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Proceedings

OF THE

Wesley Historical Society

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

Volume XXXVII

June 1969

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS (1943-68)

I. The Work of the Wesley Historical Society

SOME of our older members will recall that the *Proceedings* for June 1943 was a special Jubilee number, carrying articles by Dr. A. W. Harrison, the Rev. F. F. Bretherton and the Rev. (now Dr.) Frank Baker. Truly, fifty glorious years! The Revs. Richard Green, J. S. Simon, John Telford, F. F. Bretherton, Nehemiah Curnock, T. E. Brigden, J. Alfred Sharp, John H. Ritson, J. Condor Natrass and Marmaduke Riggall, together with Messrs. E. S. Lamplough, George Stampe, Duncan Coomer and Herbert Ibberson, had given the Society a reputation which was acknowledged on both sides of the Atlantic. Yet the work had but just begun, and Frank Baker had no difficulty in indicating the road ahead. Actually, he wrote about "The Next Fifty Years", but now, at the half-way mark, we can see how far we are from realizing the hopes of twenty-five years ago. Baker's main plea was for "a critical, fully annotated Standard Edition of all Wesley's works", and it is a pleasure to report that he is now engaged in the gigantic task of making his own dream come true.

Another desideratum of twenty-five years ago was "reducing the tangled undergrowth of Methodist literature into something like order". Here, the work of sorting and indexing that has been done at the Archives is certainly a step in the right direction.

The final suggestion—that regional study groups be formed—has again been fulfilled in the growth of our Branches.

To return to personalities: no one can fill an office in the Wesley Historical Society without feeling that he has entered into a rich heritage, and we are glad to say that the succession has been well maintained. Dr. Frank Baker took over the secretaryship in 1949, and on his departure for America in 1960 was succeeded by Thomas Shaw. In 1943 the President was F. F. Bretherton, who held that office until his death in 1956, when W. Lamplough Doughty was elected. In 1963, age and infirmity compelled Mr. Doughty to

resign, and Dr. Maldwyn Edwards, our present President, took over. In 1949 Wesley F. Swift succeeded F. F. Bretherton as editor, and on his sudden death in 1961 the present writer took office. Mr. Herbert Ibberson was treasurer until his death in 1959, then for five years we had the services of Mr. Sydney Walton, who died in 1964. Mr. Walton had resigned earlier that year, and Mr. Rowland Swift became treasurer at the Annual Meeting in July. Mr. Alfred Taber has been our printer and publications manager for most of the period under review, and no one more than the Editor knows the invaluable service he has rendered to the Society. On assuming treasurership, Mr. Rowland Swift handed over the duties of registrar to Miss Joan Gilbert, whose only wish is that she had a thousand members to cope with!

Perhaps the most important single event in the past twenty-five years has been the opening of the library in the crypt of Wesley's Chapel on 3rd April 1959. It had always been the intention of Mr. Bretherton that his fine collection of books on Wesley and Methodism should form the basis of a lending library for members of the Wesley Historical Society. Since its opening, several improvements have been made. The floor has been re-surfaced, and night-storage heaters and air-vents have been installed. The first librarian was Mr. L. E. S. Gutteridge, and on his emigration to Canada it was decided to administer the library from the Archives Centre. This is an admirable arrangement, and affords yet another instance of the close co-operation between our Society and the Archives.

Little need be said about our publications during the past twenty-five years. The *Proceedings*, catering for both the specialist and the general reader, has proceeded (!) without interruption. Year by year the Annual Lecture has been delivered, and, thanks to the Epworth Press and the personal interest of the Book Steward, Dr. Frank Cumbers, has in most cases been published on or shortly after delivery. It would be invidious to pick out any of the lectures for special mention, but all together they have made a notable contribution to our knowledge of Methodism. Two more "Occasional Publications" have appeared: *John Cennick (1718-55): A Handlist of his Writings* (No. 5), by Frank Baker, and *John Wesley's First Hymn-Book* (No. 6)—a facsimile with additional material, edited by Frank Baker and George Walton Williams. Thanks to the industry of our regular indexer, Mr. John A. Vickers, a cumulative Index to volumes I to XXX of the *Proceedings* appeared in 1960. In 1964, the Rev. Thomas Shaw revised Wesley Swift's article "How to write a Local History of Methodism" (*Proceedings*, xxix, pp. 103 ff.), and it was published as a booklet which has been in considerable demand.

Ten years ago the first regional branch was formed. This was in East Anglia, and one of the moving spirits in the formation of this and other branches was our present Manuscript Journal Secretary, Mr. John A. Vickers. There can be no doubt that the establishment of these local branches, now numbering eleven in England and Wales

(the Irish Branch really comes into a separate category), has brought new life to the Society as a whole. The Annual General Meeting, always held in the Conference town or nearby, with its accompanying Tea—still so kindly provided by Mrs. Herbert Ibberson—is always a genial gathering. It affords the officers of the Society a welcome opportunity to meet members on their home ground. The reports appearing in these pages from time to time under the heading "News from our Branches" testify to the keen interest taken in local Methodism.

One of the objects of the Society, as suggested by Mr. Riggall in his exploratory letter of June 1893, was "to promote the study of the history and literature of Methodism". During the first fifty years this was largely confined to Wesley and his century. However, as the events of the nineteenth century recede from memory into history, more and more articles have come our way on Methodism since the death of John Wesley, so that to-day Methodist scholarship covers a much wider field than it did even twenty-five years ago. In our second article we shall refer to the more important contributions which have appeared in the *Proceedings*.

We have marked many anniversaries—the death of William Clowes (1951) and of Hugh Bourne (1952), the death of John Cennick (1955), the birth of Charles Wesley (1958), the death of William Grimshaw (1962), the death of Thomas Coke (1964), the founding of the United Methodist Free Churches (1957), the Bible Christians (1965), and of American Methodism (1966).

We regularly print lists of academic theses on Methodist subjects, of articles on Methodist history in the *London Quarterly and Holborn Review* (now *The Church Quarterly*), and information on the Eays Essay Prizes and prize-winners. In 1947 Wesley Swift introduced his first résumé of "New Books and Articles"—the forerunner of our "Book Notices", which, we believe, have become an important feature of the *Proceedings*. Important new works, such as Deschner's *Wesley's Christology*, Hildebrandt's *I offered Christ*, and Currie's *Methodism Divided*, are given article-length reviews.

What of the future? There is every sign that Methodism of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, including the negotiations which led to the Methodist Union of 1932, will produce an increasing crop of articles, for it is attracting the attention of sociologists as well as that of historians. With the closing of many nineteenth-century buildings, the work of our branches in keeping records (and especially photographs) assumes a new significance. The Society and the Archives Centre are already closely linked in a common task, and the partnership is not likely to weaken.

Undoubtedly the most exciting event of the '70s will be, we expect, the publication of the new critical edition of Wesley's *Works* under the general editorship of Dr. Frank Baker, whose basic *Bibliography*, a monumental work of painstaking research and accuracy, has already appeared in a preliminary cyclostyled form. This will

be the crowning work of one who has devoted an enormous amount of time and patience to the minutiae of Methodist bibliography. We of the Wesley Historical Society can proudly reflect that Dr. Frank cut his methodistical teeth in the pages of our *Proceedings* just twenty-five years ago.

At seventy-five years of age, most living things have ceased to grow, but not so the Wesley Historical Society, and there could be no better way of celebrating this present anniversary than by enrolling that elusive 1,000th member! Can every member make it his or her business to seek to recruit a new one? Not every one will succeed, but it takes no great mathematician to figure out that if only one in ten of our current membership were to add one more to our roll, the 1,000 would be "in the bag"! What Frank Baker wrote twenty-five years ago is still valid today: "Hats off to the past! Coats off to the future!"

JOHN C. BOWMER.

(To be continued)

THE ANNUAL LECTURE

in connexion with the Birmingham Conference, 1969,

WILL BE DELIVERED IN

Four Oaks Methodist Church, Sutton Coldfield,

On Thursday, 10th July, at 8 p.m.,

BY

Rev. WILLIAM STRAWSON, M.Th., Ph.D.

Subject: "METHODIST THEOLOGY, 1850-1950."

The chair will be taken by MR. GERALD BOTTELEY, T.D.

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 the Rev. Kenneth W. Richardson, 2, Four Oaks Road, Sutton Coldfield, Warwicks (Telephone 021-308 0716), not later than Monday, July 7th.

Four Oaks church can be reached by bus (111 and 112, Roughley and Lichfield) from Steelhouse Lane. Book to Four Oaks station (the church is directly opposite). Motorists proceed along Corporation Street and the A38 to Sutton Coldfield, and continue along Lichfield Road to Four Oaks.

The Society's **Exhibition of Wesleyana chiefly relating to the West Midlands** will be on display at the Birmingham Art Gallery during Conference. Dr. Maldwyn Edwards will speak at the opening on 30th June at 12 noon.

Short midday meetings will be held at the Central Hall, Birmingham, on Wednesday and Thursday, July 9th and 10th. On the Wednesday Dr. Maldwyn Edwards will speak on "Susanna Wesley", and on the Thursday Dr. John C. Bowmer on "The Wesley Historical Society".

