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# Proceedings OF THE Wesley Historical Society

Editor : REV. WESLEY F. SWIFT

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## EDITORIAL

THE Annual Meeting of our Society was the best we can remember. It is obvious that interest in our work is growing, and this is reflected not only in the steady increase in membership but also in the fact that many of our younger members are committed to some form of research. We hope that this will result in an enrichment of the *Proceedings* as well as in university theses and printed books. The older members of the Society (such as our President, in whose continued physical and mental agility we all delight) must rejoice in their latter days to see these signs of advance and the fruit of their encouragement of the younger brethren.

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The inevitable has happened and our subscription rates are to be increased next year, though we are sufficiently lacking in modesty to think that the membership fees will still be ridiculously small for all that the Society offers to its members. The Officers hope that all members will loyally accept the new rates, that they will pay their subscriptions promptly, and that they will earnestly endeavour to secure new members, especially amongst the laymen of our Church, who are often more interested than we imagine.

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A number of Wesley letters were recently sold by Messrs. Sotheby from the estate of one of our late members. Many of them, surprisingly enough, were unpublished, and these have been bought by the Methodist Book Room. We congratulate the Book Steward on his initiative and acumen in this matter. It is astonishing that nineteen years after the publication of the Standard *Letters* new letters should still be turning up; our editorial files contain many transcripts awaiting publication. Sooner or later a new edition of the Standard *Letters* will have to be undertaken. It is well-known that the letters in Wesley's *Works* are defective; many of these inaccuracies have found their way into the Standard edition, and with other letters there has been an almost unbelievable carelessness in transcription. This indispensable tool to Wesley students should be above suspicion.

## FRANCIS GILBERT AND METHODIST ORDINATION

THE name of Gilbert has long been honoured in the history of Methodism's pioneer overseas missionary venture, the West Indies, and it is good to know that one of our members is at present engaged on a short biographical study of the family. Of the two sons of the Hon. Nathaniel Gilbert of Antigua most students know the elder, another Nathaniel, in whose temporary home at Wandsworth John Wesley preached early in 1758, later in the year baptizing Gilbert's negro slaves, prior to his return as an ardent Methodist to Antigua. Nathaniel Gilbert had been introduced to Methodism, however, by his younger brother Francis, who had fled from the West Indies to England after having—like another younger son—"wasted his substance in riotous living". This prodigal was never forgiven by his father, who at his death in 1761 left Nathaniel £40,000 and Francis nothing. Through the ministry of British Methodism, however, Francis had already discovered a far greater treasure than earthly wealth, and urged Nathaniel to come and see for himself what Methodism was all about, thus playing Andrew to his elder brother's Peter.

After Nathaniel had returned to Antigua in 1759, taking with him his baptized slaves and an enthusiastic Methodist widow, Mrs. Leadbetter, to second him in the course of evangelism to which he had pledged himself, Francis wondered whether to follow them. Already at the 1758 Conference he had been proposed as an itinerant preacher for the British work, and even before the death of his unrepentant father the West Indies were calling him.

By means of a letter written in 1760<sup>1</sup> we are permitted to enter his mind at this period, and to follow the musings of a Methodist who realized the dangers involved in the recent demand at Norwich that lay preachers should be empowered to administer the sacraments, but realized also that the position must squarely be faced if ever they were called to "preach the Gospel in any distant Part of the World"—the very issue which a quarter of a century later impelled John Wesley to take the much debated and oft delayed step of ordaining some of his preachers, thus committing an outright breach of Anglican church order. The letter is addressed, not to John Wesley, who had been half-inclined to let the lay preachers have their way, but to the zealous opponent of lay administration, Charles Wesley—though with the request that John should see it. It was not committed to the post, but simply addressed "To the Revd. Mr. Charles Wesley" and delivered by hand, being endorsed by Charles—"March 15, 1760. F. Gilbert honest". The letter runs thus:

<sup>1</sup> Preserved at the Methodist Book Room, and printed here by kind permission of the Book Steward, the Rev. Frank H. Cumbers.

Bristol March 15th 1760.

Revd. &amp; dear Sir,

Altho' I think a Lay-Preacher may lawfully give the Sacrament, without the Imposition of a Bishop's Hand, yet I in no wise judge it prudent for any of those to do it, who are in Connection with your Brother & You. It is exceeding probable that if such a Thing was allowed, it wou'd throw us into great Confusion, involve us (your Brother in particular) in many Difficulties, perhaps do little Good & much Hurt. If such a Thing was proposed in Conference, & be put to the Vote, I think, I must lose the Grace I now have, before I cou'd give my Voice for it. However were I to preach the Gospel in any distant Part of the World, where there was no Plan of a Church yet laid, & where the Sacra<sup>t</sup>. was not given more than once or twice in the Year in the Church after the English Establishment, I am now apt to think it might then be my Duty to give the Sacrament as well as to preach—

It has been for some Years impress'd upon my Mind that I shall return again to Antigua, tho I hope I shall never go till I have good Reasons to believe that it is the Will of God I shou'd. I believe the Way is clearing, & perhaps it will not be long 'ere I depart. Shou'd I preach the Gospel there, a Necessity perhaps wou'd be laid upon me to do the other Thing also, as ye Sacram<sup>t</sup>. is seldom given there. Now I have no Objection to the being ordained by a Bishop, if I may be allowed to explain two or three of the Articles mine own Way, & perhaps no good Bishop wou'd object to my explanation of them. When I reflect on the Smallness of my Abilities either acquired or natural, & the Littleness of my Grace, I have no reason to expect Success; but perhaps the Bishop who ordained Mr. Haughton,<sup>2</sup> if he knew of the Likelihood of my going abroad, wou'd not refuse *me* Ordination.

If you approve of this, & you were to desire your Brother to speak to the Bishop concerning it, perhaps he wou'd do it & succeed. But let it be wch Way it will, this is my Prayer, Lord thy Will be done, make me any Thing, send me any where. I must beg your Prayers for

Your unworthy Son tho affec. Serv<sup>t</sup>.FRAN<sup>s</sup>. GILBERT.

If you shoud write to your Brother concerning this Matter, & you shou'd judge it well that I shd write to him also, perhaps your sending him this will do as well—

Whether Francis Gilbert actually did secure episcopal ordination seems very doubtful, although on 11th April, 1760 Charles Wesley wrote from London to his wife in Bristol:

“ Mr. Gilbert's you may read, & deliver. He returns to Antigua; & may easily get Orders first; which will greatly enlighten his understanding, & rectify his judgment, perverted by C.P.”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> John Haughton, one of the earliest preachers, who after his ordination settled in Kilrea, Londonderry, where he was a useful minister and magistrate, according to Atmore's *Methodist Memorial*, p. 202.

<sup>3</sup> This paragraph is omitted from Thomas Jackson's publication of the letter, in Charles Wesley's *Journal*, ii, pp. 232-4, but is here given from the original at the Methodist Book Room. Charles Perronet was one of the ring-leaders of the lay preachers demanding the right to administer the sacraments.

