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Proceedings

OF THE

Wesley Historical Society

Editor: E. ALAN ROSE, B.A.

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CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA AND THE WESLEY BROTHERS

The role of patristic learning in the formation of the minds of the Wesleys (and therefore, to some extent, also in the placing of Methodism within the family tree of Christian thought) has been illuminated by James Dale's persuasive article, 'Charles Wesley, the *Odyssey* and Clement of Alexandria'¹

Kinship between the brothers and Clement had been noted by Bishop John Kaye of Lincoln in *Some Account of the Writings and Opinions of Clement of Alexandria* (1835). As he starts his exposition of Clement's notion of the true 'Gnostic'², Kaye quotes, *via* Alexander Knox's *Remains*, a passage of John Wesley strongly reminiscent of *Stromateis* vii, dcccclxv.5:

By salvation I mean a present deliverance from sin; a recovery of the Divine nature; the renewal of our souls, after the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness; in justice, mercy and truth. Now without faith we cannot thus be saved, for we cannot rightly serve God unless we love Him; and we cannot love Him unless we know Him; neither can we know God but by faith. Therefore salvation by faith is only, in other words, the love of God by the knowledge of God, or the true recovery of the image of God by a true spiritual acquaintance with Him.

Kaye adds: 'I know not whether John Wesley had read Clement'

He had. In March 1767 he wrote to the editor of *Lloyd's Evening Post*:

¹ *Proceedings*, 48, pp.150-2. Also in *Methodist History*, xxx, pp.100-2.

² Reprint in *The Ancient and Modern Library of Theological Literature* London, nd, p.154, n1

Five or six and thirty years ago I much admired the character of a perfect Christian drawn by Clemens Alexandrinus. Five or six and twenty years ago a thought came into my mind of drawing such a character myself, only in a more scriptural manner, and mostly in the very words of scripture³

In the inevitably incomplete list of Wesley's reading culled from his diaries by V. H. H. Green⁴ Clement does not appear. A major edition of Clement was certainly available to the brothers, and not only on a library shelf.

The normative edition of Clement, until Stahlin in the *Griechische christliche Schriftsteller* (1905ff), was the two-volume Oxford edition, *Clementis Alexandrini opera quae extant, recognita & illustrata* of 1715, edited by John Potter, the Bishop of Oxford who ordained the Wesleys. Potter (c.1674-1747) became Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford in 1708, and retained his chair even after becoming Bishop in 1715, until in 1736 he was translated to Canterbury. His contacts with the Wesleys (conveniently surveyed by Green, pp.71, 141, 155, 157, 176-7, 235, 252, and well characterized by L. W. Barnard,⁵ were cordial and encouraging on his part, respectful and trusting on theirs. A tradition extant into the nineteenth century held that Potter's last act was to write John a supportive letter in his own hand, found in that hand after Potter's sudden death by apoplexy. As long as he was professor, Potter gave regular lectures to theology graduates - precisely to that group which included the brothers throughout their years as resident college fellows, until their departure for the new world. At least Potter's enthusiasm for Clement must be assumed to have been passed on to the brothers; direct evidence for their use of Potter's edition would be worth looking for. H. W. Perkins⁶ asserted that John's theology of the ideal Christian life was derived from *Stromateis* vii; but he does not suggest which edition might have been involved.

Among other bridges to Clement must be mentioned Archdeacon Edward Welchman's *XXXIX Articuli Ecclesiae Anglicanae, Textibus Sacrae Scripturae et Patrum primaevorum Testimoniis confirmati*, Oxford 1713, (I cite from 1730), read by John Wesley in 1731 (so Green 295) and possibly earlier. Welchman, who specifies his source for *Quis dives salvetur* as the 1683 Oxford edition by Bishop John Fell, but gives no such information for his one reference to *Stromateis*, quotes six brief passages from Clement of

³ *Standard Journal*, v, p.197

⁴ *The Young Mr Wesley* (1961), Wyvern ed. (1963) pp.289-302.

⁵ *John Potter: An Eighteenth-Century Archbishop* (1989) pp.89-100

⁶ *The Doctrine of Christian or Evangelical Perfection*. (1927) p.143

Alexandria, which I translate:

P.9 (on Art.2):

As God, our Lord had foreknowledge both of what he was going to be asked and also of the answer he was going to give.... It was for this reason that he both came down and clothed himself in humanity, that he might share in the weakness of us, whom he loved, that he might transform us in the likeness of his power; so, when about to be offered up, and giving himself up as the redemption-price, he left for us a New Covenant. (*Quis dives*, ch.6, ch.37)

P.29 (on Art.10):

With their own resources alone, humankind, labouring and struggling to realize a life free from human weakness, achieve nothing. But when there is avowed passionate desire and unrelenting commitment – and when God’s power is added – then it is achieved. For God breathes into willing minds. (*Quis dives*, ch.21)

P.38 (on Art.16):

