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Proceedings

OF THE

Wesley Historical Society

Editor: REV. JOHN C. BOWMER, M.A., B.D.

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JOHN WESLEY AND WILLIAM TILLY

“D R. TILLY’S sermons on Free Will are the best I ever saw.” So wrote John Wesley in 1735, less than one month before he sailed for Georgia.¹ He was referring to two sermons on Philippians ii. 12-13, written by William Tilly and published in 1712 in a volume entitled *Sixteen Sermons, all (except one) preached before the University of Oxford at St. Mary’s, upon Several Occasions*. This brief recommendation by Wesley in a letter to one of his former pupils at Oxford opens an avenue of some significance for the understanding of the theological views of the young Wesley.

William Tilly was a Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, receiving the Master of Arts degree in 1697, and in 1707 the degree of Bachelor of Divinity. Four years later, in 1711, he was awarded the further degree of Doctor of Divinity. A high churchman and ordained Anglican priest, Tilly was for some time rector of Albury near Rycot in Oxfordshire and simultaneously chaplain to the Earl of Abingdon. He was an avowed supporter of Queen Anne, a circumstance which brought him into disfavour with the Non-jurors, and which helps, perhaps, to account for his obscurity in the history of the Church of England.² In addition to the *Sixteen Sermons*, Tilly left a sizeable number of published works.³

Wesley knew whereof he spoke in recommending the sermons on “Free Will”. He had not only read them with care, but had abridged and preached them on numerous occasions. Wesley’s holograph preaching manuscripts of the two sermons are still extant, bearing both date and place of delivery. Moreover, two other manuscripts of two additional sermons abridged from Tilly have survived, making a total of four discourses adapted from the *Sixteen Sermons*. Each of these we shall examine, concerned especially to note their theological content and import.

¹ *Letters*, i, p. 184. Wesley continued to read Tilly’s sermons while in Georgia. See *Journal*, i, p. 324.

² cf. Tilly: *Sixteen Sermons* . . . (London, 1712), pp. i-iv.

³ cf. British Museum: *General Catalogue of Printed Books* (London, 1964), vol. 239, columns 207-9.

The first to be mentioned is a sermon on the text Ephesians iv. 30, entitled "On Grieving the Holy Spirit". Assumed to be one of Wesley's own composition, the discourse was first published in 1798 in the *Methodist Magazine*, reportedly as having been "written in the year 1733".⁴ The conclusions concerning original authorship and date were both erroneous, and both were perpetuated in subsequent editions of Wesley's *Works*.⁵ A comparison of the sermon with that on the same text in *Sixteen Sermons* indicates that Tilly was the source.⁶ Moreover, Wesley's manuscript notations show that he first preached the sermon in abridged form on 28th October 1732, and repeated it the next day in the Castle prison. It was delivered a third time on 17th March 1734, also in the Castle.⁷

The sermon is addressed to Christians, and emphasizes the immediate presence of the Holy Spirit with men for the purpose of leading them into "all truth and all virtue" and to renewal in the image of God.⁸ A certain temper of soul is necessary, however, if the Spirit is to purify man's corrupt nature. Because of the preventing grace of the Spirit, man has the power to prepare in himself this temper of soul. Seriousness of mind, consideration of his imperfections, regulation of his affections and passions, and the avoidance of wilful sins are possible for man through the power of prevenient grace.⁹ Further, it is necessary for man to do these things if he is to receive any additional assisting grace.¹⁰ It is also possible for Christians to fail in their preparation, or to sin willingly in such a way as to grieve the Spirit, thus provoking Him to withdraw from them, eventually bringing a complete loss of relationship with Him.¹¹ The purpose of the Spirit's dwelling with men is to restore them to that holiness necessary for salvation. They should not disappoint His grace through failure to use it, but in preparing for and receiving Him be reformed in heart and life in the image of God. God will admit no

⁴ *Methodist Magazine*, 1798, pp. 607-13.

⁵ See *Works*, ed. Joseph Benson (London, 1812), xi, pp. 114-22, and *Works*, ed. Thomas Jackson (3rd edn., London, 1829), vii, pp. 485-92. There is an unsolved problem in relation to this sermon. It is certain that the published sermon was extracted from Tilly. Wesley's manuscript differs, however, from the published version, primarily in that it is not as greatly abridged. Thus there are two separate abridged versions, distinct from each other, but both taken from Tilly. What text did the editors of the *Methodist Magazine* use, and what subsequently happened to it?

⁶ cf. Tilly: *Sixteen Sermons*, pp. 312-38. In one of those interesting coincidences of scholarship, the "discovery" of Tilly as the source of this sermon occurred simultaneously in independent researches by Mr. Lawrence D. McIntosh, graduate student at Drew University, Madison, New Jersey, and the present writer.

⁷ See Colman Collection, vol. 19, p. 114. All sermon-references in this article are to the Wesley manuscripts in the Colman Collection. The manuscript pages were numbered by Wesley, and we shall follow his pagination. I am grateful to the Methodist Archives, London, for permission to quote from these manuscripts, and also to Dr. Frank Baker, who made his microfilm copies available to me for study.

⁸ Colman Collection, 19, pp. 103, 111-12.

⁹ *ibid.*, 19, pp. 108-9.

¹⁰ *ibid.*, 19, pp. 109-11.

¹¹ *ibid.*, 19, pp. 107-8.

one to the eternal reward "but those who have received the Spirit of His Son into their hearts".¹²

On 18th November 1732 Wesley preached a second sermon extracted from William Tilly. On two other occasions Wesley delivered the sermon, both times to the prisoners in the Castle.¹³ The text of the sermon is 1 Corinthians viii. 2: "If any man think he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know."¹⁴ The danger of spiritual pride is the theme. Many men pride themselves because of their spiritual knowledge and high attainments in religion. Such an attitude is both unreasonable and sinful. Man's mind is so "clouded by sin and folly" that the highest knowledge of spiritual things attainable in this world is still imperfect.¹⁵ Furthermore, any knowledge he has of "the Divine nature" or his religious duty is a gift of God's grace, revealed in His Word and through His Spirit. That is to say, the grace of God precedes all knowledge of God and His will for man. It is wrong to pride ourselves upon that which we receive as a mere gift. Nor does God intend that knowledge should be the foundation of eternal happiness. "It is not knowledge, even in its highest perfection, that can bring us to happiness: nothing can do this but the ordering of our wills and affections agreeably to the will of God."¹⁶ The purpose of religious knowledge, graciously given, is to direct man's religious life and practice, and in this way it is highly conducive to his happiness. Separated from this purpose, knowledge will lead man to disregard the practice of religion and depend upon his own understanding. It makes him think of himself more highly than he ought to think, and overthrows the fundamental virtues of humility and charity. Rightly understood, religious knowledge should lead men to humility, charity, obedience, and eternal life.¹⁷

The two discourses on free will complete the number of sermons abridged from Tilly.¹⁸ The text of both is "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which works in you to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Philippians ii. 12-13). Wesley's manuscript notations indicate that the first of the sermons was preached on three different occasions—initially on 14th August 1732, and at least twice later in the Castle prison.¹⁹ The second sermon, which is a continuation of the first, was preached on Sunday morning, 1st October 1732, and repeated in the Castle later the same day.²⁰

The first sermon emphasizes the corruption of man in his natural or unregenerate state, and his inability in that state to do anything pleasing or acceptable to God. Obedience to the will of God in the performance of all good works, however, is the condition of man's

¹² *ibid.*, 19, pp. 112-13.

¹³ *ibid.*, 19, pp. 123-4. 13th December 1732; 22nd September 1734.

¹⁴ *ibid.*, 19, p. 115.

¹⁵ *ibid.*, 19, p. 117.

