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Proceedings OF THE Wesley Historical Society

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VICTORIAN VALUES — OR WHATEVER HAPPENED TO JOHN WESLEY'S SCRIPTURAL HOLINESS ?

(*The Wesley Historical Society Lecture 1988*)

1. A Question of Theology

THERE is a deep and fundamental controversy among Methodist historians about Methodism's nature. Is its *raison d'être* a holiness group, a leaven within the life of the church? Is the "grand depositum" really the doctrine and practice of Scriptural Holiness or was Methodism the re-assertion of religious experience as the key feature of Christian living; a way of turning the flank of the Enlightenment's attack on Christianity? "It must not be forgotten," said Henry Bett, "that what Schleiermacher in Germany did deliberately and scientifically as a theologian was done instinctively and practically by the Wesleys and the early Methodists in England." Was our greatest Medieval historian, Herbert Brook Workman, entirely wrong when he argued that the doctrine of Assurance was Methodism's fundamental contribution to the life and thought of the church? From Assurance, Workman traces Wesley's individualism, his Arminian view of universal salvation and his doctrine of perfect love, which is a corollary of the appeal to experience. "For if a son is conscious of his relation to his father, there must be the possibility that consciousness shall be complete." Anglican interpreters and critics of Methodism have sensed this from Dean Tucker, through E. B. Pusey, to recent sympathetic comments by A. M. Allchin, who points to similarities to at least one strand of the Orthodox tradition represented by Symeon, the New Theologian (949-1022). Methodism and other renewal movements are characterized by a "whole hearted acceptance of traditional Christian doctrine coupled with the conclusion that doctrine is useless unless verified in life and experience."¹

¹ *New History of Methodism*, ed. Workman, Eayrs and Townsend, (1909), Vol. i, pp. 3-71 esp. 27. H. Bett, *Studies in Religion*, (1929), pp. 2-24 esp. 19. *Ibid.*, *The Spirit of Methodism*, (1927), pp. 127, 144, 165. A. M. Allchin, *The Kingdom of Love and Knowledge*, (1979), pp. 35ff.

Wesley clearly agreed, though, perhaps under the influence of “John Smith” and bothered by Schwärmerei, argued that Assurance is a “common privilege” not a necessity. Years later, speaking to Melville Horne, Fletcher’s successor, he asserted that it was a wonder he and Charles had not been stoned for asserting the necessity of Assurance, oddly forgetting how often the stones, rotten eggs and dead cats had been thrown! To Workman’s view—shared by the Franciscan Fr. Piette—can be added those who link Wesley with the fundamental empiricism of John Locke’s philosophy and attempt to show continuity between Locke, Wesley and the Romantics. Wesley the platonist if you like!²

The ambiguities of Wesley’s doctrine of Christian perfection have produced another cleavage. If justification is by faith, so is Christian perfection. If justification was followed by the assurance of adoption, then sanctification can also be verified experientially. It is an experience as well as an aspiration, though preceded and followed by growth on earth and in Heaven. William Burt Pope wriggled on that dilemma when he asserted, “As employed by the individual Christian himself it is a term more appropriate to his aspiration than his professed attainment. But this by no means throws doubt upon the possibility of that attainment.”³ This fundamental divergence can be traced theologically through the Methodist tradition.

One firm line stresses growth in holiness. This picks up one strand in Wesley’s thought—the non-Moravian “catholic” strand with its roots in Counter-Reformation France and Eastern Orthodoxy.⁴ Richard Watson’s *Institutes*,⁵ though not original, fall into place here, as does W. B. Pope in the *Compendium*, though Scott Lidgett’s assertion that he was influenced by Newman needs careful exploration.⁶ Lidgett is next in line, picking up ideas from F. D. Maurice, featuring filial consciousness and the life of the spirit extending holiness to include political and social life, a matter to which we shall return.⁷

Neither Lidgett nor Pope ever claimed any kind of personal attainment of sanctification, nor did their modern successors like Newton Flew and

² J. C. Hindley, “The Philosophy of Enthusiasm” in *London Quarterly and Holborn Review*, 1957, pp. 99-109; pp. 199-210. R. D. Brandley, *Locke, Wesley and the Method of English Romanticism*, (Florida, 1984). *Letters* (Oxford ed.) ii, p. 229, 25 March, 1747. cf 31 July 1747, 245ff; 30 Dec. 1745, 175ff.

³ W. B. Pope, *A Higher Catechism of Theology*, (n.d.), p. 275.

⁴ A. Outler, *John Wesley*, (1964), pp. 3-33. R. G. Tuttle, *John Wesley, his life and Theology*, (1978), pp. 100, 146-9.

⁵ R. Watson, *Theological Institutes*, (1846), pp. 111, 251ff.

⁶ W. B. Pope, *A Compendium of Christian Theology* III (2nd ed. 1880), pp. 28-99. J. S. Lidgett, *My Guided Life*, (1936), pp. 70ff.

⁷ J. S. Lidgett, *The Spiritual Principle of Atonement*, (1897), pp. 180ff. *Ibid.*, *The Fatherhood of God*, (1902), pp. 267ff. *Ibid.*, *The Idea of God and Social Ideals*, (1938), pp. 81ff.

W. E. Sangster who, in various ways, exemplify the central "Wesleyan" tradition.⁸

But there is another clear line, which emerges with the controversies with Thomas Maxfield and George Bell and theologically with Adam Clarke—an ambiguous figure at many levels—and in the underrated William Arthur (1819-1901) who picks up and fuels thinking from the United States and whose *Tongue of Fire* (1856) is only one of his formative writings.⁹ It is intriguing that Arthur seeks what can only be called a "Baptism of the Spirit" without "tongues" and "miracles", possibly a reaction from Edward Irving. This tradition is then impinged upon by American styles of holiness revivalism—the undercurrents so well, if critically, analysed by John Kent and Richard Carwardine. Phoebe Palmer is typical of the experiential teaching about entire consecration. In Methodism this style is classically expressed by Thomas Cook in *New Testament Holiness* in 1902.¹⁰ Cook was the Principal of Cliff College. Unless I totally misunderstand him, Cook asserts that "regeneration is holiness begun". Entire sanctification is "the finishing of that work, it is the eradication of all roots of bitterness, the seed of sin's disease. We grasp by faith (he cites Agar Beet) the sin-consuming power which sweeps the heart clean at a stroke." Adam Clarke is brought on to assert "Believing now, we are pardoned now, believing now we are cleansed from all sin now." Cook's argument is not to be dismissed lightly, though I can find no mention of the means of grace or of group spirituality. "Instead of frittering away our time in contemplation, let us at once resolutely make up our minds that we will have the blessing now."

Cook's style is taken up by Samuel Chadwick¹¹ who while much more broad and catholic in his sympathies, appears to equate the Baptism of the Spirit with sanctification, a matter now disputed by Methodist charismatics. Can we ask which of these is the genuine tradition or are both the consequences of the deep ambiguities in Wesley's definition of sin and naïve interpretation of the experience of his converts? Here is a divergence in Methodist belief and practice which underlies much of its history, not least the tensions over worship, liturgy, the authority of the ordained ministry, the polarity of order and ardour which can split Methodist communities to this day as the second stream bursts to the surface again.

⁸ R. N. Flew, *The Idea of Perfection in Christian Theology*, (1934), pp. 313ff. *Ibid.*, "Methodism and the Catholic Tradition" in *Northern Catholicism*, ed. N. P. Williams and C. Harris (1933), pp. 515ff. W. E. Sangster, *The Path to Perfection*, (1943). *Ibid.*, *The Pure in Heart*, (1954).

⁹ John Kent, *Holding the Fort*, (1978), pp. 315ff. W. Arthur, *The Tongue of Fire*, (1856), abridged J. H. J. Barker (1956). W. Strawson, in *History of the Methodist Church in Great Britain*, Vol. III, pp. 182-232. G. S. Wakefield, *Methodist Devotion*, (1965), pp. 61ff. Adam Clarke, *Discourses* Vol. I., London, 2nd ed. 1834; Sermons VI, X, XI, XIII.

¹⁰ A. S. Wood, *On Fire for God. The Story of Thomas Cook*, (1983).

¹¹ S. Chadwick, *The Way to Pentecost*, (1932). *Ibid.*, *The Call to Christian Perfection*, (1936).

Our task is now to ask what happened in practice. I aim to show that while Wesley greatly stressed holiness, as have some of the most notable of his followers—Clarke, Watson, Arthur, Pope, Hellier, Lidgett, Chadwick, Flew and Rupp are a formidable succession—for most of his followers the flight of the eagle was not possible, theirs was to be the fluttering of the sparrow, whose holiness was at its best a desperate earnestness and at its worst a self-righteous respectability, yet nevertheless a style of Christian living which has had immeasurable influence from John Wesley to Margaret Thatcher. Men and women self-disciplined, self-respecting, self-educated often enough and sometimes self-absorbed, could not have saved England from revolution but could have been crucial in producing a “viable class society” to use H. J. Perkin’s phrase.¹²

The debate about Victorian values has opened up again in recent years. We shall need carefully to differentiate early, middle and late Victorianism but can preface the matter with G. M. Young’s gentle irony, “Nor could it escape the notice of a converted man whose calling brought him into frequent contact with the world, that the virtues of a Christian after the Evangelical model were easily interchangeable with the virtues of a successful merchant or a rising manufacturer and that a more than casual analogy could be established between grace and corruption and the respectable and the low. To be serious, to redeem the time, to abstain from gambling, to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy, to limit the gratification of the senses to the pleasures of a table lawfully earned and the embraces of a wife lawfully wedded are virtues for which the reward is not laid up in Heaven only”.¹³ But our tale is much more complex than that!

2. Holiness for the Artisans

Wesley clearly believed that Christian holiness as aspiration and experience was for all not merely for the spiritual virtuosi.

John Kent, in a trenchant analysis, points to Wesley’s dilemma.¹⁴ The eighteenth century saw some traditional models of holiness under attack—the Jesuits were, after all, under constant threat. Was the eremitical or monastic ideal played out? Wesley’s originality was an attempt to find an ascetic ideal for those who had to live in the world and normally marry and make money even if their standard of living was modest. At the same time “he wanted to democratize the mystical experience, to replace the Catholic idea of process, a grace extending to and perfecting nature in a handful of great saints, with a picture of God’s grace as dramatic action transforming the static misery of any sinner at any

¹² R. Colls, *The Pitmen of the Northern Coalfield. Work, Culture and Protest, 1790-1850*, (1987), pp. 118ff. H. J. Perkin, *The Origins of Modern English Society 1780-1880*, (1969) esp. ch. IX. E. Royle, *Modern Britain. A Social History 1750-1985*, (1987), pp. 93ff.

¹³ G. M. Young, *Victorian England—Portrait of an Age*, (1936), p. 2.

¹⁴ J. Kent, “Christian Theology in the 18th Century to 20th Century” in *A History of Christian Doctrine*, ed. H. Cunliffe-Jones and B. Drewery, (1978), pp. 473ff.

moment if only he (or she) begged the gift of holiness in utter trusting humility". How can one be holy in a market economy? This was a dilemma faced by both Wesley and the Catholic Redemptorists in Italy under Alfonso de Liguori (1696-1787).