To every one who in truth turns to God with the whole heart , the gates are opened, and a delighted father takes back a son who has truly changed his mind. (*Quis dives*, ch.39)

P.49 (on Art.22):

Anyone, then, who accepts the messenger of repentance in this life, will not have occasion to change their mind when they depart from the body, nor will they be put to shame when they see the Saviour coming again in his glory and power. The fire will cause no fear. (*Quis dives*, ch.42)

P.81 (on Art.38):

And how much more advantageous is the opposite condition [sc., to poverty], when, having what he really needs, someone can help the people he ought to, without harming himself? For if nobody had anything, what sharing could there be among humankind? Any how then could this commandment not be judged as patently incompatible and even in conflict with other splendid commandments of the Lord? - “Make for yourselves friends from the Mammon of unrighteousness, so that when it fails they may receive you into the eternal tabernacles”. For how can anyone feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, and clothe the naked, or take in the wanderer - and for those who fail to do these things there is the threat of the fire and outer darkness - if each and every person is entirely without all these things? (*Quis dives*, ch.13)

P.82 (on Art.39):

The Gnostic [sc., the truly enlightened one] is both a person well known to be truthful on oath, and also not given readily to take an oath, and is therefore seldom compelled to speak on oath.

(*Stromateis*, Book vii)

Welchman has of course selected these excerpts to illustrate the Anglican Articles, and not the range of Clement's theology (still less those aspects of that theology which will have been of chief interest to the Wesleys); but this choice of passages was among their first introduction to the thought of Clement. In particular, the citations from Chapters 21 and 39 of *Quis dives salvetur*, with their concern to show the human personality as a locus of divine action, seem to point directly to the centre of what was to emerge as the Wesleyan apprehension of the Gospel.

DAVID TRIPP

(The Rev. Dr. David H. Tripp, M.A., is a former Tutor at Lincoln Theological College and at present is pastor of the United Methodist Church, Wolcottville, Indiana, USA.)

THREE PUFFS FROM WESLEY AND VIRGINIA WOOLF

Virginia Woolf (1882 - 1941) eminent and prolific as novelist, essayist, letter-writer and journalist, had little time for religion either in her writing or her personal life. In November 1919 (she was then aged thirty-seven) she wrote to Lady Robert Cecil saying 'I don't know what to say about Christianity – perhaps one has it born in one – I expect so'. Fifteen years later that agnosticism had changed into dislike. In a letter to Ethel Smyth dated 29 July, 1934, she mentions that she had been reading the life of 'Parson Venn', i.e. Henry Venn. She had been revolted by one instance of his evangelicalism in particular, and, although he was her ancestor, she had written saying that she wondered how anyone could 'belong to such a canting creed'. High Church punctiliousness fared no better at the novelist's hands, for in the same letter she complains about the church bell at Rodmell in Sussex, which in summoning the faithful stung Virginia to exclaim 'Oh how I hate religion. Why is Christianity so insistent and so sad?'

Nevertheless, the personalities and anecdotes of religion interested her. For example, she read and wrote about John Donne and Dean Swift, and on one occasion she acknowledged that she was enjoying reading *Kilvert's Diary*.

One anecdote which John Wesley has preserved makes three fleeting appearances in Virginia Woolf's *Diary*.¹ The entry for 15 May 1929² contains a record of various literary, social and domestic vexations beneath the admission 'I am depressed'. She sums up her mood thus:

So my wheel is turning low and do I like this pen or don't I? Such are my sorrows Mr Wesley as the man said when the servant put on too many coals.

Several years later, on 12 June 1935 she writes in a similar mood, about would-be visitors and other interruptions to her literary work:

These are my troubles Mr —— as the man said when the footman put on too many coals. And I think I've found a bridge in that scene.³

A few weeks later (13 September 1935) as she records various 'Bothers', the same anecdote drops from her pen, but she lets it trail away in her mind: 'These are my troubles as the man said...'

Curiously enough, this incident is referred to three times in Wesley's writings. The earliest reference is to be found in his letter to Joseph Benson on 5 November 1769⁴. Benson had written to Wesley saying that he had had enough of Kingswood School. Wesley's reply was that he could truthfully have said the same long ago. And then he adds:

You put me in mind of Sir John Phillips's exclamation when a puff of smoke came out of the chimney, 'Oh, Mr Wesley, these are the trials which I meet with every day.'

The incident is also mentioned in two Wesley sermons, namely Sermon 87 'The Danger of Riches' and Sermon 108 'On Riches'⁵, written in 1780 and 1788 respectively and printed in the *Arminian Magazine*. The incident is given as occurring 'many years ago' in

¹ Edited by Anne Olivier Bell in five volumes (Hogarth Press, 1977-84).

² *Diary*, iii, pp.227-8.

³ *Diary*, iv, pp.320-1.

⁴ *Standard Letters*, v, p.153.