At any rate, unlike most preachers ordained in the third quarter of the century he retained his close contact with Methodism, both in England and Antigua. In 1763 or 1764 he appears to have been one of the itinerant preachers in the Wiltshire Round.<sup>4</sup> From 1765, however, he was not listed as a preacher at all, even though the 1765 *Minutes* mention him as the Secretary of the Preachers' Fund. From London he went to Kendal, leaving there in June 1765 for Chester,<sup>5</sup> where in 1767 he married Mrs. Leadbetter, who had returned from Antigua in charge of his brother's children.

That he continued regularly to preach may clearly be seen from various entries in *An Extract of Miss Mary Gilbert's Journal*, edited by John Wesley, and he certainly remained an *itinerant* preacher, whether in the technical Methodist sense or not. After the death of his niece Mary Gilbert in 1768 he removed to Whitchurch, where yet another of his charges, his niece Alice, died in 1772. Soon afterwards he returned to Antigua, whence he sent a plea to Wesley for missionaries. On the death of his brother Nathaniel in the following year, however, he returned to England, becoming a member of the Rev. John Fletcher's class at Madeley. (Many years earlier he had almost persuaded Fletcher to become a missionary to Antigua.) On 1st July 1779 Francis Gilbert died. But his dreams of a flourishing Methodist cause in Antigua did not die with him. His widow carried on his work, speedily returning to his native island to assist John Baxter revive Methodism there, herself returning to England only in 1791, and maintaining a rich Methodist witness till her death in 1816.

FRANK BAKER.

<sup>4</sup> *Lives of Early Methodist Preachers*, ed. Thomas Jackson, 4th ed., 1871, iii, p. 311.

<sup>5</sup> See F. F. Bretherton, *Early Methodism in and around Chester*, pp. 72-95, for much information on the Gilberts.

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Witney (High Street) Methodist Church has this year celebrated its centenary. The event has occasioned a booklet of a quality all too rare amongst such productions. Witney was usually Wesley's starting-point for his "little tours in Oxfordshire", and the full text of the *Journal* references to Witney is given, followed by a concise account of the history of Witney Methodism, the whole being most beautifully illustrated. The anonymous compiler is to be highly congratulated on such a worthy souvenir.

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The Epworth Press has reprinted in pamphlet form John Wesley's *The Character of a Methodist* (pp. 16, 6d.) with an admirable Foreword by the Minister of Wesley's Chapel. We do not quite know *why* this reprint should have appeared, but we welcome it nevertheless and share Mr. Spivey's hope that similar reprints will quickly follow, for there is much that lies embedded in Wesley's *Works* which is apposite to the needs of this generation. Perhaps that is why, as the Foreword tells us, "Wesley's *Forty-four Sermons* are a 'best-seller' on church bookstalls".

## UNITED METHODISM IN THE EVOLUTION OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

[This article, unlike its two predecessors in this series of three articles on the evolution of Methodism, has not been reprinted from *Daybreak*. It has been specially written at our request by the Rev. Albert Hearn, one of the General Secretaries of the Department for Chapel Affairs. No one is more qualified to indicate the place of the former United Methodist Church in the development of Methodism.—EDITOR.]

**W**HEN the United Methodist Church became part of the Methodist Church in 1932, it was only taking a further step in a reconciling movement which had already made notable progress. The union of 1907 had brought together several divergent strands of Methodist life and tradition. It is true that with all their divergences the separate groups shared a common Methodist loyalty, but each had developed marked characteristics, so that fusion was clearly no easy task. It has to be remembered too that memories of old unhappy days were much more vivid in the first decade of the century than they are now. Yet by 1932 the United Methodist Church had become organically one and was conscious of the prophetic implication of its name. Twenty-five years of fellowship and work had welded the divergent strains into a remarkable unity. The United Methodist Church entered gladly into the larger union, realizing that its example and experience had in no small measure prepared the way for the re-united Methodism which it believed to be in line with the purpose of God.

The unity which had been achieved from 1907 to 1932 is the more remarkable when the origin and character of the three uniting bodies is borne in mind. The oldest of them was the Methodist New Connexion. Its origin in 1797 was related to the debates which centred in the "Plan of Pacification and the Leeds Concessions". The demand for lay representation in Conference was being pressed, a claim which was handsomely conceded in later developments of Methodism. Alexander Kilham and his followers were, however, like so many other reformers, ahead of their time, and the rejection of their claim by the Conference of that day led to this first division, with the consequent formation of the Methodist New Connexion. In the M.N.C. Conference, ministers and laymen met in equal numbers, but this innovation which had seemed to many so revolutionary led in fact to no alarming results. Although the New Connexion was born of reforming zeal, once the principle of lay representation had been secured, no other special reforms were pressed and the church quietly pursued its course as an effective community with a cultured ministry and a real regard for ordered and disciplined church life.

The Bible Christian Church originated in an entirely different way. In a measure it was an evangelical movement parallel to Primitive Methodism, but largely confined to the west country. William O'Bryan, unwilling to limit his labours to the circuit plan, was the leader in a revival movement which swept the west country. Expelled from the Methodist Church, he joined with James and John Thorne at Lake Farm, Shebbear, in the formation of what was later known as the Bible Christian Methodist Church. In its constitution this church accepted the principle of lay representation and for a period received women into its ministry. Its main interest was evangelical, and it retained in large measure the fervour in which it had originated. It was conspicuous for the remarkable group of outstanding personalities it produced. Men like Thomas Ruddle, the great headmaster of Shebbear, and Sam Pollard, one of the greatest missionaries of modern times, would have given distinction to any community, and there were many others whose notable gifts made an outstanding contribution to the service of their church.

The third partner in this amalgamation was the United Methodist Free Church, formed in 1857 by the combination of several groups which had been active in the distressing divisions of the earlier part of the century. One of these was the Wesleyan Methodist Association. It was a first instalment of Methodist Union, uniting as it did the Protestant Methodists who were produced by the disaffection caused by the "Leeds organ" case; the Derby Arminian Methodists, a group which had separated on doctrinal grounds and which included among its members George Eliot's Dinah Morris; together with those who had separated as a result of the Warrenite controversy. These associated groups amalgamated with the greater part of the Wesleyan Reformers of 1849 and together formed the United Methodist Free Church, which from 1857 until 1907 represented a very "liberal" interpretation of the Methodist constitution. There are those who have said that this church was much more "free" than Methodist. E. C. Urwin, however, describes it as he knew it, "a brotherhood instinct with the love of freedom . . . loyal to the Methodist faith and with a very passionate spirit of evangelism".

These, then, were the constituent bodies which were happily united in 1907 to form the United Methodist Church. It is to be noticed that included within them were the surviving representatives of some of the most dissident elements in earlier divisions, yet the unity of the United Methodist Church by 1932 was so real, and the various elements had been so successfully integrated, that the marks of former separations were for all practical purposes effaced.

How did this come about?

The answer must be given first of all in terms of the Grace of God. The negotiations for Union had themselves gone forward in a remarkable atmosphere of fraternal fellowship, but even more important was the fact that the first main effort of the united Church found expression in a simultaneous mission. In this Methodists

found, as so often before and since, that when engaged in the primary task of evangelism to which they are called, differences about secondary things become relatively unimportant.