Among Wesley's inspired improvisations was the use as "shock troops" of "extraordinary messengers", a youthful army (Methodism in England and Wales was a youthful movement) of preachers who were pledged to obedience to him and to an effective poverty—£12 a year after 1752 and, if possible, to a chastity which treated family life as marginal. Bishop Gore was right to bid his ordinands read *The Lives of the Early Methodist Preachers* for it is a salutary experience. Here are fascinating descriptions of classical mystical experience and spiritual agonies and ecstasies—stonemason John Nelson hears Wesley preach. He "felt his eyes fixed" on him, "his heart beat like the pendulum of a clock". These men and their wives are the heroes and heroines of early Methodism, if such are still permitted! ¹⁵

Kingsley Lloyd¹⁶ has detailed their life style and we learn as much about Methodism as a movement from below from their journals as we do from Wesley. I take Christopher Hopper as representative. Of farming stock, a typical boy who worried cats and stoned frogs, his conversion was classical. "God, angels, men, heaven, earth and the whole creation appeared to me in a new light . . . I found love to my God, to his yoke, to his cross, to his saints and to his friends and enemies." ¹⁷ He became class leader and preacher, prepared for rotten eggs, brickbats, stones and cudgels. Marriage followed after his fiancée was converted. In 1749 he became an itinerant, his money ran out. He was now one of the new Dominicans!

Hopper's theology was clear and simple. "I know whom I have believed. I know God is love, I know it by experience . . . I hate sin as by the grace of God I overcome it. I love holiness, the whole mind that was in Christ and I pursue it by all means . . . This I call Bible religion, genuine Christianity and this religion I call mine." Hopper chaired the Conference in Wesley's absence in 1780—"a poor helpless worm, Superintendent! President! Great words!" Hopper preached at Wesley's funeral. One wonders what he really thought of Wesley's insensitive but not untypical letter of condolence on the death of his wife in 1755. "Consider yourself as now more than ever married to Christ and his dear people, then even for this kindly-severe disposition you should praise him forever." ¹⁸ Wesley's compassion was curiously selective.

¹⁵ *Lives of the Early Methodist Preachers*, 3rd ed. (1866), Vol. I, pp. 13ff. (Nelson), p. 274 (Haime); Vol. IV, p. 286 (Rogers); Vol. V, p. 114 (Furz), p. 252 (Black); Vol. VI, p. 55 (Walton), p. 150 (Shadford). Cf. D. L. Morgan, *The Great Awakening in Wales*, (1988), p. 48.

¹⁶ A. K. Lloyd, *The Labourers' Hire*, 1987.

¹⁷ *E.M.P.*, Vol. I, pp. 179-239.

¹⁸ *E.M.P.*, Vol. I, p. 238; *Letters*, (Oxford ed.), ii, p. 587. Cf. *Letters*, (Standard ed.), viii, p. 253. *Thought on a Single Life*, Works XI, pp. 439ff. *A Thought upon Marriage*, *ibid.*, pp. 445-6.

The wives of these men are a fascinating group of women. I take Frances Pawson as my example. Born in York, she was a highly educated young woman of fashion. After a brief marriage to a Countess of Huntingdon's minister, Frances married John Pawson. She sold her best silk dress and then attired herself soberly in a Quakerly manner. Her Journal¹⁹ describes the grim Halifax manse "under the chapel" which she took over in 1791. Her spiritual dilemmas are of most interest. She claimed the experience of sanctification in January, 1785 but when bringing up an apparently mentally handicapped niece, she realized that aspiration was more important than attainment. This very perceptive Journal includes descriptions of a good deal of spiritual reading—she was fluent in French—and correspondence with other intelligent women like Elizabeth Ritchie, who became Mrs. Mortimer. Both ladies were somewhat distressed at the antics of sons of the younger revivalists of the day.

The sociology of the early preachers was first explored by Henry Bett and later Leslie Church.²⁰ The Welsh scene described by Derec Llwyd Morgan is similar. "With the exception of half a dozen of the earliest preachers who were soldiers, they were nearly all from that social grade which lies between the working class and the middle class—skilled artisans, small tradesmen, small farmers, clerks, schoolmasters, and the like—a class from which a great deal of what is best in English life has always come." If we are to find Methodist holiness in action, we might look carefully at these men and women. H. B. Workman called them Franciscan-like. I think Dominican might be a wiser comparison.²¹ They had (or many did!) an incredible loyalty to their "General", what the French call *disponibilité*, a willingness to go anywhere "not to those who want you but to those who want you most".

Clearly many could not fulfil the harsh conditions, not many would tolerate, like John Furz, finding his wife dead and naked in her bed, her nightgowns having been sold to pay for "necessaries"!²² Nor were all the wives as Quakerly or as gently perceptive as Frances Pawson. It was, of course, Jabez Bunting (and I suspect Mrs Bunting!) who realized that Mr. Wesley's preachers were not monks nor their wives nuns and pleaded for proper allowances and manses.²³ Holiness was not incompatible with normal home life but the vigorous style demanded both by Wesley and the conditions of a youthful institution continued in the missionary tradition.

¹⁹ Journal of Frances Pawson, MS in Methodist Archives. J. Sutcliffe, *Frances Pawson*, (1813). A. Bulmer, *Memoirs of Elizabeth Mortimer Mason*, (1859), p. 333.

²⁰ H. Bett, *The Early Methodist Preachers*, (1935), p. 33. L. F. Church, *More about the Early Methodist People*, (1949), pp. 1-56. T. R. Albin, "An Empirical Study of Early Methodist Spirituality" in R. E. Rickey (ed.), *Rethinking Methodist History*, (Nashville, 1985), pp. 275ff. D. L. Morgan, *op. cit.*, pp. 54, 111.

²¹ H. B. Workman in *New History of Methodism*, Vol. i, p. 43 etc.

²² *E.M.P.*, Vol. V, p. 132.

²³ Lloyd, *op. cit.*, pp. 15ff.

The sheer energy and *disponibilité* of some of the early missionaries is breathtaking. If the Fiji missionaries of the 1830s—David Cargill, John Hunt, James Calvert and their incredibly brave, if exploited, wives constantly pregnant, are taken as examples—we find an almost unearthly “optimism of grace” and the discipline of a Catholic missionary order²⁴. Margaret Smith was counselled by her mother not to marry the brilliant young Aberdonian graduate, Cargill. She did not heed her mother, bore his children and his depression. In the end “grandma Smith” had to bring them up as first mother in childbirth and father from an overdose of laudanum died in Fiji. If we are to explore adequately the doctrine and practice of entire sanctification, we must look at the writings of Hunt, and Calvert who when asked on furlough, “Were you afraid of being killed?” replied simply, “No, we died before we went”. Dietrich Bonhoeffer honoured such men and women when he bowed before the names on the board at Richard College in the 1930s. Professor Semmel was not wholly wrong—prodigious energies were invested in missions.²⁵

Primitive Methodist preachers like William Clowes walking, eating hips and haws from the bushes, praying for an hour in a corner of an artisan’s dwelling and then preaching with majesty whether his pulpit was a chapel or an upturned barrel are in the succession. Here indeed was religion not *for* the poor but *of* the poor.²⁶ Distaste for imperialism—which was not absent from our tradition later—or for Victorian respectability, ought not to diminish the achievements or the consecrated personalities of these men and women. The Primitive Methodist and Bible Christian women itinerants deserve a saga of their own but the secretary of our Society must, one day, give us her reflections on them.

The dichotomy found in Wesley’s doctrine of holiness was clearly present here. Many of his followers did not follow his Catholic style of devotion but were more in the revivalist tradition. Many of the people would place the experience of holiness above its long pursuit. For them the heroes were Lorenzo Dow, James Caughey, the formidable Phoebe Palmer, and the long line of transatlantic revivalists, the end of whose succession is not yet. The symbiosis of “high” and “low” Methodism, which proved unstable in 1828, 1835 and 1849 was not only about church government and the supposed dictatorship and centralization of Conference Wesleyanism, it was about styles of Christian evangelism and nurture. Maybe now the only remote survival of the *disponibilité* style is the fact that ordinations are at Conference and is not to a title or a “call” but to the service of the whole church—a unique feature of English Methodism.

²⁴ E.g. A. Birtwhistle, *In His Armour* (1954). M. Dixon, *The Inseparable Grief*, Margaret Cargill of Fiji, (1976). J. A. Newton, “Methodism and Obedience”, in *Epworth Review*, Sept. 1980, pp. 55-61. G. S. Wakefield, *Methodist Devotion*, (1966), p. 48.

²⁵ B. Semmel, *The Methodist Revolution*, (1974), pp. 141ff. I do not accept Semmel’s basic thesis, however.

²⁶ *Journals of William Clowes*, ed. S. Hatcher (1980). J. T. Wilkinson, *William Clowes*, (1951), pp. 85-6.

But let us pick up again Bett's sociological clue. The sociology of early Methodism is still in its infancy but we can risk some generalizations.²⁷ The greatest impact of those quasi-Dominican preachers and their flocks—was in the groups breaking away from “the dependency systems” of pre-industrial England.²⁸ Artisans—masons, shoemakers, tailors, saddlers, harness makers, shopkeepers, carpenters, croppers, stockings and the like appear in Methodism out of all proportion to their numbers in the population. These are those whom Christopher Hill, describing Puritanism, called “the industrious sort of people”.²⁹ If many of the needy poor were also drawn into the movement they tended to become industrious. They were folk who later became “labour aristocrats” rather than the totally unskilled or semi-skilled labourers or the workers newly skilled in factory techniques.

Angus Buchanan³⁰ has underlined the point made long ago by John Clapham and W. J. Warner that this social group produced the leaders of many local Methodist societies in the first generation and also later recruits for the early trade unions who battled for their standards against unskilled immigrants from the countryside or “Erin's root-fed hordes”. There is an extraordinary similarity between lists of leaders and trustees in Nidderdale, Halifax, Wolverhampton and even the prestigious Hinde Street, London in the next generation, which included among its twenty-six trustees, a “gentleman”, a Fleet Street bookseller, builders, two tailors, a bootmaker, a shoemaker, a cordwainer, a haberdasher, a cabinet maker, an ironmonger, a cheesemonger, a silver plater, a japanner, a chair maker, a turner and a medicine vendor.³¹ The rank and file could be somewhat lower in the social scale.

It is now a kind of historical orthodoxy that Methodism filled gaps in the parish system and that it created new institutions in the ‘no-man's land’ between old Dissent and the Establishment often sweeping all sorts of revival groups into its web.³² Calderdale, around Halifax, with its huge parish and inadequate chapelries is too classic a case to be entirely normative—York and Huddersfield are partial contrasts—but clearly in areas like this, Methodism attracted the artisan groups. Why? Here our concern for Scriptural Holiness is relevant.

²⁷ C. D. Field, “The Sociology of Methodism”, in *British Journal of Sociology*, July 1977, pp. 199-225. A. D. Gilbert, *Religion and Society in Industrial England*, (1976), pp. 59ff. J. D. Walsh, “Methodism and the Common People” in R. Samuel (ed.), *People's History and Socialist Theory*, (1981), pp. 354ff. J. D. Walsh, “Elie Halévy and the Birth of Methodism”, *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, Vol. 25, 1975, p. 13.