SUSANNA WESLEY (1669-1742)

A Bibliographical Survey

IT was perhaps inevitable that Susanna Wesley should have been overshadowed in the public eye and in Methodist history by her famous sons. Nevertheless, it is surprising to realize that it was not until 1864—122 years after her death—that the first biography of her appeared. The title chosen by John Kirk did not even name Susanna. It ran simply: *The Mother of the Wesleys: A Biography*; and the implied viewpoint is typical. The balance was redressed in Mrs. G. Elsie Harrison's striking study of "the private life of John Wesley". Her title highlights Susanna's crucial importance for the whole personal development of John Wesley when it styles him *Son to Susanna*.¹

If it is granted that to understand John Wesley's character and achievement it is vital to appreciate his mother, what materials are available in print to help us do so? This brief survey of the field will look first at the "lives" of Susanna, and then at her own writings. A brief sketch of Susanna's life appeared in Adam Clarke's *Memoirs of the Wesley Family* (1823), that indispensable quarry for researchers into the history of the Wesleys. The second edition of Clarke (1836) is in two volumes, "revised, corrected, and considerably enlarged", and devotes 134 pages to Susanna. Though Clarke criticizes her theology from the standpoint of strict Wesleyan Methodist orthodoxy, he is full of admiration for her character and gifts. As one theologian to another, he pays her a handsome compliment: "If it were not unusual to apply that epithet to a woman, I would not hesitate to say that she was an able divine."² The bulk of his long chapter on Susanna, however, gives the text of a number of her letters and numerous extracts from her devotional and theological writings.

In 1864 John Kirk, a Wesleyan Methodist minister (1818-75), published *The Mother of the Wesleys*—a rather fulsome tribute to Susanna, but the first complete "life" to be printed. The book carries as frontispiece an engraving by W. H. Gibbs of Susanna in extreme old age. The style is florid and pietistic, but Kirk draws on valuable source-material, including parish registers, "contemporary literature of the period", and "two valuable collections of unpublished documents". Tantalizingly, he gives no detailed footnotes or references when citing this MS. material. In 1876 Eliza Clarke, a descendant of Susanna, wrote a new "life"—*Susanna Wesley*, in the "Eminent Women" series edited by John H. Ingram. This memoir is a shrewd, down-to-earth, "no-nonsense" biography, but

¹ *Son to Susanna: the private life of John Wesley* (London, 1937). A brief notice of this book, citing Dr. J. E. Rattenbury's commendation of it as "the most vital and dramatic life of the Wesleys he had ever read", appeared in *Proceedings*, xxi, p. 110 f.

² Adam Clarke: *Memoirs of the Wesley Family* (1836 edn.), II, p. 133.

it does not begin to take seriously the profound religious basis of Susanna's life and character. Eliza Clarke admits regretfully that Susanna was "nothing if not religious", but claims it as a virtue of her own biography that it "differs from previous ones in not being written from a sectarian³ nor even from an eminently religious point of view".⁴ As a result, she can devote a whole chapter to "The Supernatural Noises" (the Epworth "ghost" or poltergeist), but of the true supernatural in Susanna's life—her religion—she can make little or nothing. Significantly, she hardly refers to Susanna's theological writings, her prayers, or her meditations. Nevertheless, within its serious limitations, the book is useful. It is lucidly and soberly written, and abounds in valuable insights into character.

Nearly sixty years elapsed before the next "life" appeared: Mabel R. Brailsford's *Susanna Wesley, the Mother of Methodism* (London, 1938). Miss Brailsford, the daughter of a Wesleyan Methodist minister, Edward John Brailsford (1863-1921), produced a short but discerning and attractive life of Susanna. It gave full weight both to the religious dynamic of Susanna's character and to her importance for John Wesley's Methodism. In 1949 Dr. Maldwyn Edwards published his *Family Circle: A Study of the Epworth Household in relation to John and Charles Wesley*,⁵ providing helpful portraits of all the members of the Wesley family except John and Charles. Two chapters are devoted to Susanna, as wife and mother, but the whole of the work provides essential background for her life and relationships. The student who has not easy access to Adam Clarke or G. J. Stevenson will find here also the full text of Susanna's outstanding letter to John Wesley (dated 24th July 1732), in which she sets out in full her educational method and her rules, or "bye-laws", for her family.

The year 1968 saw the appearance of two more studies of Susanna,⁶ which came from the press in time to celebrate the tercentenary of her birth, 20th January 1969. The first was by Mrs. R. L. Harmon, an American Methodist, and was entitled *Susanna, Mother of the Wesleys*. It is a pleasant, readable account of Susanna, enlivened by pen-and-ink sketches and by some engaging local colour from the eighteenth-century background. John A. Newton's *Susanna Wesley and the Puritan Tradition in Methodism* explores in some detail the Annesley background and the Puritan tradition in which Susanna was reared; sees this Puritanism as the key to her life and character; and traces its influence on John Wesley's Methodism.⁷

* * *

³ i.e. Methodist.

⁴ Eliza Clarke: *Susanna Wesley*, Preface.

⁵ Reviewed by Reginald Glanville in *Proceedings*, xxvii, p. 43 f.

⁶ Reviewed in *Proceedings*, xxxvii, pp. 28-9.

⁷ On Susanna's Puritan family background, see Timothy Rogers: *The Character of a Good Woman* (1697), a Puritan funeral sermon for her sister Elizabeth Dunton; and John Dunton: *The Life and Errors of John Dunton* (ed. J. B. Nicholls, 2 vols., 1818)—the autobiography of Susanna's brother-in-law.

We turn now from biographies of Susanna to her own writings, which have survived in divers portions and divers manners, and are quite crucial for any understanding of her. They consist of letters, mainly written to her family; doctrinal treatises, composed for the edification of her children; prayers and meditations. All of them throw a flood of light on her character, her theology, and her devotion. A fair proportion of them have been printed, but some remain in MS. at City Road, in the Methodist Archives, or at Wesley College, Bristol.

Only one of Susanna's writings, as far as is known, was published during her own lifetime. It appeared anonymously, in 1741, as a 28-page sixpenny pamphlet, entitled *Some Remarks on a Letter from the Reverend Mr. Whitefield to the Reverend Mr. Wesley, in a letter from a Gentlewoman to her Friend*. The tract is a weighty contribution to the controversy between Whitefield and Wesley over Free Grace, and comes stoutly to the defence of Wesley's evangelical Arminianism. Both internal and external evidence point overwhelmingly, in my view, to Susanna as the "Gentlewoman" in question,⁸ and this pamphlet shows her not only a formidable theologian, but a convinced Methodist. After her death in 1742, selections from her writings gradually appeared in print, but very little before the end of the eighteenth century. Some of John Wesley's early biographers included material from his mother's pen, but only a token amount. John Whitehead's *Life of the Rev. John Wesley, M.A.* (1793) contains a few of Susanna's letters and brief extracts from her prayers and meditations, and an almost identical selection is given in Henry Moore: *The Life of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M.* (2 vols., 1824). Moore brings us into the nineteenth century, which saw a marked increase in the amount of Susanna's writing available in print. Adam Clarke, in *Memoirs of the Wesley Family*, printed a much fuller selection of the letters and prayers, together with Susanna's detailed exposition of the Apostles' Creed—one of her most impressive pieces of sustained theological writing. In 1852, many of her morning, noontide and evening meditations appeared in the unlikely pages of the short-lived, anti-Buntingite periodical, the *Wesley Banner*.⁹ They appear to have been taken largely from the Susanna Wesley MSS. now at Wesley College, Bristol, and reflect many of the leading themes of her theology and devotion.

About 1876, G. J. Stevenson's *Memorials of the Wesley Family* (no date, Preface 1876) appeared. It contained a valuable collection

⁸ On the question of the authorship, see Frank Baker: "Susanna Wesley, Apologist for Methodism", in *Proceedings*, xxxv, pp. 68-71, and John A. Newton: *Susanna Wesley and the Puritan Tradition in Methodism*, pp. 181-3.

⁹ The *Wesley Banner* flourished for a few years in the mid-nineteenth century, and contributed to the paper warfare of the Fly-Sheets controversy. Its editor, Samuel Dunn, was a friend of Adam Clarke. By 1852 Dunn and the other Reformers had been expelled from the Connexion. Were these long extracts from Susanna an attempt by the Wesleyan Reformers to demonstrate that they still held to the Wesley tradition despite their late acrimonious breach with the Conference?

of Susanna's letters, thirty-five in all, mainly on religious subjects, and some of them so lengthy as to constitute minor theological treatises. In 1898, as the third in a series of special publications of the recently-founded Wesley Historical Society, came *Mrs. Wesley's Conference with her Daughter*. This dialogue, which Susanna composed in 1711-12, apparently for the instruction of her daughter Emily, deals with "the being and attributes of God". The MS. has been endorsed by John Wesley: "My Mother's Conference with her Daughter". It was carefully edited for the Society by the Rev. G. Stringer Rowe.

Finally, in 1956, there appeared a slim and graceful volume entitled *The Prayers of Susanna Wesley*,¹⁰ edited and arranged by the then President of the Wesley Historical Society, the Rev. W. L. Doughty, with that sensitive and meticulous scholarship which marked all his work. Forty passages from Susanna's devotional journal are printed, each prefaced by an appropriate verse or two from the third and eighth editions of the 1780 Hymn-book. This marrying of the hymns of the Wesleys to their mother's prayers is both spiritually appropriate and extraordinarily effective. The selection of material is deft and discerning, and for the student who seeks an introduction to the heart of Susanna's piety, there could hardly be a better place to begin.

It is clear from what has been written above that the full-scale, definitive biography of Susanna Wesley has yet to be written. There is a real lacuna here in Wesley studies. Almost equally valuable to the student of Methodist beginnings and spirituality would be a full and carefully-annotated edition of Susanna's own writings. The resultant volume would not be unduly large, but would have significance out of all proportion to its size. Might one hope that among the membership of our Society there are students who may be led to draw all their (Methodist) studies this way? In doing so they would be honouring one who is the mother of us all.

JOHN A. NEWTON.

[The Rev. John A. Newton, M.A., Ph.D. is holder of the Banks Crossfield Chair of Church History and History of Christian Doctrine at Wesley College, Bristol.]

