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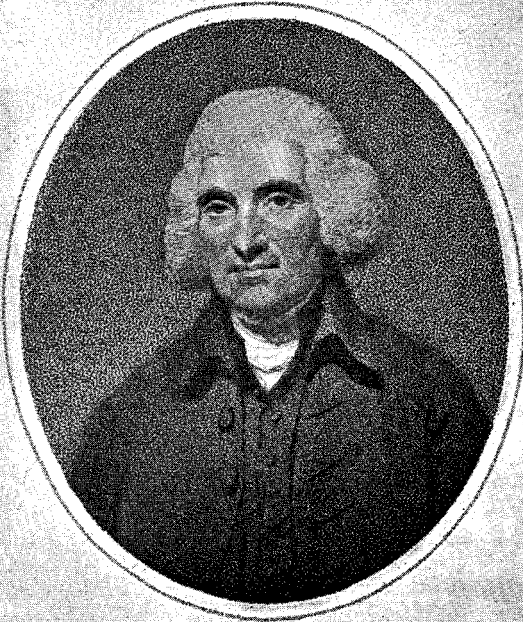
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ARMINIAN MAGAZINE.



*Eden sculp*

MR JOHN PAWSON

Aged 58.

*Preacher of the Gospel.*

PROCEEDINGS

THE REV. JOHN PAWSON,  
PRESIDENT OF THE CONFERENCE,  
1793 AND 1801.

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The fine portrait which forms our frontispiece appeared in the January number of the *Arminian Magazine* for 1796. It was engraved by William Ridley in stipple, and is in his best style. The first portrait of Pawson was given in the *Magazine* for 1779, It was like most of those, including two of Wesley himself, which appeared in that periodical up to about 1790, and were little better than caricatures. Ridley's work, principally done for the *Evangelical Magazine*, was mostly of very high quality and finish, his portrait of Wesley, drawn a few hours after death, being a marvel of sympathetic skill and power. He died at Addlestone in 1838, and is believed to have been a member of the Methodist Church,

GEORGE STAMPE.

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EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS OF THE  
REVD. JOHN. PAWSON. 1762—1806.

PRESIDENT OF THE CONFERENCE, 1793 and 1801.

From the originals in the collection of Mr. George Stampe.

(Continued from Vov. X, p. 194.)

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My very dear Friend.

Edinburgh, Oct. 8, 1785.

I have not the least objection to Nelley Redfearn. She is, I think, what we Scotch folk call an uncah bonny Lass, and I think will make a muckle gude wife. But I canna weel ken whether the parents will consent to your proposal. As to herself, please to give my kind love to her, and tell her that I say she must not refuse you. You have my best wishes and heartiest prayers respecting this knotty affair. It truly is a most dangerous time of life with you, my Charley, and you have a most difficult piece of business to manage. Watch in all things, my precious lad, and keep the reins of government in your own hands, and do not

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let any creature under heaven make a tool of you by stealing away your heart. You know that I have nothing at all against you marrying. I believe God has so formed you that it is your duty, and I believe will contribute very much to your happiness to be agreeably married. But now let your moderation appear to all men. Act the serious, sober, discreet Christian. Let wisdom dwell with prudence, and act the Man, the Christian, and the Minister, and I hope and trust the Lord will guide, direct and bless you in this and in everything else which you undertake for His Glory. My Fanny and I are as happy as heart can wish. Indeed we are now as comfortably settled with respect to temporals as we can possibly be. I am only one night in a fortnight from home, and then only six miles off. I shall have to change with Brother [Robert] Johnson, once in a quarter to Glasgow, but there they have only that one place, and I have four.

The Scots in general are unaccountably prejudiced against us, and, to the last degree, bigotted to their own way. And really it is very melancholy to think that their best and most pious ministers are our very worst enemies, and think it their duty to warn the people against us. O cursed Calvinism! What havoc hast thou made with the souls of men in this once highly favoured nation! No heart can conceive what a bar this wretched doctrine is to our usefulness, and how far and wide it spreads among people of all sorts. Those among them who are pious cannot conceive how we can be right at all except we believe in Election and the rest of those absurd notions connected with it. However, I bless the Lord I think there is a prospect of doing good. Our congregations on Sunday nights increase very much, and the people are exceedingly attentive, and I have hitherto found very great liberty among them, so that I do hope good will be done. We expect Dr. Coke here next week, when I shall give him your letter. He also intends to be with us on Sunday the 23rd, when we are to have the Sacrament again, if all is well. I think I told you in my last that we have had it once, and that it was a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. But I do not know what we shall do, as Mr. Wesley is against us having it in the Scotch form, and if he is determined then I am well satisfied that our new plan will answer no end at all in Scotland, but will prove a hindrance to the work of God. The people in general take the very name of the Prayer Book, and everything belonging to it (as they have always been taught to believe it,) a limb of Antichrist, and very little better than the

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Romish Mass book. Popery, prelacy, and all such like things are held by them in the greatest detestation, and you may depend upon it they will not submit to bow the knee to Baal, as they would call it. One and another would soon tell us, "I dinna ken what you mean by these wicked new inventions; we belong to the gude old Kirk of Scotland, and will not join with the whore of Babylon at all."

You will present our kindest love to Mr. and Mrs. Jackson, Mr. Seager, and all friends at Bacup and Blackburn, and to any of the Rochdale friends.

Farewell, my very dear Charley, and believe me to be  
as much as ever, your affectionate Brother,

J. Pawson.

Mr. Atmore,  
at the Preaching House, Coln, Lancashire.

My very dear Brother.

Glasgow, December 15, 1785.

It is an unkah thing indeed that Mr. W. should still endeavour to make us believe that marriage is sinful in the light of God, when at the same time an apostle tells us it is honourable in all men. For my own part, I dinna ken what interpretation he puts upon such Scriptures. But from hence you will see that we cannot with safety call any man Rabbi.

I am sincerely thankful to hear that the good work of our God prospers so much among you. This is the best news upon earth to me, my very soul rejoices to hear of it from any quarter of the world. You have great reason to be thankful that the Lord is pleased to use you as an instrument in His hands for promoting His own glory. Let us labour on.

