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Proceedings

OF THE

Wesley Historical Society

Editor : REV. WESLEY F. SWIFT

Volume XXIX

June 1953

EDITORIAL

THE 250th anniversary of John Wesley's birth will be celebrated in various ways by world Methodism on 28th June 1953. In this country the event has probably been overshadowed by the prominence necessarily given in this "year of evangelism" to Wesley Day and its coincidence with Whit-Sunday, but our American friends are celebrating this "quarter-millennium" with a commendable and typical enthusiasm. Four prominent representatives of British Methodism have gone to America to share in the celebrations, and will address the World Methodist Convocation of Evangelism in Philadelphia at the end of June, and the "Wesley Quarter-Millennium Commemoration" at Lake Junaluska, North Carolina, at the beginning of July.

* * *

In connexion with the celebrations at Lake Junaluska there will be held a meeting of the executive and editorial committees of the Association of Methodist Historical Societies, at which our own Society will be indirectly represented by our Secretary, the Rev. Dr. Frank Baker. Nothing but good can come of such a meeting, and we look forward with interest to our Secretary's report. Dr. Baker has a crowded seven weeks' programme in America, where he is giving a course of lectures at the Iliff School of Theology in the University of Denver, and a shorter course at the Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas. We wish our "Methodist pilgrim" in America journeying mercies and a safe return, and are sure that his first visit to the New World will not only be a "goodwill mission", but will also stimulate interest in the work of our Society.

* * *

Our Registrar has lately been working overtime in a successful attempt to reduce the number of subscriptions in arrears, and we are grateful to the large number of members who have responded to his appeal. He asks us to remind members that subscriptions not yet paid for 1953 are now overdue and should be paid at once. The use of a banker's order—obtainable from the Registrar—would facilitate annual payments and save both members and Registrar much time and trouble.

THE JOURNALS OF JAMES CHUBB

BY the courtesy of Captain S. E. Moon, O.B.E., of Plymouth, and of Mr. Stanley Sowton, I have lately had the privilege of examining some manuscript Journals written by James Chubb, a Methodist exciseman of Wesley's day, which, if they do not add much to our knowledge of early Methodism, do give illuminating glimpses of the way of life of ordinary members of the society and of the travelling preachers. Chubb was a Cornishman, born at St. Germans on 2nd February 1749. The death of his father, who was drowned in crossing a ferry, left a family of ten young children to the care of his mother. James had at once to share with his brothers in the work on the farm, and he records that he "drove the Oxen at plough" when he was eight. His education was scanty. He attended the parish church, sang in the choir, but "to the praise of men", and was famous for swearing. When he was twenty he was convinced of sin by a pious Methodist woman who came to the village and started a prayer-meeting in her home. Persecution followed, in which his brothers shared, but a Methodist preacher began to visit the little meeting and sustained him in his search for deliverance.

At Christmas 1774, at a lovefeast at St. Austell, Chubb heard many declaring "what Jesus had done for their Souls", and when the preacher made an appeal he responded.

I was then trembling, my Sins rising as mountains, the Crucified Jesus near. I stood up and declared what I felt, and while I was speaking to the Society Jesus Christ spoke peace to my Soul.

Soon he began to pray in public, and in the Almshouse and elsewhere "often read a Sermon and dropt a few words to the poor". The way continued to be hard, with hostility in his home and moods of inward depression, but he often found happiness in leading a little class-meeting.

In 1778 Chubb entered the Excise service and was sent to Liskeard, where he was initiated into his first duties. His first sight of John Wesley was at that time, when he went to Plymouth Dock to hear "the great Prophet" preach. A few weeks later Dr. Coke came to Cornwall, and Chubb heard from the doctor the story of his work at South Petherton and of his dismissal from his curacy. Excise appointments took Chubb into South Wales from 1780 to 1784, and then to Bristol until 1801, when he left for Coventry, at which point the story told in these Journals ends. Ill health often interrupted the regularity of his official work: there are many references to a "frenzy fever" which at times afflicted him. It seems, too, that leave from his duties as exciseman was easily obtained, and many pages record his travels between South Wales, Bristol, and his Cornish home. Occasionally official duties called him to London. On his way there, in June 1793, to give evidence in a case before the King's Bench, he met with a serious accident; the stage coach in which he and his wife travelled was overturned as the horses raced into Reading. Mrs.

Chubb, travelling inside, was unhurt, other passengers suffered broken limbs; James, who was on the box, was bruised and battered and so badly injured internally that the surgeon doubted if he would ever be able to return to his post in the Excise. It was two years before he resumed duties as a Permit Writer in Bristol. He records at length his sufferings and his slow return to health—sea-bathing at Plymouth and in South Wales, the kindness of Methodist friends in Reading and Bath, and his spiritual reactions to this painful discipline.

There are three volumes of the *Journal*, totalling 760 pages, and a fourth which contains a few pages of accounts of personal expenditure and receipted bills, together with cuttings relating to the Bristol Strangers' Friend Society. The story in the *Journal* is not consecutive: volumes one and two overlap; volume three summarizes the story of his early life and continues with a shorter narrative down to his departure from Bristol. It is difficult to judge whether the whole is in Chubb's own handwriting: if it is, he varied his calligraphy from time to time, adorning it with flourishes and copper-plate signatures. It was written up from rougher notes. James was in the habit of lending his *Journal* to his friends, and sometimes entertained them when they visited him by reading extracts from it. He wrote for his family and his friends, and aimed at edification. I suspect that Wesley's *Journal* was his inspiration and model.

Still, Chubb does let us see how an average Methodist in secular employ thought and gave his witness. His religion marked him out from his fellow-officers in the Excise: he was ridiculed and reviled, and often complains of their drunkenness and blasphemy. When he travelled from Carmarthen as a junior on his second round with the Collector he says he "passed for a Methodist preacher" and was called "the Collector's chaplain". An occasional encounter with another Methodist exciseman is noted with pleasure. Returning from the Leeds Conference in 1781, he spent Sunday at Worcester, and at the afternoon class-meeting found a brother officer who took him to visit another. "It is not common," he remarks, "for three Methodist Excisemen to meet together." The visit ended, as was customary, with tea and prayer.

South Wales

Chubb's work in Wales was hard, involving rough journeys over the mountains, and was made more difficult by his ignorance of the Welsh language. Between March 1780 and the end of the year he had ridden 2,000 miles. In many places he found no Methodists, and only occasionally could hear a sermon in English. On one round which lasted a fortnight he travelled with the Collector from Carmarthen through Tenby, Pembroke, Narberth, Haverfordwest, Lampeter, Llandovery, Llandilo, Llanelly and back to Carmarthen. Fifteen towns are named, with the comment: "No Methodists in our Round except in three of the above Towns, namely Carmarthen, Pembroke and Haverfordwest." Llanelly is added as an afterthought, with a note that he refers to Wesleyans. There were many

Calvinists, he adds, whose services were almost all in Welsh. But where he found a class-meeting he attended it. At Carmarthen "I met a women's Class. Most of them were simple and pious." The preacher encouraged him to improve his talent, and as the record unfolds we see the pattern of Chubb's life forming. Outside his official duties he was occupied in the cultivation of his spiritual life and the service of the little Methodist societies. On arrival at a new town he inquires for the Methodists and for the preacher, makes himself known and often is glad to accept readily-proffered hospitality. Or the preacher helps him to find congenial lodgings. To be known as a Methodist was a guarantee of welcome, fellowship and practical help. In these contacts, so quickly made in place after place, Chubb found his vocation as a visitor and leader of society classes. His feelings are expressed in a letter to an old friend in Cornwall: "Give my kind love to all the Methodists. Tell them it is a great Favour to be a true Member of that Church."