¹⁶ *ibid.*, 19, p. 119.

¹⁷ *ibid.*, 19, pp. 122-3.

¹⁸ *ibid.*, 19, pp. 81-101.

¹⁹ *ibid.*, 19, pp. 91-2. 19th November 1732; 3rd February 1734.

²⁰ *ibid.*, 19, p. 101. Preached also on 3rd March 1734.

gaining a title to eternal happiness.²¹ In regeneration a measure of liberty or freedom is restored to man, which gives him the possibility of working out his own salvation. This does not mean that man does everything, and that there is no place for the grace of God in salvation. Regeneration itself is a gift of grace. Moreover, the freedom given to man in regeneration is, in reality, the preventing grace of the Spirit which gives the new-born Christian the desire and possibility of taking "the first steps toward repentance".²² This grace does not take away man's liberty: it is rather the foundation of it. Prevenient grace removes man from bondage to the corruptions of his nature and breaks the power of temptation, placing him in a condition where, if he will, he can come to desire obedience and salvation.²³ When preventing grace has given man freedom and brought him to desire his duty, God provides a second stage of assisting grace wherein the Spirit gives him the inclination to choose and the power to do the will of God. Man may, therefore, "work out his own salvation", because the grace of God works in him "to will and to do".²⁴

In the second sermon the discussion of the relationship of assisting grace and human works in salvation is continued. Because God has given to man His assisting grace, man can and should use his "most diligent endeavours" to work out his salvation.²⁵ God's grace supplies the "defects" in man's nature, and He intends that man should use his own strength as far as it will go. "Where we fail, and He sees the labour too much for us, there He is ready to come in to our relief."²⁶ Furthermore, the continuance of God's assistance is dependent upon man's working with Him. Unless man is diligent in his endeavours to be obedient to God's will, the Spirit will withdraw Himself from us. Man should, therefore, pursue his true end and happiness with the "liveliest and strongest affections", and with all seriousness of mind engage in "constant preparation to fulfill all righteousness".²⁷

We must be careful not to over-emphasize the significance of these extracted sermons. They do not have quite the same authoritative value as expressions of Wesley's own thought in this period as do the known original sermons, such as "The Circumcision of the Heart". Nevertheless, they should be taken seriously, for in abridging them carefully and preaching them upon several occasions Wesley made them his own. Moreover, they may be said to stand in supplementary agreement with "The Circumcision of the Heart" and other early sermons of Wesley, especially in relation to the notion that prevenient and assisting grace are the empowering principles for all good desires and good works. The Spirit alone, says Wesley, "can quicken those who are dead unto God, can breathe into them the breath of Christian life, and so prevent, accompany,

²¹ *ibid.*, 19, p. 84.

²⁴ *ibid.*, 19, pp. 87, 89.

²⁶ *ibid.*, 19, p. 95.

²² *ibid.*, 19, pp. 84-5.

²³ *ibid.*, 19, p. 84.

²⁵ *ibid.*, 19, p. 95.

²⁷ *ibid.*, 19, pp. 98-9, 101.

and follow them with His grace, as to bring their good desires to good effect."²⁸

If, for these reasons, we may judge that these extracts do express Wesley's own thought in this early period, then an aspect, hitherto unexplored, of Wesley's early theology emerges. Many scholars have claimed that the young Wesley held a doctrine of simple "works-righteousness".²⁹ It is true that Wesley repeatedly emphasized, in this period of his life, the necessity of obedience to the commands of God and the doing of all good works in order to salvation. It is also true that a later Wesley, recognizing the radical primacy of faith in relation to salvation, looked back upon this period as the time of his being "under the law" rather than "under grace".³⁰ Indeed, in a practical sense, it seems clear that the young Wesley did trust too much in his own works. All this ought not, however, to obscure the fact that, judging from his own preaching, the young Wesley was no mere legalist, and that, *in principle*, he held to a doctrine of salvation which involved a complex inter-relationship of grace and works. He was aware of the importance of the doctrines of sin and regeneration, and of the necessity of grace in the process of salvation. Wesley's views of the role of preventing and assisting grace must be emphasized, even though his activistic concerns did finally, in large measure, overshadow them. His knowledge of and use of Tilly show that he understood that the way to salvation includes responsibility on the part of man, but a responsibility empowered and carried forth by the gracious action of God.

CHARLES A. ROGERS.

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²⁸ *Sermons*, ed. E. H. Sugden, i, p. 276. See also *Works*, ed. Thomas Jackson, vii, pp. 493-4.

²⁹ See, for example, George Croft Cell: *The Rediscovery of John Wesley* (1935), pp. 130-42; William R. Cannon: *The Theology of John Wesley* (1946), pp. 63-5; and Philip S. Watson: *The Message of the Wesleys* (1964), pp. 12-13.

³⁰ *Journal*, i, pp. 469-70.

In connexion with the World Methodist Conference which meets in London from 18th to 26th August, an Exhibition of Methodist documents and other items is being arranged in the Board Room, Epworth Press. Five Lunch-time Lectures (1 p.m.) will be given on the following days:

Friday, 19th and Thursday, 25th—Rev. John C. Bowmer on "The Methodist Archives".

Monday, 22nd—Dr. Maldwyn Edwards on "John and Charles Wesley".

Tuesday, 23rd—Dr. Frank Baker on "John Wesley's First Marriage".

Wednesday, 24th—Mr. John A. Vickers on "Dr. Coke".

The Exhibition will be open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. (Saturday and Sunday excepted), and visitors to London, even though not attending the World Methodist Conference, will be welcome.

THE WESLEYAN METHODIST ASSOCIATION IN LIVERPOOL, 1834-5

BY the 1830s the Wesleyans of Liverpool were enjoying a period of unexampled prosperity. The 900 members of 1789 had increased to 2,730 in 1815 and to little short of 4,000 in 1830. The old Liverpool circuit had been divided into two in 1825, and rising young ministers made or marred their reputations in the pulpits of this rapidly-expanding town. Brunswick chapel, erected in 1811 at a cost of £8,000, and now the principal church of the North circuit, bespoke the social prestige of the newly-rich Wesleyan families. Here the services were fully liturgical (and remained so until 1900), a fine organ had been installed from the very start, a paid choir was in attendance, a clerk read the versicles from a desk below the pulpit, and so keen was the demand for pews that sittings were sold by public auction. Even Jabez Bunting—a rare experience for so forthright a man—had feared to come to “a people so respectable and intelligent”.¹ Hardly less flourishing was Wesleyan chapel, Stanhope Street, erected in 1827, the leading church of the South circuit, and so constructed that “a semi-religious light fell through an oval window of stained glass and imparted a sacred shade to the communion table”.²

Yet, as Bishop Wickham points out *à propos* the Sheffield scene at the turn of the century:

Methodism at this period defies sociological label, being a purely religious revival movement and not the stereotyped religious expression of a social group³

—and it is indeed astonishing for how long a movement where social tensions were rapidly mounting had retained its unity and cohesion through the sheer dynamism of its evangelistic fervour. The Liverpool circuit plans for this period abound with the names of stations served by a host of devoted local preachers: few of the surrounding villages or the depressed parts of the town were left without witness of some kind. Many of these places were abandoned after a few months, or weeks even, but others always arose to take their place. This, then, is the exciting background to the early nineteenth-century expansion of Liverpool Wesleyanism—an expansion as yet unmarred by schism and dissension. The Kilhamites had of course been active here from the very start, and there had been mutterings of discontent at the time of the Leeds Organ case of 1827, but few could have been aware of the growing volume of latent disaffection which suddenly burst to the surface late in 1834, and cost the Wesleyan Connexion in Liverpool a quarter of its entire membership.