¹⁰ Reviewed by Wesley F. Swift in *Proceedings*, xxx, p. 158.

To commemorate the opening of the Conference Representative Session on 4th July, arrangements have been made for a special envelope and handstamp postmark. Envelopes, 1s. each, will be on sale at the Conference Post Office, and, if posted there, will receive the special postmark. Advance orders for serviced envelopes at 1s. 6d. each, which can be sent to all parts of the world, can be placed with Miss D. M. Pooler, M.B.E., 61, Wadhurst Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, 17. A limited number of cards, autographed by the President, will also be available, price 2s. 6d.

On 14th October, another postmark and special commemorative envelope will be issued in connexion with the President's visit to Scotland. These will sell at 1s. 6d., or 2s. 6d. if signed by the President. Orders should be placed with Mr. W. S. Bell, 7, Kirkwood Street, Glasgow, S.W.1.



AN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY PORTRAIT: SUSANNA WESLEY OR — — ?
(See note on page 59.)

Block kindly loaned by the Warden, Epworth Old Rectory.



A WESLEY SCENT-BOTTLE

NO one could have been more surprised than John Wesley himself had he been able to learn of the things done and made in association with his name. The degree of his popularity while living not only persisted after his death but grew with the passing years, and when all those who had known him personally had themselves passed on, this great man and his achievements became legendary—John Wesley, a name known far and wide!—with the result that it became commercialized to an extent hardly believable.

A short time ago, for instance, I received through the post a package containing a narrow cardboard box with a finely-embossed portrait of Wesley on the lid; it was a fitted box, and the contents: a couple of "cut-throat" razors!—obviously a mid-Victorian product, for then the safety-razor had still to be invented.

But this note relates to an equally unexpected piece of Wesleyana—a scent-bottle, which can be described as being

English cut glass, the sides and back deeply cut with diamonds and strawberry hobnails with matching cutting to the mushroom-shaped stopper; the base with waffle cutting; the front with a window which is incrustated with a crystallo-ceramic portrait of John Wesley facing to the right.

The Bradford Corporation Standards Department has kindly supplied the following measurements:

Height including stopper	...	4.64 ins.
Maximum width	...	3.389 ins.
Weight including stopper	...	13 oz. 1 dram
Capacity	3 fluid ounces 6 fluid drachms

The natural questions which follow relate to the identification of the craftsman who produced it and the date of its manufacture. In the search for answers to these queries, one turns over the records of technical development in the application of art to the production and manipulation of glass in this country, and then one comes up sharply against the name of Apsley Pellatt, whose life-span covered the years 1791-1863. This man followed in the footsteps of his father, who had glassworks in Southwark, but the son took out a patent, No. 4424, in 1819 for a certain process, "crystallo-ceramic, or glass incrustation", whereby substances of a refractory nature, such as medallions or ornaments of pottery ware, could be incrustated, or embedded in glass—an operation which when carried out successfully resulted in ornamental effects of considerable beauty.

As is the case with many inventions, the idea did not originate with the patentee, and Apsley Pellatt himself admitted that it was of continental origin; he certainly appeared to have developed the process to a fine degree of perfection. His patent ran for fourteen years, and then other glassworkers adopted his methods of production, but in spite of many imitators the finest work which has survived is usually attributed to Pellatt.

The essentials of the process were to find suitable ingredients for the paste from which the cameo had to be prepared, for that was the great attraction in the finished article, then for the enveloping glass, which would be in a plastic state to be laid around without the cameo becoming distorted as a lower temperature followed. The latter was one of the points where so many previous experiments had failed. A further point of the utmost importance was the necessity for the glass, a flint-glass, to possess the appropriate qualities which would produce a refractive brilliance, for without this the resultant dullness would lessen the article's appeal to the purchasing public.

To the uninitiated, the mystery is the manner in which the cameo was embedded in what is in fact a wall of glass. This was done by using a blow-pipe to the molten glass to create an elongated bubble. When the required size and shape of the bubble had been attained, an incision was made, the cameo inserted, surplus air removed, and the edges of the glass welded together. These several operations, so briefly mentioned, called for highly-developed techniques, but Apsley Pellatt succeeded at all stages, and a great demand for his wares set in. He produced various types of bottles, decanters, and almost every kind of glassware, even extending to jewellery holding these dainty and delicate incrustations. The subjects for the cameos were usually portraits of the leading figures of the day who enjoyed the public esteem. Members of the Royal Family and national heroes were popular, and obviously the maker would have a clear eye and a keen sense for business: he would produce good "selling lines"; consequently it should not be a matter for surprise when a crystallo-ceramic scent-bottle with a portrait of John Wesley made its appearance round about the year 1820.

But one point remains unexplained: who modelled the portrait?

Messrs. Josiah Wedgwood & Sons Ltd., with their usual kind and patient attention to inquiries, inform me that a similar portrait has been used by them since about 1815. This was a smaller version, but a few years later they used a larger one. At first it was only a small size of intaglio form, and suitable for rings and seals. In some collections one may find plaques, jasper ware, and if the name Wedgwood appears the name of the potter is beyond doubt. These portraits are not precisely identical, and although one would hesitate to say that the workmanship is coarse, there can be a hardness of appearance which leads one to conclude that they are the product of other potteries, and possibly of continental origin. What is perhaps the latest production of Wedgwoods—certainly a recent one, for it was specially commissioned for the World Methodist Conference held in August 1966—is a dish or tray with Wesley's portrait in the centre. So for more than 150 years Wedgwoods have produced this portrait, sometimes with very minor variations, and other potters have copied it. Apsley Pellatt used it in his crystallo-ceramic productions, but, alas, the name of the modeller appears to be unknown.

HORACE HIRD.

THE WESLEYS' CONVERSION HYMN

IN the 1933 *Methodist Hymn-Book*, the hymn "Where shall my wondering soul begin?" (MHB 361) is described as "The Wesleys' Conversion Hymn". It is well known that this description is conjectural; we know from Charles Wesley's *Journal*¹ that immediately after his conversion he wrote a hymn, which the two brothers sang together on the evening of John Wesley's conversion, but neither brother explicitly identifies the hymn. The identification assumed in the *Methodist Hymn-Book* is the traditional view. Thomas Jackson held that either "Where shall my wondering soul begin?" or "And can it be that I should gain" (MHB 371) was the Conversion Hymn.² The identification of the former was maintained in the nineteenth century by Osborn, Stevenson, and Julian; in the twentieth, it has been supported by Telford, Henry Bett,³ J. E. Rattenbury, A. S. Gregory and Frank Baker. J. T. Lightwood,⁴ however, was of the opinion that "And can it be . . ." was the hymn in question, and recently Peter W. Grant⁵ has produced evidence to identify the Conversion Hymn as "Granted is the Saviour's prayer" (MHB 277).

There are, then, three candidates for identification, the relative merits of which must again be assessed:

Christ the friend of sinners (Where shall my wondering soul begin?)

Free Grace (And can it be that I should gain)

Hymn for Whitsunday (Granted is the Saviour's prayer).

Free Grace, one of the hymns suggested by Jackson, may not be dismissed lightly. Lightwood's argument in favour of this being the Conversion Hymn depends largely upon the fact that *Free Grace*, unlike *Christ the friend of sinners*, is included in *A Collection of Tunes Set to Music, as they are commonly sung at the Foundery* (1742). Lightwood considers that one would expect John Wesley to include in this his first tune-book the hymn and tune which had meant so much to his brother and himself at the time of their conversions. The only likely candidate is *Free Grace*, to the tune *Crucifixion*. Therefore, he thinks, *Free Grace* may be identified as the Conversion Hymn.

There are three reasons, however, why this line of argument is untenable. First, there is no reason why the Conversion Hymn

¹ *The Journal of the Rev. Charles Wesley: The Early Journal, 1736-1739*, ed. John Telford (London, 1909), p. 151.

² Thomas Jackson: *The Life of the Rev. Charles Wesley, M.A.* (London, 1841), I, p. 137.

³ Henry Bett: *The Hymns of Methodism*, 3rd edn., revised (London, 1945), p. 20. Bett supported *Christ the friend of sinners*—not, as Frank Baker incorrectly writes, *Free Grace*. (See Frank Baker: *Representative Verse of Charles Wesley* (London, 1962), p. 9.)

⁴ James T. Lightwood: *Methodist Music of the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1927), p. 18.

⁵ See *Proceedings*, xxxv, pp. 161-4.

should of necessity be among those "commonly sung at the Foundery". If it was sung there regularly, so, no doubt, were many others which have been excluded from this collection, which, in any case, is primarily a tune-book. If we allow that *Crucifixion* was the tune sung to the Conversion Hymn, which may or may not be the case, John Wesley may have had reasons for setting other words to it in his tune-book. Second, all argument based on inclusion in or exclusion from the Wesleys' hymn-books is dangerous; we have no means of knowing what criteria Wesley used to govern his selection of hymns. As it happens, both *Free Grace* and *Christ the friend of sinners* appear in *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (1739), in *Hymns for those to whom Christ is all in all* (1761), and in the 1780 *Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People called Methodists*. In addition, *Free Grace* finds a place in *A Collection of Psalms and Hymns* (1738), in *A Collection of Tunes Set to Music*, and in *A Collection of Hymns* (1742), *Christ the friend of sinners* being published also in *Hymns and Spiritual Songs* (1753). The only information that sways the balance slightly in favour of *Free Grace* is the fact that it was published in 1738. But, third, there may be a simple explanation of John Wesley's partiality for *Free Grace* which would in turn explain its inclusion in so many books, if Henry Bett is correct in ascribing *Free Grace* to John Wesley, not Charles.⁶ Most authorities have accepted in broad terms Dr. Bett's critical principles for determining the authorship of Wesley hymns; an application of canons 3, 4, 5 and 6⁷ and of the additional canon 5⁸ would suggest the probability that it was John Wesley who wrote *Free Grace*. I would further suggest that *Free Grace* is John Wesley's own Conversion Hymn, written soon after the Aldersgate Street experience, and one which meant a great deal to him. If this be so, we may think that when Wesley decided to include the tune *Crucifixion* in his 1742 tune-book, the obvious words to set to it were those of *Free Grace*. Lightwood's argument, based on the absence of *Christ the friend of sinners* from this tune-book, must be rejected; John Wesley, in choosing a hymn to set to a tune of the "six eights" metre, would naturally turn to his own hymn rather than to that of his brother. It is my contention, then, that *Free Grace* is John Wesley's hymn upon his own conversion; we must look elsewhere for "the" Conversion Hymn, written by Charles and sung by the brothers on 24th May 1738.

