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# Proceedings OF THE Wesley Historical Society

Editor: REV. WESLEY F. SWIFT.

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## EIGHTEENTH - CENTURY OPPOSITION TO METHODISM

(Continued from page 98)

UP to this point only the bases of opposition to Methodism have been closely examined, and little mention has been made of the accusations levelled against it. With each accusation an attempt will be made where possible to show its relation to the primary bases of opposition. Numerous as these accusations were, it can be demonstrated how the greater number of them are but variations of one main theme—the elusiveness of the Methodists with respect to easy classification.

Any study of eighteenth-century opposition to Methodism must owe a considerable debt to the *Bibliography* by the Rev. Richard Green,<sup>1</sup> and this study is no exception. This book contains 606 entries of pamphlets and articles, many of which (and some others) have been examined. As is to be expected, most of the articles were the work of churchmen or intellectuals, and the opinions voiced can therefore be taken as those of the “upper” classes.

We may profitably begin by showing how some writers were acutely conscious of the vagueness of the term “Methodist” as it was used even by the thinking part of the population. If further proof were needed concerning the elusiveness of the Methodists, these references would furnish it. A letter written to the editor of the *Christian Observer* in 1817 has this to say:<sup>2</sup> “Now it is considered, especially in the upper classes, a respectable way of silencing one’s conscience, to charge the bearer of all ungrateful tidings of a religious kind with being a sectary or a Methodist.” In a review of Hannah More’s *Practical Piety*<sup>3</sup> we find that

Methodism has done harm to the established church but the term methodist has been infinitely more successful against the cause of religion itself . . . call a man but a methodist and every fat unthinking face

<sup>1</sup> Richard Green: *Anti-Methodist Publications* (1902).

<sup>2</sup> *Christian Observer*, 1817, p. 138.

<sup>3</sup> *British Review*, 1811, p. 341.

brightens into malicious meaning, a shade at once envelops every virtue which belongs to him and every profligate fool that listens to the charge exults in the contrast between himself and the hypocrite.

But the most ironical comment on the contemporary mood which was ready to suspect anything which could not be easily "pigeon-holed" is to be found in the letter to the *Christian Observer* referred to, where we read: "A lady of my acquaintance was advised to refrain from attending the daily public prayers of a neighbouring parish church because such a procedure might procure her the appellation of a Methodist."<sup>4</sup>

The remainder of the accusations conveniently fall into three groups: those relating to Methodist theology, those which branded Methodism as treasonable or rebellious, and those which spurned the movement because of its working-class affiliations.

Because the true nature of the Methodist movement was but little understood it was not long before it was accused of the "sin of schism". It has already been shown how the organic unity of church and state promised order in a disordered century, and one can easily understand how thinkers, especially clergy, had a great fear of schism. Whitaker in his history of Whalley<sup>5</sup> puts the Anglican case, and speaks of "the aim of a schism and the duty of conformity". He praises those clergy who "labour to inculcate principles of obedience and conformity to every ordinance of man, ecclesiastical and civil for conscience sake", and declares that schisms have always originated in "the corrupt passions of men, in enthusiasm, presumption, obstinacy—and have ended in heresy and irreligion". Whitaker was not alone in branding the Methodists as schismatics, and many other writings could be referred to, but one further quotation will suffice. It reveals quite clearly why the Methodists were attacked on the grounds of schism. Dr. Haste, a notable Anglican, was at great pains to show that "religion and religious loyalty are the only true and certain supports of any King or kingdom" in an article contributed to the *Gentleman's Magazine*.<sup>6</sup>

It has already been shown how the Anglican Church and the civil authorities tried to make the Methodists into "orthodox" dissenters on theological as well as practical grounds. However, the most burning accusation flung against them was that they were "enthusiasts". The greater part of nearly every sermon preached against the Wesleys was devoted to showing how they were "enthusiasts". This term implied all manner of evils and was used very loosely, but the basis of the charge seems to have been once again that in some way it reflected the special nature of Methodism which differentiated it from other religious bodies, alike Anglican and Dissenting. In 1743, for instance, Dr. Scott<sup>7</sup> declared that "there are thousands flocking

<sup>4</sup> *op. cit.*, p. 136.

<sup>5</sup> Whitaker: *Parish of Whalley*, p. 389.

<sup>6</sup> Dr. Haste's Sermon (*Gentleman's Magazine*, 1740, p. 137).

<sup>7</sup> Dr. Scott: *A Fine Picture of Enthusiasm* (1743).

after these enthusiasts, Whitefield and Wesley, who appear to be deluding crowds of people into a passionate, mechanical religion". The *British Review* in 1813 said: "The enthusiasm of the Methodists deviated widely from the religious character and temper which the church, no less than the Bible, inculcates."<sup>8</sup>

The accusations of treason are so many and so diverse as to stagger the imagination. Here, one feels, are the surest proofs of the assertion that Methodist distinctiveness seemed to ring a note of doom for both Church and State. To begin with, Wesley's *Journal* on 22nd November 1745 comments on the fact that "the alarm is daily increasing concerning the rebels on the one hand and the French on the other", and it is extremely significant that at the same moment Wesley was receiving reports that gentlemen "had affirmed to many that Mr. Wesley was with the Pretender near Edinburgh".<sup>9</sup> That the civil authorities suspected an alliance with the Pretender seems to be indicated by notices such as the following (given in Wesley's *Journal*, 10th March 1744) from Captain Burton, the Wakefield magistrate:

West Riding of Yorkshire. To the Constable of Birstal . . . These are in his Majesty's name to require and command you to summon Mary Castle of Birstal aforesaid, and all such other persons as you are informed can give any information, or any other of the Methodists speakers, for speaking any treasonable words or exhortations as praying for the banished, or the Pretender to appear before me. . . .

That the Methodists were peacebreakers was a common rumour. Stebbing accuses them of "gathering tumultuous assemblies to the disturbance of the public peace and with setting at nought all authority and rule".<sup>10</sup> The *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1739 shared similar views,<sup>11</sup> and urged: "Let not such bold movers of sedition be regularly admitted into pulpits", declaring that

differences of opinion in religious matters not only breed dissensions and animosities among the people but generally carry along with them a diversity of sentiments with regard to government.