We have been at this place just one week. It is a most beautiful City, indeed the most so I ever saw. But we have a miserable Preaching House, ugly beyond description, up a nasty, narrow passage, and not large enough to hold one half of the people that would come to it, bad as it is. We have begun a subscription for building a New Kirk, and by the favourable appearances which open to our view, I hope and trust that we shall be able to accomplish this great and good work. My very soul is in it, and to encourage them I have subscribed ten guineas myself, while my generous-hearted wife had not the least objection. We must do something for God and His cause while we live, for we can do nothing when we are dead. I heartily wish that some of our good friends in England would pity us and

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send help, for we want it exceedingly. I hope that if a convenient place is provided, much good will be done in this City, and many souls will be brought home to our blessed Master. There is a work just now begun at Ayr, a county town thirty four miles from this place, by a soldier who has begun to preach. Many of the soldiers have been awakened, and some of the townspeople, so that I hope a door is opened in that place, which the Calvinistical devil who reigns in Scotland will not be able to shut again. You cannot conceive how bigotted and how bitterly prejudiced the Scots in the general are to their own opinions and ways of all sorts, and yet divided among themselves amazingly. I think that if John Hurst, with all his high flown notions, was in Scotland a month, it would be enough to give even him a surfeit of his own bad opinions, as he would find thousands as hot Calvinists as himself, who would nevertheless reprobate him, as he could not come up to their standard in everything. What think you of the following pious prayer offered up to the God of Love in public by a Seceder Minister: "Lord, sweep away the Methodists from the face of the earth with the besom of destruction! Lord, bless some of us this day, it would be an unkah thing if Thou shouldst bless us all." They call Mr. Whitefield the Great White Devil, and Mr. Wesley the Man of Sin, and pray that the Lord would save them from him and his perfection and his billets—that is, his hymns. Was there ever anything like this, think you? And yet these, and such as these, are the Saints of Scotland. O! my Brother, let us praise the Lord who has taught us better, who has given us another Spirit, even the Spirit of holiness and meekness and love. My kindest love to Miss R. I can say no more about this till I hear how you go on.

Peace be with thee, my dear Charley. May goodness and mercy ever follow thee.

I am, most affectionately yours,

To Mr. Atmore,

J. Pawson.

at the Methodist Preaching House, Coln.

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Glasgow, Feb. 13, 1786.

It is an unkah thing indeed that my dear Charley should be such a muckle while in writing. However, I am now most sincerely glad to hear that the work of the Lord prospers so greatly in your part of the world. This will necessarily fill up all your time and increase your blessed labour.

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My Bro. informed me long since that you had been to the beloved land. Well, I have nothing to say but this: "Lord, direct and guide and bring to a happy conclusion, if for Thy glory, and the mutual good of Thy creatures." Still follow the cloud, move which way soever it will. Keep your eye single, and your heart truly devoted to God, and all shall be well. Robey [Robert] Johnson was to have gone to America next Conference along with the Dr. [Coke], but I fancy he will be bound before that time not in fetters of brass, but in those which are softer yet far stronger, yea stronger than death. This is a most profound secret, therefore mention it to no living creature. I suppose I shall have the honour to marry him to an unkah bonny Scotch lassie on my return to Edinburgh. And if you will come to Scotland I will do you the same kindness, and charge you not a single bawbee for my service.

I have not seen any Magazines for the present year, but am unkah well pleased at the hint you gave respecting our leaving the old Kirk. It appears to me high time to come out from among *Heathenish Priests* and *Mitered Infidels*. What may we call that Church where such blessed wretches preside but an old withered harlot who has lost all that is truly excellent in the religion of Jesus Christ? I hope that Mr. Wesley is now paving the way for our complete deliverance from all that yoke of bondage by which we have been held down too long. I hear that the Dr. and Mr. Chas. Wesley are publishing to the world their thoughts on this subject. I hope that the Dr. will come off more than conqueror. I never thought so much of the loss you sustain in England for want of the service at the proper hours on Sundays, as I have since I tasted the sweetness of those happy seasons. Our Sunday forenoons are precious times indeed. The minds of the people at that time are best prepared to receive divine impressions, and is it not a pity that this hour should be lost, no one knows how. You have very few high-flown church folks in your country, I think. We are about building a new Kirk here. That which we have is a most wretched place as you ever saw. We want money, and how or what we shall get it I canna ken. Mr. Wesley gives us £30, Dr. Coke ten guineas, and I have given ten guineas. If you could send us a good round sum, I should thank you most heartily. This is a very large, well built, and beautiful City, and very full of people. It is full of religious strife about abundance of things of which the Bible knows nothing. A minister of this town visited a poor creature under sentence of death who was to die the next day, and the only

question he asked him was : " Do you know how many Covenants there are ? " the poor soul not knowing what he meant. He walked away and never so much as prayed with him. . . . . I hope to go to the Conference if the Lord spares me so long, were it only to give my vote against the old Kirk, if any such good thing should come upon the carpet. Only it is such a long way it almost frightens me to think of it. My wife rejoices in hope of the glorious days we shall see when we come out of old Babylon. She was a Wrenite, you know, and has never been able to recover one spark of affection for the poor old Kirk since she came back to us again.

As I was writing a letter to Lady Maxwell yesterday on the subject of perfection these words were brought to my mind : " Who through faith obtained promises. " Do we obtain every promise by faith ? How did we obtain the promise of Justification ? Was it not by one simple act of faith ? Let us then, my dear Charley, preach the whole truth of God to the people, and God will bless us.

May the good Lord bless and be ever present with you, prays your most cordial friend and brother in the best bonds,

J. Pawson.

To the Revd. Mr. Atmore,  
At the Preaching House, Coln.

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## JOHN WESLEY AND FIELD PREACHING.

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In an article on " Whitefield and Bristol " which appeared in the *Proceedings* (x, pp. 1-10) we questioned the correctness of the theory that John Wesley was induced by the example of Whitefield to commence the practice of preaching in the open-air. That theory is untenable, but its power of persistence seems to be inexhaustible. The subject is so important that it is worth while to return to it, and treat it more fully.

