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Proceedings OF THE Wesley Historical Society

Editor : REV. WESLEY F. SWIFT

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JOHN WESLEY'S HUGUENOT CHAPELS

IN the *Proceedings of the Huguenot Society of London*, volume i (1885), there is an article entitled "Les Eglises Françaises de Londres Après la Revocation", by M. le Laron Fernand de Schickler, Président de la Société de l'histoire du Protestantisme Français. This article is a well-informed survey of the Huguenot churches in London during the first half of the eighteenth century, and is of considerable value to all who are interested in Wesley's London chapels. It will be recalled that both his West Street and Spitalfields chapels were formerly Huguenot places of worship. Although West Street did not pass directly from the Huguenots to Wesley (it was sold in the first place to the vestry of St. Clement Danes, from whom Wesley leased it), the relationship between the Huguenot churches in general and the Church of England at that time helps us to understand why Wesley found these churches much to his liking, and also sheds light upon Wesley's statement that he consulted the Bishops before he took them over. In a letter dated 2nd June 1789¹ he mentions the appropriation of West Street and Spitalfields, each of which he refers to as a "French Church", and adds:

. . . and no one in England ever thought or called it leaving the Church. It was never esteemed so by Archbishop Potter, with whom I had the happiness of conversing freely; nor by Archbishop Secker, who was thoroughly acquainted with every step we took; as was likewise Dr. Gibson, then Bishop of London; and that great man Bishop Lowth. Nor did any of these four venerable men ever blame me for it in all the conversations I had with them.

As soon as we realize the position of these French churches, we can see why "no one in England ever thought or called it leaving the Church". As the article referred to points out, these churches were by this time completely under the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London. This was true of even the leading French church in London:

Cette grande Eglise de la Savoie . . . formait la tête et le centre des communautés Françaises de rite anglican, était elle-même sans résistance devant la volonté épiscopale.

¹ *Letters*, viii, p. 141.

So much so that the English Bishops were able to override any Huguenot nomination and instal their own nominee:

Pourvue en 1722 par les Lords Grands Commissaires du droit de nommer les Catéchistes, la Compagnie s'apprêtait à la mort de Claris . . . à le remplacer dans ce poste aux Grecs et à St. Martin Orgars (1737) quand il lui fut communiqué que Myl. Arch. de Canterbury et Myl. Ev. de Londres avaient déjà nommé, sans la consulter, Stehelin et Coudère . . .

The supremacy of the English Church was not the only factor, for, in addition, the Anglican rite had largely supplanted whatever forms the Huguenots had themselves been accustomed to use. They were, of course, Presbyterians, who had fled from the Continent at the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. By the time Wesley took over the two French chapels, the Book of Common Prayer was largely used and sermons were preached in English:

Depuis longtemps le rite anglican les avait presque toutes conquises: les pasteurs manquaient pour remplir les vides et les fils des ministres réformés, suivant le courant général, occupaient des cures et prêchaient en anglais au sein de l'Eglise nationale.

As these buildings were also, presumably, consecrated churches, Wesley had no hesitation in using them for the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. There is no evidence that the Sacrament was celebrated in the unconsecrated Foundery during its early years as a Methodist preaching-house; it was so used later.

I have also tried to trace the name or the family of Peter Fenovillet, the donor of the Communion Plate—two chalices and one flagon²—but among the many names and family lists still preserved, I have failed to find anything to correspond. West Street chapel is frequently referred to, either by that name or by its earlier names of "La Tremblade" or "La Pyramide".

JOHN C. BOWMER.

London for the Literary Pilgrim, by William Kent (Rockliff Publishing Corporation, pp. x. 237, 21s.), will be a source of endless pleasure both to those who know their London well and to those who want to know it better. It is a book for the book-lover, who will find it an invaluable guide to the literary shrines of London as well as a repository of much curious and out-of-the-way information.

Inevitably, one turns at once to the page devoted to the sites associated with John Wesley and one is not disappointed. There are a dozen such references, ranging from Wesley's Chapel to Susanna Wesley's birthplace and portraits in the National Portrait Gallery. In connexion with the latter it might have been noted that the "Romney" is a replica and not the original.

It is good to know that the literary work of the Wesleys has achieved such recognition as is here accorded, and we may hope that those who make literary pilgrimages in London will thereby be induced to include the Wesley shrines in their itinerary. We have noted one or two inaccuracies, but they are slight and excusable in comparison with the scope of the work, which is delightfully illustrated.

² See *Proceedings*, xvi, p. 138.

AN UNPUBLISHED WESLEY LETTER

THE letter printed below is in the possession of Miss E. M. Crowle of Plymouth, and the transcript has come to us through the kindness of the Rev. E. T. Selby, the Warden of the New Room, Bristol. The letter came to Miss Crowle from her father, but she does not know its previous history. It fits in with the correspondence from Wesley to Captain Williams given in the Standard edition of the *Letters*. The following are the references, which Mr. Selby has kindly collated:

- Vol. iii, p. 205. Letter from London, dated 16th November 1756.
Vol. vi, p. 112. Letter from Bristol, dated 13th September 1774, referring to his recent preaching at Gwennap.
,, p. 332. Letter from London, dated 30th December 1778, acknowledging verses for publication.
Vol. vii, p. 135. In a letter to Francis Wolfe, Wesley sends his programme for his Cornish journey and asks that the preachers and Captain Williams may be informed.
,, p. 168. In a letter to Joseph Taylor, Wesley adds a PS., with a message for Captain Williams.
,, p. 195. Letter from London, dated 9th November 1783, with a reference to the *Arminian Magazine* and to "lines on Slavery".
,, p. 201. Letter from London, dated 10th December 1783, acknowledging news of the work in Cornwall, with editorial note.
,, p. 257. Letter from London, dated 15th February 1785. Williams has gone to Plymouth Dock, which links this letter with the unpublished letter.

Mr. Selby also points out the changes in the Captain's address. In 1756 he is at Camborne. The 1778 letter, like the unpublished one of 1781, is addressed to Crarick, near Redruth. The two in 1783 are addressed to Poldice, near Truro. The last presumably went to Plymouth Dock. Here is the letter which is now printed for the first time.

To
Capt Rich'd Williams,
at Crarick, near Redruth,
Cornwall.

Bristol
Oct. 7. 1781.

My Dear Brother,

What Hugh Saunderson writes concerning the Work of God at Plymouth Dock is no more than the truth. There has been a very uncommon awakening there, and I am in great hopes it will continue.

Some mischief maker or other has been endeavouring to infuse prejudice into Sir Francis Basset. If it be possible you should find some person who has influence with him, to talk with him, & give him better information. In the meantime it should be a matter of much prayer. And then I should not doubt but God would touch his heart.

I trust your little boy will be a comfort to you. You will do what you can with regard to the History of the Church.

I am, Yr affectionate Brother,

J. WESLEY.

The Rev. Dr. H. Miles Brown, whose researches into early Cornish Methodism have recently enriched the *Proceedings*, has given me the following important information, elucidatory of the above letter.

Crarick, near Redruth, is Carharrack, in the parishes of St. Day and Gwennap. It was a centre of the Redruth mining area in the eighteenth century. Poldice was a great mine in Gwennap parish.¹ In 1758 it was 106 fathoms deep, and had yielded £500,000 worth of tin within the memory of man. At one time 1,200 people were employed; at a later stage the mine was worked in conjunction with the Wheal Unity. An old Cornish proverb runs: "In Poldice men are like mice." There were developments up to 1893, but at the present day the mine is derelict. In perambulations over the area, Dr. Brown has tried to visualize the humming activity of an earlier age, but the ruinous conditions make it difficult to do so. He imagines that Richard Williams was a mine captain connected with Carharrack and Poldice mines, which at times were run in conjunction.

