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Proceedings OF THE Wesley Historical Society

Editor: REV. WESLEY F. SWIFT.

Volume XXXI

September 1957

EDITORIAL

THE recent Nottingham Conference saw the end of the controversy about "Separated Chairmen" which to a minor degree has agitated British Methodism for the past two years. The principle has been accepted, the realignment of Districts has been approved, and the Chairmen themselves have been appointed. Methodism now takes on a "new look". We do not propose to comment on recent events, except to say that in some quarters there have been hopes—and in other quarters fears—that the new regime may turn out in the end to bear some relation to the larger question of "taking episcopacy into our system". It is to be regretted that only a few of those who will now direct our affairs—the Conference platform, the General Policy Committee, and the new Chairmen—are members of our Society and will have read the recent articles and comments which relate to "episcopé" in Methodism. These modest contributions to our pages are, we believe, of far greater importance than would appear on the surface, and we hope that they may yet be studied by all who are so intimately concerned with the future policy of our Church; for in the long run the implications of Wesley's ordinations, and of Methodist ordinations in general, have more significance for the future than many of the details of administrative machinery which have claimed so much of Methodism's attention recently.

* * *

The Postmaster-General has once again upset the financial calculations of our Society. The increase in postal rates will be an additional burden to us, and, in particular, the increase in the printed paper rate for packets over two ounces means that after September the postage on an ordinary issue of the *Proceedings*, with envelope, will be threepence instead of twopence. In future, therefore, three issues of the *Proceedings* each year will have fewer pages than hitherto, but the fourth will be a compensating "bumper" number. In this way we shall in some measure outwit the Postmaster-General, and we confidently look for the sympathetic understanding of our readers. It would also help the Society's finances if those who write to any of its officers would enclose a stamped addressed envelope if they desire a reply.

THE RESTORED EPWORTH RECTORY

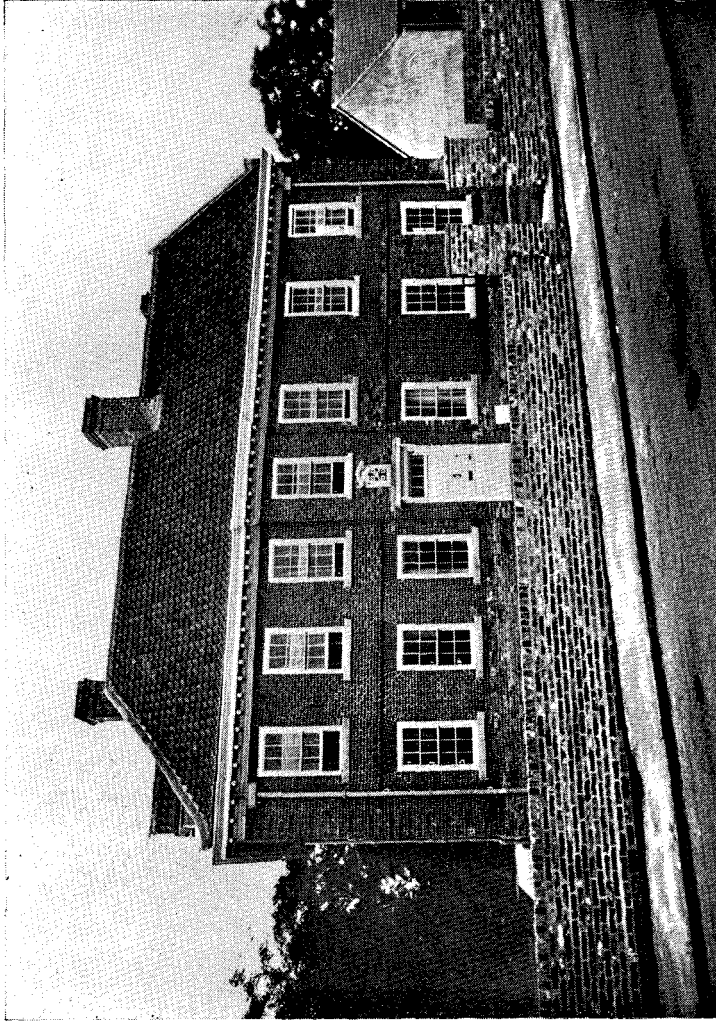
[The Epworth Old Rectory is now the property of the World Methodist Council, by whom it has been purchased and restored. It was officially opened for Methodist use on Saturday, 29th June 1957, by the President of the World Methodist Council, the Rev. Dr. Harold Roberts, in the presence of a large and distinguished company of Methodists from all over the world. We are glad to have this authoritative account of the restoration from the Secretary of the World Methodist Council, the Rev. Dr. E. Benson Perkins, to whom we are also indebted for the beautiful photograph of the restored rectory which appears as an illustration in this issue.—EDITOR.]

WRITING in 1927, Dean W. H. Hutton said: "Epworth is still today a large and flourishing village, with claims perhaps to be a town, for its population is given as 1,853. The fine rectory stands in ample grounds surrounded by high walls over which its high trees rise conspicuous in a land where trees are few." Apart from the fact that the population is a little larger, that might well describe the situation today, and particularly now that the rectory has been so beautifully restored.

When Samuel Wesley brought his wife Susanna and their three children to Epworth in 1696 it was to a rectory which occupied substantially the same area as the present building. It was, however, a vastly different structure, for it was built of timber and plaster with a thatched roof. This was the building which was entirely destroyed by fire in 1709, and out of which John Wesley, a boy of six, was rescued from an upper window. The scene is familiar to most Methodists from the well-known engraving.

The rector faced the overwhelming disaster when the rectory was entirely destroyed with amazing courage. He wrote: "By God's help I built again, digging up the old foundations and laying new ones. It cost me above £400, little or nothing of the old materials being left". What he built was by no means a reproduction of the destroyed building. He built for permanence, and the fact that the rectory has stood for nearly 250 years without substantial alteration to its main fabric is a tribute to his work. In undertaking this task, however, he taxed his resources very severely, and it is stated that thirteen years later the newly-built rectory was only half furnished because of the expenditure incurred in its building. £400 sounds a small sum for such a building, but if one is to attempt to give an equivalent value in present-day currency one could not speak of a sum less than £10,000, though other factors would have to be taken into account in an exact equating of the cost in modern terms.

The question is frequently asked whether any part of that original building remains in the rectory built in 1709. It may be that some of the beams were used which had not suffered too severely from the fire, though that is doubtful, particularly in view of the statement of Samuel Wesley himself. The architect holds the view that probably the only part of that earlier building which remains is the old fire-place and chimney-stack. The original archway over that great fire-place



THE OLD RECTORY, EPWORTH.
Erected 1709 ; Restored 1957.

can be seen in the entrance hall, and as one goes through the building one can see the great chimney which was presumably the one form of central heating of a crude type which belonged to that period. It may be that in this part there is a link with the building which was destroyed by fire. For the new building the rector clearly sought the best possible materials. For the beams constituting the framework of the building he obtained seasoned English oak which had been hewn in a shipwright's yard. One of the main beams which may be seen in its original position was clearly intended originally for the keel of a ship. Some of the timbers supporting the roof were originally hewn to form the ribs of a ship. The fact that this timber stands good today and remains in the building is evidence of the rector's sound choice. The brickwork consists of the warm, red, hand-made bricks which were fashionable in those early days of Queen Anne. They have worn well. The difficulty in restoration was to secure other bricks of the same type to replace where necessary. Fortunately the demolition of a contemporary building in Epworth made it possible to purchase some three thousand bricks of exactly the same type, and these have been used to supplement those in the original fabric. Even so the difficulties were not at an end. Specially shaped bricks were necessary for the coigns and other parts of the building. These had to be made by shaping the bricks with a chisel. In other cases where the surface of a brick was worn, the brick itself was sound and was turned round, presenting another face to the front. It is no small achievement that the present fabric of the building consists of the original type of bricks exactly as they were when the structure was first erected. The roof was finished with pantiles, as it is today.

Those who have seen the old rectory in recent years or are familiar with the usual picture of it will notice some differences. For many years the entrance door has been at one end of the building in the small side of the rectangle. Then too a number of the windows were bricked up. Whether this was due to the window tax or not is uncertain, but the windows were actually built into the original structure and then filled up with brickwork at a later stage. In the restoration the entrance door has been brought to its original position in the centre of the front of the building, as is clearly shown in an old print of the rectory of 1823. Then the five or six windows on the front which were blocked have been opened out and fitted with windows to correspond with the other windows in the building. There is a small addition over the doorway which will be noted in the photograph. This is a copy of the coat of arms granted by the College of Arms to the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes, who are the Custodian Trustees of the Epworth Old Rectory. It is based upon one of the early arms of the Wesley family dating from the thirteenth century.

The interior retains as much as possible the original form of the building. Certain intermediate walls of a later stage have been removed, thus opening out what is believed to be Susanna Wesley's

kitchen, where those informal services were held which were, in a sense, the precursors of the Methodist class meetings. The arch over the old fire-place and the great flues running through the building have been retained. Many of the old beams are to be seen in their original position. The upper room under the roof, notable as the place where the ghost, or poltergeist, known as "Old Jeffrey" was heard, is very much as it was originally. The changes which would startle a dweller of two centuries ago are the necessary modernizing for use today—the electric light, the central heating, the bathrooms, and basins with hot and cold water in the bedrooms, the carpets, and the interior finish of the walls.