In dealing with the question it is essential that we should observe the distinction between " preaching in the open air " and " field preaching. " John Wesley certainly preceded Whitefield as an open-air preacher. It was on Sunday, October 19th, 1735, that he commenced the practice by preaching on the quarter-deck of the *Simmonds* at the beginning of his voyage to America,



and it was his frequent custom to hold open-air services in Georgia during his mission to that colony. In 1735 Whitefield was not in holy orders; he was not ordained deacon until June 20, 1736. The first reference we can find to his open-air preaching is in connection with his voyage to America, when he followed Wesley's example and preached on deck on December 31, 1737. Unless it can be shown that he preached in the open-air before he was ordained, or before he sailed for America, in point of time John Wesley was his predecessor in this kind of work by a period of eighteen months. In this connection it must be remembered that Charles Wesley was also an open-air preacher in Georgia, and therein a predecessor of Whitefield.

So far as America is concerned, the question is settled by the authority of dates. Let us now turn to England. Those who are acquainted with Charles Wesley's *Journal* know how rich it is in records of incidents which shed light on events not always fully treated in the *Journal* of John Wesley. Let us consult the book, pausing at the entry made on July 19, 1738. At that time Whitefield was not in England; he did not land here on his return from Georgia until November 30, 1738. The entry in Charles Wesley's *Journal* vividly describes a scene at Tyburn, when Charles Wesley, Mr. Sparks and Mr. Broughton ministered to ten men who were about to die. They held a heart-moving service under the gallows, praying and singing hymns in the midst of the mob. When the execution was over, Charles Wesley's work was not completed. He says: "I spoke a few suitable words to the crowd." (C. Wesley's *Journal*, i, 122-123)

When Charles Wesley was speaking to the crowd at Tyburn, John Wesley was in Germany; but we have not long to wait before we see him, also, in the presence of the Tyburn mob. Let us read the record in his *Journal* under the date Wednesday, November 8, 1738. After describing the execution, John Wesley says: "My brother took that occasion of declaring the gospel of peace to a large assembly of publicans and sinners." As he listened to his brother's words he was profoundly affected by them. He felt that the appeal was to him as well as to the "publicans and sinners" that stood around him. Recalling the whole scene, he wrote in his *Journal*: "O Lord God of my fathers, accept even me among them, and cast me not out from among Thy children!" If we had nothing but the entry in John Wesley's *Journal* to guide us we might suppose that the only preacher on that occasion was Charles Wesley. But once more we must confess our obligation to the Standard edition, and the

"touch of a vanished hand." Mr. Curnock, by giving us an extract from John Wesley's *Diary*, has increased our inestimable debt of gratitude to him. Glancing at the brief jottings in the *Diary* we seem to hear a sound of far-off singing. The two words "hath died" show that at least the first verse of Charles Wesley's great hymn "O Filial Deity" was sung at Tyburn on that day. The hymn was sung at 12 o'clock when the execution took place. Then, in the *Diary*, following the allusion to the hymn, are the words "prayer, preached to the mob." From this entry it is apparent that both John Wesley and Charles Wesley preached at Tyburn on this memorable occasion. Such is Mr. Curnock's conclusion. (John Wesley's *Journal*, ii, 100). Once more we remind ourselves that these Tyburn "open-air" preachings occurred before the return of Whitefield from America.

The evidence establishing the precedence of the Wesleys as "open-air" preachers in Georgia and England is strong. We must now enter on the second branch of our inquiry, which concerns "field preaching." This part of the question is not so simple as it appears. "Field preaching," in the time of Wesley, meant much more than preaching in the open air. It raised questions of legality and propriety which had to be faced by those who felt that conscience compelled them to resort to the practice.

John Wesley's respect for law and order is well known. He had an exceptional knowledge of the laws governing the English Church, and up to a certain period in his life he observed them scrupulously. In his study of Church law he found that it was not enough to master the contents of "Constitutions and Canons Ecclesiastical." Statute Law had to be considered. At this point his store of information needed to be enlarged. He paid more than ordinary attention to the Acts passed in the reign of Charles II, and was specially interested in the Conventicle Act. His study of the Act raised some suspicions concerning the correctness of his own proceedings in connection with the Religious Societies, and he took the opportunity of an interview with Dr. Gibson, the Bishop of London, to ask a question which reveals the uneasiness of his mind. The interview took place on October 20th, 1738, Charles Wesley being with him. Dr. Gibson is known to all English ecclesiastical lawyers as the author of the famous *Codex* containing "the Statutes, Constitutions, Canons, Rubrics and Articles of the Church of England," a work of great value and authority. His opinion on any matter connected with the laws of the Church was highly important. In the interview John Wesley asked him whether his reading in a Religious

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Society made it a conventicle. That was a thorny question, and the bishop handled it with care. He was not prepared with an immediate decision, so, as Charles Wesley tells us, "he warily referred us to the laws." But as the matter was urgent and even vital to the Wesleys at the time, the brothers pursued the subject. They asked, "Are the Religious Societies conventicles?" Dr. Gibson's cautiousness was not to be overcome. He haltingly said: "No, I think not; however, you can read the acts and laws as well as I. I determine nothing." (Charles Wesley's *Journal*, i, 133). The moot point was left unsettled, and the Wesleys went on their way with a formidable difficulty unsolved.

We do not wonder at the non-committal attitude of Dr. Gibson. Those who are acquainted with the history of the Religious Societies are aware that, at one period during which the Conventicle Act was being strictly applied, it was found necessary to drop the name of the Societies and to change their ordinary places of meeting. They were called "Clubs," and, in some instances, they met in public-houses in order that their "religious" character might not be suspected. This accommodation to circumstances did much injury to the Societies; and when the fierceness of the persecution was allayed they resumed their old name and manner of proceedings. The Conventicle Act, however, remained on the Statute Book, and on any revival of the spirit of persecution its provisions could be applied. The bishop was too wary to jeopardise his reputation by pronouncing an opinion on such a complicated question.

John Wesley's uneasiness of mind was caused by his "expoundings" in the Religious Societies. At the time of the interview he had not preached in the open air in England, and had no intention of becoming a "field preacher." Charles Wesley had preached at Tyburn, and he might have put a question to the bishop concerning the legality of his act. If he had done so the subject of "field preaching" would probably have arisen. We know the bishop's opinion on that point, for in 1744 he published it in his well-known "*Observations upon the Conduct and Behaviour of a certain Sect, usually distinguished by the name of Methodists.*" Seeing that the Conventicle Act expressly forbids the holding of a religious service in a field, which service is conducted "in other manner than according to the liturgy and practice of the Church of England," the conclusions of Dr. Gibson in the *Observations* on this point will scarcely be questioned by any lawyer. He maintained that such meetings were held in defiance of the law.