The introductory paragraph to this essay indicated how fears of the French Revolution coloured the mood of the century. This fear is well illustrated in the way accusations were fired against the Methodists on this score. S. Clapham in 1794 before the Bishop of Chester at Boroughbridge made a full statement of this Anglican fear:

The opposition which the Methodists carry on against the clergy tends, surely, to overthrow the very Establishment for which some of them profess the most unfeigned respect . . . the charges they throw . . . against religious teachers may from unfavourable circumstances . . . assist the machinations of those restless innovators who look with an unfriendly eye upon religion under every form. I cannot but call to their serious recollection the havoc which faction combined with impiety has made

<sup>8</sup> *British Review*, 1813, p. 496.

<sup>9</sup> *Journal*, 8th November 1745.

<sup>10</sup> H. Stebbing: *A Caution against Religious Delusion* (London, 1739).

<sup>11</sup> *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1739, pp. 241, 257.

upon the public institutions of a neighbouring country. I cannot but remind them that the doctrines and manners of the church were most fiercely arraigned by the same wretches who . . . have trampled on the cross of Christ and . . . have extinguished even the belief in God. I cannot but entreat them . . . to consider the signs of the times.<sup>12</sup>

Something of the mood of the eighteenth century can be gauged by the fact that at one and the same time the Methodists were accused of being both Puritans and Papists. (It really does appear that people did not know quite what to make of the Methodists.) As to the latter, it is well known why they were associated in the popular mind with rebellion and treason. It would appear that there are several distinct reasons why they and Wesley were coupled together. Methodist organization was "in some things more consonant to the superstitious severity of the Romish discipline than to any known practices of the protestant churches".<sup>13</sup> Bishop Lavington's *Enthusiasm of Methodists and Papists Compar'd*<sup>14</sup> had innumerable readers, and it had the effect of erroneously associating the two in the popular mind. "Confession" in class meetings, for instance, was cited as evidence in support of this charge.

Serious as the accusations of popery were, those condemning the Methodists as Puritans had even more force. The representative quotations chosen speak very clearly for themselves: "It may be observed that the Puritans in the last century began somewhat like the Methodists in this".<sup>15</sup> "Indeed Methodism appears to be no other than the fiery Puritanism of the last age revived",<sup>16</sup> and everyone who compares the two sees a great similarity between "the first rise of those troubles which at last overturned the constitution and ruined the nation" and "the present risings of enthusiastical rant."<sup>17</sup> "What is more 'tis notoriously known that they [the Puritans] brought the Royal Martyr to the Block."<sup>18</sup> It was only in 1811 that a calmer note was sounded on the relation of the two groups.<sup>19</sup>

To identify the Methodists with the worst class of puritans is to forget that the one was a loyal body, friends in general to a rigid ecclesiastical discipline, and not avowedly hostile to the Church of England, whereas the others were mostly rebels against all discipline and murderers of their King.

The final group of accusations may be passed over fairly quickly. Perhaps the most important is that Methodism quickly earned the condemnation of landed gentry, industrialist and "squarson" alike, because of its great success in "manufacturing districts". For instance, it was observed in 1815:<sup>20</sup> "There are few persons of rank or

<sup>12</sup> S. Clapham: *How far Methodism conduces to the Interests of Christianity and the Welfare of Society* (1794), p. 22.

<sup>13</sup> *European Magazine*, 1789, p. 101.

<sup>14</sup> London, 1749.

<sup>15</sup> *European Magazine*, 1789, p. 165.

<sup>16</sup> *ibid.*, 1789, p. 165.

<sup>17</sup> *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1739, p. 241.

<sup>18</sup> *ibid.*, 1741, p. 373.

<sup>19</sup> *British Review*, 1813, p. 493.

<sup>20</sup> *Quarterly Review*, vol. 12 (1815), p. 442.

consequence of whatever party who, from a permanent residence in the country, and particularly in the manufacturing districts, have the means of correct information, but feel considerable alarm at the progress of religious delusion in the lower orders of the people." The gentry seemed to look down on the Methodists as much for their illiterate preachers as their revolutionary doctrine. Even the clergy, however, had unchristian things to say about the social status of the Methodist movement.<sup>21</sup> "The contagion, at present, is very much confined to the dregs and refuse of the people—the weak unsteady mob, always fond of innovation, and never pleased but with variety." These few quotations give a good clue to the mood in the period of Methodist expansion.

We may end this part of the analysis with four conclusions about the origin of persecution in the eighteenth century :

1. It was very difficult to classify the movement with respect to their status—in the Church of England, among dissenters and before the Toleration.
2. The accusations themselves were in the main wild rumours arising from Methodist distinctiveness.
3. The movement could not rightly be called schism, yet it stretched any definition of orthodoxy to bursting point.
4. Methodism adopted unusual evangelical methods and emphases and worked among unusual people, much to the consternation of acknowledged members of society.

Up to the present attention has been limited to eighteenth-century opposition, and little mention has been made of the nineteenth century. The reason for this is simply that there was a great diminution of serious opposition on any other than doctrinal grounds. Perhaps the last extensive survey of the grounds of opposition was made in the 1833 edition of Bishop Lavington's *Enthusiasm of Methodists and Papists Compar'd*.<sup>22</sup> The editor summarized such opposition as seemed to have some force in the first two decades of the century, but it must be realized that by 1815 much of the fire and genuine fear had gone from the opposition. By that date many of the original causes (fear of a French Revolution, etc.) had disappeared, and only the momentum of public opinion kept them alive. Polwhele is very bitter (having come under Methodist censure), but his summary is a useful pointer to the Anglican view of the movement at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

By 1810 or thereabouts Polwhele was able to classify Methodists as follows, and it will be seen that the elusiveness of Methodism with respect to classification passed over into the new century.

- i. They who profess to be members of the church of England . . . but have places set apart for additional exercises of devotion at such hours as interfere not with the church service.

<sup>21</sup> Bowman : *The Imposture of Methodism Displayed* (1740).

<sup>22</sup> Edited by Rev. R. Polwhele (1833).

- ii. They who are utterly regardless of the church and have taken upon themselves to administer and receive at their meetings the holy sacrament.
- iii. Those who encourage a wandering tribe of fanatical preachers mostly taken from the dregs of the people. . . .<sup>23</sup>

The Methodists were still accused of sedition, and Cobbett<sup>24</sup> is quoted in support: "It is worthy of remark that three out of seven traitors were of that mischievous plotting sect denominated Methodists." The Anglicans still favoured the Dissenters to Methodists because "with the conscientious dissenter we may certainly live in peace but not so with clergy who are methodistical".<sup>25</sup> There are still ample instances of the comparison of Methodists and Puritans and so on, but these must suffice.