Dean Hutton spoke of "ample grounds", and that is still true. Altogether the grounds run to about two and a half acres. There is a spacious lawn and a most attractive garden with old-fashioned flowers as well as vegetables. There is also a large field used for grazing by a nearby farmer. There is in Epworth a youth centre which occupies the old Kilham Memorial chapel. Alexander Kilham was also born in Epworth. It has been suggested that the field should be laid out as a playing-field for youth, and this might be considered if the rather heavy cost can be met. Altogether the restored rectory and grounds constitute a most attractive property.

What about their use? It is hoped that friends who have items of furniture of the early eighteenth century will be disposed to give them to the Old Rectory. It will add greatly to the interest of visitors. But it is not to be a museum. There are three directions in which the trustees feel that it can serve Methodism. First as a family guest house. Visitors from overseas will be able to stay for a week-end or longer, and, there is reason to know, will value the privilege. Such visitors from the homeland will, of course, also be welcomed. This should provide a definite contribution to the income for the maintenance of the Old Rectory. Then in the second place provision is being made for the accommodation of small group gatherings and conferences. The present maximum is twenty-five. Still further will be the interest to visitors who will welcome the opportunity of a visit to this the oldest Methodist shrine.

Methodism has been splendidly served by the expert architect, Mr. Thomas Rayson, F.R.I.B.A., of Oxford, and the builders, Messrs. Walter Firth, Ltd., of Doncaster. To both, and to their staffs, it was a work of personal interest and service. Well-deserved tribute has also been paid to the Rev. W. Le Cato Edwards, the superintendent of the Epworth and Crowle circuit, for his invaluable help. He is the new Warden of the Old Rectory, and he and Mrs. Edwards will be the host and hostess welcoming guests and visitors.

E. BENSON PERKINS.

The jubilee celebrations in 1955 at the former Bible Christian chapel at Totland, Isle of Wight, called forth a small booklet of historical notes by the Rev. Ernest Smith (8 pp.). This chapel contains the only memorial in Methodism to the pioneer missionaries, Mary Toms and W. M. Bailey.

WESLEYAN CONFERENCE ADMISSION TICKETS AND HANDBOOKS

MANY members of our Society are collectors of "Wesleyana" in its various forms. Some collect class tickets, others (the "cirplanologists") accumulate circuit plans, whilst there are some—the wealthier amongst us—who make a speciality of Wesley pottery.¹ My own modest sideline is a collection of Conference admission tickets and Conference handbooks. This hobby, if it can so be termed, has two great merits: it is cheap, and it makes the minimum demand upon one's time. My own collection of these two items, apart from the specimens I have personally acquired during my own ministry, have come to me from two sources: my own grandfather, who was in the ministry for seventy-one years, and the late President of our Society. Perhaps others have not been so fortunate. Small though my own exertions have therefore been, my collection nevertheless affords me the maximum amount of pleasure, and the purpose of this article is to share that pleasure with others who are similarly interested.

Conference Admission Tickets

My own collection, apart from one or two very small gaps, is virtually complete from 1878 to 1957. The year 1878, it will be remembered, was significant in our history as being the first time since Wesley's day that laymen were admitted to the Wesleyan Conference. Hitherto the Conference had been jealously confined to the ministers, though for sixty years laymen had increasingly shared with ministers in preparatory "committees of review"—the forerunners of our modern connexional committees. In 1878 a major revolution took place in the Wesleyan constitution, and the Conference began to meet in two sessions, pastoral and representative—in that order. Not until 1901 was the order of the sessions reversed, and now there is talk of reversing them again. The kernel of the Conference was, of course, the "Legal Hundred", as laid down in Wesley's Deed Poll, and in the newly-constituted Conference of 1878 the decisions of both sessions required, as hitherto, the ratification of the "Hundred".

I do not know if tickets were required to admit the preachers to the Conferences prior to 1878. I imagine not. The distinctive ministerial dress of those days would doubtless be a sufficient safeguard against "gate-crashing". Our fathers were not accustomed to the spectacle of ordinands posing for their photograph in the opening session of Conference, attired in shirts, soft collars and braces!² But with the institution of a Representative Session some proof of identity became necessary, and I have a feeling that the ticket for

¹ If an unaccustomed note of levity creeps into this article, it may perhaps be balanced against the more weighty and valuable matter which this issue of the *Proceedings* contains.

² *vide Methodist Recorder*, 11th July 1957.

the Bradford Conference of 1878 is the first of its kind. It is a plain card, measuring $4\frac{1}{2}$ by $3\frac{1}{8}$ ins., stating simply: "Admit Revd. Fred. B. Swift to the Conference in Eastbrook Chapel", and signed by the President (actually, of course, the retiring President), "W. B. Pope". On the reverse side is a neat "Plan of Bradford, showing the Wesleyan Chapels, &c.". Thus early did the excellent custom begin of giving Conference representatives some practical assistance in their peregrinations through a strange town. There were, however, some exceptions: London (1880), Hull (1883) and Manchester (1887) gave no such guidance; whilst Burslem (1884) substituted a sketch map of the North Staffordshire Railway. Bristol (1890), on the other hand, produced a four-page card with a large folded paper inset "Guide Map to Bristol & Suburbs", which must have been highly inconvenient on a wet or windy day. Bristol, also in this same year, gave additional information in the shape of a "Railway Time Table" printed on the reverse side of the card, giving the times of convenient trains to and from Bristol and outlying towns. This excellent idea was continued in the three following years by Nottingham, Bradford and Cardiff, and was again revived in 1903, when for the last of the three Conferences to meet in Cornwall the admission ticket advertised "special trains for the convenience of the Conference" from Penzance and Truro to Camborne, the Conference town.

The earlier tickets were, by later standards, mostly plain and unadorned. Nottingham (1891) added a pictorial touch with an engraving of Trent Bridge, which doubtless inspired Bradford and Cardiff in succeeding years to depict the Conference chapel. Birmingham introduced a novel note in 1894: the face of the card showed a very ecclesiastical pseudo-Gothic church door firmly shut against all comers, with the word "Admit" inscribed across it. The armorial bearings of the Conference town became a favourite embellishment in the later years of the century, whilst Leeds (1897) set a new fashion by depicting chapels in the Conference town. This custom, later extended to include scenes of local interest, continued until the outbreak of the First World War.

The Conference ticket in more or less its present size and form began with Nottingham in 1906. In the following years there appeared some highly artistic specimens, printed in several colours, and beautiful to the eye of the beholder; and of these, Lincoln (1909), with its portrait of Wesley Chapel, and the rose, thistle, harp, and shamrock in the four corners of a decorative border, must surely take the palm. The first war reduced the ticket to a single plain card, and the larger folded card did not return until 1924. Since then a utilitarian mediocrity has been the order of the day, though Newcastle-upon-Tyne in 1947 introduced a more pleasing pattern which has influenced each succeeding ticket.

The earliest tickets, from 1878 to 1893, were consecutively numbered. In those days the Pastoral Session numbered 400 ministers, with the addition of such other ministers as received permission from

their District Synods to attend; and the Representative Session numbered 480, of whom 240 were ministers who had already attended the earlier session. The highest numbered ticket in my collection is 1051, which would seem to indicate that a very large number of ministers attended as non-elected members of the Pastoral Session. This privilege, so dear to Wesleyan ministers, was not continued after Methodist Union; but this present year has seen its restoration, and we are credibly informed that 239 non-elected ministers attended the Ministerial Session of the recent Nottingham Conference, with full voting rights. The wheel has come full circle.

The gem of my collection is the ticket for the Birmingham Conference of 1915. From the very beginning the Conference ticket has borne the facsimile signature of the President, that is to say, the retiring President. Indeed, no other than the retiring President could sign it, for not until Conference actually met and elected the President was his identity known. It was not until the order of the sessions was changed in 1901 that our present system of designation in the previous year was introduced. Methodist folk-lore has it that in those far-off days half a dozen brethren would hopefully arrive at the Conference, each with a Presidential address in the pocket of his frock-coat! In 1915, for some reason now unknown, the Conference ticket was signed by the President-Elect, R. Waddy Moss. When the mistake was discovered, a new ticket was issued with the signature of the retiring President, Dinsdale T. Young; it contained an explanatory slip which read: "By an oversight, the name of the President-Elect appears on the Conference Ticket you have received, in place of that of the President. Will you please return, or destroy it, and use the enclosed?" I am grateful to the Rev. F. F. Brether-ton, an inveterate collector of curios, who neither destroyed the ticket nor returned it, but preserved it for forty years, until at last it passed to me!

The same mistake has been made at four other Conferences, once before and thrice since 1915, though in these instances no rectification was made. William Perkins signed in 1909 and 1910, the former being the year of his Presidency; but as my ticket is for the Pastoral Session I cannot be sure whether the retiring President, J. Scott Lidgett, signed for the Representative ticket. Similarly, C. Ensor Walters signed in 1936 and 1937, though the same qualification must be made. In more recent years, W. Russell Shearer incorrectly signed as President-Designate in 1954. The error was repeated at Manchester in 1955, when Leslie D. Weatherhead signed as President-Designate, thus depriving Donald O. Soper of his Presidential rights. It fell to the present writer, as secretary of the Conference Arrangements Committee at Leeds in 1956, to restore a due regard for our traditions; and in that year Leslie D. Weatherhead again signed, this time correctly as retiring President. A small point, perhaps, but not unimportant, for the designated President is not actually elected until the Conference meets. Perhaps some day

the Methodist Conference will in this matter give the world—and itself—a shock. What fun!