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We presume that John Wesley followed the advice of Dr. Gibson and once more read the Conventicle Act. In studying it he must have perceived that the civil authorities and not bishops or clergymen were the interpreters of its meaning and the administrators of its provisions. He would see that any magistrate might pronounce on the character of a religious meeting held in a private house, or in a field. If he determined that it was a conventicle he could inflict the penalties mentioned in the Act. If he were a malignant persecutor the thirteenth clause would stimulate his proceedings. He would pore over the words: "This Act, and all clauses therein contained, shall be construed most largely and beneficially for the suppressing of conventicles, and for the justification and encouragement of all persons to be employed in the execution thereof: and no record, warrant, or mittimus to be made by virtue of this Act, or any proceedings thereupon, shall be reversed, avoided, or anyway impeached by reason of any default in form." The perusal of the act would not allay the uneasiness of Wesley's mind. It is true that the Act was then in a somewhat comatose condition, but he was wise enough to know that it is dangerous to disturb the slumbers of drowsy Acts of Parliament.

Losing sight of John Wesley for a few moments we must fix our eyes on George Whitefield. On February 14, 1739, he arrived in Bristol, and, being unable to obtain permission to preach in the churches, three days later he went out to Kingswood and preached to about two hundred people "in the open fields." It is generally supposed that, so far as the eighteenth century is concerned, this service "on a mount" possesses all the marks of uniqueness. The members of the W.H.S. will be resolute in refusing to accept that theory when they remember the fact brought to light by the late Rev. Henry J. Foster. (*W.H.S. Proc.* vi., 102, 103). He has shown that William Morgan, a Bristol clergyman, had sometimes preached to the Kingswood colliers in the fields during 1738. According to John Cennick's testimony, quoted by Mr. Foster, Whitefield's first sermon in "the wood" was preached near the same spot, called Rose Green or Crates End, where William Morgan preached the year before.

If it is agreed that Whitefield's Kingswood service was not unique, another question arises. Was it an act, resulting from a sudden impulse, which was altogether free from the suggestion of any example set by another person? Was it an act so individual that it entitles Whitefield to the enviable position of the pioneer "field-preacher" in this country in the eighteenth century? Let us look at the question carefully.

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In January, 1739, Howell Harris, the Welsh lay evangelist, was agreeably surprised by receiving a letter from Whitefield written on December 20, 1738. He had heard of his work and wrote to encourage him. The correspondence thus commenced was continued. The two young men became firm friends, and Whitefield was well acquainted with the character of Harris's work. He shall describe it. Writing in March, 1739, he says of Harris, "He discourses generally in a field, from a wall, a table, but at other times in a house. He has established near thirty Societies in South Wales, and still his sphere of action is enlarged daily." Harris's work had been proceeding for more than two years before Whitefield's service at Kingswood. It was interrupted by the violence of mobs, but was carried on with extraordinary vigour and fearlessness. In 1739 Whitefield was in close touch with the Welsh lay-evangelist. Writing on January 27, he says: "On Monday, seven-night, God willing, I set out for Bristol, with Mr. Seward, Mr. Howel Harris and I are correspondents, blessed be God! May I follow him as he does Jesus Christ! How he outstrips me!" (Tyerman's *Life of Whitefield*, i, 163. Is it reasonable to suppose that Whitefield's action on February 17, 1739, was entirely uninfluenced by Howell Harris's example? After the Kingswood field service Whitefield says: "I have now broken the ice! Some may censure me; but if I thus pleased men I should not be the servant of Christ." (Tyerman's *Life of Whitefield*, i, 180).

If Whitefield paused before trying the experiment of field preaching he made haste afterwards. To his surprise when he returned from Kingswood he found that some of the Bristol churches were open to him, but after a few days all were again closed. In this crisis he took a bold step. He not only continued his field preaching at Kingswood, but he selected in Bristol several places in which he held services in the open-air attended by thousands of the citizens. In the Pithay Bowling Green, the Brickfield, the yard of the Glass-house, Baptist Mills, and elsewhere he conducted religious services that were not in accordance with "the liturgy and practice of the Church of England." The spectacle of those great assemblies must have astonished the Dissenters who were well versed in the story of their own persecutions. They would recall the memories of the days when their meetings for worship in the King's Wood and in the dells of Durdham Down were raided and broken up, and their fathers were cast into prison. Whitefield's conjecture that some might censure him was well founded. However, he had a multitude of

friends on his side, and their enthusiasm and the voice of his own conscience supported him.

Whitefield's visit to Bristol was short, lasting about six weeks. He was going away, and the city would not see him again, save for a few days, during the next two years. He rightly felt that the work he had commenced ought to be continued. He made an appeal to John Wesley to take his place. After some hesitation Wesley yielded to the request, and arrived in Bristol on Saturday, March 31, 1739. His hesitation arose from the condition of his health. The effect of the malarial swamps of Georgia lingered in him, and, again and again, sapped his strength. Charles Wesley was convinced that an attempt to carry on Whitefield's work in Bristol would hasten his brother's death and strongly opposed his going there. John Wesley shared his opinion, but he set out determining to face all risks. We are so accustomed to think of him as a man possessing "an iron constitution" that we are in danger of ignoring the fact that, in the earlier years of his mission in England, he was often disabled by physical feebleness.

Wesley arrived in Bristol on a Saturday evening, and Whitefield was leaving for Wales on the Monday. The conversation concerning the character of the work to be "taken over" was of great importance. That relating to the Religious Societies, Wesley thoroughly understood. He listened to Whitefield's description of his field preaching at Kingswood and in the city, and he frankly confesses that he could scarce reconcile himself at first "to this strange way of preaching in the fields." He suspended his judgment, and on Sunday he accompanied Whitefield to the Bowling Green, Hanham Mount, and Rose Green. Whatever might be his instinctive objections to some parts of the proceedings he determined to take up the work and do it with his might. Whitefield, in the evening, preached in the Baldwin Street Society Room, and, at the close of the service, announced that Wesley would preach at the Brickyard the next afternoon. Fully realising the consequences of this action, Wesley "submitted to be more vile," and went to the Brickyard on Monday, and "proclaimed in the highways the glad tidings of salvation" to about three thousand people. Whitefield had left the city in the morning, but Wesley promptly took over all his field-preaching as well as his work in the Religious Societies.

