have been published before now?" To all this, I have two answers. 1. With some of these cases I was not acquainted prior to my expulsion. 2. There were not the same reasons for publishing them if I had been acquainted with them, before the late Conference, that there are at present. I publish them, not because there is any thing in the cases themselves, *considered alone*, which requires them to be published. My reason is this. The late Conference expelled two of its ministers. The considerations which are said to have influenced the Conference to do this, are a regard for the laws, purity and credit of the Connexion. I maintain that this is not true. I prove it in my own case by the fact, that while I have violated no law, done nothing to stain the purity or endanger the credit of the Connexion, I have been expelled; while *others that have violated the laws, stained the purity and compromised the character of the Connexion, have been suffered to remain*. "That while I have been expelled *without law, and against law*, those who have violated *the most important laws* have been permitted to pass with impunity."

I should suppose that I have now, to the satisfaction of every candid reader, and even to the conviction of the most prejudiced, established all the propositions laid down at the commencement of this little work. To refresh the reader's memory, and to afford him full opportunity of judging whether they have been proved or not, I give these propositions again, in the order in which they have been discussed.

1. I have been discontinued from the ministry without having violated any law to which I was constitutionally amenable.

2. I did not receive due legal notice of the charges that were brought against me.

3. The very forms of justice were utterly disregarded on my trial; the same persons acting the part of accusers and counsel, judges and jury.

4. There was no law, either of Christ, or of the Connexion, or even of the *Beneficent Society*, that required my expulsion.

5. That first, in bringing me to trial, and afterwards in expelling me, the Conference exercised a self-assumed authority, for which not the slightest warrant or sanction can be found in the Rules of the Connexion.

6. That while I have thus been dealt with, others, many others, have been permitted to violate both the laws of the Connexion, and the laws of Christ, and even the plainest dictates of common morality, without being punished at all!

So much for the justice of the New Connexion Conference!

And then as to its forbearance. Supposing that I had questioned or denied some important doctrine; supposing that I had violated some important connexional rule, ought I to have been dealt with in such a summary way, by a body of men professing to be followers of the meek and lowly Jesus? *An heretic* is not to be rejected till after the first and second admonition. And when was I once admonished? A great deal is said about the

forbearance that has been exercised towards Joseph Barker. But how much forbearance was exercised towards me? John Ridgway referred to my youth; but supposing me to be in the wrong, ought not my youth to have been regarded as a palliation, rather than an aggravation of my offence? I once, in the course of five years diligent service of the Connexion, write two paragraphs which are deemed objectionable by the ruling men in the Conference. One of these paragraphs only, I publish, and the other I forward to the Annual Committee; and without one single attempt being made to convince me of error, or to recover me from its influence, I am tried, convicted, and expelled! The trial commences at ten o'clock in the morning, and before twelve I am discontinued from the ministry, and separated from the Body, of which I had been a member for seven, and a minister for five years! Was this kind? Was this Christian? Was the case of so serious a character as to require this extreme and summary course? Would any harm have accrued to the Conference or to the Connexion, if I had been addressed in some such way as this;—"We believe you are in error, brother, and we are sorry that you should have yielded yourself to its influence. Had you been so greatly in error on some important religious subject, or had you been convicted of some immorality in your conduct, we might have felt ourselves compelled to pursue a different course; and we may be compelled to adopt severer measures, if you should persist in maintaining and propagating the error into which you *have* fallen; but considering that you are very young—that this is the first time we have been called on to notice your conduct—that your error is not on any subject of fundamental importance—and that your general character affords us ground to believe that you are sincere and conscientious in your present views, we shall not further notice the case at present. We advise you to reconsider the subject;—read on it, and read on both sides;—confer with your elder brethren, and keep your mind open to conviction;—seek counsel and direction from above, by earnest, believing prayer;—and we have little doubt but before next Conference, you will be led to see your error, and, renouncing it, be able to unite with your brethren on those points, where a difference of sentiment exists at present." In adopting a course like this, would not the Conference have acted more in accordance with the spirit and precepts of Christianity, than by proceeding at once, without any attempt to restrain or to reclaim me, to inflict the severest penalty that could have been inflicted on a drunkard or adulterer? If the members of the late Conference had been guilty of no injustice, they have manifested an awful lack of Christian forbearance towards me.

But why do I thus write? The Conference had no opportunity of exercising forbearance towards me, for I had committed no offence. We have already seen that I had broken no rule of the Connexion; and I have now to observe, that the sentiments for holding which I have been expelled, are the very sentiments

maintained by Alexander Kilham, the principal founder of the Methodist New Connexion. Both on the subjects of the Preachers' Fund, and the right of private judgment, my views are in perfect harmony with his. A single extraat from his writings on each subject will be sufficient to prove this. The following is from his own pen, and was published in the Methodist Monitor, pages 113 and 114.

"Is it *equitable* and *just* for superannuated preachers or their widows to receive pounds a year for life, according to the years of travelling, whether they want them or not? Is it equitable and just for a rich superannuated preacher to claim thirty or forty pounds a year for life, and a young preacher that is superannuated by the providence of God, who has nothing of his own, only to have a third, or half of that sum?.....Other things equally ridiculous are found in the rules. They had no existence while Mr Wesley lived. The real wants of preachers and widows were the rule of disbursements. If a few old preachers 'cannot devise a more equitable and just plan,' cannot the rest of the brethren, who are not so deeply interested in them? And if all the preachers cannot devise more equitable and just rules, is it impossible for our people to devise better? Only let the rules of disbursement which existed at the death of Mr. Wesley be established, and we shall see the people every where rejoicing on that account.

"It was the *glaring absurdity* of the rules that led me first to examine other parts of our economy. And it was their continuance after so many remonstrances against them, that led me to speak so strongly against them, in the Progress of Liberty."

Such were his sentiments on the subject of the Preachers' Fund, and I ask any man to compare these with the sentiments expressed in the pamphlet entitled "Both Sides of the Question," and judge whether, if I deserved expulsion from the New Connexion, Alexander Kilham did not deserve expulsion from the Old. The remarks on this subject contained in "Both Sides" are exactly the same in substance as those contained in the letter which was forwarded to the Annual Committee by Friend Barker and myself, and in which our objections to the present regulations of the Fund were stated at full length. I know that the Connexion is not pledged to all that Alexander Kilham said and wrote; but I ask, what are we to think of the consistency of men, who can extol Kilham to the very skies, and yet expel another man for holding the same views which Kilham held and advocated?

On the right of private judgment his sentiments were exactly the same as mine. I have room but for one extract in proof of this. It is from the Methodist Monitor, page 82.

"But I cannot any where find, that our blessed Lord has given them any power, or pretence of power, to impose on conscience any such advices of their own, which neither reason nor revelation impose, much less to impose any of their own inventions, of new



doctrines or duties ; OR SO MUCH AS THEIR OWN PECULIAR EXPLICATIONS OF THE WORDS OF CHRIST, BY THEIR OWN AUTHORITY. When our Saviour gave commission to his Apostles, to preach the Gospel to all nations, it was in this manner : 'Go, teach them to observe (not whatsoever you shall command, but) whatsoever I have commanded you.'

The only question that remains to be considered is this—How is it that I was expelled? What was the *real* cause of my discontinuance? As the offences alleged against me, turn out to be no offences at all, what was it that really influenced the leading men in the Connexion to expel me? This is a question of the greatest importance. If my opponents had furnished no answer to it themselves, I should not have considered myself entitled to answer it. However mysterious and inexplicable their conduct might have been, Christian charity would have forbidden me to attribute to them motives which they did not themselves avow. But as they have furnished an answer themselves, I shall give that answer to my readers.

If the reader will take the trouble to turn back to page 10, he will find in the notice of trial I received from Thomas Allin, a clause printed in italics, that will help to explain the mystery of the affair. "In consequence of this, *and of your known connexion with Mr. Barker,*" &c. My "known connexion with Mr Barker!" Yes, that was my great offence; and the hint thus incautiously, and doubtless, unintentionally dropped by Thomas Allin, is not the only evidence that this was the case.

On the morning on which my trial commenced, in the conversation that John Bakewell held with me, he told me that I must promise to have no connexion with the New Periodical and Book-room; "*in short, that I must renounce all public connexion with Mr. Barker.*" Oh yes, my refusal to do this was my great, my unpardonable crime.

During the morning sitting of Conference on the second Monday, the case of Robert Gowenlock was discussed. A letter was read from this young preacher, in which the words "*Thomas Allin*" often occurred. P. J. Wright, one of the most forward opponents of Joseph Barker and myself, came to a preacher not far from where I sat, when he heard this, and whispering, said, "*Is he a Barkerite? Is he a Barkerite?*" Yes, in the late Conference, to manifest the slightest resemblance to, or sympathy with, Joseph Barker, was the greatest crime of which any man could be guilty.

But we are not left to doubtful inference in the matter. Joseph Robinson, in his pamphlet entitled "A Word to the Members and Congregations of the Methodist New Connexion," assigns this as the cause of my expulsion, that "I bid" Joseph Barker "God speed." Page 8. And this testimony he confirmed in the Circuit Meeting at Gateshead. I know that he has denied what he there stated; but I could bring one hundred and fifty persons that were present and heard it, to prove that he did in that meet-

ing say, that I had been expelled for expressing my disapprobation of Conference, in expelling Joseph Barker.

And so it has come to this at last ; that if a man be proscribed by the ruling party in the New Connexion Conference, it must be regarded as "treason" to have any sympathy or connexion with him. "My known connexion with Mr. Barker" was deemed a sufficient ground of suspicion that I was disloyal to the community ;—to "renounce all public connexion with Mr. Barker" was an indispensable condition of my continuance in the ministry ;—and because I could not, at the bidding of his persecutors, do this ;—because I had too much regard for truth, and conscience, and freedom, and my friend, to do this ;—because I dared to differ from the mass ;—because, in the face of those who had effected his expulsion, I ventured to affirm my conviction, that that expulsion was uncalled for, and the means by which it had been secured, unjust ;—because I declared that such were my convictions, and that I should feel myself bound to make them known ; because I could not be persuaded, in the hour of trial and adversity, to forsake my friend, or be deterred by fear of consequences from avowing the honest convictions of my mind ;—because of this, I was expelled from the Methodist New Connexion ! Well, what is deemed a vice on earth, is often regarded as a virtue in heaven ; what man condemns, God oftentimes approves ; and whatever may be the opinions or representations of my opponents ; and however unfaithful to conscience and to God, I may have been on other occasions ; this pleasing assurance is mine, that in the part I have taken recently in Connexional affairs, I have been influenced by nothing but a sense of duty, a deep solicitude for the welfare of the Connexion ; and an intense desire to promote the purity, efficiency, and extension of the visible church of Christ.

And now I have done. I have written the foregoing pages under a sense of obligation, that I could not shake off. I have no delight in strife. I should gladly have retired from the field of controversy, without taking any further part in the discussions which agitate, at present, the minds of men. To expound, and illustrate, and vindicate, and apply, the glorious truths of Christianity, is to me, an incalculably more pleasing exercise, than to engage in any thing like personal controversy. But I had no alternative. Publications were issued pretending to give an account of the late proceedings, calculated to mislead men's minds, and divert them from the great questions at issue. Numbers have asked me, why I was expelled from the Connexion, and the Brief Report does not furnish a full and satisfactory reply. Regard to truth, and justice, and the real interests of the Connexion, alike required me to publish a full statement of the case, and expose the intolerance, injustice, and inconsistency, which characterize the proceedings of Conference. I have spoken plainly, and I meant to do so : the case demands it. But I am not aware that I have spoken unkindly of any one. I did not intend or wish to

do so. I am aware that this statement will not be credited by some; but I cannot help that. I know something of the weakness of my own mind, and the infirmities of my own mind. I cannot therefore indulge the hope, that there is nothing in the preceding pages, *which may wear the appearance* of harshness and asperity; but my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have not knowingly indulged dispositions of this kind; and if there be any thing that seems to wear such an aspect, candid readers will attribute it to the depth of my convictions, rather than to any unkind, resentful feelings. My worst wish for my opponents is, that they may be brought to see the error into which they have fallen, and amend their ways.

To be faithful before God is the great thing. The day approaches when the smiles and frowns of men will both appear of but little moment; and should I be favoured at that day to hear the Master and the Judge of all, say "WELL DONE," a sentence of expulsion by the Conference will be remembered without pain, and ranked among those light afflictions, which are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed to the saints. God grant that my opponents, my readers, and myself, may find mercy of the Lord in that day.

## APPENDIX.

BEFORE I proceed separately to notice the pamphlets published by J. H. Robinson and T. Allin, in vindication of Conference, and in opposition to the Brief Report of Conference Proceedings, there are two or three subjects connected with what took place before the Conference, on which I would make a few observations. This may save both time and trouble in any further investigation of the affair, in which the reader and myself may engage.

And first, with regard to the meeting of officials at Manchester. It has not only been contended that there was nothing unconstitutional in that meeting, but it has also been asserted, again and again, that nothing was done at that meeting to prejudice the case of Joseph Barker at the Conference.

J. H. Robinson says, "You were not tried at all, at any of the meetings previous to Conference, that I ever heard of." Thomas Allin says, "To bring down odium on the Committee and their associates you unceasingly reiterate the cry that you had been tried and condemned in your absence, and that the leading officials in the Connexion came to the decision, that unless you could be induced to leave the body you ought to be expelled. Repeatedly has this been denied, and proof challenged, but nothing beyond bold assertion has been given! *That assertion I again meet with unqualified denial.*"

Now, in opposition to these statements, I have only to furnish the following passage, written by Thomas Allin's own hand, in a letter to Joseph Townsend, of Newcastle, a few days after the meeting at Manchester. Thomas Allin's words are these:—"I ought to state that a meeting of the Committee and Connexional Officers has been held, *at which the unanimous opinion was*, that Mr. B., as an honest man, ought to leave a church of which he disapproves, but that if he will not do this, *it will be the duty of Conference to remove him.*" This, I should suppose, is evidence sufficient; nothing more can be required; and if any attempt be made to invalidate the testimony of Thomas Allin before the Conference, of course it will equally invalidate his testimony on the subject now. Nay, more, he had fewer temptations to depart from the truth before Conference than at present; and as he himself has rendered it impossible for any man to believe both his declarations, I imagine thousands will be disposed to attach greater credit to the first statement than the last.

And then, as to the circular of the Annual Committee, various pleas are urged in its defence. Both J. H. Robinson and T. Allin labour with all their might to prove that there was nothing unfair or dishonourable about that procedure; that the representations of it which have been given by Joseph Barker and myself, and our friends, are not correct; that it was, in fact, upright, fair, straightforward, and every thing that could be desired. Let us examine these pleas, and see whether they be just and well-founded.

1. Joseph Robinson, and after him, T. Allin, contends that the meetings to which the circular of the Committee referred, could not be "partial meetings," because they were only "the adjourned quarterly meetings." Joseph Robinson is particularly confident on this point. "And for you to talk," says he, "about *getting up partial meetings*, when it is well known that the adjourned meetings before which the business was to be brought, are composed of *the same* parties as the *first* meetings; and that *all* the members of those meetings were chosen *many weeks* before any thing was heard of or done in your case,—is only to show to what desperate lengths you are capable of going when you are resolved to carry your point." Any one would suppose, to read this extract, that if you were to see the April Quarterly Meeting, assembled on April quarter-day, for the transaction of its regular business, and afterwards to see the adjourned quarterly meeting, you could perceive no difference between the two. But nothing can be further from the truth. There is so much difference between the two, as to render it perfectly easy to make the latter a "partial meeting" in every sense of that word; and what difference there can be between making the adjourned quarterly meeting into a partial meeting, and *getting up* a partial meeting, I confess, I cannot so readily perceive. The most important points of difference between the two meetings are as follows:—1. It is not the practice in all the circuits to adjourn the April quarterly meeting. There is no rule requiring this to be done, and the usage is not a universal one. 2. The object of the adjourned quarterly meeting, when it is held, is simply to attend to certain matters of business, that cannot be conveniently attended to, till near Conference. Receiving the final returns from the several societies, as to the number of members, subscriptions to the funds, &c., constitutes the principal business of the adjourned quarterly meeting. 3. The attendance at these meetings is very small. As there is no general important business to be transacted, the societies content themselves with sending one representative each, or sometimes one representative serves for several societies, by bringing the returns, &c. to the meeting. A very few individuals are all that compose the adjourned quarterly meeting in general.

It is easy to perceive now, in what way such a meeting may be made partial. The Superintendent and Circuit Stewards have only to send notice of the subject to be brought forward to those

societies which are supposed to be favourable to their views and projects, and all the delegates entitled to attend the meeting from those societies have an opportunity of attending; while such notice being withheld from societies supposed to be unfavourable, *they send*, according to custom, but one representative each, or perhaps no representative at all. I am not now drawing a picture from imagination. This I know *was done* in some circuits; it might be done in many, but I know it was done in some. Notice of the subject to be considered at these meetings *was sent to some societies, while no such notice was sent to others.*

2. The same writer objects to the statement, that the Superintendents were directed "by *application* to the *more intelligent and influential friends*, to get up partial meetings." He says, "The Circular does not say *one word* about applications being made to influential friends for *any such* purpose." Let us first read, and then analyze, the circular of the Committee, and see on which side the truth is to be found. The following is the circular:—

Altrincham, May 5th, 1841.

DEAR BROTHER—

The Annual Committee are of opinion that the same circumstances which have led to the passing of the following resolutions, at the Hanley and Manchester Quarterly Meetings, render it necessary that other Circuits, *entertaining the same views*, should also freely make them known to the ensuing Conference, and thus prepare its way for the adoption of those measures which the present exigencies of the Connexion so evidently require. The Committee request you, therefore, carefully to consider the resolutions, then submit them to the *private and confidential* consideration of the most *intelligent and influential* friends, and should it be *your* opinion and *theirs* that your adjourned quarterly meeting will *approve*, put the substance of the resolutions into such form as you and the friends prefer, and let them be duly brought forward, and have all the support which *you* and your *colleagues*, if any, and other *friends*, may be able to render. Earnestly praying that Divine wisdom may so direct all our steps, and that a gracious Providence may so overrule all circumstances, that the firmer establishment, and the more abundant prosperity of our Zion, may be secured.

I remain,

Your's, very affectionately,

THOMAS ALLIN.

What were the circumstances that led to the issuing of this circular?

*Ans.* "The same circumstances that led to the passing of the Hanley and Manchester resolutions."

What circumstances were these?

*Ans.* The facts that some ministers in the Connexion had "ceased to support the funds and attend to the ordinances established amongst us." These are the circumstances assigned in

the resolutions themselves, that is to say, Friend Barker's conduct and mine, occasioned the passing of these resolutions.

What was the object of the circular?

*Ans.* To "prepare" the "way" of the "Conference for the adoption of those measures which the present exigencies of the Connexion require."

What were those measures?

*Ans.* From Thomas Allin's letter to Joseph Townsend, we learn the views of the Committee and their associates on this subject. "I ought to state that a meeting of the Committee and Connexional Officers has been held, *at which the unanimous opinion was*, that Mr. B., as an honest man, ought to leave a church of which he disapproves, but that if he will not do this, *it will be the duty of Conference to remove him.*" So that the circular was intended, according to the showing of Thomas Allin himself, to "prepare the way of Conference for removing" Joseph Barker.

How was the circular designed to answer this object?

*Ans.* 1. It was intended to call forth from all the Circuits that were favourable to his expulsion, an expression of their views and feelings. The Committee thought "it necessary that other Circuits, *entertaining the same views*," as Hanley and Manchester, "should also freely make them known to Conference." 2. It was intended to prevent the expression of opposite views by the Circuits. Hence it was not sent at all to those Circuits where "personal attachments" were known to operate "to the injury of public principles:" that is, where the Committee knew that a vote against Joseph Barker could not be secured, but where, if the matter was laid before them at all, they were likely to send to Conference a strong expression of sentiment in his favour.

But there were some Circuits whose prevailing sentiments and feelings were not known. How were these feelings and sentiments to be ascertained?

*Ans.* To effect this object the circular was sent *privately* to the Superintendents; and in that circular they were requested,—What? To send notice to all the societies that the subject was to be brought before the adjourned quarterly meeting, and desire them to send their representatives properly instructed, to vote upon it? No, in that case there might have been a vote in favour of Joseph Barker rather than against him. The Superintendents were requested to "submit" the resolutions "*to the private and confidential consideration of the most intelligent and influential friends.*" And why was this? That "should it be *your* opinions and *theirs* that your adjourned quarterly meeting will approve," the matter might be brought forward: but if either the Superintendent or the influential friends thought there would be any danger of a vote on the other side, then the whole matter was to be kept in silence.

Joseph Robinson may, perhaps, call upon me to show these last words in the circular, as he calls on Joseph Barker to show where Superintendents are directed to get up partial meetings,

&c. But Joseph Robinson need not think thus to blindfold the people. The *words* may not be there; *but the thing is there in other words*; and it was so understood by all the Superintendents to whom the circular was sent, Joseph Robinson himself not excepted.