Francis Basset, Lord de Dunstanville (accent on *stan*, please, says Dr. Brown), was the biggest of the "bigwigs" of the time. He was created Baronet, 24th November 1779; Baron de Dunstanville of Tehidy (Illogan) in 1796; Baron Basset of Skatton, 30th October 1797. He was born 9th August 1757, the son of Francis Basset, and died in London 5th February 1835.² When the French threatened to invade the country in 1779 Francis Basset called up an army from the mines of Cornwall and marched them to Plymouth.³ An earlier Mr. Basset of Tehidy would have been arrested as a Jacobite had he not taken flight in time.⁴

Lord de Dunstanville would probably own all the local mineral rights. His attitude to the Methodists would be important and would govern such matters as granting land for chapels. It may be inferred from the letter that he was being influenced against the Methodists by false or insufficient information about them. His helpfulness to Methodists at a later stage is possibly suggested in a report made by the Rector of Illogan to his Bishop in 1812 that there were in his parish "two Schools with Methodistical Teachers and both in a way endowed by Lord de Dunstanville though I believe he is ignorant of their being Methodists".⁵

Tehidy long ago ceased to be the home of the Dunstanville family and is now the County Sanatorium after complete rebuilding.

¹ Collins, *Observations on the West of England mining region* (1912), p. 555.

² *Bibliotheca Cornubiensis*, i, p. 112.

³ R. Polwhele, *History of Cornwall* (London, 1816), iii, p. 102.

⁴ *Cornish Worthies*, i, p. 118.

⁵ Henderson MSS. at Truro, x.

Dr. Brown says he considers 1780 onwards to be the time at which West Country Methodism entered upon its spectacular advance, though he did not know that the society at Plymouth Dock (now Devonport) shared so definitely in the activity of the time.

Captain Richard Williams published in 1794 as an octavo pamphlet an address to the Methodists of Cornwall, with letters to the Rev. Joseph Benson and the Rev. William Thompson respectively.⁶ Dr. George Smith mentions this pamphlet⁷ in his account of disputes taking place at the time in Bristol. He describes the writer as

an able and very energetic local preacher of Cornwall, who, in language forcible, although not very elegant or accurate, sets forth the impolicy and impropriety of these violent contentions about ordinances.

Still following Dr. Brown's guidance, I find in the *Arminian Magazine* for 1782⁸ a note written by Richard Williams from Gwennap about the notable deaths of two sinners. Also, in Smith's *History* already quoted, there is an Appendix in which it is recorded that "At a Meeting of the Delegates, and others, from the Methodist Societies in the County of Cornwall, held at Redruth June 14th, 1791, it was agreed that an Amendment of our Discipline is Necessary".⁹ The resolutions passed may be described as radical. Richard Williams was one of the signatories.

It seems to me fairly safe to conclude that Hugh Saunderson is the early Methodist preacher of whom I wrote at length in the *Methodist Recorder* Winter Number for 1906¹⁰ and in an earlier volume of the *Proceedings*.¹¹ He "desisted from travelling in 1777" but there is no ground for thinking that this was due to misconduct. The last reference to him I have been able to find is the entry in Wesley's *Journal*, 15th August 1782:

. . . at Exeter. Here poor Hugh Saunderson has pitched his standard and declared open war. Part of the Society have joined him; the rest go on their way quietly to make their calling and election sure.

This record is in harmony with his interest in evangelistic enterprise in the same county a few months earlier.

Wesley expected his supporters to promote the sale of his publications. The *History* here referred to is the first volume, published in 1781, of *A Concise Ecclesiastical History, from the Birth of Christ to the Beginning of the present Century*. In Four Volumes. Vol. I. London: Printed by J. Paramore at the Foundry, Moorfields; and sold at the New Chapel in the City-Road; and at the Rev. Mr. Wesley's Preaching-Houses in Town and Country.¹²

F. F. BRETHERTON.

⁶ *Bibliotheca Cornubiensis*, ii, p. 884.

⁷ Smith, *History of Wesleyan Methodism*, ii, p. 115.

⁸ *op. cit.*, 1782, pp. 581-2.

⁹ *op. cit.*, ii, p. 702.

¹⁰ *op. cit.*, pp. 104-110.

¹¹ *Proceedings*, xiii, pp. 42-44.

¹² Richard Green, *Wesley Bibliography*, sect. 355.

PREACHING IN A STORM

THE early Methodist preachers had not only to contend with the taunts and blows of unfriendly hearers, but occasionally found their greatest enemy to be the elements. Especially was this so for the many adventurers who each year from 1747 braved the Irish Sea to fan the spiritual flames in Dublin and elsewhere until the day should come when Ireland would produce evangelists of her own, repaying her debt with preachers of such calibre as Adam Clarke and Henry Moore. The Irish Sea still has its angry moments which mean discomfort and delay even in these proud days of steam and oil and electricity. We of this twentieth century can hardly imagine what high adventure was involved in those early days of Methodism, when the packet-boats to Ireland were sometimes delayed for days because of adverse winds, and even then occasionally took two or three days in crossing.

Among the saga of those days is a story which is little known by Methodists to-day. It concerns the little group of preachers who were sent over to Ireland by the Methodist Conference of 1760—Thomas Brisco, Robert Roberts, Thomas Tobias, Lawrence Coughlan and William Thompson. The first two went separately, and “had an exceeding fine Passage of about 23 Hours long”. The other three came by a later boat, and their adventures are recorded in a letter from Tobias to John Wesley:

October 3, 1760.

Reverend dear Sir,

Through much difficulty we reached the Irish shore. We took ship at Liverpool, on Sunday Sept. 14, 1760, about one o'clock, and by seven on Monday morning, we were almost in sight of Dublin; when we met with contrary winds, which drove us back again to Holyhead. We got on shore, and were directed to your old lodging,¹ where we were very well entertained; a few of the neighbours joined in prayer with us the same night. Brother Coughlan preached the next morning. About one we were on board, weighed anchor, and put to sea; we had a fair wind till five, when it began to rise between six and seven, so that we were obliged to reef our sails. At seven, the sea rolled over our deck; sometimes half mast high: we looked every moment to be swallowed up. We had between twenty and thirty passengers on board, beside soldiers. Oh! the dismal groans and cries we had on every side: enough to pierce the most obdurate heart! We betook ourselves to prayer; all were now willing to join with us. Those who made a mock at it the day before, cried, For God's sake let us come amongst you, and do pray for us. Soon after our first prayer, Mr. Coughlan and Thompson were taken ill, so that they could not give a word of exhortation to the people, who were now willing to hear.² God so strengthened me both in

¹ Wesley had already made eight visits to Ireland, so that he knew the ropes. He had gone via Holyhead five times, being delayed there for over a week in 1748, and had returned by that route thrice.

² The two victims of sea-sickness, Coughlan and Thompson, were both natives of Ireland, and would have had at least some previous experience of the crossing. For Tobias it was the first attempt, however, and his constitution seems to have stood up to the storm in a remarkable way.

body and mind, that I was enabled to speak to them for four hours successively; and I hope to some purpose: for I believe some will not forget it while they live.

