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Proceedings OF THE Wesley Historical Society

Editor : REV. WESLEY F. SWIFT

Volume XXVII

1949-50

EDITORIAL

THE Annual Meeting of the Society held at Birkenhead during the recent Liverpool Conference is reported elsewhere in this issue. We hope that all our members will share in the encouragement which was received by all who were privileged to be present.

It is particularly gratifying to note the excellent state of our finances and the steady growth in our membership. We would point out, however, that the first is contingent on the second, and urge our members to be constantly on the look-out for recruits amongst the many people who do not profess to be specialists but are nevertheless interested in our work. Copies of a new Prospectus for use in this way can be obtained without charge from our Secretary.

We have been glad to notice the influx of younger members in recent years, and wish that all of them were committed to some definite piece of Methodist research. Local Methodist history is often virgin soil which yields a fruitful harvest, and there are other fields of inquiry in which the labourers are few. The Officers of the Society will always regard it as a pleasurable duty to give advice and assistance to any member who has a mind to work. And from the editorial point of view it cannot be said too often that the pages of the *Proceedings* are not the monopoly of the privileged few; they are open to any member who has a contribution to make to the work of our Society. Within the limits of our space there will—indeed, must—always be room for articles of general interest as well as those of a more specialized nature.

We must also emphasize the fact that though the period of our main interest ends about 1850, we are not exclusively concerned with the Wesleys or Wesleyan Methodism. It is regrettable that so little has appeared in our pages relating to the early history of the Primitive Methodists, the Bible Christians, and the Methodist New Connexion. Here is ample scope for the student, and we shall rejoice to know that this rich vein is being diligently worked.

EARLY METHODISM IN FURNESS

[NOTE.—The scanty official records preserved have made the task of writing any connected history of the rise and progress of Methodism in Furness very difficult. I am chiefly indebted, among other sources, to some interesting articles by the late Mr. W. G. Atkinson in the *Barrow News* from December 1925 to March 1926, and also to three short sketches of Methodism in the district by Mr. H. F. Birkett, J.P. of Ulverston, and some MSS. notes by the late Mr. James Dickinson of Coniston, for much valuable material.—G.H.B.J.]

I. Beginnings in Ulverston

FURNESS is that part of Lancashire which stretches along the northern shores of Morecambe Bay from Lindale-in-Carmel and Grange-over-Sands to Barrow-in-Furness, and penetrates inland as far as Broughton, Coniston and Hawkshead. Before the coming of the railway in the middle of the nineteenth century, it was very inaccessible. Until then, the main route from earliest times for travellers between Furness and the rest of Lancashire was across the treacherous sands of Morecambe Bay, when the tide was out. The route swept in a bold curve from Hest Bank just north of Lancaster, to Kent's Bank, near Grange. This was called "the seven mile sands" to distinguish them from the narrower "Ulverston sands" and "Millom (or Duddon) sands" further along the coast.

Many hundreds of travellers during the centuries were drowned through being overtaken by the tide, or were lost in the treacherous quicksands, as they crossed these trackless wastes. The cemeteries of Carmel, Ulverston and Aldingham bear witness to the victims of the tides. No wonder the monks of Furness Abbey established a little chapel on an islet in the bay about a mile from Ulverston, where prayer was made for travellers over the sands, and from which they often went to the rescue of those who had lost their way, or were in danger from the incoming tide. It is still known as "Chapel Island".

John Wesley, as his *Journal* records, crossed the sands more than once on horseback, and he had some hard things to say about the route, as we shall see. He was not, however, the first of the great Methodist itinerants to visit, and preach in, Furness. George Whitefield was the forerunner of Methodism in the district. Writing from Kendal to the Countess of Huntingdon on 26th June 1750 he says, "Last Saturday, and on the Lord's Day, I preached at Ulverstone". He was on his way from Cumberland to Kendal. He goes on, "There, Satan made some small resistance. A clergyman, who looked more like a butcher than a minister, came with two others and charged a constable with me. But I never saw a poor creature sent off in such disgrace. I believe good was done in the town."¹ George Whitefield preached at the Cross in the market-place. The aggrieved clergyman was the Rev. Edmond Atkinson, then Rector

¹ Quoted from article by W. G. Atkinson in *Barrow News*, 5th December 1925.

of St. Mary's, the Parish Church. He evidently objected to the appearance of a Methodist preacher in the town.

Two years later, John Wesley writes in his *Journal* on 5th June 1752, "I went with Mr. Milner² to Ulverston. Here a very convenient place for preaching was offered; but few people had any desire to hear, so I went quietly back to my inn." Mr. W. G. Atkinson suggests that the house in which Wesley preached was abutting the market-place and owned by a Mr. Myles Sandys, who was a Baptist, and had one of his rooms licensed as a preaching place.³ John Wesley and Mr. Milner were on their way from Cumberland to Lancashire, and must have crossed the sands to reach Chipping, the next day. There are no comments on the journey, so that evidently no difficulties were encountered over the bay.

Ulverston is never referred to again in the *Journal*, but Wesley describes in detail his experiences in crossing the sands on his way from Bolton to Whitehaven in 1759. On 11th May he writes, "At Lancaster we were informed it was too late to cross the sands. However, we resolved to make the trial. We passed the seven-mile sand without difficulty and reached Flookborough about sunset." There is no record or tradition of his preaching in this fishing village, where he stayed the night. No doubt he was too weary to do so, after leaving Bolton early in the morning, preaching on his way, and riding over sixty miles, including the crossing of the sands.

Next day he resumed his journey north, for on Saturday, 12th May, he enters in his *Journal*:

Setting out early,⁴ we came to Bootle, about twenty-four measured miles from Flookborough, soon after eight, having crossed the Millom Sands without either guide or difficulty. Here we were informed that we could not pass at Ravenglass before one or two o'clock; whereas, had we gone on (as we afterward found) we might have passed immediately. About eleven we were directed to a ford near Muncaster Hall, which they said we might cross at noon. When we came thither they told us we could not cross; so we sat still till about one. We then found we could have crossed at noon. However, we reached Whitehaven before night. But I have taken my leave of the sand-road. I believe it is ten measured miles shorter than the other; but there are four sands to pass, so far from each other that it is scarce possible to pass them all in one day—especially as you have all the way to do with a generation of liars, who detain all strangers as long as they can, either for their own gain or their neighbours'. I can advise no stranger to go this way: he may go round by Kendal and Keswick, often in less time, always with less expense, and far less trial of his patience.

John Wesley once described himself as a man always in haste but never in a hurry: in his view "the King's business requireth haste". Hence he became impatient with the constant delays on

² Vicar of Chipping, Lancs. See J. W. Laycock, *Methodist Heroes in the Great Haworth Round*, pp. 76-83.

³ W. G. Atkinson in *Barrow News*, 5th December 1925.

⁴ It is estimated that Wesley left Flookborough between 2 and 3 a.m. See *Proceedings*, iv, p. 120.

the sands route into Furness and Cumberland through the state of the tides, and thereafter he gave Furness a wide berth. He certainly seems to have had a poor opinion of the character of the people of the district in calling them "a generation of liars". George Fox had written in his Journal in 1652, "The people of Ulverstone in general are liars, drunkards, whoremongers and thieves, who follow filthy pleasures."⁵

We can only surmise as to the spiritual results of the visits of Whitefield and Wesley to Ulverston by the former's remark, "I believe good was done in the town". This is proved by the fact that towards the close of the eighteenth century we find a small Methodist society meeting in the cottage of Nancy Moister, near Soapery Bridge, Ulverston.⁶ Among the active members was William Hodge, whose mother heard Wesley preach, also Marian Sanders, whose daughter married Captain Redhead, a well-known Methodist. As the society grew in numbers a larger room was obtained in Neville Street, situated just below the site on which the first chapel was afterwards built. The room was used on weekdays as a school, conducted by a Mr. Allan Backhouse.