Postponing for a while our examination of the nature and causes

¹ T. P. Bunting: *Life of Dr. Bunting* (1887), p. 101. See also W. Meadowcroft: *Brunswick Methodist Chapel, A Record, 1811-1933* (1933), passim.

² John Betjeman: *First and Last Loves* (1952), p. 102.

³ E. R. Wickham: *Church and People in an Industrial City* (1957), p. 56.

of this discontent, we shall first examine the course of events which led to the rise of the Wesleyan Methodist Association in Liverpool and its development into a new religious denomination with its own chapels, preachers, organization and distinctive ethos.

On 17th October 1834, twenty-seven laymen of the North and South circuits addressed a letter to the already notorious Dr. Samuel Warren, stating that they had long groaned under a load of accumulated grievances which were now insupportable, and that they would submit to irresponsible authority no longer.⁴ Nor had they to endure their sufferings much further, for during the following three weeks all found themselves expelled—some *instantly* by the fiery, swarthy Samuel Jackson, superintendent of the North circuit, others by the more refined and scholarly George Marsden, of the South circuit, who proceeded with greater reluctance and greater tact, having already had experience of lay rebellion in the Leeds Organ case.⁵

The expelled, most of them class leaders, and many local preachers, at once organized themselves as the Liverpool Wesleyan Methodist Association, and took the Music Hall, Bold Street, a building always available to religious malcontents, to hold meetings of protest. The first, held on 21st November 1834, was reported at length in the press, and its proceedings published in pamphlet form. Overtures were made to the Manchester Wesleyan Methodist Association, and a Grand Central Association was formed, with Mr. John Wood of Liverpool as a joint secretary. Shortly afterwards the Liverpool Associationists went into print again, with an *Affectionate Address to the private members of the Methodist Societies wherein the dangerous policy adopted by the Conference is briefly exposed*. This of course amounted to an open appeal to others to join the expelled leaders and to a declaration of war on the Conference party.

Now, as both sides strove to consolidate their position, a series of elaborate and almost semi-military manoeuvres began. Small groups of Associationists and their opponents crept secretly around the town under cover of darkness, their object being to seize control of the class meetings. Chapel doors were bolted and barred, but the "Ministerial party" appears to have won this first round of the conflict, for most class books were surrendered on demand, and this initial victory was won, as was not always the case in Liverpool, with a minimum of physical force. Only at Leeds Street, the historic Liverpool chapel which was at this time situated in an area of extreme poverty, were the Wesleyans actually beleaguered, but they were relieved by a strong detachment of "Brunswickers".

Meanwhile withholding of class tickets and exclusions from the Lord's Table were continuing apace. All this meant added reinforcement for the Associationists, who in December 1834 decided to publish under the editorship of their secretary, Mr. James Picton,

⁴ J. A. Picton: *Sir J. A. Picton* (1891), p. 131.

⁵ M. Baxter: *Memorials of Free Methodism* (1865), p. 227; see also *Proceedings*, xxxv, pp. 81-7, 122-4.

a fortnightly magazine to voice their grievances, and to be called *The Watchman's Lantern*. The Wesleyans countered in January 1835 with a journal of their own, *The Illuminator*. The controversy thus acquired greater momentum, and, as both these periodicals circulated widely outside Liverpool, greater attention from the public at large.

By December 1834 the Music Hall in Bold Street was packed to capacity for the weekly harangues of the Associationists, and on Christmas Day a lovefeast was celebrated with an attendance of no fewer than 1,700. Over 120 persons had by now been expelled,⁶ and 85 of these were chosen as class leaders, for it was felt that the vast Music Hall crowd could best be organized for future activities on these traditional lines. On 26th April 1835 the Music Hall was formally opened for public worship, with a certain Mr. James Lamb engaged as "preacher". Shortly afterwards a room in Burlington Street at the northern end of the town was also opened. In view of these events it is rather odd that as late as May 1835 the Associationists were still contending that their object was "reformation not separation", for they had now, wittingly or not, acquired all the trappings of a new denomination.

In June 1835 they registered a considerable success. The private chapel at the Herculaneum Pottery which belonged to the pottery company and had for years been supplied by Wesleyan local preachers with North Staffordshire accents (these alone being comprehensible to the immigrant pottery workers) was, in view of the Wesleyans' past neglect of this station, handed over to the WMA.⁷ Much excitement was also aroused two months later when the Associationists sent delegates to the Wesleyan Conference at Sheffield, which they found "not at all favourable to reform".⁸ Once again there was a loud disclaimer against any intention to form a separate religious body, but such had by now clearly emerged, and the extent of the separation was underlined when on 19th September Dr. Warren opened a "tabernacle" at nearby Prescott. When indeed the first anniversary meeting assembled at the Music Hall on 13th November 1835 it was resolved to erect a tabernacle in the northern end of Liverpool itself, the building to be designed by Mr. Picton.⁹ The breach was now complete.

All this time of course the literary battle between the two rival periodicals had been continuing apace. The *Watchman's Lantern* was on the whole more moderate in tone, though far more wordy. It devoted considerable space to the activities of the Association in other parts of the country. The *Illuminator*, on the other hand, adopted sledge-hammer tactics to crush the advocates of reform. It had declared in its first issue that its intention was "to throw light

⁶ *Liverpool Mercury*, 28th January 1835.

⁷ *Watchman's Lantern*, June 1835, p. 213.

⁸ *Liverpool Mercury*, 14th August 1835.

⁹ *ibid.*, 13th November 1835.

on the bogs, marshes, low places and dunghills" where the Associationists were wallowing. It showed no mercy on the "anarchists", the "republican faction", or, as it termed them from the name of one of their principal leaders, the "Rowlandites". It poked fun, whenever it could, at the weekly "performances" in the Music Hall, though fortunately it stopped short at unearthing what would have been its most telling weapon—the grave charge of immorality brought and proved against Daniel Rowland eighteen years previously. The *Watchman's Lantern* finally expired in November 1835, and the *Illuminator* in March 1836. Their demise was in a sense a recognition on both sides that separation had been by this time actualized. In its later issues, in fact, the *Illuminator* had abandoned its vitriolic style altogether, and, once the gravity of the schism was realized, had presented reasoned and earnest appeals to the Associationists to return to the parent fold, underlining its arguments by illustrations of the sad fate which had befallen earlier reform movements, such as that of the Kilhamites.

When we turn from these melancholy events to inquire what causes underlay this the most serious schism that ever rent Liverpool Wesleyanism, the abundance of surviving literary evidence¹⁰ provides us with information far more adequate than that which is available from most other towns—even from Manchester, where the movement was more considerable in numbers and more devastating in its effects. And at once a surprising fact emerges: the new Theological Institution which is supposed to have sparked off the revolt connexionally occasioned in Liverpool little discontent. Six major grievances were advanced on and off during the first stage of the revolt, and five of these were conveniently listed by the chairman at a rally held in the Music Hall on 28th January 1835. They were as follows:

(i) Violation by the ministers of the Plan of Pacification of 1795 together with the amendments of 1797. Complaints on this score were frequently heard, though, it must be confessed, the Associationists played into their opponents' hands somewhat when they demanded "additional safeguards" to prevent the Plan being abused in the future, thus tacitly acknowledging that they themselves were in a sense the real innovators.

(ii) The Leeds Organ and Brunswick (Liverpool) Organ cases. Once again neither of these arguments carried much real weight: the Leeds case was now eight years old, and all the facts about it well known throughout the Connexion; nor, till the Associationists mentioned it, had most people realized that there had been a Liverpool Brunswick organ case at all.

