

# Theology on the Web.org.uk

*Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible*

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

**PayPal**

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

---

A table of contents for the *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_whs\\_01.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_whs_01.php)

# Proceedings

OF THE

## Wesley Historical Society

*Editor: E. ALAN ROSE, B.A.*

---

Volume 49

February 1993

---

### SUSANNA WESLEY AND HER EDITORS

(continued from Vol xlviii p.209)

#### VI

**B**UT what of the fate of the correspondence and journal entries which did survive and were used to edify generations of Methodists? Of the early editors, John Whitehead and Adam Clarke stayed most reliably close to John's own selection criteria, both adding journal records and letters from Susanna in their reports of the Wesley family. Naturally they were selective because their choice of material was intended to illuminate the life of John rather than Susanna, but Clarke, at least, considered her near sainthood and in his final evaluative eulogy based on her documents concludes: 'If it were not unusual to apply such an epithet to a woman, I would not hesitate to say she was a very able divine!' However, by the end of the nineteenth century, two major writers, Tyerman (1870) and Stevenson (1876) had added their own distortions to the received text, and added a few selections of their own from letters which had surfaced in the fifty intervening years. In effect they created a rather different woman by,

a) *making her seem more determined and less reflective.* This is achieved by subtle changes of style, removal of some qualifying adjectives and changing a word here and there.

b) *making her seem more certain and firm in her faith than she really was, but cutting out passages on her self-doubt.* They also removed many personal and family references and, in at least one instance, made John appear more emotionally supportive of his mother than she felt him to be.

c) *making her narrower in her religious views, by deleting or altering her references to non-protestant authors.* They also allowed her some more support for the revival in its early stages than she actually gave.

A typical example of Tyerman's editing can be seen in Appendix A.<sup>26</sup> He says he is using two unpublished letters - presumably the holographs which are not now extant. I have collated these with Baker's copy text - the transcript from John's Letter Book - deleting the words omitted by Tyerman. To give him credit, Tyerman does say her words are *from a letter*, but the visual effect of his habit of putting address, date, and opening and closing salutations to a letter which has half of its text excised is particularly misleading. We expect also that he will omit 'Christian casuistry' and 'some family affairs of painful interest' for he tells us he is doing so.<sup>27</sup> But he ignores many other things too. He uses the letters to illustrate her financial difficulties, yet seems to miss out half his evidence. Practical details of the hardships of life in Lincolnshire are removed. 'We have dismal weather [she says] and can neither get hay, corn nor firing, which makes us apprehensive of great want.'<sup>28</sup> A more John-like omission is her comment that she hopes God will preserve her from the smallpox 'because your father can't yet spare the money to bury me.' (149: 14). John himself had written the last few words in cipher in his Letter Book.

Preserving the reputation of John might account for cutting out her mild reproof that he does not write frequently enough, 'Since I decline apace and tis more trouble for me to write one than for you to write ten times' (148:7-9). But he also removes her comment of pleasure when she *does* receive John's letter (149:3-6) while allowing her complaint to stand in the first letter (148:6-7). As all Susanna's words are well chosen, it is particularly infuriating when an editor cuts them out. Here, Tyerman changes her opening phrase 'I am somewhat uneasy', to 'I am uneasy' - a change of degree perhaps, but a significant one. In the same letter, by removing the qualifier 'strangely' from the phrase 'We are strangely amused with your Uncle's coming' (148:17), he alters the meaning entirely.

George Stevenson too gives the impression he is quoting whole letters when he has cut portions out, and while his range of letters is wider than Tyerman's he adds copying errors to his sins of censorship. A sample letter of October 25 1732<sup>29</sup> is collated against

<sup>26</sup> Tyerman, *Life of Wesley*, I, pp. 26-27.

<sup>27</sup> Tyerman, *Life of Wesley*, I, p.34.

<sup>28</sup> Baker, *Letters*, I, p.148:12-14.

Baker's transcript from the holograph.<sup>30</sup> Copying errors in just this one letter include 'diverse temptations' instead of 'divers' (i.e. many), 'fit the mean' instead of 'hit the mean'. There is also an omission in the sentence, 'I was glad you got safe to Oxford' for she was 'very glad'. Her word 'forced' is changed to the more refined, 'obliged', but why does he change 'don't know' to 'can't tell'? That may be more polite too. The ten missing lines before the penultimate paragraph contain some of her most humorous motherly advice:

I must tell ye, Mr. John Wesley, Fellow of Lincoln, and Mr. Charles Wesley, Student of Christ Church, that ye are two scrubby travellers, and sink your characters strangely by eating nothing on the road, <about six words clipped from the letter> to save charges. I wonder ye are not ashamed of yourselves. Surely if ye will but give yourselves leave to think a little, ye will return to a better mind.<sup>31</sup>

Of greater significance is a doctrinal alteration. It is clear that Susanna is open to truth from whatever source it comes. In a letter to John of February 23 1724/5, parts of which were unpublished till 1980, she warmly approves of three actions of the Pope. But this section was deleted by Clarke and subsequent editors, as was her comment in the same letter that 'I think this season of Lent the most proper for your preparation for Orders.'<sup>32</sup> Later editors are even more partisan. Stevenson allows her to recommend for reading the Scottish Episcopalian, Henry Scougal, who wrote *The Life of God in the Soul of Man* (1677), and, with a reservation, one of her childhood guides, the Puritan, Richard Baxter, but he deletes from her sentence the Roman Catholic translator, Juan de Castaniza, and changes the grammar accordingly.<sup>33</sup> Luke Tyerman goes one stage further and changes her mild particularised criticism to general condemnation. Susanna is discussing with John the ideas of Thomas à Kempis whose *Imitation of Christ* he had just discovered. Concerned about its extreme unworldliness, he questions her. In part of her reply she says:

<sup>29</sup> Stevenson, *Memorials*, pp. 206-07.

<sup>30</sup> Baker, *Letters*, I, pp. 344-46.

<sup>31</sup> Baker, *Letters*, I, pp. 346:3-7.

<sup>32</sup> Baker, *Letters*, I, pp. 159-60.

<sup>33</sup> Newton points out that the book she recommended is a translation from the Italian of the *Pugna Spiritualis* of Lorenzo Scupoli. (Newton, *Susanna*, p.136.) Earlier in the same letter, Castaniza's name is left in, but she is being critical of him at that point.

<sup>34</sup> Baker, *Letters*, pp. 166:5-7.

I take Kempis to have been an honest, weak man, that had more zeal than knowledge, by his condemning all mirth and pleasure as sinful or useless in opposition to so many direct and plain texts of Scripture.<sup>34</sup>

When the good Methodist, Luke Tyerman copies this in 1870, it reads:

I take Kempis to have been an honest, weak man, that had more zeal than knowledge.

That is it. Quite a handy way of dealing with the [nasty] Catholics!

Letters to Charles have been edited also, but none has yet appeared in a critical edition. One extant holograph letter concerns doctrine and is dated December 6, 1738 - the conversion year [Appendix B]. It was first edited by Whitehead in 1793, repeated in the same form by Clarke (1823), not recorded in Tyerman, but deleted further by Stevenson in 1876. This is of some importance because the writers are using her letter as evidence that she materially agreed with Charles on the question of justification by faith. As recently as 1968 John Newton is still using Clarke's incomplete version in his discussion of her faith.<sup>35</sup> The burden of the letter is Susanna's continuing disquiet about the excesses of the sudden conversion of her sons. In an earlier letter she had asked Charles about his 'notion of justifying faith.' He had replied, and this is her response. As every editor seems pleased to point out she opens the argument with a statement of agreement:

My notion of justifying faith is the same with you, for that trusting in Jesus Christ or the promises made in him is that special act of faith to which our justification or acceptance is so frequently ascribed in the gospel. This faith is certainly the gift of God wrought in the mind of man by his Holy Spirit.