However, we are indebted to Polwhele for clear illustration of the loopholes in the Toleration Act and the difficulties which arose in applying it. He says that "in order to entitle their meeting houses to the exemptions of the Toleration Act they call themselves, at the time of registering such houses, Protestant Dissenters contrary to their solemn declarations at other times".<sup>26</sup>

This is a convenient place to end this survey of the written opposition to Methodism in the eighteenth century and early decades of the nineteenth century. For Methodism I think it is fair to say that an eighteenth-century mood lasted until the early years of the succeeding century, and that the real division must be made at c. 1815 rather than at 1800.

### Summary

Enough has now been said to prove that the popular mind of the eighteenth century saw very serious differences between Anglican, Dissenter and Methodist, and that there were many forces opposing the Methodist movement. It only remains to sketch in a few of the ways in which the disquiet represented by the pamphlet war became translated into physical or verbal persecution. While it is true that such a subject is best treated on a local basis, for the sake of completeness the bold lines of national opposition will be drawn.

It is well authenticated that the Anglican clergy were often the instigators of mob violence against the Methodists. This instigation was often helped by local gentry and other "leading men of the county", and was often very brutal indeed. It is not always possible to put forward the excuse that the mob went beyond the original intentions of its instigators, for there are recorded occasions when the clergy encouraged the mob at every stage of the brutal proceedings. It is not difficult to understand why the mobs were often such pliant material in designing hands. They loved the loose living that the Methodists condemned; many of their erstwhile comrades had

<sup>23</sup> op. cit., Intro., LXXXV.

<sup>24</sup> Cobbett's *Register*, 26th February 1803.

<sup>25</sup> op. cit.

<sup>26</sup> op. cit., LXXXVI.

deserted the tavern for the meeting-house; there was abundant emotional energy in the eighteenth-century mobs which could be easily channelled. The chief reason, however, must be the economic dependence of the populace on the "squarsons" and the landed gentry in rural areas, and the industrialists who feared working-class unorthodoxy in the towns. There is abundant evidence of economic pressure being brought to bear on Methodists themselves and upon others to make them do their overlord's bidding.

That the landlords and the clergy were closely allied in the matter of persecuting the Methodists is beyond doubt, and one can perceive why this was especially so in eighteenth-century England. The vestry was an all-important tool in persecution's hand. It was here that landlord and clergy, constable and alehouse-keeper met to determine much that went on in eighteenth-century England. One need hardly point out that here was a channel by which religious differences could be translated into physical force.

There were a number of other factors which conspired to oppose Methodism. Civil officers were unpopular at this time, and this, together with the paucity of justices, made the law rather weak in many localities. It was these two which made so much mob violence against the Methodists go unpunished and unhindered. Finally, there is evidence that in industrial areas employers discriminated against the new societies because of their innumerable meetings. It is somewhat ironic that the fear of workmen's associations arising from Methodist class meetings which characterized many eighteenth-century employers became a fact as one of the chief elements in nineteenth-century England.

BRIAN GREAVES.

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It is well known that Samuel Wesley (son of Charles) was largely instrumental in introducing into this country the works of Johann Sebastian Bach. Messrs. Hinrichsen have published a reprint of the 1875 edition of *Samuel Wesley's famous Bach Letters*, which he wrote on this subject to Mr. Jacobs, the organist of Surrey Chapel, and which were edited by his daughter Eliza Wesley (pp. vi. 50, 10s. 6d.). This little book will be of great value to all who are interested in the musical influence of the Wesleys. . . . In *Mow Cop: after 150 years* (Epworth Press, pp. 12, 9d.) Dr. W. E. Farndale brings out the spiritual significance of that event which saw the birth of Primitive Methodism. The booklet is mainly occupied with a re-telling of the story and a refutation of some popular fallacies in connexion with it. . . . Mr. W. Le Cato Edwards devotes most of the December 1957 issue of *The Epworth Witness*, as we should expect, to Charles Wesley. This quarterly magazine, so lively and stimulating, deserves a wide circulation. . . . The 1957 issue of *Bathafarn*, our Welsh counterpart and contemporary, contains an interesting article in English on "The Cardiff Circuit Plan, 1839-40", by Mr. A. H. Williams. With the aid of a Welsh dictionary we have deciphered the Society's annual balance sheet, and regret to note their parlous financial condition. . . . An article by the Rev. Albert D. Betts in the March 1957 issue (just received) of the *South Carolina Methodist Advocate* sheds new light on William Hammet's work in Charlestown (see *Proceedings*, xxviii, pp. 99 ff.).



# “THE SUNDAY SERVICE OF THE METHODISTS”

## A Study of Nineteenth-century Liturgy

FIVE years ago I wrote an article on “The Sunday Service of the Methodists” (*Proceedings*, xxix, pp. 12-20) in which I examined and compared the eighteenth-century editions of “Mr. Wesley’s Abridgement” of the Book of Common Prayer, from *The Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America*, which Thomas Coke took to America in 1784, to the 1792 edition, *The Sunday Service of the Methodists*, which was the edition authorized for use by Article 10 of the Plan of Pacification in 1795. This present essay carries that examination into the nineteenth, and indeed into the twentieth, century. The results of my researches are not so spectacular as those described in the former article, but they will be found to be of considerable interest, not only to liturgists but also to theologians.

### I. The Editions: (a) A Catalogue

In an article in *Your Prayer Book* (S.P.C.K., 1949) the Rev. Kenneth Grayston stated that there were thirty-two editions of the *Sunday Service*. I have always been sceptical of that statement, and Mr. Grayston cannot now recall the source of his information; but if to the twenty-eight editions enumerated below there are added the six eighteenth-century editions, it appears that Mr. Grayston’s statement was approximately correct. My search for nineteenth-century editions has been exhaustive, and though I cannot claim that my list is complete, I am satisfied that the existence of one or two editions which I may have missed does not affect the conclusions reached. I have personally examined each of the editions noted, whose ownership is indicated as follows:

EP=Epworth Press Library		WFS=Rev. Wesley F. Swift	
FB=Dr. Frank Baker		JCB=Rev. John C. Bowmer	
OAB=Dr. Oliver A. Beckerlegge		WRB=Mr. W. R. Batty, Southport	
H=Wesley College, Leeds		R=John Rylands Library, Manchester	
1817 Sixth edn.	(R)	1859	(EP)
1819 Seventh edn.	(EP)	1860	(EP)
1825 (12mo)	(EP)	1861	(WRB)
1825 (24mo)	(WFS)	1863	(WFS)
1826	(EP)	1873	(EP)
1834	(EP)	1876	(JCB)
1837	(EP)	1878	(FB)
1838	(EP)	N.D. (1): c. 1846-60	(EP)
1841	(EP)	N.D. (2): c. 1846-60	(EP)
1842	(FB)	N.D. (3): c. 1846-60	(EP)
1846	(EP)	N.D. (4): c. 1865	(EP)
1849	(EP)	N.D. (5): c. 1901	(WFS)
1852	(WFS)	N.D. (6): c. 1902	(FB)
1857	(FB)	N.D. (7): c. 1910	(EP)

The identification of the undated editions is given in a later paragraph.