During these early days Ulverston seems to have been included in the great "Haworth Round", a circuit which stretched from Yorkshire to Cumberland. It was so large that it took the travelling preachers six weeks to visit the various stations in it. Later, in 1806, Ulverston was attached to the Kendal Circuit as a mission station, and a lay missionary named Edward Wilson appointed.⁷ This was one of the first appointments of the kind under Dr. Coke's new plan of establishing mission stations at home and abroad. It marked a new stage in the extension of Methodism.

Although *Hall's Circuits and Ministers* shows Ulverston as a separate circuit in 1807 under William Stones (another lay missionary who entered the ministry in 1809), it did not become an independent circuit till a few years later. Stones was followed in 1808 by the Rev. John Rawson, who is described as a man of noble physique, great energy and an excellent preacher. He had some architectural skill and was instrumental in the erection of many chapels in the north. No doubt he first inspired the Ulverston Methodists with the idea of building a chapel in the town, and set the movement on foot which later led to its erection. He was succeeded by Thomas Bersey in 1809, another lay missionary. In 1810 Ulverston became an independent circuit, when the Rev. John Bedford was appointed as the first of an uninterrupted succession of ministers.⁸ For some years the association with Kendal was maintained by a monthly interchange of ministers, each borrowing a horse, riding half-way and then exchanging mounts.

⁵ Quoted from *Furness and Cartmel Notes*, by H. Barber, p. 285.

⁶ W. G. Atkinson in *Barrow News*, 19th December 1925.

⁷ May Synod Handbook, Barrow, 1910. Article by the Rev. T. E. Brigden.

⁸ "After a Hundred Years", by H. F. Birkett, in *Methodist Times*, 13th October 1910.

Under John Bedford's inspiring leadership the cause prospered sufficiently for steps to be taken to secure a site for the proposed chapel. It was obtained in Neville Street on land leased from Elijah Salthouse, a Quaker cotton-spinner, for the nominal sum of five shillings. Some years later £95 was paid for the freehold. The chapel was ultimately built during the superintendency of the Rev. John Heape in 1811-12. The stones for the building were carted by William Briscoe. When he presented his account for £20, the trustees had not the necessary funds, so he frankly forgave them the debt. Hence the trustees secured the site and the building material for next to nothing.

The chapel, when finished, was square in shape and had four rows of pews, the rest being seated with forms or benches (later replaced by high-back pews). There was a gallery across the end opposite the pulpit. The floor was boarded and the aisles flagged. The first trustees were John Heape, Minister, Ulverston; Joseph Green, Merchant, Ulverston; Robert Park, Blacksmith, Ulverston; John Westwell, Cotton Spinner, Ulverston; Edward Westhead, Merchant, Manchester; Joseph Oxley, Schoolmaster, Sparkbridge; Daniel Best, Flax Dresser, Ulverston; John Stephenson, Yeoman, Woodland; Edward Warriner, Spirit Merchant, Kendal; William Stephenson, Bookseller, Kendal; Edward Burton, Grocer, Kendal; James Rutledge, Yeoman, Little Langdale; and John Allison, Yeoman, Ulpha.⁹

The building of the chapel gave a new impetus to Methodism in Ulverston. The services were well attended and a Sunday school started. The singing at the services was accompanied by a choir and an orchestra consisting of two clarionets, two flutes, one serpent and one contra bass. The hymns were given out two lines at a time. On high days, such as Sunday school anniversaries, the scholars sat on a platform, the girls wearing white caps and white tippets, kept for such special occasions.

An old Wesleyan Plan, printed in 1823, shows how quickly Methodism had spread into the surrounding countryside. It includes Ulverston, Lowick Green, Sawrey, Green Oak (Greenodd), Cartmel, Dalton, Coniston, Kirby and Baycliffe. The names of the local preachers were Briggs, Elledge, Ray,¹⁰ Gibson, Ashburner, Cragg, White, together with four exhorters, Atkinson, Robinson, Best and Stones. Some of the places like Ulpha, Sawrey, Coniston, meant a journey of fifteen to twenty miles on foot. It is recorded that local preachers walked from Ulverston to Ulpha to take their appointments, a total distance of thirty miles. They, like the minister, sometimes had to face the perilous crossing of the sands to reach Cartmel.

There is a note on this old plan of 1823, "Love Feast at Dalton on Christmas Day". This shows there must have been a Methodist society at this time in the old capital of Furness. Whether before this date there were a few Methodists who gathered together in a

⁹ W. G. Atkinson in *Barrow News*, 19th December 1925.

¹⁰ Later the Rev. Richard Ray, Wesleyan Conference Precentor for some years.

barn at Gibraltar, as tradition holds, there is not sufficient evidence to prove; but a well-organized society, holding its own services in the town, arose out of the events described in an article on "The Rise and Progress of Nonconformity in Dalton",¹¹ by Mr. Coates, at one time master of the Wesleyan day-school. He writes:—

Before 1823 the Parish Church was the only building for public worship in the town. The Wesleyan Methodists had a small meeting-house in Ulverston, to which one Sunday morning in 1823 three earnest Dalton young men were walking, when a Primitive Methodist missionary, the Rev. F. N. Jersey, enquired where they were going, and on hearing their answer asked them to return with him, saying "I am going to storm Dalton". They returned. An open-air service was held at the market-cross that morning and on several subsequent Sundays. Organised opposition of a formidable kind soon showed itself. One morning someone engaged three men to blow horns close to the ears of the missionary, and a quarrel ensued between these and those others who wished to hear the preacher. The result was that Mr. Jersey was served with a warrant for conducting riotous and tumultuous worship at the market-cross of Dalton, and committed by the magistrates to Lancaster Castle.

No doubt the opposition was fostered by a sermon preached by the Vicar in the Parish Church from the text "Beware of false prophets", in which he strongly condemned the missionary and his services. He so reproached those who listened to Mr. Jersey that they were convinced that instead of attending the Parish Church Sunday services, as was their wont, they must have a service of their own.

Mr. Jersey was later released from prison, largely through the efforts of Henry Turner, a cordwainer in the town, who became active in founding the Methodist society in Dalton, and was the first class-leader. He himself was persecuted for his Methodist principles, but he held the little society together in those times of great difficulty and opposition. Mr. Coates continues:—

It was found impossible at first to procure a room and for a time services were held in a quarry at the top of Skelgate, until at length a notorious character, Jack Evans, who was at least a lover of fair play, declared that the Methodists should not be pushed out for want of a room, and placed at their disposal a hay-loft over a stable at the foot of Skelgate, where they could hold their meetings. Such was the opposition and persecution from which these early Methodists suffered that they scarcely dare be seen going to the meetings, but had to creep up back lanes and byways, afraid of losing their situations if detected. The Vicar of the Parish was accustomed to stand at the cross, watching these poor people going to the meeting, and with black uplifted stick in hand, shake it in threatening menace against any who had the hardihood to enter the forbidden room.

The opposition these early Methodists met with is further seen in the following incident mentioned by Mr. Coates. "They required a flight of stone steps by means of which they might ascend to their sanctuary. But no mason could be found in the town, who would

¹¹ See *Furness and West Cumberland* (P. Mannix & Co., 1882).

undertake the work, and at length it was done by an outsider." These red freestone steps and iron hand-rail are still to be seen today outside the building. However, in spite of bitter opposition and persecution, and possibly by the help of it, the society and congregation grew. This upper room was used until later a chapel was built. From 1823 onwards a Sunday school was carried on in it, the first superintendent being Mr. George Ashburner, who became a great force in local and circuit Methodism.