It is also true that the Church was blessed with fine leaders with notable qualities of statesmanship, wedded to idealism and tolerance—leaders who commanded the confidence and loyalty of the Church and were thus able to guide developments through the first difficult years. The problems that arose were various and often delicate. The fusion of the Colleges may be cited as an instance. The M.N.C. and the U.M.F.C. both had their Theological Institution, the one at Ranmoor, Sheffield, and the other in Victoria Park, Manchester. Bible Christian ministers had been trained for the most part at Shebbear College in Devon. Each place had naturally gathered about it fine and valued traditions, but it was early realized that only one centre for the training of the ministry was now required. The skilful and gracious leading of the Church was such that within the first five years of union this problem was solved with unforgettable dignity and breadth of vision. Henceforth the work was centred in Manchester. This is but one illustration of decisions made in many fields of administration, marking the steadfast resolve to make Union a reality and not merely a name.

The events of these twenty-five years are rapidly receding into history, only faintly remembered by a diminishing group, yet they have their place in the shaping of the Church we know today. It can certainly be claimed that the Union of Methodism in 1932 would have been impossible without the previous Union in 1907.

Certain definite contributions made by United Methodism to what has been called the evolution of Methodist life, call for mention. The Union of 1907 was secured on the basis of an Enabling Act of Parliament, which in many features foreshadowed the Methodist Church Union Act of 1929. It was the United Methodist Enabling Act which first provided for the simple and convenient method whereby a Trust could be transferred from one Deed to a new Model Deed by the simple Act of Declaration made by a majority of a body of trustees. This method has proved its great value in present-day Methodism. It would be hard indeed to exaggerate its importance in view of the vast task now being so successfully undertaken by the re-united Church in bringing all the Trusts of Methodism on to one Model Deed.

In the field of finance too, precious experience was gained which proved of great value for the larger Union later on. The creation of a Finance Board and the unification of central funds owed much to the acumen of the Rev. G. Parker, who was a financial genius. With him were associated well-known leaders in business life, such as Robert Turner, William J. Mallinson and Joseph Ward, whilst the administration of Trust affairs was vigorously carried forward under the enlightened and able leadership of William C. Jackson. So it happened that in the negotiations leading to the Union of 1932, a

large body of practical experience in dealing with various legal, administrative and financial problems was at the disposal of the Church, and the pressure of many problems was greatly eased because of the preparatory work which had been done in United Methodism. This Church was the smallest of the three partners in the 1932 Union. Christian folk, however, need no reminder that there are other magnitudes than those of number. The United Methodist Church by its very history was committed to a ministry of reconciliation. Uniting the broken fragments of earlier divisions and placing its experience and resources without reserve in the cause of the larger Union, it fulfilled a glorious destiny. Its suitable epitaph might well be the prophetic assurance:

“ THOU SHALT BE CALLED A REPAIRER OF THE BREACH ”.

ALBERT HEARN.

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“ . . . The result [of Wesley's work] was a new and wonderful instrument of grace, supple, flexible, adaptable, simple. ‘ Methodism came down out of heaven from God, as it was wanted, piece by piece,’ cried a preacher at Conference in 1836, and it is true that almost all our characteristic institutions and ordinances were originally inspired improvisations: class and society meeting, local preachers and itinerant ministry, connexion and Conference. Within this framework lived the Methodist people. . . . The sermons of John Wesley and his preachers, and the Methodist hymn-books, provided another kind of framework, not less important than the frame of organization, the great salvific objectivities of the Nicene Creed matched by the application of that salvation in individual faith. The results were so enormous that they have spilled over from religious text-books into the economic and political histories which gratefully record the fruit of evangelical conversion, active faith, and practical philanthropy, as over whole areas a once brutish multitude found forgiveness, and, as a series of sublime afterthoughts, decency, literacy, good manners. . . .

“ In the last one hundred and fifty years the pattern has widened but the fundamentals have remained. The Methodists went overseas, and once again supplied the lack of service of a wooden ecclesiasticism, breeding in North America an heroic band of apostolic men and in due time one of the great Protestant Churches of the modern age. They were forward in the great missionary enterprises of the nineteenth century. . . . Methodism was a revolutionary movement of the Spirit, born into an age of world ferment, the Industrial Revolution and the Revolutionary era. We owe it to the Wesleyans of the early nineteenth century that Methodism did not disintegrate under these vast pressures, that it found its shape and coherence, as a Church with Word and Sacraments able to nourish the millions of souls committed to its charge. We look back with pride also to the fervour of the smaller Methodist bodies, and the passion for justice among communities more sensitive to the social stresses of that age. Methodism was able to ride out the storm, and the first half of the nineteenth century was followed by Victorian Methodism with its great stabilities and creative changes.” . . . E. GORDON RUPP, on “ The Pattern of Methodism ”, in the Handbook of the Methodist Conference, Bradford, July, 1950.

## WELSH WESLEYAN METHODISM, 1800-1950

This article has been written at our request by the Editor of *Bathafarn*, the annual Journal of the Methodist Historical Society of Wales. We felt it right and proper that the ter-jubilee of Welsh Wesleyan Methodism should be fittingly acknowledged in the *Proceedings*, and tribute thus paid to the place of the three Welsh-speaking Districts in the life and affection of our Church.—EDITOR.

ILLUSTRATIONS: Owen Davies and John Hughes, the pioneers of Welsh Wesleyan Methodism.

THE Welsh Methodist Church this year celebrates its third jubilee. It was founded as part of the missionary work of the Connexion in 1800, nine years after John Wesley's death, and this suggests three questions which deserve consideration: why was it that Wesley himself did not establish a Welsh section of his Movement? why was such a section established so soon after his death? and who was responsible for its establishment then?

In 1747 John Wesley and Howell Harris, the leaders of Methodism in England and Wales respectively, came to an informal agreement or understanding with each other concerning Wales. By this agreement, Wesley virtually "handed over" Welsh Wales to Harris and his fellow-Methodists and undertook henceforth to confine his own and his preachers' activities to the more anglicized parts of the country; it was understood, however, that at all times the one side would extend the right hand of fellowship to the other. There was nothing legal about this agreement; on the contrary, it was more in the nature of a "gentleman's agreement", a *modus vivendi* which rested not on legal niceties but on the implicit faith of one Christian in another. Co-operation rather than competition was to be the keynote of their relations.

That is the short answer to the first question, though, put in that form, the question itself is rather misleading, for it suggests that the Methodism of England and Wales was something rigid and denominational, whereas in essence it was a spirit, a stirring on the face of the religious waters of both countries. But it is still necessary to explain how and why such an agreement could have been made, having regard to the Arminianism of the one leader and the Calvinism of the other. Twelve years had passed since Methodism had first appeared in Wales, and nine since Wesley's experience in Aldersgate Street, London. In the meantime, both Movements had made considerable headway; moreover, Wesley's dispute with George Whitefield over "Free Grace" had occurred between 1739 and 1741, and Harris had taken Whitefield's side. Both men could therefore feel satisfied with the progress already made; both were very jealous of the welfare of their own societies if not occasionally, indeed, of each other; and both held tenaciously to their different

doctrinal views. Common success and divergent doctrinal tenets were not calculated to facilitate any agreement except an agreement to differ, and the understanding arrived at in 1747 could hardly have been expected in the natural order of things.