We turn now to Mr. Peter Grant's suggestion:⁹ the *Hymn for Whitsunday*. The evidence which he brings to support this theory is impressive. First, there is clear evidence in Charles Wesley's *Journal* that the *Hymn for Whitsunday* was sung in the presence of Mr. Ainsworth on 24th May:

At our repeating the line of the hymn, "Now descend, and shake the earth," he fell down as in an agony.¹⁰

⁶ Bett, op. cit., p. 26.

⁷ *ibid.*, p. 23 f.

⁸ *ibid.*, p. 28.

⁹ *Proceedings*, xxxv, p. 162 f.

¹⁰ *Early Journal*, p. 152.

Grant argues that this reference to "the hymn" is awkward. The *Hymn for Whitsunday* has not been mentioned previously; indeed, the immediately previous references to hymns have been to the Conversion Hymn. The next clear reference to a hymn is in the account of John Wesley's arrival, when the brothers and their friends "sang the hymn with great joy".¹¹ The easiest way to read these entries is to assume that "the hymn" in each case refers to the Conversion Hymn.

Second, Charles Wesley's conversion took place on Whit-Sunday, and the twin themes of regeneration and the coming of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost are represented in the *Hymn for Whitsunday*.

As Grant says, the evidence is strong, and would be quite convincing were it not for three considerations which, I think, tell against it. First, the evidence of the *Journal* is inconclusive. True, on Grant's theory, the *Journal* references can be interpreted neatly; but is there no other possible interpretation, and is not Grant's interpretation a little too neat? The two sentences which follow the account of Mr. Ainsworth's falling down read as follows:

I found a general delight in their singing, but little attention: yet was not disquieted.

We passed the afternoon in prayer, singing, and conference.¹²

This entry implies that singing occupied a good part of this momentous day, and it would be unreasonable to assume that only the Conversion Hymn was sung. Clearly, when Charles Wesley describes the singing of hymns in the company of Mr. Ainsworth, it is not difficult to interpret "the line of the hymn" as an indication of the hymn, sung perhaps together with other hymns, which moved Mr. Ainsworth, rather than as a reference to "the" hymn. The evidence of the *Journal*, therefore, is inadequate as proof that the *Hymn for Whitsunday* and the Conversion Hymn are one and the same.

Second, as Grant himself admits, the hymn is lacking in those personal references which the *Journal* would lead us to expect. Admittedly, the hymn combines the themes of Whit-Sunday and conversion, but it is objective in character, far from ecstatic in mood, and written in the plural ("we", "our", etc., instead of "I", "my", etc.). Above all, it is basically an invitation to the Holy Spirit to come, rather than an account of "what things God has done"¹³ for Wesley's soul. It is difficult to see how Charles Wesley could be persuaded, for a time, to "break off" from writing the *Hymn for Whitsunday* "for fear of pride".¹⁴

Third, although we have pointed to the dangers of assessing the Wesleys' attachment to their own hymns by reference to their use of them in their various hymn-books, the fact that, after 1739, the *Hymn for Whitsunday* was never republished (not even in *Hymns of Petition and Thanksgiving* . . . (1746), whose sub-title is *Hymns*

¹¹ *ibid.*, p. 153.

¹³ *ibid.*, p. 151.

¹² *ibid.*, p. 152 f.

¹⁴ *ibid.*

for *Whit-Sunday*) would be inexplicable if this were indeed the Conversion Hymn.

The exclusion of *Free Grace* and the *Hymn for Whitsunday* leaves us with only one contender: *Christ the friend of sinners*. Apart from the absence of other contenders, there are three considerations which make it eminently probable that *Christ the friend of sinners* is the Conversion Hymn.

First, there are notable verbal similarities between *Christ the friend of sinners* and the *Journal*:

Mr. Bray coming, encouraged me to proceed *in spite of Satan . . . the devil threw in a fiery dart . . .*¹⁵

No—tho' the Antient Dragon rage
And call forth all his Hosts to War . . .¹⁶

And it is most usual with him [*sc.* the devil] will do honour to Christ. Least of all would he have us *tell what things God has done for our souls . . .*¹⁷

O how shall I the Goodness tell,
Father, which Thou to me hast show'd . . .?¹⁸

. . . I will perform my vows unto the Lord, of *not hiding his righteousness within my heart . . .*¹⁹

And shall I slight my Father's Love,
Or basely fear his Gifts to own?
Unmindful of his Favours prove?
Shall I the hallow'd Cross to shun
Refuse his Righteousness t' impart
By hiding it within my Heart?²⁰

This evidence is played down by Grant, and it may be admitted that it is not of itself strong enough to settle the matter. Two other facts must be considered, however. The hymn is a deeply personal utterance, full of ecstasy and wonder; we can conceive of Charles being tempted to "break off" from the writing of lines such as these. And third, a good portion of the hymn is devoted to an appeal to others to believe and turn to Christ. Thus Wesley turns to think of others in consequence of his own conversion experience. This reminds us of his actual experience on 21st May:

I found myself convinced, I knew not how nor when; and immediately fell to intercession.²¹

In the absence of an explicit statement by the Wesleys, it would be foolish to state dogmatically that the Conversion Hymn can be identified with certainty. But if *Free Grace* is excluded as a possibility on a strong supposition that it was written by *John Wesley*,

¹⁵ *ibid.* (Italics mine)

¹⁶ *Christ the friend of sinners*, 4th stanza.

¹⁷ *Early Journal*, p. 151. (Italics mine)

¹⁸ *Christ the friend of sinners*, 2nd stanza.

¹⁹ *Early Journal*, p. 152. (Italics mine)

²⁰ *Christ the friend of sinners*, 3rd stanza.

²¹ *Early Journal*, p. 147.

and if Peter Grant's ingenious theory is rejected because of the obscurity into which the brothers allowed the *Hymn for Whitsunday* to fall, and because of its lack of those characteristics which we have reason to expect in the Conversion Hymn, the already considerable claims of *Christ the friend of sinners* are greatly strengthened. Unless new evidence is brought to light, certainty must be impossible, but the balance of evidence to date weighs strongly in favour of the traditional view that *Christ the friend of sinners* is Charles Wesley's Conversion Hymn.

NEIL DIXON.

[Mr. Neil Dixon, B.A. is a graduate of Leeds University. He is at present training for the Methodist ministry at Richmond College, Surrey, where he is also engaged in research work for a thesis on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century hymnody.]

MORE LOCAL HISTORIES

We acknowledge, with many thanks, the following handbooks and brochures which have been sent to us recently. We are always glad to have such evidence of the work of local historians, and they constitute a valuable addition to our Library.

The History of Treruffe Hill Church, 1863-1967 (pp. 13): copies, price 2s. 6d., from the author, Mr. John C. C. Probert, 1, Penventon Terrace, Redruth, Cornwall.

Zion chapel, St. Austell, 140th anniversary (pp. 8): copies, price 2s. 6d., from the Rev. J. Kenneth Fletcher, 8, Beech Road, St. Austell, Cornwall.

Crafthole, Saltash (pp. 12): copies, price 2s. 6d., from the Rev. Thomas S. Nicholas, Richmond House, Tolver Place, Penzance, Cornwall.

Braintree, Rayne Road, centenary (two brochures, pp. 30, 12): copies from the author, Mr. Leslie W. Kinsey, 34, Hill Road, Chelmsford, Essex; no price stated.

Thornley (Co. Durham), opening of new chapel (pp. 8): copies from the Rev. Robert S. Thompson, 1, The Villas, Thornley, Co. Durham; no price stated.

Mosley Common, Worsley (Lancs), centenary (pp. 6): copies from the Rev. Leslie Dawson, 32, Broadway, Worsley, Lancs; no price stated.

Methodism in Ashton-under-Lyne, vol. 2: 1797-1914 (pp. 87): copies, price 8s., from the author, Mr. E. A. Rose, 18, Glenthorne Drive, Ashton-under-Lyne, Lancs.

Bates Cottages (Northumberland) centenary handbook (pp. 20): copies, price 3s., from the Rev. Tom Duerden, 113, Elsdon Avenue, Seaton Delaval, Northumberland.

The Birmingham Street Story—centenary of Birmingham Street chapel, Halesowen (pp. 20): copies, price 2s. 6d., from the Rev. Thomas Soulsby, 28, St. Kenelm's Avenue, Halesowen, Worcs.

Methodism in Congleton (pp. 64), by Joan P. Alcock, M.A.: copies, price 6s. 6d. post free, from Mr. D. Andrew, 49, Waggs Road, Congleton, Cheshire.

The History of Woodford Green United Free Church, by R. L. Galey (pp. vi. 128): copies, price 9s., from Miss M. Whitton, 30, Snakes Lane, Woodford Green, Essex.