²⁸ H. J. Perkin, *op. cit.*, pp. 34ff, 196ff. E. Royle, *op. cit.*, pp. 325ff.

²⁹ C. Hill, *Society and Puritanism in Pre-Revolutionary England*, (1966), pp. 124ff.

³⁰ R. A. Buchanan, “Methodism and the Evangelical Revival—an Interpretation”, *Anglican-Methodist Relations*, ed. W. S. F. Pickering, (1961), p. 39.

³¹ P. S. Bagwell, *Outcast London, a Christian Response*, (1987), p. 87. J. Dawson, *Methodism at the Grassroots within the Great Haworth Round*, (1978), pp. 5-6. A. C. Pratt, *Black Country Methodism*, (1891), pp. 34ff. A. Ainley, *A History of Salem Chapel, Halifax, 1797-1897*, (1897), *passim*.

³² J. Kent, *The Unacceptable Face*, (1987), pp. 92ff. A sharply critical overview.

Wesley was concerned to communicate the gospel to “plain people”. Spirituality was to be worked out in small groups—what Ronald Knox called a “theocracy of the petit bourgeois decentralized in a thousand little towns all over England”.³³ Revival without the infrastructure of the classes or the tight structure of a parish with a guaranteed evangelical succession was a “mere rope of sand”.³⁴

The class meeting is quite crucial to evangelism as well as nurture.³⁵ Methodism gave those of the artisan groups who were attracted to it a sense of belonging and purpose. It provided a focus not so much for the despair of the workers as E. P. Thompson claimed but for artisans’ hopes and aspirations.³⁶ Methodism gave people a sense of status when society gave them little or nothing. It gave scope for office, opportunities to exercise talents, skill in speech and organization which was often later carried over into politics of a liberal or radical kind. The consequence was men and women of thrift, frugality, reliability and initiative who would move marginally—and occasionally much higher—up the social scale.³⁷ If poor, they might become “respectable poor”. The paradox is Wesley’s attitude to the inevitability of this secularization of evangelical Arminianism into religious respectability combined with responsibility.

Wesley was a Christian conservative with an uncondescending but paternalist concern and care for the poor combined with a clear belief that renewal came from “below” not from “above”.³⁸ *Laissez-faire* economics had hardly displaced mercantilism. In any case it is a liberal doctrine as is its legatee monetarism. Any statements by Wesley about poverty, wealth or charity need putting into chronological sequence, since in his active ministry the social changes were enormous. His sharp eye noticed that Birmingham doubled in population, a paradigm of the whole nation.³⁹ His famous “Gain, save, give” sermon dates from 1748 in its written form.⁴⁰ In 1753 (and again in 1773) he describes poverty, “I found some in their cells, others in their garrets, half starved with cold and hunger, added to weakness and pain. But I found not one of them unemployed who was able to crawl about the room. So wickedly, so devilishly false is that common objection “They

³³ R. A. Knox, *Enthusiasm*, (1950), pp. 448-9.

³⁴ C. H. Smyth, *Simeon and Church Order*, (1940).

³⁵ W. W. Dean, “The Methodist Class Meeting. The Significance of its Decline”, *Proceedings* xliii, pp. 41-8. H. D. Rack, “The Decline of the Class Meeting and the Problems of Membership in Nineteenth Century Wesleyanism”, *Proceedings*, xxxix, pp. 12-21. D. L. Watson, *The Early Methodist Class Meeting*, Nashville, 1985.

³⁶ cf. E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, (Penguin ed. 1968), pp. 385ff. A. D. Gilbert, *op. cit.*, p. 49ff. Royle, *op. cit.*, pp. 299ff.

³⁷ G. E. Milburn, “Piety, Profit and Paternalism. Methodists and Business in the N.E. of England 1700-1920”, *Proceedings*, xlv, p. 53.

³⁸ J. M. Turner, “John Wesley Theologian for the People. An Essay in Christian Conservatism”, *Journal of URC History Society*, May 1986, pp. 320ff.

³⁹ *Journal* viii, p. 52.

⁴⁰ Sermons, Standard Edition 2, pp. 309ff. Bicentennial ed., Vol. 2, pp. 263ff. cf. Vol 1, Sermon 28, Vol. 3, 80, 87, 88, 108, Vol. 4, 131. *Works*, XI, Scarcity of Provisions (1773); Words to a Drunkard, a Smuggler; Thoughts on Dress (1788). cf. Semmel, *op. cit.*, pp. 71-80, “Mediating Between Aquinas and Adam Smith”.

are poor because they are idle".⁴¹ He could later traipse for hours in the London slush, as an old man, collecting for the poor—a one-man Christian Aid campaign.⁴² He gave most of his wealth away, having a positive horror of capital accumulation or luxurious living, with almost an obsession about large hats and silk dresses, while dirtiness of person was equally condemned.

England was changing. Wesley urged his people to avoid ostentation. These strictures coincided with what we now see as a minor consumer boom, especially in linen and cotton.⁴³ He noted the growing affluence of the Methodists and criticised them, though he did not always enquire as to its cause or refuse their money for chapels or charity. Patterns of poverty were changing, too. For Wesley the "undeserving poor" get more support than the "undeserving rich" who are seen as wastrels. The poor gave Wesley a welcome and an audience, he saw them as receptive and humble with hidden talents which Methodism could sometimes awaken. In Wesley's hands, says John Walsh, the "denunciatory side of the Protestant work ethic is directed against the rich not the poor".⁴⁴

In a remarkable way this reasonable enthusiast was both a man of reason and yet in touch with the mixture of magic and Christianity which made for popular religion. It can rightly be claimed that "the popular evangelicalism" of these years . . . filled some of the gaps between official religion and folk religion . . . Methodism did not so much displace folk beliefs as translate them into a religious idiom".⁴⁵ Wesley sought to raise the consciousness of the poor. When they became prosperous, as some did if only marginally, he became apprehensive but his rigorous asceticism and his intermittent concern for corporate Christian community was for the few not the many. It might appeal to a Frances Pawson or an Elizabeth Ritchie but they were the "eagles". The "sparrows" translated the heights and depths of Christian holiness into what are often rather misleadingly called "Victorian values" but which are really the values of early nineteenth century artisans.⁴⁶ Lord Lawson summed it up and spoke as one who came to

⁴¹ *Journal* iv p. 52, vii p. 42.

⁴² *Letters* (Standard ed.), vi, pp. 206-7, cf. Whitefield Works v, p. 133, p. 272.

⁴³ N. McKendrick and J. H. Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society*, (1983).

⁴⁴ John Walsh, "John Wesley and the Poor", Summary in WHS West Mid., Vol. 3, No. 5, pp. 48-51.

⁴⁵ H. McLeod, *Religion and the People of Western Europe 1781-1970*, (1981), p. 39. cf. J. Rule, *The Labouring Miner in Cornwall, 1740-1870*, Warwick PhD., 1971. J. Rule, *The Labouring Classes in Early Industrial England, 1750-1850*, (1986), pp. 162ff. J. Rule, "Methodism, Popular Beliefs and Village Culture in Cornwall 1800-1850", in R. D. Storch (ed.), *Popular Culture and Custom in 19th Century England*, (1982), pp. 61-7.

⁴⁶ H. McLeod, "White Collar Values and the Role of Religion", in G. Crossick (ed.), *The Lower Middle Class in Britain 1870-1914*, (1977). G. Crossick, *An Artisan Elite in Victorian Society*, (1978). J. Foster, *Class Struggle and the Industrial Revolution*, (1974), esp. p. 214. M. Hill and B. S. Turner, "John Wesley and the Origin and Decline of Ascetic Devotion", in *Sociological Year Book of Religion in Britain*, Vol. 4, ed. M. Hill, (1971), pp. 102-120. M. Hill, "Methodism as a Religious Order" in *A Sociological Year Book of Religion in Britain*, Vol. 6, ed. M. Hill, (1973), pp. 91-9.

power from below. "Methodism took the 'nobodies' and made the most humble and hopeless 'somebody'. They set aside the things that are not good for a man, they had some little pride in their dress ; they made their homes to be things of beauty and aspired and worked to give their children a better life and opportunity than themselves".⁴⁷ But this is to project well into the later Victorian period. How did Methodism move from Wesley's concept of holiness to the age of chapels and mahogany ; of Rank's Hovis with Hartley's jam to spread on it ; Reckitt's blue to wash with ; Mackintosh's toffee to suck and Boots' pills to swallow ?

3. Victorian Values and the Tools of Change

What were the tools and methods of the post-Wesley Methodists ? How did they influence society and how did society influence them ? What were the means used by these homespun theologians of holiness and liberation, for I take it that to liberate the poor is to make them "unpoor". Some of these institutions were blessed by Wesley himself whose attempts at philanthropy, self-help and Christian community await closer attention.⁴⁸ We avoid many pitfalls if we realize that there are working class as well as middle class modes of self-help and self-esteem of a corporate and individual kind and we need to divide the Victorian period into three—the early period up to the end of the slump in 1848 ; the great middle years of the Age of Equipoise, what economists used to call the "age of perfect competition" and the period after 1875, of agricultural depression when again the "bitter cry" of the poor not only in "outcast London" was heard by Methodists like Collier, Hughes and Lidgett.⁴⁹

If the class meeting tended to become stereotyped in the nineteenth century and no longer a tool of evangelism as Wesley had seen it—a matter bewailed by a Congregationalist, R. W. Dale, an Anglican, E. R. Wickham and a Catholic, John Todd⁵⁰—we must not assume too easily its moribund nature. Newton Flew claimed that in 1928 it was estimated that half the London members of the Wesleyan church met regularly in "class". This is a high claim but add to it the innumerable "leaders" who visited their class members in sickness and in health and it is still a formidable element in church life and a carrier of the homelier aspects of doctrine. Was that astute observer, Dora Greenwell, pointing to something still of great importance when she said, "You see, what with class meetings and prayer meetings and preachings Wesleyans have so much

⁴⁷ J. Lawson, *A Man's Life*, (1932), pp. 111-3.

⁴⁸ J. D. Walsh, *Proc. R.H.S.*, *op. cit.*, p. 16. L. F. Church, *More about the Early Methodist People*, (1949), pp. 177ff.

⁴⁹ J. F. C. Harrison, *The Common People*, (1984), ch. 8. A. Briggs, *A Social History of England*, (1987), ch. 10. J. F. C. Harrison, *Early Victorian Britain 1832-1851*, (1979), ch. 5 "Early Victorian Values". G. Best, *Mid Victorian Britain 1851-1875*, (1972), ch. 3.