It was made rather than born, and made because both men had passed through the same religious experience, cherished the same aims, and employed the same means. John Wesley's conversion on 24th May 1738 had its counterpart in Howell Harris's experience at Holy Communion in Talgarth Church on Whit-Sunday, 1735. Both had felt their hearts "strangely warmed"; both had been assured of the remission of their sins; and both had shared the remarkable joy which had issued from that assurance. Nor was that all. Methodism was born in their re-birth, for their conversion had created in both an intense desire to transmit to others, not the experience itself (that was a gift of God) but the key to it; to reveal the secret to the treasure rather than the treasure itself; to proclaim the condition of forgiveness and salvation in the conviction that God was ready to forgive and anxious to save.

Similar too were their aims. As dutiful sons of the Established Church their primary purpose was to revive its spiritual life and make it once again a living force in England and Wales. They both "looked one way, while every stroke of their oars took them another"—but they sailed in the same boat. The means they adopted were simple—and similar once again. The preaching of Daniel Rowland and the hymns of William Williams of Pantycelyn, said Thomas Charles of Bala at a later date, made their age more famous than any in Welsh history. The exaggeration is pardonable, for he correctly diagnosed the successful media of the Revival—the sermon and the hymn. The appeal of the early Methodist Fathers, in England and Wales, was essentially emotional and the response of an emotionally-starved peasantry was amazing. Cast down into the pit of despair to be lifted again to the lofty heights of ecstasy, they wept and leaped for joy and gave vent to their feelings in the unforgettable hymns of Charles Wesley and Williams of Pantycelyn.

A similar experience, similar aims and similar means accordingly account for the understanding of 1747. True, Wesley had but a few converts who could preach in Welsh and this may have helped him to come to a decision. Two missionaries, however, sufficed to launch the Mission in 1800, neither of whom was remarkably fluent in Welsh; and what the Conference could do, Wesley could have done had he so desired. Instead, he preferred to proceed with his own appointed task, confident that the Welsh-speaking people of Wales would not be neglected, while Howell Harris, for his part, could rest assured that the sheep he had rescued would not be enticed into the Arminian fold. At the foot of the Cross the relative merits of Arminianism and Calvinism lapse into insignificance. Wesley and Harris understood that and were consequently able to



OWEN DAVIES



JOHN HUGHES

THE PIONEERS OF WELSH WESLEYAN METHODISM

understand one another, however much they might indulge in theological disputation. Henry Lloyd of Rudry understood it and so, too, did Thomas Foulks of Machynlleth. Foulks perhaps embodies best of all the spirit of the agreement, for throughout the greater part of his life he was at one and the same time a Calvinistic Methodist in Wales and a Wesleyan Methodist in England without being in the least inconsistent. He knew that in his Father's house there were many mansions and that, to gain admission, it sufficed to be able to say with Charles Wesley, "My God is reconciled, His pardoning voice I hear". Had he lived a little longer, he might have been accused of serving two masters.

The agreement was observed while both parties lived, but once they were dead it seems to have died with them. By the end of the eighteenth century, Methodism in Wales, as in England, was beginning to settle on its lees; the pristine fire was burning low; and a new and strange emphasis was being given to doctrinal orthodoxy. So, at least, thought Dr. Thomas Coke. As President of the Irish Conference he passed frequently through North Wales and was able to assess its spiritual condition for himself. He was by no means enamoured of what he saw. True, there were many pious clergymen and Dissenting ministers in that part of the country, but there were also many sheep without a shepherd, so scattered moreover that only itinerant ministers could possibly reach them, and even they would be unavailing unless they could preach in Welsh. Further, those preachers already at work were not interpreting the Gospel broadly enough; nine out of ten were Calvinists who were preaching the doctrine of election. Preachers for North Wales, Coke argued, were therefore necessary. They must be itinerant—they must go in the manner of the early Methodists, preaching indoors and out of doors, not holding their lives dear unto them; they must preach in Welsh, for "nothing can be more vain or more hopeless than to endeavour to convert a nation by abolishing their language"; and they must preach Arminianism and so hold out the hope of salvation to the most outcast of men.

This conviction, born of his own journeys through North Wales, was strengthened first by Owen Davies, a native of Wrexham but between 1797 and 1800 a travelling preacher in Cornwall, then by an unknown pious person in Anglesey, and finally by news of the success which had attended the efforts of three local preachers in north-east Wales: Richard Harrison of Northop, Evan Roberts of Denbigh, and Edward Jones of Bathafarn farm, Ruthin. Coke submitted his proposals to the London Conference of 1800; the Welsh Mission was established; and Owen Davies and John Hughes were appointed its first missionaries, with Ruthin as their headquarters. The date was 6th August 1800.

Owen Davies was then forty-eight years of age and Chairman of the Redruth District; John Hughes, a native of Brecon, had just been ordained. The one was an experienced preacher and a good administrator, the other a young scholar of twenty-four.

Neither had had much experience of preaching in Welsh. "Mr. Davies," wrote John Hughes, "being a Wrexham man, was but a poor Welshman, and Mr. Hughes had only been accustomed to exhort or make a few remarks at the end of an English sermon." They agreed to meet at Wrexham on 22nd August. The following week, on 27th August, they set out for Ruthin and were charmed with their first view of the delightful Vale of Clwyd. "I thought," wrote Hughes, "if this country becomes as pleasing on account of our success in spiritual matters as the face of nature is, I may well say the lines are fallen to me in a fair place, and I have a goodly heritage." They were warmly welcomed by Edward Jones, and in this way Ruthin became the cradle of Welsh Wesleyan Methodism.

Since then, one hundred and fifty years have elapsed—an important period in the history of Wales and of the Connexion. The Mission was originally a part of the Chester District, but by 1803 the societies had become so numerous as to be grouped into a District of their own—the North Wales District—with Owen Davies as its Chairman.<sup>1</sup> Two years later the missionaries extended the sphere of their activities to South Wales and, despite set-backs, enough progress had been made by 1828 to justify the division of Wales into two Districts—the North and Second South Wales Districts<sup>2</sup> respectively. This arrangement persisted until 1904, when the North Wales District was sub-divided into two. In the meantime, the growing national consciousness of the denomination had created a demand for some measure of recognition and self-government, and this was met by the creation of the Welsh Methodist Assembly in 1899. At present, therefore, the Methodist Church in Wales (apart from that section which uses English as the medium of its worship) is organized into three Districts, over which the annual Assembly exercises some degree of co-ordination with the right, *inter alia*, of ordaining its own ministers. The seed which Dr. Coke sowed in 1800 has therefore taken firm root in the native soil. Hardly a cedar of Lebanon, it is true, but a tree which has given comfort and shelter to many a weary soul.

A. H. WILLIAMS.

<sup>1</sup> The appointment in the *Minutes of Conference* stated: "Brother Davies has a discretionary power to labour as and where he judges best, for the advantage of the Welsh Missions; and shall have the superintendence of the whole Mission, and authority to change the Preachers as he judges best."

<sup>2</sup> The First South Wales District was "English preaching".