So far so good, but that is all. They omit her qualifying statement, that the 'gospel covenant is conditional.' The last part of this deletion removes a masterpiece of her Presbyterian upbringing:

... it is incident to many (I hope) good Christians often to doubt the sincerity of their faith. They make not the least question of the power or will of God incarnate to save them, but they keep a jealous eye upon themselves and are sometimes afraid that they do not all which is required of them. Therefore they do in the most literal sense 'work out their salvation with fear and trembling.' And truly I am inclined to think

<sup>35</sup> Newton, *Susanna*, pp. 171-2.

that such humble, fearing Christians are in a safer though not so comfortable a state than those which think themselves sure of salvation.

The editors jump to the sentence: 'I do not judge it necessary for us to know the precise time of our conversion.' This again without her extensive qualifying comments. For here she quotes the French Reformed theologian Pierre Du Moulin (1601-1684)<sup>36</sup> in support of her theory that people should look at themselves less, and at God more. The only criticism of Charles' conversion that is *not* cut out of the letter, is of his personal approach to it, not its doctrinal soundness, beginning with the line, 'I think you are fallen into an odd way of thinking ...' followed by her reassurances of God's grace. Mothers are allowed to be concerned for such things.

A year later with some of her doctrinal hesitations settled, and as a seventy-year-old widow living with the community of 'methodists' at the Foundery in London, it is to Charles that she writes for emotional support. Samuel had died four years earlier, and as a clergyman's penniless widow, she relied on the hospitality of her children. Her eldest son Samuel had died only a few weeks previously and while moving to the Foundery brought her ostensibly nearer John, in practice she was most of the time without him, and in a rather mixed company of people. The letter to Charles of December 27 1739 that was published in the same form by Whitehead, Clarke and Stevenson gives a plaintive cry - so unlike her old self - that she needs either Charles or John for 'in the most literal sense I have become a little child.' It repeats her need for conversation, the goodness of God and her own lack of faith and love. Tyerman, as usual, cuts out her comments on lack of faith, for had she not said earlier that she felt a sense of personal conversion?

The most interesting deletion of this letter however, is in the first paragraph. Careful editing has removed her criticism that John was unwilling or unable to give her emotional support, and that she had a 'disagreeable companion' who caused her distress.

What has come down to us sounds complete enough:

You cannot more desire to see me than I do to see you, indeed your brother (whom henceforward I shall call *Son Wesley* since my dear Sam is gone home) hath just been with me and much revived my spirits. Indeed I have often found that he never speaks in my hearing without my receiving some spiritual benefit, but his visits are seldom and short for which I never blame him because I know he is well employed and blessed be God hath great success in his ministry.

<sup>36</sup> The son of the well-known French theologian of the same name.

which says much for the virtues of John. What she really wrote was:

... your brother ... hath done more, I think, than could be expected to supply temporal wants; but tho' they were not small, and relief was welcome, yet that was not the principal thing which I desired. I am in a state of great Temptation and want to talk with you about many things. I need your Direction and Instruction how to act in the present situation, particularly in relation to my *very disagreeable Companion*, who does not scruple to declare that she hates spiritual people and looks upon them as the worst people in the world.

If she hath talked at Mr Priest's and among other true Christians as to me, no wonder that they shew'd a dislike of her company. Those with whom I lodge are an excellent people, and would be glad to converse with me on spiritual subjects, but they are discouraged from coming to me (and to them I cannot go) by her either leaving the room as soon as they enter, or by something she says that Discovers her aversion from them.

Other matters I would speak with you about concerning my wordly affairs, but these are comparatively of little moment; yet still they are by no means *to be neglected*. My dear Son Wesley hath just been with me ...

So it is to Charles that in the end she turns for comfort, for perhaps the over-busy John, so much like her in his love of reason and logic, could not respond to her state of weakness, as could his gentler, more emotional brother.

One could go on. At least, here is a start at finding the real Susanna - a woman well worth knowing.

## APPENDIX A

### I

Susanna Wesley to John Wesley

Wroot, Aug 19, 1724

Dear J[acky]

I am ~~somewhat~~ uneasy, because I've not heard from you so long, and I think you don't do well to stand upon points, and write only letter for letter, since I decline apace, and 'tis more trouble for me to write one than for you to write ten times. Therefore let me hear from you oftener, and inform me of the state of your health, ~~how you go on,~~ and whether you are easier than formerly, and have any reasonable hopes of being out of debt.

~~We have dismal weather, and can neither get hay, corn, nor firing, which makes us apprehensive of great want. I am most concerned for that good, generous man that lent you £10; and am ashamed to beg a month or two longer, since he has been so kind to grant us so much time already. Give my service to him, and thanks, however.~~

We were ~~strangely~~ amused with your uncle's coming from India, but I suppose those fancies are laid aside. I wish there had been anything in it, then perhaps it had been in my power to have provided for you. For if all ~~these~~ things fail, I hope God will not forsake us: we have still his good providence to depend on, which has a thousand expedients to relieve us beyond our view.

Dear J[acky], be not discouraged; do your duty, keep close to your studies, and hope for better days; perhaps, notwithstanding all, we shall pick up a few crumbs for you before the end of the year.

Dear son, I beseech Almighty God to bless thee!

## II

Susanna Wesley to John Wesley

Wroot, Sept. 10 (1724)

Dear J[acky]

~~'Tis above a week since I received your kind letter, which has greatly revived my spirits; and though I should not have an ill opinion of you though there had really been some neglect on your side, yet I find I am much better pleased to think you do not grudge the pains of writing.~~

I'm nothing glad that Mr. -- has paid himself out of your exhibition.... Though I cannot hope, I do not despair, of my brother's coming, or at least remembering me where he is; ~~for I am persuaded God will yet order things to that either I or mine shall sometime be the better for that man; though most of my family am of another opinion....~~

The smallpox has been very mortal at Epworth most of this summer. Our family have all had it besides me, and I hope God will preserve me from it, ~~because your father can't yet well (spare money to bury me).~~

I heartily wish you were in Orders, and could come and serve one of his churches. Then I should see you often and could be more helpful to you than 'tis possible to be at this distance....

Dear J[acky], I beseech Almighty God to bless thee!

## APPENDIX B

[Text from Holograph at Methodist Archives. Deletions by John Whitehead (1793) and subsequent editors]

Susanna Wesley to Charles Wesley

December 6 1738



To the Reverend Mr. Charles Wesley at Mr. Bray's in Little Brittain.

Dear Charles

~~I should write much oft'ner had I better health and should be very glad if you received as much benefit from my letters as I do comfort from yours.~~

~~My notion of justifying faith is the same with yours, for that trusting in Jesus Christ or the promises made in him is that special act of faith to which our justification or acceptance is so frequently ascribed in the gospel. This faith is certainly the gift of God wrought in the mind of man by his Holy Spirit. But then as the Gospel promises are conditional I can't believe that the Spirit of Holiness will give that faith to any but such as sincerely desire and endeavour to perform the conditions of the gospel covenant required on their part. Sincerely, I say, for perfection no man ever did, or ever will, attain to in this life. Now because "the commandments of God are exceeding broad" and by reason of our manifold imperfection and infirmities we are so frequently subject to deviate from the perfect law of God, 'tis incident to many (I hope) good Christians often to doubt the sincerity of their faith. They make not the least question of the power or will of God incarnate to save them, but they keep a jealous eye upon themselves and are sometimes afraid that they do not all which is required of them; therefore they do in the most literal sense "work out their salvation with fear and trembling." And truly I am inclined to think that such humble, fearing Christians are in a safer though not so comfortable a state than those which think themselves sure of salvation.~~