One last curiosity from this bundle of Conference tickets. The ticket of admission to the Uniting Conference in 1932 bore the scurrilous words: "Admit Delegate". Delegate, indeed! Shades of Bunting and of Simon!

Conference Handbooks

Only those behind the scenes have any idea of the vast consumption of paper and ink which the efficient functioning of the Methodist Conference demands. The voluminous correspondence necessitated by the work of the Arrangements Committee is only the prelude to a stream of agendas, orders of service, voting papers, and leaflets of all kinds, which pour from the printing presses. And when the Conference is over, and the representatives have dispersed to the four corners of these islands, little of permanent significance remains of this mountain of paper save the Agenda, the "Daily Record", the Conference Journals,—and the Conference Handbook, that indispensable guide to personalities, places and public meetings, and a hundred and one other things that the dutiful representative must see or do at Conference.

The Conference Handbook, "issued by direction of the Conference Arrangements Committee", is so well established in popular favour that it is difficult to appreciate its comparatively modern growth. The Conferences of earlier days seemed to manage very well without it! The first Wesleyan Handbook was issued, appropriately enough, in connexion with the first Conference of this century, at Newcastle-upon-Tyne in 1901. In reality, however, it was the precursor of the modern Conference Directory rather than the Handbook, for its contents consisted entirely of the now-familiar lists of representatives and their hosts, preaching appointments on the two Conference Sundays, public meetings, seating plans, and miscellaneous information. Those who attend the Newcastle Conference in 1958 will fare better, we may hope, than their predecessors in 1901, who found that "unfortunately, there will be no Trams running in any part of Newcastle during Conference, owing to the laying down of the lines for the Electric Trams. There is, however, a service of Brakes. They are somewhat irregular." The more affluent representatives, however, would be relieved to find for their convenience in the Handbook a table of cab fares from the Central station (1s. 6d. to Jesmond Cemetery, for example).

I do not know if a Handbook was published for the Conferences from 1902 to 1906.⁸ My next copy is for the London Conference of 1907. It is a large stiff-covered book, and though it bears the imprint of the Methodist Publishing House it was obviously financed by The Star Assurance Society, whose advertising matter occupied exactly half its ninety-six pages. The remaining pages consist mainly of an

⁸ From 1907 to 1957 my collection is complete.

"Official Programme of Meetings & Services, with Hymns to be Sung, &c., &c., &c.". The hymns are twenty-three in number, and only eight of them are by the Wesleys. Sandwiched between the two sections of the book are some blank pages for notes, whilst a pocket inside the cover still contains a few sheets of Conference notepaper and envelopes.

A similar Handbook for the following year (York, 1908) was "Presented with the Compliments of the Yorkshire Insurance Company, Limited", complete with Conference notepaper. It contained two lengthy and valuable historical articles, well illustrated, on Methodism in York and Scarborough, and character sketches of Conference officials and local personalities. But the local Arrangements Committee issued a similar booklet, on inferior paper, with paper covers (minus the advertisements—and the notepaper), for three-pence. Which is a reprint of the other it is now impossible to say; one thing is certain: in this York Handbook we can see the shape of things to come.

The Lincoln Handbook (1909), in the format with which we have now become familiar, was a booklet of thirty-four pages of reading matter, plus sixty-two pages of advertisements, with a coloured frontispiece of Lincoln Cathedral. Apart from descriptions of Conference personalities, it consisted entirely of information on the topography, history, and Methodism of Lincolnshire, circuit by circuit. We must confess, however, that the advertisements are more intriguing than the typescript. In 1909 the *Methodist Recorder* still cost one penny; a four-course dinner could be had at the Lindum Restaurant for 1s. 6d., or a plate of meat, including vegetables, for 1s.; a pair of spectacles cost only 2s. 6d. ("eyesight tested free"); boarder's fees at Woodhouse Grove School were £16 per term; the Wesley Guild announced a seventeen days tour of Switzerland for 7½ guineas, "including even gratuities"; individual communion cups "specially devised for the Methodist Churches" could be obtained post free for 21s. "an outfit"; the establishment of W. Kirkham, Hairdresser and Tobacconist, "is patronized by the Circuit Ministers, and is recommended by them to the representatives to Conference"—for which purpose, we may ask? Conference teas cost 4d. (2s. at Nottingham in 1957!); and lastly—a most topical allusion—letters still cost one penny, and there were five deliveries of mail each day. What halcyon days in which to live, and only fifty years ago!

Bradford (1910) closely followed Lincoln in its layout, included seating and town plans, and increased the price to fourpence. Cardiff (1911) spread itself to 198 pages, very few of which contained advertisements; and though the price was advanced to sixpence there was extra value for money in the shape of an artistic cover depicting in colour the City Hall, and a free £1,000 accident insurance coupon for all members of the Conference. This Cardiff Handbook may well be called a comprehensive guide to the topography, industries and Methodism of Cardiff and district, fully illustrated,

with portraits and biographical sketches of "the men who have prepared for the Conference". There are even maps showing every Wesleyan chapel in the Cardiff and Swansea District, and illustrating Wesley's journeys in South Wales. The touch of humour is not absent from its pages: "How much the Conference note-paper is appreciated may be seen by the receipt of letters during the ensuing year from distant circuits bearing the familiar Conference heading!" How many who read these words, like the present writer, will have their conscience stabbed broad awake! This is a truly wonderful souvenir of the second—and last—Wesleyan Conference ever to be held in Wales.⁴

The four succeeding Conferences (Liverpool, Plymouth, Leeds, and Birmingham) produced Handbooks well up to Cardiff's standard, but war-time and post-war difficulties prevented publication from 1916 to 1919. Hull (1920), whence the Conference of 1915 had for obvious reasons been transferred to Birmingham, printed a booklet which, apart from brief historical notices, was more Directory than Handbook—and the price had risen to one shilling. The old format reappeared at Middlesbrough in 1921, and from Sheffield (1922) to Sheffield again in 1940 the Handbook may be said to have approximated very closely to the high standard set by Cardiff. Hull, indeed, in 1938 set an all-time record with 208 pages, as though to compensate for its sketchy effort eighteen years before. But the second World War, like the first, cast its blight upon the Conference Handbook. Leeds (1941) produced a "modest brochure" which "must not be compared with the lavish Handbooks of happier days"; Manchester (1942) was a Directory rather than a Handbook; Birmingham (1943) made a commendable attempt to restore something of the ancient glory, though, says the editor, "those readers who possess a copy of the Handbook . . . when the Conference met at Birmingham in 1931, will weep for the days that are no more." Weeping may last for a night, but the night was a long one, for not until 1949 did the Handbook appear again. It was in effect a joint Handbook and Directory, though the Liverpool editor was far too modest when he wrote: "The times are not yet propitious for the production of a Conference Handbook on anything like the pre-war scale. Our publication is, therefore, both a venture of faith and a compromise." Since 1949 the Handbook has made its annual appearance without interruption, and though its quality has not been consistent in these later years the modern product need not fear comparison with its predecessors of fifty years ago. Long may it so continue! The price, alas! is now two shillings, though this is not surprising when it is remembered that the Leeds Handbook of 1956 cost £780 to publish. Lincoln and its threepenny Handbook belong to an age that is gone.

⁴ The Bible Christian Conference at Cardiff in 1898 was the only other Methodist Conference to meet in Wales. For the record, it may be added that only one Conference has been held in Scotland—the Primitive Methodist Conference at Edinburgh in 1895.

Large portions of the contents of these Handbooks reflect their primary purpose and have only an ephemeral value, though they do shed a light on the changing customs of the Conference and the habits of our fathers when they gathered for their annual feast of oratory and fellowship. But for the historian the Handbooks are a storehouse of information on the origins and development of Methodism in all the great centres of population in England and Wales. The historical notes are not, of course, exhaustive, but in many cases they are the only published work on the origins of local Methodism, and for that reason have great value for the student. In this respect the Conference Handbooks are unique amongst our Methodist literature, and we hope that the break with tradition at Nottingham this year is only a temporary lapse which will not be repeated.

Lastly, a word must be said about the covers of the Handbooks. Much thought and expense have obviously been lavished upon the cover designs, especially in the earlier and later years. Cardiff (1911) we have already mentioned, but in their different ways Plymouth (1913), Bradford (1950) and Leeds (1956) displayed equal taste and ingenuity, whilst Nottingham (1957), the work of a local art student, deserves high praise for its chaste, effective simplicity. What the future of the Conference Handbook may be we do not know; we can only hope that the editors at Newcastle (1958), Bristol (1959), and all the Conferences that are to be, will discover new ways of making their Handbooks attractive, useful, and worthy of a permanent place upon our shelves.

WESLEY F. SWIFT.

The Religious Education Press have issued a revised edition of *Christian Worship—Its Making and Meaning*, by Horton Davies (pp. 122, 6s. boards, 5s. limp cover), a popular exposition for beginners. The history and content of the worship of all the main Christian denominations are clearly and accurately described, and we know of no better handbook for, say, membership preparation classes. Unfortunately, however, Methodism suffers by being lumped together with the other Free Churches, and only two cursory references give any indication that Methodist worship has its own individual tradition and emphasis. Those who abominate the "children's address" will be glad to find no mention of it in these pages; but a more serious omission is a lack of reference to the growing custom of Parish Communion in the Church of England. . . . Three recent books on the Methodist doctrine of Holiness will attract the attention of theologians: the Epworth Press have issued a new edition (in cloth) of Harald Lindström's *Wesley and Sanctification* (pp. xvi, 228, 16s.), and having taken over from another publisher W. E. Sangster's *The Path to Perfection*, have issued a fifth edition (pp. 211, 16s.); whilst from the Abingdon Press comes *Christian Perfection and American Methodism*, by John L. Peters (pp. 252, \$4). The first two books are well-tried, and need no recommendation; the third, after describing the formulation of the doctrine during Wesley's lifetime, shows its development and modification in American Methodism. This is really outside our scope, but the extensive bibliography will be a great boon to students of the subject.