All this while, the sailors were obliged to quit the deck, and let the ship drive where providence would guide her. If we lived, the Captain expected we should be in the North of Ireland; but about two o'clock in the morning we found ourselves surprisingly rolling into the Bay of Dublin; where the Captain acknowledged, "Surely the Lord hath stood at the helm this night, and miraculously brought us to this place." At three, we were at anchor, and we had the happiness of dismissing the people, with a warm exhortation to repentance. They received it gladly; and bid us God speed, in the name of the Lord.

Blessed be God, we are in good health. God hath been pleased in some measure to own us, since we came into the Round. Some have joined the Societies, and we hear others have found the Lord. Yet the work is not so deep in Ireland as we could wish. Our Round is hard and fatiguing; but I hope God will give strength proportioned to our day. Pray, dear Sir, for your loving Son in the Gospel.

THOMAS TOBIAS.³

Further light on this epic story, as well as a little more detail about the "hard and fatiguing" Round—the Athlone Round—are provided in a letter from Thomas Brisco to Charles Wesley preserved at the Methodist Book Room, endorsed by Wesley "Nov. 17, 1760. Brisco of Tobias preaching in the Storm." Unlike the published letter above, it has not passed through the editing hands of John Wesley, and it seems better to give it just as it stands, spelling errors, piety, postscript and all. Like most of the writings of these early Methodist adventurers, it is straightforward and matter of fact, with no literary flourishes, for all such dangers and hardships were accepted as in the ordinary course of a preacher's duties, with little self-consciousness or realization that many of the preaching followers of Wesley were also valiant followers in the tradition of St. Paul, albeit without his University background:

Revd. and dear Sir,

Mr. Roberts and I got safe into Ireland in about a Fortnight after we left Bristol. We had an exceeding fine Passage of about 23 Hours long. Bro. Tobias, Coughlan and Tompson were a little after us, and had A grater tryal of their Faith, for to all outward appearance they were as near being cast away as ever Men could be. The Storm con[t]inued all Night. The Sailors thought the Ship could not keep above Watter (tho ye Sails were lower'd and bound fast to the Yards), the[y] lashed the Helm and quit the Deck. The Captain desir'd they Preachers to go to prayer for in all probability they were just going into Eternity. Some in the Ship that had behav'd themselves in a very wicked contemptuous manner the Day before, now seem'd to be exceedingly humbled and earnestly desir'd that they might join in prayer with them. The Preachers cryed mightily to God alternatly. And poor dear Brother Tobias began to

³ *Arminian Magazine*, 1780, pp. 391-3.

exhort, and continued his exhortation about three hours. He assur'd them he had no fear of Death himself, that he could rejoice that he was going to Paradise, but that he was troubled on their account in that he was afraid that some of them were not prepar'd for their great change. All this time the Ship was driving and they expecting to be wret sometimes on the Isle of Man and sometimes on some part of the North of Irland. Towards Morning one of the Sailors got upon Deck to look out and cryed, A Light, upon which the Captain started up expecting as they were so near Land she should soon be steav'd to peices, on some of the Rocks, when to his great surprise he found that the Ship was going as regularly into Dublin Bay, as though they had ever so even A Gail of Wind, and had all been on Deck working the Vessel: which caused him to cry out, Truly God hath been at the Helm this Night.

Dear Sir, I should have wrote to you sooner, but that I was striving to get a Frank; but not being able to get one as yet I had patience to forbear writing no longer. Bror. Roberts, Tobias, and I are in one Round. It takes us Six Weeks to go it; in that time we have 242 Miles to Ride. The Lord hath bless'd me in my own Soul and in preaching since I have been in this Kingdom. The second Sermon I preach'd in the Round not only many were comforted but one was clearly Justified. I have also the sattisfaction to find many that were convinc'd when I was in Ireland last; who have follow'd on to know the Lord ever since. Glory be to my God that he gives me some little encouragement in the midst of my tryals. The Work of the Lord is on the reviving hand in this Round, which has been sadly neglected. The People depend upon us, and are not dissappointed, so that our Congregations increase exceedingly. I hope Sir that you will have remembrance of me in your prayers. You know that I am one that at times am greatly tried. I can truly say that I love you, think on you and pray for you. These Lines I trust will find you in a better state of health than when I was in Bristol. I cannot help desiring that the Lord would spear [spare] you longer, on our account and his Churches. Be pleas'd to give my love and Service to Mrs. Wesley. Mr. Roberts joins me in the Same. I cannot help reminding you of your acknowledgmet and Promise when I parted with you, That you was A Letter in my Debt and would write me a long one next. I shall be impatient till it comes. I am, Revd. and dear Sir,

Your affectionate Son and Servant,

THOS. BRISCO.

Athlone Nov. 17, 1760.

Mr. Roberts joins me in giving my love and searvice to Mr. Hooper, who entertaind us so well and behav'd so affectionatly to us all the time we were in Bristol. Be pleas'd to direct to Mr. Matthew Moores Mercht. in Tullamore.

Neither Brisco nor Tobias have left much of a mark upon Methodist history. Yet like many of their fellows they were of the stuff from which heroes are made, as is seen clearly above in the case of Thomas Tobias, the man whose message neither the fury of storm nor the fear of death could quench. All honour to him and his comrades!

FRANK BAKER.

THE
SUNDAY SERVICE

Wm OF THE *Walters's*
METHODISTS *Book*

IN
NORTH AMERICA.

With other OCCASIONAL SERVICES.



LONDON:

Printed in the Year MDCCLXXXIV.

TITLE-PAGE of
The Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America.
First Edition, 1784.

(Photostat by courtesy of the Librarian of the Rose Memorial Library, Drew University, U.S.A.)

METHODISM AND THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER

ILLUSTRATIONS: (1) Facsimile of the title-page of the first edition (1784) of *The Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America*. It bears the signature of William Watters, who was the first native itinerant Methodist preacher in America. (2) Facsimile of the first page of "the Ordinal" in *The Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America*.

The only known copy of this first edition is in the Library of Drew University, New Jersey, U.S.A., and I am grateful to the Librarian for his great courtesy in sending me, at very short notice and as a gift to our Society, the photostats which are now reproduced.—W.F.S.

THIS month of June 1949 sees the celebration throughout the Anglican communion of the quater-centenary of the First Prayer Book of Edward VI, which was ordered to come into compulsory use on Whit-Sunday, 1549. It is fitting that this event should not pass unnoticed in our *Proceedings*, for Methodism, alone amongst the Nonconformist Churches, has throughout its history made extensive use of the Book of Common Prayer, and our debt to it is beyond measure.

It is not easy to keep an article of this kind within strictly historical bounds, but my main purpose is to marshal the facts—most of them familiar—and allow the reader to draw such conclusions as he will, according to his own ecclesiastical and liturgical predilections.

We begin with John Wesley's revision of the Prayer Book in 1784. The Conference of that year, it will be remembered, appointed Thomas Coke, Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey to labour in America, and on 2nd September 1784 Wesley ordained Coke as superintendent, and Whatcoat and Vasey (who had been ordained deacons the day before) elders or presbyters. On 18th September the three men sailed for America, and amongst the documents they took with them was a letter signed by Wesley and addressed to "Dr. Coke, Mr. Asbury, and our Brethren in North America".¹ The letter, dated 10th September, contained a paragraph pertinent to our present purpose:

And I have prepared a Liturgy little differing from that of the Church of England . . . which I advise all the travelling preachers to use on the Lord's Day in all the congregations, reading the Litany only on Wednesdays and Fridays and praying extempore on all other days. I also advise the elders to administer the Supper of the Lord on every Lord's Day.