~~I do not judge it necessary for us to know the precise time of our conversion. 'Tis sufficient if we have a reasonable hope that we are passed from death to life by the fruits of the Holy Spirit wrought in our hearts. Such are repentance, faith, hope, love etc. Our Lord acts in various ways and by various means on different tempers, nor is the work of regeneration begun and perfected at once. Some (though rarely) are converted by irresistible grace. Others (rarely too) have been sanctified from the womb, and like Obediah, have served the Lord from their youth. But from these exempt cases we can draw no general rules, nor ought we too curiously to search after the knowledge of the operations of God's Holy Spirit. His ways are past finding out! 'Tis observed by du Moulin that "many devout souls yield a wrong obedience to this precept of St. Paul, 'examine your own selves whether you be in the faith.' For instead of examining themselves, they examine God, seeking with an over busy care what degree of comfort and assurance of salvation they feel in their hearts, which is the work of God, not of men. Wherefore, when we examine whether we are in the faith, it is not the work of God we must examine, but our own. We must call ourselves to account whether we love God and our neighbour, and what care we take to serve him, and to keep his commandments, and receive his promises with obedience of faith. In these things, where the work of God's grace is joined with ours, we have but our performance to examine, looking upon God's work with reverence and ascribing to him all good that is in us. Which reverence must be redoubled when we consider in us that work of Grace wherein man hath no share, and such are heavenly comforts, and~~

~~spiritual joys. Of these we must not curiously examine the manner or measure as though the seal of our adoption consisted in them. For it is not in feeling comfort, but in departing from iniquity that this seal consisteth." Thus far this excellent divine and I think he is in the right.~~

I think you are fallen into *an odd way of thinking*. You say that till within a few months you had no spiritual life nor any justifying faith. Now this is as if a man should affirm he was not alive in his infancy, because, when an infant he did not know he was alive. ~~A strange way of arguing, this! Do you not consider that (Christians are) there is some analogy in spiritual to natural life? A man must first be born and then pass through the several stages of infancy, childhood, and youth before he attain to maturity. So Christians are first born of water and the spirit and then go through many degrees of grace, be first infants, or babes in Christ, as St. Paul calls them before they become strong Christians. For spiritual strength is the work of time, as well as of God's Holy Spirit. All then that I can gather from your letter is that till a little while ago you were not so well satisfied of your being a Christian as you are now. I heartily rejoice that you have now attained to a strong and lively a hope in God's mercy through Christ. Not that I can think you were totally without saving faith before, but then 'tis one thing to have faith and another thing to be sensible we have it. Faith is the fruit of the Spirit and is the gift of God, but to feel, or be inwardly sensible that we have true faith, requires a further operation of God's Holy Spirit. You say you have peace, but not joy in believing. Blessed be God for peace. May his peace rest within you. Joy will follow, perhaps not very close, but it will follow faith and love. God's promises are sealed to us but not dated. Therefore patiently attend his pleasure. He will give you joy in believing. Amen.~~

~~The other part of your letter gave me pain and pleasure. I was glad to find you still retain so much tender affection for me, but sorry you should be grieved because you can do no more when you have already done far more than you were well able. It was nothing but necessity (having more to pay than your brothers' money came to) made me take the last you sent, for which, as for all other kindnesses, I much thank you.~~

~~This is my only paper or I should write more, for I have much to say. My tender love and blessing ever attend thee. Continue to pray for me as I do for you.~~

-----SW

~~I wish you a cheerful Christmas and a happy New Year, and many of them.~~

~~Your brother sent me word the 25th of November that he had that post writ to Mr. Bentham to receive some money for me the beginning of December. I hope he has got it, for having paid that money sent before, I was compelled to give Mr. Randall Hall a note upon him for 5[?]Lb. to be paid ten days after date thereof. So it will be payable the [?] 14th instant. Dear Charles, inquire after it.~~

Annotation "My mother (not clear) of faith Dec. 6. 1738."

ELIZABETH HART

(Elizabeth Hart is Librarian at the Vancouver School of Theology)

---

The society's library has now been transferred to Westminster College, North Hinksey, Oxford, OX2 9AT. Telephone 0865 247644. By February it is hoped to have it in usable order after an official opening. Enquiries as to its use should be made to Anne Hannaford, College Librarian at the above address. Readers' tickets (free to members, £3.00 to others) continue to be issued by the Librarian, the Rev. K. B. Garlick, 51 Pages Lane, Muswell Hill, London N10 1QB. Please enclose a stamped, addressed, envelope. Mrs. Joyce Banks, Assistant Librarian, expects to attend once a month in the near future.

---

*The Fetter Lane Moravian Congregation London, 1742-1992*, edited by Colin Podmore, provides an outline of the Congregation's story and conveys something of the flavour of its life at different stages. It is a story of great intrinsic interest, quite apart from the many links with Methodist origins and it is good to know that the congregation has enjoyed something of a renaissance in recent years in its present home in Chelsea. The illustrations are splendid and include four rare prints depicting worship in the Fetter Lane Chapel in the 1750s. Thomas More, Count Zinzendorf, Eskimos, German bombs and a Christian lion-cub all have a place in this lively account. Copies are available, price £2.50 plus postage, from Colin Podmore, 8 Gunning Street, Plumstead, London, SE18 1BY.

---

The work of the late Dr. Albert Outler in producing a definitive text of Wesley's sermons is now made accessible to a wide audience with the recent publication by Abingdon Press, USA, of *John Wesley's Sermons, An Anthology* edited by A.C. Outler and R. P. Heitzenrater (ISBN:0 687 20495 X). This prints fifty of the sermons, arranged in chronological order to show the development of Wesley's thought, with brief introductions by Richard Heitzenrater. Those needing the full scholarly apparatus of references will need to turn to the four volumes of the Sermons in the Bicentennial edition of the Works, but many readers will welcome this well-produced paperback which is obtainable from SPCK shops at £15.99.

---

## WESLEY OBSERVED:

### An Unpublished Character Sketch by John Pawson

JOHN Pawson (1737 - 1806) was one of the leading Methodist preachers of his generation, and by the end of his life almost the last survivor of the itinerants who had commenced travelling in the 1760s. He was twice President of Conference (in 1793 and 1801). From his own writings and Adam Clarke's carefully-worded appreciation one receives a picture of a rather severe though upright and dedicated man, suspicious of any diversions from the main tasks of a Methodist preacher - namely, to save souls, to be holy in heart and life, and to inculcate the same virtues in his flock and fellow-preachers.<sup>1</sup> It is not surprising that he disapproved at times of Clarke's scholarly diversions and of Bradburn's indulgence in wit, though he had an affectionate friendship with Charles Atmore whom some thought lacking in *gravitas*. In his later years Pawson often lamented the decline in dedication and increase in worldliness which he thought were affecting the preachers. He is reputed to have burned Wesley's copy of Shakespeare and he thought Wesley's conversation was most edifying if guided by a religiously-minded colleague. Left to himself the old man might wander in more frivolous directions!<sup>2</sup> Pawson was also a firm advocate of assurance and perfection.

Pawson produced several versions of his autobiography. There was first a *Short Account* in the *Arminian Magazine* for 1799 in the form of a letter to John Wesley which was also published separately in the same year.<sup>3</sup> Next came a much longer version published in 1801 followed by yet another in the *Magazine* for 1806.<sup>4</sup> Thomas Jackson produced another in his *Lives of the Early Methodist Preachers* which was apparently taken from the 1801 or 1806 versions though completed with material from what Jackson described as Pawson's 'diary' and from some of his letters. To this

1 Adam Clarke in T. Jackson (ed), *Lives of the Early Methodist Preachers* (4th. ed., 1872) iv, pp.91 - 104.

2 Pawson to Charles Atmore 17 March 1788 in Methodist Church Archives (MCA) PLP 82.4 and cp. the MS reproduced here.

3 *A Short Account of Mr John Pawson in a Letter to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley* (London 1799).

4 *As A Short Account of the Lord's Gracious Dealings with John Pawson, Minister of the Gospel, also of the several other Branches of his Father's Family* (Leeds, 1801).

was added appreciations of Pawson's character by various hands. Telford reproduced all this material in his *Wesley's Veterans* with an explanatory note about the sources.<sup>5</sup>

The so-called 'diary' is in fact a long MS autobiography entitled *Some Account of the Life of Mr John Pawson January 1784*, now in the Methodist Church Archives.<sup>6</sup> Pawson evidently began writing this on the date stated and there is nothing to show whether he ever kept a formal diary earlier. He continued the autobiography without a break from 1784 until the summer of 1805, a year before his death. Internal evidence seems to make it clear that from 1784 he had written up this account each year. On entering or continuing in a circuit he seems to have recorded remarks on his colleagues and the general state of the circuit and on his hopes for the coming year. During the subsequent year or perhaps at the end of it, he added an account of the main events of the year and his reactions to them. The effect was to produce something between an occasional diary and a running autobiography recorded close to the events.