If meetings purposely held for the expression of sentiment on one side of a question, while every precaution is taken to prevent the expression of sentiment on the other side, are not partial meetings, I wonder what kind of meetings can deserve that name; and if the circular of the Annual Committee does not "request" (if the word "direct" be objected to) the Superintendents of the Circuits to do their best to cause the adjourned quarterly meetings to sustain this character; and if it does not request them to do this by *submitting* the matter to the private and confidential consideration of the most intelligent and influential friends, I wonder what the circular means. But why need I waste so many words on the subject? As Joseph Barker says, "The whole affair carries its own dark character on its front," and I am constrained to repeat what I said in the face of its authors in Conference, "You may put what construction you please on that transaction; it will still appear to be one of the most partial, uncandid, unfair proceedings that ever stained the pages of ecclesiastical history. You may wash it with much soap, and still it will not be clean!"

3. But Thomas Allin attempts to justify the circular, by saying, that in it the Committee did not request judgment from the Circuits on Joseph Barker. He attaches so much importance to this statement, that he puts it in large capitals. He says, "The fact is, neither in their circular, nor in their meeting, did the Committee pass *any* judgment *on you*, **NOR DID THEY REQUEST ANY SUCH JUDGMENT FROM THE CIRCUITS.** They asked only for **AN EXPRESSION OF ATTACHMENT TO THE CONNEXION**, and of a determination to support Conference in maintaining its doctrines," &c. But from what has been said, it will be seen, that this emphatic declaration is nothing more than an unworthy quibble. From the circular itself I have shown, that its object was to procure such resolutions from the Circuits as would "prepare" the "way" of "Conference" for the adoption of those measures which the exigencies of the Connexion required." I have proved *from Thomas Allin's own handwriting*, that the measure which, in the opinion of the Committee and their associates, was required by the exigencies of the Connexion, was neither more nor less than *the removal of Joseph Barker!* And yet, in the face of these facts, Thomas Allin supposes that, by playing upon words, he can succeed in persuading people that the circular of the Committee requested no judgment from the Circuits on the case of Joseph Barker. But it is too late for such pretences as these to pass. We live in the nineteenth century; and all the sophistry in the world cannot



screen such dark and unholy measures from public reprobation in the present day.

4. Thomas Allin complains that we say nothing of "the first and great object to which the circular of the Committee was directed, namely, *the preservation of the Community.*" But does Thomas Allin mean to say, that when he, and Samuel Hulme, and John Bakewell, and William Medcalfe, and Jonathan Thornhill, and one or two others, regard the conduct of any preacher as dangerous to the Connexion, they are entitled, instead of fairly accusing that preacher before a meeting of his own circuit, and bringing him to trial in a constitutional way, to send private circulars through the Connexion, intimating that the safety of the Connexion is threatened; and then, when they have obtained resolutions from the circuits declaring their attachment to the Connexion, and their determination to support it, bring the preacher to trial, and brandishing the resolutions of the Circuits in his face, say, "See, we are supported by the Connexion?" Does Thomas Allin mean to say that he and his associates are entitled to deal with *any* preacher thus, and that when the injured preacher or his friends characterize such conduct as dishonourable and unfair, they are to be met by the pretence, that it was all "for the preservation of the Connexion?" If this be his meaning, then let every man that has any regard for the safety of his character, beware how he becomes a preacher in the New Connexion! The preservation of the community! But has not every member of the community an equal right with Thomas Allin and his associates, to judge what is requisite for the preservation of the community? On what principle of equity, or fairness, can a few individuals be entitled to judge for the whole Connexion? If it be the province of the Annual Committee, at any time, when it suits their purpose, to raise a cry of danger to the community; to call forth from the circuits declarations of attachment to the Connexion; and then use these declarations against any preacher whose expulsion *they* may deem requisite to its preservation; if this be the prerogative of the Annual Committee, then woe to the preacher that differs from that Committee, and becomes obnoxious to their displeasure! With the utmost facility they can effect his expulsion, and whatever he may say about the unfairness of the procedure, they will turn it all aside by crying, "It was all for the preservation of the community." —

The preservation of the community! And who, in the situation of the Annual Committee, ever pretended to aim at any other object than this? If we are to believe their own testimony in the case, it was "the preservation of the community" that the Popish persecutors of bygone ages sought, when they shed the blood of the saints. It was "the preservation of the community" that High Churchmen sought by passing and upholding the Test and Corporation Acts, and other legal instruments of annoyance to Dissenters. It was "the preservation of the community"

that was sought by the rulers in the Wesleyan body, when they expelled Alexander Kilham. Yea, it was "the preservation of the community" that the High Priest Caiphas sought by crucifying the Lord of life and glory! "It is expedient for us," said he, "that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not!" But in these cases, I suppose, Thomas Allin himself would believe that the object which these parties sought, was *the preservation of their own authority*, not the preservation of the community. And how does he arrive at this conclusion? Why, he judges of them, not by their professions, but by their practices. By their fruits he knows them. Finding that their professions and their conduct disagree, he prefers the evidence of the latter. And it is in just the same way that we are led to believe that the object of the Annual Committee was not so much "the preservation of the community" as the maintenance of their own official influence and power by the removal of those who stood in the way of their ambitious desires. Had they sought "the preservation of the community" they would have sought it in the manner prescribed by the rules of the community. Are we to suppose that the community has made no provision for its own preservation? Does the power which the Annual Committee exercised in this affair, form any part of the provision that it has made? Are the Annual Committee invested with such power by the constitution or rules of the Body? Where? Who can point out the clause? And is it no violation of order and justice for the servants of a public body, to exceed the powers with which that body has invested them? When the Connexion in its rules had made provision for such cases as those of Joseph Barker and myself; when its rules had given no such power to the Annual Committee as that which they have exercised; when they have, notwithstanding, put forth a power for which they cannot show the slightest warrant or sanction; when they have done this avowedly to secure the expulsion of an obnoxious minister, for whose protection the rules had established another mode of trial; is it not plain that the Committee themselves have acted in opposition to the constitution of the body? And are we yet to believe them when they say that they did so "for the preservation of the community?" Should the Prime Minister of England, aided by a few of his associates, to effect the destruction of some powerful political opponent, dispense with trial by jury, or in some other way deprive him of the protection which English laws afford to those who are charged with any offence; and should he say that he did all this for the preservation of the British constitution, would you believe him? No, nor can we believe that, when the Annual Committee deprive a man of the protection afforded him by the general rules of the Body, and effect his expulsion in an unauthorized, unconstitutional way, that *they* are influenced by a deep solicitude "for the preservation of the community."

5. But an opposite course would have been attended with dis-

advantages, and fraught with danger. This is the sum and substance of what Thomas Allin says in the latter half of the eleventh page of his second letter. "If the Committee had contented themselves with giving you notice, &c. \* \* \* your version of the matter alleged would have been sent forth, \* \* \* Societies and Circuits would have been convulsed, \* \* \* meetings would have been held, \* \* \* resolutions formed," &c. &c. On this extraordinary passage I have two or three observations to submit to the reader. 1. This passage fully shows, that the object of the Committee was to secure the most full and decisive expression of opinion *against* Joseph Barker, and to suppress, as far as possible, all expression of opinion in his favour, and thus secure a partial vote at the Conference. 2. This plea of disadvantage and peril would justify the most tyrannical measures of the most tyrannical government under the sun. If we are never to do right but when we can do it without risk, we shall seldom do right indeed; and if every man that is suspected of crime is to be tried in secret, when his popularity and influence would render a public trial perilous to his accusers, and even whenever his accusers think proper to imagine or pretend that this is the case; why, then, there is an end to all justice, and every man is liable to become the prey of every secret informer that may choose to slander him in the dark. 3. This passage presents a gloomy picture of the morality of the leading men in the New Connexion. They would have pursued a fair, upright, straightforward course, if they could have done it with safety and success; but because they knew that Joseph Barker was deeply respected by multitudes, and that by reason of his piety, talents, and usefulness, he possessed extensive influence in the Connexion, having predetermined his condemnation, they were afraid that they could not accomplish their designs, or at least that to accomplish them thus would cost them more than even *they* were willing to give as the price of his exclusion; and so to manage their point with greater facility, and less danger, they meet secretly together, try him in his absence, send private letters to those who might be expected to declare against him, and keep all others in the dark! And now, in other words, they avow all this! Why, this single paragraph of Thomas Allin's, if read with attention, and its true import fully considered, will do more to sink the Committee in the estimation of all upright, truthful, honest men, than any thing that could be written either by Joseph Barker or myself.

I have now proved by the testimony of T. Allin himself, and the circular that he sent out, 1. That J. Barker was tried and condemned in his absence, and in the absence of his friends, at the private meeting in Manchester. 2. That the circular of the Annual Committee was intended to prepare the way of the Conference for effecting his expulsion. 3. That the circular was intended to do this, by securing the expression of sentiment on one side, while no opportunity was afforded for its expression on the other.

4. That to accomplish this, the superintendents of the circuits were requested to submit the resolutions, not to the consideration of a full and impartial meeting, but to the *private* and *confidential* consideration of the most *intelligent* and *influential* friends. And 5. I have proved that all the pleas which are urged in defence of this proceeding are without foundation ; and shown that the last of these might be urged in vindication of any proceeding; however tyrannical and unjust. On these subjects, I should suppose, nothing more needs to be said.

It has been promised that the Appendix shall contain "a full answer to sundry tracts or pamphlets published by J. H. Robinson and T. Allin, in vindication of the Conference, and in opposition to the Brief Report published by Joseph Barker and myself, along with a more copious report of all those parts of the Conference Proceedings which have been called in question by the above named writers, and others, from notes taken at the time." For the sake of brevity, and to avoid needless repetition, I shall notice these pamphlets separately, in the order in which they came out, and furnish the enlarged report, as I proceed to answer those parts of the pamphlets, in which the accuracy of the Brief Report is disputed. As it is of the greatest importance that the price of this work should not be high, my remarks shall be as brief as possible, to furnish an answer to the misstatements which I have to correct. I shall notice nothing that does not enter into the merits of the case ; and what I do notice, I shall notice no further than the interests of truth and justice seem to me to require.

And first, with regard to J. H. Robinson's "Word to the Members and Congregations of the Methodist New Connexion." It was published before the Brief Report, in consequence of the strong feeling of disapprobation awakened in the Connexion by Conference proceedings. There are two or three statements in it that I shall for a moment advert to.

Both in this pamphlet, and in that entitled "An Exposure," &c., our author refers again and again to a sentiment that I expressed in Conference, while speaking on the case of Joseph Barker ; "that no Connexion had a right to require a man to act upon *its* interpretation of the truth, but should leave him to act upon his own ;" and he refers to this so often, in order to make the impression on people's minds that I am opposed to all church discipline ; that I would have no one separated from the church, be his sentiments or his conduct what they may. Now this is not fair. It has always been acknowledged, I believe, that a man is better able to interpret his own language than another can be to interpret it for him ; and that it is the part of a candid, unprejudiced person to take a man's own interpretation of his own words, rather than seek to fix a bad construction upon them. Only let the reader call to mind the remarks that I made on the resolution passed by Conference in my case, and he will see that J. H. Robinson has not acted this candid, upright part : he will see, that

had one of my declarations been interpreted by another, he would not have made such a use as he has made, of the statement just quoted.

On the fourth page there is a glaring exaggeration of our statements. It is there said that "the Beneficent Fund was ranked among those evils which *sicken the heart*, and show *the selfishness and sensuality of the church*." Where? When? By whom? The words printed in italics are mine; but *not* in reference to the Beneficent Fund. On the sixteenth page of my Lecture on the Use of Money, I say, "Two or three individual professors of religion will leave as much to their children as the entire yearly sum contributed to these institutions by the whole Church of Christ. Incalculably more is spent by professing Christians in intoxicating drinks and tobacco, and on useless ornaments of dress, than in efforts to enlighten and convert the world. When I think of the selfishness and sensuality of the church, my heart sickens, and I am unutterably distressed." I never mention the Beneficent Fund except on the twenty-fourth page; and yet I am represented by my candid, generous opponent as applying this language to the Beneficent Fund! —

On page five the reader is given to understand that the first step taken by Friend Barker and myself with reference to the points in dispute between us and the Conference, was to publish our sentiments on those subjects. But this is not correct. Our sentiments had been laid before the Annual Committee at large, both on the subject of the Beneficent Fund and the Book-room; and it was not until the confidence we had placed in the Committee was most shamefully abused by them, by secretly circulating garbled and exaggerated reports of our sentiments and proposals, that we gave our views to the public. And so far from publishing on the subject of Baptism, being Joseph Barker's first step in reference to that affair, he simply laid aside the practice himself, without advising any one to follow his example; and his tract on that subject was written, only to put the Connexion in possession of his views, and the reasons that he had for entertaining them, before the Conference proceeded to determine whether those views required his separation from the Body. I believe no man situated as we were, could have pursued a more peaceful course than we pursued in reference to those matters.

On the next page I am represented as standing up in June, 1840, and declaring "my approval of our system of church government, and the institutions connected therewith; or at least," says our author, "if there were any of which he did not approve, he had not the candour to say so." Where J. H. Robinson has got his information on the subject I cannot tell; he was not there to hear what was said himself; but wherever he may have obtained his information, it is not correct. I *did not* express unqualified approbation of the system of church government, and all the institutions connected with it; and I *did* most distinctly express my opinion that that system was imperfect, and susceptible

of improvement, in some of its minor details. On this subject see my declaration, read to the Conference, and published in the Brief Report.

On the same page the author labours to show, that because Joseph Barker thought declining to baptize children (*the ground of his expulsion*) a little thing, he ought not to have deviated from the practice of his brethren in so small a matter. But he overlooks an important distinction here ; it may be a little thing in itself whether a man baptize children or not ; it may be a *very serious* thing to excommunicate a man on that account. Joseph Barker did not represent it as a little thing for him to cease to baptize, and a great matter for his brethren to continue to baptize. He only spoke of his declining to baptize as a little matter for his brethren to visit with so serious a sentence as that of expulsion. And he spoke truly when he spoke thus. It is a little thing in itself whether I sit still in the chair where I now sit, or rise up and walk ; but it would be no little thing for another man to say, " If you don't sit still, if, contrary to my wishes you rise up and walk, I'll turn you out of the house." *That* would not be a little thing.

Our author afterwards speaks as though there were no alternative but for the Conference to expel us, or else to give up the ordinances and institutions of the Connexion. He says, " The great question is, Ought the Conference to have sacrificed some of the most sacred ordinances, and some of the most useful and benevolent institutions of the Connexion ? " But why so ? Was there no middle path ? Did the maintenance of the ordinances and institutions in question entirely rest with us, so that if we declined to support them they must be given up ? Or is there no way of upholding ordinances and institutions, but excommunicating those who dissent from the one, and think the others susceptible of improvement ? The Pope knows of no other plan, but I thought that Protestants had depended more on the power of truth than this. As it seems to me there was a way in which these ordinances and institutions might have been upheld, much more rationally, and I suppose much more successfully than that adopted by the Conference. A mild, calm, Christian refutation of what the Conference deemed Joseph Barker's errors would have done far more to recommend these ordinances to the Connexion and all thinking men, than the measures that were resorted to ; and a publication to prove that our objections to the Book-room and Beneficent Fund were without foundation ; that these institutions were perfect and needed no improvement ; or else, a frank acknowledgment that these institutions were seriously defective, that a searching reform was called for, and should be commenced forthwith ; either of these plans would have been more likely to support these institutions, and commend them to the approval of reflecting men, than the expulsion of those who sought their improvement. " The great question is " *not*, " Ought the Conference to have *sacrificed* some of the most sacred ordinances, and some of

the most useful and benevolent institutions of the Connexion?" No one proposed or wished this. "The great question is," Ought the Conference to have allowed a diversity of sentiment on these points in the Connexion, or, as they did, to have enforced absolute uniformity in such matters, by the severest penalties it was in their power to inflict? That is the first great question; and the second is, Supposing that the difference of sentiment between the Conference and Joseph Barker and myself was such as to require a separation, were we separated from the Body in a fair, upright, straightforward, constitutional way? These are the two grand questions at issue; but these are points that the advocates of Conference seem to be very unwilling to discuss. On the first of these questions enough has been said by Joseph Barker in the Brief Report of Conference Proceedings? on the second, sufficient has been said in the preceding pages, as far as it applies to my own case; and in its application to the case of Joseph Barker, it has yet to be more largely considered. There is nothing further in J. H. Robinson's first pamphlet that seems to require notice; all the rest is either quite irrelevant, or has been sufficiently answered in other publications.

With regard to J. H. Robinson's second pamphlet, but little needs to be said. By friends and foes to Conference measures, I have heard but one opinion expressed as to its spirit. I should suppose that if J. H. Robinson himself were to review that pamphlet in his closet, and ask himself whether he could imagine Jesus Christ, under similar circumstances, writing such a pamphlet, he would feel that throughout it is at variance with the spirit and teachings of the Redeemer. The reader has only to picture to himself an assembly under the influence of such a spirit as that displayed by J. H. Robinson, and he will at once form a tolerably accurate idea of the temper manifested in the late Conference, and be able to judge for himself as to the correctness of Joseph Barker's Report. By the manner in which he contradicts that report, our author has unwittingly and unintentionally, but yet most strikingly, confirmed it. But I leave this subject; to enlarge upon it might tend to irritate and embitter my own feelings; it could do no good either to my readers or myself.

J. H. Robinson and others seem to suppose that no one is under any obligation to manifest a kind, conciliating spirit, but Joseph Barker. They ought to know, however, that all other ministers of the Gospel are equally bound with him to inculcate and manifest an inoffensive, peaceful, and forbearing temper. And when convicted of an opposite spirit, they must not think to screen themselves from the disapprobation of the wise and good, by pleading, "Yes, but we have never said so much about forbearance and peace as Joseph Barker has!" No, the religious public know full well that the obligations of all Christians and Christian ministers are alike; and that the neglect of one part of our duty can never constitute any apology for the neglect of another.

It is intimated at the beginning of the publication in question, that "before any man can believe what Joseph Barker says of the Conference, he must divest himself of the idea that they were men, to say nothing of them as being professing Christians." The writer seems to forget that some of the bitterest persecutors the world ever saw, were men who professed to be Christians. To talk as though a profession of religion constituted a perfect guarantee for everything being done in equity, and fairness, and love, is to contradict the testimony which stands recorded in dark and mournful characters on almost every page of ecclesiastical history.

It has been too often manifest, that to profess religion is one thing, and to exemplify it another, for J. H. Robinson to succeed in lulling enquiry, by informing us that the Conference consisted of professing Christians. Bonner, Gardiner, and the rulers of the Spanish Inquisition, were all of them professing Christians; and yet they perpetrated crimes the very memory of which makes one shudder. And the spirit of intolerance and persecution is the same in all ages. I was present at the late Conference of the Methodist New Connexion myself; and I do declare my deep and solemn conviction, that the spirit which was manifested by some of the leading members of Conference, was the very same spirit that actuated the Popish persecutors of bye-gone ages; and that had they possessed equal power, there is every reason to fear that they would have proceeded to equal extremities.

J. H. Robinson seems to think that there is some strange inconsistency in Joseph Barker's conduct, because after having spoken and written against intolerance, he now charges with intolerance the leading members of Conference. He says, "Can he who speaks so much of mildness be so severe? He who so strenuously contends for toleration be so intolerant? He who so loudly asserts the rights of conscience and private judgment, can he censure, condemn, and denounce those of his Christian friends, who, if they have erred at all, have erred only in the exercise of that right of which no one thinks more highly, or is more careful to claim for himself than Joseph Barker?" This is one of the most extraordinary passages that I ever read; and I doubt not it will be so regarded by its author himself when he comes coolly and calmly to review it. For what right does Joseph Barker contend? What right is it that he is so careful to claim for himself? The right to determine what others shall believe and teach and do? The right to excommunicate those who decline to believe, teach, or do what he requires? Is this the right he claims, and for which he earnestly contends? No, the very reverse of all this! And yet this is the "right which the Conference has exercised," if indeed it be a right at all! This is the "right" which J. Barker has all along denied; and yet because he denies it still, he is charged with inconsistency! Just look at the case, reader. Joseph Barker strenuously contends for the right to judge for himself what God requires, without respect to



any human authority. He maintains that all human authority over conscience is irrational, unscriptural, and unjust. The Conference denies him the right for which he contends, and exercises over him the authority against which he pleads. He still pleads for the right of private judgment, and asserts, that in denying him the enjoyment of this right, the Conference has acted an intolerant part. J. H. Robinson holds up his hands in astonishment, and exclaims, "Can he who so strenuously contends for toleration be so intolerant! He who so loudly asserts the right of conscience and private judgment; can he censure and condemn those, who, if they have erred at all, have erred *only in the exercise of that right* of which no one thinks more highly, or is more careful to claim for himself, than Joseph Barker!" To read the latter part of this sentence one might suppose that Joseph Barker had written a volume in defence of persecution, and that he had been a most bold and determined advocate of the right of churches to excommunicate their members for harmless differences of opinion! But if we look back to the former part of the sentence we find that the rights for which he contends, were the "rights of conscience and private judgment!" And yet he is charged with inconsistency!