THE ANNUAL MEETING AND LECTURE

Business Meeting

ONCE more members of the Society are indebted to the kind hospitality of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Ibberson for that most happy "annual occasion", the Wesley Historical Society tea. We met this year in the schoolroom of the Ebenezer Methodist church, Arnold, Nottingham, and the local arrangements were kindly undertaken by the Rev. Allan Thornber, B.D.

The Annual Meeting faced several problems, in addition to the normal business. After a long discussion on finance it was decided that it was not desirable at present to increase the subscription from 7s. 6d. to 10s., even though this had been done by most comparable Societies; nor did members take kindly to the suggestion of reducing in any way the size or frequency of the *Proceedings*. (The Meeting was deeply grateful to Mr. R.W. Jenkins, who made out a cheque for £25 on the spot in order to ensure that there should be no retrenchment this year.) The only other way of remaining solvent seems to be that each of our members should endeavour to secure a new member. If this actually proved practicable our financial troubles would be over! **Will you try to secure a new member, please?** (Present ordinary membership 717, an increase of *one* on the year.)

Another unhappy situation was the great delay in the opening of the new Library in the crypt of Wesley's Chapel. Unfortunately the original estimates based on local voluntary labour are many hundreds of pounds off the mark now that it has been necessary to seek a professional contract. Altogether the necessary work, including lighting and a minimum of equipment in addition to shelving, will cost upwards of £900. The appeal issued some months ago has brought in so far £217, which would have been well on the way towards the original estimate. The officers felt, therefore, that it was folly to proceed until the larger amount had been secured or promised. To that end many "avenues have been explored", one or two of which are very promising, but do not seem to offer what we most desire—*immediate* as well as generous help. If any member reading this report feels able to send an extra donation (as one or two have already done), this will greatly help the situation. Such subscriptions should go direct to the Treasurer, Mr. Ibberson. We are very sorry for the delay in thus making worthy use of our late beloved President's fine collection of Methodist books, but we believe that the delay will indeed have ensured something much more worthy than would have been possible had we been prepared to accept makeshift arrangements.

Work on the Index to the first thirty volumes of the Society's *Proceedings* has been delayed, mainly due to clarifying the principles upon which the Index is being compiled. The scope has been enlarged from the first draft, and again the eventual result should be worthier of the Society. A bequest of £50 from the late Mr. Arthur Fieldhouse was gratefully acknowledged, and it was agreed that this should be earmarked as a nucleus of a Publication Fund. The Society is to be associated with the Dalcho Historical Society of South Carolina in a photo-lithograph facsimile of the 1737 Charleston hymn-book.

Future lectures were arranged as follows: 1958—Rev. Dr. A. Wesley Hill, "John Wesley among the Physicians"; 1959—Rev. Dr. Robert F. Wearmouth, "Methodism and the Trade Union Movement"; 1960—Rev. George Lawton, "Studies in Fletcher of Madeley".

The new President of the Society (the Rev. W. Lamplough Doughty) was in the chair, and he and all the other officers were re-appointed for the ensuing year.

The Annual Lecture

The Lecture followed in the Ebenezer Methodist church—a compact building of the old “box” type—which was well filled. It was appropriate that the building formerly belonged to the United Methodist Free Churches’ stream of the Methodist Church, since the lecture commemorated the centenary of the formation of the UMFC. The chairman also, Mr. Noel Shaw of Haydon Bridge, spoke of his own associations as a son of a Methodist manse, and movingly spoke not only of his convictions about remaining a “Free” Methodist, but of the great change which came in his life through conversion—the emphasis which links together all branches of Methodism.

The lecturer, Dr. Oliver A. Beckerlegge, deprecated the necessity to compress a quart into a pint pot. In these notes that compressed quart can hardly be further compressed. A whiff of the aroma must suffice. As will be seen from the review of the printed lecture, Dr. Beckerlegge was, as expected, both thorough in his treatment and provocative in his matter and presentment. With the necessary abridgement, it covered the same lines as the book (*vide* the review, p. 74). Dr. Beckerlegge avowed that he had tried to “set down naught in malice”, but he obviously enjoyed drawing a few parallels between the situation faced by the early Reformers and some aspects of modern Methodism. Nor was there any doubt about his own sympathy with the basic principles for which the UMFC came into being—local independence, and full representation on higher church courts. Not everyone agreed with him, but all found themselves stimulated.

FRANK BAKER.

WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Financial Statement for the year ended 30th June 1957

RECEIPTS.	£	s.	d.	PAYMENTS.	£	s.	d.
Balance in hand, 30th June 1956	145	3	11	Printing of <i>Proceedings</i> (4 issues)	217	8	0
Subscriptions and Donations				Postages and Stationery	53	17	10
General	180	7	7	Secretarial and Editorial Expenses	22	3	2
New Life Member	7	9	2	Steel Cupboard	10	0	0
Irish Branch	20	16	0	Bank Charges	3	1	0
Advertisements	4	0	0	Balance in hand, 30th June 1957	121	9	5
<i>Proceedings</i> (back numbers sold)	5	6	9				
Share of Lecture Collection	6	19	6				
Legacy	50	0	0				
War Stock Dividend	7	16	6				
	£427	19	5		£427	19	5

Balance Sheet

LIABILITIES.	£	s.	d.	ASSETS.	£	s.	d.
Subscriptions in advance	180	5	7	War Stock (at cost)	225	0	0
Life Members—				Cash in hand—Treasurer	75	19	11
18 in last 4 years (say)	94	9	0	Registrar	45	9	6
43 others at say 50s.	107	10	0	Back numbers of <i>Proceedings</i> , Library, Filing Cabinet, etc. unvalued			

10th July 1957.

HERBERT IBBERSON, *Treasurer*.
JOHN F. MILLS, *Auditor*.

CHARLES WESLEY'S POETICAL VERSION OF THE PSALMS

A CERTAIN Rev. Henry Fish in the middle of the last century set himself to discover the number of versions of the Psalms, and traced at least seventy written since the Reformation. These do not include the partial versions, whose number is greater still. In England, however, the versions of Sternhold and Hopkins, and of Tate and Brady, were the most popular until Isaac Watts published his *Psalms of David Imitated in the Language of the New Testament* in 1719. These were so generally adopted that William Romaine, the noted evangelical clergyman, declared in 1755 :

I blame nobody, for singing human compositions. I do not think it sinful or unlawful so the matter be scriptural. My complaint is against preferring men's poems to the good word of God and preferring them to it in the Church. I have no quarrel with Dr. Watts or any living or dead versifier. I would not wish all their poems to be burnt. My concern is to see Christian congregations shut out divinely-inspired psalms,¹ and take in Dr. Watts's flights of fancy. Why should Watts or any hymnmaker not only take precedence of the Holy Ghost, but also thrust Him entirely out of the Church? Insomuch that the rhymes of a man are now magnified above the word of God even to the annihilating of it in many congregations. If this be right, men and brethren, judge ye.

This was, likewise, the opinion of Samuel Wesley, junr., the eldest brother of Charles Wesley. In a poem entitled "Upon altering the Psalms to apply them to a Christian state", he attacked by implication the version of Isaac Watts, though his sweeping condemnation would seem to include other metrical versions :

Has David Christ to come foreshow'd?
Can Christians then aspire
To mend the harmony that flow'd
From his prophetic lyre?
How curious are their wits, and vain,
Their erring zeal how bold
Who durst with meaner dross profane
His purity of gold!
His Psalms unchanged the saints employ,
Unchanged our God applies:
They suit the' apostles in their joy,
The Saviour when He dies.
Let David's pure, unalter'd lays
Transmit through ages down
To Thee, O David's Lord, our praise!
To Thee, O David's Son!
Till judgment calls the seraph throng
To join the human choir,
And God, who gave the ancient song,
The new one shall inspire.²

¹ This is a reference to Sternhold and Hopkins.

² From *Poems on Several Occasions*, by Samuel Wesley, junr. (edited by James Nichols, 1862).

Happily, Charles Wesley did not allow himself to be daunted by the criticism directed against the version of Isaac Watts, and even his brother's dead hand did not rest too heavily upon him. His poetical version is far from complete, but it does include the whole of the Penitential Psalms and the Psalm of Degrees. The comminatory and historical psalms he evidently did not consider appropriate subjects for his poetry. His version is not to be read as offering an understanding of the Psalmist's meaning, but as a clue to the mind of Charles Wesley. Like Watts before him, he was able to read the New Testament into the message of the Psalms and to treat them as a handbook of evangelical theology. His brother's line applied to him, for with Charles Wesley—"David Christ to come foreshow'd".³

If one can forget exegesis, and read the version for the vigour of its verse, it will bring its own inspiration. Here once more in his mastery of an astonishing variety of metre is the ability to use latinisms or simple Anglo-Saxon with equal ease. In Psalm xix he keeps within the Augustan tradition. Verses one and two are strongly reminiscent of Dryden:⁴

Our souls the book of nature draws
To' adore the First Eternal Cause:
The heavens articulately shine,
And speak their Architect Divine;
And all the orbs proclaim aloud
The wisdom and the power of God.
See, in yon glorious azure height,
The sovereign, uncreated Light!
That vast expanse of liquid air
Doth His immensity declare;
And every influence from above,
His bounteous, universal love.⁵

In another verse (Psalm cx. 1), however, he uses simpler words with equal effect:

To Thee shall earth and hell submit,
And every foe shall fall,
Till death expires beneath Thy feet,
And God is all in all!⁶

Or again, as a combination of Latin and Anglo-Saxon words, consider his paraphrase of Psalm lxxiii. 25: "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee."