(iii) Special and unconstitutional District meetings of ministers to determine accusations against local preachers and others. This

¹⁰ Its abundance is no doubt due to the fact that the Mr. Picton who led the Association movement became the Sir James Picton who founded the Liverpool municipal libraries, and presented to them all the material he had collected on this controversy.

appears to have been the main grievance in Liverpool, at any rate after the initial expulsions had taken place.

(iv) The Theological Institution and Dr. Warren's case—two matters on which very little was subsequently heard.

(v) The prohibition by superintendent ministers of discussion at Quarterly Meetings of what properly concerned them—another valid grievance, it appears, so far as the Liverpool Associationists were concerned.

One further charge was later added by the rebels to their list, and this is most illuminating: "The grandiloquently trumpeted friendly leaning [on the part of Conference] towards the Church of England"—a complaint first voiced in August 1835 and on several occasions afterwards.

Apart from these several grounds of discontent, there were two additional points adduced by the Associationists to lend support to their case, but which the ministers refused to regard as anything but "red herrings" deliberately introduced to divert attention from the real issues. The first concerned the alleged sufferings of Dr. Adam Clarke at the hands of Conference. (Dr. Clarke had of course spent his declining years at Millbrook in the Liverpool circuit, and had been well known in local Methodist circles.) The *Illuminator* had little difficulty in showing from his recorded utterances that Dr. Clarke would have had little sympathy with the present agitation. The second was the case of the Rev. Robert Aitken, a Manx clergyman of dubious credentials who had been an unsuccessful candidate for the Wesleyan ministry and in the intervals of conducting revivalist meetings of an extravagant nature in Liverpool, Oldham, and elsewhere, appeared in this controversy in the self-appointed role of mediator between the two contending parties. Once again the ministers had little trouble in disposing effectively of Aitken and his "persecutions".

Underlying all these charges and counter-charges, however, there rumbled through this Liverpool controversy the murmur of social unrest which was never far from the surface even when the most delicate points of faith and order were under debate. The expelled leaders were not working men, even though on one occasion they called themselves in jest "disaffected proletarians"¹¹ and had undoubtedly a good deal of working-class support. Rather were they artisans or small tradesmen, and the sentiments they voiced were typical of the dawning democratic consciousness of this particular class.¹² Time and again the Associationists turned bitterly against Brunswick and Wesley chapels as typifying that "wealth, respectability and influence of Wesleyanism" which the Conference party

¹¹ *Watchman's Lantern*, December 1834, p. 31.

¹² The only exception to this generalization would seem to be Mr. Picton himself, a wealthy young architect, whose social background was far different from that of the other reformers. But Picton was the professional religious agitator, and was in and out of five denominations before finally settling down in the Church of England.

vaunted so highly and which they themselves particularly abhorred. It was the members of the great central chapels who spurned the services of local preachers whose labours they had been glad enough to employ in days gone by,¹³ who installed organs and adopted liturgies "to gratify the wealthier part of the congregations", and "infringed the sittings of the poor to beautify their buildings for the comfort of the rich".¹⁴ Nor did the *Illuminator* try to disguise the fact that it condemned the Associationists not least because men of such lowly social origins or vulgar occupations dared to defy the collective wisdom of the ministerial Conference. It never tired, for example, of informing its readers that the rival *Watchman's Lantern* was managed by a coffee-roaster, a bootmaker and a publican, "these scribblers as ignorant as untutored Hottentots".¹⁵

It would, however, be fatally easy to disparage the Liverpool Wesleyan leaders, and to imagine them as concerned solely to defend the social privileges of their wealthy lay supporters, for it is precisely when the Associationists were waxing most eloquent in their democratic protestations that they veered closest to spiritual anarchism. It was, in other words, when they were thrown back by the logic of events upon their own democracy, when they began to boast proudly of themselves as "men, Britons and followers of Christ",¹⁶ and to arrogate supreme powers to establish and govern their new church in whatsoever way they pleased, that we begin to realize just what the defenders of the old order were contending against. They, as did their connexional leaders,¹⁷ staked their case on one principle alone, a principle which they believed was as fundamental to true Christianity as to historic Wesleyanism—their doctrine of the Christian ministry. It was this theological principle which they opposed to the Associationists' political reformism.

Would you [asked *The Illuminator*] drag the Ministry into the mire of democracy, make it subservient to the passions of the people, despoil it of its divine origin and call?¹⁸

The rebuttal of heresy and disorder, if not the very life of the Church itself, inhered in the sacred ministry:

... the Association ask "may we not be trusted?" We reply "No, you may not! Others have been led into this bog... and this will be your call."¹⁹

The manner in which these Wesleyan apologists disported themselves may well seem reprehensible in modern eyes, but their attempt to save their people from a democratic experiment for which they believed them wholly unprepared is not so easy to condemn. Certainly the later history of the Wesleyan Methodist Association in

¹³ *Watchman's Lantern*, June 1835, p. 287.

¹⁴ *Liverpool Mercury*, 28th January 1835.

¹⁵ See, for example, *The Illuminator*, January 1835, pp. 1 ff., and December 1835, p. 350.

¹⁶ *Liverpool Mercury*, 18th November 1835.

¹⁷ See J. H. S. Kent: *Jabez Bunting: the Last Wesleyan* (1955), passim.

¹⁸ *The Illuminator*, May 1835, p. 162.

¹⁹ *ibid.*, p. 169.

Liverpool reads very sadly, and when late in 1852 the Liverpool Associationists, once over a thousand strong, had been reduced to a mere handful of supporters debating the closure of their last remaining chapel, the Wesleyans could perhaps have read into this painful scene all the justification they needed for the uncompromising stand they had taken in the great crisis of 1834. IAN SELLERS.

[Mr. Ian Sellers is a local preacher in the Sandbach and Alsager circuit and secretary of the Chester and Stoke-on-Trent District Historical Committee. He was formerly a research scholar of Keble College, Oxford. The foregoing article is part of a Ph.D. thesis for Keele University on "Liverpool Nonconformity, 1786-1914".]

THE ANNUAL LECTURE

in connexion with the Wolverhampton Conference, 1966,

WILL BE DELIVERED IN

**St. John's, Parkfield Methodist Church,
On Wednesday, 6th July, at 7-30 p.m.,**

BY

Rev. GORDON S. WAKEFIELD, M.A., B.Litt.

Subject: "THE SPIRITUAL LIFE IN THE METHODIST TRADITION FROM THE DEATH OF WESLEY TO THE SECOND WORLD WAR."

The chair will be taken by MR. ANTHONY HARBOTTLE.

The Annual Meeting of the Society will be held at the same Church at **5-30 p.m.**

Mrs. Herbert Ibberson kindly invites members of the Society to **Tea** in the schoolroom at **4-30 p.m.** It is essential that all those who desire to be present at the Tea should send their names to Mr. John A. Vickers, B.A., B.D., 5, Benson Avenue, Goldthorn Park, Wolverhampton, not later than Monday, July 4th.

St. John's is a mile and a half from Wolverhampton, just beyond the Fighting Cocks crossroads on the A459 road to Sedgley and Dudley. Take any trolley bus from Bilston Street (Snow Hill). Cars may be parked at the front and rear of the church.

An Exhibition—"Methodism Past and Present"—will be held at the Wolverhampton Art Gallery from June 28th to July 16th. A duplicated catalogue, free of charge, can be obtained from Mr. John A. Vickers by members who will send him a foolscap-size stamped addressed envelope.

Members are reminded that our **Manuscript Journal** has received a "new look", details of which may be found in *Proceedings*, xxxv, p. 73. Any members (including those who have hitherto received the Manuscript Journal) who wish to be placed on the new rota should write to the Manuscript Journal Secretary. The response so far has been negligible. J.A.V.