⁵ *The Works of John Wesley* (Bicentennial ed) vol 3, ed A. C. Outler, Nashville, 1986, pp.227-46 and pp.518-28.

Wesley's own presence and that the gentleman concerned was a baronet, a man of large fortune, who gave away nine-tenths of his income every year. Wesley's recollection was vivid, perhaps sharpened by, but certainly improved (note his 'crosses' for the earlier 'trials') for his homiletical purpose, as he writes:

While we were seriously conversing he ordered a servant to throw some coals on the fire: A puff of smoke came out: He threw himself back in his chair and cried out "O Mr. Wesley, these are the crosses which I meet with every day!" I could not help asking "Pray, Sir John, are these the heaviest crosses you meet with?" Surely these crosses would not have fretted him so much if he had had fifty instead of five thousand pounds a year!⁶

As regards Sir John Phillips (c.1701-1764) a word or two will suffice. He was a Member of Parliament whose country house was Picton Castle, Pembrokeshire and whose town house was at Westminster. He was one of the Georgia Trustees, a member of the Society for the Reformation of Manners, a buildings commissioner, and an original member of the Fetter Lane Society. Amongst his many benefactions was an allowance (episcopally sanctioned) of £20-30 to Whitefield to enable him to continue his prison work at Oxford.

Whether Charles Wesley also witnessed Sir John's outburst is uncertain, although the index to volume three of Virginia's *Diary* gives his name. But a footnote to the references in volume four accepts the present writer's identification of John Wesley's three allusions to the incident.

Virginia Woolf was a voracious reader. Whether she got this anecdote from some Wesley biography (it is not in Southey) or had read the Sermons herself, there is no means of telling. The incident may have pricked her conscience but she could not go all the way with Wesley in his condemnation of peevishness. The mighty dig which he said he gave Sir John about his 'crosses', becomes a mere balancing act in Virginia's self-application. Her first allusion to the anecdote is followed by the words:

But I must somehow wind up this account of flies in the eye, and go up to dinner...Because clearly these miseries are very small trivial miseries...When I count my blessings, they must surely amount to more than my sorrows.

GEORGE LAWTON

(An obituary of the late Rev George Lawton will be found on page 127)

⁶Ibid. pp.526-7.

WILLIAM UDY BASSETT AND THE 1902 EDUCATION ACT

The Welsh Revival was the spiritual-religious event of the early twentieth century; the political-religious event was the 1902 Education Act and 'Passive Resistance'. Birmingham Bible Christians were to play an important part in that event.

The 1870 Forster Education Act created 'Board Schools' to supplement the voluntary, denominational schools, mostly Church of England. After great debate about Religious Education, a compromise was reached between Anglican and Free Church desires: 'simple Bible teaching', would be given; education was non-sectarian. In 1902 the Conservative Balfour Education Act abolished Board Schools, introduced education rates, and created secondary education. Among many positive features, the Act also provided support from the rates for the denominational schools. The provision favoured the Church of England, with more schools than any other denomination, and was perceived to promote sectarian education.

Support of Church schools from compulsory rates outraged the Free Churches. Widespread protest ensued, in which the Free Churches found themselves alongside the Liberals in opposition to Bill and Act. Citizens' Leagues across the country supported the cause, but the Free Churches promoted 'Passive Resistance': non-payment of the proportion of the rates used for denominational purposes. The Bible Christians gave explicit support; in 1902 Conference resolved the bill to be

..... a national injustice and moral wrong a large number of our people will not consider the Bill when carried into law as entailing any moral obligation upon them to obey it.¹

For the representative body of a national church it was strong wording. Conference was more careful in its 1903 Address to the Church, but its intent is clear.

We give no direction to our people as to what they *ought* to do in this matter of "Passive Resistance" save to say in the words of the *Guardian* newspaper, "The theory of Passive Resistance is legitimate enough. We

¹ *Bible Christian Minutes*, 1902, p.35. res.xxii.

must needs be subject to the powers that be for conscience sake, but there is a higher law than that of the earthly government, and if they conflict, 'We must obey God rather than man.'" This disobedience to man would probably involve suffering, but it is to a great extent by such disobedience that moral and spiritual progress has been made, and from the days of Antigone onwards martyrs for conscience sake have won the world's sympathy and admiration.²

Two resolutions underlined the intent, instructing the governors of Connexional Colleges (Shebbear and Edgehill) to refuse moneys, and pledging support for ...

.... those who feel compelled to refuse the voluntary payment of the portion of the rate which will be devoted to sectarian purposes.³

Conference was definitely 'off the fence.' Writers from the President downwards expressed personal views in the *Bible Christian Magazine*, including one or two dissenting voices. Yet the dominant tone cannot be denied: there was powerful Bible Christian support for Passive Resistance.

Soon after the implementation of the Act, Nonconformists were suffering distraint of goods for refusing to pay rates; by October 1905 more than 230 people had been imprisoned, and thousands fined. However by 1906 various Appeal Court decisions had mitigated the situation. Indeed sympathy for the Free Church cause contributed to the sweeping 1906 Liberal victory.