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Miss Winifred Cooper has marked the sesquicentennial celebration (as our American friends call it) of Ebenezer Methodist Church, Newcastle-under-Lyme, by writing its history in a most attractive fashion in preparation for the 150th anniversary services in October. The booklet (35 pp., 2s.) contains many interesting facts about this historic chapel and is suitably illustrated. We welcome its author as a new member of our Society.

## WESLEY LETTERS AT WESLEY COLLEGE, HEADINGLEY

**I**N *Proceedings*, xxvi, pp. 83-5, a list was given of the Wesley letters contained in a volume at Wesley College, Headingley, and a further list was promised of letters contained in a second volume. The present article begins that list, but as this volume contains more letters than the former, this article is confined to those written to Adam Clarke; a further article will deal with the rest. The opportunity is taken of supplying the necessary corrections to the Standard Edition, but this article is intended primarily as a list of letters preserved at Headingley; that is why the letters are noted by their date and by the appropriate reference to the Standard Edition even when no corrections are necessary. I gladly acknowledge the assistance of our Editor, the Rev. Wesley F. Swift, who has himself done much of the work.

Many of the corrections are of no great importance, such as the variation of spelling between Clark and Clarke. But it will be seen that in one letter some new paragraphs are now published. In the letter of 25th June 1789 the translation of Luke ii. 14 is nearer to the Greek than the transcription hitherto published. In the letter of 8th January 1788 the name Amore is now seen to be a mistake for Arrivé; and Mr. and Mrs. Amore can disappear from the Index of the Standard *Letters*; they presumably owe their whole existence to a transcriptional error. Mr. Arrivé(e) is already known to us, as, for instance, from the letter of 9th November 1787.

A. RAYMOND GEORGE.

### I. Twenty-six Letters from John Wesley to Adam Clarke

Vol. vii, p. 255f. 12th February 1785

SUPERScription: *To Mr. Adam Clarke, at Mr. Flamank's, In St. Austle's, Cornwall.*

Vol. vii, p. 314. 3rd February 1786

line 7 . . . anything *which* you have learned.  
line 10 Delete *my*.

SUPERScription: *To Mr. Adam Clark, at Mr. Walters in Plymouth Dock.*

Vol. vii, p. 362. 3rd January 1787

line 5 Read: . . . *and to be as exact there.*  
line 7 Insert *which* was after *awakening.*  
line 13 Read: . . . *or too long; never above an hour. Peace be . . .*

SUPERScription: *To Mr. Adam Clark, at Capt. Walkers, in Guernsey.*

Vol. vii, p. 373. 3rd March 1787

line 7 For *pass away* read *slip away.*  
line 8 For *at Guernsey* read *in.*  
line 9 Read: . . . *if God permits not permit.*

line 10 Read: . . . *sends you not send you.*

line 11 Read: . . . *in his hand not hands.*

line 12 Delete *my.*

On the back of the letter is written a letter from William Myles, then the "Assistant" at Plymouth. It begins: *Mr. Wesley has given me leave to write in his letter* and ends: *I am, Dear Bro, your Affectionate Country man, Wm. Myles.*

Vol. vii, p. 385.

27th May 1787

line 7 Delete *be* at end of line.

SUPERScription: *To Mr. Adam Clarke, at St. Peters, Isle of Guernsey.*

Vol. viii, p. 21f.

9th November 1787

Page 22, line 11 *nothing* is underlined.

line 12 *invent* is underlined.

line 18 *you* is underlined.

SUPERScription: *To Mr. Adam Clark, at Mont Plaisir, near St. Peters, Isle of Guernsey. N.B. Not Isle of Wight.*

Vol. viii, p. 22f.

21st November 1787

Page 23, line 4 Read: *Vale* not *Valle.*

SUPERScription: *To Mr. Adam Clarke, At Mont Plaisir, Isle of Guernsey.*

Vol. viii, p. 25f.

8th December 1787

Vol. viii, p. 28.

18th December 1787

SUPERScription: *To Mr. Adam Clark.*

Vol. viii, p. 33.

8th January 1788

line 3 Insert *me* before *anything.*

line 17 Delete *to.*

line 10 Read: *Arrivée* not *Amore.*

SUPERScription: *Mr. Adam Clark, at Mont Plaisir, Isle of Guernsey.*

Vol. viii, p. 55.

17th April 1788

Vol. viii, p. 68.

26th June 1788

SUPERScription: *To Mr. Adam Clark, In St. Heliers, Isle of Jersey.*

Vol. viii, p. 101f.

5th November 1788

Page 101, line 2 Read: *I am glad you been at Guernsey.*

Page 102, line 1 Delete *all.*

lines 2 and 3 *I think it will be well to sell the old chapel is a postscript in the original.*

SUPERScription: *To Mr. Adam Clarke, In Jersey.*

Vol. viii, p. 124.

9th March 1789

line 1 Delete *you.*

line 5 Read: *for the islands* not *from the islands.*

line 7 *For and write English* read *and to speak English.*

line 8 Read: *Instructions for Children.*

line 10 Read: *be largely therein by the Blessed Spirit.*

After the poetical quotation and before the salutation there are the following paragraphs which are completely missing from the printed version:

*I am glad Betty Cook attended her Sister in her illness: particularly as it was with her Mother's consent. Certainly this is an answer to Prayer, and it is a token for Good.*

*It was matter of surprise to me, when I was informed, that "Mrs. Clarke was the person who advised Jeannie Bisson to marry". Upon that supposition I held my peace: otherwise I should have [word indecipherable] loudly. I should have earnestly advised, either that she should not have married at all, or that she should have married such a preacher as Thomas Walsh. I would gladly have recommended her to our choicest friends in England. But alas! what can be done now?*

*Pray remember me kindly to Mr. & Mrs. Walker, to all enquiring friends: particularly my dear Jeannie Cock, who, I hope, does not lose ground.*

SUPERScription: *To Mr. Adam Clarke, In St. Heliers, Isle of Jersey.*

Vol. viii, p. 146f. 25th June 1789

- Page 146, line 5 Delete the second by.  
 line 6 Delete *are their words*.  
 Page 147, lines 5 and 6 Read: *Glory to God in the highest, and peace of goodwill among men.*  
 line 9 Read: *upward* and not *upwards*.  
 line 15 Delete *at*.

SUPERScription: *To Mr. Adam Clarke, In St. Heliers, Isle of Jersey.*

Vol. viii, p. 175. 12th October 1789

- line 1 After *this* insert *key*.  
 line 4 Insert comma after *both*. Read: *Loyd's* not *Lloyd's*.  
 line 5 Insert comma after *Post*.

SUPERScription: *To Mr. Clarke, At the New Room, Bristol.*

On the back of the letter there is written a letter by Henry Moore. It reads: *Dear Adam,—The Key mentioned in the opposite Page, I have sent by the Mail Coach. My Wife joins me in Love to you & Mrs. Clarke. Your Affte Brother, H. Moore.*

Vol. viii, p. 182. 31st October 1789

- line 3 *such and such* is underlined.  
 line 9 Read: . . . *praise God, the restoring your little one.*  
 line 10 This is illegible in the original; the printed version seems a very unlikely reading.