Wesley's critics, who delight to compare him with Whitefield, still descant on the fact that, "at first" he could scarce reconcile himself to "this strange way of preaching in the fields." If he had

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forgotten, in a moment, all his knowledge of church and civil law, if he had lost, at once, the effects of the influences arising from his birth, his home-training, his social, clerical, and University life, he would not have been the John Wesley who is now recognised as one of the most cultured and wisest men of that day. He had his own canons of good taste and propriety, he had his own preferences of methods of work, but in spite of himself he took up the rôle of the "common field preacher," and, by so doing, he became the object of the pity of his old friends, and of the contempt of the great mass of the churchmen of England.

Weighing the evidence we have advanced concerning the question of the priority of John Wesley and George Whitefield in the matter of open-air and field preaching we come to the conclusion that in open-air preaching John Wesley undoubtedly stands first in order of time. As to field preaching the question is complicated by the Tyburn service. If that service is ruled out as not answering to the definition of a field service contained in the Conventicle Act, then Whitefield precedes John Wesley. If we enlarge the scope of our inquiry into the origin of field-preaching in England and Wales in the eighteenth century neither Whitefield nor Wesley in point of time occupies the first place. The claim of Howell Harris is irresistible. It must be remembered that the Conventicle Act of 1670 applied to places "within the Kingdom of England, or dominion of Wales, or town of Berwick-upon-Tweed," so that in any question concerning "field preaching" it is essential to include Wales in the consideration.

We cannot conclude our review of this important subject without making an attempt to ascertain Whitefield's inner and maturer thoughts about "field preaching." Did they greatly differ from those of Wesley? Wesley's hesitation "at the first" arose from his long training in decent and orderly public worship. Was Whitefield blind to the defects and dangers which Wesley perceived? Let us examine the evidence. In John Wesley's *Journal*, ii, 209, there is a facsimile of a letter written by Whitefield to Wesley on April 3, 1739, the day after Wesley had preached in the Brickyard in Bristol. It opens with the sentence: "Yesterday I began to play the madman in Gloucestershire by preaching on a table in Thornbury street." On Friday, April 27, 1739, he preached in Islington churchyard and afterwards wrote to Howell Harris. He says, "To-day, my Master, by His providence and Spirit, compelled me to preach in the churchyard at Islington. To-morrow I am to repeat that mad trick, and, on Sunday go out into Moor-

fields." (Tyerman's *Life of Whitefield*, i, 206). On May 13, 1739, he wrote a letter in a more sober tone. He imagines "the scorn of the self-righteous bigots to see a clergyman in his gown and cassock venting his enthusiastic ravings on a common," and adds, "But if this is to be vile, Lord grant that I may be more vile." That phrase, "more vile," was also employed by Wesley, and for using it he has been severely attacked by some of Whitefield's insufficiently informed admirers. No one can read these extracts without seeing that he knew his proceedings as a "field preacher" might be considered as lacking in decency.

We have seen that Wesley's mind was haunted by a suspicion concerning the relation of the Conventicle Act, to his own and Whitefield's proceedings. He could not put aside the suggestion that the services at Kingswood and in Bristol were not in accordance with "the law of the land." Did Whitefield share his suspicion? We know that he adopted extraordinary interpretations of the Act and derived considerable comfort from them. But in March, 1739, he went to Wales, saw Howell Harris, listened to the story of his adventures, witnessed his work. Harris would probably tell him that in February he had been threatened with prosecution under the Act, but had persuaded himself that "as he was a Conformist" he was safe from its penalties. His work, however, was often interrupted by mobs, and his life was frequently in danger. Whitefield's mind must have received additional light from Harris's experiences. He must have perceived that "field preaching" might lead to grave disorders, and that his knowledge of the Conventicle Act might not be perfect. The evidence proving that his mind was being enlightened is easily produced. On April 4, 1739, when he was in Oxford, he wrote to Harris and said, "My heart is drawn to London most strangely. Perhaps you may hear of your friend's imprisonment. I expect no other preferment. God grant I may behave so, that when I suffer, it may not be for my own imprudencies, but for righteousness sake." (Tyerman's *Life of Whitefield*, i, 204). Three days later, standing on a tomb stone in Islington churchyard, he preached to "a prodigious concourse of people." There was a great disturbance; but the hearers were so affected that, says Whitefield, "I believe we could have gone singing of hymns to prison." (Tyerman's *Life of Whitefield*, i, 205). That he then lived in expectation of prosecution is clear from his letter to Howell Harris, written on May 10, 1739, in which he says, "The hour for my imprisonment is not yet come. I am not fit as yet to be so highly honoured." (Tyerman's *Life of*



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*Whitefield*, i, 230).

Reviewing the evidence, we reach the conclusion that, although Whitefield did not see the difficulties of "field preaching" so quickly as Wesley, his eyes were soon opened and he was able to understand Wesley's temporary hesitation when they first conversed together in Bristol. It is to the honour of both the men that increasing vision only intensified their zeal. Seeing difficulties and dangers clearly, they confronted them with a courage that still excites the admiration of all whose hearts are set on the evangelisation of England.

JOHN S. SIMON.

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## YOUNG AND THE METHODIST HYMN-BOOK.