In 1903, William Udy Bassett came to Birmingham as third minister. From his arrival he espoused Passive Resistance, withholding the small sum required. When others offered to pay he would not let them. On 18 March 1904 he was summoned to appear before the Birmingham magistrates for non-payment. Unrepentant, he was sentenced to five days imprisonment at Winson Green Prison in the city. In spite of feelings of humiliation, he was treated kindly:

I do not in the least regret my recent experiences, although I came out suffering rather badly from nervous prostration; rather do I rejoice that I was 'counted worthy to suffer'. I will undergo imprisonment a hundred times, if needs be, before I will violate my conscience by paying the Priests' rate. I should have been untrue to my manhood, unworthy of my church, a recreant descendant of a long line of godly ancestors, if at this crisis I had shirked or faltered.⁴

²B. C. *Minutes* 1903, p.29.

³Ibid. p.43. res cxv.

⁴B. C. *Magazine* 1904, p.213. See pp.207-14 for a full account.

Not a hundred times to prison, but two, for the experience did not convince Bassett that payment was now necessary. Again he withheld, and on 8 September 1904 Bassett and Bible Christian local preacher Edwin Jones were sent down to Winson Green for seven days. This imprisonment was less comfortable!

[I stuck ...] closely to my work of coiling cocoanut fibre. This is by no means hard work but very trying for the fingers, and the skin at the tips of my fingers is still in a very ragged condition as a result.⁵

After release, Bassett and Jones addressed a Citizens' League meeting where those present included Professor Rendel Harris and George Tangye JP, who had sentenced Bassett to his first spell, and the nephew of Sir Richard Tangye. Bassett was also to address the National Demonstration at the City Temple in October. Undoubtedly the imprisonments had made a martyr of him, for although denying the title he wrote,

I am a more determined resister than ever after my second experience, and more than ever convinced that it is the most effective method of protest.⁶

Two other Bible Christian ministers, J. Finch and Richard Squire, were imprisoned at Bodmin.⁷ The gestures succeeded; after the Liberal victory there were no further imprisonments.

COLIN C. SHORT

(The Rev. Colin Short is a minister in the Kidderminster circuit. The above article forms part of a longer study of the Bible Christians in Birmingham.)

⁵Ibid. pp.501-2.

⁶Ibid. p.502. Bassett moved in 1906 to Hatherleigh in Devon. The 1907 Conference released him to accept a UMFC invitation to go to East Africa. He arrived in Kenya in 1908 and died at Ribe in 1918, the second Bible Christian minister to follow that path to glory (the first was T. H. Carthew).

⁷C. J. Appleby, 'When Cornish Methodist Ministers went to prison' *Journal Cornish Methodist Historical Association*, vol 8 no.2 (1992) pp.32-8 and no.3 (1993) pp64-6.

The new 'Missing Persons' volume of the *Dictionary of National Biography* (OUP 1993) includes entries for at least three Methodists. Henry Rack writes on John Bennet (1715-59), Reg Ward sketches the career of Billy Bray (1794-1868) and J.D.Y. Peel describes the achievements of the Rev Edwin W. Smith (1876-1957), Primitive Methodist missionary and theologian who was also the subject of an article by John Young in the May 1993 issue of the *Epworth Review*.

THE ARCHIVES OF THE INDEPENDENT METHODISTS

When the Independent Methodist Connexion replaced its Bookroom with a Resource Centre in 1990, accommodation was found for a much-needed Archive Room to house the records of the Connexion and its churches. This is now open to researchers and contains a substantial amount of material to reward anyone who is studying Methodist history in areas where Independent Methodists have had a presence. As the denomination once had churches in many parts of the country other than its present 'patch', this may have a wider significance than is immediately apparent. Today, the main strength of the Independent Methodists is to be found in their traditional heartlands of industrial Lancashire and the North-East, but there were once churches in Norfolk, Glasgow, South Yorkshire, North Wales and Nottinghamshire, to name but a few areas no longer found on the Connexion's map.

The archives contain some major collections, plus a miscellany of fragmentary information. Of particular significance are the following:

1. The Connexional Magazine.

This first appeared in 1823 but remained in publication only until 1829. It was resumed in 1847 and has remained in existence to the present day, having been known under a number of different titles: *Free Gospel Magazine*, *Free Gospel Advocate*, *The Independent Methodist* and, currently, *The Connexion*. The Resource Centre holds a full set of magazines, apart from a few years in the 1920s which can be found in Warrington Library. The magazines contain church news items, obituaries and many other details of the Connexion's life.

Also on the shelves is a complete set of magazines, published under the title *Zion's Trumpet*, which were produced by a group of churches which briefly seceded during the years 1854-60. Unfortunately, the records of a later secession (1907-23) are much less complete, with only a few magazines extant.