Our author seems to think it uncharitable to speak of men as servile and intolerant and persecuting. But what does he mean? Does he mean that when I see a man reeling along the streets, and hear him raving in all the wildness of intoxication, that charity forbids me to call that man a drunkard? That when I see another fraudulently or forcibly appropriating to himself his neighbour's property, charity forbids me to regard that man, and speak of that man, as a thief? If not, on what principle would he proceed to prove that Joseph Barker acts uncharitably when he calls things by their proper names, and only bears testimony to what he has seen and heard? When I see a preacher after expressing an opinion, looking intensely on the countenance of a rich layman, to see whether he has done right or wrong; when I hear that preacher, as soon as ever the rich layman intimates that he is of a different opinion, turn round and declare *against* the sentiment for which he has just been pleading; when I witness such a scene as this, am I not compelled by my very consciousness to regard that preacher as a servile, temporizing man? *Such scenes I did witness* in the late Conference more than once or twice; and in despite of all the charity I could muster, I could not help feeling a sense of mingled pity and disgust, exceedingly difficult to describe. When I see another boiling with indignation against another because he ventures to be of a different opinion from himself; when I see him looking at such an individual with an expression of unutterable contempt and scorn; when I hear from his lips the bitterest invectives; when I behold him labouring with an assiduity "worthy of a better cause," by means of dark hints and insinuations, to fix some stain on the moral character of a man whom he dare not directly charge with the violation of

any moral principle ; when I behold such a man, in conjunction with others of like spirit and character, at last proceeding to expel from the community, of which they are all ministers and members, a minister more highly gifted and esteemed, and beloved more extensively than any individual amongst them ; and when I see all this done without any pretence but that of a mere difference of opinion on points universally acknowledged to be non-essential to salvation ; when I witness proceedings like these, can I, without closing my eyes, escape the conviction, that the men who originate and carry them forward, are influenced by an intolerant, persecuting spirit ? But proceedings like these I did witness at the late Conference ; the proceedings in Joseph Barker's case were of this character throughout ; and that man's charity widely differs from any that I can regard from Scripture as incumbent on me, who can designate such proceedings by any other terms than "intolerant" and "persecuting." I take not upon me to determine the amount of guilt contracted by such proceedings ; I would make every allowance for the circumstances under which the actors in this matter were placed ; I would not on any account usurp the prerogatives of the Infinite Judge, and pass sentence on individuals ; I would not cherish unkind or resentful feelings towards them ; I would pray for their welfare, and to the utmost extent of my ability, minister to their salvation and happiness. Charity requires all this, and I would comply with her requirements to the full ; but charity no more requires me to believe that servility is manly independence, or to say that persecution is kindness and affection, than it requires me to believe that black is white, or that one whom I take in the very act of theft, is an honest man. Persecution is persecution, and servility is servility ; and charity cannot forbid us to call things by their proper names.

As this is a subject on which the Conference writers seem disposed very much to enlarge, I will venture another observation or two before I proceed. Charity has claims to urge on behalf of the Connexion, and the whole religious public, as well as on behalf of the members of Conference. Charity, as well as justice to the Connexion, requires that the people should know the character of their rulers ; that the preachers, the junior preachers especially, should be aware of the kind of treatment they may expect, if they should ever venture to think for themselves in opposition to the will of the ruling powers ; and that those who have not yet become preachers, should have an opportunity of determining whether they can afford to sacrifice their liberty of conscience and their right to judge and act for themselves, in order to become preachers in the New Connexion. Charity to the religious public generally, requires that men should know that professions of liberality are not always attested by a liberal course of conduct ; that no forms of government can secure the interests of religious liberty, unless a deep-toned moral sentiment pervade the whole body, and unless individuals feel that the rights of conscience are

the most sacred with which the Creator has invested them ; and in consequence make these rights their individual care : in one word, charity and justice to the religious public alike demand, that the fact should be distinctly stated and widely published, that under the most liberal form of government the most tyrannical deeds may be perpetrated ; and that nothing less than *an individual determination to be free to learn and do God's whole will*, can secure the religious liberties of any people. Joseph Barker has made known this fact in his Brief Report ; and in doing this he has discharged the claims of charity as well as of justice and of truth.

But one word more on this subject, and I have done. Both J. H. Robinson and T. Allin write as though Joseph Barker had made *loud professions* of kindness, and meekness, and charity. Now I, for one, have not heard these professions. Both in his writings and in his oral discourses he inculcates those lovely dispositions ; but is he not bound to do this as a minister of Christ ? And are not other ministers bound to do the same ? I have also often known him express a *desire* that these virtues might have their full influence on his heart, and be duly exemplified in his life. But to represent him as professing the personal enjoyment of them to a greater extent than his brethren, is not correct ; Joseph Barker has as little about him as any man that I know of, of the disposition that says, Stand by, for I am holier (or kinder) than thou. Nevertheless, he acknowledges his obligations to pursue a mild, and meek, and charitable course ; and after all the dark representations that have been given of his Brief Report, I am persuaded that it will not suffer (in point of temper, I mean), by comparison either with J. H. Robinson's Exposure, or T. Allin's Vindication. Between them let the public judge, and if these productions should be read by another generation, let posterity decide.

But our author disputes the correctness of Joseph Barker's report, and singles out several instances, in which he charges him with wilful misrepresentation. These I shall notice one by one.

On page 4, he objects to Friend Barker's statement that "his case was in reality decided on Monday, the first day in Conference," &c.

J. Barker's words, he gives as follows :—"And then you proceeded to say, that it was said, that what we had received from our forefathers *ought* not to be discussed : that you were clamoured down, and that it was decided, in effect, that whoever either transgressed a Conference law, or proposed an alteration in any Conference law, should, unless Conference had reasons of its own for passing by the offence, be expelled without mercy."

On this passage, he comments in the following chaste, and elegant strain, "Why, man. Where was your *reason* and your *conscience* when you wrote this sentence ? Here is a resolution in which it is simply declared that the Conference was determin-

ed to maintain the "rules and institutions of the Connexion" (for this is all that it does declare,) tortured, twisted, amplified, **AND FALSIFIED**, till it becomes a complete monstrosity! No assembly of rational creatures on earth could have passed such a resolution as you make this to be," &c. Without venturing a syllable as to the spirit and style of this paragraph, I would ask a question or two on the facts of the case. What, then, was the cause of this resolution being passed? Simply this. T. Sturges had received an imperfect certificate from his circuit in consequence of having ceased to baptize infants. When his certificate came to be considered by the Conference, some proposed his immediate discontinuance; others thought he should be sent for; while a third class, desirous to avoid the precipitancy of the first course proposed, and yet, determined that the sense of Conference should be taken on the subject before it was fairly discussed, proposed the motion in question. That the Conference was determined to maintain its doctrines, ordinances, and laws, and requiring T. Sturges to appear before Conference to answer the charge that was brought against him by his certificate. As soon as the resolution was proposed, Joseph Barker and myself, along with our friends, saw at what it was aimed; to commit the Conference to a course that would secure his expulsion and mine, as well as the expulsion of T. Sturges, and *that* without allowing a full, thorough discussion of the subject. On this ground, we objected to it; and proposed that the clause, which seemed to us to commit the Conference to an extreme course, should be left out of the resolution. We might as well have talked to the winds. We then proposed, as they were determined to press the resolution, that we should go into the merits of it, and fairly discuss the principle involved in it. But all in vain. *Thrice* did I rise myself, to urge upon the Conference, by a regard for its own character and the safety of the Connexion, not to allow such a principle to be laid down without a free discussion of it; *but in every instance was I clamoured down*. Joseph Barker urged on the Conference similar views; so did Joseph Townsend; but we were all interrupted and finally silenced; and so rancorous was the spirit displayed by the ruling party, and so determined did they seem, by fair means or by foul, to secure their ends, that some of their own friends were alarmed; and George Goodall came forward to the front of the platform, and entreated the Conference to beware how it came to a rash and precipitate conclusion in the matter. But all was fruitless; repeatedly did we endeavour to obtain a hearing, *but were not allowed*; we entreated the Conference to pause and to adjourn the discussion instead of pushing the resolution to a vote without discussion; but all was in vain. The resolution was passed, and we entered our protest against it; and two of the reasons assigned for the protest were as follows,

"3. Because the Conference would not allow the principle to be discussed, but contended that the doctrines and ordinances of

the Connexion ought not to be questioned; that what had once been established, what we had received from our forefathers, was never to be altered; and, therefore, refused to allow those who dissented from the principle of the resolution to be heard before it was put to the vote.

4. Because the resolution appeared to be intended to decide other cases besides that of Thomas Sturges, and that before they were heard; and that it was apparently designed to prevent those cases from being fairly heard."

An additional proof of the tumultuous, uproarious character of the first day's debate is, that John Webster, one of the delegates, wrote home to his Circuit, on the evening of that day, giving just such an account of it as that given above. He has stated this fact to me since the Conference, and it has been confirmed by those to whom he wrote.

Well, but J. H. Robinson says, "all that the resolution declared was, that the Conference was determined to maintain the rules and institutions of the Connexion." *That*, of course, is admitted at once; but what does *that* mean? *How* was the Conference determined to maintain its rules and institutions? Mark, reader, *that* is the question. And now, let facts give the answer. Thomas Sturges was expelled! Joseph Barker was expelled! I was expelled myself! And now, let every candid man determine whether Joseph Barker's representation of the case is not correct. "That it was decided, *in effect*, that whoever either transgressed a Conference law, or proposed an alteration in a Conference law, should, unless Conference had reasons of *its own* for passing by the offence, *be expelled without mercy*."

But our author urges that the Conference denied this in one of their resolutions: "That the matters in dispute between the Conference and Mr. Barker, are not whether the laws and institutions of the Connexion shall be open to improvement; this being a fundamental principle of our system, and inseparable from it." Yes, I am aware that the Conference passed this resolution; and I am aware that Conference writers and advocates generally wish to make the impression on people's minds that it was nothing but respect for the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, that induced them to expel Joseph Barker. But facts speak more loudly than words; and as long as it is known that I was expelled myself without differing in sentiment from the Conference on these subjects, they and their agents may protest as loudly as they please, that it was a regard for Christian ordinances that led them to take the course they did pursue; their conduct contradicts their professions, and they cannot be believed.

Our author objects to the account given by Joseph Barker of the difference of opinion between John Bakewell and Samuel Hulme. Here, also, a full explanation of the affair will show where the truth is to be found. John Bakewell, in one of his speeches, declared that though he *did not* regard Baptism as

essential to salvation, he still believed it to be an ordinance of great importance." Samuel Hulme spoke afterwards, and said that "he was not prepared, like his friend Mr. Bakewell, to give up the ordinance as *essential to salvation*. He was not prepared to give up that point. *He did believe that it was essential to salvation.*" In this broad, unqualified way was the assertion made, and that sitting of Conference closed without any attempt at explanation. During the interval between the sittings of Conference, John Bakewell expressed, to a friend of mine, his astonishment at Samuel Hulme's assertion. He said that *that* was the very error against which he, John Bakewell, had lately been lecturing in the Chester Circuit. Well, Conference again assembled; and it was not until the difference of opinion between these two leading men had been referred to repeatedly by speakers on the opposite side, that they brought about a reconciliation. And how was it then done? Why, J. Bakewell said that he and S. Hulme had conversed on the subject, and they had found that there was no real difference of opinion between them; and he called on S. Hulme to explain his meaning. Samuel Hulme arose and said that his meaning was, "*that when a man believed it to be his duty to be baptized, he could not be saved unless he was baptized!*" This, of course, was a formal recantation of what he had said. For, in this sense, teetotalism, abstinence from flesh, or *any thing*, may be an essential to salvation! If a man believes *any thing* to be his duty, he cannot be saved if he neglects to do it. Joseph Barker himself believes Baptism to be essential to salvation in this sense. He believes that if a man regards it as a duty, he cannot be saved without performing it. If Samuel Hulme's explanation of his views was sincere, Joseph Barker is as orthodox on the subject of Baptism as he is: and Samuel Hulme deserves expulsion for his views of Baptism as much as Joseph Barker. But then, it was plain to all unprejudiced men, that the explanation was given for no purpose but that of avoiding the appearance of inconsistency that there would be, in expelling one man for differing in opinion from the Conference on the subject of Baptism, while more serious differences on the same subject existed amongst his judges. Had Joseph Barker and I been able thus to make statements, and recant them; to declare sentiments one day and explain them away the next, as convenience dictated, we might both have remained in the Connexion. And I am persuaded that *such* an explanation as took place between J. Bakewell and Samuel Hulme, will, in the eyes of all discerning, upright men, only stamp with deeper dishonour those who were the parties to make it.

But this was not the only instance of inconsistency with which the leading men in the Conference stand chargeable. I have in my possession a letter from a respectable man in Halifax who was, at the time referred to in the letter, a member of the New Connexion. In this letter he gives me a detailed account of a conversation that took place between his wife and John Bakewell,

when J. B. was superintendent of the Halifax Circuit. His wife went to the house of a friend where J. B. happened to be visiting at the time. She had her child in her arms, and it was crying vehemently. "Poor little thing," said J. B., "how bitterly it cries." Yes, replied the mother, it is sometimes said that they are better tempered, after they are baptized; what is your opinion Mr Bakewell on the subject of Baptism? She told him that her mind had been a good deal exercised on the subject in consequence of her husband's views being different from those generally entertained. He asked her what her husband's opinions were? She told him, that in her husband's view the baptism of infants was not at all Scriptural; that adults were the only proper subjects of Baptism. He, John Bakewell, told her, that he was of the same opinion, and wished her to examine the Scriptures and see if any were baptized anciently but such as *heard* the word, *understood* it, and *believed* it. My friend's wife then asked him if his children were not baptized? "Why, you see," was his reply, "I happen to differ in my views from Mrs. B., and I let her have her own way; it is not my will that they should be baptized, I can assure you." Well, but do you not baptize other people's children when they bring them to you for that purpose? "No," said John Bakewell, "*except indeed you call wetting the floor Baptism; I generally throw the water over their heads, or else sprinkle their pinafores; and I hope you will not call that Baptism!*" Oh no, replied the female; I thought of getting you to baptize this little one. "*I can assure you,*" said he "*I would rather be without the job!*" Well, she said, my husband says it is foolishness to follow a practice for which no reason can be shown, and he has gone so far as to say that we might as well sprinkle our Tommy (the cat), which saying I think is altogether wrong. To this John Bakewell replied, "*I fully agree with him; you might just as well sprinkle Pussy, (pointing to the cat at the same time), as sprinkle that little creature!!*" The name and address of the friend whose wife had this conversation with J. Bakewell, may be had by application to the author.

And this is the man who took so prominent a part in the proceedings against Joseph Barker! The man who professed such reverence for Baptism as an ordinance of Jesus Christ. This is the man who so often said, that it was not manly nor honest for Joseph Barker or me, to wish to continue in a Connexion from which we so widely differed in opinion! If we could make so little of our opinions as he did; if we could believe Infant Baptism so useless as to say, that pussy might as well be sprinkled as a child, and so unscriptural that we would rather not baptize an infant; and if, holding such views, we could impose upon parents and congregations, by pretending to sprinkle an infant, while we really spilt the water on its pinafore or on the ground; if we could have acted such a "manly," "honest," "straight-forward" part as this, then we might have remained in the Connexion and been raised to the highest honours that it could

confer! But because we made "matters of opinion into matters of conscience," and could not thus trifle with the convictions of our minds, we must be expelled from the Connexion.

And now that I am speaking of the inconsistency of the ruling men in the Connexion, I will give another specimen or two to the reader. One of the objections made by the Annual Committee to the establishment of a New Periodical was, that "it was not necessary." And yet prospectuses of a new periodical, entitled "The Christian Examiner," &c. were sent round to the preachers, with a letter, strongly recommending the periodical, bearing the signature of Thomas Allin. On the 9th of November, 1840, Thomas Allin, writing to J. Barker respecting his proposed periodical, says "*It is not necessary.* Already are the claims of universal knowledge, and philanthropy, and of holiness, advocated by writers of all gradations of intellect, and in publications so varied, as to be in the hands, or within the reach of all classes of readers; and if any of our own members or friends wish to labour in so honourable a field, the Connexional periodicals are open to them; or if they desire to publish a sermon, a treatise, or a tract, the press and the world are before them. But if they wish the improvement of the Magazine, and the advancement of the interests of the Connexion, the Magazine will be the channel they will generally prefer; and to that channel the Committee earnestly solicit your attention." On the 29th of December in the same year, Thomas Allin sends a prospectus to the preachers in the Connexion, in which the projectors say, "Gratefully acknowledging that the cause of philanthropy, truth, and liberty, is largely indebted to the best portion of the periodical press, we feel, however,—and in this feeling many generous minds fully sympathise,—that the friends of popular freedom, philanthropic enterprise, and true religion, *require* a distinct, unsectarian, and independent organ, through the medium of which, they may regularly hold mental intercourse, &c. To supply this desideratum is our object in proposing to augment the power of the periodical press." This periodical, thus declared by its projectors to be "required," Thomas Allin recommends to the preachers, and says respecting it "as the principles to be advocated are those to which we are attached, both as Dissenters and Philanthropists, by affording that *individual support* which is compatible with the claims of our own churches, we may extend the knowledge and the influence of the great principles on which those churches are based, and thus at once benefit both ourselves and our country."

But more than all this—will it be believed by the reader?—After all that has been said against the establishment of a New Periodical, and after the expulsion of a minister from the Body, because he avowed his determination to support such a periodical—will it be believed, I say, that some of the leading men in the Conference have commenced a new periodical themselves? Yet such is the fact. The first number of this periodical, entitled



"The Beacon," was published on the first of September. Can inconsistency go farther than this? Is it not obvious, that it is not *what is done*, but *he who does it*, that is considered by the rulers of the New Connexion? That what is *guilt* in one is *innocence* in another, that what is an unpardonable crime in the case of one man, is a commendable, praiseworthy deed, when performed by another.

J. H. Robinson next refers to a statement he made in the Circuit Meeting at Gateshead, on the 11th of June, and charges Joseph Barker with reporting it incorrectly. Since I read J. H. Robinson's pamphlet I have been in the north, and inquired of numbers who were present at the meeting, whether the statement referred to was really misrepresented in the Brief Report: and from all of whom I inquired, I received but one reply; that Friend Barker's report *was perfectly correct*. Were it necessary, I could bring forward *hundreds* that were present and heard the statement, to prove that it was correctly reported by Joseph Barker. But it is not necessary. Our author himself confirms it. His words are as follows, "I did *not* say that W. Trotter was expelled because he expressed his *disapprobation* of the proceedings of Conference in your case. I said he was expelled because he had resolved to agitate the Connexion, to oppose the decision of Conference, to denounce those decisions as unscriptural! illiberal! unconstitutional! unjust! unkind! cruel! and dishonourable! Such, says he, are my convictions, and I shall *feel bound to publish them to the world*." And what was this but declaring my disapprobation of Conference proceedings? No one could have known that I disapproved of them if I had not declared my disapprobation; I should have acted a very unreasonable part if I had declared that I disapproved of Conference proceedings without assigning my reasons for doing so; and I should have acted as unmanly a part, as the other would have been unreasonable, if, holding such sentiments as I did in reference to Conference proceedings, I had withheld my views from the Connexion and the public. But what is there here more than an "expression of disapprobation of Conference proceedings?" Hear the reply. "It is an expression of determined hostility to those proceedings altogether." And who could disapprove of proceedings like these, in which the character and comfort of an esteemed and useful minister of the Gospel, as well as the reputation and welfare of the Connexion, were most deeply involved, without expressing "determined hostility to those proceedings altogether?" But our author afterwards gives us another version of the affair. He says, "I stated at Gateshead (not as you report, that he was expelled for expressing his disapprobation of Conference in expelling you), but that the Conference was obliged, after what Mr. Trotter had said, "either to eat its own words and rescind its own acts relative to you, or to expel Mr. Trotter." But why so? Why, simply because I had "expressed my disapprobation of these words and acts;" I had pronounced the one unkind—the

other unjust. And where, in the name of common sense, is the difference between this, and expressing my disapprobation of Conference proceedings? Is not our author plainly labouring to establish a distinction where there is no difference?