My perfect holiness Thou art,
My full felicity:
Enter, and fill my hungry heart,
Which wants no heaven but Thee.⁷

³ The examples are taken from *A Collection of Psalms and Hymns* (1741); "Versions and Paraphrases of Select Psalms" (collated from various sources); and *Short Hymns on Select Passages of the Holy Scriptures* (1762); and the references given are to *The Poetical Works of John and Charles Wesley*.

⁴ An article on *Dryden and the Methodist Hymn-Book* will be found in *Proceedings*, x, pp. 159-62.

⁵ *Poetical Works*, viii, p. 36.

⁶ *ibid.*, ii, p. 144.

⁷ *ibid.*, ix., p. 310.

It is not only his mastery of verse but his evangelical fervour which still has power to move the reader. Here is once more the note of universalism (Psalm lxxxvi. 5):

Thou still art ready to forgive ;
 Who sue to Thee for life shall live ;
 Who seek Thy face shall find ;
 Thy grace doth, more than sin, abound ;
 With Thee is plenteous pardon found
 For me and all mankind.⁸

He puts a Gospel interpretation on the words "O when wilt thou come unto me?" (Psalm ci. 2):

Why not now, my God, my God,
 (Ready if Thou always art,)
 Make in me Thy mean abode,
 Take possession of my heart?
 If Thou canst so greatly bow,
 Friend of sinners, why not now?⁹

The Christian goal is defined memorably in his paraphrase of Psalm xxxix. 8 (P.B.V.), "And now, Lord, what is my hope?":

What now is my object and aim?
 What now is my hope and desire?
 To follow the heavenly Lamb,
 And after His image aspire:
 My hope is all centred in Thee;
 I trust to recover Thy love,
 On earth Thy salvation to see,
 And then to enjoy it above.¹⁰

When John Wesley lay dying his thoughts found expression in Isaac Watts's hymn, and he sang the first verse:

I'll praise my Maker while I've breath;
 And when my voice is lost in death,
 Praise shall employ my nobler powers:
 My days of praise shall ne'er be past,
 While life, and thought, and being last,
 Or immortality endures.

But Charles Wesley had his own spirited paraphrase of Psalm cxlvi:

Long as my God shall lend me breath,
 My every pulse shall beat for Him;
 And when my voice is lost in death,
 My spirit shall resume the theme;
 The gracious theme, for ever new,
 Through all eternity pursue.¹¹

The constant reading of this poetical version of the Psalms has been of such blessing to me that I have given some quotations only that others might bring their pitchers to the same deep well.

MALDWYN L. EDWARDS.

⁸ *ibid.*, viii, p. 169.

⁹ *ibid.*, ix, p. 318.

¹⁰ *ibid.*, ix, p. 293.

¹¹ *ibid.*, viii, p. 260. [The third line would seem to be a conscious borrowing from Watts.—EDITOR.]

WESLEY, KING AND COKE

Wesley hands on Coke hath laid,
But who laid hands on him ?

WAS John Wesley really inconsistent in setting apart Thomas Coke as Superintendent? If the answer is "Yes", it is a very surprising answer. Wesley was a professional logician, and he denied any inconsistency in his writings from 1738 to 1789.

Lord Peter King

Let us begin by forgetting both Bishop Lightfoot and the Oxford Movement. Modern views on early church organization and order are irrelevant at this point. Wesley was influenced in January 1746 by Lord Peter King, who argued, with many quotations from the Fathers, that during the first three Christian centuries:¹

As but one Bishop to a Church, so but one Church to a Bishop. The Bishop's Cure never called a Diocess [sic] but usually a Parish no larger than our Parishes.

The particular acts of [a Bishop's] Function were such as these: Preaching of the Word, Praying with his people, Admitting to the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, Taking care of the Poor, Ordaining of Ministers, Governing his Flock, Excommunicating of Offenders, Absolving of Penitents.

[A Presbyter is] a Person in Holy Orders, having thereby an inherent Right to perform the whole Office of a Bishop; but being possessed of no Place or Parish, not actually discharging it, without the Permission or consent of the Bishop of a Place or Parish. But lest this definition should seem obscure I shall illustrate it by this following Instance. As a Curate hath the same Mission and Power with the Minister whose Place he supplies yet not being the Minister of the Place he cannot perform there any acts of his Ministerial Function without leave from the Minister thereof; So a Presbyter had the same Order and Power with a Bishop whom he assisted in his Cure; yet being not the Bishop or Minister of the Cure he could not there perform any part of his Pastoral Office without the permission of the Bishop thereof.

1. That the Presbyters were different from the Bishops *in gradu* or *in degree* but yet

2. They were equal to them *in Ordine* or *in Order*.

So then in this Sense a Presbyter was inferior to a Bishop in Degree—that having no Parish of his own, he could not actually discharge the particular Acts of his Ministerial Function without leave from the Bishop of a Parish or Diocess: The Bishops were superior to the Presbyters in that they were the presented, instituted and inducted Ministers of their respective Parishes and the Presbyters were inferior to the Bishops in that they were their Curates or Assistants.

But though the Presbyters were thus different from the Bishops in Degree yet they were of the very same specific Order with them having the same inherent Right to perform those Ecclesiastical Offices which the Bishops did.

¹ The quotations are from the summary to chapter 2, and chapters 3 and 4, of King's *Enquiry into the Constitution, Discipline, Unity and Worship of the Primitive Church*. This book was published in various editions in 1691, 1712, 1713, 1719, without footnotes in 1839, and in Latin and German in 1733.

The consistent Wesley

It is immediately obvious that King's theory fits remarkably with what was already Wesley's position. Of course, it compelled him to amend certain ideas (e.g. that there was a difference of order between presbyter and episcopos), but it confirmed certain convictions that Wesley had gained since 1738. Wesley had already written: "I have both an ordinary call and an extraordinary. My ordinary call is my ordination by the Bishop . . . My extraordinary call is witnessed by the works God doeth by my ministry, which prove that He is with me of a truth in this exercise of my office",² and "I look upon all the world as my parish".³

We must also notice at length the account⁴ he gives in 1745 of church government, making as we read a mental comparison with Wesley's own position in Methodism as the original "Preacher of the Gospel".

Q. 5. Is Episcopal, Presbyterian or Independent church-government most agreeable to reason?

A. The plain origin of church-government seems to be this. Christ sends forth a Preacher of the Gospel. Some who hear him repent and believe the Gospel. They then desire him to watch over them, to build them up in the faith, and to guide their souls in the path of righteousness.

Here, then, is an *Independent* congregation; subject to no Pastor but their own, neither liable to be controlled in things spiritual, by any other man, or body of men, whatsoever.

But soon after, some from other parts, who are occasionally present while he speaks in the name of Him that sent him, beseech him to come over to help them also. Knowing it to be the will of God, he consents. Yet not till he has conferred with the wisest and holiest of his congregation, and with their advice appointed one or more, who has gifts and grace, to watch over the flock till his return.

If it please God to raise another flock in the new place, before he leaves them, he does the same thing: appointing one whom God has fitted for the work to watch over these souls also. In like manner, in every place where it pleases God to gather a little flock by his word, he appoints one in his absence to take the oversight of the rest, and to assist them of the ability which God giveth. These are *Deacons*, or servants of the church, and look on the first Pastor as their common father. And all these congregations regard him in the same light, and esteem him still as the shepherd of their souls.

These congregations are not absolutely *independent*, they depend on one Pastor, though not on each other.

As these congregations increase, and as their Deacons grow in years and grace, they need other subordinate Deacons, or helpers: in respect of whom they may be called *Presbyters*, or Elders; as their father in the Lord may be called the *Bishop*, or Overseer of them all.

Q. 6. Is mutual consent absolutely necessary between the Pastor and his flock?

A. No question. I cannot guide any soul, unless he consent to be guided by me. Neither can any soul force me to guide him, if I consent not.

² *Letters of John Wesley*, i, p. 322.

³ *ibid.*, i, p. 285.

⁴ *Minutes of Conference*, 1745 (1862 edn.), i, pp. 26-7.

According to King, Wesley's *ordine* as presbyter gave him the "inherent right to perform the whole office of a bishop", subject only to the bishop's permission, i.e. he could preach, administer the sacraments, exercise the pastoral office, and govern his societies, where the clergyman of each parish permitted it. Far from permitting it, of course, the eighteenth-century clergy generally varied between utter indifference and violent opposition to Methodism. Yet they did nothing themselves for "the lost sheep of the Church of England". As a result of Wesley's preaching, these lost sheep placed themselves in his care, and Wesley felt divinely constrained to build them up in the faith. (Nobody else would. Note his emphasis on "consent" in view of the lack of it on the part of the bishops, i.e. parish priests, of his day.) He says: "to be so employed of God! and so hedged in that I can neither get forward nor backward".⁵ The lost sheep came in such numbers that classes, societies, circuits, lay helpers, and the Conference, became a necessity. In all this Wesley knew himself "employed of God".