THE BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE BIBLE CHRISTIANS

A Supplement

FOUR years or more ago I compiled a "Bibliography of the Bible Christians", which appeared in *Proceedings*, xxxv, pp. 45-50, 74-6, 100-104, 128-9. Though it may be thought that a disadvantage of issuing a bibliography lies in the fact that sooner or later one will be obliged to issue a supplement thereto, there is also the advantage that such publication leads to the discovery of other hitherto unknown works or editions. Such as have come to light since 1965 are listed below, following the classification then used.

I. Official

- The Minutes of Conference** *Add* : B (1907)
The Arminian Magazine *Add* : S (1822)
Young People's Magazine *Correct* : 1894-
Mrs. Johns, Portloe, Truro (1895-7)
Rules and Regulations of the Bible Christian Itinerant Preachers' Annuitant Society *Add* : 1871 B
Book of Services for the Use of the Bible Christian Church
Add : n.d. B
1903 A B
Add :
Circular, signed by President and Secretary, re Superannuated Preachers' Fund, addressed to the Quarterly Meetings, Michaelmas 1905 4to. B

III. Biographies

Bray

- BOURNE, F. W. : *The King's Son* . . .
Add : 2nd edn., 1871 B
29th edn., 1891 B
33rd edn., 1896 B S
(Epworth), 1937 A
HASLAM, W. : *From Death unto Life* . . . *Add* : B

Gilbert

- THOMAS, JOSEPH : *William Gilbert* . . . *Add* : Rev. R. K. Parsons

O'Bryan

- THORNE, S. L. : *William O'Bryan* . . .
2nd edn., Plymouth, 1888 *Add* : B

Terrett

- BOURNE, F. W. : *Ready in Life and Death* . . . *Add* : C

Thorne

- RUDDLE, T. : *Samuel Thomas Thorne* . . . *Add* : Rev. R. E. Kendall

V. Local Histories

Clovelly

- POLLARD, SAMUEL, sen. : *The Hand of God* . . . *Add* : S (imperfect)

Add :

Exbridge

- ANON. : *Poetry on Billy the Sweep, in Devonshire* (pp. 4, n.d., c. 1850) B

Somerset (West)

- SYMONS : *Early Methodism in West Somerset*. *Add* : C

VI. Books by Bible Christian Authors . . .

- ALLIN, SAMUEL :
 Christology . . . *Add* : B
- BATT, JOHN HERRIDGE :
Correct : Life of Dr. Barnardo (Partridge, 1904). A B
Add : Dwight L. Moody (by 1904).
- BOURNE, FREDERICK WILLIAM :
 Ministers Working together with God . . . *Add* : B
- BROKENSHIRE, MARK :
 The Veiled To-morrow of Soul-Life . . . *Add* : B
Add :
- DALE, R. :
 Clerical Intolerance. A Sermon preached in the Bible Christian Chapel,
 Heamoor, Madron (Penzance : F. Rodda, 1894). B
Add :
- FLETCHER, JOHN :
 Whole Works of John Fletcher. Vol. I [all published?] (incl. Five Checks
 to Antinomianism, and others) (Devon : S. Thorne ; L : J. Stephens, 1835).
- HORWILL, HERBERT WILLIAM, M.A. :
 The Old Gospel in the New Era . . . *Add* : B
- JONES, JOHN CYNDDYLAN (ed.) :
 Studies in the Gospel of St. Matthew . . . *Add* : B
 Studies in the First Epistle of St. Peter . . . *Add* : B (Vol. I)
- PYKE, RICHARD :
 John Wesley came this way . . . *Add* : B

VII. Hymn-books

- Add* :
- 3aa. A Collection**, etc. Fourth Revised edition (James Thorne, Shebbear,
 1865). pp. 640 + 32 unnumbered. Rev. R. W. Dunstan
- 3e. A Collection**, etc. n.d. (before 1880). pp. 192. B
- Correct* :
- 4a. A Collection**, etc. Third edition, London, 1892. B
- Add* :
- 5aa. A Collection**, etc. As last, but "2nd edition", 1893. B
- 5da. A Collection**, etc. Third edition, 1899. pp. xvi. 832. B
 Mr. R. A. Baldwin (Gillingham)
- 8d. The United Methodist**, etc. 1920. pp. xiv + ii + 832. B

OLIVER A. BECKERLEGGE.

On the grounds that "the Church is neither a travel agency nor a museum" the compilers of the 1969 Conference *Handbook* thought it best to "leave descriptions of the flora and fauna of the Midlands and of our historical curiosities to guide books and local histories". "Our job," says the editor, "is to consider the Church." So be it; this is a worthy motive! At the same time, Conference representatives who have any sense of their continuity with the past—a sort of corporate Apostolic Succession—will regret that the story of Methodism in the Midlands is dismissed, along with flora and fauna and historical curiosities, and so deemed unworthy of treatment. It is one of the signs of the times that we are concerned with the present rather than with the past, but it is worth a thought that the present has been shaped by and is inexplicable apart from the past. That is why we feel that a word about the beginnings and growth of Methodism in the Conference city would not have been inconsistent with a scheme "to consider the Church"; and we regret the omission. The handbook is, all the same, well produced, and is as much a comment on the Church in the world today as a specific guide to the Conference, except in so far as it calls that assembly to its primary job—"to consider the Church".

THE EVOLUTION OF THE CIRCUIT PLAN

TO this day, the circuit plan remains the least standardized of Methodist institutions. Differences in the size and situation of circuits—not to mention the idiosyncrasies of superintendents!—make each plan unique. Perhaps for this reason, no serious attempt has been made to chart the development of its format; and indeed, anyone who essays to do so in general terms must recognize that there have always been exceptions to even the strongest trends. There are no invariable rules, and very few statements can be applied to *all* plans in a given period.

The term "plan" was used in the early days of Methodism to describe three distinct types of document:

- (i) A statistical summary of the circuit, i.e. a schedule.
- (ii) A travelling preacher's itinerary, usually for a period of six weeks.¹
- (iii) A rota of preaching appointments, usually taken by the local preachers.

It is from the last that our modern plan has developed. John Wesley was almost certainly using "plan" in its first sense when he wrote to Christopher Hopper in February 1780:

... I desire you to send me a plan of the circuit: you send me an answer, telling me... that you was the very person who introduced plans among us...²

Unfortunately, this passage led early contributors to the *Proceedings*³ to ascribe preaching rotas to Hopper, when in fact, as Frank Baker has pointed out, "again Wesley himself seems to have been the pioneer".⁴ In 1754 he prepared a set of seventeen consecutive weekly preaching plans for the London circuit.⁵ These were written out, and probably hung up in the preachers' house. However, as will appear, London plans were for many years not typical of Methodism as a whole.

The precursor of the modern plan is to be found in the plans which were made by the superintendent to indicate the appointments of his local preachers. In the 1760s in Leeds, John Pawson was put "into the Plan among the local preachers before I had ever preached at all".⁶ In 1776 Wesley wrote to the assistant of the Dales circuit: "fix a regular plan for the local preachers and see that they keep it",⁷ whilst in 1781 he described how the Manx local preachers "follow a regular plan, which the assistant gives them monthly".⁸

A number of these plans are reproduced in local histories, and one or two originals have survived. They share certain features,

¹ Examples are the Manchester "Plan" of 1784 (see *Proceedings*, xiv, p. 71 f.) and the Colne "Plan" of 1786 reproduced as Appendix 6 in W. Jessop: *Methodism in Rossendale* (1880).

² *Letters*, vi, p. 380; cf. vi, p. 374. ³ *Proceedings*, ii, p. 63; iii, p. 21 f.

⁴ *A History of the Methodist Church in Great Britain*, I (1965), p. 238.

⁵ *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1855, pp. 223-6.

⁶ *Lives of Early Methodist Preachers* (3rd edn., 1866), iv, p. 24.

⁷ *Letters*, vi, p. 224. ⁸ *Journal*, vi, p. 322 (8th June 1781).

exemplified in the celebrated Leeds plan of May–July 1777.⁹ The names of the places (often coupled) appear down the left-hand edge, the Sundays across the top, and the preachers are indicated by initials. No list of preachers is given, and no times of services. The circuit is divided into two sections, supplied on alternate Sundays. This system of fortnightly appointments obtains in most eighteenth-century plans, which were handwritten. Joseph Entwisle describes how they were produced in Manchester in 1783:

There were no *printed* plans in those days. The Superintendent of the Circuit, or the Assistant, when he had prepared the draught [sic], used to employ a person to write out a copy in a fair and legible hand for each of the Local Preachers.¹⁰

Many assistants presumably emulated the Ripon assistant in 1799, who found that a class-paper made an ideal framework into which details could be inserted.¹¹

The Rochdale plan for 1789¹² must have been one of the first to be printed. Appointments were still fortnightly, with two exceptions, but there was now an important change: preachers were indicated by numbers, with a key down the right-hand side. The Ripon plan was still a manuscript affair in 1802,¹³ but in July the change to numbers was made. For the first time there is a list of preachers, and across the bottom a note:

The figures against the names of the Brethren stand for the names themselves in their respective stations. * denotes month places; P—Prayer Meetings.

A more fundamental change occurred when more and more circuits began putting the appointments of both travelling and local preachers on one plan from the 1790s. Manchester had achieved integration by 1799, but at Bolton the change did not take place until 1811, and at Spilsby it was even later. The evolution of the Leeds plan has been described by Wesley Swift:

Leeds plans continued to be handwritten until 1790 when the places were printed but the preachers' initials were written as before. Plans were printed in full from 1795 onwards, and at the same time the preachers were given numbers. The names of the travelling preachers did not appear until 1799, and then only intermittently until 1807. From that time the Leeds plans were complete records of the appointments of both travelling and local preachers. The appointments of the travelling preachers were from 1799 indicated by their initials; they were not given numbers until 1811.¹⁴

It is interesting that examples of separate plans for travelling and local preachers also occur among the early plans of the Methodist

⁹ Reproduced in *Proceedings*, xxvii, p. 130.