2. Minutes and Year Books.

The earliest surviving *Minutes* are those of the 1808 Annual Meeting. Copies are intermittent until 1824, but a continuous set remains (some printed, others only in manuscript) from then onwards to the present date. The *Minutes* are termed *Year Books* from about 1900 onwards. They contain church reports, statistics, lists of ministers and many other items of useful information.

3. Local Church Histories.

Published histories of more than half the Connexion's churches are to be found on the shelves. These vary in both quality and length - from two page pamphlets to a two-volume work of great significance: *The Memorials*

of *Folds Road Chapel, Bolton*, which contains information about early Independent Methodism recorded nowhere else. This collection includes histories of a number of churches no longer in existence.

4. Boxed Collections

Many closed churches (and some existing ones) have deposited their records in the Archives. Each church has a box (or boxes) containing items such as baptismal, membership and marriage registers, minute books, account books and often many other interesting items of memorabilia.

5. Independent Quarterly.

This was a magazine produced only during the period 1927-1936. It consists entirely of feature articles on topics of current interest, but reflects much of the outlook of the period and the views of many of the Connexion's leading figures in the early twentieth century. A full set is kept in the Archives.

6. Independent Methodist Authors

The books in this collection vary from works on denominational history and polity to autobiographical works by preachers and missionaries. The Connexion has never operated its own missionary society but has had a steady flow of members working in the overseas field throughout the present century.

7. Circuit Plans

A map chest contains a collection of old circuit plans, a few of which go back to the 1820s. There are plans of some circuits which are long since extinct and some of circuits from other branches of Methodism. The largest collections are those of the Bolton Circuit and the Colne and Nelson Circuit. This section has still to be catalogued.

Work is under way to index all the magazine obituaries, which will provide a valuable resource, whilst a future project should see all church reports in magazine and minute books indexed. A useful one-volume work gives computer-generated statistical charts showing memberships of all churches from 1862 (or their year of origin if later) to the present date.

The Resource Centre is usually open on Mondays to Fridays during normal office hours, but it is best to telephone before coming, as the Manager is sometimes out on office business. Visitors are always welcome and are free to spend as long as they wish in the Archive Room. Documents can be photocopied at reasonable cost. Anyone wishing to spend the day at the Centre can use one of the other rooms for lunch and can make tea/coffee in the small kitchen.

For further information contact:

The Independent Methodist Resource Centre, Fleet Street, Pemberton, Wigan, WN5 ODS. Tel. 0942-223526.

JOHN A. DOLAN

(John Dolan is at present editor of *The Connexion*)

BOURNE'S PRESS PRINTS AGAIN

The 'Atlas' iron handpress, bought by James Bourne, probably in the year 1823, and used by him and his brother Hugh to print a wide range of Primitive Methodist publications at Bemersley Farm over a period of some twenty years, has once more been used to print for the first time in over fifty years. This fine press, of which only three others are known to have survived¹, had been, until about two years ago, at the Stoke-on-Trent Museum, at Hanley. Since it was purchased at auction in 1939², the press had deteriorated and several vital parts of the impression mechanism were lost. After it had been returned to the Museum of Primitive Methodism at Englesea Brook, in south-east Cheshire, it became the hope of the Rev. John Banks that it might once again be put into working order - and by a remarkable series of circumstances, this has now been achieved. The first stage was a contact between Mr Banks and John Henshall, a well-known printer in the Manchester area. He, in turn, put the problem to Tony Nightingale, Director of the North-western Region of the British Printing Industries Federation. By good fortune, Tony Nightingale had been one of the people initially involved in the formation of the National Printing Heritage Trust, so he wrote to the Trust's Correspondent, Dr Derek Nuttall, who lived near Chester.

Although the Trust was newly formed and did not have much cash, the Trustees agreed to do what they could and offered to meet the cost of replacement parts. Once again it was fortuitous that Dr Nuttall had had plenty of experience in advising on and restoring early handpresses - a few years ago he had set up a 'Victorian Printing Office' at the Grosvenor Museum, Chester. The first inspection of the press revealed the extent of the problems which would have to be overcome. First was the sheer size and weight of the machine coupled with the fact that the bed (one of the largest parts) had been put on back to front! Secondly, the platen (the large, flat plate which applies pressure to the type) was jammed at an angle, and thirdly, three important parts had been lost from the impression wedge mechanism.

Because it was impossible to get at, let alone remove any parts of the impression mechanism, the missing parts had to be made by careful measurement and informed guesswork. The two other presses which could possibly have supplied the answers to the problem, were in museums and could not be dismantled. Nevertheless, the missing parts were, eventually, made. This just left the final problem of pulling the 'Atlas' to pieces so that they could be fitted. And this is where help came from an unexpected source: half-a-dozen young men and women, who are members of the

¹The known Atlas presses are at Reading University and Blists Hill Open Air Museum at Ironbridge; the third was, until about four year ago, at Keele University but has since been sold and its present whereabouts are not known.