Hence not only was Wesley's *ordine* equal to that of a bishop, but so also was his *gradus*. People consented, nay demanded, to be governed by him. There is no pride in his affirmations: "I firmly believe that I am a scriptural episcopos as much as any man in England or in Europe",⁶ and "I know myself to be as real a Christian bishop as the Archbishop of Canterbury."⁷ To Methodists and non-Methodists his episcopé was evidently blessed by God.

True, there is a conflict here, but no inconsistency. The conflict is between King's qualifying phrase "with the consent of a bishop" and the lack of consent of eighteenth-century Anglicanism generally (it being possessed of the "parish" of England). But then eighteenth-century Anglicanism can be described in human terms in contrast to divine. Wesley is not afraid to quote the scripture, "If it be just to obey man rather than God, judge you".⁸ As he says: "Put these two principles together. First, I will not separate from the Church;⁹ yet Secondly, *in cases of necessity*, I will vary from it . . . and inconsistency vanishes away."¹⁰ Wesley thus finds himself exercising episcopé over people and preachers. They are admitted, discharged and governed by him. Towards the end of his life, in refuting the claim of some of his lay helpers to administer the sacraments, he says:

For supposing (what I utterly deny) that the receiving you as a Preacher, at the same time gave you an authority to administer the sacraments; yet it gave you no other authority than to do it, or anything else, *where I appoint*. But where did I appoint you to do this? Nowhere at all. Therefore by this very rule you are excluded from doing it.¹¹

⁵ *Letters*, v, p. 16.

⁶ *ibid.*, vii, p. 284.

⁷ *ibid.*, vii, p. 262.

⁸ *ibid.*, i, p. 285.

⁹ Wesley means "not ceasing to attend her worship"; he does not include observance of her discipline, which is "well-nigh vanished away".

¹⁰ Sermon CXV on "The Ministerial Office", paragraph 16.

¹¹ *ibid.*, paragraph 14.

Wesley and Coke

Yet to ordain men himself to the ministry of Word and Sacrament will seem to some a step of a different order. Not according to King. "Lord King's Account of the Primitive Church convinced me many years ago that bishops and presbyters are the same order and consequently have the same right to ordain."¹² E. W. Thompson suggests that "King would remark, 'Presbyters have no right to ordain except by the bishop's permission'."¹³ Wesley, of course, referred to what King calls their "inherent right", which in Wesley's case was an exercised right because God had called him to the episcopé of Methodism. Because of his love for the Church of England Wesley tried to persuade the bishops to ordain men for America, and when they refused he "obeyed God" and himself ordained.

Coke's letter to Wesley in 1784 throws more light on this point.¹⁴ It reads:

The more maturely I consider the subject, the more expedient it appears to me, that the power of ordaining others should be received by me from you, by the imposition of your hands; and that you should lay hands on brother Whatcoat and brother Vasey, for the following reasons: (1) It seems to me the most scriptural way, and most agreeable to the practice of the primitive churches. (2) I may want all the influence, in America, which you can throw into my scale. Mr. Brackenbury informed me at Leeds, that he saw a letter from Mr. Asbury, in which he observed that he would not receive any person, deputed by you, with any part of the superintendency of the work invested in him; or words which evidently implied so much. I do not find the least prejudice in my mind against Mr. Asbury; on the contrary, I find a very great love and esteem; and am determined not to stir a finger without his consent, unless necessity obliges me; but rather to be at his feet in all things. But, as the journey is long, and you cannot spare me often, it is well to provide against all events; and I am satisfied that an authority, formally received from you, will be fully admitted; and that my exercising the office of ordination, without that formal authority, may be disputed, and perhaps, on other accounts, opposed. I think you have tried me too often to doubt, whether I will, in any degree, use the power you are pleased to invest me with, farther than I believe absolutely necessary for the prosperity of the work.

In respect of my brethren Whatcoat and Vasey, it is very uncertain whether any of the clergy, mentioned by brother Rankin, except Mr. Jarratt, will stir a step with me in the work; and it is by no means certain, that even he will choose to join me in ordaining; and propriety and universal practice make it expedient, that I should have two presbyters with me in this work. In short, it appears to me, that everything should be prepared, and everything proper be done, that can possibly be done, on this side the water. You can do all this in Mr. C——n's house, in your chamber; and afterwards (according to Mr. Fletcher's advice) give us letters testimonial of the different offices with which you have been pleased to invest us. For the purpose of laying hands on brothers

¹² *Letters*, vii, p. 238.

¹³ *Wesley: Apostolic Man*, p. 29.

¹⁴ *Tyerman: Life and Times of John Wesley*, iii, p. 429.

Whatcoat and Vasey, I can bring Mr. Creighton down with me, by which you will have two presbyters with you.

In respect to brother Rankin's argument, that you will escape a great deal of odium, by omitting this, it is nothing. Either it will be known, or not known. If not known, then no odium will arise; but if known, you will be obliged to acknowledge, that I acted under your direction, or suffer me to sink under the weight of my enemies, with perhaps your brother at the head of them. I shall entreat you to ponder these things.

This letter shows that certain points had already been agreed; in particular that Coke was, in any case, going to America to ordain preachers and to set up a Methodist Church there—note the significance of “my exercising the office of ordination, without that formal authority, may be disputed”. The point at issue, the point for which Wesley contended, and which was opposed by Rankin, and to which Coke had now come round, is that Wesley should lay hands on Coke. The two reasons given in the first paragraph are irrelevant if the issue were the larger one of Coke (under Wesley's direction) setting up a Church and ordaining ministers. They can only be understood in the light of a suggestion from Wesley that Coke should receive a “formal authority” from Wesley to do so. Coke needed this because his own authority was inadequate. In Wesley resided the episcopé, and he could only be consistent by *formally* setting apart Coke and Asbury to share it with him in America. Hence the old question “Who laid hands on him?” is answered thus: Wesley could lay hands on Coke because Coke was “possessed of no Place or Parish”, while Wesley was possessed of his Methodist Cure.

Let us note in passing that if (in accordance with the threefold order of the ministry theory) episcopé *is* a question of ordination,¹⁵ then one cannot defend Wesley's claim to be a scriptural episcopos. He acted without being ordained to it. But Wesley believed that God had called him to this function, and that the fact was “witnessed by the works God doeth by my ministry”. Of course, Wesley provided for the “setting apart” of superintendents as the “ordinary call” in recognition of the divine call. Compare the following extract from Clause 30 of the Deed of Union of 1932: “Those whom The Methodist Church recognises as called of God and therefore receives into its Ministry shall be ordained by the imposition of hands as expressive of the Church's recognition of the Minister's personal call.”

But God had, in fact, set Wesley apart without the imposition of hands. It might also be added that despite Wesley's intention in providing an Ordinal for the “ordinary call” of a superintendent, Methodist superintendents have in fact exercised their function without its use.

Conclusions

Thus we see Wesley equal in *ordine* and *gradus* to a scriptural episcopos. Not, admittedly, according to Anglican doctrine, though

¹⁵ As the Rev. A. Raymond George contends in *Proceedings*, xxxi, p. 30 f.

the Church of England was the "best ordered National Church in the world", and "some obedience [he] always paid to the bishops" but only "in obedience to the laws of the land". But equal in the scriptural sense, as one given pastoral care of lost sheep and holding that commission, not as Curate or Assistant, but as Father in God to his people and preachers.

It seems not improbable, having regard to the fluidity of both nomenclature and practice, that in the Primitive Church, at a certain stage of development, history foreshadowed the situation in which Wesley had to set apart Coke as superintendent because only he had the personal authority to do it. As the gospel spread from one town or province to the next it would be necessary for the presbyter-bishop (*vide* Lightfoot) responsible for its spread to set apart with formal authority a man who would assume the episcopé in the new area. The apostolic and sub-apostolic age was very far from having tied doctrine and organization up in neat little bundles. The rule of the Holy Spirit was still the reality which Wesley was to rediscover in the eighteenth century.

VICTOR E. VINE.

ERRATUM

In *Proceedings*, xxxi, p. 30, footnote 15, for Asbury's read Coke's

The Rev. William Leary has written, as a labour of love, the history of Methodism in Humberstone, his native village near Grimsby (pp. 16, 1s. 9d. post free from Mr. J. Stephenson, Cranford, Enfield Avenue, New Waltham, Grimsby, Lincs). The chapel is about to celebrate its jubilee, but Methodism began in Humberstone as long ago as 1790, and the first chapel was built in 1835. Information about the early days is only fragmentary, but Mr. Leary has told in detail the story of the last half-century; and this neat booklet (his first publication) is a credit to its author, one of our most "up and coming" younger members, from whom we expect great things in the future. . . . We are indebted to the Rev. Raymond O. Ball for a copy of the current Year Book of the Stratford-on-Avon circuit, which, in addition to some interesting historical notes of a general character, contains extensive information about the origin and development of Methodism in every one of the eleven preaching-places in the circuit. This is a novel method of using what is so often a mundane production, and one well worthy of imitation. . . . Mr. J. Duncan of Bury St. Edmunds has sent us a carbon copy of that section of his extensive typescript on "The Origins of the Free Churches in Bury St. Edmunds" which relates to Wesleyan Methodism. We hope that a work of such high quality and value may some day find a publisher.