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Time was when a Methodist sermon would have been considered lacking in grace had it not contained a passage from Young's *Night Thoughts*. The eschatological teaching of the church was then much more prominent than now, and the sounding lines of this poet gave point to the fervid appeals which so largely explain the success of Methodist preaching in its earlier days. The Wesleys sought in their sermons, letters, journals and other publications to familiarize their followers with the *Night Thoughts*, which they valued as highly as Boswell did. Soon after its appearance our Founder issued *An Extract* from this work, which ran to a second edition, and, in altered form, was republished until 1863. (See Green's *Bibliography*). In his *Journal* Charles Wesley writes on July 30, 1754, "I began once more transcribing Dr. Young's *Night Thoughts*. No writings but the inspired are more useful to me." Their usefulness in prompting the muse of our poet, and of others whose hymns are included in our manual of devotion, will be noted in the following references :—

- Hymn 61, v. 5.—Father of angels, but the Friend of man,  
Like Jacob, fondest of the younger born!  
*Night IV*, 603-4.
- Hymn 68, v. 1.—Great God of wonders! (if, Thy love survey'd,  
Aught else the name of wonderful retains).  
*Night IX*, 463-4

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- Hymn 68, v. 2.—Pardon for infinite offence ; and pardon  
 Through means that speak its value infinite !  
 A pardon bought with blood ; with blood  
 Divine ! *Night IV, 320-2.*
- Hymn 134, v. 2.—And Being's Source, that utmost flight of mind !  
*Night V, 60.*
- Hymn 315, v. 4, & 756, v. 4.—Heaven our reward—for heaven  
 enjoy'd below. *Night VII, 326.*
- Hymn 328, v. 4.—My soul which flies to Thee, her trust, her  
 treasure. *Night I, 41.*
- Hymn 358, v. 1.—Where shall that praise begin which ne'er  
 should end ? *Night IV, 383.*
- Hymn 372, v. 2, & 425, v. 3.—O may I breathe no longer than I  
 breathe  
 My soul in praise to Him who gave my soul,  
 And all her infinite of prospect fair.  
*Night IV, 378-380.*
- Hymn 392, v. 2.—The rush of years beats down their strength.  
*Night VIII, 209-210.*
- Hymn 440, v. 2.—Rouse, stand in arms, nor lean against thy  
 spear,  
 Lest slumber steal one moment o'er thy soul,  
 And Fate surprise thee nodding. Watch, be  
 strong. *Night V, 891-3*
- Hymn 563, v. 2.—Thou, who didst save him, snatch the smoking  
 brand  
 From out the flames, and quench it in Thy  
 blood ! *Night IV, 605-6.*
- Hymn 635, v. 4.—Redemption ! 'twas creation more sublime.  
*Night IV, 455.*
- Hymn 642, v. 6.—Or o'er our dying friends in anguish hang,  
 Wipe the cold dew, or stay the sinking head.  
*Night V, 498-499.*
- Hymn 684, v. 2.—A banquet this, where men and angels meet,  
 Eat the same manna, mingle earth and heaven!  
*Night IX, 1224-5.*
- Hymn 695, v. 3.—Is it that Time steals on with downy feet ?  
*Night V, 397.*

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Hymn 756, v. 4.—The more our spirits are enlarged on earth,  
The deeper draught shall they receive of  
heaven. *Night IX, 578-9.*

Hymn 842, v. 3.—No more we slumber on the brink of fate,  
*Night VI, 559.*

It is scarcely needful to say that previous editions of the Methodist hymn-book contained more allusions to Young's sombre poem than the collection now in use, and therefore a few of these found in the edition of 1876 are here appended :—

Hymn 55, v. 3.—I would not damp, but to secure, thy joys.  
*Night I, 325.*

Hymn 57, vv. 1 & 2.—Command the Grave restore her taken prey,  
And Earth and Ocean, pay their debt of man.  
*Night VII, 916-918.*

Hymn 262, v. 4.—  
They see  
On earth a bounty not indulged on high  
And downward look for Heaven's superior  
praise !  
First-born of ether, high in fields of light,  
View man, to see the glory of your God.  
*Night IV, 438-442.*

Hymn 483 v. 3.—O ye, who from the Rock of Ages leap,  
Apostates plunging headlong in the deep !  
*Night IV, 477-8.*

Hymn 513, v. 3.—Resorbs them all unto Himself again ;  
His throne their centre, and His smile their  
crown. *Night IV, 529-530.*

Hymn 536, v. 5.— Happy day that breaks our chain !  
That manumits, that calls from exile home.  
*Night IV, 666-7.*

Hymn 665, vv. 1 & 6.—Eternity's Inhabitant august ;  
Of two eternities amazing Lord !  
One past, ere man's or angel's had begun.  
*Night VI, 663-5*

Hymn 792, v. 3.—Be wise to-day, 'tis madness to defer.  
*Night I, 390.*

Hymn 830, v. 3.—Wrong he sustains with temper, looks on  
Heaven,  
Nor stoops to think his injurer his foe ;  
Naught but what wounds his virtue wounds  
his peace. *Night VIII, 1127-9*

Hymn 61.—The reference to this hymn has been reserved to the last because the whole of it is based on lines 744-749 of *Night VI* :

“ If so decreed, the Almighty will be done,  
 Let earth dissolve, yon ponderous orbs descend,  
 And grind us into dust : the soul is safe ;  
 The man emerges, mounts above the wreck,  
 As towering flame from Nature’s funeral pyre ;  
 O’er Devastation, as a gainer, smiles.”

The inverted commas are Young’s acknowledgement of indebtedness to Horace, *Odes* 3. 3. 7. Addison places two lines from this ode at the head of his Essay in the *Spectator* on the Happiness of Dependence on the Supreme Being, No. 441. It is in this Essay that Addison published his well-known paraphrase of Psalm xxiii, “The Lord my Pasture shall prepare.” The following verse translation of Horace’s lines is given :

Should the whole frame of nature round him break,  
 In ruin and confusion hurled,  
 He, unconceived, would hear the mighty crack,  
 And stand secure amidst a falling world. *Anon.*

RICHARD BUTTERWORTH.

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## WESLEYAN METHODIST REGISTERS OF BIRTHS AND BAPTISMS. 1803—1836.

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The following correspondence may not be of much general interest, but it may be of service to local historians and biographers. The letters appeared in the *Methodist Recorder*, Nov. 9th, et. seq. 1916. The first letter in reply is based on Philip Garrett’s *Digest of the Minutes to the year 1826, Halifax 1827*, and on the *Minutes* of 1803, 1812, 1818, 1825, 1829.

“ R. C. R. ” writes :—

The following is a copy of a document that has come into the possession of Alderman Tombleson, of Barton-on-Humber, and local Methodists would be pleased to know from Members of the Methodist Historical Society or others more about the Methodist Register Office mentioned in the document ; what were its functions, and when it became extinct. The certificate runs :—

Leonard Watson Hunter, the son of Isaac Hunter, of

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Hibaldstowe, in the County of Lincoln, and of Sarah Hunter, his wife, who was the daughter of William Watson and Mary Watson, was born at Hibaldstowe on the 8th day of Nov., in the year of our Lord, 1824, at whose birth we were present, Ann Watson, William Aston, Apothecary, Brigg.