The relationship between the MS and the various printed accounts is not a simple one since although the printed versions (as one would expect) omit a good deal of private reflection and other sensitive material recorded in the MS, it is also the case that the printed versions include material not in the MS. This is true of the Jackson-Telford version as well as Pawson's own published versions.

Two of the most interesting items in the MS which were not published are a brief and hostile comment on Charles Wesley's character and an extended character sketch of John Wesley. So far as I am aware the latter has never been published nor even referred to in biographies of Wesley. It is of special interest as an estimate by a close associate and leading preacher who remained a faithful Methodist to the end of his life. It seems to have been written very shortly after Wesley's death and is remarkable for its careful balance between praise and criticism. It may be presumed to have been written independently of the estimates published by Hampson, Whitehead and Alexander Knox which were critical of Wesley but

5 Jackson, op. cit., iv, pp. 1 - 108; J. Telford, op. cit., pp. 1 - 121 and note on p.1. explaining the various accounts.

6 MCA Diaries Box under 'John Pawson'. The MS consists of 73 numbered folios of four sides each (not separately paged). They are cited here by folio numbers only.

7 Bradburn's character study of Wesley is in his *A Farther Account of that Wondrous Man of God* etc. attached to Richard Rodda's memorial sermon on Wesley (Manchester 1791) and reprinted with his *Select Letters of John Wesley* (London 1837).

could be deemed suspect because of their authors' strained relationships with Methodism or detachment from it. On the other hand, the treatment is far less bland than the tradition represented by the lives from Moore and Watson onwards or even the rather less emollient Bradburn.<sup>7</sup>

It is true that one has to allow for possible sources of bias in Pawson's case too, though this is much more obvious in his remarks of Charles Wesley. Charles had alienated many of the preachers by his openly-expressed suspicions of their character and ambitions over many years; by his hostility to all moves away from the Church of England; and by what they saw as his clericalist monopoly of the City Road pulpit. They also distrusted his fostering of his sons's musical talents by 'concerts' in his house and were shocked by his son Samuel's flirtation with popery. Pawson's comments were by no means untypical though especially sharp and represented a commoner type of attitude to Charles than is apparent in most of the Methodist biographies of him.<sup>8</sup>

Pawson's account of John Wesley is a different and more complicated matter, since it is very evenly balanced between appreciation of Wesley's outstanding virtues and criticism of his characteristic weaknesses. Here he resembles Hampson, Whitehead and Knox and on the notorious question of 'ambition' or rather, power-seeking is closest to Hampson. The weakness for young women, however, is very much Pawson's own comment - it is remarkable that Hampson does not mention this as he is critical enough on other weaknesses. On the other hand Pawson has nothing to say about Wesley's 'superstitions' and 'credulity' which are prominent in the other accounts mentioned and in Southey. Judging by his autobiography, Pawson probably found nothing difficult about accepting the supernatural as such, though he was more restrained and discriminating than Wesley in his taste for it.

There is, nevertheless, the possibility of bias in his account of Wesley. There were at least three occasions when he had reason to be displeased with Wesley's dogmatism and authoritarianism. In 1773 he was deeply hurt when Wesley refused his pleas to be allowed a third year in Bristol because of family circumstances.<sup>9</sup> Here Wesley upheld the current connexional rule on two-year stays and Pawson certainly felt this deeply as he had strong feelings about personal and family relationships.<sup>9</sup> He also records that when

8 Cf. also Pawson to Atmore 28 April 1788 in PLP 82.4 and Joseph Sutcliffe, *History of Methodism*, ii, pp. 917 - 19 (MS in MCA) which shows Charles's behaviour still ranking in an old man's mind in the 1850s.

9 *Some Account* MS, f11

10 *ibid.*, f.61

11 *ibid.*, f.28; Pawson to Atmore 8 August 1787 in PLP 82.3.

in Bristol and London Wesley insisted that he take early services which Pawson believed was alien and damaging to his constitution and health. But Wesley, in this as in other matters, judged that what was good for himself was good for all, which Pawson thought obtuse.<sup>10</sup> Finally, there was the question of the Scottish ordinations which Pawson welcomed on principle and because he hoped they would open the way for ordinations for England. As is well known, though Wesley ordained for Scotland he forbade the preachers concerned (including Pawson) to officiate when they returned to England. Pawson not unreasonably pointed out that to treat ordained men in this way when they were guiltless of any moral or religious offence was contrary to all ecclesiastical precedent.<sup>11</sup> On the other hand, in all these cases, Pawson in his MS account and letters still professed devotion to Wesley, despite his complaints that Wesley was claiming more power than any Pope.<sup>12</sup>

One may feel then that Pawson had personal reasons for criticising Wesley's love of power. Hampson certainly had, because of the exclusion of himself from the Legal Hundred which led to his leaving the connexion. Whitehead, on the other hand, justified Wesley's benevolent use of power and rather blamed the preachers for abuse of it after Wesley's death.<sup>13</sup> Both Hampson and Whitehead deplored Wesley's ordinations but here Pawson had no complaints except that he had not gone far enough. After Wesley's death he opposed the 'Church Methodists' interpretation of what they called the 'old plan' which they claimed ruled out ordinations, Methodist sacraments and services in church hours. But neither was Pawson for a sudden and formal break with the Church. He took a mediating line which could, with some justification, be seen as Wesley's 'plan': that is to say, making concessions on all these matters as the need arose. Pawson wished to allow the sacraments where the loyal society wished for them. But he also believed that Methodism needed effective district or regional government between Conferences. Here he put his finger on the biggest gap left by the death of Wesley, the lack of an executive to act between Conferences. Wesley had acted as his own executive and Pawson thought that the system of District Meetings set up soon after Wesley's death was inadequate. This, as much as provision for

12 e.g. Pawson to Atmore same letter.

13 L. Tyerman, *Life and Times of John Wesley* (London 1872), iii, pp. 424f.; J. Hampson, *Memoirs of John Wesley* (London 1791), iii, pp. 203 - 5; J. Whitehead, *Life of John Wesley* (London 1793, 1796), ii, pp. 475 - 7.

14 For Pawson's account of this see Pawson to Atmore 8 April 1794 in PLP 82.10.

15 Pawson to Atmore 21 January 1794 in PLP 82.10.

16 Pawson to Atmore 18 February 1794 in PLP 82.10; cp. Sutcliffe, *MS History of Methodism*, iii, p. 1222.

Methodist sacraments, was the purpose of the notorious Lichfield Plan of 1794 for Methodist 'bishops' in which Pawson was a leading figure.<sup>14</sup> Pawson believed that Wesley had had something of this kind in mind as a contingency plan and hence his ordination of Mather as a Superintendent, presumably for England. Indeed Pawson himself accepted ordination as a 'bishop' from Dr Coke in 1794.<sup>15</sup> But he found that Mather was a broken reed despite his participation in the Lichfield Plan and he came to distrust Mather's lordly ways and support of the 'High Church' Methodist advocates of the so-called 'old plan'.<sup>16</sup> Benson and Thompson were even worse from this point of view. It was probably these men he had in mind when he complained about Wesley's choice of bad advisers in his last years, his susceptibility to flattery and his descent into acting like a 'politician'. One might suspect that Pawson was here expressing resentment that Wesley was not relying more on Pawson himself but it is fair to say that it does reflect a genuine concern for plain dealing and for priority to be given to purely religious considerations and methods which were features of Pawson's character. It is in fact a pity that he and others who spoke about Wesley like this did not particularise about the 'evil counsellors' for there is much that is obscure about who was really running the connexion in Wesley's last years and how far he was really being 'managed' rather than acting on his own initiative. Coke was, and is, often seen as the great intriguer with ambitions to succeed to Wesley's power but Pawson seems not to have agreed.<sup>17</sup> A more likely candidate for this role may be Mather.