Meanwhile at Ulverston, where the only chapel in the circuit had so far been built, the cause, which had prospered considerably between 1810 and 1823, showed some decline between the years 1824 and 1828. The appointment of the Rev. William Huddleston in 1828, however, led to a considerable revival of the work during his able and devoted ministry. He was full of evangelistic zeal and "in labours more abundant". Reviewing the work at the end of 1828 he records in his diary, "Opened several new places, and persevered in crossing sands, while some have missed their way and been lost."¹² One of these new places was Roose, near Barrow-in-Furness. William Huddleston refers again to the difficulty of crossing the sands from Ulverston to Cartmel under date April 1829, and writes in his diary, "This has been a month of toil in crossing the sands, walking home in the evening twelve miles round, so tired as to sit down on the roads, and at the bottom of the town—not to weep, but to pray that God would support me and bless His word."

G. H. BANCROFT JUDGE.

(To be continued)

¹² These passages from William Huddleston's diary are quoted from article by W. G. Atkinson in *Barrow News*, 16th January 1926.

We have often regarded the institution known as "L.P.M.A. Sunday" as a boon conferred upon the Methodist ministry, but it had not occurred to us that the Local Preachers' Mutual Aid Association was a subject for historical research until we read *A Goodly Fellowship*, by F. Harold Buss and R. G. Burnett (Epworth Press, pp. 223, 8s. 6d.). The Association has recently celebrated its centenary and in this commemorative volume two of its most prominent members have recounted the story of these hundred years. It is one of the curiosities of our history that 1849, that most distressing year which saw the culmination of the Fly Sheets controversy, the year in which official Methodism was preoccupied with expulsions and a declining membership, should have witnessed the inauguration of this noble ministry of benevolence which we affectionately designate the "L.P.M.A." From humble beginnings the Association has won for itself an honoured place in our Methodist life and a rightful claim upon the generosity of our people, and in *A Goodly Fellowship* the full story is reliably narrated with a wealth of detail which makes the book a valuable contribution to our historical records. The book is at once an encyclopaedia of information and a portrait gallery of Methodist personalities and we congratulate its authors upon the quality and the accuracy of their work.

CHARTERHOUSE NOTES

III. John Wesley as a Steward at Founder's Day Dinner

ILLUSTRATION: The elaborately decorated Invitation to the Founder's Day Dinner in 1727 is preserved at Charterhouse in a scrap-book made up many years ago by Mr. F. K. W. Girdlestone, then an assistant master of the school. The photograph has been obtained for us by the courtesy of Mr. C. F. H. Evans, Librarian of Charterhouse.

Our contributor, Mr. Robert Birley, M.A., was headmaster of Charterhouse for twelve years and left in 1947 to become the Advisor on Education in the British Zone of Germany. He has recently been appointed headmaster of Eton College. Mr. Birley's earlier articles in this series of "Charterhouse Notes" were printed in *Proceedings*, xxvi, pp. 7-9; 36-7. The fourth and final article will appear in an early issue.—EDITOR.

THOMAS SUTTON, the Founder of Charterhouse, died on 12th December 1611. His body was brought from Christ Church, Newgate, to Charterhouse on 12th December 1614. In 1627 the Governors resolved "that there be an anniversary commemoration of the Founder kept every twelfth day of December with solemn service, a sermon, and such increase of commons as we allow upon festival days by our establishment hereafter ensuing". The earliest reference to the Founder's Day Dinner is to be found in an advertisement in the *London Journal* in 1680, which states:

Whereas an Anniversary Feast has heretofore been held by the Gentlemen that have been Scholars in the Charterhouse School: these are to give notice that the said Feast will be kept on the 13th of the same month (the 12th falling on a Sunday).

Some time before 1677, when it is mentioned in Herne's *Domus Carthusiana*, the practice was established of the senior boy on the Foundation delivering a Latin Oration, for which he was rewarded by a purse of money. This was continued until 1872.

The Steward's Book, from which this extract is taken, gives complete records of the dinners from 1720 to the present day, except from 1760 to 1768. John Wesley was a Steward in 1727. It is interesting to note that, while the dinner was held at the Charterhouse that year, it was held elsewhere in 1696, according to an advertisement in the *London Gazette*, from 1720 to 1726, and from 1728 to 1739. There is no record to show where it was held from then until 1769, since when it has usually been held at the Charterhouse. The dinner is referred to in the famous account of the Founder's Day Service in Chapter XXXVII of Thackeray's *The Newcomes*.

Dr. King had been a Scholar at Charterhouse, leaving in 1678; he was Preacher of the Charterhouse from 1696 to 1715, and Master until his death in 1737. He, therefore, became Master while Wesley was at the School. Robert Vincent and Edward Doyley

SIR,

You are desired to meet the
Gentlemen Educated at the
Charterhouse School on
Tuesday the 22th day of December 1727
by Ten of the Clock precisely at the Charter-
house Chappel to hear a Sermon, and to
Dine in the Charterhouse at 3 of the
Clock precisely

The Rev^d Dr. John King
Master of the Charterhouse.
W^m Robert Vincent jun^r.
W^m John Wesley.
W^m Edward Dwyly.

Stewards

Pay the Bearer Seven Shillings & 6 pence
and bring this Ticket with you



N.B. The Stewards having provided sufficient number of Gentlemen
servants will not be admitted to rest at Dinner.

INVITATION TO FOUNDER'S DAY DINNER, CHARTERHOUSE, 1727.
JOHN WESLEY AS STEWARD

were not Scholars and must have been Oppidans. Thomas Rowel had been a Scholar from 1709 to 1716 and was therefore in the School with Wesley. Mr. Eyre in whose hand "ten guineas each were deposited" was Receiver of the Charterhouse from 1719 to 1739. In 1755 he was admitted a poor brother and died shortly after. Wesley's earliest extant letter was addressed to him on the subject of his exhibition from the School to Christ Church. Mr. Tooke, who was presented with a ticket by the Stewards, was doubtless Andrew Tooke, who had been a Scholar from 1686 to 1690, was Usher from 1696 to 1728, and Schoolmaster (Headmaster) from 1728 to 1732. He became Professor of Geometry in Gresham College and a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1704, and the Society used to meet in his rooms at the College. He had been Usher when Wesley was at the School.

ROBERT BIRLEY.

Founder's Day, Dec. 12. 1727.

Stewards Dr. King Master of the Charterhouse
 Mr. John Wesley
 Mr. Robt. Vincent
 Mr. Edward D'oyley

Preacher Mr. Thomas Rowel on account of Mr. Blackwell's
 indisposition

First meeting at the Crown behind the Exchange Monday
 27 Nov. To Wine, Supper Tobacco etc.....1:10:0

The Bill was discharged by the Stewards then present and ten
 guineas each were deposited in Mr. Eyre's hand.
 Second Meeting Monday Dec: 4th.
 To Wine Supper Tobacco etc.....2:10:0

Invitation to Founder's Day, 1727.

SIR,

You are desired to meet the
 Gentlemen Educated at the
 Charterhouse School on

Tuesday the 12th day of December 1727
 by Ten of the Clock precisely at the Charter-
 house Chappell to hear a Sermon. and to
 Dine in the Charterhouse at 3 of the
 Clock precisely.

The Revd. Dr. John King Master of the Charterhouse. Mr. Robert Vincent junr. Mr. John Westley. Mr. Edward D'oyly.	}	Stewards.
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Pay the Bearer Seven Shillings & 6 pence
 and bring this Ticket with you.

N.B. The Stewards having provided sufficient Attendance, Gentle-
 mens Servants will not be admitted to wait at Dinner.

THREE UNPUBLISHED LETTERS FROM JOHN WESLEY TO HIS WIFE

WE are indebted to the Rev. John Heaton for the transcripts of the three new Wesley letters which we print below. They are of exceptional interest, if not of importance, inasmuch as all three were written by John Wesley to his wife—one before marriage and two afterwards. The first of the three, indeed, is the earliest of such letters which we possess, antedating the first in the *Standard Letters* by some nine months, and is the only letter which has come to light of the many which Wesley must have written to Mrs. Vazeille before their marriage.