In addition to the above, all of which bear the title *The Sunday Service of the Methodists*, there are other service-books with the title *Order of Administration of the Sacraments and other Services, for the use of the People called Methodists*, which in their reduced contents correspond roughly to our "Shorter Book of Offices". I have seen the following editions :

1839 (EP)	1858 (EP)	1873 (JCB)
1848 (JCB)	1863 (OAB)	1875 (EP)
1852 (WFS)	1864 (EP)	1878 (JCB)
1856 (EP)	1865 (JCB)	1879 (EP)
1857 (EP)	1867 (H)	1881 (EP)

It will be noted that there are copies of *both* books for 1852, 1857, 1863, 1873, and 1878. There are important differences between the two books of 1857, of 1873, and of 1878 which will be considered later.

If to these editions of the two books we add the definitive fourth edition of 1792,<sup>1</sup> and the fifth edition of 1816 (which I have not seen, but of which I have reliable information), it will be seen that between Wesley's death and 1910 there were at least forty-five editions of a "Book of Offices", under the two stated titles. The *Order of Administration of the Sacraments* was discontinued after the major revision of 1882, but the *Sunday Service* continued merrily on its way for at least three more editions, in competition with the new *Book of Public Prayers and Services* of 1882, to which in many respects it bore little resemblance. Unfortunately, the editions after the seventh were not numbered, and it is therefore difficult always to distinguish between "editions" and what would technically be regarded as "impressions" of an existing edition. For all practical purposes, however, the word "editions" may stand.

It is impossible to ascertain the number of copies printed of each edition and the variety of bindings available. I have examined the records of the Book Committee, and they are almost silent on these points. I have, however, traced two catalogues of Methodist Publishing House publications, from which I discover that in 1899 the *Sunday Service* was available in three sizes (royal 24mo, crown 8vo, and royal 8vo) and seven bindings. The same bindings were obtainable in 1907, but one size had been dropped. We have already noted an edition of 1910, and the remarkable fact which cries for explanation is that these editions of the *Sunday Service* were still being published over thirty years after they had been superseded by the official revision of 1882. To this point we must return later.

Before we leave our catalogue of editions a word must be said about the identification of those copies which have no date on the title-page. The dates of nos. 1-4 in our list I have determined from

<sup>1</sup> The 1792 edition is described as "fourth edition" on its title-page. It was in fact the sixth, but for the explanation of this discrepancy I must refer readers to my previous article. Here I shall continue to refer to it as "fourth". I regard it as definitive because, although published after Wesley's death, it corresponds exactly with Wesley's last revision.

internal evidence and comparison with other copies. No. 5 is obviously late Victorian: I suspect it belongs to an edition of 1899 which is briefly referred to in the Minutes of the Book Committee. But all the pages which refer to Queen Victoria (in Morning Prayer, etc.) have been removed before binding, and similar pages with the appropriate references to King Edward have been inserted. I might not have noticed this interesting fact, had not the inserted pages been inexactly cut and the quality of the paper been slightly different. No. 6 is a straightforward King Edward edition, of a different size from no. 5, and its date is more or less fixed by the fact that the first owner's name and the date 1902 appear on the fly-leaf. No. 7 is the most interesting of all these undated editions. It is a small book, printed in double columns, with the Royal Prayers containing the names of King George and Queen Mary, and in all probability it is the edition of 1,000 copies to which the Minutes of the Book Committee make reference in 1910. Had I not seen the book with my own eyes I would not have believed that the *Sunday Service*, its contents following the pattern of the original, was still being printed in 1910. It is almost certainly the last of a long and distinguished line.

#### (b) Two additional Service-books

At this point notice must be taken of two other publications which do not appear in the foregoing list, but which have a separate and special interest. First, in the Library of the Epworth Press there is a copy of a service-book with the title *The Sunday Morning Service of the Methodists*, published by the Conference Office in 1812. Many of the regular contents of the *Sunday Service* are omitted: it contains only Morning Prayer, the Litany, the Collects, Epistles and Gospels, the Holy Communion, the Baptism of Infants, the Burial of the Dead, and the Psalms. There is no list of Proper Lessons for Sundays, but in its place there is a lectionary giving New Testament lessons for each day in the year, with the exception of certain festival days. There are no rubrics in the Communion Office, the Exhortation is printed *in extenso*, the Absolution uses "you" (as in the Book of Common Prayer) instead of "us", the Confession contains the BCP phrase "the burden of them is intolerable", and the additional prayers are printed after the Blessing as in the Prayer Book. In these respects this book is unique amongst Wesleyan service-books. It is obviously a freak of some kind or other, for which I can find no explanation whatever.

Second, the Epworth Press Library contains two copies (dated 1838 and 1842) of *Selections from the Sunday Service of the Methodists; designed for the use of Sunday-Scholars on the morning of the Lord's Day*. The contents of these two editions are identical: they contain only Morning Prayer, the Litany, the Collects, the Holy Communion up to and including the Collect for the Queen, and Select Psalms. The purpose of the book is obvious, but it would be interesting to know the extent to which it was used by the Methodists of the mid-nineteenth century.