²*Proceedings*, xxvi, p.98.

Lancashire and Cheshire Young Managing Printers' Association offered to come to Englesea Brook to use their muscles and to clean the old press.

The eventful day arrived on 9 May 1993, when Martin Kerry, from Rhodes Ltd., of St. Helens, brought with him a team consisting of Ara Colligan, Joanne Duke, David Thurrold Ian Roberts and Karen Wheelan. They soon man (and woman) handled the bed into its correct position, lowered the platen and, after the new parts had been inserted, helped to reassemble the press. Then came the unenviable task of cleaning off the rust and grime - and the team worked like Trojans. But, when all this was done, there was no guarantee that the press would actually print, especially as yet another part needed to be made in steel to replace a temporary wooden wedge.

On Tuesday, 25 May 1993, Dr Nuttall and his wife Ruth arrived at the Englesea Brook Museum with the new part and two formes of type. Ink was rolled onto the test forme, a sheet of paper laid on packing material placed on top, and the bed was trundled under the platen. The impression handle was pulled, the bed removed, the sheet of paper peeled off the type - and, after a lapse of over half a century, there was a virtually perfect piece of printing! Such a result was far in excess of anyone's wildest hopes.

During the Celebration Weekend to commemorate the ten years existence of the Museum of Primitive Methodism, the 'Atlas' proved that, after 170 years, it could still produce printing as good as that turned out by the Bourne brothers. A special 'Keepsake' forme, hand-set in metal types was run off in a limited edition of sixty copies. Only a few feet away, in a glass case, was one of the many Hymn Books, printed at Bemersley (dated 1827): can it be hoped that Hugh and James Bourne looked benignly on as their press once again turned out printing to help the Methodist cause?

D. NUTTALL

Henry Abelove, *The Evangelist of Desire. John Wesley and the Methodists* (Stanford, California, Stanford University Press, 1990) attempts to explain how Wesley attracted and controlled his followers, and how far they accepted his teaching and prescriptions for them. It is argued that his authority depended partly on the fact that his social status was superior to that of most of his followers, but the main stress is laid on psychological factors. He became the focus of a kind of mass love-affair but at the same time his followers were tied by bonds of love to each other and did not always follow the patterns of belief and behaviour he set for them. To support his arguments Abelove provides much unusual information on early Methodist sexuality, spirituality and daily conduct which expands on his earlier essay on Methodist 'sexual politics' in James Obelkevich (ed.), *Disciplines of Faith* (Routledge 1987).

H.D.R.

A Cumulative Index to WHS Branch Publications

A cumulative subject-index to all regular serial publications of WHS Branches is gradually being assembled at the New Room in Bristol where the library has files of all the various 'Bulletins', 'Journals', 'Newsletters' or 'Proceedings' issued by the Branches except for six relative to the Plymouth and Exeter Branch (vol. 1 nos.1,9,13 : vol. 2 nos. 3-4, 10) and no. 3 of the 'Bulletin' of the now defunct South Wales Branch. Offers of any of these missing issues would be appreciated. The work of indexing from parts of publications currently received began in 1985 and has now been completed retrospectively except for pre-1985 issues relating to Cumbria, Yorkshire, the North-East and Scotland.

Some Branch publications began life over thirty years ago and by now they collectively contain a considerable amount of historical information. Without a general index however the cumulative value of this information is in danger of being overlooked and would remain incapable of exhaustive exploitation. Some Branches have issued retrospective author and subject indexes themselves (the North-East Branch and Lincolnshire) and another has appeared for London and the Home Counties taken from New Room listings. It is hoped that the subject-index being prepared at the New Room will enable the eventual possibility of locating all the information available comprehensively, quickly, and fully retrospectively. Certainly today specific enquiries can be dealt with within an hour and, if computer technology can be brought to assist with the amalgamation of the current file (1985-) and the sixteen separate retrospective ones consultation time could be shortened well below that. Currently the New Room index contains some 2,600 entries.

The work has already started to pay dividends locally for enquiries which have come to the New Room from users, especially those requiring biographical and topographical information. There is however no reason why a wider service should not be offered if anyone has some particular enquiry (especially 'out-of-area' ones) which their own Branch library may not have been able to solve. Enquirers should use their own Branch library first and of course not forget the rich resources we have in Oxford and at Manchester but as an auxiliary to those, the New Room may be able to help. As the Honorary Librarian is not in attendance daily at the New Room a letter to his home address, 162 Church Road, Frampton Cotterell, Bristol BS17 2ND would be the quickest way of getting a response and any enquiries should be accompanied by an s.a.e. Alternatively anyone who does not mind waiting perhaps a few days can write (again with an s.a.e.) to the New Room (John Wesley's Chapel), 36 The Horsefair, Bristol BS1 3JE. Copies of articles traced can be made available at ten pence per sheet of photocopy and enquirers should bear in mind the stipulations of the Copyright Act (fundamentally one copy for their own exclusive research use and no reproduction of subsequent copies for any other purposes).