But if Pawson's estimate of Wesley's character was, like those of the early biographers, coloured by the policy conflicts as well as personality clashes of Wesley's last years which erupted more openly in the 1790s, this was not always for the same reasons or in the same directions as those of Hampson and Whitehead. Hence the fact that in important respects his critical comments on Wesley's character coincide with theirs makes all of them more convincing than is often allowed. It is a curious fact that Hampson's life of Wesley, though disliked by Methodists, was often utilised with little or no direct acknowledgement not only by Whitehead but also by Moore, though the latter silently passed over most of Hampson's pointed criticisms. Pawson's account suggests that there was an alternative view of Wesley's personality as well as of his policies even within the faithful ranks of the Methodist preachers.

Here, then, are Pawson's estimates first of Charles Wesley and then of John:

17 Jackson, *Lives*, iv, pp. 54f. for Pawson on Coke at least as regards the Deed of Declaration. But he also records Wesley's hostility to Coke for his attempts to promote ordinations for England: Tyerman, iii, p. 443.



## CHARLES WESLEY

This year (1788) also Mr Charles Wesley died. It was said that he died in peace. However that might be, God knoweth but he died as he had lived for many years, full of High Church bigotry, and left no good testimony behind him that I could hear of. I have known so much of his conduct for so many years past, that I cannot conceive how he could be saved without deep repentance. Yet I hope that the Lord would not suffer him to be lost. O that all bitter zealous High Church bigotry may die with him..... (MS.f.36)

## JOHN WESLEY

In March this year (1791) it pleased God to call away our Master from our head. This was a stroke which we had long expected and some of us had greatly dreaded. But our minds were in a good measure prepared as we were living in continual expectation of it. He died in great peace and tranquillity of mind, and with a joyful hope of a blessed immortality. He certainly was a very great man. And had been greatly honoured by and greatly blest of God, he having been the principal instrument of a glorious revival of pure and undefiled religion. He seemed to have outlived the reproach and contempt which for many years had been plenteously poured out upon him by all sorts of people. Now the whole world did him honour, and all sorts and all degrees of men spoke well of him. Many both of his own particular friends and others drew him too high and made him into something more than human. I believe I knew him nearly as well as anyone living and am well satisfied that he was both a great and good man. Beyond all doubt he was blest with a remarkable good natural understanding, exceedingly improved by a very liberal education, and by conversing with men and books for a long succession of years. He had been brought to enjoy a clear manifestation of the love of God to his own soul. And his views of the whole plan and of the nature and extent of Gospel salvation were remarkably clear, so that he preached a free, full and a present salvation through faith in our blessed Redeemer. His ministerial abilities were extraordinary and his preaching was in the general attended with the unction of the Holy Spirit so that he certainly was a wonderful instrument in the hand of the Lord for great good to mankind. In the latter part of his life he undertook too much, and preached too often, so that his sermons were very frequently formal, dry and too much upon a legal plan. But on the Lord's day, and more especially in the forenoon, when he had time for meditation and prayer, and when the powers both of his body and mind were fresh and lively, then he generally excelled himself and it was truly delightful to hear him. When in company, his conversation was generally lively, entertaining and profitable, but sometimes very light and trifling. His natural disposition was exceedingly flexible, so that he drank too much with the spirit of those with whom he conversed. He always wanted some very serious, sensible, spiritual men to lead him by the hand and

to begin the conversation, and then he would be exceedingly pleasing, and truly profitable. He certainly was an amiable man, and had very many excellent qualities. Yet he had some very great weaknesses. His natural temper was exceedingly warm and he had not always power over it, but on many occasions broke out sometimes to the great grief of those who sincerely loved him. In the government of the preachers and the people, he was extremely fond of power, it was as dear to him almost as his life. Perhaps he used his power to as good a purpose and abused it as little as any one man who ever possessed so large a degree of it as he did. But he certainly thought that God had committed this authority to him, and therefore he never would suffer it to be called in question, much less would he share it with any other man be he who or what he would. In a very great variety of affairs which he was concerned in, he acted as a politician, and one could not help seeing something that looked artful and designing and there was a manifest want of that simplicity, sincerity and uprightness, which are so amiable both in the sight of God and man.

I suppose that having such a variety of tempers and dispositions to deal with, he thought that kind of policy necessary but his best friends always looked upon it as a very great and blameable weakness in him. He was not sufficiently guarded against flattery. Some who knew him well thought he loved it. His ear certainly was too attentive to hear his own praise. Many there were who took the advantage of this great weakness, and served themselves, deceived and misled him and greatly injured others who were far better than themselves. So that he often seemed highly to value some very worthless people, whom no one esteemed but himself, and by their means was prejudiced too frequently against some of his most faithful friends and accordingly they were unkindly treated by him. But his greatest weakness was his extreme fondness of the company of agreeable young women. Not that there was any thing criminal in this. But in him it was an inexcusable weakness. He let himself down in the esteem of those who knew him the best exceedingly, and often he grieved them beyond measure. Yet notwithstanding these things, he surely was an excellent man, was raised up of the great head of the Church to do a great deal of good in the world. And when he had finished his work he died full of faith and love and is now entered into the joy of his Lord. (MS.f.39-40)

(I am grateful to Rev. T. Macquiban and the Methodist Church Archives Committee for permission to reproduce this text).

HENRY D. RACK

(The Rev. Dr. Henry D. Rack is Bishop Fraser Lecturer in the Department of Theological Studies, University of Manchester and author of *Reasonable Enthusiast* (1989)).

## SOME VICISSITUDES OF 'THE COVENANT HYMN'

WHAT is conventionally known, through its association with the Covenant Service, as 'The Covenant Hymn' (even the definite article should put us on our guard), has been presented in two metrical forms, DCM and CM. Charles Wesley's original DCM version appeared as No.1242 in Vol.II (pp.36-37) of his *Short Hymns on Select Passages of the Holy Scriptures* (1762). John, as is well known, broke up his brother's three DCM stanzas into six CM stanzas for No. 518 in his 1780 *Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People called Methodists* (see pp.710-711 in the 1983 Oxford Edition by F. Hildebrandt, O.A.Beckerlegge, J.Dale [*Works of John Wesley*, 7]; most readers will use the 1876 supplemented edition, where the hymn is No. 532). In both Britain and America, the 6-stanza CM form has prevailed, and has been the point of departure for adaptations, being replaced by the DCM version only in the 1989 U.S. *United Methodist Hymnal* (No.606).

The DCM *Urtext* reads:-

1. Come let us use the grace divine.  
And all, with one accord  
In a perpetual covenant join  
Ourselves to *Christ* our LORD,  
Give ourselves up through *Jesu's* power  
His name to glorify,  
And promise in this sacred hour  
For GOD to live and die.
2. The covenant we this moment make  
Be ever kept in mind!  
We will no more our GOD forsake,  
Or cast his words behind;  
We never will throw off his fear,  
Who hears our solemn vow:  
And if thou art well-pleas'd to hear,  
Come down, and meet us now!
3. Thee, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,  
Let all our hearts receive,  
Present with thy celestial host  
The peaceful answer give;  
To each the covenant-blood apply  
Which takes our sins away,  
And register our names on high,  
And keep us to that day.

Among subsequent changes to the text (ignoring those in punctuation, elisions, italicisation, and most of the obvious typological accidents), may be noted the following:

**Line 1:** 'Come let us seek the grace of God' - theologically motivated Anglican alteration by Bickersteth for his *Christian Psalmody* (1833), to weaken CW's bold language, and to fit the text into the setting of Anglican confirmation (cf J. Julian, *Dictionary of Hymnology*, s.v.)

**Line 4:** 'to Christ the Lord' - JW's adaptation; if deliberate, perhaps to emphasize the objectivity of Christ's dominion, but weakening the suggestion of the Saviour's already existing claim on repentant faith.

**Line 5:** 'Give up ourselves' - JW's probably stylistic amendment, for smoother iambic effect, abandoning CW's conservative use of a separable verb, but also losing the rising rhythmic parallel in the line between 'up' and 'power'.