Narberth was Chubb's headquarters for twelve months, "a famous town for drunkenness". There he arranged for "Mr. Wesley's preachers one night in a fortnight" to visit the town, and found them a place to preach in. He made friends with the more numerous Calvinists: "they come and hear our preachers and I attend their public and private meetings and we are often blessed together". Fifteen years later Chubb and his family re-visited South Wales, where by sea-bathing he hoped to restore his health. In the place where they lodged, near the "Bathing-House" at Swansea, he "met two of the Classes with pleasure" and exclaims "I love the pious Welsh." At Neath, after the preaching, he joined in a love-feast, with Mr. Lloyd, "one of Mr. Wesley's preachers", present, and was refreshed. At Llanelly he "met the little Class in the Evening in their new Chapel".

Bristol

At the end of February 1784 Chubb took up his duties in Bristol. His first impressions of the city were not favourable, for he found it very disagreeable to be confin'd in Town, and survey nothing but Soapers & Chandlers. There are many Privileges in having some of the Best Ministers, but the Methodists in General take but little Notice of Strangers.

But this was a hasty judgement, corrected on the next page. "I soon found many friends in both temporal and spiritual matters." Bristol gave him his wife, Elizabeth Wensley, whom, in the end, he married secretly because of her father's opposition. She was then twenty, seventeen years her husband's junior. A list of their children gives fourteen names—nine born in Bristol and baptized at St. James's parish church, and five at Coventry, baptized at Trinity church. Some doubtless died in infancy, but the maintenance of so large a family strained the father's resources and made him anxious about their future. In his last year or two in Bristol he lived in a "retired comfortable house" in Cannon Street, a narrow cobbled alley-way opening at the foot of the tower of St. James's church.

Here, on John Wesley's last visit to Bristol—in 1790—Chubb entertained him to dinner. Charles Wesley and his wife would walk through Cannon Street on their way between their home in Charles Street and the parish church. But Charles had moved from Bristol to London some years before Chubb arrived, and I cannot discover that they ever met.

The New Room was Chubb's spiritual home, and he was also one of the first trustees of Portland chapel. He helped Captain Thomas Webb in begging from house to house for money for the building fund. "This I done," he writes, "besides my Stewardship, and Excise business, which frequently kept me up until midnight." He wished he might be buried at Portland, but when the end of his life came he was living in retirement at Liskeard.

Chubb knew the Bristol preachers well, and had a special affection and admiration for Henry Moore, who befriended him in Bath. "A very wise, humble Gentleman, he was made a blessing to this people and particularly to J & E Chubb." One would have been glad to hear from Chubb some account of the trouble that arose from the administration of the Communion at Portland chapel on the Sunday following the end of the 1794 Conference, in which Moore assisted. The New Room trustees issued an injunction forbidding Moore to preach there when next day he arrived to fulfil his appointment. Moore appealed to the congregation, and most of them walked out and followed him up the hill to Portland chapel. A few days later a building Committee set to work to provide a new chapel to replace the New Room (now more often called "the Old Room"), and on 28th June 1795, Ebenezer chapel, fronting Old King Street and adjoining Wesley's old chapel, was opened, Moore preaching in the morning and Adam Clarke in the evening. The bitter controversy raged throughout Methodism, and Bristol was flooded with pamphlets for and against the trustees. But during a good part of this time Chubb was a physical wreck as a result of his accident in Reading, and was out of Bristol. He makes no reference to the raging of the storm, but his signature appears on the long statement issued to the preachers by the leaders and trustees in Bristol. One note in his Journal adds a little to our knowledge of the struggle by revealing the fact that Moore was reconciled to the recalcitrant trustees a year later. On 16th August 1795, the day before he left Bristol,

Mr. Moore was again admitted to the Old Room. He preached an excellent Sermon from Job. Acquaint thyself with Him and be at peace. Mr. M. said that Job and his friends could not agree till God came down and made peace between them. Just so with the contending Methodists in Bristol.

The Conferences of 1790 and 1794 were held in Bristol, and Chubb attended many of the special services. In 1790 "Mr. W. and Dr. Coke gave the sacrament to, I presume, 1500 persons". This was Wesley's last Conference, and his diary (there is a blank in his *Journal*) shows that he gave communion on each of the three Sunday mornings, but the number of communicants is not stated. The New

Room would not hold half of 1,500 people. Chubb says Dr. Coke gave an account of the work in Dublin, and that "Mr. J. Wesley at the penitent meeting exhorted all to be serious, spoke much against laughter". At Guinea Street he heard Joseph Benson preach on Revelation xx. 11-12. "Under this Sermon I had great views of the Judgment, the Coming of Christ, &c, by faith I did look into the Eternal World."

Chubb visited the 1794 Conference from Bath, where he was still taking the waters and recuperating from his accident. With the help of friends he struggled about, sometimes on crutches, sometimes in a bath-chair. "Mr. Shum's men" helped to push his chair up to Portland chapel. But he was improving. At a prayer-meeting in his own house he had almost the free use of his limbs. Crippled though he was, he made full use of the ministry of Conference preachers during the ten days he stayed in Bristol, hearing Benson, Pawson, Thompson, Bradburn, Coke, the two Taylors, and Thomas Hanby the President. Their texts are quoted with summaries of the sermons. Evening preaching was followed by prayer-meetings. "Several souls found peace with God" after Joseph Benson had preached. Chubb left the Room between ten and eleven o'clock, but "some stayed until one in the morning". Next evening he heard Henry Taylor and stayed till ten: "It was a very awful, solemn Time, but not irregular as last night." On Sunday the preachers he heard were Joseph Taylor at seven o'clock, Pawson at ten at Portland, after prayers had been read, Thomas Taylor at three, and the President at half-past five, "at the Room", where, following the sermon, Mr. Pawson gave an exhortation to 13 young preachers then received into full Connexion. . . . It was a very awful Time. God was powerfully present. The prayers [were] then put up by Dr. Coke, Pawson & Hanby in behalf of those young Labourers . . . meeting lasted till 9 o'clock.

After Mather had preached on the Monday evening prayer followed, "and many were constrained to cry aloud. I came away at 11 o'clock at night. Dr. Coke was then engaged in prayer with the Broken-hearted. Many found Peace." Tuesday's sermon was by Samuel Bradburn, "preached by desire of Conference". Chubb thought it was "pointed at Mr. Benson", who earlier in the week had preached about schism in the Body of Christ—a faint echo, perhaps, of the current controversies. On Wednesday evening Dr. Coke read "several accounts of the great work in Yorkshire, many Thousands added in that County last year". Those were happy days for the good man, suffering though he was. He had fellowship with the preachers in the common-room above the chapel, received their sympathy and rejoiced with them at the outpouring of the Spirit—"many were convinced and converted". Despite the undercurrents of discordant opinion, the Conference was a time of spiritual blessing.

One further curious note may be quoted. At the Sunday afternoon service conducted by Thomas Taylor

a young Singer being forward gave out an Anthem before Sermon. Mr. Taylor said he was not for discouraging the Singing of Anthems, it would do in private Rooms, but he lik'd for all to sing in meetings. Was he recalling Wesley's Rule: "Sing all"?

Reading and Bath

It was in June 1793 that James Chubb was thrown violently out of the stage coach at Reading and badly injured. He was carried into an inn, and a surgeon was sent for.

I first asked the Surgeon if any of the late Mr. Wesley's preachers were in this Town. He said he knew one, Mr. Scott. I desired he might be sent for as all medical help would not do without the assistance of my God.

Scott came, prayed, and provided a nurse "to attend on (as appeared) his dying brother". The sufferings Chubb endured during his seventeen weeks in Reading, both from his injuries and from surgical treatment, are described in some detail. He was refreshed by the visits of Methodists and others—among them two Anglican clergymen and a Baptist minister. Indeed, one of Chubb's physicians was displeas'd, thinking that "these praying people" did him harm. "Health was the best time for repentance," he said; "Mr. Chubb did not stand in need of prayers." Chubb remarks: "He is a very good Physician for the Body, but a poor one for the Soul." At this time he found much comfort in singing one of Charles Wesley's hymns, and quotes several verses. It is a hymn that has long since disappeared from our sight.