SUPERScription: *To Mr. Clarke, At the New Room, Bristol.*

Vol. viii, p. 188. 26th November 1789

- line 3 *retain* is underlined.  
 line 5 Read: *that have tasted not who*.

SUPERScription: *To Mr. Adam Clarke, At the New Room in Bristol.*

Vol. viii, p. 198. 28th January 1790

- line 6 Read: *about thirty* not *but thirty*.  
 line 12 Read: *as we have done* not *as I have done*.  
 line 15 For *jail* read *gaol*. For *Good reason* read *Reason good*.  
 line 17 *me* is underlined.

SUPERScription: *To Mr. Clarke, At the New Room in Bristol.*

Vol. viii, p. 201.

11th February 1790

- line 3 Delete *o'clock*.
- line 5 For *James* read *John*.

SUPERScription: *To Mr. Clarke, At the New Room in Bristol.*

Vol. viii, p. 208.

25th March 1790

- line 2 For *making the friends to understand* read *taking pains to understand*.
- line 3 *constrained* is underlined.
- line 4 For *reveal* read *loosen*.
- line 6 Read: *At first, suppose it was only a cheat*;
- line 9 For *brave* read *trace*.

SUPERScription: *To Mr. Clarke, At the New Room, Bristol.*

On the reverse side there is a postscript, which reads: *You must not let the poor girl starve. If possible, rescue Mr. Durbin!*

Vol. viii, p. 214.

14th April 1790

- line 10 For *taken* read *followed*. Delete *years*.
- line 12 Delete *you*.

SUPERScription: *To Mr. Clarke, At the New Room, Bristol.*

Vol. viii, p. 237.

9th September 1790

- line 1 Delete *that*.
- line 5 Before *prudence* insert *all the*.
- line 9 For *in temper* read *to temper*.
- line 15 For *direction* read *directions*.
- line 17 For *strikes* read *strike*.

Vol. viii, p. 244.

28th October 1790

- line 3 For *highly sensible of anything* read *keenly sensible of any*.
- line 11 *me* in underlined.
- line 16 For *upwards* read *upward*.
- line 21 For *warm your bowels* read *save your bowels*.

Vol. viii, p. 252f.

3rd January 1791

- Page 252, Heading Delete *London*.
- Page 253, line 4 *thus* is underlined.
- line 11 For *at* read *in*. For *Pray let him* read *But let him*.
- line 12 For *the past* read *and it*.
- line 12 After *forgotten*, add: *I wish my dear Sister Clarke and you many happy years*.

Vol. viii, p. 261f.

9th February 1791

- Page 261, line 3 For *a wonderful manner* read *an uncommon manner*.
- line 4 Delete *Lord*.
- line 5 Insert *thoroughly* before *to consider*.
- line 6 For *give you* read *give us*.
- line 8 Insert *the* before *more*.
- line 15 Delete *am*.
- line 19 *Animal Magnetism* is underlined.
- line 20 For *Satanic* read *Satanical*.
- Page 262, line 2 Delete *I am*.

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The Sunday-school at Bolton (Bridge Street) has recently celebrated its centenary. To say that its history has been written by the Rev. C. Deane Little in *A Century of Service* (pp. 55, 2s.) is sufficient guarantee of the accuracy and thoroughness with which this pleasing booklet has been prepared. It is a notable addition to Mr. Little's previous studies in East Lancashire Methodism.

## WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY (Irish Branch)

THE Annual Meeting of the Irish Branch of the Society was held in Wesley College chapel, Dublin, on 16th June 1950. The attendance was smaller than for some years as the time of meeting coincided with the hour of resumption of Conference. The President of the Branch, the Rev. R. Lee Cole, M.A., B.D., presided.

During the year, through the valuable assistance of Mr. William M. Fullerton, D.L., an excellent portrait of Gideon Ouseley was presented to Edgehill Theological College, Belfast. At the ceremony a very interesting address was delivered by the President of the Irish Branch.

The Branch continues to receive many inquiries specially in connexion with jubilee and centenary services. Recently Lord Claud Hamilton, son of the Duke of Abercorn, asked for particulars concerning the two visits which John Wesley made to Baronscourt, the family seat. Lord Claud was preparing a broadcast address on Baronscourt to be given in the series "Famous Houses in Ulster".

On the last Sunday in June, the Secretary of the Branch, Mr. Norman Robb, visited Moira church, Co. Down, and gave an address on the history of the circuit, referring to the interest shown in Methodism by the Earl and Countess of Moira. The latter was a daughter of the Countess of Huntingdon.

During the service Mr. Joseph R. Calvert unveiled a tablet in memory of Miss Anne Lutton, who was born in Moira on 16th December 1791, and died in Bristol on 22nd August 1881.

Mr. Robb gave an interesting and informative account of the life and work of this remarkable lady. She knew no fewer than seventeen languages, and in her eighty-eighth year surprised a learned Jew by conversing with him in Hebrew. She was a devoted class leader and held meetings for women only over a wide area in Co. Antrim and Co. Down. For the last thirty-two years of her life, she was a member of Portland chapel, Bristol, where a memorial to her was erected, and was leader at one time of no fewer than seven classes.

The Branch is actively engaged in preparations for the commemoration of the bi-centenary of the first Irish Conference which was held in Limerick on 14th and 15th August 1752.

It would be of great service to Irish Methodism if the *Irish Evangelist* and its successor the *Irish Christian Advocate* were indexed. It is hoped that volunteers will come forward to undertake this work.

NORMAN ROBB  
(Secretary of the Irish Branch).

## THE ANNUAL MEETING AND LECTURE

**B**ETWEEN thirty and forty members enjoyed the hospitality of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Ibberson at tea on the premises of the Ebenezer Methodist Church, Dudley Hill, Bradford, on Wednesday, 19th July 1950. A very lively business meeting followed, under the chairmanship of our President, the Rev. F. F. Bretherton, B.A.

The Treasurer's report showed that owing to increased expenditure the Society had reduced its credit balance by over £100 during the year, so that careful economy was absolutely necessary, in addition to increased rates of subscriptions. Any reduction in the number of pages in the *Proceedings*, however, was felt to be highly undesirable, and our economies must be sought elsewhere.

The Secretary reported a total membership of 627, a net increase of twelve during the year. Standing tribute was paid to the eleven members whose deaths had been reported since the last Annual Meeting. The present number of Life Members is thirty-two.

The Editor pointed out that although a fair amount of material was still on hand, further articles for publication would be welcomed from any of our members. He also announced that the response received from members was sufficient to justify the resuscitation of the "Manuscript Journal", and on his suggestion the Rev. John C. Bowmer, M.A., B.D., was appointed to supervise this valuable feature of our work, which had in the past provided so much useful material for published articles. Any members who would like to contribute periodically to this circulating manuscript journal are asked to get into touch with Mr. Bowmer.

The Constitution of the Society, as printed in the *Proceedings* six months ago (pp. 118-9), was unanimously adopted after careful consideration section by section. This Constitution, it must be pointed out, includes the new rates of subscriptions, which will become operative as from March 1951.

The Officers of the Society were re-appointed, with the addition of Mr. Bowmer as "Manuscript Journal Secretary". The designation of Miss C. M. Bretherton's office is changed from Assistant Secretary to Registrar.