¹⁰ *Memoir of Joseph Entwisle* (Bristol, 1848), p. 15.

¹¹ Original plan in the Methodist Archives.

¹² Reproduced in F. G. Mee and J. Oddie: *Wesleyan Methodism in Bamford, 1789-1933* (1933), p. 7.

¹³ Original (undated) plan in the Methodist Archives.

¹⁴ *Proceedings*, xxvii, p. 129, quoting a note in a bound volume of Leeds plans now in the Wesley Historical Society Library.

New Connexion. There exists a manuscript "Local Preachers' Plan" for the Sheffield circuit, November 1797–May 1798, and also a manuscript "Sunday Plan for the travelling Preachers" for the Hanley circuit, November 1800–June 1801 (eight months).¹⁵ By 1806, however, the Hanley plan was of the normal combined form.

In contrast to these somewhat rudimentary productions, surviving London plans of the 1790s look surprisingly modern. They were printed, with names for appointments, one or two references, and notices of the Quarterly and Preachers' Meetings. This was more than appeared on provincial plans of the time, which are characterized by their extreme simplicity. The Manchester plan for 1799¹⁶ has no references, no addresses and no dates; and no distinction is made between travelling and local preachers. Along the lower edge, however, are the words: "The Bearer hereof..... is an approved Local Preacher here, and may be employed as such wherever he comes." The superintendent filled in the name and added his signature; and the plan thus endorsed constituted the local preacher's credentials. The Manchester plan was no more elaborate by 1805. Stockport plans were similarly austere; Chesterfield in 1807 contented itself with the names of the two preachers on trial. By 1811 there were notices on the Manchester plan about Baptisms, Quarter Day, Fast Day ("It is shamefully neglected") and a monthly preachers' meeting.

The early years of the nineteenth century saw experiments both in frequency of issue and in layout. Many plans of the 1820s covered a period of six months, until the practice of issuing three plans a year became common. Finally, in the late 1830s, quarterly plans became the rule. Sheffield produced a circular plan for the travelling preachers in 1802,¹⁷ although it does not seem to have been copied elsewhere; but a number of circuits issued plans in which the preachers were listed down the left-hand edge and the numbers represented places—an arrangement which was very convenient for the preachers, but hardly helpful for society stewards! Of this type are Manchester 1807-10, Burslem 1807, Hull 1808, Banbury 1810, Rye 1813, Chester 1814-15, and Camborne 1834.

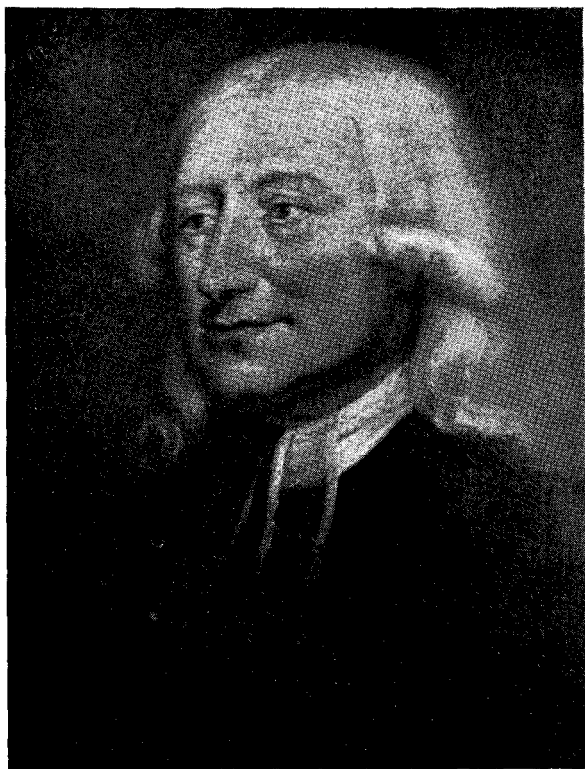
We are fortunate in having for 1825 a plan from every Wesleyan circuit in the British Conference.¹⁸ This collection was a by-product of the first attempt by the Chapel Department to enumerate the number of chapels in the Connexion. The Conference of 1824 resolved that

For the purpose of obtaining a correct Register of all the Chapels in our Connexion at home, every Superintendent shall produce at the next Annual Meeting of his District, a copy (*printed*, if it be practicable) of the Plan of his Circuit—those places at which we have Chapels being

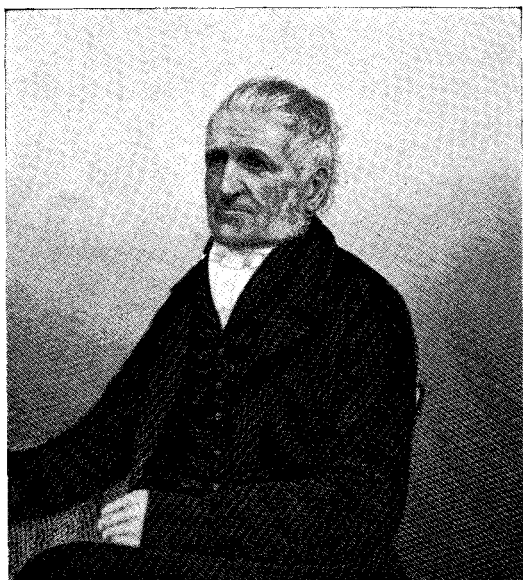
¹⁵ The Sheffield plan is at Sheffield Central Library. The Hanley plan is at Hanley Bethesda chapel.

¹⁶ Original plan in the Methodist Archives. ¹⁷ *Proceedings*, xxxi, p. 76.

¹⁸ There is in the Archives another set of plans virtually complete—that for 1863.—EDITOR.



THE "OWEN" PORTRAIT OF JOHN WESLEY
Now at Culford School. (See note on page 59.)



JOHN WEDGWOOD (1788-1869)



THE FIRST BROWN KNOWL PRIMITIVE METHODIST CHAPEL. Erected 1836; demolished 1913. The monument marking the grave of John Wedgwood (see note on page 57) is to be seen on the right. The present chapel stands on higher ground further back.

marked with the letter C; and these plans shall be transmitted by the Chairman to the General Treasurers . . ."¹⁹

The General Treasurers at this time were Thomas Marriott, Esquire, of London, and the Rev. Samuel Warren. Marriott evidently handled the sorting of the plans, and at some later date the "Marriott Collection" passed to Drew University, USA.

Of the 324 plans sent in, ten were handwritten; five of these were for Scottish circuits with very few preaching-places. Only thirteen plans used names for the appointments, and these fell into two groups: (i) the four London circuits plus Deptford and Hammer-smith, and (ii) six circuits around Bristol, plus Swansea. Seventeen plans carried details of the appointed Lessons, normally for morning service, and this is an indication of the tendency for plans to become more informative as time went on.²⁰ The first plan showing morning lessons that we have traced is Bolton 1820, and we may believe that from about this time the custom spread rapidly, until it became exceptional for a Wesleyan plan not to carry the Lessons, either in the date-columns or as a separate section. Addresses, too, first of the preachers and later of officials also, began to appear as the nineteenth century advanced.

As circuits—particularly urban ones—were divided into smaller units, it became easier to use names for appointments. The change appears to have proceeded rapidly from the late 1850s, and was almost complete by 1880.²¹ Smaller circuits also made it easier to convert the single printed sheet into a folded booklet; a popular size was 5 by 12 ins., printed on both sides and folded down to 5 by 3 ins. This development came later than the use of names, and probably was normal in urban circuits by 1900, although Manchester (Oxford Road) issued a booklet plan of eight pages as early as 1847. Rural circuits followed more slowly; in fact one circuit at least—Kirkoswald (Cumberland) was still issuing a broadsheet plan a year or two ago. Thus, Wesleyan circuit plans had mostly assumed their modern directory form by 1910. Subsequent changes have been, in the main, in the realms of typography and layout.

Plans were, of course, issued by all the non-Wesleyan bodies, including the Arminian Methodists, the Original Methodists, the Methodist Unitarians, the Stephensites, the Christian Brethren, the Gospel Pilgrims, and the Independent Methodists. They shared the common format of all Methodist plans, but some had features peculiar to their denomination. Almost all New Connexion plans carried a list of former circuit ministers. Most Primitive Methodist plans squeezed in a hymn somewhere, and often had a separate weekday plan below the Sunday appointments. Female preachers were, at first, indicated by initials, in contrast to numbers for the

¹⁹ *Minutes*, 1824, p. 60.

²⁰ Information kindly supplied by the Rev. Dr. Frank Baker.

²¹ But Bilston (Staffs) was still using numbers in 1886.

men.²² The earliest Bible Christian plans employed initials for the itinerants and numbers for the local preachers.

In general, the non-Wesleyan bodies went on using numbers for appointments long after the Wesleyans. To a lesser extent, they also retained the broadsheet format much longer. From examination of a limited number of examples, it seems probable that the United Methodist Free Churches were a little more advanced in their use of names; and London plans of all denominations were more "modern" than their contemporaries in the provinces.

Many Primitive Methodist and some United Methodist circuits seemed to regard the use of numbers as a denominational badge. As late as 1956 a representative sample of British plans showed that 9 per cent of circuits—almost all ex-PM—were still using numbers. In the early twentieth century, the Primitive Methodists were also responsible for another innovation: a booklet containing the plans of two or more adjacent circuits. This arrangement became very common in the large towns, where there were many single-station circuits (examples are Manchester and Nottingham), and it was also used in some rural areas (such as North Shropshire).