There are two points, however, in connexion with this passage, on which I would bestow a moment's attention. 1. That the principle is here plainly laid down, that for a preacher to oppose a decision of Conference, and seek its reversal; nay, for a preacher even so much as to *declare his intention to do so*, is an offence that deserves no less a punishment than expulsion from the Body. And if this be liberty, let all men judge! 2. This passage mournfully establishes the fact, that one sin facilitates and seems to render necessary the commission of another. The Conference unjustly expelled Joseph Barker; and then, because I dissented from their proceedings, they felt as though they would not be consistent if they did not expel me as well! Though I was perfectly clear of the charges on which they had convicted and punished my friend, though I had violated no law of Christ, nor broken any rule of the Connexion; though, in order to give a colour of justice to their proceedings, they had to misrepresent my views, and attribute to me sentiments which *I had distinctly disclaimed*, and which, in my inmost soul, I abhorred;—still I dissented from their proceedings in Joseph Barker's case, and they felt themselves obliged, according to the declaration of J. H. Robinson himself, “either to eat their own words, and rescind their own acts, relative to him, or to expel me!” When an individual or a community, but especially the latter, once departs from the path of truth and righteousness, it is impossible to tell where their wanderings will end!

Our author, in the next place, charges Joseph Barker with “the most unconscionable extravagancies and bombast in his language.” He represents him as giving a most exaggerated account of the spirit that prevailed amongst the leading men in Conference. As this is the point on which the advocates of Conference seem disposed chiefly to insist; as it is on this point that they most loudly impugn the veracity of the Brief Report, I shall be excused by the reader for trespassing a little further on his patience to discuss this point. There are a few observations that I wish to make on the subject.

I. In itself it is a question of minor importance whether the Conference manifested a good temper or a bad one. A good deed may be performed in a bad spirit, and an evil action may be performed in a quiet, noiseless way. A man may be *murdered* in cool blood.

II. The temper of the Conference is not a principal argument against its proceedings in Friend Barker's Brief Report. It is scarcely referred to at all till the 24th page, and then it is noticed, rather by the way, as it were, than as a leading consideration to determine men's judgment in the case.

III. The real questions, as we have already seen, are not what

sort of a temper did the Conference manifest—but, 1. Ought such differences of opinion as existed between the leading men in the Connexion and Joseph Barker to have been made the ground of his separation from the Body? And, 2. Supposing this to be the case; Was his separation from the Body effected in a fair, upright, constitutional way? These are the real questions at issue, and though it can be no mystery to any one that the friends of Conference should seek to divert the attention of the public from these questions, and engage us in a personal quarrel about the correctness of our report as to the temper of Conference, we certainly do not intend either to be thus misled ourselves, or to suffer the public to be thus misled.

IV. There is no subject more convenient to be made the ground of a personal squabble than the spirit in which the Conference conducted its business. On a subject like this, every thing depends on the impression made on people's minds. The *same thing* viewed from *different points*, through *different mediums*, assumes the most contrary aspects, and produces the most opposite impressions. What seems *violence* and *clamour* to me, appears to another as nothing more than a proper demonstration of earnestness and zeal.

V. I must not be understood by these remarks to acknowledge that Friend Barker's account of the spirit manifested by the ruling party in Conference is exaggerated in the least. I did not write that account myself; but my conviction is, that the entire impression it makes on the mind, is *under* rather than *over* the truth. In fact, *language cannot convey to the mind an adequate impression of the intolerant, relentless, persecuting spirit that pervaded that assembly. In order to be understood, it must have been witnessed and felt.* It is true indeed that my testimony will be represented as unworthy of credit, as well as Joseph Barker's; and were I to procure the testimony of Joseph Townsend, John Ridgway, John Webster and others, to the correctness of my representations, theirs would be spoken of as the testimony of "two or three pledged partizans." There are some, however, who know these men, and a few who know me; for the sake of the former, I beg to state that I have their authority for saying, that, in their opinion, the impression made on the mind by Joseph Barker's account of the spirit of Conference is not one whit worse than the reality: and, for the sake of the latter, I will state two or three facts, which I believe cannot be denied, even by the supporters and advocates of Conference measures.

1. It is a fact, as stated in the brief notice of T. Allin and J. H. Robinson's publications in No. 2. of the Christian Investigator, that both Joseph Barker and I were *clamoured down* on the first Monday of Conference—and that the resolution on T. Sturges' case was put to the vote without an opportunity being allowed us of discussing the principle involved in it.

2. It is a fact that Joseph Barker's case was introduced by an attempt on the part of John Ridgway, of Staffordshire, to create

a prejudice against him, by trying to show that he had been guilty of a breach of confidence towards him in publicly addressing him in "Both Sides of the Question." With what justice this insinuation was made, any one may see by consulting the Brief Report, page 37.

3. It is a fact, that in reference to a passage in John Ridgway's letter, William Shuttleworth said, "*that none but a fool would have put such a construction on it as that put on it*" by Joseph Barker! It is also a fact, that in the conversation that grew out of the correspondence between J. Ridgway and J. Barker, Wm. Burrows said, "that an honourable man of the world, destitute of religion, would not have acted as the latter did, in thus dragging Mr. Ridgway before the public." These observations were put down at the time by a layman, a friend of mine, as well as by myself, and he is prepared to vouch for the accuracy of these statements at any time.

4. It is a fact that Joseph Barker was repeatedly interrupted while he was speaking, Wm. Medcalf on one occasion urging that "he ought not to be allowed thus to occupy the time of Conference, that they might stay there till the next week at that time if he were allowed to proceed thus." And while Joseph Barker was addressing the Conference, several of its leading members were seen whispering to each other, looking first at him, and then at each other *with a scornful smile*; and as was observed in the article already referred to, "appearing at a loss to show how much they despised and hated him." John Bakewell, P. J. Wright, W. Shuttleworth, and many others conducted themselves in this disgraceful way.

5. It is a fact, that very violent, extreme language was used by some of the speakers against Joseph Barker, that these speakers were occasionally applauded, as in a public meeting; and, that the more violent and extreme their language was, the louder and more vehement was the applause. One or two examples shall suffice. Towards the close of one of his speeches, J. Bakewell made the following observations, which were loudly cheered by the Conference. When he considered the prospects and state of the community, and the extravagances and eccentricities of *him* by whom it had been brought into its present unhappy, divided condition, he felt what he could not express. He. (J. Barker). *pretends* indeed, to regret that bitter and angry expressions should be used; and yet he continues to call them forth by his strange and inconsistent conduct. "Never," said he, "Never till Mr. Barker's agency began to be exerted, was there any thing like division of sentiment and feeling in the Conference and the Connexion. The Conference used to be a season of holy enjoyment, and both preachers and laymen returned to their circuits, exclaiming, 'Behold how good and pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!' But what a change had they beheld. They now looked forward to Conference with anxiety, attended its sittings with pain, and returned to their circuits mourning

over the strifes and animosities which had been engendered in the Connexion. To whom was this change to be attributed? *To Mr. Barker, and to Mr. Barker alone.* To him, his continuance in the Connexion was perfectly unaccountable. Here," said he, "he sees a community once distinguished for its peace and concord, lying torn and bleeding, through the influence he has exerted in it, and *I wonder how he can find in his heart to inflict such injuries on a Connexion that he pretends to love.* Tremendous is the responsibility that rests upon him. If we let him alone, it will be destructive to the Body; if we expel him, he has his friends, and we cannot expect our circuits to escape without injury; and yet he refuses to resign. On him rests the responsibility for *all the evils* that may result from these agitations: all these evils he has brought *voluntarily, DELIBERATELY, PURPOSELY* on the Connexion!" These observations were delivered with the utmost vehemence of voice and gesticulation, and were as vehemently applauded by those who listened to them.

Samuel Hulme gave utterance to some of the bitterest and most rancorous expressions. He said, If they, the Conference, would allow him (J. B.) to think and write *the most extravagant nonsense*, then there would be no agitation. But the man that had no more *understanding* than not to perceive that such a course would destroy the community, or no more *Christianity* than not to try to avoid it, was unworthy a place in the Connexion. He said that he approved of many things in Mr. Barker's character, but he had no notion of heaping unqualified honours on one individual, and disparaging others equally talented and devoted. He had laboured, it was true; but were they, fellow-labourers with Mr. B., to be taunted with a want of labour? If all had laboured *like him*, the Connexion would have been *wrecked!* He made a desperate attempt to fix on Friend Barker the imputation of holding Unitarian sentiments. He said that the right of private judgment, as it was understood by Friend B., was a right to *believe* any thing, or to reject any thing, and yet continue in the Body. He said that they would have had more love in the Connexion if it had not been for *Mr Barker*, and more members too. He, himself, and his pamphlets had been the topic of discussion instead of the salvation of souls. He charged Friend Barker with denying the doctrine of original sin—with believing that infants came into the world *pure and untainted as Adam was when created.* (But this was after he had been obliged to leave the Conference on the Saturday evening.) These, and many other statements of the kind, that I have not room to insert, were made by Samuel Hulme, and the tone and manner of their delivery were in perfect harmony with their intolerant, slanderous character; and yet they were loudly cheered by the Conference.

P. J. Wright also gave it to the Conference as his opinion, that their want of prosperity as a Connexion was owing to the *frown of God* being upon it, and that that frown of God upon the

Connexion had been incurred by retaining in its ministry such a man as Mr. Barker.

But of all those who manifested such a spirit of determined hostility to Joseph Barker, Thomas Allin was the most inveterate and relentless. He seemed to be resolved not only to have Joseph Barker expelled, but to fix upon him, if possible, such a brand, as would effectually prevent his usefulness afterwards. He charged him with *evasion*, with a *habit of evasion*. He said that J. Barker could not deliver an address for *five minutes*, without forcing the conviction on his mind that there was a *want of honesty* in his character. He said that he had detected him in not one, but *five hundred* instances of evasion. He said that some spoke a great deal of his piety, and perhaps they did not think *stedfast adherence to truth* a part of piety; but in his opinion piety required *adherence to truth*. He said that he would condescend to the *most dishonourable shifts* rather than relinquish a favourite opinion. He said that *evasion* was his *hobby*; that he indulged in it unconsciously; that he had surrendered himself to its influence, until he *did not know when he indulged in it!* He charged him afterwards with a want of clearness and soundness in his doctrinal views, and a want of manliness and straightforwardness in stating them. He spoke of the *maudling divinity* with which his Evangelical Reformer was filled. He attributed his want of clearness on the subjects of the atonement, justification, regeneration, &c., to his sympathy with the Society of Friends. He asked how, sympathizing so much with the Friends, he could *honestly* retain his place as a Methodist preacher? He said that *he* did not see how an *honest man* could do it. He applied to Friend Barker an expression that W. Styan was accustomed to use; he said that Friend Barker had a practice of “fettling up his conscience.” He said that he was not the man to *serve* the Connexion, but to *destroy* it. He said the Connexion was once an asylum of peace; it had scarcely known any serious interruption to its peace before it knew Mr Barker. What is it now? he inquired. Its foundations loosened, the bands which hold it together dissolved. Who has done it? *Mr Barker*, and *Mr Barker alone!* Had the Connexion never known Mr. Barker it would still have enjoyed peace and prosperity. He, Thomas Allin, had served it body and soul, for a number of years, and he had rejoiced in seeing so many young men rise up to take the place of him and his brethren that were like him, advanced in years. But what was the result of all? Through the influence of *one man* he saw the Connexion *torn and wounded and bleeding and on the verge of death!*

Such were the statements made by Thomas Allin in the Conference; and I leave it for the reader to judge whether such statements, delivered with all the vehemence of which he was capable, were likely to secure the ends of justice, by affording to Joseph Barker an impartial, fair investigation. If these statements were not *calculated* to inflame men's minds against him;

f they were not *intended* to do this, and if they did not *actually* *effect* what they were designed to accomplish; then I must acknowledge that I know nothing of human nature, and that my eyes and ears deceived me while I sat in Conference.

6. It is a fact, as stated in the Brief Report, that one of the delegates was shamefully abused by one of the leading preachers. The delegate was John Webster; the preacher was Thomas Allin; the circumstances were these. A resolution was proposed, to the effect that the Conference considered the Lord's Supper as well as Baptism to be of Divine appointment and permanent obligation. Friend Webster expressed his regret that Baptism was joined with the Lord's Supper in the resolution; the reason he stated was, that some might be disposed to vote for the resolution, if it referred only to the Lord's Supper, who would remain neuter if it included Baptism as well. He had no sooner made this remark, than Thomas Allin came forward to the front of the platform, and said, he was grieved and astonished at such an observation. He could not have believed that there were any members of that Conference ("except one or two," and he referred to these with such a tone of ineffable contempt, looking towards the pew where Friend Barker and I sat) that questioned the permanent obligation of Baptism, as a Christian ordinance. If he could have thought so, he should have been ashamed almost to sit in Conference, and he should now be ashamed to have it known that any member of that Conference could make such an observation as Friend Webster's. If there were any who did not believe in the permanent obligation of Baptism, *they ought to leave the Conference*; "their continuance amongst us," said he, "will be productive of nothing but discord and disorder." Was it to be proclaimed to the world, to the Wesleyans, to the Independents, to Church people, that there were members of that Conference who declined to vote for a resolution, because it recognised the permanent obligation of Baptism as a Christian ordinance? What would they think of such a fact? Would *they* tolerate such individuals amongst them? These, and similar observations were made by Thomas Allin, and made with such an air of dictation, and in such a violent, overbearing tone, as fully to justify the strong language used by Friend Barker in his Report. I have heard many a man speak more gently and kindly to "an unruly dog," than T. Allin spoke of John Webster on the occasion in question. I am aware that T. Allin has attempted to invalidate the testimony of J. Barker and his friends on these subjects, by publishing certain extracts of letters he has succeeded in getting from D. Oldam, B. Fowler, E. Withinshaw and others, and by stating that he could have furnished many more besides theirs, *all* of them declaratory of the same thing; *i. e.* of the good temper and good behaviour of Conference. Nay, he goes on to say, that of the parties which comprise the Conference, there is but one opinion as to the propriety of its late proceedings, with the exception of two or three of "Mr. Barker's pledged partizans."

Here again I ask what the public must think of T. Allin's veracity, when they know that, at the time he made these statements just referred to, he had in his possession letters from individuals, which he knows are not the pledged partisans of Joseph Barker, which entirely contradict his statement, and which *because they do so*, are withheld from the public, so that the public must never know, if T. Allin can help it, that any such letters had ever been written or received ! With such facts as these in their possession, I ask, what must people think of T. Allin as a man of truth, and as the grand accuser of Joseph Barker, because in his (T. Allin's) opinion, he had not always told the truth ? What must they think of him as the leading man in the Connexion, when he can publish or not publish letters just as they may or may not answer his purpose ; and when in possession of letters the most *contradictory*, he can, in effect, declare that they *all testify the same thing* ? This is an awful instance of the extent to which he has allowed his feelings of exasperation against Joseph Barker to carry him, and is quite as bad, if indeed in a moral sense it be not worse, than his having, in his second letter contradicted the truth of what he had only a few weeks before written with his *own hand*, the facts of which are already published in the Investigator.

Not the least sympathy was shown by the leading individuals in Conference, towards those who, in J. Barker's case, differed in opinion from themselves—they were spoken of as rebels—as persons who, under the influence of personal attachments had departed from public principles, as the subjects of secret alienation, &c. ; and when the vote upon the motion of Joseph Barker's expulsion was about to be taken, Thomas Allin came forward and spoke to the following effect :—"It will be seen by this vote who are the friends and who are the enemies of the Connexion ; from those who will not come forward and support us on the present occasion, nothing good can ever be expected, *and the sooner they take themselves away from the Connexion the better !*" So that no man in the Connexion may have an opinion of his own, as to what is calculated to promote the interests of the Connexion. Thomas Allin assumes that he and his associates are the Connexion, and that there cannot be any opinions held by others opposite to theirs, but what are not only hostile to the Connexion, but which proceed from hostile feelings, and that therefore all who differ from them ought to quit the Community. Whoever, therefore, does leave the Connexion sooner than become such a slave, leaves it agreeably to the distinct and dictative directions of *T. Allin himself*, given from the platform of the Halifax Conference.

7. It is a fact, that before Joseph Barker rose to make his final defence, the names of all the circuits were called over, and most of the delegates expressed a determination to vote for his expulsion. To this fact, attention cannot be too distinctly drawn. It ought to be known throughout the Connexion, that a large majority of



the delegates declared their intention to vote for Joseph Barker's expulsion, *before they had heard a word that he had to say against it.* This fact cannot be denied.

8. It is a fact, as I have stated in the report of my own trial, that I was frequently interrupted while reading my declaration, and on one occasion interrupted in the most disorderly, vociferous way.

I believe that these are all facts that cannot be disputed ; that the very individuals who bear testimony to the *general* good temper of Conference, will be compelled to acknowledge the truth of the *particular statements* I have now made : unless, indeed, they should be disposed to vindicate Conference at any expense. And if these particular statements are true, *could* the general temper of Conference be good ? I have nothing more to say myself as to the temper of Conference, except to repeat what Joseph Townsend says in the article already referred to ; if it be true " that the spirit of that Conference was as good as the spirit by which Conferences are animated in general, then, happy is the man who keeps at a distance from a Conference, from his cradle to his grave ! "

The spirit in which J. H. Robinson concludes his pamphlet is similar to that in which it is commenced. From first to last it is calculated to suggest the inquiry, What must a Conference have been, composed of men that can write such pamphlets as these ? There are two or three insinuations, however, contained in the last page that ought to be rebutted. It is insinuated that we are opposed to all church discipline. Not so ; we are only opposed to the encroachments and usurpations of mere human authority in matters of religion. Let the Bible be our standard of orthodoxy and our code of laws, and we shall be satisfied. As Alexander Kilham said, " Let the plain BIBLE become in FACT, as well as in PROFESSION, the ONLY rule of our religious faith and practice," and we ask no more. It is insinuated also that we are opposed to " subordination to one another in the Lord." But this is as unfounded as the imputation just noticed. We plead for subordination to *one another* in the Lord. We are disposed to yield *every point* in which nothing more than our personal comfort and convenience is involved ; but our *consciences* we can render to no man. We are disposed, we trust, to be all things to all men, in all cases where duty and principle are not involved ; but those we must abide by, or prove unfaithful to God. I believe it answers no good purpose to misrepresent the sentiments of an opponent ; and I fancy J. H. Robinson's pamphlet would have produced quite as favourable an impression on the minds of his readers, if he had not attributed to us principles and sentiments which we hold in as much abhorrence as himself.

I have now gone through J. H. Robinson's two pamphlets ; and I am not aware that there is a single statement of any importance, bearing on the case, in either of them, that I have left unnoticed. I am not aware that there is a single argument

in either of them that I have not fairly met in the face, and answered according to the best of my knowledge, and the truest convictions of my mind. His "challenge" I have accepted, and I suppose that I have so fully justified and completely established the allegations of Joseph Barker, relative to the circular of the Annual Committee, that there will never be any necessity to return to the subject. The Brief Report of Conference Proceedings I have vindicated from the charge both of misrepresentation and exaggeration; and by a more copious report of those parts of the proceedings which have been called in question, I have shown that the worst had not been told. I have sometimes expressed myself in strong terms, but I hope that I have not cherished any unkind feelings towards my opponent. J. H. Robinson, I have been accustomed highly to respect; I do highly respect him still; and the worst wish I entertain respecting him is that he may soon be delivered from the strange, perverting, bewildering influence under which he seems to have laboured for some length of time. When he is himself, he is a candid, straightforward, generous man; and I wish he may soon be himself again. And though he may not give me credit for the kindly feelings I entertain towards him, I still intend to cease not to pray for him, that the richest blessings of Heaven may be his portion both here and hereafter.

And it seems to me, that in thus answering J. H. Robinson's publications, I have also answered Thomas Allin's. His first letter is but a reiteration of those charges of misrepresentation and exaggeration, which had been urged by Friend Robinson, and which have been met and answered. His second letter is an attempt to justify the Manchester meeting, the Hanley resolutions, and the circular of the Annual Committee. These topics have all been sufficiently discussed. I should not notice these two publications at all, were it not to correct some misstatements in minor matters, that may perhaps be calculated to mislead some minds.

On the impassioned declamation with which the second letter abounds, and on the dark insinuations, and unkind imputations, with which both the first and second are replete, I have not a word to say. The foundations on which these imputations are based, have been taken away in the preceding pages; and it would serve no purpose but that of perpetuating strife to retort these imputations on their author.

On the 7th page of the first letter, David Oldham refers to the circumstance of J. Barker leaving the Conference before the close of the proceedings on the Saturday evening, and intimates that in so doing he manifested a want of due respect for his brethren, &c. Now when it is understood that the sittings of Conference ordinarily close at five o'clock in the evening, and that that had been prolonged till between six and seven; that he had been publicly advertised to preach at Lees on the Sabbath, a place not far from Manchester, and that without leaving the Conference he

must have missed the last train, and have been unable to fulfil his engagement; when these circumstances are considered, his conduct will appear to be far from disrespectful. He could not have acted otherwise without the breach of a public engagement, and whether he ought to have violated that, let the reader judge.

On page 9 of the same publication, B. Fowler, speaking of the document I read to the Conference, says, "*This declaration, which, I believe, would have prevented Mr. Trotter's reception into our ministry, had it been made at the time,*" &c. Now, it is a fact, that I made just such a declaration when I was received into the ministry. I declared that I should support the rules and regulations of the body, as far as they commended themselves to my own mind as being in agreement with the word of God, but I promised *nothing further*.