**Lines 13-14:** 'We never will throw off Thy fear / Nor break our solemn vow' - so *Primitive Methodist Hymnal* 1889 (No. 1042); prefers to start second-person address to the Deity at an earlier point, and not suddenly in the middle of a stanza. Perhaps also puzzled by God's apparent passive role in 'hearing' the covenantal rite?

**Line 15:** 'If, Lord, Thou art well pleased to hear' - so John Flesher's *Primitive Methodist Hymn Book*, No. 765 (1874ed p.512). Probably stylistic. Abandoned in 1889 book.

**Lines 17-24:** Whole concluding stanza (DCM) = both concluding stanzas (CM) omitted in U.S. *Methodist Hymnals* 1932 (No. 540) and 1964 (No. 508), for no obvious reason, unless out of embarrassment with Trinitarian expressions. God's response is limited to 'coming down,' though what that might involve is not clear. Whole stanza restored in U.S. *United Methodist Hymnal* 1989 (No. 606)

**Lines 17-20:** omitted (also for no obvious reason) in British *Methodist Hymn Book* 1933 (No. 749), and therefore in British *Book of Offices* 1936 and dependent texts (U.S. *Methodist Book of Worship* 1964, pp.382-3, and Free Methodist/Wesleyan *Hymns of Faith and Life* 1976, p. 502). Not replaced in British *Methodist Service Book* 1975 or *Hymns and Psalms* 1983 (No. 649), as research had neglected the hymn.

**Line 19 (a):** 'with the celestial host' - so JW 1780; if deliberate, for euphony? Possible tacit alignment with Luke 2:13?

**Line 19 (b):** 'Thou, present with the heavenly host' - Flesher, *Primitive Methodist Hymn Book* (1853/1874), No.765, apparently for purely rhythmical reasons. Adaptation abandoned in 1889 *Primitive Methodist Hymnal* (No.1042).

**Line 21 (a):** 'To us the covenant blood apply' *Standard Journal* vi,p.203, on a Covenant Service at the Irish Conference, July 12, 1778. No doubt simply in error, strangely not corrected between the Diary and the Journal.

**Line 21 (b):** 'To each covenant the blood apply' - U.S. *United Methodist Hymnal* 1989 (No. 606) Must be a typographical accident; the allusions to Hebrews 13:20 and Exodus 24 would not be deliberately suppressed.

An annalistic chronicle of the varied fortunes of the text is incomplete without some evaluation. It must be said that the adaptations of Charles Wesley's three stanzas show little or no understanding of their content, purpose, and resultant sequence.

Stanza 1 emphasizes the synergistic relation (through grace) of deity and humanity: because grace is, and is present and is offered, we may 'use' it, may do so together, may have the power to surrender self and to do so for a lifetime and for eternity. This personal adhesion is possible only in the power of the God-Man who gives us life through his saving death -- this theme recurs in the concluding lines, thus forming the unifying framework of the whole.

Stanza 2 turns to lay stress on the human side of the covenantal process: the need to remember, to resolve in repentance never again to forsake our God (all this, possibly, in the light of Jeremiah 50, the hymn's point of departure, in conscious contrast to those who did not in the past or do not in the present choose the way of life), to fear the loving God who listens patiently and with grace as we offer our resolutions - but even this human resolve is meaningless unless God validates the covenant, which he inspired in the first place, by 'coming down,' as at the covenant-making at Sinai (Exodus 19:18), or on the covenantal offering of his appointed priesthood (Leviticus 9:24). This passage must be read in conscious association with Charles's preference for the image of the God who answers by fire (cf I Kings 18:24).

Stanza 3 balances the preceding emphasis on human responsibility with a resounding final assertion of the sovereignty of divine grace, grace flowing down from the entirety of the Triune Being: the eternal mutual commitment of Three Persons is the essential foundation and milieu of God's commitment to us and our responsive commitment in God to God. The references to both the baptismal formula and to the eucharistic Sanctus are unmistakable. God, present with his heavenly hosts ('thy' indicating their character as witnesses and messengers of grace), acts not only as author but also as mediator of the covenant.

The major changes that have befallen the text seem to reflect a certain doubt as to the role of the hymn. Even John Wesley's 1778 *Journal* allusion, which refers to the hymn as concluding the Covenant Service, takes little account of the invitatory character of the wording: 'Come...' Nor, indeed, does John's division of the stanzas, which, as has already been asserted, opened the way to the subsequent changes. Why did he make this change, destructive as it is of the logical structure of the hymn? The only explanation which offers itself is that he was influenced by a tune that he liked and had used for the hymn, perhaps following some choir-master's example observed during his travels. The tune suggested by John himself in later editions of the 1780 *Collection* is *Brockmer's*, which had appeared in the Foundery Collection (pp.23, 31) as *Leipsic* in two forms, where it is not clear if it is meant to be a DCM tune or a CM tune with lots of repeats. In the

last Wesley hymnal, it is listed only for CM hymns (Nos. 62, 63, 121, 134, 135, 359, 404, 453, as well as 518). The custom of 'lining-out', the preacher reading out no more than two lines of text at a time for the congregation to sing, will have disguised from everyone involved the effects of dissolving the architectonic structure of the hymn by pairing it with an incompatible tune.

Examination of several of Charles Wesley's surviving MSS - for example, those devoted to personal and domestic matters - encourages the view that Charles himself was markedly influenced in his process of composition by tunes matching the mood of his theme. Of the DCM tunes in the Foundery collection - and although this little book surely did not contain all the tunes Charles knew, it does represent the normative corpus with which both the brothers worked - the most suitable tune for 'Come, let us use the grace divine' is William Croft's *St Matthew* (p.18). Its off-beat beginning to each line, with nonetheless a minim for the (mostly) unaccented first syllable, matches the iambic metre comfortably, and yet allows for the occasional spondee (lines 1, 5, ?13, 17, ?19), which Charles uses for emphasis.

The choir of the Wolcottville, Indiana, United Methodist Church, graciously agreed to sing the original text of 'Come, let us use the grace divine' to *St Matthew* (using the comfortably singable modern version, current since at least 1889, when it featured as No.549 in the *Primitive Methodist Hymnal*), as an anthem for Maundy Thursday. The result endorsed the hypothesis that this tune was probably in the poet's mind as he wrote.

DAVID TRIPP

(David H Tripp, MA, PhD is a Methodist minister, formerly of the British Conference, now of the North Indiana Conference, USA. He has written widely on liturgical topics.)

The task of tracing former Methodist chapels has been eased by the reprint by the Methodist Publishing House of *Methodist Church Buildings. Statistical Returns, including seating accommodation as at July 1st 1940.* (£10.00) Over 14,000 places of worship are listed by circuit and District and, particularly important, the pre-Union affiliation of each one is given. There are other listings of Wesleyan and United Methodist chapels, but this is the only reliable list of Primitive Methodist chapels, if one allows for the small number which were closed between 1932 and 1940. Every District Archivist should have a copy!

The Charles Wesley Society has published the second of its reprints of Charles's hymn tracts: *Hymns for our Lord's Resurrection* (Green 90). It is a facsimile of the first edition of 1746 with an introduction and notes by Oliver A. Beckerlegge. Copies are available from the Methodist Publishing House at £4.50. Further reprints in this valuable series are planned.

## BOOK REVIEWS

*Capitalists and Christians: Business Leaders and the Churches in Britain 1900-1960* by David J. Jeremy (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1990, pp. xviii, 491, £45.00. ISBN: 0 19 820121 4)

How many leaders of big business in twentieth-century Britain have been Christians? What influences did the Churches exert on their individual character, and on the formation of their social outlook? How did these leaders apply their Christianity to the worlds of big business and industry? And what influence did these rich and powerful laymen exercise within the national councils of their own denominations, and upon wider religious developments?

As a co-editor of the *Dictionary of Business Biography* David Jeremy is well acquainted with the life stories of many businessmen, some of whose careers might be re-told to illuminate the answers to those questions. But he rejects a 'selected heroes of industry' approach in favour of a quantitative method, as rigorous and scientific as the nature of the subject and the available evidence will allow. His computer must have become very warm during the researches which lie behind the 54 tables (some of considerable length) which constitute the hard core of the book's essential data.