⁵⁰ R. W. Dale, *The Evangelical Revival*, (1880), pp. 31ff. E. R. Wickham, *Church and People in an Industrial City*, (1957), pp. 266ff. J. M. Todd, *John Wesley and the Catholic Church*, (1958), p. 10.

more *means* than Church people ! ” This was an exaggeration in some active parishes but she thought this was the secret of “the extraordinary hold of Methodism upon the English poor”.⁵¹

The whole life of the chapel, especially in later Victorian times, became a focus for Christian education. Partly as a reaction to changes in culture outside, partly as an attempt to combat it.⁵² Alan Wilkinson⁵³ has recently shown from his father’s papers the life of a Primitive Methodist chapel in the Black Country in the 1920s and 1930s—a cameo of what is now done by Extra-Mural Departments and bodies like the “University of the Third Age”. This was the end of a long tradition of self education. When the Methodists of Grantham built their new chapel, a local poetaster declaimed :

Magnificent indeed it is
And stately it doth stand . . .

It stands in Finkin Street
The centre of the town ;
The Philosophic Institute
Stands rather lower down.⁵⁴

Indeed it did, as Matthew Arnold no doubt had observed ! But the independence and frugality and quest for education of the Grantham chapel in the end produced the National Liberal, Alderman Roberts, the grocer whose daughter must rank as the most significant of all “lapsed Methodists”. “I was brought up to work jolly hard”, she writes. “We were taught to live within our income, that cleanliness is next to Godliness. We were taught self-respect. You were taught tremendous pride in your country. All these were Victorian values”.⁵⁵ I will allow Alan Wilkinson, as an Anglican brought up in a home which was the very epitome of cultured Dissent, to comment : “She has brought into contemporary political life, much to the amazement of many of her own party and of the general public, certain aspects of the dissenting heritage which seemed, only a few years ago, to have gone for ever. The fact that some of her sternest critics have been found among the members of the Free Churches is a measure of how far they have moved away from the spirit of Victorian and Edwardian nonconformity.”⁵⁶ Was *that* what happened to Wesley’s scriptural holiness ? Let us not forget that a portrait of Mr Gladstone stood on many a Methodist mantelpiece, that only he and John Wesley were habitually called “Mr.” and Gladstone was the father of Victorian tax policy !

⁵¹ D. Greenwell, *Two Friends*, (1952), pp. 89ff.

⁵² H. D. Rack, “Wesleyanism and the World in the late 19th Century”, *Proceedings*, xlii, pp. 35ff.

⁵³ A. Wilkinson, *Dissent or Conform?* (1986), pp. 3-82.

⁵⁴ Cited in L. F. Church, *Early Methodist People*, (1948), p. 78.

⁵⁵ Mrs. Margaret Hilda Thatcher, *Standard*, April 1983. cf. Speech to General Assembly of Church of Scotland 1988.

⁵⁶ A. Wilkinson, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

But the “myth” that Victorian values were what politicians of “right” and “left” think now needs careful reassessment. It also requires a surgeon’s skill to distinguish between the various “sub-cultures” of Evangelicalism⁵⁷ and Nonconformity. We cannot, like Sydney Smith, ignore what he called “the finer shades and nicer discriminations of lunacy”.⁵⁸

If Methodism was a religion of the “labour aristocracy” and the petite bourgeoisie we need to look at interactions between Methodism and society in that stratum of the class structure. The debate about living standards in the Industrial Revolution rumbles on⁵⁹—if a generalization can be dared, the incomes of skilled artisans increased, except for those in domestic industries—croppers, weavers, stockingers and the like—while most remained static until the general prosperity of the 1850’s when all began to benefit. Working people developed tools of both protest and revolt, self-help and respectability.

The first could include food riots and Luddism, when croppers smashed the shearing frames around Halifax and Huddersfield at the end of the Napoleonic wars and the beginning of the “revolt of the Field” in the Captain Swing riots of 1830. There were few, if any, Methodist Luddites though some had Methodist parentage.⁶⁰ The “Tolpuddle Martyrs” of 1834⁶¹ were a different case as several of them were Wesleyans and there was much borrowing of Methodist techniques by the Chartists and some personal involvement. The leadership of Primitive Methodists in the early mining and agricultural unions is clear also.⁶² It is with self-help that I am concerned. It is more plebeian and much earlier than Samuel Smiles, who wrote his famous book in Leeds in 1859.⁶³ The unions were largely limited to skilled craftsmen. But there was also the great congeries of Friendly Societies—the typical self-help institutions of early and mid-Victorianism. Here we find the inevitable saddlers and harness makers, handloom weavers and stockingers, skilled men from the extractive industries also. The New Poor Law of 1834 with its principle of “less eligibility” (greater unpleasantness) was a measure both preventing starvation for the poor and appearing to punish poverty,⁶⁴ yet a pointer to a rudimentary welfarism. Out of social discontent before the Social Service State of Bismark, Lloyd George and Beveridge, come not only unions and Chartism but also such Friendly Societies as the Independent Order of Oddfellows, and

⁵⁷ I. Bradley, *The Call to Seriousness*, (1976). D. Rosman, *Evangelicals and Culture*, (1982).

⁵⁸ Sydney Smith, *Essays*, Vol. II, p. 301.

⁵⁹ Royle, *op. cit.*, 165ff.

⁶⁰ Recent Calderdale research by Mr. J. A. Hargreaves.

⁶¹ J. Marlow, *The Tolpuddle Martyrs*, (1971).

⁶² E. Royle and J. Walvin, *English Radicals and Reformers 1760-1848*, (Harvester 1982). N. Scotland, *Methodism and the Revolt of the Field*, (1981). R. Colls, *op. cit.* R. F. Wearmouth’s writings are still relevant, if romantic!

⁶³ A. Briggs, *Victorian People*, (1965), ch. 5. S. Smiles, *Self Help*, Introd. by Sir Keith Joseph (1986 ed.).

⁶⁴ O. Macdonagh, *Early Victorian Government 1830-1870*, (1977), Himmelfarb, *op. cit.*, pp. 147ff.

the Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes, which at least assured money from "the box" in illness and a funeral with a ham tea! Here (together with the early Co-ops, Mutual Improvement Societies and Building Societies) was an artisan's "Masonry" complete with the strange rituals beloved of protestants when starved of them in chapel (the Tolpuddle Martyrs were technically charged with administering illegal oaths). From an estimated membership of 925,000 in 1815, they grew to four million in 1872 and later included 80% of the seven million male industrial workers. Methodists were clearly involved here⁶⁵—on a smallish scale the Local Preachers' Mutual Aid Association was a way in which Methodists sought to help their own poor. An annuity of five to eight shillings a week could keep a man out of the workhouse when the average wage was a pound a week. Here is a prime example of Victorian corporate self-help at a time when there was nothing else. "This is the context of chapel, a model of self-control expressed collectively offering a life of obedience, discipline, duty and noseyness to individuals. In a world where you had only your feet to stand on, there could be no better recipe for stepping heavenwards".⁶⁶ This is a world of values more akin to Wesley than to Marx.

Two basic styles of self-respect and improvement are found in the Sunday School and the Temperance Movement. It is too glib to see the Sunday School as a mere means of bourgeois social control.⁶⁷ It was much more a means of self-improvement dominated, certainly in West Yorkshire, by labour aristocrats rather than mill owners. The numbers of children and adults involved were extraordinary—Mount Zion, Ogden and Heptonstall are early Calderdale examples each with hundreds of children involved at any one time. Clearly the Victorian Sunday School was to give a veneer of Protestant religion to millions of working people. It is easy to caricature the treats and bunfights, the sermons, the Whit walks, the white dresses on the Anniversary platform, the feasts of Victorian non-conformity countering what were thought less wholesome community activities. The Sunday Schools provided not only much impetus to elementary education, which working class parents wanted, but also much of what is now called "invisible religion", the vague "folk religion" of the English working class so well depicted by Richard Hoggart in the *Uses of Literacy*.⁶⁸ Sunday Schools, too, could be subject to gusts of radicalism and revivalism—hence Jabez Bunting's dislike of some of their activities. They were independent of hierarchies and parsons. Even now at Southowram, Halifax, the "Sunday School" of the Methodist Church is not on the Model Deed but has independent trustees—all good "chapel" members. If "class meetings" reached

⁶⁵ P. Marsh (ed.), *The Conscience of the Victorian State*, (1979).

⁶⁶ C. Binfield, *So Down to Prayers*, (1977), pp. 11-12.

⁶⁷ T. W. Laqueur, *Religion and Respectability. Sunday Schools and Working Class Culture 1780-1850*, (Yale, 1976). cf. M. Dick, "The Myth of the Working Class Sunday School", in *Hist. of Education* Vol. 9, 1980. P. B. Cliff, *The Rise and Development of the Sunday School Movement in England 1780-1980*, (1986).

⁶⁸ R. Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy*, (Penguin 1958). T. Luckman, *The Invisible Religion*, (1967).

their thousands, Sunday Schools reached their millions. Here was a bridge between folk culture and domestic holiness. Its débacle has not yet been analysed—we might be in for a salutary surprise.

The Temperance Movement was another instrument of Victorian values—who will sneer now when alcohol is again a plague as it was in Victorian times? The work of Brian Harrison and L. Billington has recently opened up this area.⁶⁹ Temperance again is not a bourgeois prejudice but had more radical and plebeian roots. Francis Place and William Cobbett, alike, saw drunkenness as lack of self-respect. Robert Colls, writing about the Durham pitmen, comments that conversions resulted in the convert transforming his self-image and therefore his habits. John Wilson, Primitive Methodist miners' leader, saw his conversion leading to life seen as stewardship which would not include drinking and gambling. The miner mocked about miracles retorting, "Well, if Jesus could turn beer into clothes for my children and furniture for my house, he could easily turn water into wine", was not joking. The other miner who said, "I am an autonomous individual not a machine for hewing coal", was plugging into the tradition of Methodist spirituality more than he knew.

"Drink" became a consistent symbol of all that prevented not only respectability but responsibility. Joseph Arch, the founder of the Agricultural Workers' Union, would echo the miners by saying, "The day is not distant when you will no longer be called joskins and clodhoppers but acknowledged as free citizens of the land".⁷⁰

"The pledge" could become a secular substitute for evangelical conversion, a badge of self-esteem and respectability. Temperance had two effects. One was to widen the cleavage between "respectable" and "unrespectable" poor, chapel and pub. On the main road from Wolverhampton to Dudley is the *Fighting Cocks Inn*, with a Methodist chapel opposite, representing two rival working class sub-cultures, though the pub supporters might well have sent their children to Sunday School. I would hazard the guess that teetotalism, which the Primitive Methodists and M.N.C. supported early on and the Wesleyans for long suspected because of radical associations, was the last nail in the coffin of any Methodist attempt to win the "unrespectable" poor. That was left to the Roman Catholics, though Cardinal Manning advocated and practised total abstinence.

After 1875 temperance was a normal part of the Methodist "mind-set". Is it too harsh to say that the cult of temperance in late Victorian non-conformity symbolized the "transition from a religion of faith to a religion of works"? To its late nineteenth century advocates temperance meant prosperous and happy homes. It meant new priorities, better

⁶⁹ B. Harrison, *Drink and the Victorians 1815-1872*, (1971). A. E. Dingle, *The Campaign for Prohibition in Victorian England*, (1980).