How happy the sorrowful man
Whose sorrow is sent from above!
Indulg'd with a visit of pain,
Chastis'd by omnipotent love.
The Author of all his distress
He comes by affliction to know,
And God he in heaven shall bless
That ever he suffer'd below.¹

In the middle of October Chubb left Reading for Bath. On the Sunday he was taken to King Street chapel, where his friend Henry Moore preached and returned thanks for his deliverance from pain and danger. At the end of the month he and his wife were able to entertain in their lodgings Frederick Shum and his bride when they returned from their marriage at Keynsham church. The Shums figure prominently in the rest of the Bath pages of the Journal—a family renowned in Methodist history for their work in Bath and for their distinguished Methodist descendants. They were true friends to the broken man. Chubb thought he was a little better for the Bath waters, and says with more confidence: "On the whole my Soul prospered." He marked the luxury and pleasure he saw in the city, but found some "Lots in a Sodom", and picks out "several that preach the Gospel"—Methodist, Calvinist, Baptist, Independent and Moravian ministers. At a lovefeast he spoke of his experience,

¹ *Short Hymns on Select Passages of Scripture*, No. 733.

and fainted from weakness. "Hardly a dry eye was present." It may be added that after long legal proceedings against the coachmasters Chubb accepted damages amounting to £950. His Bath friends were on the scene again when, next year, he went to South Wales for sea-bathing. He and John Shum were together daily—walking on the sands, bathing, riding (in Mr. Shum's carriage), praying together in the meetings and when they visited each other's lodgings. There was much conversation "on the deep things of God".

The Strangers' Friend Society

In March 1790 John Wesley visited Bristol, and on Sunday morning, the 14th, met the Strangers' Friend Society, "instituted wholly for the relief, not of our society, but for poor, sick, friendless strangers". "I do not know," he writes, "that I ever heard or read of such an institution till within a few years ago. So this also is one of the fruits of Methodism." A footnote to this entry in the Standard Edition of the *Journal* states that a similar society was started in London in 1785 by a retired soldier, John Gardner, and that the members gave a penny a week "for the suffering poor". Wesley encouraged and helped it. Other societies in Dublin and Manchester are connected with the name of Adam Clarke, and he has been described as the founder of the one in Bristol. That, however, is a mistake.

The earliest account of the Bristol society hitherto published says it began when "a few pious young men, members of the late John Wesley's Society, agreed to devote several hours on the Sabbath to visiting the sick and those who, by age or infirmity, were unable to attend public worship." Often they felt they should add "pecuniary relief" to their spiritual ministrations, and set to work to raise a small fund for that purpose. No member of the Methodist society was eligible to be helped from the fund—a fact which drew from Wesley the comment quoted above. Another rule required that no relief should be given until the person for whom the appeal had been made had been visited at home. The visitors were carefully chosen and were then instructed and commissioned. An early minute book gives a list of questions put to them on that occasion and a lengthy report of an address or "charge" delivered to them. The Bristol Society is still in existence, carrying on a useful and unobtrusive work on the income of invested funds. The officers and visitors hold their monthly meetings at the New Room, as they did when the Society was founded in 1786.

Hitherto it has not been known who was the founder of the Society in Bristol—the oldest surviving minute book dates only from 1810. The *Journal* of James Chubb makes it clear that he was the man who made the first move. His account is explicit.

Sept. 1786. I was called to visit the sick. I mentioned this to my intimate Friends, Joseph Poole, David Penton, John Brown and Stephen Roberts. [They met with Chubb in the same Band.] We agreed to search for poor sick distressed Creatures. We first went to

the Almshouse in Pennywell Lane. . . . We drew up some Rules and I was appointed Steward. . . . Each Visitor subscribed weekly towards the relief of those in great want which were easily found in Garrets, etc. . . . These visits also done good to our own souls and kindled a flame also in our own Society.

Later he writes:

14th March, 1787.² Revd. John Wesley met the Visitors of the Sick and appointed me and Thomas Delve Stewards and called us The Strangers' Friend Society—we now went on our way rejoicing.

Of Chubb's pride in this charitable undertaking there is evidence in the last entry in these Journals, written in February 1823, in a testimony on his 74th birthday.

I rejoice that I have done a little for God, being the first Steward for visiting and relieving poor distressed Strangers. The Revd. John Wesley said it was a new thing in the world [and] gave our little Society in Bristol the Name (I presume never printed before) Strangers' Friend Society. It is now in most parts where the Gospel is preached. The Calvinists and Baptists have followed our plan.

Pasted on some pages of the account book referred to above are a printed set of Rules, a list of the names of Stewards of the Society for the first three years, printed accounts for the years 1787 to 1800, and some extracts from annual reports with commendations by William Myles (1801) and Charles Atmore (1797). Another cutting contains the following:

N.B. Though this Society is instituted by the Methodists, yet their own Poor shall not be entitled to any relief from it, a Fund for supplying their wants being already established.

S. BRADBURN.

A. CLARKE.

The Rules, too, are worth reproducing.

STRANGER'S FRIEND

- I. Many have been the charitable Institutions which have commenced in England in little more than half a Century. One of these has been a new Kind; I believe never heard of before. Four or five years ago, a few poor Men in *London*, agreed to pay each a *Penny* a Week, in order to relieve STRANGERS, who had no Habitation, no Cloaths, no Food, no Friends. They met once a Week and assigned to each his Share of the Work for the ensuing Week: to discover proper Objects (who indeed were easily found) and to relieve them according to their several Necessities. And they took Care of their Souls as well as Bodies, instructing them in the Principles of Religion, of which till then they had little more Knowledge than the Beasts of the Field.
- II. A little Society of the same Kind has lately been founded at *Bristol*. Being determined to do them all the Service I could, I appointed them to meet at Six o'Clock every Sunday Morning at the *New-Room*, with the resident Preacher and two Stewards,

² This is probably a mistake, and the date should be 1790. In the diary the year is plainly written 1787, but I have now found a small note in vol. 4 which gives the year as 1790. This coincides with the entry in Wesley's *Journal* quoted above.

who are to receive all Contributions, and keep Account of all Disbursements. The present Stewards are JAMES CHUBB and THOMAS DELVE.

- III. At the weekly Meeting, first the Names are called over, then each has his Work assigned for the following Week. Next, Enquiry is made, whether each has fulfilled his Appointment the preceding Week.
- IV. Any Member, who without a sufficient Cause, is absent from this Meeting, or does not fulfil his Appointment, pays *Two-pence* for the Use of the Poor.
- V. If any of the Members are sick, he shall be visited twice a Week.

JOHN WESLEY.

Bristol, *March 12, 1790.*

The accounts shew that at the beginning, from September 1786 to December 1787, the income of the Society was £8 17s. 4d., of which £8 9s. was distributed. By 1800 the annual income had risen to £403 7s. 3d., and £344 was expended "By distributions to 1679 distressed Objects". Extracts from early reports tell pitiable stories of desperate poverty and of the relief given to the needy by the visitors of this admirable Society.

A Methodist of Wesley's Day

James Chubb may be regarded as a typical Methodist of the rank and file. He knew Wesley, heard him preach at various times and places, and on several occasions had a meal with him; but Wesley's *Journal* does not mention his name. In 1781 Chubb rode to Pembroke to hear Wesley preach in St. Daniel's church ("about 1500 attended the sacrament"), and afterwards dined with him "at Mr. Llewelin's". Wesley rode a pony and started out before Chubb who, though he "rode at the rate of seven miles an hour" failed to catch him up until they reached a ferry. "It is about 9 miles and Mr. W. 76 years old", adds Chubb. A few days later he heard Wesley exhort the society "not to indulge themselves with too much sleep. . . . He allowed six hours for a Man and seven for a Woman in health."