EARLY WESLEYAN CLASS TICKETS

Comments and Catalogue

(Continued from page 38)

On the three following pages are given details of the tickets issued from 1781 to 1791, concluding the Rev. John H. Verney's present survey.

Year	Quarter	Letter	Text	Member	Collection
1781	March	S	"BE NOT FAITHLESS BUT BELIEVING" (in capitals) (John xx. 27)	Chas. Kilburn	V E W ^o
	June	Sb	"He that believeth . . . witness in himself" (1 John v. 10)	(No name)	V E W ^o
		T	"Except a man . . . kingdom of God" (John iii. 3)	Bridget Weaver	V E W ^o
	Sept.	Tb	"Whosoever is born of God . . . sin" (1 John iii. 9)	Mary Cawley	V E W ^o
		U	"Be of good cheer . . . forgiven thee" (Matt. ix. 2)	Bridget Mann	V E W ^o
	Dec.	Ub	"LET US GO ON UNTO PFRFECTION" (in capitals) (Heb. vi. 1)	Mary Cawley	V E W ^o
		W	"How is it . . . faith?" (Mark iv. 40)	Briget Man	V E W ^o
	Wb	"All things are possible . . . believeth" (Mark ix. 23)	(No name)	E W ^o	
From 1781 till 1821 the letters and quarters follow in direct sequence, and the printing is not again in capitals.					
1782	March	X	"Be not afraid, only believe" (Mark v. 36)	Bridget Mann	V E W ^o
	June	Xb	"Examine yourselves . . . in the faith" (2 Cor. xiii. 5)	J. Mills	V E W ^o
		Y	"While ye have light . . . children of light" (John xii. 36)	Bright. Mann	V E W ^o
	Sept.	Yb	"Believe . . . shall have" (Mark xi. 24)		E W ^o
		Z	"Bring forth . . . repentance" (Matt. iii. 8)	Bridget Mann	V E W ^o
	Dec.	Zb	"Love not the world . . . world" (1 John ii. 15)		V E W ^o
		A	"Now we live . . . in the Lord" (1 Thess. iii. 8)	Bridget Man	V E W ^o
1783	March	Ab	"Abstain from all appearance of evil" (1 Thess. v. 22)	Wm. Gordon	V E W ^o
	June	B	"For this . . . your sanctification" (1 Thess. iv. 3)	Bridget Mann	V E W ^o
		Bb	"The Lord make you . . . toward another" (1 Thess. iii. 12)	Jane Belford	V W ^o
	Sept.	C	"Quench not the Spirit" (1 Thess. v. 19)	Bridget Mann	V E W
		Cb	"Study to be quiet . . . business" (1 Thess. iv. 11)		E W
	Dec.	D	"The Lord direct your hearts . . . Christ" (2 Thess. iii. 5)	Mary Cawley	V E W ^o
		Db	"Now the Lord of peace . . . means" (2 Thess. iii. 16)	John Skinner	V E W ^o
1784	March	E	"Remember . . . keep it holy" (Exodus xx. 8)	Bridget Mann	V E W
	June	Eb	"Remember Lot's wife" (Luke xviii. 32)	Mary Cowley	V E W ^o
		F	"This do in remembrance of Me" (Luke xxii. 19)	Mary Cawley	V E W ^o
	Sept.	Fb	"Stand fast in one spirit" (Phil. i. 27)		E W ^o
		G	"Pour out Thy fury . . . name" (Jer. x. 25)	Bridget Man	V E
		Gb	"Watch ye . . . be strong" (1 Cor. xvi. 13)		E W ^o

Year	Quarter	Letter	Text	Member	Collection	
1784	Sept.	H	"Thou art the man" (2 Sam. xii. 7)	Briget Man	V E W	
	Dec.	Hb	"It is impossible . . . again unto repentance" (Heb. vi. 4-6)		E W ^c	
1785	March	I	"There is no respect of persons with God" (Rom. ii. 11)	A. Farrow	V E W ^c	
		Ib	"Blessed are the poor . . . heaven" (Matt. v. 3)	Mary Cawley	V E W ^c	
	June	K	"To be carnally minded is death" (Rom. viii. 6)	Bridget Man	V E W	
		Kb	"Blessed are the meek . . . earth" (Matt. v. 5)	Alice Creighton	V E W ^c	
	Sept.	L	"To him that knoweth . . . it is sin" (James iv. 17)	Bridget Man	V E W ^c	
		Lb	"Blessed are the merciful . . . mercy" (Matt. v. 7)	M. Sumerell	V E W ^c	
	Dec.	M	"Casting all your care . . . for you" (1 Peter v. 7)	Mary Cawley	V E W	
		Mb	"Ye are the light . . . cannot be hid" (Matt. v. 14)		E W	
	1786	March	N	"They said . . . what shall we do?" (Acts ii. 37)	S. Gordon	V E W
			Nb	"God forbid . . . Lord Jesus Christ" (Gal. vi. 14)	Mary Cawley,	V E W
June		O	"The promise is unto you" (Acts ii. 39)	Will Elkin]	V E W	
		Ob	"We know that all things . . . love God" (Rom. viii. 28)		E W	
Sept.		P	"Save yourselves . . . generation" (Acts ii. 40)	Mary Calley	V E W	
		Pb	"All things are yours . . . ye are Christ's" (Gal. vi. 14 [sic—should be 1 Cor. iii. 21-23])	Bridget Man	V E W ^c	
1787		March	Q	"They continued . . . apostles" (Acts ii. 42-43)	Bridget Man	V E
			Qb	"Having therefore . . . unto this day" (Acts xxvi. 22)	Mary Calley	V E W ^c
		June	R	"He that believeth . . . abideth on him" (John iii. 36)	Mary Cawley	V E W ^c
			Rb	"Be ye holy . . . conversation" (1 Peter i. 15)		E W ^c
1788	Sept.	S	"Evening, and morning . . . cry aloud" (Ps. lv. 17)	Mary Cawley	V E W ^c	
		Sb	"Thy vows . . . O God" (Ps. lvi. 12)		E W ^c	
	Dec.	T	"Wash me throughly from mine iniquity" (Ps. li. 2)	Letis Bayley	V E W ^c	
		Tb	"Renew a right spirit within me" (Ps. li. 10)		E W ^c	
	March	U	"Come out . . . thou unclean spirit" (Mark v. 8)	Mary Calley	V E W	
		Ub	"Go home . . . hath done for thee" (Mark v. 19)		E W ^c	
	June	W	"Who is a God like unto Thee" (Micah vii. 18)	G. Osborn	V E W	
		Wb	"Examine yourselves" (2 Cor. xiii. 5)	Mary Calley	V E W ^c	
Sept.	X	"Surely His salvation . . . fear Him" (Ps. lxxxv. 9)	P. Worsley	V E W ^c		
	Xb	"Work out . . . fear and trembling" (Phil. ii. 12)	Mary Calley	V E W ^c		

Year	Quarter	Letter	Text	Member	Collection
1788	June	Y	"Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Luke xvi. 13)	Sar. Miller	V E W
		Yb	"Keep yourselves in the love of God" (Jude 21)	Will Gordon	V E W
	Sept.	Z	"Be not carried about . . . doctrines" (Heb. xiii. 9)	Wm. Gordon	V E W
		Zb	"Rejoicing in hope" (Rom. xii. 12)	Wm. Elkin	V E W
	Dec.	A	"Satan hath desired . . . thee" (Luke xxii. 31-32)	Mary Cawley	V E W
		Ab	"Look to yourselves" (2 John 8)	Jane Ford	V E W
1789	March	B	"If we deny Him . . . us" (2 Tim. ii. 12)	Wm. Gordon	V E W
		Bb	"Hold fast that which is good" (1 Thess. v. 21)	Mary Warton	V E W ^c
	June	C	"Woe unto them! . . . Me" (Hosea vii. 13)	S. Oddie	V E W
		Cb	"Wait on thy God continually" (Hosea xii. 6)	John Miles	V E W
	Sept.	D	"Beware of covetousness" (Luke xii. 15)	Mary Calley	V E W
		Db	"Behold, I come as a thief" (Rev. xvi. 15)	Ann Whittaker	V E W
	Dec.	E	"He will speak peace . . . people" (Ps. lxxxv. 8)	Nancy Mills	V E W
		Eb	"The Lord is with you" (2 Chron. xv. 2)	Jane Bedford	V E W
1790	March	F	"My son, give me thine heart" (Prov. xxiii. 26)	M. Cawley	V E W
		Fb	"Stand fast in the Lord" (Phil. iv. 1)	P. Worsley	V E W
	June	G	"They that wait . . . renew their strength" (Isa. xl. 31)	Peter Worsley	V E W
		Gb	"Continue in prayer" (Col. iv. 2)	J. Carter	V E W
	Sept.	H	"Our God . . . deliver us" (Dan. iii. 17)	M. Cawley	V E W
		Hb	"Walk in love" (Eph. v. 2)		E W
	Dec.	I	"This day is . . . of rebuke" (2 Kings xix. 3)	Wm. Elkins	V E W
		Ib	"Men ought always to pray" (Luke xviii. 1)	Geo. Furnish	V E W
1791	March	K	"The gift of God is eternal life" (Rom. vi. 23)		V E W
		Kb	"Covet earnestly the best gifts" (1 Cor. xii. 31)	Eliza I. Lomax	V E W
	June	L	"Submit yourselves therefore to God" (James iv. 7)	Robt. Frazer	V E W
		Lb	"My yoke . . . light" (Matt. x. 42 [sic—should be xi. 28])	Wm. Elkins	V E W
	Sept.	M	"Can two walk together . . . agreed?" (Amos iii. 3)	Mary Cawley	V E W
		Mb	"Be at peace among yourselves" (1 Thess. v. 13)	Peter Worsley	V E W
	Dec.	N	"Brethren, stand fast" (2 Thess. ii. 15)	M. Cawley	V E W
		Nb	"Hold the traditions . . . taught" (2 Thess. ii. 15)	Mary Durley	V E W

BOOK NOTICES

The United Methodist Free Churches: A Study in Freedom, by Oliver A. Beckerlegge. The Wesley Historical Society Lectures, No. 23. (Epworth Press, pp. 112, 8s. 6d.)