There is no need to recount the story of Wesley's marriage and its subsequent failure. The earlier biographers, out of respect for "Mr. Wesley", skimmed over it very lightly as though it were a spot of defilement on the robe that wrapped the saint. Later biographers have not all been so circumspect, but the reader who wishes to refresh his memory will find that Dr. J. S. Simon has put the facts in their right perspective and done his best to be scrupulously fair to both parties to this unfortunate marriage.¹ Reference should also be made to the *Standard Letters* at the appropriate places, and to an additional letter in *Proceedings*, vol. xix, pp. 146-7.

I

JOHN WESLEY TO MRS. VAZEILLE

Dublin

June 19. 1750

My dear Sister,

I am glad to hear you have been with my Brother at Ludlow. Sally Perrin sent me a little Account of what passed there, & of her proposal to you, of taking a longer journey together, if the way should be made plain. I believe, Riding, so far as your Strength will allow, will much confirm your Bodily Health, And the conversing with those in various Parts who know and love God, will greatly strengthen your Soul. Perhaps too He who sendeth by whom He will send, may make you usefull to some of them. If it be so, I trust it will humble you to the Dust: you will so much the more be vile in your own Eyes, & cry out, "Not unto me, O Lord, but unto thy Name give the Praise!"

O let us work for our Lord while the Day is: The Night cometh when no man can work. I have gone thro' Calms & Storms, Rough Weather & Smooth, since I came into Ireland. But all is good, while He walks with us, who has all Power in Heaven & in Earth. I hope you have some time daily for Meditation, Reading & Prayer. My Dear Sister, Peace be with your Spirit!

Next Month I hope to be in Bristol.

Addressed: To
Mrs Vazeille
In Threadneedle Street
London.

¹ See especially *John Wesley and the Advance of Methodism*, pp. 190-8, and *John Wesley, The Last Phase*, pp. 73-9.

We do not know when John Wesley first met Mrs. Mary Vazeille, the wealthy widow of Anthony Vazeille, a Huguenot merchant, nor do we know how long she had been a widow when she married Wesley on 18th or 19th February 1751. (It is passing strange that the exact date of the marriage cannot be established, and that the place of marriage can only be conjectured, as the entry has never been traced in any marriage register despite the most exhaustive search.) She first comes into our view on Thursday, 20th July 1749, when Charles Wesley met her, "a woman of a sorrowful spirit", at the house of his friend Edward Perronet, the younger son of Vincent Perronet, Vicar of Shoreham.² Thus early are we made aware of the friendship between Mrs. Vazeille and the Perronets; a natural friendship, as they would have much in common, for both Mrs. Vazeille's husband and father, and the Perronets, were of Huguenot descent. The three Perronets, Vincent and his two sons Charles and Edward, were all counted as Methodist preachers at this period, and it is not difficult to see how John Wesley first became acquainted with Mrs. Vazeille.

It was on 15th May 1750 that Charles Wesley "set out with Mrs. Vazeille, &c., for Ludlow" for a stay which extended over nine days.³ Ludlow was, of course, the new home of Mr. and Mrs. Gwynne, the parents of Charles Wesley's wife. The identity of the "&c." remains tantalizingly obscure, though from the letter we gather that Sally Perrin was one of the party. Sarah Perrin was for some years John Wesley's housekeeper at Bristol. The *Diary* for 1741 contains five references to "tea" and "conversation" at "S. Perrin's", and the first volume of the *Arminian Magazine* contains five letters which Mrs. Perrin wrote to Wesley during the years 1742-4.⁴ Wesley described her as a "Mother in Israel" but added, "I do not know that her Marriage increased either her Usefulness, or her Knowledge and Love of God."

The first letter printed above is addressed to Mrs. Vazeille "In Threadneedle Street, London". Threadneedle Street, says Dr. Simon, was at this time a residential neighbourhood where lived "a large colony of Huguenots, some of whom were well-known merchants". Mrs. Vazeille was therefore still living in her late husband's house, and there Charles Wesley and his wife stayed with her for eight or nine days soon after the Ludlow visit.

II

JOHN WESLEY TO HIS WIFE

Manchester

April 7. 1751

Last night I had the pleasure of receiving Two Letters, from my Dearest Earthly Friend. I can't answer them, till I tell you, How

² *The Journal of Charles Wesley*, vol. ii, p. 62.

³ *ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 71

⁴ *Arminian Magazine*, 1778, pp. 218-27

I love you: Tho' you knew it before. You feel it in your own breast. For (Thanks be to God) your Heart is as my Heart. And in token of it, you have given me your Hand.

If you find yourself at any time heavy for a season, you know where to go for Help. You will cry without Delay,

Take this poor, fluttering Heart to rest,

And lodge it, Saviour, in thy Breast!

In June, if it please God to continue our Life & Health, you shall travel with me. I want to have you always near me. And yet even That Want is made easy. I was glad you was not with me last week. For it has rained every day.

My Love to Molly

[end of first page] I hope, She prays for me.

I think you might have found a better Husband. But O! where cou'd I have found so good a Wife? If I was not to bless God, surely the Stones wou'd cry out!

I suppose you mean Miss Mady Perronet. I am glad She is with you. I love her dearly. Nevertheless it will be inconvenient on some Accounts. To prevent which Inconveniences, you will quit your House (if you live) at Midsummer. We agree, in desiring to cut off every Needless Expence. O how exactly your Heart agrees with mine! Thanks be to God for this Unspeakable Gift!

My dear Soul, Adieu!

[At side of page] Don't be afraid to give S. Briggs

Addressed "To Mrs Wesley".

[Mr. Heaton says that the name "S. Briggs" in the incomplete sentence comes to the side of the page. From this, and the folding marks, he is inclined to think that there is a narrow strip missing.]

The second letter was written less than three months after Wesley's marriage. Much of it is far too intimate for comment. Suffice it to say that there is as yet no sign of the cloud which was soon to darken the sky.

Wesley's suggestion that his wife should leave her house in Threadneedle Street is interesting, and so is the peremptory manner in which the request is made. It may be that the necessity of leaving such a comfortable abode was one of the grievances responsible for destroying the harmony of their married life, and in this matter our sympathies might well be with the lady. We know from another letter, written on this same day to Ebenezer Blackwell, that Wesley was much occupied at this time with the settlement of his wife's affairs.⁵

It is a pity that this letter is incomplete, and that the reference to "S[ister] Briggs" is lost. Elizabeth Briggs was a sister of the brothers Perronet, and had recently married William Briggs, of the Custom House. On 27th March Wesley had advised his wife to allow Briggs to make her will for her. Briggs was a leader at the Foundery, and in 1753 was appointed first Book Steward at the Foundery in conjunction with Thomas Butts.⁶ Again we see the connexion between Mrs. Wesley and the Perronet family.

⁵ *Letters*, iii, pp. 66-7.

⁶ *Stevenson's City Road Chapel and its Associations*, p. 38.

III

JOHN WESLEY TO HIS WIFE

Liverpool

April 22. 1757

Now my Dear Molly, you do just as you shou'd. I was really uneasy, for want of hearing from you. Thus far God has brought me safe & well. But I have left my Companions behind me. John Haime cou'd reach no farther than Leicester. (But he hopes to meet me at Manchester.) Joseph Jones held out to Poole, near Nantwich. But having forgot his Bags at Bilbrook, he was obliged to go back for them. Bro: Lucas came with me from Chester today: But he also must leave me on Monday, & go into the Round. I shall then want simple Michael: For without a Companion in travel, I am like a Bird without a Wing. Especially in this Place, wch is at present the Seat of War: For poor James Scholfield sets me at open defiance. But I am not afraid of that: I fear only fair Words: And that weapon he is not at present inclined to use. I suppose he has carried off about half the Society, by telling them How cruelly I have treated him.