A HISTORY OF THE ORIGINAL METHODISTS

(Continued from page 121)

II

THE March and June Quarterly Meetings of 1839 in the Belper Primitive Methodist circuit were among the stormiest in its history. The Rev. William Carthy was accused of dictatorial conduct, and everything he said seemed to justify this accusation in the opinion of his accusers.

The strongest opposition came from the Selston society. Their little chapel, which may still be seen, had been built in 1826, and from its foundation had been included in the Belper circuit. This society provided some of the most distinguished local preachers in the circuit, and nothing that was said could assuage their indignation at the proposed increase in ministerial stipends. Moreover, a few had witnessed the outrageous treatment of one of their most respected brethren, and a full report of the District Meeting's dealings with John Tomlinson had been given to the members and friends of the Selston society—on which occasion even the seats in the chapel's little gallery had been fully occupied.

At this point in our narrative the writer would like the Original Methodists to tell their story, as it is recorded in the *Original Methodists' Record*, 1st January 1850, printed and published by C. Plumbe, Post Office, Sutton-in-Ashfield :

The Original Methodists' Connexion owes its commencement to the tyranny and covetousness of what are called the Primitive Methodist travelling preachers; these men who, at first, were humble, zealous, industrious, soul-loving, and (in God's hands) soul-saving preachers, had, for some years previous to 1839, been undergoing a change: proud men had got in among them—their zeal was not so much to promote God's glory as to promote the interests of their sect, particularly its financial interests. It is true they shouted loud in their public assemblies, and made great professions of disinterestedness; but in their private meetings for church management, their principal care generally seemed to be how they could best augment their own incomes: and if any of the leading men opposed them in this matter, they bore with the individual for a time, and endeavoured by caresses to bring him over to their side; but if he was what they termed an obstinate man, that is, if he was a man of unflinching integrity who would not be turned from the course which his judgment and conscience told him was the right one, but upon every proper occasion opposed their despotic and money-grasping proceedings, then he became what the travelling preachers termed "a marked man" (a term by which the Roman Catholics, in their worst days, used to designate active Protestants.) After this, no matter how intelligent, pious, or useful the conscientious leader or local preacher might be, the travelling preachers were unceasing in their endeavours to find some real or pretended cause for driving him from the connexion. By this and other means they contrived to raise their salaries, which formerly were twelve shillings a week for married men, and their board

free when out from home in the circuit, first, to fourteen shillings and house rent; then a furnished house; then one shilling per week for each child; then seventeen shillings for man and wife, and one shilling and sixpence for each child; then some began in some of the circuits to try for a guinea, and the more respectable (as they thought themselves) began to talk of twenty-five shillings a week.

Different official men in the Belper circuit opposed this growing grasping after more money, and prevented the travelling preachers from receiving more than fourteen shillings and house rent, furniture, child money, book profits, etc. until the Conference of 1838 stationed W. Carthy as the superintendent of that circuit, a man of limited preaching abilities, and raised from the lowest dregs of civil society; this man boldly demanded an increase of salary, to obtain which he was determined to ride rough-shod over every opponent. His despotic conduct and avaricious disposition, added to all that had before occurred of the same kind, had the effect of causing many to think that travelling preachers were an evil in the Christian church, and a few active local preachers in that circuit determined to make an effort to establish a society which should not employ any paid preachers, and, as a commencement in such an enterprise, they began by holding a camp meeting on Selston Common, on Sunday, 7th July, 1839.

On that occasion there were in the waggon, used as a pulpit, John, James, and Hannah Green, and John Tomlinson, one of the preachers now¹ on the Original Methodists' Preachers' Plan, and a few other individuals. It was a very powerful day; there was truly a shout of a king in the camp. From that time they began as a separate people to hold class meetings, prayer meetings, and preachings until the 7th of the following October, when they held their first quarter day in John Green's house, Selston, and made their first attempt at organisation, published their first plan and a few plain resolutions.

The writer will deal with these resolutions shortly.

The first plan ever to be published contained the names of John, James and Hannah Green of Selston, T. Cox of Golden Valley, and John Tomlinson of South Normanton. Others were included, but after a very short time they returned to their former friends in Belper circuit. Selston, Portland Row and Golden Valley were the only preaching-places then included. So strong was support for the new cause at Selston and Portland Row that the Primitive Methodist societies were for a short time completely eclipsed, though by 1843 they were back with a reduced membership. The PM society at Golden Valley might have suffered the same fate had not John Smith, a colliery manager under the Butterley Colliery Company, worked with great zeal and thoroughness in the Primitive Methodist cause. Even so, this society only just managed to avoid extinction, though by the late forties its position had much improved, whilst that of the Original Methodist society was already declining.

The resolutions entered into on the first Quarter-day were printed with the plan in the following form:

¹ The reader is asked to bear in mind the fact that these words were written ten years after the events recounted.

1. Q—By what name shall we be distinguished from other Christian Communities?

1. A—As we intend to fall back on the original principles and practices of Methodism—particularly with regard to the appropriation of monies [sic], we denominate ourselves “Original Methodists”. Our Class Money of one penny per week (where it can be afforded) shall be distributed by our Leaders & Stewards, among the distressed and afflicted, in the places where it is collected; except in cases of new Chapels being built chiefly for the accommodation of the poor; in such cases, part of the Class Money may be given to promote that object. These regulations are agreeable to the usages of the first Methodists.—See Myles’s “History of Methodism”, published 1803, page 47, year 1747—“The Stewards in London were very many at that time; they visited the sick and relieved the poor. All the Class Money, amounting to several hundred pounds in the year, was then, and for many years after, given to the poor.” Page 16, Feb. 15th, 1742 :—“Many were met together at Bristol, to consult concerning the proper method of paying the public debt which was contracted by building; and it was agreed—1st, that every member of the Society that was able, should contribute one penny a week—2nd, that the whole Society should be divided into little companies or Classes, about twelve in each Class—3rd, that one person in each should receive the contributions of the rest, and bring it to the Stewards weekly.” Thus began that excellent Institution, merely upon a temporal account, from which we reaped so many spiritual blessings, that we soon fixed the same rule in all our Societies.

2. Q—What shall be done respecting the money contributed by the members at the time of renewing the Quarterly Tickets, which was formerly called Quarterage but has of late been corrupted into Ticket Money?

2. A—It shall be collected as usual in all our Classes, and paid into the Quarter-day, for the support of God’s cause among us, and shall be called, as originally, Quarterage. We think the term “Ticket Money” bears the idea of Members buying, and Preachers selling, the privilege of membership, which is both anti-scriptural and unmethodistical.

3. Q—What doctrines shall be held and taught among us?

3. A—None but the doctrines of the Holy Scriptures, as understood by Methodists generally.

4. Q—What shall be the conditions of Membership among us?

4. A—Mr Wesley’s first rule upon this subject shall be our rule. He says,—[“] There is only one condition required of those who desire admission into these Societies—a desire to flee from the wrath to come; to be saved from their sins.” It is expected of all who continue therein, that they continue to evidence their desire of salvation—1st, by doing no harm; 2nd, by doing good; 3rd, by attending on all the ordinances of God.

5. Q—What other regulation shall be made for the government of our Societies?

5. A—A Committee of five persons shall be appointed to draw up a code of Rules for presentation at the next Quarter-day, corresponding, as much as circumstances will allow, with the Rules and Regulations of the first Methodists. This Committee to manage the affairs of the Infant cause until next Quarter-day.