C.J. SPITTAL

Hon. Librarian: New Room, Bristol.

The Rev. Dr. George Lawton 1910-1993

George Lawton went to Richmond College and served in several circuits before entering Queen's College, Birmingham in 1948 to train for the Anglican ministry. He was ordained priest in 1950. As vicar of Madeley he followed an illustrious predecessor, John Fletcher, on whose ministry he gave the WHS Lecture in 1960. From 1959 until his retirement in 1977 he was rector of Checkley, Staffs. He gained his B.D. (in 1964) and Ph.D. (in 1970) from Nottingham University.

An assiduous scholar, George will be especially remembered for his life-long work on John Wesley's use of the English language, the main fruits of which are preserved as articles in the *Proceedings on Wesley's use of slang*, proverbial expressions etc. and in his definitive *John Wesley's English* (1962). He wrote a life of Augustus Toplady (1983) and *Reader - Preacher: A lay ministry ideal* (1989). Despite major surgery in the summer of 1993, he continued his researches until the eve of his death in October. His extensive Methodist collection was left to the Wesley Historical Society and Lambeth Palace Library, and his Wesley concordance has been made available to the Wesley Works Project at Duke University.

J.A.V.

Charles Wesley's Bristol Homes

Interest in John Wesley's younger brother Charles has recently been reviving, partly through the formation of the Charles Wesley Society. A major refurbishment of his Bristol home is being planned.

But where did Charles Wesley and his family live during their twenty-two years in Bristol? The traditional answer is, at No. 4 Charles Street, a house that since 1931 has been in the hands of the New Room trustees. But there have always been some unresolved queries about the evidence for this (see, for example, the article by H.J. Foster in *Proceedings*, ii, pp. 161-70).

Now Mr. Robert W. Brown, one of the New Room stewards, has made a fresh study of the question, using in particular rate books which were not available to earlier researchers. His conclusion is that the Wesley family had no fewer than three homes, two of them in Charles Street. No. 4 Charles Street was their home only for the last six years of their residence in Bristol. For a much longer period, from 1749 to 1766, they lived in a house on the opposite side of that street - possibly No. 19. It was at this first of their Charles Street residences that their children were born. Before that, for a few months in 1749, they had temporary 'lodgings' in nearby Stokes Croft.

Mr. Brown presents the detailed evidence for this in a booklet *Charles Wesley Hymnwriter*, sub-titled 'notes on research carried out to establish the location of his residence in Bristol during the period 1749-1771'. The booklet includes facsimile reproductions of early maps and relevant documents and is available from the author at 42 Westover Road, Bristol BS9 3LT at £3.00 post free.

JOHN A. VICKERS

BOOK REVIEWS

The Presence of God in the Christian Life, John Wesley and the Means of Grace by Henry H. Knight III. (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1992, pp xv, 252, £35.00, ISBN: 0 8108 2589 9)

Although John Wesley has not generally been regarded as being of much consequence as a theologian there is nowadays a steady flow of writing from the U.S.A. which takes him very seriously indeed in this role. Wesley is, it is generally admitted, highly eclectic as a theologian and indeed may be said to have more or less literally done his theology on the hoof! Much of it, too, was done in response to critics or to what he saw as extreme and dangerous abuses of evangelicalism. He also changed his mind more than he always admitted even long after his conversion. Though he was a conservative rather than an eighteenth-century style rationalising theologian he did react impatiently against some of the more scholastic presentations of the Reformation tradition especially in his later years. This does not look like promising material for systematic theology. Yet it is fair to say that Wesley did try to be as consistent as he could, if sometimes at the cost of special pleading or refined verbal distinctions. This makes it feasible to try to discern underlying patterns of principle and coherence in his thinking, and here Dr Knight's project becomes quite original.

He credits Wesley if not with a systematic theology at least with 'systemic' thinking. The title and sub-title of the book might seem to suggest yet another survey of Wesley's view of religious experience or of his teaching on the sacraments. Both, indeed, have their place; but what is new is an attempt to show that Wesley had a coherent view of salvation which was integrated both with the stock Anglican and with the fresh Methodist means of grace. The theology informed the view of the means and the means both expressed and implemented the theology. In the process of doing this Wesley managed to avoid what Knight terms 'oppositional' thinking. The 'oppositions' in mind are the opposite extremes of eighteenth-century Anglicanism - 'formalism' and 'enthusiasm'. Eighteenth-century Anglican piety is seen as 'formalist', stressing human 'religious' activities and losing a sense of the divine initiative by locating grace in church and sacrament. 'Enthusiasts' like the 'stillness' Moravians wanted to maintain a lively sense of the activity of God but sought to do so by encouraging human passivity. It was Wesley's genius to bring together these opposites, avoiding the extremes of each, since he saw grace as 'relational' - it 'both enables and invites us to participate in an ongoing personal relationship with God.' In other words, grace is not irresistible but invites and requires a human response. This was why, for example, Wesley constantly tried to steer between Calvinists seen as risking antinomianism and advocates of a 'works'-based piety who risked underestimating the need of divine grace. Similarly, in his controversial doctrine of perfection, Wesley urged the active pursuit of the gift by use of the means of grace while

asserting that we never cease to depend on grace received by faith. To complete the picture, Knight argues that Wesley provided a pattern of means of grace which fostered the growth of a relationship with God. They were designed as a means not only for receiving grace and making progress in the Christian life but also for illuminating the nature of God and understanding of him.