It was confirmed that the Annual Lecture at the Conference of 1951 at Sheffield would be given by the Rev. Griffith T. Roberts, M.A., B.D., on "Howell Harris" or some cognate subject of Welsh interest.

The meeting cordially endorsed the proposal to offer a prize of £5 for an historical essay of not more than 4,000 words, open to students in any of our British Methodist colleges. The subject for the forthcoming year is "Wesley's World Parish". We are grateful to Mr. Herbert Ibberson for his kind promise to provide the prize for 1951, and to Dr. Coomer for a similar promise for 1952.

Our Irish Branch continues to flourish, and greetings were brought in person to the meeting by Dr. R. H. Harte, M.A., and were cordially reciprocated. The branches in Australia and New Zealand continue healthy, and during the year the first local branch in Great Britain has been established, at Sheffield, with the Rev. George Artingstall as secretary.

Owing to the pressure of time two other important matters had to be remitted to the Executive: a scheme, suggested by Mr. R. C. Swift, for the collection of historical information; and the provision of a depository for loans, gifts and bequests. Several members pointed out



## BOOK NOTICES

*The Secret of Mow Cop*, by W. E. Farndale. The Wesley Historical Society Lectures No. 16. (Epworth Press, pp. 76, 3s.)

Dr. Farndale's lecture deals with a subject which has long puzzled students of Primitive Methodist origins. The revival which began at Mow Cop in 1807 produced no outstanding national figure. Hugh Bourne himself was a diffident speaker, and of his helpers most are unknown even by name. Yet the movement spread with astonishing rapidity, winning its adherents not by disruption from the older Methodism but by evangelizing the unconverted. When Bourne died the membership of Primitive Methodism was 104,762, an achievement not unworthy to be set alongside the membership of 72,000 left by John Wesley, though of course Wesley was the pioneer, and those who followed entered into his labours.

What was the secret of this remarkable revival? Dr. Farndale is not in doubt. The early Primitive Methodists believed intensely in prayer, and especially in group prayer. Bourne, who had been influenced by Quaker literature, valued "praying labourers" more than preachers. He insisted that the camp-meetings should have three praying companies for every preaching stand. "I began steadfastly to believe," he wrote in his *Journal*, "that the Lord answered whenever I prayed. When I prayed for sinners, I believed that the Lord shook their hearts and when I prayed for believers I believed that the Lord sent power from me to them."

Readers of H. B. Kendall's two volumes know how powerfully the practice of believing prayer influenced the later campaigns of Primitive Methodism. In 1823 John Oxtoby undertook the apparently hopeless mission to Filey. On Muston Hill the sight of Filey in the distance drove him to his knees in loud and insistent prayer that God would revive His work. Presently he sprang to his feet saying, "Filey is taken! Filey is taken!" In February 1830 John Ride and his young colleague, Thomas Russell, knelt for hours in the snow in Ashdown Park pleading with God to give them Berkshire, until Russell exclaimed, "Yonder country is ours! And we will have it." This is what Dr. Farndale means by the secret of Mow Cop. No one is better qualified to write of it, and in recalling it to the attention of Methodism today he has rendered a great service indeed.

For the rest, the lecture touches of necessity on familiar history: the disastrous resolution of the Wesleyan Conference of 1807 which led to the expulsion of Bourne and later of William Clowes, the refusal of the Burslem superintendent to accept in membership those who were brought in by the camp-meetings, the formation of the first society class at Standley in 1810, the building of the first chapel at Tunstall on such a plan that it could be turned into cottages if the work failed. Dr. Farndale goes further than earlier accounts in tracing the name of Primitive Methodism to words used by Wesley himself. At the memorable meeting in the preacher's vestry at

Chester in 1790 when Wesley charged the brethren to go into the streets and lanes, did he say, "This was the way the primitive Methodists did"? Or was this James Crawfoot's own phrase when, nearly twenty years later, he had to defend himself in the Northwich Quarterly Meeting against the charge of free-lance preaching?

Some corrections need to be made. The name of William Clowes is wrongly given on page 41, and the monument on Mow Cop was unveiled on 15th May 1948 (p. 71). "Whitfield" (p. 32) should be "Whitefield", and the date of the lecture was 19th July, not 20th as given on the back of the title page.

NORMAN UPRIGHT.

*The Story of American Protestantism*, by Andrew L. Drummond. (Oliver and Boyd, pp. xii. 418, 30s.)

This book attempts to explain Protestantism in America in the light of its past. It is of greater value to the student of social history than to the theologian; it contains many facts and some figures, and it is a painstaking account of the growth and development of the American churches from their colonial genesis until yesterday. It is good to be reminded that the "Lambeth Quadrilateral" was first put forward by the Protestant Episcopal Church in 1886. The Christian and Protestant heritage of Europe has been modified in the American melting-pot, but it remains the main influence in spite of the recurrent waves of revivalism that have swept over America and have resulted *inter alia* in the rise of numerous and sometimes influential aberrant sects.

The student of American Methodism will need to do much quarrying in the pages of the book, and the index will help. The author is not over sympathetic in his references to Methodist "authoritarianism" and its tendency to become a guardian of public morals, but there is a friendly account of the career of Francis Asbury. Dr. Drummond is also just in his admission that the Methodist genius for organization (an organization modified from the first but still based on the Wesley tradition and expressed in the mobility of the "circuit riders") enabled Methodism to "forge ahead". We have looked in vain for some reference to the later modifications in the structure of American Methodism of which the effect has been the practical disappearance of the circuit system as we know it in this country, except in Home Mission areas. Methodism in America has been profoundly influenced by the Puritanism of New England, by the War of Independence and the subsequent unification of the country, the Civil War and the spread of American civilization to the shores of the Pacific, and not least by revivalism which is called with some justice "the dominant pattern of American Protestantism".

One small point. It is surely misleading to say that Dr. S. Parkes Cadman crossed the Atlantic as a "poor youth". While this may be true, he had at least the benefit of a Richmond training behind him, which helped him to become, in America, one of the many great preachers among the alumni of that College.

WESLEY J. CULSHAW.

*The Late Mr. Wesley: A Phantasy*, by F. H. Everson. (Epworth Press, pp. 32, 1s.)

In the Author's note, Mr. Everson tells us that "the purpose of the play is simply to remind the present generation of Methodist people of their Founder, of the kind of man he was, and of some of the things for which he and Methodism were raised up". There is no "simply" about it: those aims are complex—too complex for a short play, and lacking in the one quality which a play must have to be a play, namely, conflict. This cannot be too often stressed, because the absence of a clear central conflict renders the best material blurred and formless.

In this miniature pageant, a rather trivial artist and his fiancée are visited by a re-embodied Mr. Wesley during the painting of a picture of him. Even this single phantasy would have been difficult enough to achieve within the naturalistic prose convention, but if the author had concentrated on showing Wesley's grandeur and incisive power in contrast to (i.e. conflict with) the modern slipshod outlook, he might have succeeded. Instead, after some indeterminate chat in which we get only fitful glimpses of Wesley's dynamic strength, the scene is cluttered—there is no other word—with four singers, Bishop Asbury, representatives of the overseas countries, and a Juvenile Missionary collector, and all dramatic form and coherence vanishes.

