

Bibles at home. But it is obvious that the complaint must arise, not from the mere fact of the distribution, but from the mixed composition of the distributing Society.

The first question is thus far answered. Dissenters are at liberty, even in the judgment of the principal antagonist of the Bible Society, to form associations for the distributions of Bibles, not only abroad, but at home. This part of the subject cannot be dismissed, however, without inquiring, whether there be any other class of persons who may fairly deem themselves at liberty to act, as Dissenters, for this purpose? Does then the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge object to certain members of the Church who offer themselves for admission as subscribers? This is a very serious question. On the one hand, it is of the highest importance to preserve the purity of the established doctrine; on the other, to reject an apparent member of the Establishment, is to treat him as a Dissenter. Unless therefore the most cogent grounds can be assigned for the rejection, such a proceeding is most highly dangerous. An enemy may be made of him who was desirous of shewing friendship. Too fastidious a scrutiny may be exercised; and a fear and dislike may be prematurely and unjustly entertained against those persons of the Church to whom popular clamour may have given the name of Methodists. Most reluctantly we confess that we have heard one serious complaint of this nature. We know not indeed the secret grounds of the rejection; but, from the respectability and connections of the remonstrating party, we have reason to fear that an alarm somewhat extensive has been given, and that others have been deterred from offering their names to a scrutiny which they deem offensive to their feelings, and degrading to their honour and character. Here then, we presume, is another class of persons who, not admitted into the ancient Society, or actuated by the fear of a rejection by it, are at liberty to join their benevolence with that of the Dissenters for the purpose of distributing the Scriptures.

2. The other question remains, whether members of the Establishment, whose principles are undoubted, may belong to the Bible Society?

To this also we answer in the affirmative, provided they first belong to the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, the claims of which are of an higher nature; and provided they discover, in the new Institution, none of those circumstances, from which alone, as we conceive, mischief would arise to the Establishment.—The reasons of this judgment we shall also state in their order; and, first, for the demand that the Churchman be a member of the ancient Society.

When we separated from the church of Rome, the contest was, in a great measure, concerning the free use of the Scriptures. To these