This "Liturgy" was *The Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America*, the title-page of which appears as one of our illustrations. The Preface, dated 9th September but not prefixed to the first edition (which was taken across the Atlantic in loose sheets straight from the press by Dr. Coke and his companions), expresses in a

¹ Wesley's *Letters*, vii, p. 239.

single sentence Wesley's high regard for the Book of Common Prayer:

I believe there is no Liturgy in the World, either in ancient or modern language, which breathes more of a solid, scriptural, rational Piety, than the Common Prayer of the Church of England.

and then goes on to state that "little alteration is made in the following edition of it". Richard Green rightly comments that the differences between the *Sunday Service* and the Book of Common Prayer are in reality "considerable", and they were examined in detail by the Rev. Frederick Hunter, M.A., B.D., in an important article entitled "Sources of Wesley's Revision of the Prayer Book in 1784-8",² to which we refer our readers. This volume is the progenitor of the many editions which came to be popularly styled "Wesley's Abridgement". Abridgement it certainly is, but we feel that Mr. Hunter is on safe ground in preferring the word "revision".

The *Sunday Service* which Dr. Coke took across the Atlantic omitted, of course, the prayers for the King and for the Royal Family, and also the relevant petitions in the Litany, whilst the Prayer for the Church Militant read: "We beseech Thee to save and defend all Christian Governors; and especially Thy servants the Rulers of these United States; that under them we may be godly and quietly governed."

In 1786 an edition with the Royal Prayers restored appeared with the title *The Sunday Service of the Methodists in His Majesty's Dominions*, for Methodism was already established in Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and Antigua, and in the following year St. Christopher and St. Vincent were to appear on the Stations. In 1786, also, an edition appeared with the title *The Sunday Service of the Methodists; with other Occasional Services*, and under this name it continued through the greater part of the nineteenth century. Green noted editions up to 1817,³ and several later editions have been seen by the Rev. Frank Baker, the latest noted being 1878. Green, however, says "it is so continued at the present time", i.e. 1896.

Returning to the first (American) edition of the *Sunday Service*, it is necessary to add that Green notes a fourth edition in 1790. This would appear to be the last edition for the United States to be printed in England, and thereafter the American Conference pursued its own liturgical way. Its later history has been amply chronicled in America and does not concern us here.⁴

To leave it there, however, is to ignore the important fact that in those few short years the *Sunday Service* had left an indelible and permanent mark upon the constitution and the worship of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The famous "Christmas Conference"

² *Proceedings*, xxiii, pp. 123-33.

³ *Wesley Bibliography*, sects. 376, 390; *Proceedings*, iii, p. 130; see also appendix to second ed. of *Bibliography*.

⁴ See *Rites and Ritual of Episcopal Methodism*, by Nolan B. Harmon.

held at Baltimore in 1784 formally adopted the Twenty-four Articles of Religion, which Wesley had formulated from the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England,⁵ and also adopted the *Sunday Service* as its liturgy and its guiding symbol. The official record reads:

Question 3: As the ecclesiastical, as well as civil, forces of these United States have passed through a very considerable change by the Revolution, what plan of church government shall we pursue?

Answer: We will form ourselves into an episcopal church under the direction of superintendents, elders, deacons, and helpers, according to the Forms of Ordination annexed to our liturgy and the form of Discipline set forth in these Minutes.⁶

Richard Whatcoat has recorded the same decisions in his memoirs:

On the 24th we rode to Baltimore; at ten o'clock we began our Conference, in which we agreed to form a Methodist Episcopal Church, *in which the Liturgy* (as presented by Mr. John Wesley) *should be read*, and the sacraments administered by a superintendent, elders, and deacons, who shall be ordained, by a presbytery, using the Episcopal form, as prescribed by the Rev. Mr. John Wesley's prayer book.⁷ [The italics are Whatcoat's own.]

The "forms of ordination" were, of course, "The Form and Manner of Making and Ordaining of Superintendents, Elders, and Deacons", the first page of which is reproduced as one of our illustrations. As Dr. Nolan points out,⁸ these forms "embodied principles and procedures which had been in the very lifestream of the English Church", so that there came to American Methodism at its origin

an actual order of procedure by which its ministry itself was constituted, by which it was to continue to be constituted in future. It was not altogether a new church which in 1784 came into being. It was a church which . . . was careful to stay within the Christian tradition and to conform to the English Rite. . . . Methodism too has its "succession". . . . [*The Sunday Service*] transmitted into the life of the church the ethos and influence of an age-old church.

Another American writer, Dr. W. W. Sweet, comments on the curious fact that Wesley did not add to the Occasional Offices a form of service for receiving new members into the societies. Dr. Sweet suggests that Wesley assumed that American Methodists "would continue to have some kind of relationship to the American Episcopal Church and would have their formal church membership within that body".⁹ That, however, was not to be, and could

⁵ Wesley's Articles of Religion numbered twenty-five, but the Baltimore Conference naturally substituted an Article "Of the Rulers of the United States of America" for Wesley's Article XXIII, "Of the Rulers of the British Dominions".

⁶ Nolan B. Harmon, *The Organization of the Methodist Church*, pp. 16-17.

⁷ Quoted in W. W. Sweet's *Religion on the American Frontier, 1783-1840: The Methodists*, pp. 20-21.

⁸ *op. cit.*, pp. 17-18.

⁹ In *Methodism*, p. 49, a composite volume ed. by William K. Anderson

Wesley have foreseen that within a year of his death the door was to be effectually closed upon any union between the Methodists and the American Episcopal Church he might have repaired his omission to provide such a form of service.

We now turn from the American to the English edition of the *Sunday Service*, first published in 1786. At the Conference of 1788 the question was asked: "What further directions may be given concerning the Prayers of the Church of England?" and the answer was recorded:

The Assistants shall have a discretionary power to read the Prayer-Book in the preaching-houses on Sunday mornings, where they think it expedient, if the generality of the Society acquiesce with it: on condition that Divine service never be performed in the Church-hours on the Sundays when the sacrament is administered in the parish-church where the preaching-house is situated, and the people be strenuously exhorted to attend the sacrament in the parish-church on those Sundays.¹⁰

Such was the position during the closing years of Wesley's life. The disputes which followed his death, however, were largely concerned with the question of the administration of the sacraments in Methodist chapels, and a solution was found, as is well known, in the Plan of Pacification which was agreed upon at the Manchester Conference of 1795. Articles 9 and 10 of the Plan bear upon our present theme:

9. The Lord's Supper shall always be administered in England on the Lord's Day according to the form of the Established Church; but the person who administers shall have liberty to give out hymns, to use exhortations, and extemporary prayer.

10. Wherever Divine Service is performed in England on the Lord's Day in church-hours, the officiating Preacher shall read either the service of the Church, our venerable Father's Abridgement, or, at least, the Lessons appointed by the Calendar. But we recommend either the full Service or the Abridgement.¹¹

We may note in passing that the liberty given to the officiating minister to give out hymns and to use extempore prayer in the Communion service dates from 1795. It has been frequently re-affirmed by the Conference, and is the subject of one of the Rubrics prefixed to our present Communion Office. It marks an important departure from the usage of the Book of Common Prayer.

The regulation of 1795 was re-affirmed in 1815, with the following addition:

With a view to the full execution of these rules, and in order to meet the case of those of our Societies, at home and abroad, who, in accordance with the recommendation of the Conference, make use of Mr. Wesley's Abridgement of the Liturgy, our Book-Committee shall, without loss of time, publish and advertise a new edition of the said Abridgement, both in the duodecimo size for individual accommodation, and in the quarto size to be used in the pulpits.¹²

¹⁰ *Minutes*, 1862 ed., vol. i, p. 213.