In the first quarter a new chapel was erected at Selston, and opened for public worship in December. During the mid-forties this chapel underwent certain improvements, including the erection of a gallery. The seating capacity was for 184 persons, and the evening congregation soon numbered over one hundred. This chapel is still in use, and at present is in the Ripley circuit. To all Selstonians it is known as the "Middle Chapel" on account of its situation between the chapel on Allen's Green (from which the secessionists moved after the dispute with Carthy) and the Independent or Congregational chapel situated in "The Pens", Dove Green. Selston "Middle Chapel", which today has a band of active young people, is the only chapel in the Connexion still used for public worship that had its origin in the very beginning of the Original Methodist secession.

In the course of the first year two other places were received on the plan. The first of these, Plain Spot, a very small neighbourhood only just within the parish of Selston, was opened in strange circumstances. In 1838 a young man named John Wharmsby was converted under Primitive Methodist influence, but was deeply concerned that his aged parents, who lived at Plain Spot, remained unconverted, and this despite the prayers and entreaties of himself and his friends. All seemed in vain, until one day his mother sustained a broken thigh when blown down in the garden by a sudden gust of wind. Alarmed by this calamity, which seemed to come as a warning, she and her husband sent for their converted son to pray with them, and soon they too received the assurance of salvation. After their conversion they opened their house for prayer meetings, class meetings and the preaching of the gospel. Several of their relatives and neighbours began to inquire what they must do to be saved, and soon a society was brought into being.

The other place coming on to the plan the first year was Hucknall Torkard. Shortly after the Primitive Methodists moved into this populous village in 1816, preaching took place first in the Seven Stars inn club-room, then in the house of Mr. Smith in Wood Lane, and afterwards in cottages tenanted by Messrs. George Oldham and Moss. These cottages, which were opposite the old Seven Stars inn, were pulled down many years ago. In 1839 the services were held in Wagstaffe's barn, later known as Bess Percy's. John Green (no relation to John Green of Selston) was described by J. H. Beardsmore in his book *The History of Hucknall Torkard* as "an ideal Sunday School Superintendent" at this place, which became crowded with scholars. However, when the Rev. George Herod became superintendent travelling preacher of the Mansfield circuit in which the Hucknall society was included, a division soon arose. It is stated in the *Original Methodists' Record*, 1st April 1850, that

He, like many others of his order, loved money and despotism; and in carrying out his money discipline and absolute rule, he so wounded the minds of the members that they sent a deputation over to Selston, desiring that an Original Methodists' preacher might be sent amongst them.

In compliance with their desire, one accordingly visited them and preached the gospel to them. They approved of the specimen. The leader and members all came over to the little body, bringing with them their Chapel and Sabbath School.

It is true that when the division occurred in 1840, Mr. Wagstaffe, the owner of the barn used as a chapel, favoured the "free gospelers", and let them retain the barn, but the Original Methodists are incorrect in claiming that "all came over to the little body". There were in fact seven members² who remained loyal to the PM connexion. These were cast adrift, and resorted to the Half Moon club-room. They were subjected to petty persecution, and their small assembly was soon broken up. Since the feeling in the town was against them, the next superintendent of the Mansfield circuit, the Rev. G. Wood, gave them up in 1840. In the following summer the Rev. E. Morton came from Arnold and missioned in the streets, and succeeded in re-establishing the little society, which until 1848 met in Mr. Robert Hutchinson's cottage at the Towel Roller. By this time the membership had increased to 30, and the society carried on in a little hired room in the Lammas in Allen Street until 1859, when the first Watnall Road chapel was built.

DONALD M. GRUNDY.

(To be continued)

² The seven were: Robert Hutchinson and his wife, William Allen, John Woollatt, T. Bramley, Mrs. Saxton, Mrs. Mettam.

The 1966 Conference *Handbook*, edited by Dr. J. T. Wilkinson, price 2s. 6d., follows the traditional format, and in addition to the usual personality notices contains several articles of interest to students of Methodism. Mr. John A. Vickers writes on "Methodism in Wolverhampton", the Rev. Leonard Emerson on "Methodism in the Black Country", Dr. Wilkinson himself on "Methodism in Shrewsbury and beyond", and the Rev. Brian S. O'Gorman on "The Methodist Church and the Present Situation". This is a generous ration of historical material, for which the editor, himself a distinguished historian, is to be congratulated. We hope that editors of future Conference handbooks will follow this excellent pattern. One advantage of the present tendency for Conference to be held in centres hitherto unvisited (at least since Methodist Union) is that it affords an opportunity to write up the local history of the place. The story of Bristol, Leeds, and Newcastle upon Tyne, for example, used to become due for rehearsal approximately every ten years; but recent excursions to Stoke-on-Trent, Plymouth, and now Wolverhampton, have given us something new to shout about. Best wishes to our North-Eastern historians for next year at Middlesbrough!

Wesley's England is the title of a 32-page brochure, with excellent illustrations, which has been produced by *The Methodist Recorder* at the price of 3s. Designed mainly for visitors coming to England to attend the World Methodist Conference in August, it will nevertheless serve as a useful guide for any Methodist pilgrim.

SLANG AND COLLOQUIALISM IN JOHN WESLEY'S TRACTS AND TREATISES

THIS is the fourth and final article on the colloquial element in Wesley's style of writing. Three former articles were concerned with expressions of this character in the *Letters, Journal* and *Sermons*. Here we are concerned with the Treatises and the numerous smaller pieces which are gathered together in volumes viii-xi, xiii and xiv of the *Works* (1872 edition).

To avoid repetition, the reader is referred to the previous articles, especially the third, entitled "The 'illustrious vulgar' in John Wesley's Sermons" (*Proceedings*, xxxiii, pp. 53-4) for introductory notes upon this aspect of Wesley's style. The bibliographical items in that article are appropriate also to this one.

Considered as a single group, these tracts and treatises do not contain as much slang and colloquialism as Wesley's other writings. Our purpose, however, is not comparative, but to draw particular attention to terms and phrases which are distinctive, and which have received no treatment in the previous articles. In the matter of comparison all that need be said is, that in spite of a lesser quantity, many of the familiar and forceful expressions of the *Letters, Journal* and *Sermons* appear in the Tracts and Treatises also.

For ease of reference, the items are arranged alphabetically under the composition in which they occur, volume by volume. The annotations attempt not only to define meaning, but also to reveal Wesley's setting and use of the expressions.

Volume VIII

Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion

(1) "Crew, that godless" (p. 245). The derogatory tone of this phrase is exactly that which sounds frequently in Ned Ward's *London Spy*—one of the most colloquial pieces of English writing. Wesley is maintaining that Methodism is an asset to the nation. The "godless crew" here alluded to is any of the mobs roused to do the devil's work against the law-abiding, God-fearing Methodists. These enemies of Methodism draw from Wesley a pageful of ironical epithets—"honourable men", "troops" (of Apollyon), "rabble-rout", "scum", "wild beasts", "turnkeys". A sentimental evangelicalism may murmur that this is not the way to woo the nation. Wesley well understood the psychology of the mob, and never minces his words upon the subject.

(2) "Death of him, Swore he would be the" (p. 211). The phrase has risen in dictionary status so as to be ranked as standard English. At the same time, in actual use, it often has a piquant colloquial flavour, whether literally or figuratively used. Here the expression reads like a bit of a first-hand account of a Black Country riot against the Methodists, but its significance is unaltered if it is Wesley's own account.

(3) "Floating hell, A ship has been called a" (p. 174). The expression occurs also in *The Doctrine of Original Sin* (vol. ix, p. 226). To illustrate the doctrine that all men are sinful, Wesley appeals to common knowledge regarding various trades and professions. Life in the forces of the Crown was notoriously evil. He had heard ships spoken of as "floating hells", and he takes the expression, first, as a proof of the consummate wickedness of sailors, and secondly as a proof of original sin. In the former instance Wesley is simply echoing colloquial utterance. The latter instance is marked with double commas, as though he is appealing to some literary work as his authority.