On page 10, Thomas Read says, "I was perfectly satisfied with the whole of the Conference affair towards Mr. Barker, and the other discontented ministers." If so, he has changed his views since Conference. I was conversing with a friend in Halifax, last Sabbath, who declared that Thomas Read had expressed himself to him to the following effect, during Conference:—That he could not lift up his hand for Friend Barker's separation from the Body, *but that if he was his own brother he could not vote for his continuance amongst men who were so inveterately opposed to him!*

On page 15, T. Allin intimates that the case stood thus. *Barker against the Christian church*. And does T. Allin mean us to understand that he would *un-church* all who question the permanent obligation of Water Baptism, and the outward elements of the Lord's Supper. Does he mean to say that George Fox, and William Penn, and Robert Barclay, and all the members of the Body of which they were the founders, were none of them members of the Christian Church? Does he mean to say that the Society of Friends at this day constitutes no part of "the Christian church?" Alas, alas, if such be really his meaning! The Lord send a better spirit amongst his people! A spirit that will not exclude from a place in the Christian church those whose only offence is, that they put a different interpretation on some part of that revealed truth, which they as cordially and thankfully receive as ourselves!

On page 19, T. Allin speaks of some in the Conference who testified their attachment to Friend Barker, and their reluctance to vote for his expulsion, *by their tears*. Yes, and William Shuttleworth was one of those that wept; I remember him speaking very pathetically of "the tears that roll down these old cheeks." But let the reader just turn back to page 40, and read again the statements that he made in Mossley in reference to Joseph Barker, and judge what importance is to be attached to his tears! I'd rather judge men by *their actions* than their *tears*; and if their *actions* be unkind, though *tears* be shed in profusion, I cannot regard them as my friends.

On page 22, E. Withinshaw informs us that no attempts were made in Conference to bias *his* judgment; and for the best reason in the world; his judgment *required* no biasing: he was known beforehand to be favourable to the measures of the ruling party. What inducement there could be to make such attempts in a case like this, I leave E. Withinshaw to explain.

On page 23, the same individual asks, "But did not Mr. Barker, when he commenced his defence on the Saturday afternoon, revert to, and acknowledge with thankfulness, the kindness and patience with which the Conference had acted during the painful and protracted investigation?" And Thomas Allin answers this question thus, in a note at the bottom of the page: "Yes, such at least is my conviction, and the conviction of others with whom I have conferred." But this is like many other of T. Allin's convictions; it is not correct. Friend Barker did say, when he commenced his defence on Saturday afternoon, "that his case had occupied a great deal of the time of Conference, and that he was sorry that their time should be occupied with matters of so unpleasant character. He *solicited a patient hearing for what he had to say*, and urged his request by the consideration that it was most likely the last time that he should trouble them with a speech in Conference, *but he never* acknowledged that he had been treated with kindness and patience by his opponents: he never said any thing bearing the most distant resemblance to this.

Thomas Allin commences his second pamphlet by endeavouring to show that it was not ambition to rule, and personal hostility to Friend Barker, that led the "officials to adopt the course which they did pursue. But enough has been said of this already: there is no need that any thing should be added here. Neither is there any necessity to say any thing more as to the laboured defence of the Manchester meeting, and the circular of the Annual Committee which fill the remainder of the pamphlet. All this has been answered in the observations at the commencement of this Appendix. There are some misstatements, however, in this second letter, as in the first, which require to be corrected.

On page 8, the writer endeavours to justify the steps taken by himself, and others, to drag forth a private letter of Joseph Barker's, to make it the ground of a public accusation. He attempts to show that it was not a private letter; that Friend Barker "directed the person to whom it was sent to *make his views known*, alleging as a reason, that *he did not wish to be admired in the dark*." Now what were the facts of the case? Simply these. A young man at Staley-bridge, a particular friend of Joseph Barker's, had been reading a tract in which sentiments were broached that greatly exercised his mind; and he wrote to Friend Barker requesting his opinion of the tract. There were some others of his acquaintance whose minds had been exercised on the same subjects, and he requested permission to show Friend Barker's reply to his acquaintances. This permission Joseph

Barker granted; "*but*," said he, "*there is prudence in all things.*" Whether this was a permission to show the letter to any one, or to make any use of it whatever;—whether this was such a permission to show the letter, as to destroy its *private* and *confidential* character;—and whether there was any thing in this circumstance to justify the use that has been made of the letter by the Annual Committee, let the public judge.

But this is not the only instance in which violence has been done to the confidence of private friendship. A little while before Conference, I received a letter from a local preacher in London, with whom I had been rather intimate when stationed there, but with whom I had never held any correspondence after I left the Circuit. This letter was written in a tone of the greatest frankness and affection, and amongst other things the writer said that he understood there were certain differences between the Connexion and the Rev. Joseph Barker, but that of their precise nature he was not aware. He had heard, however, that I was very friendly with Mr. Barker, and he thought that I should be as likely as any man to furnish him with full information, and accordingly he requested me to do so. I answered his letter immediately, and in the simplicity of my heart, I told him all that was in my soul. I expressed my sentiments freely, both as to Friend Barker's general character, and the nature of the differences between him and the ruling men in the Connexion. I never dreamt for a moment that my correspondent was a spy, employed for the purpose of drawing from me a statement of my views and feelings; and to show the confidence I placed in him, I need only say that I did not even keep a copy of the letter that I sent him. Little did I imagine how my confidence was to be abused. During the Conference, I received a letter from another friend in London (who, he it observed, is very firmly attached to the Conference), informing me that my letter had been "*hawked round the Circuit, and even read at the adjourned quarterly meeting,*" to make an impression against me. And, in this letter, there was no permission of *any* kind, or to *any* extent, that I am aware of, to show it to *any* individual!

On page 10, Thomas Allin intimates that Friend Barker had formed a plan to re-model "*the doctrines and ordinances of the Connexion, agreeably to a pattern taken from Penn, Barclay, Channing, &c.,—thus transforming the Community into a strange compound of Quakerism, Unitarianism, Methodism,*" &c. On this passage, and especially on the insinuation that Friend Barker is friendly to Unitarianism, I have two or three observations to make.

1. I have always thought it the part of a wise man to select from every system, be it called by what name it may, whatever seems true, excellent, or useful. How this can be any disparagement to any man, I cannot perceive. Whatever is good in the writings of Penn, Barclay, and Channing, should be adopted, and every thing that is evil should be rejected.

2. This is the principle on which Thomas Allin has acted himself sometimes. He once wrote a letter to a friend, in which he advised him to read *Channing's Discourse on the Christian Ministry*, in order to see what the Christian ministry should be. Now, unless Thomas Allin thinks the ministry is already what it ought to be, or unless he does not wish it to be what it ought to be, *he* would have the *ministry* "re-modelled agreeably to a pattern taken from Channing!" And the ministry is surely one of the most important institutions of Christianity.

3. The attempt to damage Joseph Barker's character, by representing him as friendly to Unitarianism, on account of his having recommended Channing's Works is an unfair, dishonourable attempt. A few words on this subject shall suffice. 1. It was not Channing's Works indiscriminately that Joseph Barker did recommend; it was *a single volume of discourses* by Channing, in which there was little, if any thing, said on the Socinian controversy. 2. It was *not* an *unqualified* recommendation even of that volume, that was given. 3. Joseph Barker is not *the only man* in the Connexion that has recommended books containing false and pernicious sentiments. William Cooke, in his Course of Study, recommends, *without the slightest qualification*, the Works of Hume and Gibbon, the two great infidel historians, works that are full of the most subtle and virulent poison. If Joseph Barker had done so, the Connexion would have rung with the cry that he was about to become an infidel, or that he was already an infidel in disguise.

And now that I am speaking on this subject, I will just venture another observation. It has often been insinuated that Joseph Barker leans to Unitarianism, because he is supposed to have invalidated, in some degree, the Apostle's testimony on the subject of baptism. But whether has Joseph Barker or William Cooke done most to diminish our reverence for the Scriptures? William Cooke, in his article on Creeds, in the April Magazine, places our translation of the Scriptures on a level with a mere human compilation of doctrines, called a creed. He intimates that if the one is not worthy to be referred to as an authoritative standard of truth, because it is *human*, neither is the other, for it *is human too!!* Why, if Joseph Barker had penned such a passage as this, words could not have been found strong enough to express the indignation of the ruling party in the Connexion. But it is not Joseph Barker, it is only William Cooke! and no notice of it is taken at all!

Before I finally dismiss the case of Friend Barker and the observations of his opponents, I would advise them, if they should think proper to publish on the subject again, to pursue a different course from that which they have hitherto pursued. Declamation will only influence some minds, and *those* only of the weaker sort, who will easily be turned aside if another more powerful declaimer should arise on the other side of the question. Violent attacks on character, especially where the party who is

the object of these attacks is *known*, and known to be undeserving of such attacks, generally injure their authors more than those against whom they are directed. If the advocates of Conference are to do any thing effectual to retrieve their cause from disgrace and ruin, they must enter into the real merits of the case; they must answer the *great leading* arguments of their opponents, and show them to be unsound; and then having thus unnerved the arguments that are urged against the proceedings and decisions of the Conference, they must proceed by clear, convincing, candid argumentation to prove that these proceedings and decisions were just, and kind, and christian. If they will take my advice, and accept of my assistance, I think I can show them how to proceed, in order to convince thinking, candid people, of the justice of their cause. And whether they will accept my aid and take my advice or not, I shall lay my views before the reader, that *he* may know how they *ought* to proceed, and be able to judge whether they pursue a fair and upright course.

It seems to me that those who undertake to advocate the recent proceedings of the Annual Committee and the Conference should answer the following questions:—

1. Whether are we to believe Thomas Allin's statement of the 12th of May, relative to the meeting at Manchester, or the statement that he has made since Conference, in his second printed letter? These two are in direct opposition to each other, and as we cannot believe them both, we ought to be informed which we are to believe.

2. Supposing that the first of these statements is true, was it possible for Joseph Barker to have a fair trial at the Conference, when all the most influential members of that Body had previously come to the unanimous conclusion that he ought either to leave of his own accord, *or be removed by Conference?*

3. Were not the circulars of the Annual Committee designed to draw from the Circuits such resolutions as would prepare the way of Conference for adopting the measures that were required by the exigencies of the Connexion? And was not the great measure so required, in the judgment of the Committee and their associates, the expulsion of Joseph Barker?

4. Were not the circulars intended to prepare the way for his removal, by eliciting the fullest expression of opinion from the Circuits *against* him, and preventing, as far as possible, all expression of opinion *in his favour?*

5. Were not the circulars, in consequence, sent to some Circuits and withheld from others? And were not measures taken, and directions given, to prevent the subject from being brought forward at all, where there was reason to apprehend a decision in Joseph Barker's favour?

6. What chance had Joseph Barker of a fair and impartial trial before a Conference, the members of which had thus been influenced before it assembled?

7. What authority had Conference to bring Joseph Barker to

trial at all, when he had not been previously tried in the Circuit where he was stationed? If Conference is really possessed of such authority, *let its warrant be produced.*

8. Is it not true that the resolution in T. Sturges's case was passed without any discussion being allowed on the principle involved in it? And is it not also true, that the meaning of that resolution was explained by Thomas Sturges's expulsion, Joseph Barker's, and my own?

9. Are not those instances, specified in the preceding pages, in which harsh and violent language was used by the speakers against Joseph Barker, and in which such language was applauded by the Conference, correctly reported? If not, let our opponents point out the particular flaws, and give us a *correct* report.

10. Is it not true that determined efforts were made to damage Joseph Barker's character, by imputations against both his doctrinal soundness and moral integrity? And is it not true that one of the preachers, who voted for his discontinuance, read a paper, in which he stated that he did not mean his vote to be understood as a sanction to such imputations?

11. Is it not true that most of the delegates declared their intention to vote for Joseph Barker's expulsion *before he delivered his final defence?*

12. If the leading members of Conference were influenced merely by a regard for the ordinances of Christianity, how is it that such a principle never manifested itself more decidedly before? How is it, if baptism be a matter of such importance, that no efforts have been made previously to the late Conference, to enlighten the minds of the people on the subject? How is it that persons have been received both as members and ministers without ever being asked whether they were baptized or not? And how is it especially, that Joseph Barker was allowed to declare his sentiments on baptism in his Evangelical Reformer, without being called to account for his views till years afterwards, when he had proposed certain improvements in the Book Room and Beneficent Fund?

13. If the Conference expelled Joseph Barker for nothing but a regard for the ordinances of Christianity, how was it that they expelled me, when my views of those ordinances were the same as those held by the Conference?

14. Is it not true, as I have shown at large, that I was expelled myself without having violated a single law of the Connexion or of Jesus Christ? and that the Conference proceeded to such extremities as these, without the slightest shadow of a warrant for doing so, in the Rules of the Connexion?

When the advocates of Conference have answered these questions *fairly* and *satisfactorily*, I shall have as many more for them to answer: and if they cannot fairly and satisfactorily answer these questions I think *they ought to acknowledge that they cannot*, and desist from any further controversy on the matter. But if



they will neither answer these questions fairly and fully, nor acknowledge that they are unable to do so, the public will see through their designs; and all their sophistry and declamation will not be sufficient to redeem the Conference from disgrace, and preserve their interests from ruin.

I intended to have made some observations on the present state and prospects of the Connexion. But this work has already so far exceeded the limits at first assigned to it, that I shall be compelled as hastily as possible to draw my remarks to a close. I would only observe on this point, that as far as present appearances indicate, the leaders of the Conference have involved both themselves and the Connexion in inextricable difficulties. I refer not to any loss of numbers that has ensued, or may yet ensue from late transactions; such losses may be repaired. I speak not of the excitement and agitation which at present so extensively prevail; the excitement may subside; the agitation in process of time may be allayed. I speak not of any temporary evils that result from the proceedings of the last Conference. I speak of more serious, weighty, important consequences. I refer to the loss of character which the Connexion has sustained; from being the praise of all the churches for the liberality of its principles and institutions, it has become a proverb of exclusiveness and intolerance. I speak of the altered relation that the Connexion bears to other denominations, and to the church in general; instead of leading the van, as it has been wont to do in the struggle for full, scriptural, universal liberty of conscience, it has fallen back into the rear, nay, worse than that, it has gone over to the side of the enemy, and is now numbered amongst the ranks of those who contend for human authority in matters of religion, eliciting the enquiry on every hand, "Why is there a New Connexion? Its doctrines, and ordinances, and general plans for conducting the work of God, are the same as those of the parent community, and it need not be a distinct and separate body on account of any of these. It has indeed been distinguished from the old body by its liberal system of church discipline. But now that distinction has ceased; the New Connexion has imitated as closely as possible the conduct of the old Body *in the very case* which gave rise to the division; and we cannot see why a New Connexion should exist. If it has returned to the *practices*, let it also return to the *Communion* of the Parent Society." Such are the reflections of thousands, and will be of thousands more when the case comes to be more thoroughly understood. I speak of the want of confidence amongst the members and ministers of the Connexion that must result from the late proceedings. The ministers will feel that they are never safe unless they submit in all things to the ruling party; and the people will feel that they are never safe from such disturbances as have recently occurred, so long as such an antichristian power exists in the Body as has been exercised of late by the Annual Committee and the Conference. I speak of the difficulties that the ruling party will meet with, in

arrying out their exclusive, intolerant principles. They have got rid of Joseph Barker and me ; but they have not yet got rid of the influence exerted on the Connexion by the views to which its members have been trained, and to the advocacy of which they have been accustomed. They have heard of liberty ; they have talked of liberty to others ; they have been accustomed to regard themselves as free men ; and the yoke cannot be fitted to the necks of men like these, all at once. The Conference has committed itself and the Connexion to principles directly at variance with all those notions of liberty which the people have been accustomed and *encouraged* to indulge. And the people cannot all at once be persuaded that these notions are unfounded and unjust. Already indeed have the friends of Conference met with the most determined resistance in some circuits. The Conference expelled me because I sympathized with Joseph Barker, dissented from their proceedings, and declared my intention to oppose them. In the minutes of Conference the Circuits are called on to pursue a similar course. " And as the same obligations rest on our circuits with respect to other officers, Conference calls upon them, as they respect the purity of our doctrines, the permanence of our ordinances, the order and prosperity of our societies, the honour of the Connexion, and the approbation of God, to take heed of the doctrinal purity, as well as to the correct moral conduct of both officers and members, and to remove those who refuse to conform to our rules." Minutes page 50. Now, interpreting this language by the measures which Conference itself adopted, it requires the circuits to expel all those, whether members or officers who dissent from Conference proceedings, and manifest any sympathy for us. And so it has been understood. In some places where Conference influence is great, the superintendents have exactly imitated the Conference. In one place a leader has been expelled for selling our publications, and otherwise manifesting his sympathy for us, and his attachment to our principles ; and at the Leaders' meeting at which he was expelled, the superintendent declared, that no one could be considered a member of the New Connexion who either *sold* or *bought* our publications ! But in other circuits it has been found impracticable to act on these Popish principles. In one circuit a local preacher has been received into full connexion, declaring at the time, his deep, strong disapprobation of the proceedings of Conference. His reception was opposed earnestly by the superintendent, but still he was received. In the same circuit, another who has been a leader and local preacher for many years, declared at a circuit meeting that he was determined to act on his convictions, regardless of all earthly authority : and yet he is allowed to continue in the Body. In another circuit, the Circuit Steward being also a leader and local preacher, read a declaration to the quarterly meeting, similar to that which I read in Conference, and yet the meeting unanimously resolved that he should retain his offices. And so it will be : the Methodist New Connexion has heard too much, and

boasted too much of liberty to be brought easily under such a yoke as the rulers of Conference now seek to impose upon it. The Conference has placed itself in such a dilemma, that it must either (to use the language of J. H. Robinson) virtually "eat its own words, and rescind its own acts relative to" Joseph Barker and myself, by tolerating the continuance of many of our friends and supporters amongst them, or else with their own hands, break up the Connexion.

I speak not these things in triumph or in anger, I am grieved at heart to behold a Connexion that I have esteemed, and for whose welfare and prosperity I have laboured with all my might, and which did at one time bid fair to bless by its influence the Churches of the Redeemer and the nations of the earth,—I am grieved, I say, to behold such a Connexion as this exposed to such imminent danger, and already subjected to such sad calamities by the rashness, injustice, and intolerance of a few of its leading men. And though I expect to be reproached for what I am about to say, though I expect that it will be attributed to bad and malicious motives, to unkind and revengeful dispositions; yet my conscience bears me witness that I am prompted by nothing but a sense of duty to God, and a sincere desire to promote the interests of the Connexion to say, *that the steps which have been taken must be retraced, the principles which have been laid down must be abandoned, or the Connexion must ere long become a hopeless wreck.*

I have done. I have plainly and frankly declared all that was in my soul on these subjects. It has been an unwelcome, unpleasant task, and I am thankful it is done. The publication of this work would not have been delayed so long, but I was anxious to insert in it all that I wished to say on the subject. I have done so, and it will be something extraordinary indeed, that will tempt me to take up my pen again for such a work as this. If my opponents successfully answer the arguments here brought forward, and invalidate the statements here made, I shall be happy in some public way to acknowledge myself defeated: but if they should answer this book as they have answered our former publications, by passing over the great leading arguments, misrepresenting others, and playing upon words to create an impression on weak minds against us, I shall take no notice whatever of their publications. Mine and theirs will be before the public, and let the public judge between us.

May God in his infinite mercy forgive every thing, whether in our conduct or the conduct of our opponents, that is wrong. May he bless and prosper whatever is right and according to his will. May he overrule these unhappy events for the promotion of his glory and the advancement of his cause; and may he grant us, after all our differences on earth, to meet in one common Heaven above, for Christ's sake, Amen.

Bradford, Sept. 9th, 1841.

## THE RESULTS OF CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS.

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In consequence of the unchristian and unconstitutional proceedings of the Annual Committee and Conference, as detailed in the preceding pages, and in the "Brief Report," &c., a number of Societies have withdrawn themselves from under the authority of Conference, and become free Congregational Churches.

The first to break off all connexion with Conference were Newcastle-on-Tyne, Gateshead, and Bradford. When news of the decision of Conference, in the case of J. Barker, reached Newcastle, the Society recalled their Representative, and came to a resolution that, instead of holding their rights and privileges at the will of Conference, they would henceforth hold them directly from Christ, under the New Testament. Since then the Church has gone on in peace and prosperity.

The Gateshead Circuit followed a similar course, and they also, along with most of the Country Societies, are now working together in great harmony, and with considerable prosperity. They have lately engaged R. Hamilton, of Kilmarnock, as their pastor, or superintendent minister.

Bradford Circuit separated from Conference entirely with the exception of twenty or less, and with W. Trotter as their pastor, they are doing well. The Bradford friends worshipped till lately in the Temperance Hall; the Country Societies worship in their respective chapels.