(c) **The Fifth and Sixth Editions**

Before we turn to an examination of the contents of the various editions enumerated above, it is necessary to comment on the fifth and sixth editions of the *Sunday Service*, which have features peculiarly their own. A very long period of twenty-four years elapsed between the fourth edition of 1792 and the fifth edition. Presumably there was no demand for the book, as the preachers were not observing the regulation of 1795 that "wherever Divine service is performed in England, on the Lord's day, in church-hours, the officiating Preacher shall read either the Service of the Established Church, our venerable father's Abridgment, or at least the Lessons appointed by the Calendar." The Conference of 1815 drew the attention of the preachers to this neglected rule, and, to assist its implementation, directed that the Book Committee should "without loss of time, publish and advertise a new edition of the said Abridgment, both in the duodecimo size for individual accommodation, and in the quarto size to be used in the pulpits".<sup>2</sup> The fifth edition was the result of this Conference directive. I have not seen a copy, but it is noted in Richard Green's *Wesley Bibliography* (2nd edn., Appendix, p. ix) and dated 1816. Green says that it lacks the Ordinal, but presumably it is in other respects identical with the 1792 edition. The sixth edition was published in 1817 (Green wrongly gives the date as 1816<sup>3</sup>), and I have been able to examine a copy in the John Rylands Library, Manchester. It was the last edition in the original format and style of type, and in the inside back cover of the Rylands Library copy there are some pencilled notes in what would appear to be the handwriting of Richard Green. These notes give some valuable information about the missing fifth edition. It was identical with the fourth edition, except that (a) the Ordinal was omitted; (b) the prayers for the Royal Family were omitted from Morning and Evening Prayer; (c) a footnote is added to the phrase "He descended into hell" in the Apostles' Creed in both Morning and Evening Prayer:

"Hades—The invisible world. The common receptacle of the souls of all men, both just and unjust, after death."

The sixth edition restores the Ordinal and the prayers for the Royal Family, and omits the footnote to the Apostles' Creed. It is, in fact, identical with the fourth edition, except in one remarkable respect. In the closing prayer in the Public Baptism of Infants a major alteration has been made, which can be seen at a glance if we compare the two editions:

1792	1817
We yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased thee to receive this Infant for thine own Child by adoption,	We yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, for the grace which thou hast shewn in behalf of this Child, in redeeming him by the

<sup>2</sup> *Minutes of Conference*, 1815 (1864 edn., vol. iv), p. 122.

<sup>3</sup> But in *Proceedings*, iii, p. 130 (published four years before the second edition of the *Bibliography*), Green correctly gave the date as 1817! The *Bibliography* also wrongly dates the seventh edition as 1817. It should be 1819.

and to admit him into thy holy blood of thy dear Son Jesus Christ,  
Church. . . . and by this ordinance admitting  
[sic] him into thy Church. . . .

This innovation disappeared from the next edition, and was never repeated. Who was responsible for it we cannot say, but it is important as being the first of many attempts in the post-Wesley era to "improve" the Baptismal Office.

This sixth edition has one other innovation sufficiently interesting to be worthy of notice: for the first time a Table of Moveable Sabbaths was introduced (in this case for the years 1818 to 1837), and this device, borrowed from the Book of Common Prayer, remained a constant feature of the *Sunday Service* through most of its subsequent editions.

## II. General Contents

I have already said that we may regard the fourth edition of 1792 as definitive. It was the first edition to be printed solely for use in this country, and, presumably, also for the English-speaking West Indies, and all subsequent editions follow its main outline. Its contents were:

- I. John Wesley's Preface.
- II. Proper Lessons for Sundays and for particular Days, and Proper Psalms on certain Days.
- III. The Order for Morning Prayer, Every Lord's Day.
- IV. The Order for Evening Prayer, Every Lord's Day.
- V. The Litany.
- VI. The Collects, Epistles, and Gospels, To be used throughout the Year.
- VII. The Order for the Administration of the Lord's Supper.
- VIII. The Ministration of Baptism to Infants.
- IX. The Ministration of Baptism to such as are of Riper Years.
- X. The Form of Solemnization of Matrimony.
- XI. The Communion of the Sick.
- XII. The Order for the Burial of the Dead.
- XIII. The Form and Manner of making of Deacons.
- XIV. The Form and Manner of Ordaining of Elders.
- XV. The Form of Ordaining a Superintendent.
- XVI. Articles of Religion.

The Preface appeared in some but not all editions, though it was still being printed in 1910. The Office for the Communion of the Sick survived until 1841,<sup>4</sup> in which edition it disappeared, only to return in 1842, but thereafter it is found no more. The Form of Solemnization of Matrimony underwent a change in 1846, when the legal declarations by the bride and bridegroom, as demanded by the Marriage Act of 1836, were inserted. At the same time, the use of the ring in marriage, which Wesley had expunged in 1784, was restored to the service, and the rubric requiring the publication of banns disappeared. Incidentally, we wonder why the marriage service had previously been included in the *Sunday Service*, for it was

<sup>4</sup> It was, however, omitted from the massive "pulpit" edition of 1834, for obvious reasons.

not until 1836 that marriages were legally permitted in places of worship other than those belonging to the Church of England. The Ordinal in its three-fold form persisted until 1846, when it was superseded by the "Form for Ordaining Candidates for the Ministry in the Wesleyan-Methodist Connexion". Again we cannot help but wonder how frequently, if at all, Wesley's Ordinal based on the Prayer Book was used. For the rest, the major changes in the various editions of the *Sunday Service* affected the Lord's Supper and the two Baptismal Offices. These will be examined after a brief discussion of the revisions which introduced them.

### III. Revisions—Official and Unofficial

The subject we are about to discuss is confused and intricate. The variants in the texts of the three sacramental services are so numerous and involved that it is difficult to bring order out of chaos. A general pattern is indeed discernible, but there are divergences for which no rational explanation can be found. It is therefore necessary to state at the outset that during the nineteenth century there were only two authorized revisions of what, even at that date, was already called the "Book of Offices". (The title *The Sunday Service*, strangely enough, nowhere appears in any official document dealing with these matters.) With the revision of 1882 we are not at the moment concerned; it will be dealt with at a later stage in this essay. The other revision was initiated by the Conference of 1860, and after prolonged consultation between the Book Committee on the one hand and Synods and superintendent ministers on the other, it reached its climax in 1864, when "various suggested alterations in the Book of Offices were reported on behalf of the Committee charged with its revision",<sup>5</sup> and the Conference formally adopted the Book of Offices "as now carefully prepared, for use in all our chapels".<sup>6</sup>

The changes made in 1864 can be clearly seen in the edition of that year, but we are left to wonder who was responsible for the variants in previous and succeeding editions. It may have been the Book Committee, or more probably the Connexional Editor and/or the Book Steward, or there may have been a power behind the throne whose influence we cannot now detect. On these matters the Minutes of the Book Committee shed no light. The Book-Room was not without its eccentrics at the helm during the crucial years of our investigation, but the autobiographical scraps which they have left are silent just where we wish they had been vocal. John Mason was Book Steward from 1827 to 1864—more than twenty editions of the service-books were published with his name on the title-page—and he may well be the scapegoat we are seeking. On the other hand, it must be remarked here that the general trend of nineteenth-century Methodism, as reflected in its service-books, was in a "Protestant" direction; and when we remember the growing concern of the Conference at the increasing menace of popery (a concern fostered, no

<sup>5</sup> *Methodist Recorder*, 1864, p. 327.