¹¹ *ibid.*, vol. i, p. 693.

¹² *ibid.*, vol. iv, p. 122.

In 1840 the superintendents were required, without delay, to see that every chapel in their respective circuits was supplied with at least Mr. Wesley's Abridgement in order that the regulations of the Plan of Pacification might be enforced throughout the Connexion, and, apparently for the first time, the Sacrament of Baptism was required to be administered in liturgical form.¹³ It was at this same Conference of 1840, held at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, that some local laymen requested that the reading of Morning Prayer in the Conference chapel on the morning of the Conference Sunday should be set aside. In the debate which ensued, complaints were made that laymen read the prayers. On the motion of Dr. Bunting, however, it was "resolved unanimously" (to quote the official record) "that the Morning Service be read in the Chapel in which the Conference is assembled, at least when the Official Sermons of the President and the Ex-President are delivered", but Joseph Fowler's private recollection of the affair was that, so far from the vote being unanimous, "several were neutral".¹⁴ The custom of reading Morning Prayer at the official Conference service has been maintained continuously, we believe, in both Wesleyan and post-Union Methodism.

In 1864 the burial of the dead was added to the two sacraments as requiring the use of liturgical forms, and, in deference to the spirit of the times (as we shall later see), the minimum requirement for morning service in church hours was reduced to "the reading of the Psalms in connection with the Morning Lessons".¹⁵ The regulations in this final form remained operative in Wesleyan Methodism (in theory, at any rate) until the close of the century.

Such, briefly, is the history of Wesleyan Methodist legislation on this matter. But legislation is one thing, life and practice another. We must now assess the extent to which the rules gained the assent of nineteenth-century Methodism.

First, we must record the well-known fact that Wesleyan Methodism remained faithful to the Order for the Administration of Holy Communion as found in the 1662 Prayer Book, with only slight modifications, and has carried this tradition into the present Church. In this service, central in the life of the Church, we still hear, as generations of our fathers heard, the "incomparable English Liturgy". We are not unmindful of that other tradition in modern Methodism, the tradition that finds expression in free, spontaneous, non-liturgical worship in Holy Communion as elsewhere. We respect that tradition, for we can no longer say with Wesley that a Methodist service "presupposes public prayer. . . . If it were designed to be instead of the Church service it would be essentially defective."¹⁶ But the present celebration reminds us

¹³ *Minutes*, 1862 ed., vol. ix, p. 94.

¹⁴ *ibid.*, vol. ix, p. 105; Gregory, *Sidelights on the Conflicts of Methodism*, p. 289.

¹⁵ *Minutes*, vol. xvii, p. 622.

¹⁶ *Large Minutes*, 1789, Q. 45.

that in the liturgical Communion Office we have preserved a link with the Church from which we came.

Second, we note that on the mission field "Wesley's Abridgement" has achieved its greatest success, for Morning Prayer has been regularly used in our overseas mission churches from *The Sunday Service of the Methodists in His Majesty's Dominions* until today. Native congregations struggle valiantly with the *Te Deum* and the *Venite*, and the popularity of the liturgical service is beyond question. There are some cogent reasons to account for this, which we have no space here to discuss.

Third, to what extent has Morning Prayer been used in British Methodism? The evidence, unfortunately, is sparse and inconclusive. Richard Watson, writing in 1831, said that the use of Morning Prayer was increasing so rapidly that "in a few years it will become the general mode of the forenoon service in all the large Chapels".¹⁷ That prophecy was never fulfilled. Robert Newton, in 1812, found the Prayer Book service in general use in London,¹⁸ and there is evidence that as late as 1874 it was used in most of the London chapels.¹⁹ The biographies of nineteenth-century preachers hint at its use in some provincial centres. But for the most part the regulation was honoured more in the breach than in the observance. Methodism seems never to have taken kindly to the use of liturgical forms for ordinary services. As the century progressed the use of Morning Prayer gradually declined, though here and there it probably received an impetus with the building of neo-Gothic chapels. At Brunswick chapel, Portwood, Stockport, for example, Morning Prayer was used at its opening in 1849 and for forty years afterwards. When it was discontinued in 1889 the reasons given were: the change in the class of people resident in the district, the difficulty of getting local preachers to read the service, and the general dislike of it shown by the congregation. And yet many families left when the change was made!²⁰ In present-day Methodism there are less than forty churches where Morning Prayer is regularly used, and nearly half of them are in London.

It is a curious fact, moreover, that there has always been a preference for the Book of Common Prayer as against "Wesley's Abridgement". This may be due in part to the fact that in the early years the Methodists frequently attended the services of the Church of England, as they did in Manchester, for example, when Jabez Bunting was a boy. Newton preferred the Prayer Book to the "Abridgement", and so did Bunting, who had a particular aversion to Wesley's abbreviated version of the Psalms.²¹ He thought that the principle on which the excisions had been made

¹⁷ Richard Watson, *Life of the Rev. John Wesley* (9th ed.), p. 463.

¹⁸ Jackson, *Life of the Rev. Robert Newton*, pp. 75-6.

¹⁹ *Methodist Recorder*, 21st August 1874.

²⁰ F. W. Harrison, *Short History of Methodism in Stockport*, pp. 23-4.

²¹ T. P. Bunting, *Life of Jabez Bunting*, p. 117.

was utterly unscriptural. Years later, in the 1874 Conference, the Rev. Charles Prest said he had always understood that the arrangement of the Psalms had been prepared by Dr. Coke, and in an evil hour Wesley had been induced to put his signature to it.²² That, however, hardly tallies with Wesley's own statement that Coke had made two or three "little alterations" in the Prayer Book without his knowledge.²³

Adam Clarke also expressed a strong preference for the Prayer Book. Writing in 1811 to his friend Joseph Entwisle he said:²⁴

With respect to the introduction of the Liturgy of the Church of England:—this book I reverence next to the book of God. . . . Most devoutly do I wish, that wherever we have service on the forenoon of the Lord's Day, we may have the Prayers read. . . . Had it not been, under God, for this blessed book, the Liturgy of the British Church, I verily believe Methodism had never existed. I see plainly, that where we read these prayers, our congregations become better settled, better edified, and put further out of the reach of false doctrine. . . . Introduce the Church Service in God's name; not in any abridgement, but in the genuine original.

This preference for the "genuine original" persisted through the years. A writer to the *Methodist Recorder* in 1874 described "Wesley's Abridgement" as "a work which is well known to have died a natural death",²⁵ and ten years later the leading article of the same journal stated that it had long been "an inconvenience and grievance that it was impossible to worship in a Methodist Chapel where the Liturgy was used without using the Church of England Prayer-book".²⁶ Frankly, this statement cannot be squared with the fact that the *Sunday Service* was being constantly reprinted until 1878,²⁷ and the problem must remain unsolved. The prejudice against the "Abridgement" is still maintained, however, for the Book of Common Prayer is still used in more than half of those churches in modern Methodism which read the Morning Prayer.

It remains for us to touch lightly upon the difficult subject of the history of the revision of the *Book of Offices*. This is a tangled skein, which awaits the leisure and patience of some interested member of our Society to unravel. The plain fact is that prior to 1882 there were many attempts to tamper with the "Abridgement". Various abbreviated editions had been published in which restorations and alterations had been made, either with or without the authority of the Book Committee, and by 1882 the position

²² *Methodist Recorder*, 21st August 1874.