Chubb had some pleasant associations with Dr. Coke, whom he first met at Liskeard in 1778. He was in Cornwall again at the end of 1794, re-visiting old scenes, and ended the year joyfully by hearing Coke preach at Launceston. Next day "the Dr. preached and gave the Sacrament". Chubb then joined him, and they travelled by chaise

through Tavistock, Plymouth, Exeter, Taunton, &c. The Dr. preached at various places in our Road where we slept. Baptised 15 children in Taunton. The weather was very cold but the Christian Conversation and sometimes singing warmed our hearts.

They were a fortnight on the road.

There is some material in these Journals for a study in Methodist preaching of the period. Chubb diligently records the names of preachers he heard and their texts, and often adds a summary of the sermon; but it would hardly be fair to judge the preachers by these

bare outlines. They are more desiccated than those usually presented to modern examining committees of District Synods. They do, however, indicate the range of subjects chosen. Speaking generally they are evangelical, with a strong emphasis on the need for present decision, the solemnity of life with its opportunity for repentance and faith, and the certainty of judgement. Chubb was no bigot. He attended the parish churches and took communion there. As he travelled about he worshipped with Calvinists, Baptists and Quakers, as well as with his own folk. He heard all preachers with charity and a desire to profit by what he heard, though sometimes an effort was necessary, as when a "rigid Welshman" in one of Lady Huntingdon's chapels said: "Calvin, I know, is in Heaven, but where Arminius is I cannot tell. If he is saved, he recanted and is saved by Grace." Even then the hearer "endeavoured to hold fast what was good and leave the bad". In his early days Chubb was occasionally more critical. "In the evening Sir Henry Trelawney Preach'd in ye Presbyterian meeting-house. Little or nothing said about Repentance." At Liskeard he once heard an Arian preacher discourse mostly about the planets: "nothing said about being a New Creature". A note that provokes a smile, though it was not intended to do so, is this: "I rid to Landrake where I heard a Serious hatter Preach a good Sermon . . . describing the great Day of Retribution." On another day at Landrake Church he had but "a dry morsel".

The modern Methodist "enjoys" a sermon, or has "a good time", if he comments on it at all. Chubb was subdued by what he heard, and applied the message to his own heart, often adding an ejaculatory prayer—a word of praise or petition. "It was a solemn time", "an awful time", "a comfortable discourse"—these are typical descriptions. "It was a blessed time and tears dropt from every eye" is another. Many Sundays end with the remark: "One of my best days". Emotions found ready expression in tears: Chubb wept at meeting and parting with friends, wept when he recalled mercies received or sufferings endured. The class-meeting was usually an occasion when tears flowed. "If those are blessed that weep, everyone in the meeting was Blessed" is his comment on a class-meeting in Cornwall with old friends—"very Awful, Powerful and affecting".

Quotations cannot convey the impression which these artless pages make on a sympathetic reader. Life is lived in a pervading awareness of God: His commands to be obeyed, His judgements to be feared, His salvation to be experienced with humble joy, His succour near at hand. This cannot be dismissed as conventional piety. Phrases may be stereotyped, but behind them is a soul alive to God in Christ. God is seen but thinly veiled in Nature, and His hand is recognized in all that happens. At Glastonbury Chubb "saw the thorn that Blooms to Christmas" and cries: "How wonderful are Thy works, O Lord". As he rode along the Cornish cliffs, he "not only beheld the Rowling waves but Meditated on Him whom the wind

and seas obey". The first sight of the hot wells in Bath prompts the exclamation: "Nothing is impossible with God". When his horse bolted down a steep hill and threw him into a ditch, the rider was supported "even in the air" by "Him that rideth on the wings of the wind". The daily discipline of reading the Scriptures and prayer was supplemented sometimes by fasting. Conversation with friends was "about the best things". On a Saturday evening he writes:

I have put my Books in order . . . May I now settle my Accounts with God, recollect my soul . . . Lord, pardon my wandering moments and prepare my soul for the Sabbath.

Several times Chubb was in peril crossing the Bristol Channel. He, his wife and two children, with a maid, left Swansea one Sunday night and were driven down Channel in a storm. At eleven o'clock on Monday night they struck a sandbank. Chubb went on deck.

I saw that none but God could get us off. It being good Moonlight I looked up to my Father's throne and cried to Him for help. He heard, He answered, He moved us.

By two next morning they were safely anchored in the shelter of the English shore. The simplicity of such faith is touching: it is as though the good man saw the Heavenly Throne just above the clouds and claimed his Father's help. Our ways of thinking about Providence have changed: in our sophistication we have lost something that sustained our fathers.

Guidance came in answer to prayer. Occasionally Chubb would open his Bible and look for directions in the first verse he saw, though his interpretation sometimes seems strained. When he was riding to Liskeard for news of his first Excise appointment, meditating as he went, he turned to his "Scriptural cards" for a pointer, and drew one with the words "I am thy God, I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." It seemed to him as though God spoke from heaven through the prophet. This was in his early days: as his spiritual life developed he truly walked with God and knew he was being led by the Divine hand.

The Journals

James Chubb died at Liskeard in 1826; his widow lived till 1852. The Journals passed to their son, Thomas, who founded a firm of bookbinders in Gough Square, Fleet Street, and from him to his grand-daughters, the last survivor of whom gave them to their cousin, Captain Moon. The late Sir Lawrence Chubb, who was the original Secretary of the Commons and Footpaths Preservation Society, which became the Playing Fields Society, was a grandson of James, the Journal writer. The first two volumes of the Journal have been given to Mr. Stanley Sowton, for Wesley's Cottage, Trewint; the other two will be preserved at the New Room, Bristol. By his generosity Captain Moon has added to the treasures of these two shrines, and has done us a service for which we are grateful.

EDGAR T. SELBY.

EARLY METHODISM IN GREENOCK AND PORT GLASGOW

I. Greenock

HOW and when Methodism first came to Greenock, and where the society met, we do not know. Wesley paid the town three visits, in 1772, 1774 and 1776; but it is clear that Methodism had already a footing in the town,¹ from Wesley's reference to "our room":

Monday, April 20th 1772. I went on to Greenock, a sea-port town, twenty miles west of Glasgow. It is built very much like Plymouth Dock and has a safe and spacious harbour. The trade and inhabitants, and consequently the houses, are increasing swiftly; and so is cursing, swearing, drunkenness, and all manner of wickedness. Our room is about thrice as large as that of Glasgow, but it would not near contain the congregation. I spoke exceeding plain, and not without hope that we may see some fruit, even among this hard-hearted generation.

Tuesday, April 21st 1772. The house was very full in the morning. And they shewed an excellent spirit; for after I had spoke a few words on the head, everyone stood up at the singing. In the afternoon, I preached at Port Glasgow, a large town, two miles east of Greenock. Many gay people were there, careless enough, but the greater part seemed to hear with understanding. In the evening I preached at Greenock: and God gave them a loud call, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear.

Two years later he revised his estimate of the size of the house—or the house had been altered!—for his *Journal* for 16th May 1774 describes it as "twice as large as that at Glasgow".