Nearly the whole of the Society at Stalybridge, also, have laid aside the authority of Conference, and become an independent church. S. Sayce, late a missionary in Ireland, has become their pastor.

The Societies at Mottram and Newton also have laid aside Conference authority, and chosen Thomas Sturges as their pastor.

A numerous body, with near thirty Preachers, have separated from Conference in the Staffordshire Potteries. In some of the places they are building chapels, but they have not yet got a regular Minister.

At Hawarden and the neighbouring places, a great part of the Societies have asserted their Christian rights, and they are now proceeding prosperously in their labours for the salvation of souls.

Considerable secessions from Conference have taken place at Stockport, Dukinfield, Oldham, Lees, Delph, Mossley, Hirst, Ashton, Manchester, Pendleton, Bolton, Bramley, Huddersfield, Berry Brow, Paddock, Lindley, South Shields, and in many other places. The Connexion generally is in a state of great dissatisfaction, and there appears to be no prospect whatever that the Rulers of Conference will be able to make their way. Even those parties who still adhere to Conference, appear to have lost all confidence in the rulers of the body, and even the ruling ministers and laymen themselves appear to be in despondency, and to have lost all confidence in their own measures.

The Periodical published by J. Barker, W. Trotter, &c., has already obtained a very extensive circulation, and the principles advocated therein appear to be spreading rapidly in all directions. It does appear as though God were intending to overrule the unchristian and arbitrary proceedings of the Conference, for the furtherance of his cause in the earth.



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in Wesley Chapel, Dudley.*

BY JOSEPH BARKER.

On the evenings of Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, the 25th, 26th, and 27th of last month, I delivered three lectures in the Lancasterian School-room, Dudley, on the subject of Evangelical Reform. After each lecture J. Bakewell stood forward and entered into discussion, not so much on the subject of the lectures, as on matters of a personal nature, respecting myself and the proceedings of the Methodist New Connexion Conference. What J. Bakewell said, and how he was answered, may be stated hereafter; all that is needful to be said on that subject at present is, that S. Hulme, T. Allin, and other Conference preachers and advocates who were present, did not seem to be at all satisfied with the results of the discussions, and came to a determination to attempt to repair the injury their cause had sustained, by some other means. Accordingly, after the close of the second night's discussion, it was announced that, on the Thursday evening following, S. Hulme would deliver a lecture in Wesley Chapel, to expose the inconsistencies and misrepresentations of J. Barker, &c. As I had allowed them free discussion after my lectures, I asked if they would allow discussion after their lectures: to which they replied, NO. I then asked whether they would allow me to ask questions: but they answered, NO. Such a procedure, after they had spent three nights in discussion with me, and after they had actually complained of me and my friend Trotter for not allowing them still greater liberties, appeared both unjust and suspicious, both to myself and to the audience, and the audience gave forth strong expressions of disapprobation. I and my friend W. Trotter attended the lectures, and took notes of them, and as we were not permitted to make any reply on the occasion, we thought it needful to reply through the press. S. Hulme spoke first; then T. Allin, and then S. Hulme again. The lectures were purely personal, and occupied in the delivery about three hours and a half. The following is a statement of the principal things advanced by the speakers, with a brief reply to each statement.

STATEMENTS OF S. HULME, WITH ANSWERS BY J. BARKER.

1. *S. Hulme*: Mr. Barker got married during the time of his probation, and so broke the pledge which he had given to observe the rules of the Connexion in reference to marriage.

Answer. 1. I consulted the will of God with respect to marriage, and no one's will besides; and I have never seen cause to repent of the course which I took. 2. But in marrying during my probation, I broke no pledge; I never gave a pledge not to marry during my probation. 3. It was not I that was to blame in the affair, but Conference. 1. Conference punished me for what I had never done, viz., breaking a pledge, when I had never given a pledge. 2. Conference tried me, condemned me, and punished me in my absence, without either previously reproving me, speaking to me, or allowing me to speak a word for myself, and

without even so much as giving me notice of what it was doing. So early did Conference begin to deal unjustly towards me.

2. *S. Hulme*: At the Nottingham Conference Mr Barker got the circuit to send him to Conference in his superintendent's place, thus supplanting his superintendent.

Ans. 1. The reason why the Sunderland Circuit did not send the superintendent preacher to the Nottingham Conference was, first, to save expense, and secondly, because he was unwilling to do the business which the circuit wished him to do. 2. The reason why I was sent to Conference was, because I had to go to Nottingham on my own business, and it was considered that I might, while there, do the business which the circuit wished to have done, and they appointed me their representative accordingly. 3. In all this, both I and the circuit acted according to the rule of the Connexion. 4. If I had not gone, there was no intention, on the part of the circuit, to send the superintendent. 5. The Conference, in turning me out of the Nottingham Conference when the circuit had sent me as its representative, and taking into Conference a person whom the circuit had refused to send, broke its own laws, destroyed the constitution of the Connexion, and practised towards me a great injustice. Here, also, the fault was the fault of Conference, not mine.

3. *S. Hulme*: At the Nottingham Conference there were doubts entertained by some as to the soundness of Mr. Barker's views. Mr. Barker had spoken against the atonement in his sermons. Mr. Barker gave a written declaration of his views, and it was accepted; though some thought that there was nothing in Mr. Barker's declaration but what a Socinian might subscribe.

Ans. 1. That some at the Nottingham Conference professed to have doubts of the soundness of my views, is true; and when did a man ever think for himself, without having his views suspected? It is the case now, and it always has been the case, as Baxter observes, that a man must either be a heretic, or called one. If he be content to be a heretic, men will call him orthodox, but if he be resolved to be orthodox, to follow Christ and no one else, he is sure to be denounced, by a certain class of persons, as a heretic. See the Investigator, on the Reproach of Christ. 2. But the Nottingham Conference said nothing about my views of the atonement, nor was there ever an instance in which I either spoke or wrote against the atonement. I never even heard of such a charge, till made by S. Hulme, who must either have invented the charge, or some one else for him. 3. The written declaration of my views, which I gave to the Nottingham Conference is still in existence, I suppose; if there be any thing heterodox in the declaration, let it be published to the world. If my opponents know the declaration to be unobjectionable; if they know the views expressed in it to be strictly correct, why mention the thing at all? 4. Though one person said there was nothing in the declaration but what a Socinian might say, A. Scott declared that a Trinitarian ought to say no more. If I am in error on any part of the doctrine referred to by S. Hulme, why not expose and refute the error? and if I am not in error, as my very opponents seem to be aware, why do they still find fault?

4. *S. Hulme*: Mr. Barker was brought up at the Liverpool Con-

ference in 1836, for grievous reflections upon his brethren, but promised reparation.

Ans. 1. What I was called to account for at the Liverpool Conference was, writing a letter in the *Christian Advocate* against *close Conferences*, as S. Hulme himself well knows; and so far from retracting what I had written on that subject, I repeated my sentiments in the very next letter I wrote in the *Christian Advocate*. The Conference would fain have frightened me into a recantation, but I thank God, in that, as in other trials similar, he graciously preserved me. I now understand better than I did why the recommendation of Conferences being open, created so much alarm in the minds of the ruling few. If Conferences were open, the injustice which I have witnessed and experienced could not have been so well practised; close Conferences, will always be preferred, so long as party objects are preferred to the great objects of the Gospel of Christ; but when men have in view the truth only, and not their own power and narrow selfish ends, they will not deem the recommendation of Conference ceasing to be close a crime.

5. *S. Hulme*: At the Ashton Conference Mr. Barker was brought up for an offensive Article on Creeds, published in his *Evangelical Reformer*; the article was publicly censured in the minutes.

Ans. The sentiments which I published on Human Creeds, were no other than the sentiments of Alexander Kilham, the principal founder of the Connexion, as I have abundantly proved in my published letter to Thomas Allin on the subject.\* In condemning this article, the rulers of Conference condemned the writings of Kilham, they overturned the fundamental principles of the Connexion, and prepared the way for all those troubles that have lately come upon them. I glory in my articles on Human Creeds.

6. *S. Hulme*: The following year Mr. Barker published a commendation of a volume of Channing's Discourses. Discourses fraught with undisguised Socinianism, thus bringing his doctrinal views into doubt, &c.

Ans. 1. The discourses of Channing, which I recommended, were not fraught with Socinianism: the Socinianism that was in them, was as nothing to the mass of the book. The discourses were no more fraught with Socinianism, than Bunyan's *Pilgrim* is fraught with antinomianism. 2. My recommendation of the discourses was carefully qualified, and the points on which I considered Channing's views to be so excellent, were particularly specified. 3. Channing's works were first recommended to me by T. Allin, and the first thing of Channing's, that I recollect seeing, was lent me by T. Allin. T. Allin also, in a letter to J. Townsend, which I have seen, recommends J. Townsend to read Channing's work on the Demands of the Age on the Christian Ministry, that he might see what the Christian Ministry should be: and yet this work of Channing's is about the most Socinian work he has written. If, then, my recommendation of a volume of Channing's Discourses rendered my orthodoxy questionable, what shall we think of T. Allin's orthodoxy? 4. W. Cooke, in a pamphlet written for the

\* See *Toleration, Human Creeds, &c., a letter to T. Allin*, price one penny.

improvement of young ministers, and revised by T. Allin, recommends, without any qualification, the works of Hume and Gibbon, two of the meanest, and craftiest, and most virulent and dangerous enemies of Christianity that ever wrote. If men are to be answerable for every sentiment in every book they recommend, why is not T. Allin expelled for Socinianism, and W. Cooke for infidelity and lasciviousness? (I may observe here, that S. Hulme, when professing to read what I had written in my *Evangelical Reformer* about Channing, slipped in words and phrases of his own, quite altering the sense, and passed them off as mine. W. Trotter can bear witness to this, who, as well as myself, heard S. Hulme.)

7. *S. Hulme*: There were several articles in Mr. Barker's *Reformer* that were vague and defective.

Ans. Name them, and let the public read and judge. If they find not every article strictly scriptural and practical, I shall be glad to be corrected.

8. *S. Hulme*: Mr Barker excludes from his account of justifying faith, trust in Christ.

Ans. I. I do no such thing. Witness the following passage from the *Christian Investigator*, page 33:—"That faith by which a man is justified or saved includes three things:—1. A belief of Gospel truth. 2. Submission to Gospel authority; and 3. *Reliance upon Gospel promises.*" Does this exclude trust in Christ? Can a man trust in all Christ's promises, and not trust in Christ? But in page 36, I name "Trust in Christ" expressly as forming a part of saving faith. My words are as follows:—"Some speak of saving faith as consisting in a bare belief and acknowledgment of the truths of the Gospel; others speak of it as if it consisted merely in a sure trust and confidence in Jesus Christ; and others speak as if it did not matter much what a man believed, provided he paid respect to his outward general conduct; but they are all wrong.—If we would be *true Christian believers*, we must have *all these things in one.*" [See the whole article.] This is my uniform doctrine, both in my *Evangelical Reformer*, and in all my works. I may sometimes vary the phraseology, as Christ and his Apostles do, but the sense is still the same. What think you, then, my readers, of the charge that I exclude trust in Christ from my view of saving or justifying faith?

9. *S. Hulme*: Mr. Barker denies the doctrine of the witness of the Spirit, and says that all talk about this subject is *man's* talk; that God talks of no such thing.

Ans. What an awful misrepresentation. In that very article, from which S. Hulme pretends to quote, I expressly teach the doctrine of the witness of the Spirit: my words are as follows:—

"To those that are the Sons of God, the Spirit gives freedom from bondage of soul, and from superstitious and guilty fears. 'For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba Father.' The spirit itself beareth witness to our spirits, that we are the children of God." (*Evangelical Reformer*, vol. 2, page 124.) See the whole article.

This doctrine I teach in all my writings. [See vol. 3. *Evangelical Reformer*, page 429-430, &c.] What I say is *man's* talk, is what some people say about the *manner* of the spirit's operations.

It is not talk about the witness of the Spirit, the influences and workings of the Spirit, that I call man's talk ; but the talk about the witness of the Spirit being *direct*, and about the influences and operations of the Spirit being *immediate* and *irresistible*. And I may say the same again, without fear of refutation. To prevent misunderstanding, the words *direct*, *immediate* and *irresistible*, in the article referred to by S. Hulme are put in italics, and the conclusion of the passage, which S. Hulme did not choose to quote, is as follows :—

“ The manner of the Spirit's operations is said by Christ to be secret, The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth. So is every one that is born of the Spirit.” Why then should men pretend to know what God has wrapt in darkness?”

I pray God that this wresting and perverting of my words, and this misrepresenting of my sentiments, by my adversaries, may be forgiven them.

10. *S. Hulme*: The Conference at Huddersfield was given to understand that Mr. Barker's Evangelical Reformer would be given up almost immediately, and yet it was continued nearly a year after.

Ans. I never promised any body to give it up ; and when I did give it up, it was not to please Conference, but because I thought it *proper* to give it up.

11. *S. Hulme*: Mr. Barker was brought up before the Longton Conference again, but the Conference did not proceed to severe measures.

Ans. What I was brought up for at the Longton Conference was the re-publication of my sentiments on Human Creeds ; and the reason why Conference did not proceed to severe measures was, 1. Because I had proved my sentiments on that subject to be the sentiments of A. Kilham, and the principles on which the Connexion was founded; and 2. Because the people were so loud and resolute in their opposition to the proceedings of my adversaries, that Conference had not the courage or the power to proceed to severe measures.

12. *S. Hulme*: Mr. Barker thanked the Longton Conference for its leniency.

Ans. Perhaps I might; but not because I thought the Conference more lenient than it ought to be. The Conference was lenient compared with what it had been before; but compared with what Christianity requires, it was both unjust and cruel. Any thing like justice or Christian forbearance was so new to me in Conference, that I was rejoiced to see it, and might well thank it, in the hope that it would proceed, in future, differently from what it had done up to that time : alas, I was deceived in my expectation !

13. *S. Hulme*: When all was supposed to be settled and quiet, Mr. Barker began again.

Ans. This is quite incorrect : the peace made at Longton was broken by the Annual Committee and W. Ford; who, shortly after Conference, published a letter to the circuit preachers, containing a personal attack upon me. In this, as in every other case, the fault was on the side of the Conference rulers.

14. *S. Hulme*: During the last year, Mr. Barker proposed the

establishment of a new book-room, and of a new periodical, by which, if he had been allowed to proceed, he would have ruined the Connexion.

Ans. Let those who wish to understand this matter, read the pamphlet called the Church and the Press, price twopence, which contains the whole correspondence between me and the Annual Committee on the subject; and then let them judge how what I proposed could injure the Connexion. The Christian Investigator is the periodical which I and my friend Trotter proposed to publish: let those who read it, judge whether it is calculated to destroy any thing good or not.

15. *S. Hulme*: In the concluding articles of his *Evangelical Reformer*, Mr. Barker sounded the tocsin of war, and used offensive language.

Ans. The concluding articles of my *Evangelical Reformer*, in Vol. 3, I regard as the most honourable things I ever wrote: and as far as I glory in any thing I have written, I glory in them. In these articles I refuted the slanderous story that I had recanted the articles censured by Conference, expressed my strong disapprobation of the conduct of Conference in persecuting my little work, declared my conviction that the Scriptures, and not any human creed, ought to be regarded as the standard and rule of truth and duty, and expressed my determination to believe, and teach, and practise the whole religion of Christ as laid down in the New Testament, regardless of the authority of any man. These were my offensive sentiments; this was what they called offensive language. And these are my great crimes. I cannot but glory in such crimes. I cannot but wish the world were overrun with such crimes.

One of the sentences with which I concluded my *Evangelical Reformer* was the following:—

"I consider myself able to prove, before any public audience, or before the world at large, that the sentiments contained in those parts of my writings to which the offensive resolutions of Conference refer, are not erroneous, or dangerous, but that they are, on the contrary, in strict and full agreement with the doctrine of Christ and his Apostles, as laid down in the New Testament. And I repeat it, if my doctrines are as orthodox as the doctrines of Christ and his Apostles, they are as orthodox as I wish them to be."

If *S. Hulme* and my other opponents thought my sentiments erroneous, why did they never expose them? Why do they not accept my challenge and do it now?

16. *S. Hulme*: Mr Barker next assailed the Beneficent Fund.

Ans. I did not assail the Beneficent Fund; I simply proposed a few alterations in its rules, with a view to bring the fund into conformity with the principles of the Gospel. I wished none to be obliged to pay in, but those who were able; and I wished none to receive out, but those who were in need. I thought it wrong for a poor widow and her orphans to be left to starve, while a man with five or ten thousand pounds was receiving forty pounds a year. But my views on this point may be seen in "*Both Sides of the Question*."

Next followed various misrepresentations of my views on Baptism, for a refutation of which I refer to my pamphlet on that subject.

Then succeeded a number of misstatements respecting a private letter which I once wrote to a friend on the subject of the Lord's Supper, for a reply to which I need only refer to the "*Brief Report of Conference Proceedings*," &c., and to "*The Justice and Fairness of Conference*," &c. My sentiments on both these subjects are before the world, and I leave all to judge for themselves, whether there be any thing in them erroneous and dangerous or not.

I refer to "*Both Sides of the Question*" for a reply to what S. Hulme said about the Hanley Quarterly Meeting also ; as also for a true account of the Manchester Secret Conference ; at both which meetings I was tried and condemned in my absence, as well as in the absence of my friends. An account of the same matters may be seen also in the "*Brief Report of Conference Proceedings*," &c., and in "W. Trotter's pamphlet on Conference Proceedings." The facts, in short, are these. While I was labouring peacefully and prosperously in my circuit, and while every circuit in which I had resided was regarding me with affection and esteem, the ruling party in Conference, always unkind and jealous, and now more alarmed than ever, in consequence of my determination to commence a new and cheap periodical, and to furnish a supply of cheap good books, resolved on my expulsion. Their first step was, by slanderous statements, to induce the Hanley Quarterly Meeting to pass certain resolutions, craftily worded, so as to beguile the people, but in reality pledging them to support the ruling party in Conference in their efforts to expel me. These resolutions were sent to the Annual Committee. The Annual Committee called a meeting of the friends in whom they could confide, which came to the unanimous opinion, that if I would not leave the Connexion, it would be their duty to expel me. Next day, the Manchester Meeting was induced to pass resolutions like those of the Hanley Quarterly Meeting, pledging themselves to support Conference in their efforts to expel me. The Annual Committee then got the resolutions of the two circuits printed, and sent them round to all such circuits as they supposed could be led into the snare, along with a lot of slanderous stories respecting me and my plans, and accompanied with a *private letter* from T. Allin, requesting the superintendent preachers to use means to get similar resolutions passed in their circuits. The slanderous reports sent round, were such as these : that I was endeavouring to abolish the Beneficent Fund, and to destroy the Book-room,—that I was opposed to Class Meetings, to Monthly Collections, &c., &c. One report thus sent round, that I did not baptize or sprinkle children, was true ; but even this was mixed up with falsehood. The private letter to the preachers, directing them how to proceed in order to secure a vote against me, and where that could not be managed, to prevent a vote in my favour, was as follows :—

" Altringham, May 5th, 1841.

" DEAR BROTHER—

" The Annual Committee are of opinion that the same circumstances which have led to the passing of the following resolutions, at the Hanley and Manchester Quarterly Meetings, render it necessary that other Circuits, *entertaining the same views*, should also freely make them known to



the ensuing Conference, and thus prepare its way for the adoption of those measures which the present exigencies of the Connexion so evidently require. The Committee request you, therefore, carefully to consider the resolutions, then submit them to the *private and confidential* consideration of the most *intelligent and influential* friends, and should it be *your* opinion and *theirs* that your adjourned quarterly meeting will *approve*, put the substance of the resolutions into such form as you and the friends prefer, and let them be duly brought forward, and have all the support which *you* and your *colleagues*, if any, and other *friends*, may be able to render. Earnestly praying that divine wisdom may so direct all our steps, and that a gracious Providence may so overrule all circumstances, that the firmer establishment, and the more abundant prosperity of our Zion, may be secured,

"I remain,

"Yours, very affectionately,

"THOMAS ALLIN."

This letter will speak for itself. Even J. Ridgway condemns it.

Now mark you—all this was done in absolute secrecy. Not a word was sent to me. I was tried and condemned in the Hanley and Manchester Quarterly meetings; I was tried and condemned by the secret Conference at Manchester; I was then tried and condemned in the secret meetings, called by the dark circular sent out by T. Allin; and I was not even informed by a single soul of all my opponents, of a single thing that was going on. The first whisper I heard of those strange and dark proceedings, was from a private friend in Staffordshire. I then wrote to T. Allin for information, but in vain. I wrote again, and at length I received a brief delusive note. Then came the notice of trial, and that so late, that if they had not agreed to break their own laws, they could not have tried me at Conference at all. How my opponents went on at Conference—how they set aside their own laws—how they relinquished every charge at first preferred against me, and preferred others, of which I had received no regular notice, and how, without ever having admonished me, even supposing me to have been wrong, or borne with me, they expelled me, you may read in the "*Brief Report of Conference Proceedings*," and in W. Trötter's pamphlet on Conference.