⁷⁰ H. McLeod, *op. cit.*, pp. 41-3. L. Billington, "Popular Religion and Social Reform. Teetotalism and Revivalism", *Journal of Religious History*, Vol. X, pp. 1978-9.

furniture, books. It meant healthy and wholesome sport like cricket and soccer (shades of Aston Villa !) rather than gambling, contests of brute force and fighting with dogs and bulls. It was attractive to women, too. A drunkard became the Methodist equivalent of the idle aristocrat, the public house his palace. The tradition of teetotalism had hardened into self-righteousness by the days of Hugh Price Hughes, who saw the "liquor trade as the greatest of all the existing hindrances to the progress of the Gospel in England".⁷¹

But temperance could also lead to a more positive view of the state—legislation was needed. If T. H. Green⁷² was the philosopher behind radical liberalism, it needs to be remembered that his aim of "removing hindrances to freedom" could be seen to include not only legislation against the liquor trade and its evil works but in the end the beginning of the Welfare State. Hughes said of Green's lectures that they were the "philosophical expression of the grand old Methodist doctrine of entire sanctification."⁷³ Green would not, I think, have been flattered but Hughes was pushing the old Wesleyan doctrine out into wider waters, a point taken up by Scott Lidgett not only in the whole concept of the Bermondsey Settlement but on the L.C.C. as leader of the Progressives.⁷⁴

This was the religious frontier of the labour aristocracy, the world of the chapel, the smell of which Robert Browning so disliked, the lack of "sweetness and light" which Matthew Arnold so patronizingly and scornfully despised. Most Methodists were of this class but not all. Go to Wolverhampton's Darlington Street chapel in 1840.⁷⁵ Under the clock—the top seats—would sit the ironmaster, J. B. Thorneycroft and his friends who were to dominate the town after the incorporation of the borough in 1848. Thorneycrofts, Hartleys, Fowlers—names to conjure with in West Midlands Wesleyanism. Fowler⁷⁶ became the first Methodist peer, the first Methodist Cabinet Minister in days when vainglory would boast of such ! In Halifax, Salem M.N.C. chapel which had the pick of the small Connexion's preachers and scholars, was called the "Mare's Nest" because it supplied so many mayors and councillors, many of them self-made entrepreneurs and mill-owners, none perhaps as mighty as the Congregationalist Crossleys or the lapsed Methodist Akroyds, who shot up rival spires to outdo one another in ostentatious godliness but the *Halifax Guardian*, was in M.N.C. patronage.⁷⁷ Sir Isaac Holden was not as mighty as Sir Titus Salt but was a force enough in the West Riding of his day—preferring revival to

⁷¹ H. P. Hughes, *Social Christianity*, (1890), p. 168.

⁷² T. H. Green, *The Principles of Political Obligation*, (1924), p. 209.

⁷³ D. P. Hughes, *Life of H. P. Hughes*, (1904), p. 134. E. R. Norman, *The Victorian Christian Socialists*, (1987), ch. 8, "Hugh Price Hughes".

⁷⁴ R. E. Davies (ed.), *John Scott Lidgett*, (1957), ch. 2 ; ch. 5.

⁷⁵ A. Pratt, *op. cit.*, 59ff. F. Avery, *The Book of the Century*, (1948), pp. 33f.

⁷⁶ E. H. Fowler, *Life of H. H. Fowler*, (1912). cf. E. P. Hennock, *Fit and Proper Persons*, Arnold (1973).

⁷⁷ J. A. Hargreaves, "Political Attitudes and Activities of Methodists in the Parish of Halifax, 1830-1848", Huddersfield Polytechnic MA 1985.

liturgy !⁷⁸ These were provincial Methodists of enterprise and homely paternalism who influenced chapel and municipality alike.

The Mackintosh family in Halifax are typical—selling toffee in the market place, combining business with homespun piety, growing to the enterprise which produced *Quality Street*. Characteristically it was Lord Mackintosh of Halifax who was in charge of National Savings during the second world war—“lend to defend the right to be free”, was the catchphrase I can remember ! Some Methodists never forgave the introduction of Premium Bonds ! Holiness was a serious matter for the Mackintoshes for whom teaching in Sunday School was as important as expanding business.⁷⁹ Ferens of Hull, Rank and Hartley, whose influence on Primitive Methodist culture and ministerial education was quite extraordinary, make a formidable trio. No doubt some would see business as really not a proper sphere for the Christian—Matthew Arnold was not alone in appearing to want to lift his cultural skirts at it—Wiener’s⁸⁰ recent book is illuminating here—but these men took their Methodism into their business. Methodism was a provincial faith.

Was it all suffocating to culture ? “We don’t now live in the days of the Barons, thank God”, said Brougham in 1880, “we live in the days of Leeds, of Bradford, of Halifax and of Huddersfield”. Halifax—all muck and mills and money and Methodism. “The ballast of chapeldom,” Clyde Binfield calls it, “all pride, poverty and pianos and the stuff of self-reliance”⁸¹ But it was also the world of church music of a high quality—Halifax and Huddersfield Choral Societies, Black Dyke Mills Band, *Messiah* and *Elijah*. Robert Moore was not far off the mark when he characterized a Methodist of the Deerness Valley in County Durham as, “a highly disciplined, self-controlled person, willing to train his mind in critical thinking and his voice in harmony singing” and the chapels as non-drinking, non-gambling social centres providing “almost the only legitimate source of entertainment for the women”.⁸² From these chapels there poured into the new professions and bureaucracies of a buoyant economy thousands of men and women of integrity and earnestness. “I never took a bribe”, said my father after fifty years in local government, “though I was offered many”. And the Primary school teacher ? —an influence on English life of immense importance, many of them Methodist women out of all proportion to the size of Methodism. The dedication of the great caring professions owes much to the lesser, unsung Florence Nightingales of Methodism.

There was another world, too ! That of Samuel Drew of Cornwall—the Methodist Plato, they called him—worthy of a London chair of philosophy ; James Smetham, the artist and those fascinating Wesleyan

⁷⁸ E. Jennings, “Sir Isaac Holden”, *Proceedings*, xliii, pp. 117ff., 150ff.

⁷⁹ H. V. Mackintosh, *By Faith and Work*, (1966).

⁸⁰ M. J. Wiener, *English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit 1850-1980*, (1981).

⁸¹ Binfield, *op. cit.*, p. 54 ; p. 91.

⁸² R. Moore, *Pit Men Preachers and Politics*, (1974), p. 116.

"cousinhoods" of the late Victorian era—Osborns, Gregorys, Derrys, Moultons, Macdonalds. The daughter of Hannah and George B. Macdonald⁸³ married a Baldwin, producing Stanley, another bore Rudyard Kipling, a third married Burne-Jones, a fourth Poynter. Fred, a brother, was at Handsworth as tutor and then at the Mission House. There was something hard to define but quite distinctive about the Moultons⁸⁴—the missionary factor comes into it clearly as well as the consecrated scholarship and consecrated personality which, after all, is the stuff of holiness, not some "blessing" hawked about by a revivalist. The Moultons, nevertheless, fully supported Moody and were influenced by him as were Dale, Söderblom and George Adam Smith!

Scott Lidgett sought to differentiate the Methodist "sub-culture" from that of Anglican evangelicalism, the world of Keswick, and saw the universal Fatherhood of God as the key to a Methodism which was not so narrowly pietistic or so obsessed with pre-millennarianism. "The doctrines in which we were instructed were the doctrines of the Catholic Reformed Church with their Wesleyan emphases, interpretation, and application . . . Though restrictions of conduct and amusements that may be called Puritan, were practised and inculcated, no hard and fast distinction was made between the sacred and the secular, the spiritual and the social".⁸⁵

Only a Lidgett—and before him T. B. Stephenson, with the Children's Home and the Deaconess Order—could turn aside R. W. Dale's astute and fundamental criticisms of Wesley's holiness doctrine.⁸⁶ Dale preached in 1879 when the Wesleyan Conference was at Birmingham. "The class meeting is perhaps the most striking and original of all the fruits of the Revival but in ethics it has a great weakness. Voluntary service, yes, moral endeavour, yes, but the doctrine of Christian Perfection remains where Wesley left it—it has not entered the world of politics". Lidgett was to enter that world, as, in a quite different and more oratorical and ambiguous way did Hugh Price Hughes, who brought together the pursuit of holiness—and in its more experiential form, for he received a "second conversion"—and a fairly radical Liberalism prepared to use legislation for moral purposes. If he saw T. H. Green as a modern philosophical version of Wesley, he was in the tradition also of "Christ the transformer of culture" which stemmed from F. D. Maurice. It was that tradition which typified Lidgett who dominated Wesleyanism after Hughes' death. Hughes did not envisage any fundamental critique of the basis and structure of society and on the ethical superiority of the British Empire was a man of his age. Yet there is a continuity in the politics of evangelical pietism, voluntary giving and concern for the poor. The Methodist response to the *Bitter Cry of Outcast*

⁸³ I. Taylor, *Victorian Sisters*, (1987).

⁸⁴ W. F. Moulton, *William F. Moulton*, (1899). W. F. Moulton, *James Hope Moulton*, (1919). W. F. Moulton, *James Hope Moulton*, (1963).

⁸⁵ J. S. Lidgett, *My Guided Life*, (1936), pp. 21ff.

⁸⁶ Dale, *op. cit.*, pp. 31ff.

London, to the Booth and Rowntree surveys on poverty which fuelled the Forward Movement was, with all its faults, an attempt to spread scriptural holiness and is in a clear succession from John Wesley.⁸⁷

We cannot here delineate the Methodism of the era of the “strange” death of Liberal England and the consequent era of communal consensus, the causes of which are worth exploring. Two or three streams of continuity suggest themselves. Methodism, for a time, had a purchase on University and College students out of all proportion to its size as a sub-culture, a sociological product of all I have attempted to describe. In “Meth Socs” in the 1930-60 period, the old tools were sharpened—“groups”, a revival of the Wesley hymnody, a mild renewal of preaching linked with the trenchant neo-orthodoxy of biblical theology. For many, Methodism seemed to be a church which would have a considerable contribution to the “coming great church”.

Methodism, too, still had a purchase on a million or more young people in Sunday School and Youth Club—M.A.Y.C. was one of the more creative enterprises. Somehow the churches helped many youngsters—albeit mainly of a lower middle/middle class origin—to find Christianity worth pursuing. The fragmentation since parallels the fragmentation of many other institutions of leisure in a secular society. Some of these have declined much more dramatically than Methodism—the church is never a totally isolated sub-culture.⁸⁸ The influence, too, of “lapsed Methodists” has a fascination all of its own.