George Whitefield preached in Greenock on Tuesday, 19th August 1742, and again in 1763 (in a loft in the Royal Close, now demolished, on "Is there no balm in Gilead?") on the occasion of his departure for one of his American visits; and whether Methodism resulted from either of those visits, or was an indirect result of Wesley's first visit to Glasgow in 1753, we cannot tell; the latter is perhaps the more likely. As for the hired room, it is well known that Wesley often preached in the Masons' Lodge of any town; and it seems likely that it occurred in Greenock, and that it was the home of the Methodists for many years. The building still stands, though altered out of all recognition, at the corner of East Hamilton Street and Charles Street, and is now occupied by Crawford's Restaurant. Naturally the society wished for a room of their own, and attempts were made to build or buy one; for, writing to Charles Atmore on 20th October 1781, Wesley says: "It does not appear that we have as yet any place in Greenock."

From the days of Wesley's visits, Greenock was supplied, on and off, by preachers, sometimes sharing a man with Glasgow, sometimes with Ayr. As early as 1774, Wesley seems to have tried to set apart a man for Greenock; for writing to Joseph Benson on 26th July of

¹ The standard *History of Greenock*, by R. M. Smith, which states that Wesley introduced Methodism into the town, is thus in error.

that year, he says: "I will there [at Conference] propose the case of Greenock." Earlier that year, Benson himself had been at Greenock, and Wesley had written him on 4th March: "When you have been three or four weeks at Greenock and Port Glasgow, Brother Broadbent should change with you." But before the end of the year, Wesley was of the opinion that the town could not have a man to itself; writing to Benson on 16th October 1774, he says:

The Society in Greenock are entirely at their own disposal. They may either have a preacher between them and Glasgow or none at all. But more than one between them they cannot have. I have too much regard both for the bodies and souls of our preachers to let them be confined to one place any more. I hope John Bredin will punctually observe your direction, spending either three days or a week at each place alternately. . . . If John Bredin does not go to Greenock let him spend half his time at Dunbar. . . . But give me only six days in a fortnight there and I will visit all the Society from house to house.

Men of note were there from time to time: Alexander Suter was appointed to Ayr and Greenock in 1787; James Bogie, in Glasgow in 1789, was asked to keep an eye on the Greenock society; and Richard Smetham was there in 1814-16.

The first chapel was built in 1814,² though the land on which it stood was not bought until 1815. It stood at the corner of Tobago Street and Sir Michael Street, its frontage on the latter street; it held 400, with the manse as part of the buildings. What its cost is not known, but when completed there was a debt of £1,100, not finally cleared till 1839. It was a pleasant neighbourhood in those days: "Near to the slaughterhouse, and all along Tobago Street, were trees and rich gardens. In the garden at the foot of Ann Street a singular anecdote is told of the nightingale, a bird which has almost never been known to come farther north than Lancashire." It is far different today!

On 12th January 1815 a feu contract was drawn up between Sir Michael Shaw Stewart, Baronet, and the Reverend Valentine Ward, Minister of the Gospel in Edinburgh, the Reverend John Gaskil, minister in Dunfermline, the Reverend Thomas Bridgeman, minister in Hamilton, the Reverend Richard Smetham, minister in Greenock, Alexander Carson, Ropemaker there, John Candlish, pot-maker in Cartdyke, Daniel Smith, Chairmaker in Greenock, James Gordon, Mason in Port Glasgow, as Trustees for behoof of the Methodist Society in Greenock, . . . all and whole that piece of ground lying on the south side of Tobago Street as laid down in a plan drawn by Thomas Richardson landsurveyor in Glasgow, of the following mensurations, namely: seventyone feet in length along the front of Tobago Street, . . . sixty feet in breadth along St. Michael's Lane [now Sir Michael Street]. . . . Upon the foresaid piece of ground there is erected a Chapel intended for the use of those persons who are of the Methodist persuasion, and also a dwelling house, offices, and other conveniencies [sic] for the officiating Preacher of such Chapel.

The conditions are further described:

² It seems that rooms had been rented on the same site in 1812.

First, the Methodist Conference of the late Reverend John Wesley shall have the sole right and privilege in all time coming of placing and appointing the Preacher who shall officiate in the said Chapel and be entitled to the occupation of the said dwelling house and other conveniences annexed to living. But declaring that the Conference shall not have the power of continuing such preacher in his office and living foresaid for more than two years successively without the special consent of the majority of the Trustees of the Chapel for the time being. Second, Such officiating Preacher to be appointed as above mentioned shall preach no other Doctrines than those contained in certain notes upon the New Testament and the first four volumes of sermons published by the said Reverend John Wesley referred to in a certain Deed Poll bearing date the twentyeighth day of February one thousand seven hundred and eighty four. . . . The Trustees shall have the power to permit the occasional preaching of such pious clergymen as they may find expedient. . . . The Preacher shall be moral in his conduct; . . . in case the majority of the Trustees for the time being shall be of opinion that the Preacher fails in preaching the Doctrines above mentioned or is immoral in his Conduct they shall have full power to take the steps recommended and ordered in the articles of pacification agreed upon at the fifty-second Conference assembled at Manchester in July 1795.

The trustees were empowered to borrow money and "grant bonds on the said subjects", to sell or dispose of the chapel, but were "bound to make an offer in writing to the next Conference", and were compelled to hand over the proceeds of the sale to Conference; any trustee ceased to be such on ceasing to be a Methodist; should the number of trustees fall below five it was to be increased to eight; and the trustees had power to name proxies if they lived more than five miles away. Further, all buildings were to be covered with slate or tile; no "soap or candlework, tanwork, glasswork or Barkinghouse" could be built; there was payment of a feu duty of £9 17s. 2d. each year from Martinmas 1812; and the trustees were "bound to bring all malt they shall happen to make, brew, or retail in Drink within or about the Burgh or Barony of Greenock to the milns of Wester Greenock and to pay therefor according to use and wont; and to pay multure for what corn they or their foresaids shall have growing or dried within" Greenock. Lastly, the trustees were to pay "£3 19s. 4d. every nineteen years in lieu of the composition of heirs".

The contract was signed by "John Gaskil, in the presence of Robert Harley, Weaver, and John Dott, Hairdresser," on 6th February; by Valentine Ward, "before the Reverend Samuel Kittle, Minister of the Gospel in Edinburgh, and George Hall, Writer", on 8th February; by "Thomas Bridgeman, Hamilton, before James Colans and James Cooper, resident in Hamilton", on 26th March; and lastly by Sir Michael Shaw Stewart on 10th April.³

For many years the society did not prosper; there seems to have been no minister from 1828 to 1844, and apparently services were

³ Details from Cartulary VII, pp. 54 ff., of the Ardgowan Estates, Mansion House, Greenock; the original was destroyed, with the building, in an air-raid.

periodically discontinued. For a time from 1827 onwards, a minority who left the Mid Kirk, because of a disagreement about the appointment of an assistant minister, worshipped in the chapel; then the "Arts and Science Lectures Association" met in the chapel before 1829, when the Association closed down; a note in Fowler's *Greenock Directory* for 1836-7 states that "the Methodist Church, 6, Tobago St., has recently been opened as a preaching station under the Society for the Extension of the Church of Scotland, preacher Mr. Tait."; and the Mechanics' Institution was meeting there in 1839.