I expect B. Atkinson will give you every Week an Account of the Books sold. I am sorry I forgot to mention it to him. Your Labour in the Printing-house was well bestowed: As also in getting the Books collated. Now, my Love, Go on to overcome Evil with Good: By the Grace of God, you are able. I am afraid Jemmy Roquet's Head is not quite right: I have written him a long, mild, loving answer. Pray let the Notes (in quires) he sent down to Leeds directly: And with them Two Hundred of each sort of Proposals. The Post constrains me to break off. Grace & Peace, my Dear Life, be with you & Jenny & Noah for ever! Adieu.

Pray tell Mr. Blackwell, I stay here ten days: Then Six Days at Mr. Philips in Manchester, & Seven more in or near Leeds.

Pray put ye inclosed into ye Post Directly.

Addressed "To Mrs Wesley".

When Wesley wrote the third letter he had been married more than six years. Little of it requires comment.

Of the three preachers mentioned, John Haime was the soldier-preacher who was responsible for the establishment of Methodism in Dunbar. He travelled from 1745 to 1784 and his autobiography will be found in the *Lives of the Early Methodist Preachers*.⁷ Joseph Jones itinerated for some years; upon his marriage he settled as a farmer in Somerset.⁸ Poor fellow! his forgetfulness at Bilbrook cost him an extra journey back from Poole of more than forty miles. Of Richard Lucas we know little. Myles says he began to itinerate in 1754 and died in 1774. His name disappears, however, from the *Minutes of Conference* after 1765, when he was the third preacher in the London circuit.

In the early years of their married life Mrs. Wesley was of considerable help to her husband in the affairs of the Bookroom at

⁷ op. cit., vol. i, pp. 269-309.

⁸ Atmore's *Methodist Memorial*, (1871 ed.) p. 122.

the Foundry, as this letter testifies. William Atkinson was evidently connected with the Bookroom. He had offered himself as a preacher in 1753, but his difficulty was what was to become of his wife. She later proved to be a gossip.⁹

The edition of Wesley's *Notes upon the New Testament* referred to here was described by John Hampson as "the most elegantly printed book he ever published".¹⁰ It was a quarto edition and was published in 1755.

Wesley refers in the *Journal* under date 21st April 1757 to the destructive work of James Scholfield at Liverpool. Myles, in his *Chronological History of Methodism*, states that Scholfield was in the itinerant work only from 1755 to 1757, but his name appears amongst those attending the 1753 Conference, and a "James Scholfield" appears in the account book of the Manchester Round as far back as 1752. He was evidently expelled from the itinerancy about the time of this visit of Wesley to Liverpool.

WESLEY F. SWIFT.

⁹ *Letters*, vol. iii, pp. 153, 179.

¹⁰ Hampson's *Memoirs of the late Rev. John Wesley*, vol. iii, p. 147.

Wesley Historical Society

Financial Statement for the year ended 30th June 1949

INCOME.			EXPENDITURE.		
	£	s. d.		£	s. d.
Balance on hand, 30th June 1948 ...	167	6 6	Printing of <i>Proceedings</i> (four issues) ...	170	4 0
Subscriptions ...	185	10 0	Postages and Stationery...	21	17 3
do. (Irish Branch)	14	0 0	Editorial Expenses ...	3	7 9
<i>Proceedings</i> (back numbers sold) ...	10	14 5	Committee—Travelling Expenses ...	3	0 0
Advertisements ...	2	3 0	Society of Genealogists ...	1	1 0
Annual Lecture—share of Collection ...	6	9 7	Grant for Research ...	10	0 0
War Stock Dividend ...	7	16 6	Lecture Honorarium ...	5	5 0
			<i>Proceedings</i> (back numbers bought) ...	11	6
			Bank Charges ...	17	6
			Balance on hand, 30th June 1949 ...	177	16 0
	<u>£394</u>	<u>0 0</u>		<u>£394</u>	<u>0 0</u>

NOTES

1. In addition to the balance on hand, the Society holds £225 of 3½ per cent War Stock in the name of the Board of Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes.
2. The balance on hand includes £97 8s. od. received for subscriptions in advance.
3. The "free money", i.e. after deduction of subscriptions paid in advance and Life Membership subscriptions, amounts to £160 8s. od.
4. There are forty-eight subscriptions in arrear.

3rd July 1949.

HERBERT IBBERSON, *Treasurer*.
DUNCAN COOMER, *Auditor*.

CHANGING CIRCUITS IN 1808

ROBERT MELSON began to travel as a Methodist preacher at the Manchester Conference of 1803, when he was appointed to Witney. In 1804 he went to Easingwold, in 1805 to Epworth and in 1806 to Spalding. At the Conference of 1807 he was received into Full Connexion and appointed to Retford. In 1808 he was appointed superintendent at Inverness.

His parents were Methodists at Horncastle. He married Bessie, a daughter of the Rev. John Barritt, who was one of Wesley's preachers. When John Barritt was stationed at Epworth in 1803-4 his colleague was Zechariah Taft, who married his daughter Mary. Mary Taft became a notable evangelist.

In 1810 Robert Melson was appointed to Brechin. Here a son was born, John Barritt Melson, who ultimately graduated M.D. at Trinity College, Cambridge, and established a medical practice in Birmingham. He became a very popular local preacher and one of the most influential and highly respected Methodist laymen in the Midlands in the middle of the nineteenth century. There is a good account of him in Slugg's *Woodhouse Grove School*.¹ He had the honour of presenting a gold medal to Dr. Jabez Bunting, the President of the Birmingham Conference of 1836, in commemoration of its being the first Conference to be held in that city. A daughter of Dr. Melson married the Rev. Henry T. Smart, a son of whom, the Rev. H. Melson Smart, is now a Methodist minister in Frankfort, Michigan, U.S.A., and a daughter is the widow of the Rev. Benjamin Nume.

Robert Melson retired to Birmingham in 1846, after travelling forty-three years. Those were troublous times in Methodism, and he found himself in strong opposition to much in the official administration of the Church he had so faithfully served. This he declared both to the Conference and to the general public, and from 1852 his connexion with the Conference virtually ceased, his name disappearing from the *Minutes*.

The following intensely interesting letter was written to his parents. When we remember in what a comparatively small area he had hitherto itinerated, and the difficulties of travel in those days, we can realize what an adventure a journey from Nottinghamshire to Inverness must have been. From the *Minutes of Conference*, 1809, we learn that the cost of this journey was £13 5s. od.

W. L. DOUGHTY.

¹ See also an article by Mr. W. C. Sheldon in the *Methodist Recorder*, 21st February 1901.

Inverness. Sept 19, 1808.

Dear Father and Mother,

I have no doubt but you are desirous to know if we have accomplished our journey or not and how we were on our way and how we are at the present.

I therefore take up my pen to communicate a little intelligence to you relative to our journey.

The Monday after I left you we left Retford and arrived safe at Gainsborough where we met with a gentleman who was going to sail for Newcastle upon Tyne with whom we took our passage but though we left Gainsborough on the Wednesday we did not get out of the Trent until the next Sabbath because the wind was against us—so we spent a few days among some of our good friends in the Epworth Circuit who live upon the Trent bank.