John Wesley is a great subject who can be portrayed only in a great play—which still remains to be written.

JESSIE POWELL.

The Rev. F. H. Everson has seen Miss Powell's review, and makes the following comments:—

Miss Powell knows, I am sure, that the first rule of criticism is that the subject of criticism must be judged by what it claims to be. *The Late Mr. Wesley* does not, except in the loosest use of the word, claim to be a play. It is deliberately called a "phantasy", and to talk about the "absence of a clear central conflict", "dramatic form and coherence", and my failure in the use of "the naturalistic prose convention" is, therefore, beside the point—and, I feel, rather ponderous.

The second rule of criticism is that an author should not be condemned for failing to do what he had no intention of doing. I had no intention of showing "Wesley's grandeur and incisive power". My sole intention was to awaken amongst younger people—rather trivial artists and their fiancées, for example—a little curiosity regarding Wesley and our Church, and the Editor has evidence that my modest effort has not been entirely unsuccessful. As to the "indeterminate chat", perhaps it escaped Miss Powell's notice that practically everything Wesley says is quoted verbatim from his own writings. "John Wesley . . . can only be portrayed in a great play," says Miss Powell. Even if that were true, it has no bearing, as criticism, upon *The Late Mr. Wesley*.

Finally, whether the various groups and characters "clutter the scene" depends, with all respect, upon the producer, not upon Miss Powell's *ipse dixit*.

## NOTES AND QUERIES

### 895. JOHN WESLEY'S "SACRED HARMONY".

A few years ago I picked up for a shilling what seemed to be a rare copy of an eighteenth-century book of hymns with tunes. It bore no title-page and no other indication of its publisher and date of publication. The book is leather-bound and measures  $6\frac{1}{2}$  ins. by  $4\frac{1}{4}$  ins. Page 1 is blank, pp. 2-157 contain the tunes with words, and p. [158] is blank. A superficial examination convinced me that I had bought one of John Wesley's tune books, and I sent it to be examined by the Rev. Maurice Frost, M.A., of Deddington, Oxford, a recognized authority on church music and psalmody. I had been corresponding with Mr. Frost for many months previously, and he had very generously lent me rare Methodist tune books in furtherance of my research into the relationship between English and Welsh hymn-writers. On receipt of the rare old book Mr. Frost wrote me as follows (students of Methodist hymnody will be interested, no doubt, in his letter):

Your book thrilled me, as it turns out to be one I have been searching for a long time. Neither the British Museum nor the Bodleian Library could produce a copy. It is clearly a copy of the *second* edition of John Wesley's *Sacred Harmony*. The first edition of 1780-81 was a fat book with the words complete. According to James T. Lightwood the second edition with the first verse only of the words was published in 1788. A third edition was prepared by Charles Wesley (junior) and published in 1822.

I have compared your book with both the first and third editions, and checked up Lightwood's description on p. 39 of his *Methodist Music in the Eighteenth Century*. His description isn't quite accurate. He says, "Four tunes [in the first edition] were omitted, and six new ones added. The number of Anthems was increased by two". As a matter of fact *two* tunes were omitted: *Bristol* and *Epworth*, three were given new names, i.e. *Cambridge* became *Hemmings*, *Evesham* (second tune of that name) became *Purcell's*, and *Thou Shepherd* became *Salter's*. The new tunes added are:

*Spring* (?)

*The Dying Christian* (?)

*Denbigh* (Lock Collection, 1769)

*Yarmouth* ("Easter" in Lock Collection, 1769).

A possible explanation of Lightwood's differences is that the copy he used is a later edition of the "thin" edition than this one.

Are there any other copies of this rare edition in existence? I should be interested to know.

GOMER M. ROBERTS.

I know of three other copies of the above volume, two of which I have examined, both preserved in Didsbury College Library. There also appears to be a copy in the library of the Methodist Book Room. One of the Didsbury copies is bound up with the sixth edition of Wesley's *Collection of Hymns, for the use of the people called Methodists* (1788). It formerly belonged to Robert Spence, the Methodist bookseller of York, who himself issued a hymn book for the Methodist societies, incurring Wesley's displeasure as a result. Spence's copy of *Sacred Harmony*, however, is badly knocked about, and somewhat imperfect, though he has enriched it by the addition at the end of fourteen MS. tunes.

Green's *Wesley Bibliography*, p. 214, points out that there were indeed two editions of the cheap re-issue of *Sacred Harmony*, and it may easily be true that the slight discrepancies noted in the descriptions are due to this fact. Mr. Roberts's copy seems to lack not only the title-page, but also the four pages of "Contents". FRANK BAKER.

896. WESLEY'S GREAT SAYING—"CHURCH OR NO CHURCH".

In *Proceedings*, xxii, pp. 105-7, I wrote a short article on a saying, attributed to John Wesley, which has been frequently and widely quoted by eminent Methodist leaders and in important connexional documents, as in the Conference Statement of 1937 on "The Nature of the Christian Church".

This saying is open to suspicion, because there are several variant forms, but the best attested is that which occurs in Dr. Rigg's *The Churchmanship of John Wesley*:

CHURCH OR NO CHURCH, WE MUST ATTEND TO THE WORK OF  
SAVING SOULS.

Rigg quotes from Stevens' *History of Methodism*, and Stevens from Smith's *History of Wesleyan Methodism*. In my article I did not carry this succession any farther back, but I wish now to say that Smith gives as his authority Watson's *Life of the Rev. John Wesley*. It will be found there in a footnote on page 215 of the first edition of 1831. In the text Watson has written:

The intention of Charles was evidently to obtain controlling powers over his brother's proceedings, but there was one great rule to which Mr. John Wesley was more steadily faithful. This was to carry on and extend that which he knew to be the work of God, without regarding probable future consequences of separation from the Church after his death; which was, in fact, the principle on which they had agreed at the first Conference of 1744.

To this passage Watson adds in a footnote:

"Church or no Church," he observes in one of his letters to Charles, "we must attend to the work of saving souls".

The succession, therefore, runs from Rigg to Stevens, from Stevens to Smith, from Smith to Watson, and from Watson to a letter of John Wesley to Charles. But where is that letter? It is not to be found in the Standard edition of the *Letters* or in any letter published since the Standard edition. Was Watson quoting from memory and giving the substance of many sayings of John to his brother without using his exact words; or is there a letter of John to Charles which has been lost or never published?

No one can deny that the "Great Saying", in any of its varying forms, faithfully represents John Wesley's attitude on the ecclesiastical issue. The insistence on the "saving of souls" is constant with him. It occurs in the *Minutes* of the first Conference, in the "Rules of a Helper", and in many treatises and letters. In my article I referred to two letters of John to Charles of 8th September 1761 and 4th April 1772 which, put together, almost make up the "Great Saying".

It is not, however, an idle question to ask when and where John Wesley uttered this word in this precise form, for the saying, if authentic, is the most compressed and striking statement of the pragmatism which is fundamental in the Methodist doctrine of the Church. Has any reader found its source in a writing of John Wesley?

EDGAR W. THOMPSON.