Continual help was required from connexional sources. Grants to Greenock and Port Glasgow from 1812 to 1825 from the Contingent Fund totalled £1,033; and grants for the reduction of capital debt, from 1819 to 1835, totalled £762 to Greenock and £218 9s. to Port Glasgow.⁴

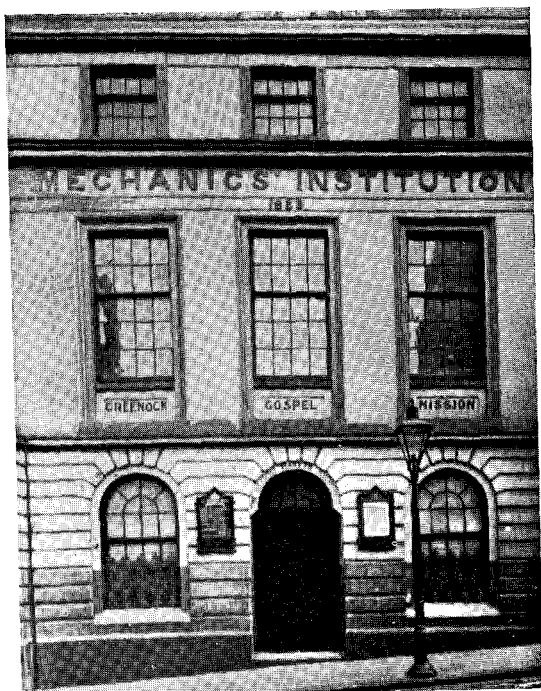
Conditions were even more precarious in 1844, for in that year the Committee of the Mechanics' Institution, "impelled by a new-born zeal, were contemplating the proposal for acquiring as a favourable site, ground in Tobago Street adjoining the Methodist Chapel, then in the market at the price of £180". Now this is ambiguous—it is not clear whether it was the chapel or the adjoining land that was for sale for £180. At any rate, the chapel was not sold; and the society must have taken on a new lease of life, for when the Free West Kirk, built as a result of the Disruption of 1843, moved to the present St. Mark's in 1862, the society was prosperous enough to take the Free West site (the Tobago Street area having by now deteriorated), where in 1883 they built a new chapel, the present Ardgowan.

Again the Mechanics' Institution comes into the picture. It was proposed on 11th November 1862 to purchase the chapel, "now for sale, if it can be got on reasonable terms". It was reported that one Dr. Stewart (who seems to have bought from the Methodists) "would sell for £360, not asking any profit for himself, which he could prove by documents in his possession"; and ten days later it was further reported that the purchase had been negotiated at that figure. Fifteen months later, in March 1864, the erstwhile chapel was converted into "two commodious halls, the lower let as an auction room, the higher for soirees, concerts, etc".⁵ So the old chapel remained part of the Mechanics' Institution (though in later years used also on Sundays by the Greenock Gospel Mission) until the air-raid of 1941, when with its records, it was totally destroyed.

Sometime, probably in the sixties of last century, when repercussions of the 1849 tragedy were still taking place, a small body left the parent society in Greenock and formed a society of the United Methodist Free Churches. Little can be traced of the story of this small society; the only reference made to it in the U.M.F.C. *Minutes* is in 1871, where it is noted that the Greenock society with 16

⁴ W. F. Swift, *Methodism in Scotland*, pp. 89-90.

⁵ Quotations from R. M. Smith, *A Page of Local History—a record of the origin and progress of the Greenock Mechanics' Library and Institution*, Greenock, 1904.



THE FIRST WESLEYAN CHAPEL IN GREENOCK,
OPENED 1814.



THE MASONS' LODGE, KING STREET, PORT GLASGOW.
(The upper rooms are the Lodge rooms.)

members, attached to the Edinburgh circuit, had been given up. No mention is made of this small society in the relevant volumes of the *Greenock Directory*; but in the "Church Announcements" of the *Greenock Telegraph* for 3rd July 1869 we read: "United Methodist Free Church. Rev. G. B. Caple of Edinburgh will preach on Sabbath First in the Bruce Mission Hall, Cathcart Street, at 11 and 6.30"; and on 11th September of the same year: "Quarterly Services in connexion with the above Church will be conducted in the Bruce Mission Hall, 11 Cathcart Street, on Sunday first at 11 and 6.30. Evening Sermon by Rev. Alex. Davidson, E.U. Church. Collection for the support of the ministry." Regular church announcements do not figure in the *Telegraph* of those days, so it is impossible to say how regularly services were held; the 1869 file announces them for July 17, October 2 and December 4, in addition to the above dates. The "Bruce Mission Hall" still stands, though now derelict; some years ago it was the home of the "Apostolic Church", and that name appears in faded paint on the wall.

The third branch of Methodism in Greenock—Primitive Methodism—dates from 1873, when Robert Ayres was sent from Paisley to mission the town. By March 1874 he had built up a "promising society" of nineteen members and one on trial, so that in May of that year land was bought; the building was begun two months later, and was opened on 24th January 1875 at a cost of £2,376, of which only £476 had been raised at the time. This debt of £1,900 crippled the society for years. In 1880 a bazaar was held to raise £500, the Home Missions Committee giving £400 on condition that £500 was raised locally, so as to reduce the debt to £1,000. The bond for this figure was finally discharged in 1895.

But in spite of financial difficulties the cause made headway and had a fervent evangelistic spirit. By 1881 there were forty-eight members and eleven on trial, and in June of that year the Quarterly Meeting resolved "that we do our best during the coming quarter to establish a society at Gourock and Port Glasgow". But this was difficult, and after some attempt at Port Glasgow, it was given up, Port Glasgow coming off the plan in 1885. Those pioneers would hardly know that fifty years earlier a Wesleyan chapel in that town had closed down. On the other hand mission services were held at Cartsyke Street, Ann Street, and Prospect Hill at various times.

II. Port Glasgow

Wesley visited Port Glasgow each time he visited Greenock in 1772 and 1774. We have already quoted Wesley's *Journal* for Tuesday, 21st April 1772; the following day, Wednesday, he returned again to Port Glasgow, and relates:

About eight, I preached once more in the Masons' Lodge at Port Glasgow. The house was crowded greatly; and I suppose all the gentry of the town were a part of the congregation. Resolving not to shoot over their heads, as I had done the day before, I spoke strongly of death and judgment, heaven and hell. This they seemed to comprehend.

And there was no more laughing among them, or talking with each other, but all were quietly and deeply attentive.

His next visit was on Monday, 16th May 1774, when he records: "In the afternoon, as also at seven in the morning, I preached in the kirk at Port Glasgow. My subjects were Death and Judgment, and I spoke as home as I possibly could." MacArthur remarks: "He must have had a large congregation, as, when in Dundee two years later, he comments that the congregation was nearly as large as at Port Glasgow."⁶

Wesley then preached in two buildings, the Kirk and the Masons' Lodge. The Kirk stood at the head of Church Street, but was pulled down and rebuilt some fifty years later, so that the present handsome building on the same site has no connexion with Wesley. But the Masons' Lodge still stands, and is in use as such, at the top end of King Street; and there services were held, apparently regularly, in Wesley's day.

But King Street has another interest for us. Below the Lodge, on the same side of the street, not far from the main Greenock-Glasgow road, stands a large block of derelict tenements—it cannot be long before town improvements see their demolition. In the centre of this block stands an old gateway, boarded up, still known locally as "Methody Entry". This led to a pend, or courtyard, behind the tenements, at the back of which "a chapel was built—or bought, more probably—about 1813, and was burdened with a lease of £15 per annum. This was almost certainly a Valentine Ward project. In 1830 it was regarded as one of the worst cases in Scotland, and in that year a grant of £138 15s. was made from the Fund for the Relief of Distressed Chapels".⁷ The chapel had a short life and was closed before 1835. No trace of it now remains; the ground on which it stood is occupied partly by the Hamilton Church of Scotland and partly by the Town Hall, both of which have their frontages in Princes Street.

As we have already noted, the Primitive Methodists for a short while attempted work in Port Glasgow, but no records remain beyond the minute of June 1881, already cited, and a further minute of September 1883 which records: "that we endeavour to mission Port Glasgow, if a hall can be got". Apparently this was found possible, for the following Quarterly Meeting resolved: "that Mr Lewins (the minister) see Mr M. in reference to his neglect of Port Glasgow on the Sabbath"; and "that Port Glasgow be continued another quarter and that two services be held if practicable".

But the next quarter tells a different story: "That the services at Port Glasgow be discontinued for the present"; and in September 1885 it was resolved "that Port Glasgow come off the Plan". Half a century earlier the Wesleyan Methodists had come to the same conclusion, and that little burst of activity nearly seventy years ago is the sole Methodist witness in Port Glasgow in well over a century.