<sup>6</sup> *Minutes of Conference*, 1864 (vol. xvi), p. 109.

doubt, by the rise of the Oxford Movement), which found expression in official resolutions passed with monotonous regularity from 1840 onwards, our eyes light upon the name of William H. Rule, joint Editor from 1851 to 1857. Dr. Rule's autobiographical *Recollections* make it clear that his years with the Gibraltar Mission in Spain had made him intolerant of Rome and all its works; and, on his own admission, his return to England after years of missionary service found him out of sympathy with much that he saw in Methodism at home. He was also interested in liturgical matters. However, speculation is futile, and we do not wish to defame the dead! One thing is certain: a liberty was afforded in those days to meddlers with the "Book of Offices" which contrasts sharply with the constraint which fetters would-be reformers of today, when (as I am told on unimpeachable authority) no Book Steward or Editor would dare to alter so much as a comma of the *Book of Offices* without the consent of the Conference.

We need also to note more exactly the distinction between the two books catalogued above—the *Sunday Service* and the *Order of Administration of the Sacraments*. Until 1839 the *Sunday Service* as "Mr. Wesley's Abridgement" held the field with no competitor save the Book of Common Prayer itself. But in 1839 the Conference determined that "Mr. Wesley's Abridgement of the Order for the Administration of Baptism and the Lord's Supper shall be published in one convenient volume, distinct from the other parts of the Liturgy."<sup>7</sup> This was done immediately, and the first issue of the new book, *Order of Administration of the Sacraments*, appeared in the same year. It contained only the Lord's Supper and the two Baptismal Offices. Subsequent editions, however, were expanded to include the forms of service for Matrimony, the Burial of the Dead, and Ordination. Thus the two books maintained their independent lives for more than forty years, each containing variants within its own successive editions, as well as variations from the other; and both of them with considerable divergences from the Book of Common Prayer, which was still being used in many chapels. By the time the 1882 revision was undertaken confusion was worse confounded, and even then the remedy was more a palliative than a cure.

WESLEY F. SWIFT.

(To be continued)

<sup>7</sup> *Minutes of Conference*, 1839 (1862 edn., vol. x), p. 494.

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We have been a little remiss in failing to commend an excellent quarterly publication, the *Amateur Historian*, now in its third volume. A wide variety of subjects are covered, many of which are of interest to Methodist historians. Recent issues include articles on "Methodist Archives", by Dr. Frank Baker; the Archives of Congregationalism and the Society of Friends; "Friendly Societies"; and "The General Register of Births, Marriages, and Deaths". Subscriptions of 15s. per annum should be sent to Messrs. Alden & Blackwell Ltd., Eton College, Windsor.

# “GREAT-UNCLE JOHN”

## A New Wesley Letter

THE original of the following letter from Wesley to Pitt, which has been one of the exhibits for some time now in the Museum in Chancery Lane, was discovered among other papers in the Public Record Office by Dr. D. H. Gifford, an Assistant Keeper of the Rolls, who has kindly sent a transcript.

JOHN WESLEY TO WILLIAM PITT

Sir,

Without preface or ceremony I beg a favour of you. To give any little thing in the Church to my nephew, Mr. Lievre who was Curate at Deptford when Dr. Conyers died.

For above fifty years, I have done all that was in my little power to serve both his late and his present Majesty. And it will be my glory to tread in the same steps as long as God is pleased to prolong the life of,

Sir,

Your willing servant

JOHN WESLEY

Scarborough

22 June 1790

This letter provides a key for the identification of the Rev. Mr. L——, to whom Wesley wrote on 25th October 1786 (*Letters*, vii, p. 345). It also explains the “near relation”, to which he refers in that letter, which begins: “Last night I had a long conversation with a few sensible men concerning going to church. I asked them what objection they had to the hearing of Mr. L——.” According to the *Journal* (vii, p. 217), he was at Deptford on Tuesday, 24th October 1786, for under that date he writes “I met the classes at Deptford”. This is confirmed by the *Diary* (vii, p. 217); brother Dornf [ord], with whom he had dinner, and sister Philips, where he had supper and, presumably, stayed for the night, both lived at Deptford. Dr. Conyers, mentioned in the letter to Pitt, was the rector of St. Paul’s, Deptford, from 1775 until 23rd April 1786, when he died. Wesley seems to have stayed with him on 17th February 1783.

There are several references in the *Diary* to someone at Deptford whom he visited and variously describes as P. Lieur, P. Liev, P. Lievre, Mr. Liev and Mr. Lievre. Probably “P. Hore’s” on 15th February 1785 (vii, 51) should also be included. These entries cover a period from 14th November 1783 to 1st December 1789. On a number of occasions Wesley appears to have stayed with him overnight.

Mr. Alan D. Ridge, Archivist at County Hall, has very kindly supplied the following information: “From the marriage registers of St. Paul, Deptford, I have found that the Rev. Peter Lièvre was there at least between June 1776 and September 1794. He appears to have succeeded the Rev. Mark Holberry as curate.”

In his letter to the Rev. Mr. L——, Wesley quotes some remarks



made about him by the Deptford Methodists: "[They said:] 'One thing we cannot approve of—his being ashamed of the Methodists. . . . for everyone knows his near relation and his many obligations to *you*. They know how you have loved and cherished him from a child'."

Dr. Frank Baker provides the "near relation" clue. In a letter he says: "I think that I can give you a clue, which ties up the situation about Wesley's visits to Lièvre at Deptford, and confirms your identification of 'Mr. L——'." He refers to Stevenson's *Memorials of the Wesley Family* (1876), where on page 286 we read that "Ann Ellison, the second of Richard and Susanna Ellison's children, married Mr. Pierre le Lièvre, a French Protestant refugee. He left one son, Peter le Lièvre, who was educated at Kingswood School [probably at Wesley's expense?], took orders in the Church of England, and died at his living of Lutterworth in Leicestershire. He was accounted a worthy, religious man, and left a family in comfortable circumstances. Two of his letters are inserted in the *Arminian Magazine* (vol. xi, p. 498, and vol. xii, p. 274). His son, the Rev. John Sturges Lièvre, was a clergyman of good character." Also, on page 284, we find that Ann Ellison "died in London, having been chiefly supported in her later years by the Rev. John Wesley and her son Lièvre". Peter Lièvre, therefore, was Wesley's grand- or great-nephew, not his nephew; the son of his niece, Ann Ellison, and the grandson of his sister Susanna. It is interesting to find that in another letter to Pitt (*Letters*, vii, p. 234) he refers to "your former goodness shown to one of my relations, Mr. Thomas [?] Ellison."