On the Sunday morning we got into the Humber and as our ship was to lie at anchor only five miles from Winterton all the afternoon and night we thought it well to walk to Winterton and spend the Sabbath evening with Father and Mother Barritt. We did so and I preached for Father in the Winterton Chapel. On the Monday morning Father took us back to our ship in his gig. This day we got safe to Hull and as our ship was to lie at anchor all night in the Humber we thought we would go into Hull to lodge. We went to the Preacher's house and he got us lodgings at a very kind gentleman's house and I preached for him that evening and the next morning at 6 o'clock, and at 2 o'clock we went to sea. Whilst at sea we were all very sick together. I being the best of the three I strove to help my wife and Jane as well as I could. We arrived safe at Newcastle, Thursday, September the 1st. We stayed all night and found a bed on land, very acceptable.

This evening I met with another ship that was going to sail for Banff in Scotland, which is about 170 or 180 miles north of Newcastle. We sailed on the Friday but only got down the River Tyne to Shields, which is about nine miles from Newcastle. Here we stayed until Sunday morning. We lodged in Shields, Friday and Saturday nights. On Sunday morning about one o'clock we were awoken by the captain who said the wind was fair and we must go to sea directly. We sailed about 3 and were at sea three days. Monday night and Tuesday we had a storm of rain with a heavy gale. On Tuesday night at 10 o'clock we were under the necessity of going into the harbour at Peterhead. We then went into the town and took lodgings at an inn where we stayed two nights and a day.

This was the first place in Scotland which we landed at and I do assure you we did not spend a day there for nothing, for though we had no great dainties excepting at breakfast it cost us £1. 1. 0, but at breakfast I must say we had, for though we only called for coffee they furnished our table with *bread, hot-cake, oat-cake, fish, eggs, coffee, butter, sugar and salt*. Thursday morning at 2 o'clock we were called by our captain. We then arose, went to sea between 3 and 4 and arrived safe at Banff about eleven. Banff is 36 miles from Peterhead and is in my circuit, though 75 miles from Inverness. Here we stayed the Sabbath over and went to sea no more. The 75 miles we travelled by land.

On the Monday we hired a man, his horse and cart, to go with us

to Elgin, which is 34 miles, thinking that we should have all our luggage with us and we could walk and ride as we pleased, but my wife having rode [sic] a little she said it shook her so that she would rather walk. I would then have hired a post-chaise at the next town but she would not let me so we all walked, (you would almost think it incredible), I should think not less than 30 miles that day. We then stayed a day in Elgin to rest ourselves and on Wednesday the 14 instant I hired a gig for the last 41 or 42 miles and we all arrived safe at Inverness that evening. Thanks be to God for all His mercies for I have experienced them to be neither few nor small.

My wife tells me that she is as well as ever she was in her life. Last Friday I was seized with a violent pain in my bowels and was obliged to go to bed but thank God I am better.

We [cannot] tell you much respecting our circuit as we are quite strangers in it. We like our house very well. I am to be the chief of my time at home, not going out of Inverness more than three times all the year. Inverness is a very nice town. I preached in it yesterday three times. All the work I have to do all the week is to preach twice, viz., Tuesday and Thursday, and prepare for the next Sabbath, when I shall preach again three times more, besides meeting a class tonight. But you may be assured that though I have so much time I have no time to lose. May you and I consider every hour precious and improve the same to the glory of God and the satisfaction of our own minds!!

My Bessie joins me in sincerest love to you both. Wishing you every blessing, I am yours &c.

R. MELSON.

Write soon. Direct thus—Mr. Melson, Methodist Minister, Inverness, Scotland.

Our sincere love to all brothers and sisters, with all inquiring friends, particularly to Mr. and Mrs. Simmons.

The publication of the Rev. Harold B. Rattenbury's latest book, *David Hill: Friend of China* (Epworth Press, pp. 214, 8s. 6d.), coincided most happily with the author's elevation to the Chair of the Methodist Conference. The story of David Hill remains an epic of missionary enterprise and consecrated service, but one, alas, of which the present generation knows little, for the previous biographies have long since been out of print. Mr. Rattenbury has done good service, therefore, not only to the cause of missions (which is his main concern), but also to the cause of Methodist history by giving us this "modern portrait" with its illuminating flashes from David Hill's note-books and diaries which were not available to earlier biographers.

David Hill was ordained to the Wesleyan ministry in 1864. Like Mr. Rattenbury himself (what a curious coincidence!) he spent thirty-two years in China. His first furlough was at the end of seventeen years! It is obviously impossible in a few lines adequately to appraise such a book as this. Suffice it to say that *David Hill*, written with the descriptive charm and grace we are accustomed to associate with the present occupant of John Wesley's Chair, will, we are sure, abundantly achieve its purpose. We are glad to commend it for many reasons, and not least for the contribution which it makes to our knowledge of the early days of Methodist missionary work in China.

THE ANNUAL MEETING AND LECTURE

Business Meeting

AFTER an excellent tea kindly provided by Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Ibberson, about twenty members gathered in the Grange Road Methodist Church, Birkenhead, on 11th July 1949, for the Annual Meeting of the Society, under the chairmanship of our President, the Rev. F. F. Bretherton, B.A.

The Secretary's report showed a total membership of 615, a noteworthy *net* increase of fifty-four during the year, though the number of new members totalled eighty. There are twenty-nine Life Members. A standing tribute was paid to the memory of the seven members who had died during the year.

The Treasurer's report was also very satisfactory, revealing a substantial credit balance. The detailed balance sheet is printed on page 62.

Several changes were made in the list of Officers. After thirty years of valued service as General Secretary, the Rev. F. F. Bretherton resigned from this position, a special resolution of appreciation being placed on the minute book. The members were glad to know that he is still able to serve the Society as its President. The Rev. Frank Baker, B.A., B.D., was appointed to succeed him as General Secretary (which office will now include those of Registrar and Minute Secretary), and it was hoped that Miss C. M. Bretherton as Assistant Secretary would be able to undertake the task of receiving the subscriptions. The Rev. Wesley F. Swift was appointed Editor, and Mr. Herbert Ibberson and Dr. Duncan Coomer were re-appointed Treasurer and Auditor respectively. A new office was created, that of Publishing Manager, to be filled by Mr. Alfred A. Taberer, F.R.C.O. It was also decided that the Editorial Council should be replaced by an Executive Committee, consisting of all the Officers, which should meet to discuss policy and make recommendations to the Annual Meeting.

It was agreed that, in spite of increasing costs, membership subscriptions should be left at their present level for the time being, but that the charges for back and extra numbers of the *Proceedings* should be increased. Arrangements were made to publish a complete list of members with the *Proceedings* in December 1949.

It was confirmed that the Lecture at the Bradford Conference in 1950 would be given by the Rev. W. E. Farndale, D.D., on "The Primitive Methodist Revival", and the meeting decided to ask the Rev. Griffith T. Roberts, M.A., B.D., to lecture in 1951 on "Howell Harris" or some similar subject of Welsh interest.

Consideration was given to a suggestion that the Society should sponsor a prize for historical essays by students in our theological colleges. Though giving general approval to the idea, the meeting asked the Executive to give further thought to details, so that a full scheme could be submitted to the next Annual Meeting.

The Annual Lecture

The Wesleyan Reform Movement reached its climax exactly one hundred years ago, and it was therefore appropriate that the subject chosen by the Lecturer, the Rev. E. C. Urwin, M.A., B.D., should be

“Methodism’s Greatest Upheaval: The Significance of 1849”. Feelings are still apt to become a little strained in considering the often bitter exchanges of those stormy days, but Mr. Urwin wisely strove to avoid partisanship, and contented himself with giving a factual outline of one of the most outstanding (and most tragic) events in Methodist history. His survey was supported by much research, however, and was coloured both by his own passion for social justice and his inborn sympathy with the reformers who were driven out into the wilderness after inflicting a great wound on the mother church of Methodism. Only her remarkable spiritual resources, as Mr. Urwin pointed out, enabled Wesleyan Methodism to recover from what might have been a death-blow, for during the years following the expulsion of Everett, Dunn and Griffith, about 100,000 out of 500,000 members left her ranks, while in the minds of many who remained there was uncertainty and unrest.