OLIVER A. BECKERLEGGE.

⁶ W. F. MacArthur, *History of Port Glasgow*.

⁷ Note kindly communicated to me by the Rev. Wesley F. Swift.

NOTES ON WESLEYAN CLASS TICKETS

THESE notes are intended to supplement the articles on tickets written by the Rev. F. M. Parkinson and Mr. J. G. Wright, and published in *Proceedings*, i, pp. 129-35; v, pp. 33-44. This latter article has illustrations of thirty-six tickets.

(i) *The Size*. Mr. Parkinson says the tickets are "usually upright oblong $2\frac{1}{2}'' \times 1\frac{7}{8}''$ with a text of Scripture, simple border and letter of the alphabet". This refers to a specific period, 1766-1821. The earlier tickets were of different shapes and sizes, especially the picture tickets. The 1822 issue for March, June and September, both Band and ordinary, were almost double the size of the previous issues, horizontal not upright. In December 1822 the size was reduced by a full $\frac{1}{4}''$, and this became the standard for 110 years, until Methodist Union.

(ii) *The Issue of Five*. Mr. Wright says that five tickets were issued in the years 1766, 1767, 1770, 1772 and 1774. This statement needs correction. In each of the years 1766, 1770 and 1774 there were five tickets. They were dated February, May, August, September and December for the year 1766; January, March, June, September and December for 1770, and February, March, August, November and December for 1774. The year 1767 had four tickets for the usual quarters, March, June, September and December, and a fifth ticket issued in May had a written not a printed date, and bore no letter. In 1769 only three were issued, one each for March, June and September. Probably the December ticket was a replica of the one issued for January 1770, as is the case with the December ticket for 1771. It bears the same text and letter (B) as that for February 1772. In 1772 there were five, dated February, May, June, August and December. But the June and August issues bear the same letter (D) and text.

(iii) *The Date of Issue*. Until 1775 tickets were issued at irregular periods, especially when the date was hand-written. Up to 1761 every month had been used, and frequently the date was exactly given, viz. February 13th, August 1st, October 2nd, 3rd, 4th. One ticket gives the time of issue: Saturday Night. The year 1774 saw the last of these irregularities until 1851. Following the disruption of 1849 there was a broken sequence of both letter and text. From March 1851 to March 1852 the letters D, E, F, G, H and the text associated with each letter were used for the quarter succeeding the one for which they were meant. Similarly the letters were out of sequence in 1765; and on the Methodist ticket for December 1950 a T appears where an M should be.

(iv) *The Text*. The earliest tickets had no text, but later came text with no Biblical reference, either of book, chapter, or verse. So far as I can gather, the tickets with no printed date were all of this type. Some yearly tickets lacked the reference. One issued by Jacob Rowell about 1754 bore the text "Stand fast in the faith", with the reference 1 Cor. xvi. 13. But so far as I know this stands alone. The

text used for March 1771, Job xxii. 21: "Acquaint now thyself with Him and be at peace", was used again two years later, in February 1773. In March, June and September 1776, words were taken from Matthew vii. 7, and eight texts which had already been used in February, August and December 1774. A study of the texts chosen shows a rather freakish use of Scripture. An odd feature is misquotation. September 1779 has James xiii. 9, which should be Hebrews xiii. 9. June 1786b has Galatians vi. 14, which should be 1 Cor. iii. 22-23; while 1792b quotes "Jude i", though there is only one chapter.

(v) *Printers and Printing.* It is impossible from odd tickets to deduce how many printers were employed. The same sheet often bore different types of letter, spacings, and borders. One half sheet carries four different borders for the same ticket—September 1819. The quarterly ticket issued with a place for the number on 25th March 1753 was printed on the same sheet as the yearly ticket bearing the text "To him that overcometh", etc. Generally the printers printed five rows of ordinary tickets followed by one row of Band tickets for the same quarter.

Mr. Wright says there is only one ticket printed in capital letters: March 1781—"BE NOT FAITHLESS BUT BELIEVING". But September 1781 (Band) has in capital letters: "LET US GO ON TO PERFECTION"; and December 1779 in the same type: "PREPARE TO MEET THY GOD". The quotation on the text for September 1776, "BE YE HOLY", is also in capitals.

In Stevenson's *History of City Road Chapel* there is this entry amongst the disbursements for 1st December 1789: "Paid Mr. Moore for printing Society tickets £1:2:0". Stevenson adds the note: "It is remarkable that the bookroom being in London and supplying all the Societies with Quarterly tickets, that the London Society should provide and pay for its own tickets independently of the bookroom." Evidently the uniformity decreed by the Conference at Manchester in 1765 had not materialized. Conference was then concerned about the variety of tickets, and this question was asked: "Would it not be well to have one ticket everywhere?" and the answer was "It would: send the form from London directly." Twenty-four years later the London society had its tickets printed privately. Mr. Parkinson says that "in 1807 the tickets were printed at the Conference office, North Green, Worship Street, and sent throughout the Connexion." But Stampe (*Proceedings*, i, p. 137) says they were also printed in Bristol and Newcastle when the supply ran short. A ticket issued in March 1802 to Jos. Gregg has at its base: "T. Wright, Printer, Leeds." So uniformity came but slowly.

(vi) *The Written Name.* This may have a lesser interest, but the name Normington was spelt by various ministers in eight different ways. More interesting is the issue of a series of tickets to one Bridget Mann, or Man, from 1754 to 1785. Her name was Mann, or Man, but in June 1781 she was named on her ticket Bridget Weaver—evidently the name of her occupation.

(vii) *The Initials of the Issuing Preacher.* In 1753 Jacob Rowell signed his full name three times on the yearly ticket issued to Bridget. Other early initials are S.S. and W.C. appearing before 1774. But for the most part the tickets were issued without signature. Initials were used intermittently until 1835, when five out of the eight were initialled; in 1843 six out of the eight, but in 1845 and later almost all were initialled.

(viii) Frequently the date of the ticket was altered to suit the convenience of the issuing preacher. Sometimes the letter also was altered. Frequently a Band ticket was issued to one not in Band. I have before me one ticket issued to two people and bearing the two names. This prompts us to ask if one ticket was paid for, or two!

(ix) Since Methodist Union two tickets have some interest for the collector. The December 1941 ticket had a misprint, the small h being displaced by a capital H, which happens to have a greater significance than it would in many other passages, for the text is Hebrews ii. 8, 9. A ticket for December 1937 has in the left-hand corner a small P printed, in line with the letter printed on the last four issues of the Wesleyan Methodist tickets. This may have been meant for use in the Church overseas, and by some accident found its way into a Home parcel. This happened in the Brighton circuit in June 1905, when a member received a ticket headed "Methodist Church" evidently printed for use in Ireland.

If ever a complete set of tickets is secured for the Methodist Church, the above notes will be amplified and amended.

JOHN H. VERNEY.

THE ANNUAL LECTURE

in connexion with the Birmingham Conference, 1953,

WILL BE DELIVERED AT

Handsworth College Chapel, Birmingham

On Saturday, 11th July, at 7-30 p.m.

BY THE

Rev. R. NEWTON FLEW, M.A., D.D.

Subject:

"CHARLES WESLEY'S HYMNS: A STUDY OF THEIR STRUCTURE."

The chair will be taken by the REV. DR. HOWARD WATKIN-JONES.

The Annual Meeting of the Society will be held at Handsworth College at 6 p.m.

MR. and MRS. HERBERT IBBERSON kindly invite any members of the Society to Tea at Handsworth College at 5 p.m. It is essential that all those who desire to accept this invitation should send their names to the Rev. Philip S. Watson, M.A., B.D., 142, Friary Road, Handsworth Wood, Birmingham, 20, not later than Wednesday, 8th July.