Obviously then, the Rev. Mr. L——, P. Lievre of Deptford, and "my nephew" are one and the same. Judging by his letter of 25th October 1786, it looks as if Wesley had helped him a number of times before, for he says that the Deptford Methodists "might have added, 'You owe your whole education to him; and therefore, in effect, your ordination, your curacy, your school, yea, and your wife: none of which you would in all likelihood have had had it not been for him'."

Apparently the letter to Pitt did not bring any immediate promotion to Lièvre, for, as we have already seen, he was still a curate at Deptford in September 1794. About five weeks before the letter was written a child was born to the Lièvres. Mr. Ridge, the County Hall Archivist, writes to say that he has found this relevant entry in the baptism register of St. Paul's Church, Deptford: "John Sturgis Lièvre, son of the Rev. Peter and Mary, of Church Street, was born on 16th May 1790 and baptised on 20 June 1790." Perhaps this addition to the family was the reason for great-uncle John's request to the Prime Minister!

GEORGE GIFFORD.

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A souvenir booklet to celebrate the golden jubilee of the present Ashby (Wesley) church, Scunthorpe, has been written by the Rev. George E. Diggle. Its eight pages are devoted to an admirable account of local Methodism, and of its two earlier chapels, the first of which was built in 1826.

## BOOK NOTICES

*Sursum Corda*. Being studies of some German Hymn-writers, by Sydney H. Moore. (Independent Press, pp. 127, 8s. 6d.)

This is a delightful book. The author, retired headmaster of Silcoates School and, like Bernard Manning, a Congregationalist of Wesleyan origin, gives us ten short sketches on German hymnology. His friends have always known how thoroughly he is at home in the German tradition, culture and language, and how warm and unwavering his friendship for the German Church has been through many long and critical years. What he modestly calls a "side-line" is, in fact, a key to the understanding of German thought and piety; Johann Heermann and Martin Rinckart, Paul Gerhardt and Gerhard Tersteegen, were and are sung in circles where the Lutheran and Reformed "Confessions" could never be studied, and the soul of German Protestantism lives in this hymnody. Some of the hymns have found their way into English hymn-books, notably the Methodist Hymn-book; Mr. Moore cites many more samples of translation, and each hymn comes to life as we learn the circumstances under which it was written, and are introduced, in brief biographical sketches, to the person of its writer. An appendix on "the Turkish menace in the sixteenth century" gives added colour to the book, and the reminder of the Thirty Years War ("from the tears and agony of Christian men and women during that dire upheaval, there was minted the fine gold of pure religious song") has its own significance for our generation. "What hymnology needs today is what every other science needs—the patient but stern labours of an army of students who are afraid neither of the demands nor of the discipline of research . . . only thus can it truly become the 'mental vitamin' needed by so many harassed folk in these middle years of the twentieth century."

FRANZ HILDEBRANDT.

*History of Methodist Missions: II. The Methodist Episcopal Church, 1845-1939*. Volume III: *Widening Horizons, 1845-95*, by Wade Crawford Barclay. (Board of Missions of the American Methodist Church, pp. xvi. 1211, \$4.50.)

This third volume is twice the size of its predecessors, and at the price is a publishing marvel. It emphasizes the clamant need for a similar work on British Methodist missions. The period under review saw the expansion of American missionary work in China, India, Malaya, Japan, Korea, South America and Africa, and a tremendous amount of loving care and exact scholarship has gone into this fully-documented narrative. But the main interest for the English reader will lie in the first 300 pages, which are devoted to the changing structure of American society during that formative period, and the internal changes in American Methodism within that society in matters of discipline, in the attitude of the Church to moral issues such as slavery, and in broadening theological conceptions and changing forms of evangelism—all leading to a new conception of the missionary task facing the Church. Here is background material which, so far as we know, can be found nowhere else. The last hundred pages, which chronicle the expansion of Methodist missions in continental Europe, are also of special interest. The American policy of sending to Germany and Scandinavia as missionaries men who were natives of those countries paid large dividends, and we cannot but admire the enterprise of our transatlantic brethren in this matter. This is a book we can unhesitatingly commend, and we anticipate with pleasure the further three volumes which will complete the *History*.

WESLEY F. SWIFT.

## NOTES AND QUERIES

## 991. METHODISM IN SWEDEN.

While in Stockholm in August as a representative to the European Methodist Conference, I heard from my hosts stories of the founding of Methodism in Sweden. The first Methodist services were begun by workmen from England employed in the construction of docks. It was this work which I suppose came under the charge of the Rev. J. Rayner Stephens in 1826, and was subsequently developed by the Rev. George Scott, who succeeded him in 1830. (Geo. Smith, *History of Wesleyan Methodism*, iii, p. 352.) Workman does not mention this English mission to Sweden, which is of interest as being one of the rare examples of work on the Continent having its origin in England rather than the United States. Is there in English an account of the beginnings in Sweden? Is there not room for a history of Methodism on the Continent?      GEORGE H. LOCKETT.

## 992. TESTAMENTARY RECORDS.

We have received a letter from the City Librarian of Gloucester, commenting on the statement in our last issue (p. 103) that "original wills, or certified copies, may be inspected . . . at the District Probate Registries or (where they have been transferred) at the County Record Office". The City Librarian informs us that "in the case of records from District Probate Registry at Gloucester these were transferred to the City Library. There are other areas in which transfers have been made to places other than County Record Offices." We are grateful for this correction and additional information.      EDITOR.

## 993. GUSH'S PORTRAIT OF CHARLES WESLEY.

In my recent article I said that "the location of the original painting is unknown". Dr. Frank Baker has kindly directed my attention to the *History of Kingswood School* (1898), where on page 208 it is stated that Mr. Gush himself presented the painting to Kingswood School, where it was hung in the dining-hall. The present chaplain of the School confirms that it still hangs there. I am glad to have this piece of information.

WESLEY F. SWIFT.

## 994. JOHN NEWTON COMMEMORATION IN CORNWALL.

It is sometimes possible for two streams to flow smoothly and happily into one. Recently this happened in our remote corner of Cornwall, where church history and church unity marked a memorable service in our parish church of Linkinhorne.