Several plans survive which were printed on silk—generally to celebrate the jubilee of the circuit or some other occasion; others were issued on linen and other types of cloth, for no reason which is now apparent. A final point: when were plans first charged for? Beyond noting that there are several plans of the 1860s which show prices ranging from 3d. to 1d., the question is impossible to answer. Then, as now, each circuit, in the form of its plans at least, was a law unto itself.

E. A. ROSE.

[Mr. E. A. Rose teaches History and Science at a secondary school near Manchester. He is secretary of the Lancashire and Cheshire Branch of the Wesley Historical Society, and is gathering material for a history of the Methodist New Connexion.]

²² H. B. Kendall: *History of the Primitive Methodist Church*, I, p. 208, discussing a Nottingham PM plan of 1818.

We gratefully acknowledge the following periodicals, some of which are received on a reciprocal basis with our *Proceedings*.

Cirplan, Lent 1969.

The Baptist Quarterly, January and April 1969.

The Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society of England, May 1969.

Transactions of the Congregational Historical Society, May 1969.

Transactions of the Unitarian Historical Society, October 1968.

The Journal of the Historical Society of the Presbyterian Church of Wales, March 1969.

Bathafarn (the Welsh Methodist historical journal), 1968.

"Heritage", *The Journal of the Methodist Historical Society of Victoria* (Australia), October 1968.

Journal of the South Australian Methodist Historical Society, October 1968.

Journal and Proceedings of the Australasian Methodist Historical Society (Sydney), No. 88.

BOOK NOTICES

The Renewal of the Covenant in the Methodist Tradition, by David H. Tripp. (Epworth Press, pp. 220, 50s.)

In this book, Mr. Tripp does for the Covenant Service what Dr. Bowmer once did for the Lord's Supper in Methodism: he provides a detailed history of the rite. He has indeed merely referred to its Puritan origin and to what is known about the Alleines: these established facts are rightly taken for granted in a work of research. But he has combed Wesley's *Journal* and *Diary* to settle many questions about his practice, such as the date of the first such service, and he has thoroughly investigated the practices and especially the printed forms in all the branches of Methodism in the nineteenth century, about which very little was known. Incidentally, the chapters on the observance and its regulation and on the development of the rite itself might well have been amalgamated. The text with which many of us were familiar in our youth was not the text of the Alleines as Wesley had published it in 1780 (printed here in an appendix), but the extensive Wesleyan revision of it in 1897. What within living memory replaced this and then formed the basis of the 1936 text was largely the work of G. B. Robson; the service was given a liturgical shape, but the style was that of the 1920s. The older material stood out like an "erratic boulder" in a plain. (I do not think Mr. Tripp anywhere quotes this famous phrase, which is now part of our oral tradition. Does it come from Henry Bett?)

Mr. Tripp then briefly considers the place this service has had within and without Methodism, defends it against criticisms, and makes some suggestions for its revision. The Church of South India put it, in a modified form of the 1936 service, into its *Book of Common Worship*, and every now and then some Anglican congregation or ecumenical gathering discovers it with enthusiasm. But on the whole this phase seems to be passing, and younger Methodists are now often among its sharper critics, not only on the reasonable ground that the material from the 1920s is verbose and tedious, but on the ground that the "Canon" (as the erratic boulder is sometimes fancifully called by its supporters) is individualistic and unnecessary. Mr. Tripp points out in answer to this that the Covenant Service is closely related to the two sacraments. This is not a rationalization produced by the modern revival of interest in the sacraments, for the 1780 version explicitly refers to baptism, and from Wesley's day onwards the service has rarely been used except in the context of the Lord's Supper. There is ample precedent in "catholic" churchmanship for the renewal of baptismal vows and for eucharists with special intention. The service is properly for the renewal rather than for the making of a covenant. (The earlier discussion of this point at pages 72-3 is not, however, entirely clear.) The objections made by biblical scholars, especially those of a Calvinist frame of mind, that the service misunderstands the nature of covenant are also briefly answered.

On page 77 the word "Adoration" at its second occurrence should be "Thanksgiving". The use of end-notes rather than footnotes may be necessary to keep down costs, but it would be a great advantage if at the page-proof stage the pages as well as the chapters to which they refer could be added.

The book as a thesis at Leeds secured the award of a degree "with distinction"—a comparatively rare honour, well deserved. Its careful

scholarship reveals the arrival of a new and valuable recruit among the historians and liturgists of Methodism. Its appearance is particularly timely when the Covenant Service is being revised by the Faith and Order Committee. The revision is likely to be a modest one, but it will probably provoke a fresh discussion of the history and theology of the service; and for those who engage in such discussion this work will be indispensable.

A. RAYMOND GEORGE.

In the Steps of John Wesley, by Jack Ford. (Nazarene Publishing House, Kansas City, USA, pp. 300. Obtainable from the Nazarene Literature Department, Rannoch Terrace, Edinburgh, 4, price 30s. post free.)

Even if this title had not been used for another book, wholly about John Wesley, it is misplaced here. The sub-title is a truer indication of the contents of the book: "The Church of the Nazarene in Britain". For those who want a history of this Church and of kindred Holiness Churches, this book is admirable. It is well written and, as becoming a Ph.D. thesis, well documented. Those, however, who are led by the title to expect something on John Wesley will be disappointed, for Wesley enters late in the book as the ancestor of the Holiness movements which are its main concern. As an up-to-date history of these movements, it supplies a real need. But why publishers issue a book like this without an index is a mystery to all who wish to take their work seriously.

JOHN C. BOWMER.

Wesleyan Missionaries in Great Namaqualand, 1820-1867 and *Wesleyan Baralong Mission in Trans-Orangia, 1821-1884*, by Walter G. A. Mears. No date or price stated. Obtainable from the author at 21, Woodlands Park, Camp Ground Road, Rondebosch, S. Africa.

These are important papers on the early history of Methodist missions in South Africa, and Mr. Mears has won our gratitude by rescuing from obscurity deeply moving facts about the story of how the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society tried between 1816 and 1867 to establish stations in Great Namaqualand. The fortitude with which the missionaries and their wives endured privations and hardships was equalled only by the passion for souls which was their motive power. This account follows on the familiar story of the first unsuccessful attempt, in which the missionary William Threlfall and his African companions Jacob Links and Joanna Jager lost their lives.

If Mr. Mears is justified in giving the title "A Forgotten Story Remembered" to his account of the establishment of Methodism in Great Namaqualand, his title "The Odyssey of the Baralong" is equally felicitous for the second of these papers. It describes the movement of Wesleyan missionaries travelling in 1822 eastwards from Campbell along the Vaal river in search of any Bechuana tribe to which they could attach themselves and the subsequent story of the mass migration of nearly 15,000 people, under the missionaries' guidance, 240 miles to the Caledon valley.

Again we meet men like Barnabas Shaw, Samuel Broadbent, and the LMS missionary Dr. Philip, who came into the story of William Threlfall, and we read how things developed after their time. We do well to learn afresh about the courage of these pioneers and the transformation which the Gospel produced in the lives and culture of such people as the Baralong.

N. ALLEN BIRTWHISTLE.

NOTES AND QUERIES

1196. JOHN WEDGWOOD AND CHESHIRE PRIMITIVE METHODISM.

The centenary of the death of the Primitive Methodist evangelist John Wedgwood, and the 150th anniversary of the start of his Cheshire Mission, were celebrated in March 1969 at Brown Knowl Methodist chapel, Broxton, Cheshire (in the Whitchurch circuit), where Wedgwood is buried.

Born in 1788, John Wedgwood was the eldest son of William Wedgwood of Burslem. His family was one of the branches of the Josiah Wedgwood family of potters, and John began work as a "thrower" in the business. At the age of 21, after a long spiritual struggle, he was converted, and soon associated himself with the evangelistic fervour surrounding Hugh Bourne and his camp meetings, becoming a preacher in great demand. Joseph Ritson wrote "In that long line of spiritual sons and disciples thus called into being, . . . John Wedgwood stands first."¹

Wedgwood's labours took him far afield, and he was ever wont to "make his plan as he went". It was in Grantham in 1817 that he gained the distinction of being the first Primitive Methodist to be imprisoned for preaching in the open air; and his biographer and friend, Thomas Bateman of Chorley (Nantwich circuit), records many other adventures, some hair-raising, shared by Wedgwood with other early preachers of the movement.

His Cheshire Mission began on Easter Sunday night, 11th April 1819, when he preached at Bulkeley, near to Brown Knowl, in response to an invitation from the son of a local farmer. So it was that the Primitive Methodist Revival began in that part of Cheshire, and quickly spread into the Wirral peninsula, into North Wales, and North Shropshire. The work was first organized by the Tunstall circuit as the Burland branch, but grew so rapidly (at one time stretching from Liverpool to Shrewsbury) that Burland soon became a circuit in its own right, and was later divided several times, first into sections and later into separate circuits based on principal towns in the area.

Although Wedgwood returned many times to the scene of his Cheshire Mission, he travelled far and wide to fulfil his preaching engagements, and only increasing feebleness curbed his activities towards the last. By this time he had moved to Crewe, and he died there on 20th March 1869. In accordance with his own wish, his body was conveyed the fourteen miles to Brown Knowl for burial. The funeral procession was joined by many of the thousands who lined the route, so that by the time the cortège reached Brown Knowl the rear of the procession was still some two miles away. Such had been the influence of this remarkable man, and it is hardly surprising to find Bateman writing of that day:

Such a funeral as this had not been witnessed in this part of Cheshire during the recollection of the oldest living. Nor can the sight seen, or the impressions made, be very soon or easily forgotten.²

The special services in memory of John Wedgwood were conducted by the minister at Brown Knowl, the Rev. Ronald F. Leathwood. One of them was a colour-slide history of Wedgwood's life and of the Brown Knowl society, which is one of the many resulting from his mission. The speaker at a service on the anniversary day of Wedgwood's death was the Rev. Leonard Brown of Dudley. An exhibition of historical material was staged as a feature of the celebrations. RONALD F. LEATHWOOD.