Transport: Birmingham Corporation buses—16A to Friary Road or 70 to College Road.

A LETTER OF GIDEON OUSELEY

THE following letter, written by the Rev. Gideon Ouseley (1799-1839), the famous Irish evangelist, to the Rev. Zechariah Taft (1801-48) has recently come into my possession.

GIDEON OUSELEY TO ZECHARIAH TAFT

Dublin, 5th July, 1823.

Rev. & very dear Bro.

The welcome and greatly esteemed favour of Sister Taft, joined with yours, came to Dublin in due time, but being on my Mission, on a tour through the Kingdom, or a part thereof, I did not hear of it for a long time. However, although I have delayed to take my pen, I now sit down to write you a few lines and to assure you I cannot forget the affectionate attentions of you, my dear friends, when I had the pleasure of meeting you in your own land.

With regard to the Work of the Lord in this wretchedly distracted and deeply superstitious Kingdom, covered as it is with popish darkness and sanguinary confederacies, and when you add to this that that part of our Connection [sic], the $\frac{1}{3}$ of the whole, which broke off from us because of our strict adherence to that path God had marked out for us to walk in, have been using all their ingenuity to impede our way, for that we would not submit to their wild notions, which has sometimes been the case with yourselves also,—what prosperity, considering all these hindrances, could we well expect? Yet in the midst of all the Lord our God is with us and condescends to visit us graciously. So that notwithstanding our [?] and the emigration of the Protestant population, and of our members in particular, a good work is going forward progressively; many are awakened and, vigilant as the popish priests are, several Romanists have joined us in the past year, and many of them are greatly shaken as to their religious principles, who have not courage as yet to break off from the old stock. For that population being federated by oath generally to cut off heresy, i.e., exterminate all Protestants and overturn the present government, and this with the full knowledge of their priests, and a foul popish prophecy by one of their bishops, Pastorini, that in 1825 Protestantism shall be extinct, being diligently spread among them, it is little to be wondered at that, till this fatal year shall have elapsed, their fears to leave Mother Church should be many and prevail.

My health, thank God, continues, and as I know the points of their system so well, and can and do speak in the Irish tongue, so I preach much to them in the open streets and open up to them not only their state and the blessed Gospel of our God, but also the mysteries of their iniquitous system, yet with such caution and ingenuity as not to give them offence, so that the streams of briny tears gush out and run down their faces while I thus labour among them for their good. I write too for them, in such a way as the priests cannot answer, & that in the newspapers as well as in tracts. I have written a volume, about two years ago, that has been, in the hand of God, instrumental in opening the eyes of several of them, and also of preserving Protestants from popish delusion. A young man who has read it this year, and who has been educated for a priest, has forsaken the Mass and actually joined our Society. A letter written by one of them, a military man, to his friend, now lies before me. He thus writes:—

I have been taken up this week reading Gideon Ouseley's controversial Work, and indeed it has rooted out the last remains of popery that were in me. It is the ablest confutation the Church of Rome has ever met with. I would be almost ashamed to own that I ever was a Roman Catholic, after reading it. I think when my father and mother find I am no more a Roman Catholic, they will fret very much at it, my mother certainly, etc., etc.

Rathmullan. Apl. 13th 1823.

W. FEGAN.

We are, my dear friends, looking out for good days, even in our country. Yes, God will bless us and deliver the people out of the hands of their blind guides. The plans proposed this year by the London Missionary Methodist Society, and in which we have joyfully acquiesced, namely, of increasing the number of missionaries and establishing day and Sunday Schools on our missions—O. that such were spread through all our circuits!

In reference to the propriety of females declaring God's counsel to sinners for their salvation, I must say I never saw one text of Scripture to oppose it, nor one solid reason ever advanced against it; nor, I think, ever can, till it is proved that souls converted to God by females are less pleasing to him than those converted by men, or that women ought to speak and write so much and so much only.

God bless you, my friends, prays your affectionate brother,

GIDEON OUSELEY.

The letter was written during the sessions of the Irish Conference in Dublin, over which Dr. Adam Clarke, himself an Irishman, presided. In 1800 the mis-managed Union of Ireland and England had been legally effected, leaving the former country in rebellious discontent, and from that time onwards unrest had steadily increased. The Irish resistance movement, during the period to which this letter refers, was led by O'Connell, a Roman Catholic, who, in the words of G. M. Trevelyan, "appealed to his own people to close their ranks and extort through fear what had been denied to justice". In this year (1823) the "Catholic Association" was founded, which became "nothing less than a regimentation of Catholic Ireland, under the priests as officers, with O'Connell as Commander-in-Chief".

The rebellious state of the country, the murderous outrages which occurred, the baleful influence of Rome and the poverty and barbaric ignorance of the peasantry were features of the times that year after year engaged the attention of the Irish Conference. Methodists throughout the British Isles regarded Ireland as a field of genuine missionary activity, and as early as 1799 three men had been set apart as "Irish Missionaries". Crookshank (*History of Methodism in Ireland*, ii, p. 165) says that the Conference of 1799 "is memorable in the annals of Irish ecclesiastical history, as having projected the first organized evangelistic mission ever attempted with direct reference to the Roman Catholic population of the country". These "missionaries", of whom Gideon Ouseley was one, were commissioned to preach to the people at large in their own native Erse tongue. Gradually their numbers were increased, rendering possible more concentrated work. Meanwhile, life in the circuits continued

independently of this missionary enterprise, and ministerial appointments were made to them in the usual way. Thus, in 1823 there were forty-three normal circuits in the country, staffed by seventy-eight ministers. The Conference of that year removed the names of the "missionaries" from their customary place in the "stations" for Ireland, and, with the exception of the established societies, transferred that country to the mission field, where its name appears in the *Minutes* as the first country in the European section. By this time there were seventeen areas, worked by twenty-one missionaries, twelve of whom, including Ouseley, were commissioned to "preach or teach in the Irish tongue".

Because of the degrading illiteracy of the people, which more than anything else helped to keep them in subjection to the priests, the Conference was greatly concerned to establish day and Sunday schools, and commended this work to the missionaries. Before entering upon the great campaign of his life, Ouseley had lived for a time in Sligo, where he had opened a largely-attended boys' school and his wife had taught girls.

Ouseley, with his colleagues, had thus been given a kind of roving commission against four gigantic evils, to all of which there is some reference in this letter: spiritual darkness, popery, political terrorism and illiteracy.

At the Conference of 1823, 22,039 members were returned for Ireland, this being a decrease of 679. Ouseley attributes this mainly to the revolutionary state of the country, with the resultant emigration of many people, including Methodists, and also to "that part of our Connection . . . which broke off from us".

This reference is to an agitation in Ireland, which extended over twenty years and had been brought to a head at the Conference of 1816. There had been a growing demand for Methodists to receive the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper at the hands of their own ministers and in their own places of worship. To this there was a strong opposing element, and the Conference ruled that if two-thirds of the officers of a church or circuit favoured such administration, and the Conference agreed, it could take place. A large number of the dissentients had, however, broken away and formed a separate society, known as the Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Society in Ireland, and only in 1878 was the breach healed. The seriousness of the loss appears in the membership returns for Ireland. In the following year (1817) alone, a decrease of 7,511 was reported.

From the closing paragraph of the letter it appears that Zechariah Taft had solicited Ouseley's opinion on what had long been a controversial topic in Methodism—the propriety of female preaching. The Conference of 1803 had advised strongly against it, and had issued stringent rules for the guidance of those who were not prepared to accept this advice. Taft was a redoubtable protagonist for women preachers, of whom his own wife, Mary (née Barritt), was one of the most popular and distinguished. W. L. DOUGHTY.