A year ago, when the book-shelves of a former squire were being rearranged, there came to light a rare little volume of letters from John Newton, the hymn-writer, to the Rev. James Coffin, a former vicar of Linkinhorne. These sixty or so letters were mostly "period", but in places they contained a dynamic message for today, just as do John Newton's hymns.

John Newton in his Liverpool days owed much to John Wesley and George Whitefield. Later he became rector of St. Mary Woolnoth, London. It was fitting that the present rector of that famous city church should be so interested in our commemorative service as to volunteer to take part in it, which he did with notable effect. Church and chapel combined in providing a united choir; hymns of Newton and Cowper were sung; and a Methodist local preacher, a trustee and a steward each readily donned a surplice for the occasion and sang in the processional hymn.

John Wesley referred in his *Journal* (v, p. 332) to his second reading

of Newton's "lively book", the *Account of his own Experience*, and expressed the opinion that Newton's conversion was due to the influence of his mother's prayers. It is on record that Newton acted as one of the pall-bearers at the funeral of Charles Wesley, but it strikes one as strange that though the two Johns were near-neighbours in the City Road area, there is no record of any such "pulpit interchange" as so happily takes place nowadays between Wesley's Chapel and St. Mary Woolnoth.

STANLEY SOWTON.

995. CATECHUMENS AND EXCOMMUNICATION IN BEDFORD METHODISM.

The Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting of the Bedford and Amptill circuit for March 1841 to June 1875 contain two interesting references to Methodist churchmanship which I have not previously encountered. The Quarterly Meeting held in Bedford on 27th June 1860 in addition to full members and members on trial recorded the following entry: "Catechumens in Bedford 68". No further reference is made to catechumens until the Quarterly Meeting held on 24th June 1868, when 29 Catechumens were returned in the membership figures, 26 in September, 20 in December, and 51 in March 1869.

The Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting held in Bedford on 27th June 1842 have this entry: "Mr. Hamer is still excommunicated and it is hoped he may have the advantage of the Institution." There is no previous minute to give indication as to why Mr. Hamer was excommunicated, nor is there anything to give enlightenment as to what followed.

Are there many other references in British Methodism to catechumens and excommunication?

FREDERICK PILKINGTON.

996. WAS CHARLES WESLEY BURIED IN UNCONSECRATED GROUND?

A recent inquiry by a distinguished ex-President involved me in some research into this matter. I had always assumed, uncritically, that the oft-repeated statement that Charles Wesley (to his intense chagrin in the better world) had been buried in unconsecrated ground was based on sound evidence, though I did not know what the evidence was. A very little research, however, was sufficient to cast serious doubt upon the accuracy of the statement.

A chance reference by Dr. A. W. Harrison in the *Methodist Recorder* on 22nd May 1930 led me back to the Rev. Charles H. Kelly's *Memories* (published in 1910), where, on page 105, I read:

He insisted that he must lie in "consecrated ground". Consequently, his grave was secured in the burial-place of Marylebone, a chapel-of-ease used before the present Marylebone parish church was erected. . . . But, oddly enough, it turns out that the ground never has been "consecrated" by any bishop. It is merely a cemetery belonging to a chapel-of-ease. I was told that by Canon Barker, then Rector of Marylebone, now Dean of Carlisle.

This quotation by Kelly was, I think, the start of the legend. But, so far as I can discover, the facts he adduces are not correct. The old parish church of St. Mary-le-Bourne was built in 1741 to replace an older church. The enormous growth of the parish during the eighteenth century necessitated yet another new church in 1817. This new church was originally intended as a chapel of ease, but during its erection the Vestry decided to make it the parish church, and to demote the old one to be the chapel of ease; and the plans for the new church were improved accordingly. The

old church was closed in 1926 and demolished in 1949. (I have culled these facts from Elizabeth and Wayland Young's *Old London Churches*; they are also to be found in Sugden's *John Wesley's London*, and in *Old Marylebone and some of its famous people.*)

It was in the graveyard of this old church built in 1741 on the same site as the earlier church that Charles Wesley was buried on 5th April 1788. It was at that time the parish church, and not a chapel of ease. Kelly was misled by Canon Barker's confusion on this point.

The 1741 church was undoubtedly consecrated, for the law of the Church demanded it. It is a fair assumption that the adjoining land would be consecrated at the same time, though there is nothing contrary to the law of the Church in a burial in unconsecrated ground. (There is a fascinating chapter on this whole subject in Phillimore's *Book of Church Law.*) John Wesley believed that the graveyard was consecrated, or he would never have written, only seven weeks after his brother's death and with obvious reference to Charles's expressed desire to be buried at Marylebone, an article in which he derided the practice of consecration as "a mere relic of Romish superstition" (*Arminian Magazine*, 1788, p. 543).

But does it really matter? Tyerman (*Life and Times of John Wesley*, iii, p. 529) quotes from a letter written by John Pawson a month after Charles Wesley's death:

He [Charles Wesley] sent for the parson of the parish where he lived, and said: "Sir, whatever the world may have thought of me, I have lived, and I die, in the communion of the Church of England, and I will be buried in the yard of my parish church."

My attention is attracted to the last phrase of that quotation. It is the final expression of Charles's strong attachment to the Church of England. I hazard the guess that at the last resort Charles would not have been unduly troubled about the matter of consecration (though he believed the Marylebone graveyard had been consecrated, and the evidence supports his belief); what mattered most to him was that he should be buried "in the yard of my parish church". His wish was granted. *Requiescat in pace.*

WESLEY F. SWIFT.

#### 997. JOHN WESLEY IN CHESTER CATHEDRAL.

Nearly two years ago, in *Proceedings*, xxx, p. 159 f. (Notes and Queries, No. 974), Dr. A. Wesley Hill offered a prize of one guinea for a suitable inscription of not more than 150 words which could be suggested to the authorities of Chester Cathedral as a replacement for the present inaccurate description beneath the John Wesley window. We have to report that only two entries were received: one of them was too lengthy, and neither of them, in the Editor's judgement, qualified for the prize. No doubt Dr. Hill's offer is still open, and we therefore give this further opportunity to any interested persons who care to try their hands at this intriguing task. Entries should be sent to the Editor without delay.

EDITOR.

#### POSTAGE OF RECEIPTS

In view of the increased postal charges, it is proposed to effect an economy by including receipts for subscriptions with the *Proceedings*. Will members therefore please note that in future receipts will not be posted separately unless specially requested.