I end with two portraits of outstanding Methodists, born in West Yorkshire in 1899 and 1900, a girl and a boy, one in Halifax, the other in Oxenhope. The one was the product of bourgeois Methodism, the other of the labour aristocracy. The girl was Dorothy Hinckman Farrar. Although frail in health, she was able to go to University. Her faith faltered but she had her “Aldersgate” on a hill at Siddal. She wrote her two doctrinal theses on religion and psychology and taught generations of Deaconesses to pray. At the heart of her life was the pursuit of holy living—and at the end, holy dying. She kept up her fellowship group to the end in Halifax. Small groups, after all, are the heart of the Methodist way. The boy was cradled in mill-village Methodism, went to Keighley Grammar School and Peterhouse, Cambridge, to read history. He became successively Fellow of his college, Professor and then Regius Professor of Modern History, Master of his college and Vice Chancellor of the University, when his early studies of the *Peace Tactics of Napoleon* and the *Statecraft of Machiavelli* stood him in good stead! When Sir Herbert Butterfield died—for it was he—Owen Chadwick said, “When he thought a historian to be pretentious whether by writing history before he read the sources or by

⁸⁷ D. W. Bebbington, *The Nonconformist Conscience. Chapel and Politics 1870-1914*, (1982). G. I. T. Machin, *Politics and the Churches in Great Britain 1869 to 1921*, (1987), pp. 221ff. B. S. Turner and M. Hill, “Methodism and the Pietist Definition of Politics” in *A Sociological Yearbook of Religion in Britain* 8, ed. M. Hill, (1975), pp. 159-77.

⁸⁸ S. Yeo, *Religion and Voluntary Organisations in Crisis*, (1976).

turning it into journalism or by thinking history warranted him in being a prophet or by allowing pride to block understanding of the past or by pretending to know more than he did or by pontificating or cheapening or just being unpleasant, Butterfield could be devastating. It was partly an intellectual integrity so absolute that at moments it frightened". That was his Methodism from "the land of moorland villages where the Methodist chapel was the source of society and civilization". He retained the simplicity, a touch at times of the austerity and always the loyalties of his childhood⁸⁹—and this is my comment, he met his "class" to the end. Whatever happened to Wesley's Scriptural Holiness? Only lives like that can answer my question.

JOHN MUNSEY TURNER.

[The Rev. J. M. Turner M.A. is Superintendent of the Halifax circuit]

⁸⁹ Owen Chadwick, *Memorial Address*, Great St. Mary's, Cambridge, Oct. 1979.

Correction

The omission of two lines of type on page 94 of the February issue produced a conflation of the careers of James Hope Moulton and his father. After "... Rev. James Hope Moulton" (line 41) the text should read: "MA, DLitt, DD, DCL (d.1917), one of the most noted New Testament scholars of his day. He was a son of Rev. W. F. Moulton, MA, DD, (d. 1898), founder of the Leys School . . ."

The General Secretary has a limited supply of a recent publication by our New Zealand WHS: *John Wesley's South Seas Heritage*, papers delivered at the recent WMHS South Pacific Conference. Copies are £4.00 each plus postage.

Methodism & Wesley Studies by Barrie W. Tabraham, a course available from Distance Education and Resources in the Division of Ministries, £7.50 including p&p, or £15.00 including correspondence course.

This course comes in two spiral-bound booklets, the second of which contains a useful collection of documents, selected to illustrate the course notes. The ten units cover the rise of Methodism, Wesley's theology, the years of division and reunion, and Methodism since 1932. The notes are available for use apart from the correspondence course. The material is clear and stimulating in presentation and has a great deal to offer to intelligent but poorly informed Methodists (lay and ministerial), not least in this anniversary year. It deserves more positive and effective promotion than the Division seems able or willing to give it.

JOHN A. VICKERS

THE ANNUAL MEETING AND LECTURE

It was very appropriate that the 1988 Annual Meeting should be held at Wesley's Chapel in this year of the 250th anniversary of the Wesleys' conversion experiences. Once again members of the Society were delighted to be the guests of Mrs. Joyce Swift to tea. Dr. J. A. Vickers thanked her and the friends at Wesley's Chapel, led by Mr. Cyril Skinner, who had organised the meal.

Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting, presided over by the Rev. A. Raymond George, received the minutes of the last meeting; remembered in prayer those who had died during the past year and re-elected the Executive Committee. In the course of the reports the Registrar urged each member to try to recruit another member as the most effective way of keeping down the subscriptions; the Treasurer, in presenting the accounts, (see page 186) endorsed this; Mr. A. A. Taberer asked the meeting to accept the Executive Committee's recommendation that the prices of all the publications should be increased by 50% and the back numbers of the *Proceedings* should cost £2.00 per issue; the Rev. William Leary reported on the Conference exhibition, while the Rev. T. S. A-Macquiban gave details of the successful conference held at York during Easter week and looked ahead to future ones. In written reports the Editor emphasised the need for more nineteenth and twentieth century articles and Mr. R. F. S. Thorne stated that all the Local Branches were thriving. The difficult situation at the Society's Library was outlined by the President, the Librarian and the Assistant Librarian and it was agreed that negotiations should be continued to see if more satisfactory arrangements could be made. All the members of the Executive Committee were thanked for their work. Suggestions were received for future lectures.

Annual Lecture

The Annual Lecture, chaired by the Rev. Dr. Gordon S. Wakefield, M.A., M.Litt., was delivered by the Rev. John Munsey Turner, M.A., B.D. who took as his subject: "Victorian Values: or whatever happened to Wesley's scriptural holiness?" The lecture is printed in this issue of the *Proceedings* where those who were not privileged to be present will be able to read it, while those who were will be able to savour the remarkable scholarship of Mr. Turner once more.

E DOROTHY GRAHAM.



WESLEYANA AND METHODIST POTTERY

A Short Guide by Roger Lee

- ★ The first ever general guide to this fascinating by-product of the rise of Methodism.
 - ★ Quality printing of 46 pages with 150 items detailed or noted.
 - ★ 80 photographic illustrations.
 - ★ Includes coverage of John Wesley, other personalities and Primitive Methodism.
- ★ A mine of information for collectors and all interested in this subject.
- ★ Available from some Methodist booksellers or post free from the Rev Roger Lee, B.A., 27 Rosemont Road, Acton, London W3 9LU.
- ★ Price £4.50 (U.S.A. price \$10.00 in U.S.\$ bills, includes airmail postage.)
- Please allow 10 days for delivery.

WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY — FINANCIAL STATEMENTS, 1987

Income and Expenditure Account for the Year ended 31st December 1987

INCOME.		£
Subscriptions (Note 1)	2,914	
Donations	213	
Irish Branch	183	
Sales of <i>Proceedings</i> (back numbers)	40	
„ other Publications, etc. ...	357	
Library—Tickets, Donations, Sales	34	
Grant from Southlands College ...	500	
Annual Lecture Collection (½-share)	28	
Advertisements	83	
Bank Interest	262	
War Stock Dividend	8	
		<u>4,622</u>
EXPENDITURE.		£
<i>Proceedings</i> and distribution	3,055	
Other Printing	345	
Library	1,292	
Lecturer's Honorarium, etc.	42	
World Methodist Historical Soc.	36	
Administration Expenses	409	
Insurances	25	
Advertising	37	
		<u>5,241</u>
Excess of Expenditure over Income		<u>£619</u>

Balance Sheet as at 31st December 1987

ASSETS EMPLOYED (Note 2)		£
Investments—		
3½% War Stock (at cost) (Note 3)	225	
Current Assets—		
Sundry Debtors	470	
Income Tax recoverable	180	
National Savings Bank...	1,138	
Trustee Savings Bank	2,041	
Midland Bank (Deposit A/c)	234	
„ (Current A/c)	445	
Cash in hand—Treasurer	3	
„ Asst. Librarian	125	
		<u>4,636</u>
Current Liabilities—		
Sundry Creditors	777	
Subscriber's paid in advance	2,424	
		<u>3,201</u>
Net Current Assets	1,435	
		<u>£1,660</u>
REPRESENTED BY		
Balance at 1st January 1987	2,279	
Deduct Excess of Expenditure over Income for the year	619	
(Signed) RALPH WILKINSON,		<u>£1,660</u>
<i>Honorary Treasurer.</i>		

Notes to the Accounts

1—SUBSCRIPTIONS		£	£
Unexpired Subscriptions at 1st January 1987 (estimated)—			
Ordinary Members	1,750		
Life Members	500		
			<u>2,250</u>
Received during year*	3,007		
Income Tax recoverable	81		
			<u>5,338</u>
Less Unexpired Subscriptions at 31st Dec. (estimated)—			
Ordinary Members	1,974		
Life Members	450		
			<u>2,424</u>
			<u>£2,914</u>

*No account has been taken of subscriptions in arrears at 31st December 1987, whether or not recovered since, but any previous arrears received during the year are included in the above figures.

2—ASSETS EMPLOYED
The Library and stocks of Publications have not been valued, and are not included in these financial statements.

3—WAR STOCK
Market value at Balance Sheet date ... £77

AUDITOR'S REPORT—I have audited the financial statements in accordance with approved auditing standards. The amount of subscriptions paid in advance by members includes estimates based upon a reasonable interpretation of the available data. No account has been taken of possible arrears of subscriptions. Other assets and liabilities have been independently verified.

Subject to the matters mentioned above, in my opinion the financial statements give a true and fair view on an historical cost basis of the state of affairs of the Society as at 31st December 1987, and of its deficit for the year then ended.

Barron & Barron,
Bathurst House, 86, Micklegate, York, 14th June 1988.

(Signed) W. B. TAYLOR,
Chartered Accountant.

BOOK NOTICES

John and Charles Wesley: A Bibliography by Betty M. Jarboe (American Theological Library Association and Scarecrow Press, Metuchen and London, 1987, pp. xv, 404, \$39.50)

This volume, the twenty-second in the American Theological Library Association's Bibliography Series, lists 4,755 works about John, Charles, Samuel (senior) and Susanna Wesley produced between 1788 and 1986. The vast majority (97%) are written in English, and a wide variety of literary formats and types is represented including books, essays, articles, theses, poetry, drama, fiction, juvenile works and audio-visual materials. The compiler, who is on the staff of Indiana University Library, has gathered these references from four separate sources: inspection of the subject catalogues of twenty-one American and British libraries, a manual search of thirty indexing and abstracting services, an on-line search of seven databases, and consultation of various specialized bibliographies. Just under a fifth of the citations are accompanied by brief notes designed to elucidate their provenance, scope or line of argument, and a further 4% which could not be verified against standard bibliographical tools have a library location recorded.

As someone who has had first-hand experience of the problems in undertaking such a project, this reviewer cannot but applaud Mrs. Jarboe's initiative and offer congratulations on her achievement, particularly when it is realized that, seemingly, she came to the research without any real prior knowledge of the topic or of its eighteenth-century background. Sadly, this approval has to be qualified somewhat both in respect of the content and structure of the volume.

So far as the former is concerned, Mrs Jarboe freely admits that "no claim for complete coverage is made", and there are numerous omissions, especially as regards British publications (American ones, by contrast, are fairly comprehensively surveyed). This fact may not be immediately obvious to readers of these *Proceedings* (from which no fewer than 462 articles are listed) nor especially evident for works published before the early 1960s (mainly as a result of Mrs Jarboe's heavy dependence upon Sandra Judson's unpublished and undeservedly neglected inventory of "Biographical and Descriptive Works on the Rev John Wesley", University of London Diploma in Librarianship, 1963); however, it is very noticeable for the last quarter of a century and more than a little curious that the annual "Bibliography of Methodist Historical Literature" has not been used to fill the gaps after 1974. It is not just isolated titles which have been overlooked but entire serial runs such as *Epworth Review* or the journals of the local branches of the Wesley Historical Society. These omissions can hardly be justified on grounds of economy when so much space is allocated to items which are trivial, outdated or, occasionally, wholly irrelevant (the prize here must surely go to number 1055, about death-watch beetle in the roof of Wesley's Chapel) and which will only be of interest to the avid historiographer.