²³ *Letters*, viii, pp. 144-5.

²⁴ *Memoir of the Rev. Joseph Entwisle*, p. 239.

²⁵ *op. cit.*, 21st August 1874.

²⁶ *op. cit.*, 7th November 1884.

²⁷ Kenneth Grayston, in an article in *Your Prayer Book*, recently published by S.P.C.K., says there were at least thirty-two editions, but I do not know the source of his information.

was chaotic. Even the *Sunday Service* was not immune. The "Manual Acts" in the Communion Office, for instance, appear and disappear in successive editions after the manner of the famous Cheshire Cat and for no obvious reason. One important alteration was of course necessary, but here again there was inconsistency. The Ordinal—"the Form and Manner of Making and Ordaining of Superintendents, Elders, and Deacons"—of the first American edition served no useful purpose *in that form* after 1792, yet it continued to be so printed. Green says it was omitted from the edition of 1816 and subsequent editions, but restored later, e.g. the edition of 1825. And yet ordination by imposition of hands was not resumed until 1836! By 1848 the Ordinal had become the "Form of Ordaining Candidates for the Ministry in the Wesleyan Methodist Connexion", a revision based largely on Wesley's "Form and Manner of Ordaining of Elders" and carried out, presumably, by the authority of the Book Committee.

The question of revision was raised in the Conference of 1874, which appointed a committee

to consider the subject of revising the Liturgy and the Book of Offices, especially with a view to the removal of all expressions which are fairly susceptible of a sense contrary to the principles of our Evangelical Protestantism.²⁸

The result of their labours, under the title of *The Book of Public Prayers and Services for the use of the People called Methodists*, was published by authority of the Conference of 1882, thus bringing to an end a long controversy which was mainly focused on the Baptismal Office. I have read through the reports of the lengthy Conference debates in the files of the *Methodist Recorder* for those eight or nine years; the speeches were not lacking in invective if they were deficient in information, and few of them had a good word to say for "Wesley's Abridgement". The *Methodist Recorder* itself greeted the new book with a cheer, for another blow had been struck in the cause of nonconformist liberty. Not only was the Prayer Book "tainted with Popish error" but also:

The use of the Church of England Prayer Book in Methodist chapels could not but have a powerful tendency to send the Methodist youth away to that superior Church on which Methodism allowed itself to remain thus evidently dependent, whose suzerainty, at least, if not sovereignty, seemed still to be recognized by the customary use of the Prayer Book in the leading chapels of the world—for such the chief London chapels cannot but be supposed to be by the Church and the world outside the Connexion, however much Yorkshire Methodists may insist on the precedence of their noble sanctuaries, with their great congregations.²⁹

The least we can say is that Yorkshire was evidently running true to form!

²⁸ *Minutes*, 1862 ed., vol. xix, p. 456.

²⁹ *Methodist Recorder*, 7th November 1884.

The Form and Manner of Making and
Ordaining of SUPERINTENDANTS,
ELDERS, and DEACONS.

The Form and Manner of making of
DEACONS.

When the Day appointed by the Superintendent is come, after Morning Prayer is ended, there shall be a Sermon, or Exhortation, declaring the Duty and Office of such as come to be admitted Deacons.

After which one of the Elders shall present unto the Superintendent the Persons to be ordained Deacons: and their Names being read aloud, the Superintendent shall say unto the People:

Brethren, if there be any of you, who knoweth any impediment or crime in any of these persons presented to be ordained deacons, for the which he ought not to be admitted to that office, let him come forth in the Name of God, and shew what the crime or impediment is.

And if any Crime or Impediment be objected, the Superintendent shall surcease from ordaining that Person, until such Time as the Party accused shall be found clear of that Crime.

Then the Superintendent (commending such as shall be found meet to be ordained, to the Prayers of the Congregation) shall, with the Ministers and People present, say the Litany.

Then

Methodism joins in gratitude for the heritage of the Book of Common Prayer. Morning Prayer and the Communion Office have the sanction of the Conference, the Canticles and Psalms are in our Hymn-book, the very language of the Prayer Book is to be found in Wesley's hymns and its influence is to be seen in *Divine Worship* and in much of our extempore prayer. Many of the Occasional Services we have lost for ever; indeed, we have no need of them in Methodism. Some of them have been considerably revised. But for the rest we may justly feel that *The Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America* and all its successors have preserved for us a valuable link with the Book of Common Prayer.

WESLEY F. SWIFT.

The revised edition of A. S. Gregory's *Praises with Understanding* (Epworth Press, pp. xviii. 265, 12s. 6d.), with an additional valuable chapter on "Psalms and Chanting", will give much joy to those who wish to make it their own, or possessing their own, wish to commend it to others. Mr. Gregory writes with such discernment of the good, the true, and the beautiful that his work is historically accurate, æsthetically satisfying, and, thanks to three excellent indexes, always a safe and easily accessible guide. It needs one with a fine feeling for both words and music to produce a competent appreciation of that book which contains so much of our theology, liturgy, and history. The minute study and the care for details which have gone into the making of *Praises with Understanding* might easily have led its author to miss the wider view of the subject. But Mr. Gregory succeeds where lesser men might have failed, and he gives us a most valuable appraisal both of our hymns as individual compositions and of the Hymn-book as a whole. There is much material here for the student of Methodist history, and we could also wish that this book might fall into the hands of every choirmaster and be read by every Methodist who wishes to do more than "make a joyful noise" and to sing his "praises with understanding".

JOHN C. BOWMER.

We acknowledge, with gratitude, receipt of the following: An autographed copy of *Swinging Portals*, the story of One Hundred Years of Methodism in Portland, Oregon, U.S.A., presented to our Society by the author, Dr. William Wallace Youngson. . . . *John Wesley and John Bousell*, by Frank Baker, reprinted from "The Journal of the Friends Historical Society", Volume Forty, 1948. . . . *John Wesley in Northumberland*, by H. Pollard (S.P.C.K., pp. 23, 1s.), a most sympathetic and accurate treatment of the subject. "If Anglicans could shake off their apathy and Methodists their sentimentalism, both could learn much from the story of Wesley", says Mr. Pollard. How true! . . . "The Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society of England", May, 1949, containing, *inter alia*, an article pertinent to our work, entitled: "A Presbyterian View of Some Present Day Tasks for Free Church Historians". There are suggestions here to which we may have opportunity to return.—EDITOR.

BOOK NOTICES

The Clue to the Brontës, by G. Elsie Harrison. (Methuen, pp. xii. 222, 14s.)

The sudden death of Dr. A. W. Harrison three years ago caused widespread sorrow; apart from his family circle it was nowhere felt more keenly than amongst the members of the Wesley Historical Society. He was a man of varied experience but by no means aged; many purposes were broken off in the administrative sphere in which he served so well, and in the historical researches in which he had become so proficient. Therefore those who read the Preface to this book, though conscious of deep loss, will rejoice that in one matter of deep interest his widow has brought to full fruition a suggestion from his fertile mind.

She draws a beautiful picture of the way in which she was introduced to Mrs. Gaskell's *Life of Charlotte Brontë*:

as my husband read it to me and as we both set our minds to work, in twinkling firelight, to puzzle out the meaning behind the drama of Haworth Parsonage. . . . One day my husband came to me and put the clue to our problem into my hand. He bade me make of it what I could, but, before I had travelled far, he had himself outstripped me and gone forward into that world of light where no shadows remain with meaning to be guessed. He was the historian of Methodist origins, and, in his work, had discovered that the home of Thomas Tighe, who was Patrick Brontë's patron, was the Mecca, in that locality of Rathfryland, for Wesley's travelling preachers in Ireland. That was the clue.