The first above-mentioned Leonard Watson Hunter was solemnly baptised with water in the name of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost on the 5th day of Dec., in the year of our Lord, 1824, at the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel in Hibaldstowe, by Mr. D. Deakins. We, the parents of the above-named Leonard Watson Hunter, do hereby attest the truth of the above record of the Birth and Baptism of our said son.

ISAAC HUNTER, Father.  
SARAH HUNTER, Mother.

Registered at the the Methodist Register Office, No. 66, Paternoster Row, near St. Paul's Church, London, this 27th day of Dec., in the year of our Lord, 1825. Folio A. 463, No. 3696. —JOHN BROWN, Registrar.

In reply to this enquiry, the Rev. Thos. E. Brighden writes :—

In the "Methodist Recorder" of last week an enquiry was made concerning a certificate of Birth and Baptism, 27th Dec., 1825, in possession of Alderman Tomblason. "Registered at the Methodist Register Office, 66, Paternoster Row." No. 3696.

The Committee of Privileges appointed in 1803 (of ten members named in the "Minutes of Conference,") instituted a "General Methodist Register of Births and Baptisms kept in London under their superintendence and sanction." It is interesting to learn from the certificate described that 3696 entries had been made in this register up to 1825. In 1818 the question had been asked at Conference if any improvements could be made in the "Baptismal Registers of our Connexion," and the Committee of Privileges was asked to adopt some method by which "the Local Registers kept at our Country Chapels may be regularly copied into the books of our London Office so as to be duly preserved and easily referred to." The existing certificate concerning a birth and baptism at Hibaldstowe shows that the Conference direction was carried out. It would be interesting to know to what extent this was done throughout the Wesleyan Methodist Church in this country; how far this was affected, as concerned births, by the Registration Acts of 1836-1874; and if the old registers are still accessible at the Methodist Book Room. Perhaps the Book Steward of to-day can tell us.

The Rev. J. Alfred Sharp writes :—

The Rev. T. E. Brigden asked whether the Book Steward can state where the old Baptismal Registers are which were kept at the London Office, and whether they are still accessible at the Book Room. They certainly are not here, and, from what I can gather, when the Act for Registering Births, Marriages, and Deaths received the Royal assent in 1836 these books were removed to Somerset House. A gentleman with whom I have consulted on this matter states that he has many times had occasion to consult these Registers, and it was through his information that I found where they were deposited.

This last information is of importance, and should be preserved in the *Proceedings* of the W. H. S. Has there ever been any official statement of this in the *Minutes*, or in Connexional Handbooks?

T. E. BRIGDEN.

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## “THE CHRISTIAN’S AMUSEMENT.”

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This article gives interesting information supplementary to that contained in Mr. Roland Austin’s contribution in our last issue, pp. 39-43.

Recently there came to my hand a copy of a Methodist newspaper called *The Christian’s Amusement* bound together with the better known paper *The Weekly History*. The two sets of publications seem to be closely related, for they were printed by the same John Lewis, of Bartholomew Close, London; and, judging by the dated letters found in them the *Christian’s Amusement* seems to have been issued between September 1740 and March, 1741, and the *Weekly History* from April 1741 to November 13, 1742.

As far as I can ascertain, the *Christian’s Amusement* seems to be extremely scarce and very little known. There is no copy in the British Museum nor in the National Library of Wales. Tyerman in his *Life of George Whitefield* (vol. I. p. 471, note) speaks of the *Weekly History* as being the first Methodist newspaper ever published, and he does not seem to know of the existence of a similar periodical bearing an earlier date than April 11th, 1741. Similarly the standard edition of *The Journal of John Wesley*, refers to the *Weekly History* only, for it has a note (vol. II. p. 421) as follows:—

“J. Lewis at this time started the first Methodist newspaper

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ever published, and succeeded in securing Whitefield, Cennick, Harris, and Humphreys as its principal contributors. Its title was *The Weekly History*, or an Account of the Most Remarkable Particulars relating to the Present Progress of the Gospel. London. Printed by J. Lewis. Price 1d. The newspaper was a small folio of 4 pages; the first number was issued April 11th, 1741, and 84 numbers were published. It then passed into another form."

The title page of the *Christian Amusement* reads as follows:—

Number 1.

### THE CHRISTIAN'S AMUSEMENT :

Containing

Letters concerning the Progress of the Gospel both at Home and Abroad etc. Together with an Account of the *Waldenses* and *Albigenses* : People that never fell into the Popish Errors, but retain'd the Truth of the Gospel from the time of the Apostles, under all the Popish Persecutions down to the Reformation.

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Printed by J. Lewis in Bartholomew Close. [Price One Penny.]

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Both the *Christian's Amusement* and the *Weekly History* were issued in weekly parts of four pages each, but the printed column in the former was double, each one measuring  $2\frac{3}{4}$  inches in width, whereas the printed matter of the latter measured  $5\frac{1}{2}$  inches across. Both periodicals are bound together in the volume which I possess, and of the *Christian's Amusement* there are 27 numbers or parts, but none of them are dated.

John Lewis the printer, does not begin to insert dates of publication even in the *Weekly History* until No 15 is reached which is dated *Saturday, July 18th, 1741*. Tyerman probably inferred the date of the first issue of the *Weekly History* by reckoning back fourteen weeks from July 18th, and so arrived at April 11th, 1741. No interval seems to have elapsed between the 27th number of the *Christian's Amusement* and the first number of the *Weekly History*, indeed the contents of both these issues are identical, for the sermon of the Rev. Isaac Chanler of South Carolina on Acts xi, 23, fills both.

What then was the relation between the *Christian's Amusement* and the *Weekly History*? If one is but a continuation

of the other, why alter the name and why change from a double column to a single one? What happened between March 11th, and April 11th, 1741? How came what looks like a *private* enterprise of the printer to be the first *official* organ of Whitefield's Methodist Connexion?