The arrangement of the book is also rather frustrating since works appear in alphabetical order of author within ten broad categories of material. The sections devoted to English-language books and essays (1,889 references) and articles (2,215) are particularly unwieldy. Obviously, an appropriate "topical index" would quickly have circumvented this problem, but, whilst the compiler has created such an index, she unhappily has to confess that it is "not as precise as hoped for, and many entries could not be assigned a precise heading". Some of the entry terms, especially the keyword-based ones, are just too broad to be of value in such a specialized area; one may cite, in this respect, 'Eighteenth

century' (20 references), "Methodism" (86), "Methodism—history" (91), "Wesley, John—monographs about" (149) and "Wesley, John—sketches of" (314). Others are split between two different locations, quite unnecessarily so in view of the fact that all the items are supposed to deal with the Wesleys; thus readers seeking information about ordination will have to look both under "ordination" (for ordinations by John Wesley) and "Wesley, John—ordination of" (for references to his own).

In short, this is a volume with an uncertain readership, insufficiently comprehensive to fully satisfy the expert and too long and confusingly ordered to meet the needs of a novice enquirer. Given more rigorous—and, one suspects, less hurried—planning and editorial procedures, Mrs Jarboe's enthusiasm and undoubted professional expertise might so easily have produced a classic of bibliographical scholarship.

CLIVE D. FIELD.

To be and to do : Exploring Wesley's thought on ethical behaviour by L. D. Hulley (University of South Africa, Pretoria, 1988, pp. xii+82, £6.45)

This study, said to be of Wesley's ethics, has considerable chapters on such familiar topics as anthropology, sanctification, law and gospel, so that ethical theories are not reached till the final chapter. In the account of faith and works attention might well be paid to the *Minutes* of 1770.

To give a brief account of Wesley's doctrine of Christian perfection is no simple matter. Admittedly there are some ambiguities in it and it is heavily qualified. In my opinion, however, this author pitches it too low. Like many others he concentrates on Wesley's definition of "outward sin" as "an actual voluntary transgression of the law"; the cessation of this is supposed by Wesley to be the privilege of every Christian. Sin continues in believers in the form of evil thoughts, tempers and so on. It is the removal of these which constitutes perfection, as for example in the passage quoted on page 45 "ye shall be wholly delivered ... from all remains of the carnal mind". This may indeed be lost by a lack of vigilance, but that does not justify the author's comment on the same page that "the propensity to pride remains even in the lives of the entirely sanctified". Whether Wesley for all his qualifications pitched it too highly is of course another matter.

When we at last arrive at the less familiar ground of Wesley's ethical theories, the author contends that Wesley was concerned both with being and doing, character and behaviour. Obviously they are closely related; indeed I wonder whether the distinction between them is helpful, in this discussion: "conscience" and "intention", for example, have much to do with conduct, but here they are treated under "be-ing" as the author puts it.

The book's chief merit is the author's determination to follow the primary sources, Wesley's own writings, and almost every statement is accompanied by a precise reference. There is indeed a list of secondary sources, but there are few references to them. But the author does not bring a great deal of fresh insight or clarity to the exposition of the sources which he quotes.

A. RAYMOND GEORGE

Wesleyana and Methodist Pottery, by Roger Lee, (published by the author, 1988, pp. 46, price £4.50)

When the youthful sculptor and modeller, Enoch Wood, persuaded the seventy-eight year old John Wesley to give him five "sittings" in 1781 from which he produced the first of many fine busts, he could not have known the train of events he was setting in motion. The Enoch Wood pottery "Wesley" was immediately popular and remains so to this day. Following Wesley's death many other potters saw the commercial value of "Wesley", resulting in John Wesley becoming the most represented figure in English pottery. Other Methodists were also produced in ceramics, being, in order of popularity, Adam Clarke, John Fletcher, and, later, Hugh Bourne and William Clowes. Surprisingly there is not one pottery representation that can confidently be said to be that of Charles Wesley.

Now the story of Wesleyana pottery is told by Roger Lee in his very readable paperback, complete with 79 black and white photographs of some of the most representative pieces. Even Methodists will be surprised at how large is this field of Methodist ceramics. Probably as much as 80% of all this field of this Wesleyana was produced anonymously, i.e. carrying no definite marks as to date and factory. Mr Lee has had to suggest the most likely identification in many instances, and while other collectors may not agree with all his suggestions, on the whole the book is a very good guide. More careful proof-reading would have taken care of a few mistakes. John Wesley was one of nineteen children (not seventeen, p.6), also the phrase, "few of whom survived" (p.6) is misleading as ten of the nineteen survived infancy. John was saved from the rectory fire in 1709 (not 1710, p.7); Herculanium (p.9) should be Herculaneum; John Wesley died March 2nd., 1791, not March 9th (p.12, but this may have been sculptor's error!). Francis Asbury was born in 1745 (not 1744, p.6); the 14 preachers referred to on p.21 should be 15, and "Adam Clarke ESA" (p.30) should be "Adam Clarke FSA". Altogether readable, informative, interesting and very appropriate for 1988.

HERBERT MCGONIGLE

Religion in the Lives of English Women, 1760-1930 ed. Gail Malmgreen, (Croom Helm, 1986 pp.295, £25.00)

This a book of essays covering such varied topics as Women Hymn Writers; denominational biographies; the female diaconate; the beginnings of church feminism; social concerns and Queen Victoria and Religion. Each essay is well referenced and documented. Of the eleven essays four have appeared elsewhere.

In her introduction the editor emphasises the lack of sound research into the roles, influence and significance of women in religion and religious life in the period under discussion and feels that many social historians have not dealt adequately with the religious history of women. She states that the aim of the book is to bring "specialists in women's studies and religious studies together in a joint enterprise, seeking to open up a new vista across disciplinary lines ... the essays ... For the most part concentrate not on the interior world of belief, but on the public expression of religion, and open religion as an engine of social action".

Margaret Maison in her essay on Women Hymn Writers 1760-1835 covers the

work of around two dozen authoresses from different denominations and comments on their output and style, and the content and value of their work. She notes the extensive circulation they enjoyed and the influence they received from and had upon writers such as Isaac Watts and the Wesleys. Perhaps of Methodist interest is her implication that there were few Methodist women hymn writers because they could engage in even more masculine roles like preaching. The essay on Elizabeth Heyrick gives a fascinating picture of a little known Quakeress, who while enthusiastic for social reform yet reflected a paternalistic attitude. The third contribution by D. Colin Dews on Ann Carr will already be familiar to most of our readers from his *Mow Cop to Peake*. The writer who deals with Queen Victoria and Religion surveys her varying religious attitudes and arrives at the conclusion that she embodies a series of paradoxes and was "In truth a most unusual Victorian". Thirteen illustrations are included in the essay on The Early Victorian Artists' Portrayal of Nuns and Novices. Catherine Prelinger discusses the role of deaconesses in the Anglican Church and concludes with a brief sentence about the ordination of women and this theme is further explored by Brian Heeny in the Beginnings of Church Feminism. Temperance and work with unmarried mothers are dealt with in two more papers and throw interesting sidelights on the social concerns and attitudes of the periods they cover. Lastly we have an essay on the changing roles of Jewish women in Religious Life.

We have here an anthology covering a wide spectrum of religious interests, priced at £25.00 it would seem to be more designed for a place on a library shelf for reference than in a personal collection.

E. DOROTHY GRAHAM

Defending and Declaring the Faith : Some Scottish Examples, 1860-1920 by A. P. F. Sell (Paternoster Press, 1987, pp. 256, £9.95).

Dr Alan Sell, formerly of Geneva and now resident in Calgary, is fascinated by historical theology which he interprets skilfully for students who but for his very readable style and anecdotal revelations of the foibles of the theologians themselves would find the whole subject decidedly offputting. Hitherto Dr Sell has marshalled his arguments around opposing polarities : Calvinist versus Arminian (*The Great Debate* [Henry Walter, 1982]), Liberal versus Conservative (*Theology in Turmoil* [Baker Book House, 1986]). Later nineteenth century Scots theology will not however yield itself to this sort of categorisation : the nuances and shifts of emphasis are, as the author recognises, far too subtle.

There are stern, unbending Calvinists here, like the doughty John Kennedy of Dingwall, still revered among today's "Reformed Christians". There is a destructive liberalism too. Yet of particular significance for Methodists is the trend, within the parameters of Evangelicalism, away from theories of particular to those of general redemption. James Denney is a key figure here, and Dr Sell writes very sympathetically of this theologian whose name is still revered by the older generation of ministers. Had he included scholars like D. M. McIntyre or John Macpherson among the nine theologians he deals with here, this trend would have been even more conspicuous. Naturally English Congregationalists, largely through the writing of the émigré Scotsman A. M. Fairbairn, and Methodists too, responded eagerly to what was happening north of the border : there was much theological cross-fertilisation. Dr Sell feels this himself, and has

recently in his paper "An Englishman, a Scotsman and an Irishman" (Scottish Journal of Theology, 38 [1985]) provided a very neat introduction to the thought of W. B. Pope, the man who equipped Wesleyanism with a theological compendium and who would, had our Victorian forebears relished such things, have given them a full-blown *dogmatik.* Perhaps Dr Sell could furnish us with the fuller treatment of this significant theologian which he clearly deserves.

IAN SELLERS.

A heart set free : the life of Charles Wesley by Arnold Dallimore. (Evangelical Press, 1988, pp. 272, £5.95)

It is good to have a biography of Charles Wesley to mark the bicentenary of his death, but the fact that it is the only one currently in print and comes from the evangelical stable is a sad commentary on the state of Methodist publishing in this year of grace.

The special pleading which is so marked a feature of Dallimore's two large volumes on George Whitefield and is justified as a corrective to the long tradition of Wesleyan bias, is less appropriate in a popular life of Charles Wesley and sometimes leads the author into unfair or questionable judgments. There are also inaccuracies, irrelevant passages and touches of naivety. Despite these, it is on the whole a readable account. But the inadequate treatment of "Charles Wesley the Poet" is not redeemed by the extravagant claim that he occupies "the first position among the writers of English religious verse"! (Or is the author implying that, compared with Milton, Donne, Herbert, Hopkins *et al*, Wesley is a mere "versifier"?)

JOHN A. VICKERS.

Preachers All ed D. C. Dews (Yorkshire Branch of the W.H.S., 1987, pp. 46, £3.00)

The Yorkshire Branch celebrates its Silver Jubilee in style with this important collection of essays. A. Raymond George describes the work of Headingley College from 1946 to 1967 largely from the standpoint of its successive Principals and tutors. Alan Rose on the other hand recalls the M.N.C. College at Ranmoor, Sheffield (1864-1917) from the perspective of its students, scanty though their written memories are. The result is a delightfully evocative portrait of an institution which was curiously marginal to the life of the denomination. Kenneth Garlick adds a complete list of ministers trained at Ranmoor with dates of ordination and death. Next J. Munsey Turner, very much the historian of tensions within Methodism, breaks new ground as he tentatively explores the story of the sometimes uneasy relationships between itinerant and local preachers and the role of the LPMAA in denominational life. Finally Oliver Beckerlegge recalls the Dodgsons of Elland, dyers and prominent Free Methodists, successful entrepreneurs and tireless evangelists who may well have introduced the colour khaki into British army uniforms. Here are five important papers treating themes of both national and regional significance.