In all these proceedings, from those of the Hanley Quarterly Meeting to those of Conference, S. Hulme and T. Allin,—father-in-law and son-in-law—have been the leading individuals; and this is the business which they would fain wash white. It cannot be done. There is no power in the universe can wash it white. My Dudley friends will here see another reason why S. Hulme and T. Allin refused to allow us to ask them any questions, or to make any reply; and they will also be able to see why S. Hulme, T. Allin, and J. Bakewell refused to accept my often-repeated invitation to a public and full discussion of those matters. I am glad that, in writing and in speaking, I have to do with people that have common sense, and a respect for common equity and honesty.

17. *S. Hulme*: What Mr. Barker says about being tried and condemned at the Manchester Meeting is not true; that meeting came to no resolution whatever on his case.

Ans. So *you* say; but T. Allin, the man who called the meeting, and whose office it was to record its decisions, speaks differently—his words to J. Townsend are as follows:—

"I ought to state that a meeting of the Committee and Connexional Officers has been held, at which the unanimous opinion was, that Mr. B., as an honest man, ought to leave a church of which he disapproves, but that if he will not do this, it will be the duty of Conference to remove him."

18. *S. Hulme*: But this was not coming to a resolution, but only to an opinion.

Ans. And what is a resolution of a meeting but an expression of opinion? Why cavil about words?

19. *S. Hulme*: The Adjourned Quarterly Meetings consist of exactly the same persons as the Quarterly Meetings?

Ans. This, as regards the actual fact of the case, is as far from the truth as a statement could well be. For a full reply to this, see W. Trotter's pamphlet on the *Justice and Forbearance of Conference*. Page 52.

20. *S. Hulme*: Mr. Barker had the opportunity of speaking for himself at the Adjourned Quarterly Meeting at Hanley, by means of his pamphlet.

Ans. As far as the pamphlet went, it refuted your former charges; but to secure your object, you and John Ridgway invented new ones; which, though as false as the former, neither I nor my pamphlet were present to answer.

21. *S. Hulme*: On the subject of Baptism, Mr. Barker is a Quaker.

Ans. Very nearly so, but not quite. And is it a sin to be like a Quaker? This country owes as much perhaps to the Quakers as to any other class of men; and many of the names which have done so much honour to religion and humanity, are the names of men and women of that denomination. What sort of souls must people have, to imagine that a man would be ashamed of being like W. Penn, R. Reynolds, G. Fox, J. Sturge, Jon. Dymond, or Eliz. Fry? I am heartily sorry that I am not more a Quaker than I am, in those points in which Quakerism and Christianity are one. I know that many are called Quakers that are not Quakers; but true Quakers, those who carry out the original principles of the society, are amongst the noblest men and women on this side the gates of heaven. The mere fact that my views of Baptism are no worse than the views held by a number of the best and happiest, of the noblest and most useful of our race, is itself a proof that the clamour raised on this subject by my opponents, has neither reason nor religion on its side.

22. *S. Hulme*: Mr. Barker was expelled purely on account of his views on Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Ans. The greater shame, then. But it is not true. At the time that my opponents determined on my expulsion,—nay, even at the time that I was virtually tried and sentenced to expulsion at the Hanley Quarterly Meeting, and at the Manchester Secret Conference, my views on Baptism or the Lord's Supper were not mentioned. Even in the notice of trial received from T. Allin, less than a fortnight before Conference, my views of Baptism are not referred to or noticed, but only my refusal to baptize children.

23. *S. Hulme*: All the clamour and violence that took place in the Conference, took place on Monday, the first day of Conference. Mr. Barker objected to any resolution being passed on the case of T. Sturges, and wished to enter into a discussion of his own case; and this was what caused the clamour.

**Ans. 1.** I never did object to a resolution being passed in **T. Sturges's case**; what I objected to was, First, introducing a clause into the resolution about **T. Sturges's case**, which was intended to decide my case without any discussion at all; and, Second, forcing that clause, which decided my case, through the Conference without allowing it to be discussed. To the resolution, so far as it referred to **T. Sturges only**, I made no objection whatever. **2.** I did not wish to discuss my own case on the Monday; I simply wished it not to be decided without discussion. **3.** The clamour and violence of our opponents in Conference did not all take place on Monday; the most cruel and unchristian part of the conduct of our opponents took place afterwards.

**24. S. Hulme:** Mr. Barker's case came forward on Wednesday.

**Ans.** Nay, on Thursday.

**25. S. Hulme:** Mr. Barker is a Quaker on the subject of the Lord's Supper, as well as on Baptism; precisely and fully a Quaker.

**Ans.** It is not correct: I should not be at all ashamed of my views on those subjects, if they were precisely the same as the Quakers'; but they are not so: and to say they are, is not doing either the Quakers or myself justice.

**26. S. Hulme:** Mr. Barker entertained the views of the Connexion when he joined it, and when he had changed his views, he was bound to withdraw.

**Ans. 1.** I had not changed my views on any subject of importance. **2.** The principal change of views that had taken place, was in my opponents, not in me: they had turned completely round on many subjects, and torn up and cast away the very principles upon which the Connexion had been founded. If, therefore, those who had changed their views ought to have left the Connexion, it was **T. Allin, S. Hulme, J. Ridgway, &c.**, that should have left. **3.** But the principle, that a man should leave a church or denomination whenever he changes his views, is not a good one; it is neither Christianity nor New Connexionism. Christ did not leave the Jewish Church; he preached and practised his doctrines, without regard to the traditions of the rulers, and left it to his enemies to expel him. So did Paul, and so did the rest of Christ's followers. And Luther and Melancthon did the same; publishing and preaching the Gospel, and leaving to the Pope the responsibility of attempting to separate them from communion with the church. Wesley did the same with respect to the Church of England, and Kilham did the same with respect to the Wesleyan Connexion. And so far from blaming them for so doing, you call their conduct noble and apostolical. In your Apology for the New Connexion you say,—

“Every man's duty is to labour for the improvement of the system to which, in the course of Providence, he is attached; he is called upon to use his best efforts to reform existing evils.”

And even **T. Allin**, in his letter to me on Human Creeds, &c., teaches the same doctrine. He says,—

“Ministers ought not only to test, by the Scriptures of truth, the doctrines they have received and taught, but they may also deem it their duty—to call upon the church to revise both its faith and practices.” It is no honour to you thus to contradict yourselves, and especially when you contradict the Saviour at the same time.

27. *S. Hulme*: But R. Barclay himself, your Quaker friend, says, men ought to leave in such cases.

Ans. Then R. Barclay and Jesus differ, and in such cases I think it best to abide with Jesus.

28. *S. Hulme*: R. Barclay speaks very strongly against those who cause divisions in the church.

Ans. In that he is right; and I hope the rulers of Conference, who, by their late proceedings, have rent in pieces scores of churches that were living in peace and harmony, will lay what he says to heart.

29. *S. Hulme*: The Baptists would not have fraternized with Mr. Barker.

Ans. Robert Hall would, according to the principles advocated in his writings on Church Fellowship. He pleads for communion with those who, in his opinion, do not use baptism, or believe it obligatory; and R. Hall had not many superiors, either among the Baptists or other denominations.

30. *S. Hulme*: Would the Independents have fraternized with Mr. Barker?

Ans. According to John Harris's principles, in his work on Union, they could do no other; for in that work it is proved clearly, that all who truly believe in Christ ought to fraternize,—or, in plain English, receive each other, and use each other as brethren. Hall, Harris, Wesley, Kilham, Robinson, Jeremy Taylor, Chillingworth, Chandler, Penn, Christ and his first followers, are all on our side. Our Conference opponents have the Pope on their side, but very few else of much note.

32. *S. Hulme*: The Scriptures are in favour of Conference and its proceedings; they teach that the church has a right to expel men for heresy. The Apostle Paul says, Titus iii. 10, "A man that is a heretic after the first and second admonition, reject." And again, in Gal. i. 8, "Though we or an angel from heaven preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." And again in Rom. xvi. 17, "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions, and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them." And John says, 2 Epis. 10, "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed."

Ans. With all that is said in these passages I perfectly agree, but they prove nothing in favour of Conference and its proceedings, but the contrary.

Answer me these questions. 1. Is it heresy to differ from you in opinion as to the meaning of some passages of Scripture? Will you please to prove it to be so? 2. Are not the heretics referred to in the passages quoted, spoken of, not as *misunderstanding* or *misinterpreting* the words of the inspired Apostles, but as *rejecting* and *contradicting* the Apostles' testimony? Are they not spoken of as "denying that Christ had come in the flesh?" 2 John 7. But do I reject any doctrine or statement of Christ or his Apostles? Do I not receive the whole New Testament? And is not the difference between me and my brother Christians, a mere difference as to the meaning of some passages? 3. Does every one bring a new Gospel, that interprets some passages of the New

Testament differently from yourself? Do the Independents and Baptists and Wesleyans all bring new Gospels? 4. Ought Methodists and Calvinists to refuse to receive each other into their houses, and to wish each other God speed in their labours to save souls? Must they pronounce each other accursed? If they regard each other as heretics, as bringing new Gospels, they ought to do so; for the Gospel itself commands them. And if they are not to regard each other as heretics, as bringing new Gospels, why should I and my friends be called heretics or charged with bringing a new Gospel, for still less important differences of interpretation? 5. Were not those whom the Apostles called heretics profligates as well as infidels? Were they not "subverted, sinful, self-condemned,—men who served not the Lord Jesus, but their own belly,—men who were enemies to the cross of Christ, whose God was their belly, whose glory was in their shame, who minded earthly things,—men who would not consent to wholesome words, even the words of Christ,—men of corrupt minds, supposing that gain was godliness?" And do you consider *me* and my friend Trotter such? Did you not, when you resolved on our expulsion, whatever you may do now, regard even me simply as a Christian brother who had fallen into some error as to the meaning of some parts of the Gospel system? And if you should call simple error,—the mere mistake of a sincere mind—heresy, where is the Christian in existence who is not a heretic? 6. But supposing us to be heretics, what had Conference to do with expelling us? Is Conference the church? 7. Did the churches with which I was labouring expel me? Did they wish for my expulsion? Did they make the slightest complaints against me? Did they not wish to retain me as their minister? Did they not even reject all the Conference preachers for their conduct in expelling me? If the churches have a right to expel or not, as you contend, why then do you complain of the Gateshead, Newcastle, Bradford, Stalybridge, Mossley and other churches for expelling the Conference and retaining me and my brother? 8. Suppose we had been heretics, and suppose the Annual Committee or Conference had been the church, did they admonish us time after time, and bear with us with all long-suffering and gentleness, before they expelled us? Did they ever admonish me on Baptism or the Lord's Supper at all? Did they ever admonish W. Trotter on any subject? 9. Did not the Annual Committee know that the churches generally loved and esteemed us, and was not that the reason why they sent none of those dark calumnious letters to the churches where we were labouring, and the reason why they sent them so secretly to other circuits? 10. The Scriptures say we are to mark those who cause divisions, and to avoid them; but who are they? Did I or my friend Trotter cause any divisions? Was not every church we laboured in, at peace and in unity? Was there ever a division in any church over which we were placed? Were not the first divisions made by the unchristian proceedings of the rulers of Conference? Is it not the retention and use of unchristian and unjust power by the Conference, that still prevents the divided churches from reuniting? May we not trace nearly all the divisions that ever afflicted the church, to that usurpation of authority over churches and pastors for which

you and your friends contend? And are not our friends doing just right in avoiding the Conference, until the members of that body relinquish their unchristian and dividing claims? Answer these questions: tell me, whether every passage you quote from the Scriptures does not go flat against you?

33. *S. Hulme*: Mr. Barker denies that the church has any right to expel heretics, and yet he claims that power for his own church.

Ans. 1. I do not deny that the church has any right to expel heretics. What I teach is, 1. that sincere believers in Christ are not heretics, though they may not properly understand all that Christ has said. 2. That Conference is not a church, but a number of men who have robbed the churches of their rights and liberties, and usurped an anti-christian domination over them.

34. *S. Hulme*: Kilham approved of the churches having power to expel unworthy members.

Ans. 1. So do we; but Kilham did not approve of Conferences taking the power out of the churches' hands, and using it for selfish or revengeful purposes. 2. Kilham did not consider those unworthy members of the church, who were true believers in Christ, and whom Christ himself had received.

35. *S. Hulme*: Kilham never taught such a doctrine of liberty as Mr. Barker teaches.

Ans. If there be any difference between what I teach and what Kilham taught, it is that Kilham went farther than I go. See my letter on "Toleration," &c.

36. *S. Hulme*: Mr. Barker is pursuing a course of active hostility to the Connexion.

Ans. My object is to benefit the Connexion, by teaching it to cease its subjection to the unchristian and mischievous authority of Conference, and to be subject only to the authority of Christ. The Connexion has never prospered under Conference usurpation, and it never will. Those parts of the Connexion that have thrown off the Conference yoke, are prosperous and happy; and we want the whole Connexion to be the same. We are not the enemies of the Connexion, we are its best friends.

37. *S. Hulme*: We do not suppose Mr. Barker's sentiments and peculiarities shut him out of heaven, but, &c.

Ans. Am I fit for heaven, and not fit for the church on earth? Am I good enough to be received as a brother by Jesus Christ, and yet am I fit only to be avoided, pronounced accursed, and shut out of their houses by imperfect men? Is this Gospel? Is this orthodoxy?

38. *S. Hulme*: Mr. Barker knows that W. Trotter was expelled for something else than his views of the Beneficent Fund.

Ans. I know that there was nothing else laid to his charge in his notice of trial, unless you reckon his known connection with me a crime: and if he was expelled for something of which he received no notice of trial, he was expelled contrary to law, as well as contrary to Gospel. Here is the notice:—

"Altringham, May 14th, 1841."

"DEAR BROTHER,

"I write to inform you that the Annual Committee deem it their duty to direct the attention of Conference to your printed and written statements relative to the Beneficent Fund. In consequence of this, and of your

*known connection with Mr. Barker, Conference may deem it requisite not only to attend to that particular case, but also to ascertain, if possible, how far you retain that approval of the laws, &c. of the Connexion, the profession of which secured your introduction into our ministry.*

"With sincere prayers for your welfare,

"I remain, yours affectionately,

"T. ALLIN."

39. *S. Hulme*: Mr. Trotter was expelled for the principles and determinations expressed in his declaration.

Ans. The greater shame, then; for that declaration contains not a sentiment but what ought to have endeared him to your hearts. The principles and purposes expressed in that declaration, are Christian from beginning to end.\*

40. *S. Hulme*: W. Trotter declared that he would "reject every thing that he believed to be false, receive every thing that commended itself to his judgment as true; that he would avoid every thing that in his judgment God had prohibited, and do whatever he believed God required; in short, that he would act at all times, and under all circumstances, as a sense of duty might dictate, whatever might be the requirements of any earthly authority." It was for principles like these that he was expelled.

Ans. Indeed! then his expulsion was one of the most unholy deeds ever witnessed either by earth or heaven. The Lord forgive the doers.

You have said more in that one sentence to destroy the reputation of Conference than all that the enemies of Conference have ever said.

*S. Hulme*: But Mr. Trotter refused to give up his connection with Mr. Barker.

Ans. Indeed! he was true to his friend then, as well as to his God. What strange charges!

*S. Hulme*: He said he would not give up his connection with the "Christian Investigator" and the new Book-room.

Ans. He was faithful to the church and the public then, as well as to his God and his friend. Enough; enough.

*S. Hulme*: And he said all this with an air of confidence that amounted to a defiance of Conference.

Ans. Indeed! he was firm and undaunted then in his virtue. Having fixed himself on the rock of truth and righteousness, he showed no disposition to change his ground. He did not seem to be afraid. Conference could not bend him. He was neither to be bribed by promises, nor overawed by terror. Just such was the spirit of martyrs.

*S. Hulme*: It was therefore absolutely necessary to expel him.

Ans. Perhaps it was: he was not a fit man for Conference: at least Conference was no fit place for him. You have said enough. The character you have given of Conference is so black, that nothing can make it blacker; and the character you have given of W. Trotter is so good, that nothing can improve it.

When S. Hulme had got thus far, he desisted for a while, and T. Allin began. T. Allin's great object was to prove that, on the subject of Baptism, I had practised evasion, and had even unsaid at one time what I had said at another. Those who were at Con-

\* See the declaration in the "*Brief Report*," page 17, and in W. Trotter's own pamphlet.

ference will understand how he proceeded, when I say, that he took a course similar to that he pursued in the Conference. But in Conference I had the liberty to reply, and the remembrance of this kept him in some bounds. But in Wesley Chapel I was neither to be allowed to reply, nor to ask a question; and taking advantage of this, he appeared to set at nought both the claims of truth and decency. Such an attempt to injure a person's reputation by misrepresentations, partial quotations, multiplied false statements, and an inexcusable play on words, I never witnessed, and could not, if I had not witnessed it, believed it possible. It was while T. Allin was engaged in this part of his lecture, if I recollect right, that W. Trotter, almost overpowered with amazement, exclaimed, "They might well resolve to allow no discussion."

The only reply to this part of T. Allin's address that it is needful to give at present, is contained in the following statements:—

1. From the time that I ceased to baptize children, I never made any secret of the matter. I believed I had good reasons for giving up the practice, and both in my own circuit and in other circuits, I both declared my sentiments, and acted on them without reserve.
2. My reasons for not answering T. Allin's inquiries on that subject were, 1. That I had already resolved, in consequence of the unparalleled manner in which T. Allin had betrayed and abused the confidence I had reposed in him in my former correspondence with him, no more to place it in his power to betray me. 2. I had had abundant proof that T. Allin was employing men as spies upon me, and encouraging private informers, with a view of obtaining materials out of which to make out a case against me; and I did not feel at liberty to encourage and assist him in such a business.
3. The information which, in my letter to T. Allin, I said was, in my judgment, incorrect, was, not the information that I had ceased to baptize children, but information to the effect that I had actually refused to sprinkle children who had been brought to me to be sprinkled, and that I had thereby sent the parents away grieved and disappointed. That T. Allin had received this information, I had more reasons than one for believing: and that it was not true, I was fully assured.
4. What I said in my "*Both Sides of the Question*," in my pamphlet on Water Baptism, and in my speeches in the Conference was just one unvaried statement.
5. The only sense in which I ever said that I had not refused to baptize children was this: that I had not, in any case that I could recollect, been actually requested to baptize a child and refused. I had never had such a request made to me, and I could not therefore refuse. If I had been requested, I should have refused; and if the persons who made the request had not been satisfied with my naming the child in my own way, I should have grieved them: but as, when I ceased to baptize children, the fact was soon noised abroad, people did not *ask* me to baptize their children.
6. All the cases in which it has been alleged that I had refused to baptize children, I have already answered. In the Dukinfield and Huddersfield cases, I was never requested to baptize children. That I was not requested to baptize the child at Newcastle, the one to which J. Argue referred in Conference, and that I did not therefore *refuse* to baptize it, is proved by the published testimony of J. H. Elliott, the father of the child,



and of R. Courage, the chapel keeper, as well as by the manifest and numerous inconsistencies in the story of J. Argue himself. That I did not refuse to baptize the child at Pennsnett, both the father and mother of the child expressly declared in the public meeting at Dudley, in the very face of the men who had circulated the story. This matter may therefore be considered as for ever set at rest; and terribly have the efforts of my adversaries to convict me of falsehood in this matter recoiled upon their own heads. In their eagerness to convict me of an untruth, they have proved my reputation to be invulnerable, and have convicted themselves of untruths innumerable.

*T. Allin:* Mr. Barker refers to W. Pennock's case; now Pennock's case was not discussed at the time the negotiation was going on between the Association and the New Connexion.

*Ans.* That Pennock's case was discussed, and that his views of Baptism were spoken of as a matter of little moment, I most distinctly recollect, and I have no doubt many others recollect the matter too. As to the time when the discussion took place, I cannot recollect; but I am so fully assured that it did take place, and that the feeling expressed on the subject was such as I have described, as I am of any past event in my memory.

*T. Allin:* Mr. Barker, in his "*Both Sides of the Question*," says he never did believe Water Baptism to be an ordinance of Christ: in this I cannot believe Mr. Barker.

*Ans.* Why not? Nearly eight years ago, when in the Sheffield Circuit, I expressed the same sentiments; and nearly four years ago, I published as much in my *Evangelical Reformer* respecting Infant Baptism. And how can you suppose that I believed adult baptism to be an ordinance of Christ, when you knew that I was neither thus baptized myself, nor thus baptized any other.

*T. Allin:* Mr. Barker also says, in his "*Both Sides*," that he was not aware that Water Baptism was considered as an ordinance of Jesus Christ by the Connexion generally. Will he tell us what reason he could have for thinking so?