The author's aims in this quantifying exercise were, in brief, as follows: to identify the business leaders of the hundred largest companies active in Britain at three particular 'benchmarks' (1907, 1935 and 1955); to assess the religious influences on these men in their formative years, and their denominational allegiance as adults; and where possible, to estimate the relevance of their faith to the manner in which they ran their businesses. A different computer exercise sought to identify those businessmen who (because of the number of denominational committee posts they held) might be regarded as the national lay leaders of their Churches.

All this statistical evidence (impossible to summarise here) is thankfully supplemented and enlivened by extensive commentary in which biographical data plays a large part, though always in relation to the statistical findings. Dr Jeremy here reveals his extensive knowledge of individuals and of the context in which they worked. He has much of great interest and perceptivity to say about their social attitudes, religious convictions, denominational involvements, and industrial policies – ranging from William Lever's use of religion as a potent instrument of social control over his Port Sunlight workforce at the start of the period, to Alfred Owen's active commitment to the Billy Graham campaigns of the 1950s.

The scholarship of this large and important book is undoubtedly impressive, though the overall conclusions reinforce a picture which was already familiar. These conclusions are: that the heads of the major companies in the period under survey, being reared according to Victorian and Edwardian values, were subject to strong Christian influences in their younger years; that the Christianity they imbibed was heavily individualistic in its emphasis; that, until the 1920s at least, the Churches

laid down few effective guidelines to help business leaders face up to the moral dilemmas of capitalism; that all the Churches had leading businessmen in active lay roles but with a decline in their numbers and importance as the century advanced; that their role was always ambivalent, yet vastly important in terms of their support for favoured schemes, and for financial advice, and the encouragement of organisational efficiency in national Church structures.

Dr Jeremy remarks that 'from the evidence available about behaviour at leadership levels, the impact of business on the Churches has on balance been more substantial than the impact of the Churches on business' (p.418). With regard to the latter he sees Christianity's strongest impact to have been exerted firstly by the fine example of sensitive paternalism set by the Cadburys at Bournville, and secondly by the encouragement of informed critical debate on social and industrial matters stimulated partly by Quaker employers, but more particularly by William Temple and J. H. Oldham in the latter 1930s. Through the *Christian News Letter* and the work of the Christian Frontier Council a new emphasis emerged with regard to the key role of an informed laity making Christian judgements from within the very industrial situations where the consequences of these judgements would have to be worked out.

Readers of *Proceedings* will be particularly interested in Chapter 8 which deals with 'Businessmen and Women in Methodism 1900-1960' (though despite the title I can find a brief reference to only one woman, Miss Hilda Porter). There are in this chapter many illuminating vignettes of powerful Methodist laymen, (the Connexion's 'workhorses') - of Sir Robert Perks 'the wily intriguer', of George Chubb who according to Perks was 'never happy unless he had titled friends around him', of Sir William Hartley ('among the Primitive Methodists Sir Robert Perks' counterpart'), and so on. One lone farmer appears in the lists, Walter Wheeler Berry, 'a breezy Faversham fruit and hop grower (evidently not a teetotaler)'. Most of these men were tough nuts both in business and in Methodism, and Dr Jeremy offers many telling sidelights on their character and influence. None is more striking (or more tragic) than the story of Josiah Stamp, 'an Olympian economic technocrat' with a vast admiration of all things German. In 1938 he visited Germany as Hitler's guest, only to be killed by one of Hitler's bombs at his home at Shortlands less than three years later.

G.E. MILBURN

---

*Susanna: the Mother of John and Charles Wesley*, by A.A. Dallimore. (Evangelical Press, 1992, pp.176, £4.95. ISBN: 0 85234 292 6)

This new biography of Susanna, coming out in the 250th anniversary of her death, is in the fine old tradition of Victorian hagiography and uses mostly nineteenth-century sources. Even then, Dallimore misses the more accurate Adam Clarke, in favour of Kirk (*Mother of the Wesleys*, 1868), Tyerman (...*Samuel Wesley*, 1886) and Stevenson (*Memorials of the Wesley Family*, 1876); the last two authors being heavily selective in what parts of her letters they published. Thus, these errors are continued here. It is also



unfortunate, and foundational, that the first page of Dallimore's preface states wrongly that 'Since Susanna left no diary or daily journal the only record we have from her pen is found in her letters' (p.7). Someone should have directed him to the Wesley College archives in Bristol where her journal is kept. One might add that John Newton's *Susanna Wesley and the Puritan Tradition in Methodism*, (1968) would have been another useful secondary source, as would some of Frank Baker's papers.

Though Dallimore omits some basic sources, he must be commended for incorporating the discovery of the correspondence between Susanna, Lady Yarborough, and Bishop Hickeys around the 'Amen' affair, (*Manchester Guardian* July 2, 1953) and he uses a Bodleian MS for Samuel Wesley correspondence. Neither of these has been used previously in book-length biographies of Susanna.

There are several errors of fact: that the place of her marriage is unknown (p.26) [St. Marylebone, March 10th 1682/3] that 'her father had never known financial need' (p.35) [he was probably in considerable hardship after 1662], that there were 19 children [Baker thinks this only a 'possibility'], and so on. South Thoresby is wrongly given for South Ormsby, but corrected on the following page (37, 38), while Dr. Frank Baker suddenly becomes 'Charles Baker' in the preceding note [p.172].

He gets somewhat carried away with the quick summary ['Much of her adult life was taken up with bearing children and watching them die.' p.37] and the conjecture - from meagre or non-existent evidence - about her and her family's motives and thoughts. For example, in the incident of her husband Samuel's leaving home for some months, precipitated by her not saying 'Amen' to his prayers for the king, our author boldly speculates that 'one of the main reasons for his being passed over [for preferment in the church] was no doubt the irresponsibility he had displayed in this affair.... Susanna's attitude towards him was never the same again, for since he had once shown himself to be so heartless she feared he might well do the same again' (p.54). Dallimore also assumes an estrangement between Susanna and her father after she changed her Dissenting opinions (p.17), but most commentators consider that as he left his papers to her on his death, this is evidence enough of his continuing affection towards what has been assumed to be his favourite child.

Having said all this one must commend Dallimore on his true devotion to his vision of Susanna which in itself reflects her sanctification in the best Victorian tradition - complete with lyrical comments on her physical beauty. The clue to understanding this very mixed book is that he says he has 'tried to slant it especially to women readers' (p.7). Before he retired he was pastor of the Baptist Church in Cottam, Ontario. Perhaps there were the women he was writing for. Certainly today's women (and men) deserve a more accurate biography.

I recommend Mary Greetham's little book *Susanna Wesley: Mother of Methodism* (Foundry Press, 1988) or Rebecca Harmon's *Susanna: Mother of the Wesleys* (Abingdon: 1968) and continue to hope for the publication of Susanna's complete works which Charles Wallace has in hand.

*A Reformed, Evangelical, Catholic Theology: The Contribution of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, 1875-1982*, by Alan P. F. Sell (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1991, pp. xi, 304, \$18.95 ISBN 0 8028 0483 7)

A feature of the ecclesiastical scene in the last hundred years or so has been the organization of the Christian world communions or confessional bodies, as they are sometimes called. They have periodic conferences which hear papers, some of them on important theological issues. One such body is the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, formed in 1970 by the union of the World Presbyterian Alliance (1875) and the International Congregational Council (1891). Professor Sell, a former theological secretary of the World Alliance, has compiled an account of the theological history of this body and its predecessors, the first detailed analysis of the theological contribution of any of the confessional bodies.

One naturally compares it with the World Methodist Council, which goes back to 1881, and the author points out that, like the Baptists but unlike the Lutherans, the Reformed and Methodist bodies have no one confession to which all its members subscribe and which may be used as a test of membership (p.74).

At the last Congregational Council (1966) a speaker said that Congregationalism repudiates the term 'lay', which he says has crept in from Methodist 'lay-preachers', the historic Congregationalist term being 'gifted brethren' (p.96). The historic Methodist term is of course 'local preachers'.