Eric Partridge states that the expression was slang from about 1810 to 1850, and that the allusion was not to the Navy generally (as Wesley made out), but to the conditions aboard those hulks which were under the hand of tyrannous commanders. This seems very likely. It is most improbable that sailors' slang would castigate sailors' morality. Wesley's misapplication is characteristic of the way in which he seized upon a phrase and used it to drive home a point. The *Oxford English Dictionary* dates this expression 1867, and gives an instance of its use from Smyth's *Sailors' Word Book*. Apart altogether from the precise classification of the expression, Wesley's former instance—"Is not almost every single man-of-war a mere floating hell?"—was written over one hundred and twenty years earlier, and the second one hundred and ten years earlier. If Wesley points to a colloquial usage, then Partridge's note upon the slang history of the expression needs to be revised. If Wesley here individually anticipates the language trend, that itself is worthy of notice. The context, in the case of *The Doctrine of Original Sin*, is rich in colloquialisms from various trades which were synonymous with coarse expressions, lying and cheating: "brood of porters", "draymen", "carmen", "hackney-coachmen", "footmen", "oyster-women", "fishwives", and other "good creatures".

(4) "Packing, Send them" (p. 153). At this point in his indictment that England is ridden with men who have taken oaths, and forgotten them, in connexion with public service, Wesley quotes from John Disney's *View of Ancient Laws against Immorality and Profaneness*, 1729. A constable's duty, states the law, is to seize on any strolling players and to move them on immediately, or in phraseology which has remained unchanged since the time of Shakespeare, and perhaps earlier, to "send them packing". The expression is rated as standard English, but is familiar, and borders on the colloquial, strictly speaking.

(5) "Set" (substantive) (p. 51; also, *Advice to the People Called Methodists*, pp. 353-4). This term for a group of people was familiar speech in the eighteenth century, as it is today. The first instance here noted is of interest merely because of the extent of its application: "I had once designed to consider all the oaths which are customarily taken by any set of men among us." In the other

two instances the term means "religious group"—in fact, on page 354, Wesley uses the phrase "every other religious set of people". The *O.E.D.* records this usage as obsolete, and gives no instance after 1538. Wesley's use of the term, with this meaning, is dated 1745. Apart from this, those who are unaware of Wesley's derogatory and ironical application of familiar language to human groups, considered as evil, are surprised at his habitual resort to such disrespectful terms as "brood", "flock", "herd", "pack", "spawn" and "tribe".

(6) "Song, Old" (p. 223; cf. "song" in *The Consequence Proved*, vol. x, p. 371). A "song", in colloquial speech, indicates an unwarranted fuss about something, or an excessive estimate. When Wesley hits off poor delivery of the scripture in public worship, in the phrase "reading it as an old song", he conveys the notions both of "cheapening" it and "murdering" it. Eric Partridge does not list the expression as slang, but the phrase "for an old song" had been familiar English for many years. A greater element of personal feeling rings in the expression as it is used in *The Consequence Proved*, where it relates to the Calvinist doctrine of Election. In a piece of objective reasoning the sentence might have gone like this: "The reprobate shall be damned do what they can' is the whole burden of the argument [song]." That the composition is no academic exercise is clear from the very next sentence: "Take only two precious sentences more . . .". "Precious" here is a very feelingful colloquial intensive.

Minutes of Several Conversations

(7) "Tub-pulpit" (p. 332). Seventeenth-century nonconformity, it is said, used to put barrels and tubs to service as open-air and sometimes as indoor pulpits. Originally, the preacher stood in the tub, but experience proved that standing upon it was less hazardous. However, right or wrong way up, but chiefly right way in this figure, "tub" became a slang word for a "pulpit", and "tub-thumping" for a certain kind of declamation.

Wesley here forbids ornamental iron rostrums, and a certain type of pulpit, presumably round, hexagonal or octagonal ones, in the preaching-houses. The prohibition is especially interesting in view of the fact that a pulpit of this kind existed at the Foundery. Probably it was to enforce his view that Methodist places of worship were neither "churches" nor "meeting-houses", nor, originally, even "chapels", but specifically "preaching-houses". Jacobean pulpits, small and tub-like, were common, of course, in the Establishment and in Dissenters' chapels.

The expression "tub-pulpit" is interesting in itself. On the one hand it is tautologous, inasmuch as the term "tub" itself was slang for "a pulpit". On the other hand, by his quasi-adjectival use of the slang term in this compound he has softened its tone somewhat.

On strict definition, this is the only colloquialism in the *Minutes*,

though there are numerous proverbial expressions in this piece of writing, as well as many standard English terms which lie well to the left of the centre. For example, "high-head" (a fashionable head-dress), "slouched hat" (forbidden to the preachers) and "swallow" (figurative, as of relishing Calvinistic doctrine) all have almost a slangy ring about them. In fact, this document is, in some respects, a social as well as a religious manifesto.

Volume IX

The Doctrine of Original Sin

(1) "Birds, Newgate" (p. 233). Wesley was sometimes extraordinarily naïve, and this page contains one of the most interesting illustrations of this spirit in all his writings. Bending everything to his purpose of proving man's innate corruption, he points to the necessity of keeping business records as a proof that men are knaves. He satirizes the requirement of written receipts as a sure mark of human dishonesty. The successful business man, buying cheap and selling dear, is also offered as an illustration (a little more convincingly) of original sin. Wesley knows quite well that the charge will not distress these merchants. What would sting them would be to be told that they were no better than gaol-birds. As far back as the seventeenth century the term "bird", with its dual nuance of "caged" and "rogue", had been slang for a person who had been sentenced to imprisonment. When Wesley likens these sharpers to "Newgate birds", and not simply to "gaol-birds", he implies the *ne plus ultra* of roguery.

(2) "Gadding abroad" (p. 374). The expression occurs in an extract from Isaac Watts's *Ruin and Recovery of Mankind*, 1740. The word "gadding" occurs in the Apocrypha. Dr. Johnson found it acceptable, it seems, defining it as "to rove loosely or idly". At the same time, the tone in which the term is used is very frequently slangy.

(3) "Stalking-horse" (p. 207). Wesley is reviewing the morals and manners of ancient Rome, on the look-out for examples of human villainy. He contemptuously dismisses the emperor Pompey's title to greatness by calling him "the stalking horse of a party". The term occurs in Shakespeare. Hoten's *Slang Dictionary* ranks it as slang. Later lexicographers usually regard it as standard English. When applied to people or to human attitudes it usually has the tone of street language.

Wesley's *Doctrine of Original Sin* abounds with words and phrases so contemptuous in tone that, even though most of them have dictionary rank as standard English, it is hardly possible to grant them this status in their Wesley setting. For example, he speaks about "the clowns of the midland counties" (p. 225), meaning people less civilized than those in the seaports. Again, when he speaks of porters, draymen, carmen, hackney coachmen and footmen as a "brood", and when he speaks of a "collection" (of knowing and

pious Christians, p. 226), the irony of tone almost moves the terms into full colloquialism. Similarly with the expression "a friendly bill" (in Chancery). Once again, in spite of his "catholic spirit", he rarely could keep his remarks about Roman Catholicism entirely free from contempt, and thus, when he speaks of Roman priests as "swarming" in Ireland, the overtones are obvious. In alluding to anxieties on behalf of the erring relative who loved "wine, women and gaming" (p. 330), he came very near to coining a phrase which later became famous. These are but a sample of a mass of such things in this composition.