The answer seems to lie in the fact that George Whitefield in that month (March—April 1741) returned from America and published his answer to the Rev J. Wesley's sermon on Free Grace. So evidently our little newspapers have some light to throw on that rupture between Whitefield and Wesley. The Standard Edition of Wesley's *Journal* (vol. II. p. 421) explains that painful conflict and crisis between the two leaders. When Whitefield embraced the Calvinian creed, James Hutton, the Moravian, refused to act as his printer, and John Lewis of Bartholomew Close took his place. Furthermore, it was to foster *Calvinistic* Methodism that J. Lewis, undertook, under the auspices and with the encouragement of George Whitefield, to publish the *Weekly History*.

But how came John Lewis to start publishing the *Christian's Amusement* in 1740. I would welcome any help on this question. Who was John Lewis the printer? Had Whitefield anything to do with the publication of the *Christian's Amusement*? Is it possible that W. Seward, on his return from America, in June, 1740, brought any letters from Whitefield to John Lewis bearing on the matter?

M. H. JONES.

## MORE ANTI-METHODIST PUBLICATIONS.

The Rev. R. Green, in his valuable book on this subject, refers to and numbers several publications, the details of which he copied from other authorities, but had not himself seen. The library of the Conference Office contains some of these, and also others which he does not name at all. Following is a list of the latter, between 1741 and 1800, now in the catalogue. When a new edition of the *Anti-Methodist Publications* is published, these and others must of course be added. The titles are given in a shortened form, to save space:—

*Ridgway, Ed.*—Truth Defended; or, the Awful Sovereignty of God . . . . vindicated, in a letter to the Rev. John Wesley, A.M. London: J. Wilson. 1741.



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Professes to answer that part of Wesley's sermon on Free Grace "wherein he makes too bold with the awful and reverend name of the great and holy God and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord."

*Dockwray, Thos.*—The Operations of the Holy Spirit Imperceptible . . . . . a Sermon preached at St. Nicholas Church in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, on Whitsunday, May 23, 1743 . . . . . Published at the Request of the Magistrates. Newcastle : Printed by John White . . . . .

Dedicated to the Mayor and Aldermen (named). The first paragraph is aimed at the Methodists directly, and the rest of the sermon professes to combat their teaching concerning the guidance of the Spirit.

*Howdell, W., M.A.*—Religion Productive of Joy, and Consistent with Politeness : A Sermon Preached at the Abbey Church at Bath, April 16, 1744. . . . . York : Printed by Cæsar Ward . . . . . 1744.

The titlepage states that it was "published in order to wipe off the aspersions that have been cast upon it by the Methodists."

*Anon* ["*Impartial Hand*"].—An Essay, containing Evident Proofs against the Methodists, from Certain of their Secret Articles and Practices, that their Religion is an Artful Introduction to Popery, and directly in Support of It . . . . with Remarks on the Famous Sermon at Oxford. London : Printed for the Author . . . . n.d. [probably 1745 or 1746].

Green certainly names what is probably this pamphlet (see No. 194), but only vaguely and from Decanver's list. The "famous sermon" was of course that on "Scriptural Christianity" (see *Wes. Bibliog.* No 55), of which the C.O. Library contains the whole of the eds. mentioned by Green. Notable as being earlier than Lavington's book on the same lines.

*Cudworth, W.*—A Preservative in Perilous Times : In Three Letters. . . . [II. and III. to Wesley]. London : G. Keith. . . n.d.

Letter II. is against Wesley's *Preservative against Unsettled Notions*, published in 1758; and Letter III. is "occasioned by [Wesley's] letter of Remarks on Theron and Aspasia, published in the above-mentioned *Preservative*."

*Kershaw, J.*—A letter to the Author of a Pamphlet entitled "A Few Thoughts and Matters of Fact concerning Methodism." By James Kershaw, author of the "Appeal to the Public." . . . Newcastle-upon-Tyne : J. White and T. Saint. 1767.

This is an answer to No. 376 (*A.M. Publs.*)

*Kershaw, J.*—A Second Letter to the Author, &c. ; being a Reply to the Answer of a Late Pamphlet of Mr. Wesley against Mr. Erskine . . . Newcastle-upon-Tyne : J. White and T. Saint. 1767.

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This appears to be another answer to the same pamphlet. Both the above tracts are named in Osborn's *Bibliography*.

*Anon.*—Some Remarks on a Pamphlet intituled "A Letter to a Person Lately Joined with the People called Quakers in Answer to a Letter wrote by Him." In a letter from a Friend in the Country to another in Bristol. London: Reprinted by Samuel Clark. 1761.

This is an answer to "Wesley's Letter to a Quaker" (Green's *Wesley Bibliog.* No. 108) and the 1st ed. was probably issued in 1748 It is, of course, written from the Quaker standpoint.

*Anon.*—Diotrephes and Stentor: A New Farce acted near Moorfields . . . London: 1765.

A satire on the ordinations performed by the Greek bishop Erasmus, in the form of a dialogue, Diotrephes being Wesley, and Stentor one of his helpers. Rather amusing.

A. WALLINGTON.

[To be Continued.]

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## WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY: ANNUAL MEETING.

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The Annual Meeting of the Members was held in the Central Buildings, Westminster, on Friday, July 20th. The number of members present was small. Mr. George Stampe was voted to the chair. The Treasurer's statement showed a balance in hand of £11 13s. 1d., whilst the sum of £11 9s. 1d., is in the hands of the Secretary, the Rev. John W. Crake.

It was decided that if Mr. Brigden can obtain an eighteenth century picture of Blundell School, Tiverton, it shall appear in the *Proceedings* as an illustration in connection with his articles on Samuel Wesley, Junr.

A hearty vote of thanks was presented to the Officers and Editorial Council for their past services, and they were cordially re-appointed. It was agreed that letters of sympathy and affection should be sent by the Minute Secretary to Dr. Simon and Mr. Crake, who were not able to attend the meeting. J.C.N.

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Through the courtesy of the Secretary of the Westminster Hospital, the Rev. Thos. E. Brigden has obtained much interesting and hitherto unpublished matter concerning Samuel Wesley, junr. In consequence his second article on the oldest of the Wesley sons is deferred to our next issue.

Dr. Simon has kindly consented to write an article on the Conventicle Act and its bearing upon the Wesleys and early Methodism, a subject of great historical importance.