A speaker at the Congregational Council in 1930, however, had spoken with approval of 'a lay Christian' occasionally presiding at the Lord's Supper, and he gave a warning that union with Methodists or Presbyterians might abolish this custom (pp. 171-2). As we know it still occurs in Methodism, though some dislike it. But page 282 shows a greater understanding of Methodism than is shown by many Methodists. 'Since John Wesley has come to be regarded by many as the pioneer of the open table because of his statement that "experience shows the gross falsehood of that assertion, that the Lord's Supper is not a converting ordinance" (*Journal*, 27 June 1740), we should note that this comment was made in the context of the denial by the Moravian, Philip Henry Molther, that apart from "full assurance of faith" a person should not use any of the means of grace'. Wesley, says Sell, was not advocating the open table, and here he cites John C. Bowmer in these *Proceedings*, xxxiv, pp.109-13.

Apart from these side-glances at Methodism, this very detailed book is primarily of interest to the Reformed, and indeed to their specialists in theology.

A. RAYMOND GEORGE

*An inventory of nonconformist chapels and meeting-houses in south-west England*, by C. F. Stell. (HMSO, 1991, pp.xviii + 263, £60. ISBN: 0 11 300036 7)

A lecture by Christopher Stell is an experience to savour, with its stern berating of Philistines (in the persons of chapel officers who replace pews with plastic chairs) and its brilliantly juxtaposed illustrations from every corner of England. This closely-written regional inventory, the second to be published by the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England, might appear to offer little scope for such pyrotechnics, but a closer examination shows expressions of individuality and authority, for here Avon does not exist, Bournemouth is still in Hampshire and Chulmleigh Congregational chapel is firmly 1710, although the local people favour an earlier date.

This volume includes an area described as the south-west of England but it is nearly 280 miles long, stretching from Berkshire to the Scilly Isles, so it is diverse rather than coherent, but how rich is its diversity which is succinctly and scholarly described in word and photograph in this magnificent volume. Methodists will notice that the 232 Cornish entries are almost wholly of their persuasion, although the cover illustration is of Come-To-Good Friends' Meeting House in Kea. But it would be a bigoted Methodist indeed who was not fascinated and instructed by the panorama of historic and magnificent buildings from the more easterly counties, traditionally the home of old dissent. The early Georgian grandeur of Mary Street Unitarian in Taunton is still preserved by a small congregation but the late Victorian Baptist Tabernacle in Swindon with its extensive use of cast-iron is gone, five-bay Tuscan portico and all. So this inventory is more than a record of what is and what was of architectural interest, it is a chronicle of the decline of traditional religion in our own time. The brief preface, which is vintage Stell, deplores the loss of so many good buildings but can offer no solution.

The author for his survey went off-shore to Wight and Scilly where there is a full measure of chapels but it is rather a pity that Lundy, the granite island off North Devon, has never seen nonconformity, at least in the religious sense.

Like its predecessor on Central England this volume deals with all major chapels up to 1850 and many later. It includes the historic counties of Berkshire, Cornwall with Isles of Scilly, Devonshire, Dorset, Hampshire with Isle of Wight, Somerset and Wiltshire. The volume of Northern England is in preparation and is eagerly awaited.

ROGER THORNE

## NOTES &amp; QUERIES

## 1460. MAKING A 'TRUE METHODIST': SOME NEW EVIDENCE

M. Robert Fraser (Note 1450) has recently brought to light a neglected version of the most frequently reprinted anti-Methodist broadside of the eighteenth century. Its title took various forms: *A Receipt (or Recipe) to Make (or How to Make) a Methodist (or a True Methodist)*, and this was sometimes used as a subtitle after the main title, *Wonder upon Wonder*. Fraser's version appeared as a postscript to the tract *Methodism Unmasked*, which dates from the late 1780s. He notes that Donald Henry Kirkham assigns the date 1785 to a broadside with the same title as this postscript (see Kirkham's 1973 bibliography, item 543A). Clive Field's 1991 revision of Kirkham uses the same date and item number but notes that there were also other undated versions during the century.

It is possible to offer an earlier and better documented date for what is probably a different edition of the *Receipt*. The Rev. John Penrose, vicar of Penryn, Cornwall, wrote numerous letters to his family while he visited Bath in 1766 and 1767, and this correspondence has been published (*Letters from Bath 1766-67*, ed. Brigitte Mitchell and Hubert Penrose (Gloucester, 1983)). In the postscript to a letter of 17 April 1767 (p. 169) he writes without elaboration: 'Send a copy of the *Receipt to make a Methodist*.' Then, in a letter of 15 May (p. 181) Penrose writes: 'We thank Jacky (i.e., his son John) for the *Receipt to make a Methodist*; but hope, we shall never make use of it. For the Methodist, who is of the best composition, is a worthless, very worthless creature.'

The two interpretations of these quotations that seem most plausible are that: (1) the *Receipt* has just appeared, Penrose has heard about it, and he wants to obtain a copy; or (2) Penrose now wants it sent to him, presumably to share with his friends at Bath. The second explanation seems preferable since Penrose appears to assume that his correspondent will know precisely what he is referring to when he requests the *Receipt*. It seems unlikely, moreover, that an anti-Methodist broadside that has just been published would be available in Penryn but not in the bustling port city of Bristol. While keeping in mind the strong possibility of an earlier edition, one can offer with certainty the date 'c. 1767' as the earliest known appearance of the most popular anti-Methodist broadside to appear during John Wesley's lifetime.

Still, it is not immediately clear which version of the *Receipt* Penrose obtained in the 1760s. There seem to have been two main textual variants. What might be called 'Version A' included, toward the end of the text, the claim that a true Methodist would 'play the whore under the cloak of sanctity' and would 'cut the throats of all your opposers.' The other variant, 'Version B,' omits these references to loose women and bloodthirsty enthusiasts. The 1780s text reproduced by Fraser is clearly an example of Version B. There are many extant examples of Version A, including the one reprinted in *The History of the Methodist Church in Great Britain*, IV, p.153. Apparently the only dated example, however, appeared in *Poor Robin. 1776. An Almanack* on the back of the title page. Entitled 'A Receipt to make

a perfect Methodist,' it states that Methodist converts will 'whore while you are able' and will 'cut the throats of your gainsayers!' The text used in *Poor Robin* obviously belongs in the Version A category, but it is an apparently unique variant of Version A. This suggests that the compiler of *Poor Robin* was using an earlier edition or editions and was simply employing word substitutions to 'freshen' a text that had been around for perhaps a decade or more.

It seems, therefore, that the more vitriolic Version A was the earlier version, that it dated from at least the 1760s, and that it is the version that helped to fuel Penrose's bigotry. The available evidence suggests that the more moderate Version B came later, perhaps not before the 1780s. This would be consistent with the quantitative findings of Kirkham and others (confirmed by Field) that anti-Methodist publications were appearing at extremely high levels in the 1760s and at quite low levels in the 1780s.

ROBERT GLEN

#### 1461. CHESLYN HAY METHODISM

Salem Methodist Church, Cheslyn Hay, Staffordshire, does not appear in the list of chapels given by Myles in the fourth (1813) edition of his *Chronological History of the People Called Methodists*. Although the present building dates from 1854, the original building was a converted barn which was registering baptisms from 9 May 1789. The original society was formed in the 1780s by miners who migrated from Tipton Green, Dudley and Wednesbury to work coalpits belonging to Henry Vernon of Hilton Hall. The infant society was nurtured by William Smith of Walsall who moved to Hanley in 1793 and became a leading lay figure in the formation of the Methodist New Connexion.

Four years after tearing down the old barn and building a new chapel in 1817 the Methodists at Cheslyn Hay severed their connection with the parent Wesleyan body and joined the New Connexion. Local traditions are silent on the reasons for this decision but renewed evangelism from the MNC in Birmingham plus memories of the influence of William Smith reinforced by a long radical tradition of 'ranterism' in the village may have contributed to the making of the decision.

CHARLES GOODWIN