*Ans.* Most readily. 1. I never heard any one in the Connexion speak of it as an ordinance of Christ, that I recollect. 2. I thought it was so plain that Water Baptism was instituted by John the Baptist, that I had no idea but all understood it to have been instituted before Christ commenced his public labours. 3. So little regard was always paid to Baptism in the Connexion, that I was obliged to believe either that the Connexion did not regard it as an ordinance of Christ, or else to believe that the Connexion acted systematically on the principle of trampling Christ's ordinance under foot. No question was asked about Baptism when persons were received into society, or into the ministry. When I used to express my sentiments on the subject, no one seemed to consider my sentiments of any moment; and when I published my sentiments in the *Evangelical Reformer*, near four years ago, no notice whatever was taken of them. Parents were never exhorted to baptize their children, and children, whose Baptism had been neglected, were never exhorted to get Baptized. I never heard a sermon or a lecture on Baptism. As I said in my defence before the Conference; little or nothing had been done by the leaders of the Conference to bring people

to regard Water Baptism as a Christian ordinance, binding on all Christ's followers. No books had been published on the subject, no articles had been published in the Magazine,—the Book-room, the Annual Committee, the Conference, the Leading Ministers, the Circuit Meetings, had all done nothing, that I had heard of, on the subject,—Baptism had never been treated in the Conference as a matter of importance till it was taken up as a matter against me. How was it likely that I should believe that the Connexion regarded Water Baptism as an ordinance of Christ, when I everywhere, and at all times, saw it so much slighted?

*T. Allin*: But the rules called it a Divine ordinance.

*Ans.* I know; and I dare say James Robinson recollects the time when I first discovered that the rules called it a divine ordinance, and he may recollect my surprise when I made the discovery. I could not account for the fact. But even that discovery was far from leading me to suppose that the Connexion generally regarded it as an ordinance of Jesus Christ; as a thing which every disciple is bound to observe. The conduct of the Connexion would not let me do that, unless I could have believed the Connexion guilty of a wilful, and flagrant, and systematical violation of Christ's law; and whatever I might think of the Conference, I could not think so badly of the Connexion.

*T. Allin*: Mr. Barker says that preachers have been allowed to hold all sorts of opinions on Baptism; what does he mean?

*Ans.* He means what he says in his "*Brief Report*," and what he said in Conference, that he never saw any regard paid to people's views on Baptism, till just lately; and that even now there are about as many opinions on the subject, as there are preachers in the Connexion. One believes it essential to salvation, another not; one believes it of permanent obligation, another not; one speaks of it as a part of regeneration, another as a sign of regeneration, while others think that children are not regenerated at all when they are baptized. One speaks of it as a profession of faith, others don't know that children have any faith; some regard it merely as a consecration of the child to God, others as the act of the church, acknowledging the child's acceptance with God: some think that *all* children should be baptized, others that the children of believers only should be baptized, while others, according to the rule of Conference, would baptize the children of all seat-holders and chapel-goers, whether the parents and children be drunkards, atheists, fornicators, or all these things together; and others refuse to baptize illegitimate children, notwithstanding the rule of Conference to the contrary. These are some of the differences of opinion and practice tolerated by Conference on this subject, and if it were needful I could give five times as many. I fancy I could find persons in the ministry, who, previous to last Conference, believed immersion to be the proper mode of Baptism, and persons that believed believers only proper subjects of baptism. What the opinions and practice of J. Bakewell, editor of the Magazine, were, I leave you to learn from W. Trotter. See his "*Justice and Forbearance of the Conference*," &c. Since Conference, two advocates of Conference have written against my pamphlet on Baptism; and so widely do they differ from each other, that one tells the other that he is

more deserving of church censure than myself; and the Editor of the New Connexion Magazine, in noticing the pamphlet which represents A. Scott as more deserving of expulsion than myself, speaks of the work only in terms of approbation, and heartily recommends it to the Connexion and the public! I have not yet found two of you agreeing on the subject, and I believe I never shall.

*T. Allin:* Mr. Barker has equivocated about the use of bread and wine in the Lord's Supper; first denying them to be binding, then saying that he only had doubts on the subject.

*Ans.* I have not equivocated. John Ridgway, to whom you wrote, and who has seen all I have written on the subject, and who has heard all I have had to say on the subject, declared that he considered what I had published in my "*Brief Report*" agreed, as far as he could perceive, with what I had written in the private letter.

*T. Allin:* Why did you not give up the private letter, or at least show it to Mr. Wilson?

*Ans.* You know my reason well enough. Why did you not tell the people plainly, that I had given you my reasons in a letter to you? Publish my letter, and let the public judge for themselves whether my reasons for declining all further correspondence with you were not sufficient.

*T. Allin:* But you said you wished the letter to be offered to be read to any friend.

*Ans.* I did no such thing, as J. Ridgway, James Taylor, and W. Trotter, can testify. But if I had done so, am I not to judge who are and who are not my friends?

*T. Allin:* Mr. Barker said, in reference to the letters published by me in my answer to his "*Brief Report*," 1. That I had not given *all* the letters which I had received on the subject; that I had kept some back of a different tenor from those published. 2. That those which I had published, I had not published entire, except one,—but that I had kept parts of the letters back; and 3. That the letters published were written in answer to a private letter of mine, and could not be properly understood, unless that private letter were given. These things he said, to prove that the letters printed were of no force as evidence.

*Ans.* And every thing I said was strictly true. 1. You did not publish all the letters you received on the subject,—you did keep back letters, more than one that I know of, tending to establish the general correctness of our "*Brief Report*." 2. The letters published by you, were not published entire: only one is published entire. 3. The letters published *were* in answer to a private letter of yours, and could *not* be properly understood without that private letter. In your letter to the Staffordshire Mercury on the subject, you did not, and you *could not*, deny any of my statements on this point. I challenged you to a public discussion on the statements I had made in my lectures on that and other subjects, and on the principles I had advocated in my lectures; my challenge was published in the newspaper in which your own letter appeared,—I challenged you to a public discussion on the very spot where I made the statement, and I have repeated that challenge times without number, both from the platform and

through the press,—I repeated the challenge at Dudley, offering to meet either you or any of your brethren for six, eight, ten, or even twenty days, if you wished it, and yet you have never yet dared to come forward to let the subject be laid fairly and fully before the public. To crown all, you have even charged me with running away from discussion. And yet, after giving such proofs that you have not confidence in the goodness of your cause, you would have others to have confidence in it.

*T. Allin:* But why did you not mention the same things about my letter when at Manchester?

*Ans.* I tell you candidly. 1. Because I had heard that day in Manchester, to my astonishment, that you had contradicted my statements, and though I had the fullest proof that they were true, I did not wish to repeat them, till I had enquired afresh into the matter. 2. As you were present at the meeting, and as I knew that you were aware of my statements, I expected the matter would be referred to by yourself; and, when instead of doing so, you and your friends laboured to throw the meeting into an uproar, I regarded it as an acknowledgment, on your part, that my statements on the subject were true. And events have proved that I was not wrong. I may also add, that near three months ago you promised in print to publish your private letter to D. Oldham, &c., immediately; and you have broken that public promise; your private letter is private still. I say again, if T. Allin has confidence in his cause,—if he is not conscious that it is utterly and thoroughly bad, let him come forward publicly; let there be a full and fair discussion,—let the discussion be reported by an able reporter, and published to the world: and if he and his friends will not adopt such an honourable course, then let him and his friends acknowledge they are wrong, and let them endeavour, by repentance, to repair the evil they have done.

*T. Allin:* Though some of Mr. Barker's statements were true in fact, the *inference* was not true.

*Ans.* But people must be allowed to draw their own inferences: and if people did not think the inference true before, they will be in danger of thinking it true *now*, unless you take the proper course to prevent it.

*T. Allin:* Mr. Barker professes to go up and down lecturing on Evangelical Reform, but his real motive is to assail the Conference.

*Ans.* Neither at Dudley nor at any other place have I said a word against the Conference in my lectures. I want to have nothing to do with Conference. Besides, I have no idea that Conference needs any assailing; its power and its reputation are gone, if I am not mistaken, never to return. My friends can bear me witness, that when I have referred to Conference proceedings, it has not been in my lectures, but in discussions forced upon me by Conference advocates. There is enough in the "*Brief Report*," and in W. Trotter's pamphlet, to settle the question about Conference and its proceedings for ever. When I have offered to give information on Conference matters, it has not been of my choice, but in compliance with the wishes of friends who thought it necessary to offer information, to prevent Conference advocates from saying that I dare not refer to that subject.

**T. Allin:** If Mr. Barker's object was Evangelical Reform, he would not come to such places as Dudley alone, where the New Connexion has interests, but to other towns where there is no New Connexion.

**Ans. 1.** My friends who wrote to me about coming to Dudley can bear witness, that in my letter in reply I proposed going to Gloucester, Worcester, &c., places in which there is no New Connexion, and that I proposed spending only one night at Dudley instead of three. 2. I never have confined myself to places where the New Connexion has interests. I have been at Hexham, Seghill, Shotleyfield, &c., &c. I could mention more places that I have visited where there is no New Connexion than where there is. My plan is to go every where preaching the word. 2. But Christ commanded his disciples to begin at Jerusalem, where they were known, and where he himself had been crucified, that they might try the force of his Gospel in the face of his greatest enemies, and prove the excellency of his character and the divinity of his mission, on the spot where he had been condemned and executed as an evil-doer. And I think there is some good reason why I and my friend Trotter should imitate the Saviour's example in this respect. If our opponents can prove any thing against us, we will give them the opportunity, by going into the midst of them, and having done that, we can visit strange places with a better grace.

2. But we have other reasons for not avoiding all those places where the New Connexion has interests. We think the New Connexion is capable of improvement, and we wish to promote its improvement. Besides, the members of the New Connexion generally have shown a noble readiness to receive the truth, and it is due to them to afford them the opportunity of hearing it. We have special friends also in the New Connexion, who know well our character, and are both disposed and able to afford us assistance in our labours. Again, by first uniting together those whom we know, we are making the best preparation for visiting strangers. The agents of Conference have circulated many slanderous reports respecting us in their Circuits, representing us as monsters of iniquity; and we are wishful to afford the people an opportunity of seeing and hearing us, that they may judge of us and of our doctrine for themselves. And lastly, one of the most important reforms which we recommend is, the throwing off of all Conference usurpation and authority, and full and undivided subjection to the authority of Jesus Christ.

**T. Allin:** Mr. Barker's object is to recommend his doctrine of independency or congregationalism.

**Ans.** I am not ashamed to acknowledge that that is part of my object; and I should find little difficulty in proving that for a church to be bound hand and foot by a foreign, usurped authority, is one of the greatest evils with which it can be afflicted. But to say that my *only* object is to advocate the doctrine of Christian liberty, is to say what cannot be proved, and what is not true.

**T. Allin:** Mr. Barker's doctrine of liberty is, that no church has liberty to remove a member.

**Ans.** My doctrine of liberty is no such thing: my doctrine is,

that a church *has* liberty to remove an unworthy member, even though Conference should command the church not to remove him ; and that the church has liberty to retain a *worthy* member, though a Conference should command the church to expel him.

*T. Allin* : The New Connexion has as much liberty as a Connexion can have.

Ans. Suppose it granted that it has as much as a Connexion with a legislative Conference at its head can have, that liberty might prove to be just none at all. The New Connexion societies have not liberty to choose their own ministers, or to expel or receive members ; they have not the power over their own chapels, &c. &c. They have, in fact, when the matter comes to be understood, no liberty at all, except the liberty to send a man to Conference, to be made unhappy for a fortnight, and to learn to sigh and cry over the unhappiness of Conference proceedings all his life long.

*T. Allin* : One half of Conference consists of the peoples' representatives.

Ans. 1. That is not correct : there are several persons who are members of Conference in virtue of their office, and you, *T. Allin*, are one of those. 2. Originally *all* the members of Conference were the peoples' representatives : how comes it to pass that only one-half are representatives now ?

After this *S. Hulme* rose and spoke again.

*S. Hulme* : I think *Mr. Barker* is not dealing fairly with us in reference to his books. He says, in the "*Church and Press*," that he can sell twenty-four pages for a penny, and get a hundred per cent., and yet I am charged sixpence for *W. Trotter's* pamphlet with less than a hundred pages. How is this ?

Ans. 1. You gave only part of what I say in "*The Church and the Press*," and the part which you leave out would explain the whole matter. You know right well that the price at which books can be afforded depends 1. On the number printed and sold. 2. On the opportunities possessed of getting them sold by persons who will be faithful in the payment of the money, and who will sell for little profit. If only a *thousand* be printed, the cost of a book is more than twice as much in proportion, for that number, as when *twenty* thousand are printed : and in the "*Church and Press*," I mentioned the number supposed to be printed and sold. Then, when the persons who sell our books are allowed only ten per cent., and pay us faithfully, we can afford to sell them as cheap again as when we have to allow twenty-five per cent., and sustain occasional losses. In the calculations given in the "*Church and the Press*," I am speaking of what might be done by the New Connexion, with all its members and friends as customers, and all its ministers as its salesmen, without allowance, or with the allowance of only ten per cent. commission. And these things make all the difference. What a single man can do, almost without capital, with hired agents, with liberal allowances, under numerous and peculiar difficulties, and what a book-room might do with four thousand pounds at its command, with a hundred thousand customers, and a hundred salesmen, and a thousand under-agents, doing all comparatively *gratis*, and bound to send regular remittances, are two different things. When you pretend to quote a man's words, you should

quote the whole, and quote them correctly, especially when you refuse to allow a reply to be made, or a question to be asked.

**S. Hulme:** At the end of W. Trotter's pamphlet it is said that there are considerable secessions from our Connexion at Stockport, Bramley, and Pendleton. Now at Stockport only ten have seceded; at Bramley I was hardly aware there was a society; and at Pendleton not one has left.\*

**Ans. 1.** You have here again quoted only part of the passage you refer to, and by so doing, have done the writer serious injustice: the whole sentence is as follows:

"Considerable secessions from Conference have taken place at Stockport, Dukinfield, Oldham, Lees, Delph, Mossley, Hirst, Ashton, Manchester, Pendleton, Lindley, South Shields, and in many other places."

It is one thing to say a thing of two or three places, and another thing to say the same of twenty places. If I had said that considerable secessions had taken place at Stockport, Bramley, and Pendleton, it might have sounded extravagant, even if full one-half the people had separated; because the places themselves are not so very considerable: but when I say that considerable secessions have taken place at Stockport, Dukinfield, &c., mentioning nearly twenty places, there may be no extravagance in the statement, even though it should prove that the secessions in two or three of the places were not considerable. Now what I say is said of the places generally, and what I say, so understood, is true, even though allowing your statements about Stockport, &c. to be correct. 2. But your statements about Stockport, Bramley and Pendleton are not correct. I have both received a letter from Pendleton stating the fact of a number throwing off the Conference yoke, and I had Pendleton friends over to see me when in the neighbourhood of Manchester, to consult with me as to the course they should pursue. If S. Hulme will accept my invitation to a fair and full discussion before the public, I will give him names. I imagine you are not properly acquainted with what is going on in the Connexion. Then, as to Bramley, you profess scarcely to know whether there was a society. Let me inform you then, that there was a society of towards forty members, and every one has thrown off the yoke of Conference. I have written to Stockport, but have not received an answer; but when over there I preached to several hundreds, and, unless I am strangely mistaken, I *saw* and *spoke* to more than ten—many more than ten—who, as I was informed, had separated from Conference. But if it were but ten, it would be a considerable secession in such a society, as Portwood, Stockport.

I have just received a letter from Joseph Gamble, as to the number of members who left the Conference at Stockport. J. Gamble, declares S. Hulme's statement that only *ten* had left, to be false, and gives me the names of *sixteen* persons in one of the Stockport societies alone, who have left the Conference, and are now meeting along with about sixteen more who have since joined them, in the liberty of Jesus Christ.

**S. Hulme:** Mr. Barker says that a numerous body, with near thirty preachers at their head, have separated from Conference in the Staffordshire Potteries: the truth is, only five preachers have left our Connexion in the Potteries.

\* The statements about secessions, at the end of W. Trotter's work, are my own, not W. Trotter's. [J. B.]

Ans. 1. It is true that a numerous body in the Staffordshire Potteries have separated from Conference. 2. It is true that they have a preachers' plan, with the names of twenty-four preachers on it, and that those preachers also are persons who have left the Conference. But you say only five preachers have left on account of Conference proceedings towards me and W. Trotter. I reply, I know it to be otherwise. You may say, "More have left, but they had other reasons for leaving," but this is only cavilling: no other reason has been assigned. "But some of them have been made preachers since they left." I answer, It may be so; but I spoke of what was at the time I wrote, and went by the plan which I had before me, and by the letter accompanying it: and what I wrote was substantially, and even literally, correct.

There is one statement which S. Hulme did not mention, which is thought by a friend of mine at Stalybridge not to be strictly correct. I state, at the end of W. Trotter's pamphlet, that nearly the whole of the society at Stalybridge had laid aside the authority of Conference. My friend says it is about *two-thirds* of the society. This correction I thought it proper to publish, though many, perhaps, will think that it is not much wide of the mark to call two-thirds of a society nearly the whole. I may also state, that if any inaccuracy, however trifling, should be found in any of our publications, we shall be glad, so far as we have the means, to correct it, the moment it is pointed out.

S. Hulme: Mr. Barker says, in his Investigator, that he has received information of persons in the New Connexion having received notice of trial for selling the Investigator and other works of his. It is not true that any persons have received notice of trial for selling Mr. Barker's works.

Ans. 1. Titus Fellowes declared aloud in the chapel, to S. Hulme's face, that he himself had received notice, and that from S. Hulme himself, to the effect that he must either desist from selling my works, or, as I understand, be expelled. 2. John Barnes, of Sheffield, member and local preacher, not only received notice of trial, but was expelled for selling my works. I have myself seen the notice of trial, and not a thing is laid to his charge, but his being agent for my works. I might mention numbers of such cases, but these are sufficient.

I have now finished my reply to S. Hulme, and T. Allin's lectures. There is not one of the charges which they preferred against me, either with respect to matters of doctrine, or matters of fact, which I have not fairly met. I have examined all, and I have refuted all. I have shown that with respect to my marriage, and with respect to the Nottingham Conference, it was the Conference that was guilty of injustice, supplanting, and pledge-breaking, and not I myself. I have shown that the proceedings of the Liverpool and Ashton Conferences reflect dishonour, not on myself, but on my persecutors. I have shown that the charges preferred against me on the subject of faith, of the atonement, of the witness of the Spirit, and of the divinity of Christ, are utterly false, pure fabrications, contrary to the plainest facts. I have proved that S. Hulme and T.

\* Eight local preachers who left the Conference sent me their names from one society alone in the Potteries.



Allin have misquoted my writings, and my letters, and flagrantly perverted their meaning. But it is needless to run through all the particulars of the lectures again: it is enough to state, that the whole of the lectures, occupying no less than three hours and a half in the delivery, were one long-continued and unvaried series of falsehoods and misrepresentations. I could not have believed it possible, if I had not witnessed it, for two such men as T. Allin and S. Hulme once were, to have pursued so strange a course. I am more and more amazed at the blinding and corrupting influence of the possession of power, and at the wild excesses into which my opponents have allowed themselves to be hurried thereby. I thank my Heavenly Father,—most heartily do I thank him,—that he has placed me in a situation in which I am neither under the power of others, nor in possession of power over my brethren. I would not again be in the situation in which I once was for all the world: I would not be in the situation in which my opponents are, for a thousand worlds. It is trying enough to be *under* power, and to have to resist its iniquitous demands; but to *possess* power, and to be in circumstances which enable you, and which seem to require you, to *make* iniquitous demands on men, is inconceivably more trying still. A man *may* maintain his integrity against the influence of power in the hands of others; but for a man to maintain his integrity against the influence of power in his own possession, is what we have no right to hope for. From that extreme of peril and unhappiness, in which my opponents are placed, may God, in his great mercy, deliver them. I have nothing further to say on this subject, but only to repeat my offer, to meet either T. Allin, S. Hulme, J. Bakewell, W. Cooke, or any other Conference preacher, or all of them in succession, in public discussion, either on the matters contained in this pamphlet, or on any other statements or principles embraced by my lectures on Evangelical Reform. I am prepared to meet them either in Dudley, in Stourbridge, in Shrewsbury, in Ashton, in Manchester, in Macclesfield, in Staffordshire, in Liverpool, in Chester, in Nottingham, in Sheffield, in Leeds, or in Derby, and I am willing to spend in the discussion either six, eight, ten, or even twenty days, as they may prefer. If my opponents wish for truth, and if they have confidence in their principles and in their statements, let them accept this offer; if they refuse to accept it, and instead of appealing honourably to the public, continue only to send forth anonymous pamphlets, and to deliver lectures under the protection of civil law, and prohibiting a reply on pain of imprisonment; I leave the public to judge what confidence is due to them.

Newcastle on Tyne, Nov. 6, 1841.

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