Thoughts upon Jacob Behmen

(4) "Dog-Latin" (p. 512). "Dog-Latin" is pretended or sham Latin, i.e. it is not poor or ungrammatical Latin, but mock Latin. The reader will find a humorous example if he turns up the entry under this heading in *Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable* (New Edition). Farmer and Henley give the term as colloquial. Jacob Behmen's writings were not written in Latin of any sort, but in German. They appeared in English through the labours of Eli-stone, Sparrow, Blunden, Hotham, and Taylor, between the years 1644 and 1662. Thus, Wesley's application of the term to Behmen is catachrestic—deliberately so, in order to express most forcibly his views of Behmen's style. Wesley was not alone in shying at Behmen's weird word-compounds.

GEORGE LAWTON.

(To be continued)

Copies of the following local histories of Methodism have come our way during the past quarter:

Wellesbourne (Jubilee brochure)—from the Rev. W. Parfitt, 86, Mountford Close, Wellesbourne, Warwick (no price stated).

Bank Street, Altrincham (Centenary handbook)—from the Rev. R. W. Gillett, 29, Burlington Road, Altrincham, Ches. (no price stated).

Methodism in Greasbrough (1750-1964), by Ernest Binns (no price or author's address stated).

A Story of Knutsford Methodism, edited by S. H. Royle—from the Rev. Clifford T. Harris, 12, St. John's Road, Knutsford, Ches. (no price stated).

Brotton Wesley Centenary—from Mrs. Mary U. Nellist, 1, Day's Terrace, Brotton, Saltburn, Yorks (no price stated).

High Hope, Pontnewydd (Centenary brochure)—from Mrs. Jeanette Thomas, 13, Park View, Pontnewydd, Cwmbran, Mon, price 1s. 3d.

"*These Many Years*", 1866-1966—Stoke Church, Coventry—from the Rev. Dennis D. Sanders, 44, Mellowdew Road, Wyken, Coventry, 2s.

Bawburgh (Norwich) Centenary brochure (no author or price stated).

Lowestoft Road, Gorleston (Centenary brochure)—from the Rev. Peter H. Mundy, 3, Clarence Road, Gorleston-on-Sea, Norfolk, price 2s. 6d.

It is not often that personal items appear in the *Proceedings*, but we feel sure that members of our Society will join in expressing good wishes to Mr. Richard S. Wainwright of Leeds, one of their number, on his election to Parliament on 31st March 1966.

BOOK NOTICES

The Age of Disunity, by John H. S. Kent. (Epworth Press, pp. xii. 209, 30s.)

Essays in Modern English Church History, edited by G. V. Bennett and J. D. Walsh. (A. & C. Black, pp. x. 227, 35s.)

Wesleyan and Tractarian Worship, by Trevor Dearing. (Epworth Press, pp. xii. 166, 27s. 6d.)

Here are three books of essential reading to any serious student of Methodist history. The first is a Kentish harvest—the ingathering of material written at other times and in other places, but no less welcome for that! Some of it has already been published or reviewed in these *Proceedings*—“The Doctrine of the Ministry” was the Wesley Historical Society Lecture for 1955 under the title *Jabez Bunting: the Last Wesleyan*, and was reviewed in volume xxx, p. 68; “Historians and Jabez Bunting” appeared in xxxi, pp. 125 ff., 150 ff.; xxxii, pp. 13 ff. “Anglican Episcopacy” was mentioned in xxxiii, p. 104, and “Methodism Misunderstood” was published in xxix, pp. 84 ff. However, to articles which have previously been published Dr. Kent has made some significant additions. For example, in the chapter on Anglican Episcopacy he has included comments on Wesley’s ordinations which ought not to be missed. They constitute the first real challenge to the late Edgar W. Thompson’s views as expressed in *Wesley: Apostolic Man*. Dr. Kent’s argument is that ordination was not a cause of separation, but that separation (certainly in America and virtually in Britain) had already taken place, and that therefore Wesley felt himself free to ordain. In like manner the author profitably amplifies many of his earlier versions. Other chapters can only be named, but their titles will be sufficient to whet the appetite of our readers. “Methodism Union” is the first study of a period which has now receded sufficiently from memory to become “history”. “Methodism and Politics in the Nineteenth Century” and “Federation or Unity” complete the book.

The second book is a composite work, and it contains two essays with particular reference to Methodism—“Origins of the Evangelical Revival”, by John D. Walsh, and “Hugh Price Hughes and the Nonconformist Conscience”, by John H. S. Kent. Without disparaging Dr. Kent’s contribution, we wish, through limitations of space, to comment only on the former essay. Mr. Walsh is doing us all a service these days by drawing attention to the wider background against which the Methodist Revival had its beginnings and early growth. He did this also in the chapter which he contributed to *A History of the Methodist Church in Great Britain*. Clearly, early Methodism was part of a wider upsurge which, through the inordinate attention devoted to Methodism, has been largely ignored by historians. We need to know more about those who remained in the Church of England without—or almost in spite of—the influence of Methodism. Mr. Walsh refutes the idea that Anglican Evangelicals were simply Methodists who stayed within the Establishment. His main purpose in this essay is to trace “some of the ideas which may have acted as a catalyst to the conscience of early leaders of the Revival”, and to show why the conversion of a few earnest men should touch off a nation-wide revival; though he admits that much more research must be done. This is certainly an essay which will repay close study.

The title of our third book—*Wesleyan and Tractarian Worship*—

is apt to mislead. It all depends upon what you mean by "Wesleyan"! Mr. Dearing uses the term in the sense of "pertaining to John Wesley", and his work amounts to a comparison of Tractarian views with those of Wesley, largely in his Oxford days. What we do not have is a study of the confrontation of Tractarians and Wesleyan Methodism in the nineteenth century. We cannot, of course, chide an author for failing to do what is obviously outside his sphere, but we mention this fact in case the title of this book leads would-be readers to expect a treatment of the later conflict. At the same time, a real ecumenical service, but one much more difficult to perform, would be to trace the common ground which did exist between the Tractarians and the Wesleyans—and there *was* some common ground, in spite of the deep cleavages which found expression in the *Tracts for the Times* on both sides.

Mr. Dearing's concern is, of course, with Wesley and the Tractarians, where the kinship is real though limited. The Methodist Revival has been said (rightly, we think) to have prepared the ground for the later Oxford Movement: "so to fertilize the organism of old High Churchmanship that it once again could bear offspring" (Brilioth). This book is a straightforward exposition of this theme so far as public and private acts of worship and devotion are concerned. Each chapter proceeds methodically, setting out the Wesleyan and the Tractarian position, and concluding with a comparison of the two. As such it is well done, and to many of our readers this will be new territory, well worth exploring. The author is frank enough to point out the divergencies as well as the similarities between the movements. At the same time, in spite of the claims made in the Foreword by the Archdeacon of Halifax with regard to the ecumenical and liturgical movements of today, the "Wesleyanism" with which Mr. Dearing deals is not quite the same as later "Wesleyanism"—and it is the latter, as inherited by the present Methodist Church, that is our practical concern in this twentieth century.

It is good to note that some of our younger scholars are taking a new look at Methodist history. We feel, for example, that the writings of Kent and Walsh here reviewed represent a welcome statement of the position to date. The eighteenth-century origins and nineteenth-century developments of Methodism are now being studied without the "near-idolatry" which beclouded the judgement of biographers and historians of a generation or two ago. The result, though maybe somewhat iconoclastic, is most invigorating, and we can only await further essays with keen anticipation.

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We acknowledge, with many thanks, the following journals, received on a reciprocal basis with our *Proceedings*. We greatly appreciate these contacts with contemporary historical societies, for whom we wish all success in their various fields of work.

The Amateur Historian, Vol. vii, Nos. 1 and 2.

The Journal of the Historical Society of the Presbyterian Church of Wales, March 1966.

Methodist History, April 1966.

The Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society of England, May 1966.

The Baptist Quarterly, April 1966.