In following this clue, Mrs. Harrison "seeks to turn mental telescopes towards the right quarter and there to see the incandescent flame of the Wesley portent behind the familiar constellation of the Brontës". The resulting book will be found deeply interesting to the general reader; whatever it is, it is not dull.

The distinguishing feature of this new treatment of the subject is that Mrs. Harrison begins where Patrick Brontë began. He hailed from Rathfryland in Ireland, where the Rector, the Rev. Thomas Tighe (1778-1821), held evangelical views, as did the neighbouring Presbyterian minister. Crookshank records that in 1798 the Rectory was a place of call for the Methodist preachers.

No doubt Tighe's Methodist sympathies arose at an earlier stage in his career, though some of Mrs. Harrison's statements about his personal association with Wesley are based upon inference rather than upon definite evidence. The proximity of Rathfryland to Rosanna is another significant fact. There resided Thomas Tighe's half-brother William and his wife. To the initiative of the latter we owe the Romney portrait of Wesley. Mrs. William Tighe and Miss Tighe welcomed Wesley to their home in 1789. Miss Tighe married the Rev. Thomas Kelly, who frequently helped the Methodist preachers. Four of his hymns are in the *Methodist Hymn-book*. At Rosanna likewise was the seat of Lord Moira, who married a daughter of the Countess of Huntingdon.

These circumstances undoubtedly influenced young Patrick Brontë, and it is not surprising that when he went to Cambridge under the patronage of the Rector he joined a group, not unlike the Holy Club, formed by the Rev. Charles Simeon, a disciple of John Fletcher of Madeley.

On leaving the University, Patrick Brontë became a curate in Yorkshire, and was appointed examiner to the Woodhouse Grove Wesleyan school. Here again he was in close touch with fervent Methodists, old and young. His marriage to Maria Branwell, niece of the headmaster, and the subsequent arrival at Haworth Parsonage of aunt Elizabeth Branwell, a militant Methodist who brought up "mad Methodist Magazines" from Cornwall, ensured that the children received a full share of the true Methodist tradition. The familiar undertone of the language and theology of Methodism, and an outlook upon heaven, hell, guilt, and assured forgiveness, have the genuine stamp. Moreover, the many vivid recollections of Grimshaw's vehement ministry, which surrounded the family in the Haworth Parsonage and parish, were a strong contributory factor.

The clue is pursued with much skill as Mrs. Harrison traces the crimson trail from person to person and through the story of book after book. The understanding and sympathetic treatment of that strange character Branwell Brontë is especially impressive. The idea pervading the whole book seems to us to be soundly based, though the vivid imagination of a writer eagerly pursuing such an attractive theme leads at some points to over-emphasis. The book contains a regrettable number of misprints.

F. F. BRETHERTON.

Family Circle, by Maldwyn Edwards. (Epworth Press, pp. x. 192, 12s. 6d.)

Dr. Edwards tells us that this book was "written accidentally", but the impression it makes upon the reader is one of exact scholarship, mature reflection and painstaking research. Nothing has been hurried, nothing appears to have been missed. Without overburdening the book the author reveals his familiarity with the original sources from which his history is drawn, and the reader is left with an impression of his extreme competence and care.

All of the characters comprising this remarkable family tend to leave Dr. Edwards's hand with a reputation enhanced: the Father in relation to his Daughters, the Mother as tutor to her growing children, the Brothers in relation to their Sisters, and the Sisters in relation to their Parents and to one another. If the method adopted falls short of what would be necessary to introduce us to the rough and tumble, the give and take, of family life in the Epworth Parsonage as such, yet sufficient is said—and especially in the closing chapter on *The Family Circle*—to demonstrate with vivid forcefulness the rare degree of unity and affection that existed between them all. And in particular, the deference paid by all the children,

whatever their experience or age, towards their parents, and the depth of feeling felt by the sisters for their brothers, is very plain.

Yet it must surely be true that nothing will ever avail to reconcile us to the brutal and tragic contrast between the fortunes, on the one side of the three sons and on the other of the seven daughters of this household. Agree though we may with Dr. Edwards in declining to attribute this to any particular malevolence on the part of the father of them all, there is evidence enough in this book of an inconsiderateness on his part and an obduracy, indeed, in relation to the girls which—though we may condone as characteristic of his age—we are bound to deplore and condemn in a minister of Christ. Gratifying it is, indeed, to know that those of the sisters who suffered worst in this respect, drew most deeply of consolation and hope from the evangelical experience to which they were introduced, and in which they were maintained, by the ministries of John and Charles. We have heard before of sons who accept responsibility for their father's debts and live in order to discharge them. That these two sons, in this most intimate respect, most certainly did, though we have no reason to suppose that they laid the responsibility for their sisters' unhappiness expressly at their father's door.

When all that has been said, however, it probably amounts to little more than this—that the utmost that parents can do is to prepare their children for the Gospel of Christ: so to train them in conscience and heart that when the Knocker comes the door will be opened. That these two parents did, so that in this as in other respects detailed here, the home at Epworth must still be reckoned as "the most famous Rectory in English history".

No praise could be too high, to the Epworth Press, for the style in which the book has been produced. All that is left to be desired is a complete series of portraits, but to ask for that is to desire the impossible. The characters are here, and for them we are profoundly grateful.

REGINALD GLANVILLE.

The Worship of the English Puritans, by Horton Davies. (Dacre Press, pp. xii. 304, 25s.)

Puritan Architecture and its future, by Martin S. Briggs. (Lutterworth Press, pp. 91, 8s. 6d.)

It would be presumptuous to attempt in these pages an adequate appraisal of Dr. Davies' book on Puritan worship, for its scope—Cranmer to Watts—lies slightly outside our special interests. We can, however, thoroughly recommend it as a "background" book for the better understanding of those nonconformist influences which the Wesleys inherited from their paternal and maternal grandfathers. Dr. Davies has done for Nonconformity what Dom Gregory Dix did for Anglicanism in *The Shape of the Liturgy*. (Curiously enough, the two books come from the same publishers.)

Among the many good things which these pages contain we are especially grateful for the delightful picture of Dr. Samuel Annesley, Wesley's grandfather, celebrating the Lord's Supper in Little St. Helen's, London, the meeting-house of which he was for many years

the minister. The scene is described by Samuel Sewall, the New England judge:

The Dr. went all over the meeting first, to see who was there, then spake something of the Sermon, then read the words of Institution, then prayed and eat and drunk himself, then gave to every one with his own Hand, dropping pertinent Expressions. In our Pue said—Now our Spikenard should give its smell; and said to me, Remember the Death of Christ . . . The Deacon followed the Dr., and when his Cup was empty filled it again: as at our Pue all had drunk but I, he filled the Cup, and then gave it to me; said, as he gave it—Must be ready in new Obedience, and stick at nothing for Christ.

In the divine Providence it appears to be the fortune of Methodism to stand as a "bridge Church" between Anglicanism and the older Dissent. Our origins and traditions predispose us towards the one; our later history has thrown in our lot with the other; and we have much to learn from both. Dr. Davies' book is thus invaluable: it will correct many false ideas, arouse new interests, and help to give a true perspective. It is a book for the historian, the liturgiologist, and the believer in Church unity, and the hall-mark of scholarship is stamped on every page.