It was eminently appropriate that this year's Lecture should commemorate the centenary of the union which formed the United Methodist Free Churches, and the further union fifty years later in which the UMFC became part of the United Methodist Church. It was equally fitting that Dr. Beckerlegge should be the chosen lecturer, for in no other amongst us are the qualities of scholarship and the flair for historical research so perfectly blended with a passionate—almost militant—belief in the principles for which the reformers "came out" a century ago. We must confess that we approached this book with a considerable degree of apprehension that Dr. Beckerlegge might have been tempted to "let himself go", but our fears were groundless, for he has exercised the most commendable restraint.

The three main chapters of the book are based upon the words "United", "Methodist", and "Free". The first recounts the story of the 1857 Union; the second shows how the UMFC were in the main stream of Methodist tradition in their use of Wesley's hymns, class tickets, magazines, ministerial training, the setting up of connexional departments, and, above all, in their evangelical emphasis. The third of these chapters expounds the two basic principles of the reformers: Free Representation and Local Independence: and their outworking in the life of the denomination is amply illustrated. The rest of the book is devoted to an account of the remarkable missionary activity of the UMFC in many parts of the world, notably in Jamaica, China, Australia and Africa, and to the story of the Union of 1907. It is remarkable indeed to discover that of the seventy-two Assemblies, from the beginning of the Wesleyan Association in 1836 to the closing UMFC Assembly in 1907, thirty-two of them passed resolutions in favour of the desirability of union with other branches of the Methodist family.

There still remains the opening chapter on "Origins". Dr. Beckerlegge has attempted the impossible task of compressing the story of three great secessions into twenty pages, and the result is a not unnatural bias in favour of the actions and motives of the reformers. The narrative, despite Dr. Beckerlegge's desire to be fair, does not do justice to the other side of the disputes. Those who are able to turn to Dr. Simon's masterly series of articles in the *London Quarterly Review* (1884-93) will discover that one of the greatest of our Methodist historians has given a reasoned and judicial but very different interpretation of the same events. To put it bluntly, Dr. Beckerlegge's opening chapter should be taken with a pinch of salt. He has largely been the victim of his own necessary compression, but it is significant that his footnotes refer almost entirely to anti-Conference sources; and for this reason alone we regret the absence of a bibliography.

It would be idle for the present reviewer to disguise his lack of sympathy with the reformers, with their motives and their principles. We believe that a careful study of Lord Lyndhurst's judgement in the Warren case, and of Beecham's *Essay on the Constitution of Methodism*, would have modified some of Dr. Beckerlegge's opinions—but perhaps he and we are equally recalcitrant! But our criticisms of this opening chapter do not blind us to the merits of this Lecture. For Dr. Beckerlegge it has been a labour of love and a tribute to the Methodism of his fathers; for our Society it will take a worthy place in the succession of our annual Lectures, for it tells for the first time the history of a denomination which has brought its own



CHARLES WESLEY'S MEMORIAL AND THE GARDEN OF REST AT MARYLEBONE, LONDON.

Photograph by kind permission of *The Times*.

contribution to our united Methodism, in which the bitterness of the past has been forgotten, even though the influence of Bunting and of Everett may still remain. It should be added that the book contains twenty-five excellent illustrations, the inclusion of which has been made possible by generous financial help from interested friends. WESLEY F. SWIFT.

Methodism and the Love-Feast, by Frank Baker. (Epworth Press, pp. 83, 5s.)

Dr. Frank Baker's book on the lovefeast is, in many ways, one of his best. It is historical without being of mere historical interest, for in the last two chapters and an appendix he reviews the subject in the light of present-day needs and opportunities. With his usual attention to detail and by a careful combing of all his sources, Dr. Baker has traced the history of the lovefeast from the New Testament "agapé" through Moravianism into Methodism. After their separation from the Moravians, the Methodists retained the lovefeast, and it remained a recognized means of grace in all branches of Methodism well into the nineteenth century. The crucial question has always been the relation of the lovefeast to the Holy Communion, and this is discussed by Dr. Baker with insight and ability. The point is: Can the lovefeast be revived in some form, so that it can supply a common means of grace for churches which are not yet able to kneel together at the Lord's Table? Dr. Baker thinks it can; but there will be others who will regard such a practice as merely by-passing the real problems of intercommunion. In any case this is a timely book, and the chapter dealing with the actual conduct of the lovefeast is sure to be of great practical value to all who, not having attended such a service, may wish to arrange one. There is a remarkably full bibliography at the end of the book.

JOHN C. BOWMER.

Puritan Devotion: Its Place in the Development of Christian Piety, by Gordon S. Wakefield. (Epworth Press, pp. xxii. 170, 21s.)

Culpable ignorance is the main reason why our generation has turned wistfully towards "catholic" devotional literature, and away from the frames of Protestant devotion. This year's Fernley-Hartley Lecture should stimulate the reading and thought of those who have a conscience about this. Puritan piety had a four-square framework based on the Bible, the religion of the home, Sunday, and the law of Christ: on that frame souls were nourished. Within that frame there was a spirit of devotion, which Mr. Wakefield illustrates abundantly from a rich and diverse company of Puritan divines, whose works have been allowed to slip into neglect and disuse. But it is no accident that John Wesley wove these very men into his "Christian Library". There is a connexion between the frame of Puritanism and the Methodist four-fold scheme: "Our Doctrine", "Our Discipline", "Our Hymns", "Our Literature"; it would be interesting to work out the links, the differences and the similarities. Thus the Methodists produced no devotional literature like these writings, but they had Charles Wesley's hymns, which could be used to comment on almost every one of Mr. Wakefield's quotations. There was no written Methodist counterpart to Puritan casuistry, but there was the discipline of band and class meeting. Both Puritanism and Methodism produced a dedicated, fervent love of God and man. Now our degenerate modern Protestantism has hardly any discernible framework, and the results are the jellyfish pieties of our ineffective evangel, in an introverted church. This learned and valuable study has many clues towards a more excellent way and towards a revival of true Methodist piety. E. GORDON RUPP.

NOTES AND QUERIES

985. A CIRCULAR CIRCUIT PLAN.

The newly-formed Society of Cirplanologists will doubtless have some interesting discoveries to share, and the *Proceedings* is a suitable repository for such information. I have come across a circuit plan of singular value to any collector. I regret that the original is not mine. It hangs in the vestry of the Mount Pleasant chapel at Chapeltown, near Sheffield, and another copy is at Carver Street chapel, Sheffield. Unfortunately, the manuscript is old and faded, and it is impossible to secure a worth-while reproduction. I hope, therefore, that a brief description will indicate some of its curious features.

The plan is circular in shape, with a diameter of $11\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and hand-written. It is described as "Itinerant Preacher's Plan, 1802. Sheffield Circuit." The preachers' names are "John Reynolds, John Grant, Timothy Crowder", though in the *Minutes* John Grant is the third preacher and not the second, whilst "Crowder" is a curious error for "Crowther". The main outline of the plan is divided into three smaller circles, and from the centre there radiate dividing lines like the spokes of a wheel. The main outer circle is sub-divided into nine smaller circles, and within the spaces thus created appear dates beginning at the letter "R" (for Reynolds) with 28th March and ending in the course of three circles with 31st July. Thus the quarter is completed for Reynolds. The same process is repeated for "G" (Grant), who occupies the second group of three circles, and for "C" (Crowder), the third group. The small inner circle has letters for the days of the week, beginning with Sunday, "S", whilst the spaces in the intermediate circle are occupied by the names of the preaching-places in the circuit, some of which are named more than once—Sheffield, for instance, appears ten times. This ingenious arrangement therefore gave the preachers' appointments for 126 days—seven days a week for eighteen weeks—without rest or respite. Truly, "there were giants in the earth in those days".

Much might be added about the size of the circuit and some of the societies within it. The only comment I will make is about Thorncliffe, now part of Chapeltown, a district which houses the large firm of Newton Chambers & Co. Ltd., whose Izal products have world renown. Both Newton and Chambers, the founders of the firm, had strong ties with Methodism, and the Thorncliffe chapel mentioned on the plan still stands on the road-side between the present Mount Pleasant chapel and the village of High Green, and forms part of the Newton Chambers establishment, being now used as an Institute for that firm.

As a final and lighter comment I would suggest that if Methodist preachers did not frequently miss their providential way in their spiritual pilgrimage, it is not unlikely that they missed it sometimes when following so involved and intricate a circuit plan.

WILLIAM LEARY.

Charles Wesley's Tomb

Charles Wesley was buried in the old Marylebone churchyard in 1788. The memorial to himself, his wife, and their two sons Charles and Samuel, was erected about 1838. When the old church was demolished in 1949, part of the churchyard was made into a Garden of Rest, opened in March 1952, in which the Charles Wesley memorial has an honoured place. This is the subject of our illustration facing page 74.