¹ *The Romance of Primitive Methodism* (1909), p. 107.

² *Memoir of the Life and Labours of Mr. John Wedgwood* (1870), p. 129.

1197. PRIMITIVE METHODISTS AND THE MINERS' UNIONS.

Dr. A. R. Griffin's article on "Methodism and Trade Unionism in the Nottinghamshire-Derbyshire Coalfield, 1844-90" (*Proceedings*, xxxvii, pp. 2-9) does less than justice to the Primitive Methodists. Dr. Griffin acknowledges the miners' unions' indebtedness to Methodist influence, and he cites in particular the MNC, UMFC, and PM. My own researches have revealed that it was pre-eminently the Primitive Methodists in the early twentieth as well as in the nineteenth century who provided the most important and outstanding leadership to the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire miners' unions.

When the Nottinghamshire Miners' Association was formed in 1881, nearly all its leaders were Primitive Methodist local preachers. The following local preachers must serve as examples: Joseph Hopkin (president in 1883 and agent, 1884-6), William Bailey (full-time agent, 1886-96), Aaron Stewart (president, 1888-97, and later full-time secretary), William Hardy (vice-president, 1893-7, and president, 1897-8), and Charles Bunfield (vice-president, 1902-6; president, 1907-8; full-time assistant agent, 1908-10; secretary from 1910, and treasurer from 1921). William Carter (1862-1932), though not a local preacher, led a Bible-class at the Mansfield PM chapel for many years, and in 1907 was elected vice-president of the Association, in 1909 president, in 1910 assistant secretary, and in 1927 general secretary. The early Executive Council of the Nottinghamshire Miners' Association was almost entirely composed of Primitive Methodists. As well as Bailey, Bunfield, Hardy and Stewart, there were on the council J. Willgoose of Birchwood, J. Spiers of Pinxton, J. G. Shacklock of Kirkby and Matthew Holland of Portland Row, who were all Primitive Methodist local preachers.

A similar preponderance of Primitive Methodists existed in the Derbyshire Miners' Association, established in 1879: the three principal leaders—Bunting (president), Haslam (secretary), and Harvey (treasurer)—were all Primitive Methodist local preachers. Haslam remained the secretary and agent of the Association until 1906, when he was succeeded by Harvey. Another Derbyshire PM local preacher, Barnet Kenyon (1851-1930), was president of the Derbyshire association from 1898 until 1906, when he was appointed assistant agent; and in 1920 he became general secretary.

The late Dr. R. F. Wearmouth's researches into Methodist influence on trade unionism generally, particularly in North-Eastern England, corroborate the view that it was pre-eminently the Primitive Methodists who were most active.

G. M. MORRIS

(Madeley College of Education).

1198. FREE CHURCHES IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

Anyone wishing to undertake a research project dealing with the Free Churches in the nineteenth century, and deterred from doing so by reason of cost, should know that there is a substantial sum of money available under the Rev. J. F. Marquis Legacy from which grants could be made to assist with the cost of such research. For further details, please write, giving all relevant particulars, to The Secretary, The Presbyterian Historical Society of England, 86, Tavistock Place, London, W.C.1.

The Society has a large collection of books, pamphlets and records available for reference by anyone undertaking research into Church History. In special cases, the Society will be glad to let material go out on loan.

A. G. ESLEMONT.

1199. PORTRAITS OF SUSANNA WESLEY.

We hope to publish in some future issue of the *Proceedings* an informed article on the portraits of Susanna Wesley. In the meantime, however, readers' comments are invited on the alleged likeness which we publish opposite page 40 of the present number. Referring to this portrait, the late Rev. Charles H. Kelly wrote in the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1907, p. 736:

It may be well to state here, that there is a well-known engraving which has been published both in Great Britain and America purporting to be a portrait of Mrs. Susanna Wesley. It is that of a beautiful woman of about thirty years of age, with fashionable dress, somewhat exposed bust, hair parted on one side, and expressive features. It is an interesting picture, but it is not a likeness of Mrs. Wesley. It is the portrait really of Lady Rodd, a relative by marriage of the Gwynne family into which the Rev. Charles Wesley, our poet, married. It has obtained a large circulation, but under a great mistake.

There are in the Methodist Archives several copies of the print, and one of them is inscribed: "Port. of Lady Rudd—2nd wife of Mrs. C. Wesley's brother." Stevenson's *Memorials of the Wesley Family* (p. 427) says: "Brother Howell Gwynne . . . married Lady Rudd, by whom he has one son."

In view of the fact that this particular portrait is often used to illustrate articles on the mother of the Wesleys—see, for example, a recent number of *The Epworth Witness*—and in the interest of historical accuracy, the matter ought to be clarified. Where did Kelly get the information about Lady Rodd or Rudd? Can anyone confirm that this in fact a picture of her ladyship?

EDITOR.

1200. THE CULFORD SCHOOL PORTRAIT OF JOHN WESLEY.

The attractive and dignified portrait of John Wesley shown in the illustration facing page 52 was given into my keeping in 1945 by the late Mrs. E. C. Stocks, widow of Mr. Edward Vazeille Stocks, formerly University Librarian at Durham. From 1945 until 1951 it hung in my study at the Johnston School, Durham, of which I was then headmaster, and was then transferred to my present school—Culford School, Bury St. Edmunds—with the ready agreement of Mrs. Stocks and her daughter. The painting comes in a direct line from Mrs. John Wesley—the widow Molly Vazeille whom Wesley so unfortunately married—and is thought to have been painted from life. Mrs. Vazeille's daughter by her first husband married a certain William Smith, and their daughter was the paternal great-grandmother of Mr. Edward Vazeille Stocks. William Smith and his wife greatly befriended John Wesley throughout all his matrimonial troubles, and it was doubtless through their care that the portrait was handed down in the family and escaped the venomous destructive zeal of Mrs. Wesley.

The portrait is very finely painted in oils, and measures 9 by 10½ ins. A label on the back of the painting bears the handwritten inscription: "English School, William Owen pinxit 1778." The only artist named William Owen known to have lived and worked in Wesley's day was a well-known portrait-painter, a Royal Academician; but as he was born in 1769 it is not very likely that he painted this portrait at the early age of nine, and there is therefore an error either in the date or in the attribution to Owen. It is interesting to note that the well-known composite portrait by John Jackson, painted in 1827, which appeared as a frontispiece to the

old Wesleyan Hymn-book, and which is now at the Book-room, bears so strong a resemblance to Owen's painting that I am of the opinion that Jackson must have had this picture before him when he made his so-called "standard typical portrait" of Wesley. CHRISTOPHER STOREY.

1201. METHODISM AND NINETEENTH-CENTURY HISTORIOGRAPHY.

The debate sparked off by Elie Halévy as to whether Methodism saved England from a French-type revolution (see *Proceedings*, xxxiv, p. 188; xxxv, p. 55) is still a live issue in nineteenth-century historiography. Latest examples of viewpoints in the debate are to be found in G. Himmelfarb: *Victorian Minds* (1968), pp. 275-99. Miss Himmelfarb gives an interesting account of the debate, and asks whether in the end Halévy will defeat Marx as the interpreter of this crucial period in English history.

E. P. Thompson in the Pelican edition of *The Making of the English Working-Class* (1968 edition) has a postscript (pp. 916 ff.) which refers to criticisms of his earlier edition by Dr. E. J. Hobsbawm, Dr. John H. S. Kent, Miss G. Himmelfarb and others; and there are references to the question also in *Captain Swing*—the story of the revolt of the agricultural labourers—by E. J. Hobsbawm and George Rudé (1969). The whole issue awaits a full-scale treatment. J. MUNSEY TURNER.

In addition to the list of periodicals printed on page 54, we gratefully acknowledge having received copies of the following publications, which have been placed in the Library:

Bulletin (No. 20, 1968) of the Committee on Archives of the United Church of Canada.

Bulletin of the Wesleyan Theological Society (Concord, Michigan, USA), vol. iv, No. 1, Spring 1969.

Princeton Seminary Bulletin, vol. lxi, No. 3, Summer 1968.

Methodist History, April 1969.

The Significance of Trevecca College, 1768-91, by G. F. Nuttall. (Epworth Press, pp. 30, 2s. 6d.)

The Memoir of William Smith, by Barrie S. Trinder. (Reprinted from the *Transactions* of the Shropshire Archæological Society, vol. lviii, part 2.)

Visitors to the Methodist Archives Centre, research students, and members of our Society generally, will be sorry to learn of the forthcoming departure of Miss Joan Gilbert, who will shortly be leaving City Road to take up a position with Methodist Guest Houses at Cullercoats. In addition to her duties as Archivist's secretary, Miss Gilbert has for the past five years held office as our Registrar, and for her careful work in that capacity deserves our special thanks. Our good wishes go with her—and we confidently expect that there will now be a steady increase in the numbers of Methodist visitors to the bracing North-East Coast!

Pending a new appointment to be made at the Annual Meeting at Sutton Coldfield in July, correspondence normally addressed to the Registrar should go to the Rev. Dr. John C. Bowmer, Methodist Archives and Research Centre, 25-35, City Road, London, E.C.1.