From Puritan worship to Puritan architecture is a natural sequence and the second book is complementary to the first. The oft-despised "ugly little Bethels" of Nonconformity have found a worthy champion in Mr. Briggs, an architect and a son of the manse. There is, it seems, a "Puritan tradition" in architecture and the greater part of this book is devoted to its historical exposition. Many surprising facts are brought to light as the author traces the story from the quaint little Elizabethan chapel at Horningsham (1566) to the ultra-modern buildings of recent years. Mr. Briggs does not overlook Methodist architectural developments—and vagaries. Nearly a page is devoted to Wesley's Chapel, which is described as "typical of Nonconformist architecture before the Gothic Revival". The book is profusely illustrated with forty-two photographs and line-drawings of Nonconformist chapels old and new, of which not a few are Methodist. It is closely related to our work, and we could hope that one of our members might be inspired to do for Methodist architecture what Mr. Briggs has here done for Nonconformist architecture in general. A good starting-point might be the description of the famous "Octagon" at Norwich (p. 34), the precursor of Wesley's many Octagons, which were not the freaks that some people suppose them to be.

Mr. Briggs is not afraid to speak his mind: he dislikes the word "chapel"; he approves a suggestion that architecture should be included in the curriculum at our theological colleges; and his pungent comments on the neo-Gothic style will rejoice many hearts and irritate still more! It remains to add that, as the title indicates, Mr. Briggs has ideas for the future as well as facts about the past; in both respects *The Methodist Church Builds Again* might well be read as a companion volume.

WESLEY F. SWIFT.

NOTES AND QUERIES

877. REV. CHARLES WILLIAMS—AN ANGLICAN METHODIST.

Some time ago a correspondent drew my attention to a curious entry in that invaluable work, *Ministers and Probationers of the Methodist Church*. In the list of ministers who have "died in the work" (1947 ed., p. 459) there appears the following:

*Williams, Charles [W] Commenced 1850 . Died 1906

The asterisk, of course, indicates a "Clergyman of the Established Church".

How, my correspondent asked, could an Anglican clergyman be a Methodist minister at so late a period as 1850-1906? Was the asterisk an amusing misprint?

Reference to the obituary notice of this brother in the *Minutes of Conference*, 1906, p. 135, solved the mystery. The relevant quotation is as follows:

CHARLES WILLIAMS, born November 7, 1822, died January 18, 1906. He had a godly Methodist parentage. He became a candidate in 1845 and after two years training at Richmond travelled for twenty years in some of the most laborious Circuits of Methodism, when upon conscientious scruples as to the validity of his ordination he left us, and became a clergyman of the Established Church. For thirty-two years he fulfilled his ministry in that Church, partly as Chaplain to the Birmingham Hospital and partly as Vicar of Coalville in Leicestershire. Upon his retirement from his "living" he settled at Dunster. The ritualistic practices which prevailed in the Established Church greatly shocked him; after much painful experience, and ineffectual efforts to alter the condition of things, he resigned his place in the ministry of that Church and gave up his retiring allowance. For the last six years of his life he was a super-numerary minister in our Church. He was an impressive preacher, a model pastor, very generous to the poor, and liberal in his support of the institutions of Methodism.

Mr. Williams was received back into the ministry of the Methodist Church by the Conference of 1899. His interesting career raises a number of ecclesiastical points into which we forbear to inquire further here!

WESLEY F. SWIFT.

878. CHARLES WESLEY, "STUDENT OF CHRIST CHURCH".

The Rev. A. Raymond George has drawn my attention to the fact that some modern writers have developed an unfortunate habit of referring to "Christ Church College, Oxford". He points out that though in the case of most Oxford colleges the use of the word "College" is optional, with Christ Church it is *never* used, and the designation "Christ Church" is both sufficient and correct.

Mr. George also indicated the desirability of clarifying the eighteenth century use of the appellation "Student", pointing out that in present-day usage at Christ Church "Student" = "Fellow", and that it was highly improbable that Charles Wesley would become a "Student of Christ Church" in the modern sense at the early age of nineteen.

Correspondence with the Dean of Christ Church has elicited the following courteous and helpful reply:

There were two classes of Students: (1) the Senior Students (who would be called Fellows in other Colleges); (2) the Junior Students, elsewhere—and now also at Christ Church—called Scholars. The title "Student" is still retained for the dons at Christ Church, but was given up for the Juniors in the nineteenth century and replaced by "Scholar".

The only record of Charles Wesley we have here is that he matriculated as Student on December 22, 1726.

It would appear, therefore, that Telford's paragraph relating to Charles Wesley as "Student of Christ Church" in his *Life of the Rev. Charles Wesley*, pp. 25-6, is both confused and inaccurate. The subtleties of Christ Church terminology obscured the fact that Wesley was a "Junior Student" = "Scholar", and not a "Senior Student" = "Fellow".

WESLEY F. SWIFT.

879. JOHN HICKLING'S BIBLE.

The Rev. John Hickling achieved some fame in the middle of last century as the only surviving Methodist minister who had been called into the work by John Wesley. Indeed, as was pointed out some time ago (*Proceedings*, xxvi, p. 16), some people even claimed that he was "the only minister living who was ordained by the Rev. John Wesley".

Mr. G. T. Simmons, of Hartley Victoria College, Manchester, has drawn our attention to the existence of John Hickling's Bible, which confirms the fact that he was "called out", but not ordained, by Wesley. The Bible has recently come into the possession of a village chapel in the Northwich circuit, where it is used in the pulpit. It is inscribed:

"This is God's Word. Read it, love it,
and hide it in your heart.

Written in the ninety second year
of my age, and in the ministry
I have been since the year 1788,
when the late Rev. J. Wesley
called me out.

Altringham

Feb. 19, 1857.

John Hickling."

FRANK BAKER.

Although it was published in 1940, T. W. Herbert's *John Wesley as Editor and Author* (Princeton University Press, pp. viii, 146, \$2) as yet has received no notice in the *Proceedings*. Issued in the "Princeton Studies in English" series, this is a comprehensive survey of the literary activities of John Wesley, fully documented and adequately indexed. The author has little new to tell us, but it is useful to have this concentrated study of one important aspect of Wesley's work, written with that freshness and vigour which characterizes so much of the literature that comes from across the Atlantic. We had never realized, for example, that the singers of Negro spirituals owed anything to Wesley, or that as an "abridger" he prepared the way for the *Readers' Digest*. It is unfortunate that its American origin has prevented this book from being better known in England.

Annual Meeting and Lecture

THE ANNUAL LECTURE

in connexion with the Liverpool Conference, 1949,

WILL BE DELIVERED AT THE

Grange Road Church, Birkenhead,

Monday, 11th July, at 7-30 p.m.,

BY THE

Rev. E. CLIFFORD URWIN,

M.A., B.D.

Subject:

“Methodism’s Greatest Upheaval:
The Significance of 1849.”

Chairman:

Mr. W. RAYNER BATTY (of Southport).

The Annual Meeting of the Society will be held on the same premises at 6 p.m.

MR. and MRS. HERBERT IBBERSON kindly invite any members of the Society to **Tea** in the Schoolroom of the Grange Road Church at 5 p.m. It is essential that all who desire to accept this invitation should send in their names to the Rev. H. Quarmby Eastwood, 41 Westbank Road, Birkenhead, by Saturday, 9th July, at the latest.

Members of the Conference may be glad to know the nearest and quickest way to Grange Road Church. Travel by the Mersey Railway from Liverpool (Central) to Birkenhead (Central). Thence by bus to the Fire Station, or walk up Borough Road (seven minutes) to Horatio Street. The side entrance to the church is in Horatio Street.