IAN SELLERS.

Prophetic Sons and Daughters: Popular Religion and Social Change in England 1790-1850 by Deborah M. Valenze, Princeton University Press, 1985, pp. xvi, 308, no price stated.

First I must admit that I have read this work in thesis form only. It is essentially a sociological appraisal of early "sectarian" Methodism and in particular of women's preaching.

Valenze looks first at the place, preaching and influence of women in rural religion. She surveys in particular three areas of the country—Derbyshire, the South-West (which turns out to be the Berkshire/Wiltshire area—the early Primitive Methodist Brinkworth District) and Devon. Social change, the changing economic conditions and the drift from the land to the town; the pressures caused by the differences found in this movement from an agrarian to an urban society all come under her scrutiny and she maintains that religion was a stabilizing factor in all this upheaval. Next the writer considers the subject of women and the industrial town and perhaps rather predictably chooses Leeds and Ann Carr for her study. One cannot help but feel that she has relied heavily on the work and advice of D. Colin Dews who has done much valuable work in this part of the country. The section dealing with the subject of "Independent Methodism and migration in the Industrial North-West" concentrates chiefly on the areas associated with the rise of Independent Methodism. Lastly the writer turns her attention to the fishing village of Filey where she considers popular religion especially as portrayed by the Primitive Methodists.

This work is an interesting survey of sectarian Methodism, but personally I found it unsatisfying in that some of her statements and observations seem to be rather sweeping and difficult to reconcile with my own findings. Great emphasis, perhaps in view of some lack of supporting evidence, is placed on "cottage evangelism" and home-based religion. However, that is possibly more a matter of interpretation than inaccuracy—I am not a sociologist and doubtless look at things a little differently.

E. DOROTHY GRAHAM.

Women of Mr Wesley's Methodism by Earl Kent Brown (The Edward Mellen Press, New York, 1983, pp. 261, \$39.95)

This volume from the Edward Mellen Press is presented in their usual format, produced from the author's camera-ready manuscript.

In his study of the place of women in Mr Wesley's Methodism Brown delineates the area in which they worked, the power they were given, and the scope and influence they exercised within the life of the connexion.

He notes how women were encouraged to proclaim their faith in a variety of ways—in classes, bands, schools, by sick visiting and even "preaching"; how Wesley and other prominent male leaders valued their advice. Although these female activities were a novelty, Wesley, at least, was enough of a realist to see their worth in the saving of souls and to permit the women a larger sphere of influence than was normal in the religious life of the time.

Brown shows how many of the women formed "networks", which provided them with spiritual and moral support and thus helped the Methodist movement

to spread and develop. The penultimate chapter contains brief biographies of six women who were associated with Wesley, notably Lady Maxwell, Mary Bosanquet, Elizabeth Ritchie, The Countess of Huntingdon and Hester Ann Rogers. These six were chosen because there is extant primary source material for them. Finally the writer attempts a group portrait of 110 women, freely acknowledging that it is an almost impossible task given the varying material available for these women. However, it is a gallant effort and an illuminating one.

The Appendix is particularly useful giving as it does information about the women on whom Brown has based his study.

The passing reference to the curtailing of the women's role and influence after Wesley's death is tantalising, but understandable as being outside the compass of this book.

While I might question Earl Kent Brown's interpretation on one or two points, for example, that Mr Boyce "regularly listed his wife (Sarah Mallet) in the preaching plan" (p.93), this a very readable and useful volume and especially to be commended to those interested in the part played by women in Mr Wesley's Methodism.

E. DOROTHY GRAHAM.

NOTES AND QUERIES

1411. METHODISTS AND SOCIETY

The residential conference of the Society supported by the WMHS took this as its theme for the three days spent in York after Easter. Over 40 participants heard the following keynote speakers contribute papers which provoked lively discussion.

Geoffrey Milburn gave a Northeast case study of John Wesley's evangelical strategy, tracing the development of Methodism in the 18th century in Northumberland and Durham. John Hargreaves explored the links between Methodism and Luddism in Yorkshire 1812-13, at a time of divergence between radical political elements and loyalist pro-Government feeling in the wake of disturbances. The contribution of Methodists in 19th century society was highlighted by Clyde Binfield in his *Pride of Pooocks*, a study of one prominent Wesleyan family, and Oliver Beckerlegge in his examination of the Social witness of United Methodists. Developments in the latter part of the century were exemplified in Paul Glass' paper on Hugh Price Hughes and the West London Mission. A prominent figure of the 20th century served to remind us of the unique contribution of Methodists to ecumenism and education as John Lenton shared some aspects of the life of Dr. Harold Roberts. An introductory lecture on Religion in York and a walk-about around the city led by Edward Royle helped put the Conference in its historical and contemporary perspective. An Archives seminar and Bookshelf session reminded participants of past records and current scholarship.

A summary report of the proceedings of the Conference is available from the Conferences Secretary.

TIM MACQUIBAN.

1412. NEW PLAQUE ON CHARLES WESLEY'S HOUSE

On May 24th 1988 a fresh plaque on the front of 4 Charles Street, Bristol, was unveiled by the Rt. Hon. Viscount Tonyandy, P. C., and dedicated by the Rt. Rev. Oliver S. Tomkins, formerly Bishop of Bristol. The Rev. Dr. Kenneth G. Greet, the Rev. Leslie M. Wollen and the Rev. Ian T. White also took part in the ceremony. The hymn "O thou who camest from above", by Charles Wesley, was sung to the tune *Hereford*, written by Samuel Sebastian Wesley, son of Samuel. The old plaque, which commemorated only Charles, is being placed on another wall of the house. The new plaque is as follows:

CHARLES WESLEY
HYMNWRITER
LIVED HERE 1749-1771

SAMUEL WESLEY
ORGANIST AND COMPOSER
SON OF CHARLES
BORN HERE 1766

A. RAYMOND GEORGE

1413. "THE LONDON QUARTERLY REVIEW"

I have been looking through nineteenth century issues of the *London Quarterly Review*, for articles by William Arthur and references to him. Unfortunately the names of authors of articles were not published, and I am having to rely on hunches and hints. Can anyone put me on firmer ground? Does a printed or manuscript list of authors exist? I shall be grateful for help, sent to me at 21 Old Cavehill Road, Belfast BT15 5GT, Northern Ireland.

NORMAN W. TAGGART

1414. METHODIST BELLS

An example which does not so far seem to have been noted is the chapel at Leavening in the Malton circuit, North Yorkshire. This has a bell turret and bell. The chapel dates from 1825.

JOHN A. VICKERS

1415. JOHN WESLEY AND SHERINGHAM

Wesley's Journal (Standard ed.), Vol. 6, p. 458, has in the Diary footnote for Wednesday October 29th, 1783:

"... 8 diligence, Sher(ingham), Lynn, dinner; 4.30 . . ."

The assumption is that Wesley travelled by public diligence from Norwich to King's Lynn, via Sheringham, leaving at 8 a. m. and arriving in time to have had his dinner before 4.30 p. m. I want to query the "Sher(ingham)" entry.

1. Nobody goes to King's Lynn from Norwich via Sheringham unless they have an engagement in Sheringham. It adds 20 miles to a journey which is 45 miles direct. It meant going, in Wesley's day, to an insignificant village, well away from major post roads. How fast did a diligence travel? To go direct would mean about 6 to 6½ m.p.h. To go via Sheringham would mean about 9 m.p.h.—both figures including stops. I certainly doubt if any public vehicle went to Sheringham, certainly not the diligence named for its speed.

2. Could the editor have misread Wesley's handwriting? Did Wesley in fact write "Der" not "Sher"? If so it would mean Dereham, a staging post on the direct route from Norwich to Lynn. I am forced to the conclusion that he did, which means Wesley lived and died without ever visiting north east Norfolk!

I would welcome responses.

REV. ELIZABETH J. BELLAMY.

1416. A FORGOTTEN MEMORIAL

On a recent visit to Wesley's Chapel, London, I wandered round the neighbouring area of Tabernacle Street and on a nearby building my eye lighted on a memorial stone which read,

NEAR THIS SPOT
STOOD THE TABERNACLE BUILT BY
THE REV. GEORGE WHITEFIELD IN 1753
115 YEARS AFTERWARD IT WAS TAKEN DOWN
AND IN ITS PLACE
THIS BUILDING WAS ERECTED
THIS STONE WAS LAID
BY J. REMINGTON MILLS, ESQ. M.P.
ON THE 11TH OF SEPTEMBER 1868
REV. W. GRIGSBY, PASTOR
CHAS. G. SEARLE AND SON, ARCHITECTS
DOVE BROS., BUILDERS.

It is rather dilapidated, and partly obscured by undergrowth behind iron railings. I am greatly indebted to Mr. Cyril Skinner of Wesley's Chapel Museum in helping me to decipher some of the crumbling letters. Mr. Skinner suggests that the name of the architect could be SEARLE, as a certain G. C. Searle was the architect of the Camden Road Baptist Church (1853-54) and of the New Court Congregational Church, Tollington Park, Islington (1871).

Whitefield's first Tabernacle was a wooden structure, built in 1741 and intended to be a temporary home for the Society, but in 1753 it was replaced by a brick edifice to which this stone refers. See *Proceedings* v. p. 101 and Dallimore, *George Whitefield* ii. p. 49. However, I can find no references to, or picture of, this stone in any biography of Whitefield that I have to hand.

One can only hope that if the present building, on the corner of Tabernacle Street and Leonard Street is ever demolished, someone will ensure that this memorial stone does not perish with it.

JOHN C. BOWMER

1417. EPWORTH OLD RECTORY LIBRARY

The Library at the Old Rectory at Epworth was greatly enlarged in 1988 by the addition of the library of the late Gwyron Wesley Aston. This makes the library one of the best for Methodist History in Lincolnshire. It is open to bona fide students during the months of March to October and in normal opening times of the Rectory. Application for access to be made to The Warden, The Old Rectory, Epworth, Doncaster DN9 1HX.

WILLIAM LEARY

LOCAL HISTORIES

Building Together : The Story of Peckham Methodist Church (1985) by John D. Beasley (18pp) : copies from the author at 6 Everthorpe Road, London, SE15 4DA, no price stated.

The Methodist Church in Mossley 1788-1988 by E. A. Rose (29pp) : copies from Rev. Michael Hughes, 56 Hanover Street, Mossley, Lancashire, OL5 0HL, price £1.20 post free.

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The Chapel in Black Tom : A History of Park Road Methodist Church, Bedford, 1887-1987 by R. A. Luscombe (30pp).

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Wesley Memorial Church, Epworth : The Years Between 1888 and 1988 by Polly Marshall (60pp) : copies, price £1.50 plus postage, from The Old Rectory, Epworth, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN9 1HB.

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