Mr. Urwin set the internal troubles of Methodism against the background of political unrest throughout Europe during the years 1848-9. Everywhere the common people were in a ferment, demanding justice and a hand in the ruling of their own destinies. Small wonder that this unrest in the body politic should be paralleled in the body ecclesiastic. Already there had been divisions within Wesleyan Methodism, in part at least over the same questions which tore the Connexion so terribly in 1849. These were not matters of doctrine but of ecclesiastical organization. The 1849 upheaval had as its root cause a struggle to decide where lay the seat of power in Methodism—in its Conference, or in its local societies, in its ministry, or in its laity. Behind this lay a fundamental (though generally unrealized) uncertainty about the nature of a Christian Church, an uncertainty still fruitful of division in discussions on Christian Unity.

As the Lecture is to be published in the near future, it is unnecessary to describe its theme in detail. Mr. Urwin recited the familiar facts and made them live again: the autocracy of the ministry, centring in the “Legal Hundred”; the almost “totalitarian dictatorship” of Jabez Bunting and the consequent division of Wesleyan Methodism into “pro-Bunting” and “anti-Bunting” sympathies; the undercurrent of rebellion against a man who could brook no criticism; the circulation of the anonymous “Fly Sheets” with their vituperative attacks; the disciplinary inquiry based on the “brotherly question”; and the final expulsion of the three ministers, James Everett, Samuel Dunn and William Griffith, on the main charge of “contumacious refusal to answer questions put to them”.

“The Three Expelled” soon became symbols of outraged justice, and a wave of agitation was spread through the land by means of newspaper reports and huge public meetings. Repressive measures undertaken locally in many places to prevent Methodists attending such meetings made matters worse. Soon those members expelled by ministers (who at that time had such power) were being joined by sympathizers to form new churches owing allegiance to “The Three Expelled”. During the next few years Wesleyan Methodism lost one-fifth of her membership, and although eventually the unions of 1857, 1907, and 1932, brought most of the divisions of Methodism together again, the scar of that terrible wound of 1849 still causes discomfort.

FRANK BAKER.

BOOK NOTICES

England in 1815. Volume One of *A History of the English People in the Nineteenth Century*, by Elie Halévy. (Ernest Benn, pp. xvi. 655, 18s.)

Twenty-five years have passed since Halévy's famous *Histoire du peuple anglais aux dix-neuvième siècle* first appeared in an English translation and for much of that time it has been out of print. A great welcome will therefore be accorded to this new and revised edition in six volumes, of which the first, *England in 1815*, has just been published. We congratulate the publishers on their enterprise, and the printers on a book which is a specimen of their craft at its best, cheap only in price, and a delight both to handle and to read.

England in 1815, the year of Waterloo—and, incidentally, a year which (very roughly) marks the beginning of a period momentous in the history of Methodism, a period of conflict, development and secession, and of increasing legal toleration for Dissent. The three sections of M. Halévy's book, Political Institutions, Economic Life, Religion and Culture, all have a bearing upon our history, but the last-named is of course our chief concern. Nowhere is the genius of M. Halévy more marked than in his amazing grasp of the intricate nature of English religious institutions; and in his examination of Anglicanism and Dissent, their relations with each other and with Scottish Presbyterianism, he is a sure and dependable guide.

Had the author been an Englishman and a Methodist he could not have shown a more sympathetic appreciation of our history in all its ramifications in this period. Here and there he has gone astray. To classify Valentine Ward's *Free and Candid Strictures on Methodism* under the heading of "Anti-Methodist Literature" (p. 636) is a pardonable error; and it is a pity that he should have perpetuated the fallacy that the early preachers in Scotland largely failed because they "were either in favour of episcopacy or indifferent to forms of Church government" (p. 462). But these are small points which serve only to heighten the general impression we receive not only of accurate statement but also of genuine insight into Methodism's problems in those formative years. And not Wesleyan Methodism only: the other three Methodist bodies are fairly dealt with as "examples of a type of constitution intermediate between the connexionalism of the Wesleys and the congregationalism of the Independents and Baptists".

Some of M. Halévy's *obiter dicta* are worth pondering. Two of them we will quote. He concludes an admirable summary of Methodist organization thus: "Of all the Free Churches the Wesleyan was the least free" (p. 413). And again: "Scottish

Presbyterianism . . . contributed to nineteenth-century England an element of intellectual virility which would have been wanting had the country been abandoned entirely to the emotionalism of the Wesleys and the Wilberforces." (p. 467.)

There are a few books (a very few) which in the true sense of an overworked word are "indispensable" to the serious student of Methodist history. *England in 1815* is one of those few, and for the very good reason that unlike most books it quite literally puts Methodism in its proper place.

WESLEY F. SWIFT.

William Cowper and the Eighteenth Century, by Gilbert Thomas. (Allen & Unwin, pp. 347, 16s.)

Methodism needs defenders in the study as well as in the street. This book (a revised edition) silenced the slanderers who attributed Cowper's attacks of insanity to the influence of Newton's Evangelicalism. Mr. Thomas first shows clearly that Wesley's Arminian Methodism was not guilty, and then argues (speculatively, it is true) that the healthier and more hopeful spirit of the Arminian section of the Revival would probably have sheltered Cowper from the attacks of his mental disease.

Mr. Thomas then gallantly defends Newton, pointing out that Cowper's first attack occurred before the two Olney hymn-writers had met. He speaks of the sane and manly character of Newton's religion, and claims that his influence on Cowper was almost completely healthy. If there was a Calvinist culprit, he holds that it was Madan, the poet's cousin. But does he adequately defend Whitefield by asserting that Newton's Calvinism was as mild as Whitefield's, but that Madan's was "of a stronger vintage"? Madan actually came under Whitefield's influence as early as 1750, more than a dozen years before Cowper's contact with Madan and his subsequent mental attack. If Madan is to be accused we would like a detailed defence of Whitefield, who evidently influenced him greatly. But Cowper's breakdowns seem to have been produced by external strains mainly non-religious in origin, which overtaxed a mind which had some fatal inner weakness.

Our enjoyment of this book makes us "ask for more". Mr. Thomas calls Blake "the greatest poet of the Revival". Would he please distinguish between the influence of the Revival and that of Swedenborg and others on Blake? Blake was one of the simplest and most suggestive of poets at his best, but for the ordinary man his strange symbolism made him one of the most incomprehensible of poets at his worst. It would be a pity if the Revival was delivered from the stigma of responsibility for Cowper's insanity, only to be saddled with the blame for Blake's eccentricities. Would Mr. Thomas's finely discriminating pen come to our aid again?

FREDERICK HUNTER.

NOTES AND QUERIES

880. GEORGE WADDY: METHODIST PIONEER IN TASMANIA.

I am anxious to obtain information about a namesake of mine, George Waddy, who helped to introduce Methodism into Tasmania early in the last century. The only details I have are as follows: He was born at Newark in 1789, enlisted at Chelmsford in 1812 and left England with the 48th Regiment (Northamptonshires). In 1820 (according to the *History of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society*, vol. iii, pp. 67, 69) his regiment was moved from Sydney to Hobart Town, and there, with two other soldiers, he formed a society class. Later (having been promoted to the rank of sergeant) he was moved from Hobart to the lonely prison station of Macquarie Harbour. Here also he was able to start a class meeting and "Methodism struck root in this terrible place." He died in India in 1824.

I should like to secure details of George Waddy's parentage and especially of his connexion with Richard Waddy, who was in the Wesleyan Methodist ministry 1793-1853. If any member can help me with this or any other information about this soldier-missionary I shall be grateful.

J. LEONARD WADDY.

881. METHODIST HISTORY PRIZES FOR RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS.

A generous Methodist layman, himself an old Rydalian, concerned that the pupils in Methodist boys' schools should be encouraged to study the history of their Church, recently offered to establish Methodist history prizes to be competed for annually. Two other laymen followed suit for the benefit of the girls' schools, so that the pupils at all the schools controlled by the Board of Management for Methodist Residential Schools are eligible to compete. The donors of the prizes wish to remain anonymous.

Those competing are required to submit an essay of about 2,500 words on a prescribed subject connected with Methodist history. The first pruning of entries is done by the schools and no school is allowed to submit more than three entries for the final selection. The subject selected for 1949 was "The Influence of Methodism on Social and Political life in the Eighteenth Century". One prize is restricted to pupils at Rydal School and was won by K. F. Dewhurst. Other prize-winners were W. H. G. Howden and D. M. R. Keate, both of Culford School, and H. G. Powell of Queen's College, Taunton. The successful candidates at the girls' schools were Janet Squirrell and Diana Westgate, both of East Anglian School.

It is to be hoped that this interesting and encouraging development may eventually bring some new recruits into the field of Methodist research as represented by the Wesley Historical Society. The subject of the essay for 1950 is "Methodism and the Church of England, 1784-1812".

ERIC W. BAKER.

882. AN INTERESTING COLLECTION OF WESLEYANA.

The Rev. John Heaton has recently received a most interesting parcel of Wesleyana from the daughter of the late Mr. T. Cann Hughes, for many years Town Clerk of Lancaster, recently deceased. They were gathered by Mr. Thomas Hughes, F.S.A., art dealer, of Chester, whose wife was a Methodist.

The most interesting item is a little book enclosed in a leather case stamped on the front, "Rev. John Wesley, M.A., Pocket

Testament". On the narrow margins are notes in Latin and Greek in Wesley's neat handwriting.

There is a copy of *Hymns and Sacred Poems*, published by John and Charles Wesley in 1742. On the fly-leaf is written the name of Mrs. Charles Wesley's father, Marmaduke Gwynne, with a note appended "given by the Rev. John Wesley, the 30th of June, 1742". On the front cover, in the handwriting of Miss Gwynne, is written "Sarah Gwynne's book, 1744, given by her Father".

The parcel also contains autograph letters, books and pamphlets, including Wesley's *The New Testament with an analysis of the several Books and Chapters*. This was issued in 1790 and never reprinted. It must not be confused with the better known *Notes*.

Very interesting is a pocket-book or reticule made of white satin, beautifully embroidered. Inside is a very old-fashioned hat-pin, and a small, unbound, gilt-edged note-book, on the front page of which is written: "To my dear friend Miss Mary Trueman on her approaching marriage, this Bible [missing] and Pocket Book are presented as a token of the giver's affectionate regards, John Wesley, 6 April 1783". A bill accompanies it showing that it was bought by Thomas Hughes, Esq., F.S.A., The Grove, Chester, for four guineas in 1877 from William George, 26, Park Street, Bristol. A photograph of the pocket-book appeared in the *Preston Guardian*, 2nd October 1926.

Amongst the papers is a copy of the official account of the death of Wesley sent to the preachers throughout the Connexion, and two of the Wesley death medals.

Collectors of Wesley pottery will be interested to learn that Mr. Heaton has received from the same source a Wesley jug, about pint size, unfortunately snipped at the top. The Curator of the Lancaster Museum considers it to be of the Adams period. There is a non-Wesley jug of the same shape in his collection. The fact that there is no date of birth or death on it seems to indicate that it was probably made in his lifetime. On one side there is a portrait of Wesley with Bible and Cross above and flanked by figures of Hope and Charity. Beneath is the following rhyme quoted without alteration:

JEHOVAH reigns let Saints let Men adore
Obey ye Sinners and proclaim his pow'r
Ho' each desponding thirsty Soul draw near
Nor money bring nor price nor doubt nor fear
Wide as Creation deep as Sin's recefs
Extends the merits of redeeming Grace
So WESLEY speaks so wondring Angels taught
Love peace goodwill to all in Christ are bought
Enamour'd thousands hear the joyful Word
Yeild to conviction and confes the LORD

On the other side with cherubs and scrolls above and the dove of peace (which looks more like a vulture) with olive branch in beak and scrolls below, is the following:—

JESUS, my All, to heav'n is gone,
He whom I fix my hopes upon;
His track I see, and I'll purfue,
The narrow way, till Him I view.

The jug is cream and the lettering and scroll work black. It appears to have been long kept in one place exposed to the sun, as the lettering in parts is faded.

F. F. BRETHERTON.

883. JOHN ACOURT.

John Wesley gives an account of Acourt's separation from the society at the Foundery in his *Journal* (ii, p. 353), but comparatively little is known of Acourt himself. Charles Wesley refers to the conversion of a Mrs. Acourt on 1st April 1739, and she was quite possibly John Acourt's wife.

In a letter to Howell Harris dated 13th March 1740, Mrs. Judith Godwin, having described how the zeal of the "Wesleyan" party for their doctrine cools their love towards Whitefield, states:

. . . and another instance I see of this kind, in the indifference they discover towards a serious young man of themselves, who is here waiting for orders; he came from Barbados, and designs returning there, but woud willingly be usefull amongst his friends here, while he stays which they decline accepting of, as he is a predestinaryan. I hope you will see him here, for he will not be gone till May or June, his name is Acourt. (*Trevecka Letters*, No. 227, published in the *Journal of the Calvinistic Methodist Historical Society*, Trevecka MSS. Supplement, No. 8, p. 303.)

Harris was in London from 3rd May to 12th June 1740. On 25th May he heard a certain "Ackart" preach at "St. Peter's-in-the-Pool". The Rev. John Thickers thinks that the preacher was Acourt, and the place St. Peter's-le-Poor. Had Acourt been ordained then? And how did he come to preach at St. Peter's-le-Poor? Some of our London members might be able to find the answers to these queries. Mr. Thickers also quoted at least three references to a certain "Ackol" from Harris's diary during his stay in London; who was he? Or is the name another Harrisian variant of Acourt?

During Harris's stay in London, Acourt wrote him a letter (*J.C.M.H.S.*, Supplement, No. 9, pp. 238f), mainly on whether Harris should seek ordination or not. In it he refers to his wife, who "is convinc'd of unbelief—has a small spark of true Faith and longs for an Increase". He invites Harris to visit them "at Mr. Alwoods, Book-binder, Broad Sanctuary, Westminster". He writes again to Harris on 3rd July, giving an account of his being "turned out of the society" by John Wesley (*ibid.*, pp. 350-2). He adds: "I did purpose to come to Wales but I durst not leave my little Flock . . . for my D^r B^r John Westly at present treads down the pastures and fouls the Waters with his Feet." His address is given as "at Mr. Deans at the four Coffins in Noble Street near Goldsmiths Hall, London".

It was on receipt of this letter that Harris wrote to John Wesley (*ibid.*, pp. 355-7) complaining of his treatment of Acourt. Harris's complaint was not quite fair, though, since he states that Acourt was excommunicated "because he held Election". Both Wesley's *Journal* and Acourt's own letter agree that he was turned out because he *preached* (and, according to the *Journal*, insisted on preaching) the doctrine of Election. Wesley's reply to Harris has been printed in his *Letters*, i, p. 343f. Samuel Mason, himself a Calvinist, expressed his view in a letter to Harris (*Trevecka Supplement*, No. 10, p. 364) that Acourt and Wesley "were both to blame".

Harris recorded in his diary for 18th March 1741: "had some knitt[in]g in spirit to Bro. Acourt that I hear is now gone away" (*Trevecka Diaries*, No. 70). Had he then returned to "Barbados" in accordance with his original design? Does anyone know what became of him afterwards?

GRIFFITH T. ROBERTS.