This theme is worked out in considerable detail, and although most of the material will be familiar to students of Wesley, the mode of analysis often places it in a fresh light. One particularly interesting section is on the problem of Wesley's apparently ambiguous attitude towards the relationship between baptism and the new birth. Here Knight adds a third view to those of Bernard Holland and Ole Borgen. It might be argued that here and elsewhere there is a tendency to make Wesley more consistent than was really the case. This is perhaps particularly true of his (Wesley's) attempts to rationalise and justify his view of perfection. Knight does indeed recognise the dangers of Wesley's famous restricted definition of sin 'properly so called'. The relationship between baptism and the new birth also raises questions about the way in which Wesley's post-conversion theology conformed uneasily with his earlier high church views and Knight tends to gloss over shifts of this kind in the interests of a 'systemic' theology. He is also, surely, less than fair in describing the Anglicanism of Wesley's day so summarily and completely as 'formalist', as if this type of piety conveyed no experience of the living God. (And he acknowledges that Taylor and Law were not 'formalist' though they perhaps should have been by his formula.) It may be added that when Knight quotes Wesley's praise for sermons on 'good tempers and good works' against 'what are vulgarly called gospel preachers' (p.157) he does not note the fact that Wesley was here praising 'formalist' preachers. But Wesley by 1770 had retreated a good way from his early post-conversion strictures against 'works'. This is, nevertheless, an interesting and often stimulating approach to Wesley's theology and system of piety which deserves careful reading. One should also congratulate the Scarecrow Press for its enterprising selection of publications and fine book production.

HENRY D. RACK

Modern Religious Rebels by Stuart Mews (ed) (Epworth Press, 1993, pp.x, 262, £12.50. ISBN: 0 7162 0488 6)

To mark his seventieth birthday John Kent has been presented with a *estschrift* of thirteen important and interesting essays, informed by a single theme: religious rebels of one type or another, highly suitable for one who is held to be quite a rebel in his own right. Religious rebels fall into distinct categories by far the largest of which is rebels of the conservative sort. Quite apart from Newman (John Coulson) about whose alleged liberalism scholars will argue till Doomsday we find in this group Frederick Lucas of *The Tablet*, the Ultramontane writer and Irish nationalist whose vision for the Emerald Isle was not unlike de Valera's later on – contented peasant and craft communities policed by clerical autocrats – a not ignoble dream, but one which Lucas, happily for himself, did not live to see, as did the

Taoiseach, reduced to dust and ashes. We have too, Priscilla Sellon, of Anglican Sisterhood fame, shown by Sean Gill to have been an arch-conservative, a medievaliser in fact, her aim outside the convent to dispense superior culture to the very poor, a petty tyrant whom it is difficult to see as in any way a contributor to women's lib. A fascinating study of C.F. Andrews by Jeffrey Cox reveals another rather socially superior sort of Anglican, this time a missionary in India, with the self-assumed task of imparting Oxbridge culture to the burgeoning educated Hindu élite, realising in the fullness of time that the future belonged to the Congress movement and attaching himself as a kind of chaplain to the same. (The real radicals in this essay are the conversionist missionary societies who won over untouchables in their thousands – Andrews was rather troubled by them.) Then comes David Thompson on F.D. Maurice, another backward-looking rebel, resurrecting neo-Platonism as the key to the reinterpretation of Christianity which the nineteenth century was presumed to be demanding. Dimly now we begin to glimpse Rebellion's unacceptable face: the beetle-browed intolerance of a later Liberal Anglican establishment. Canon Collins follows. Haddon Willmer hints that the inspiration of this CND activist was his understandable unwillingness to see the rural and suburban England of his youth incinerated in a nuclear war. There is a touch of William Cobbett here and Willmer helps explain how current Green politics grew out of CND. Finally there is John Wesley himself (David Hempton) whose natural Toryism was balanced by a strong pragmatic commonsense and devotion to the principles of the Glorious Revolution, all this making for practical success, if not for intellectual consistency.

Then there are rebels whose crime in their opponents' eyes is the adoption of an ideology totally at variance with the one they professed at ordination. Hugh McLeod shows convincingly how the Roman Catholic authorities in turn-of-the-century New York fell out with Fr McGlynn, a truly turbulent priest, not so much because he became a disciple of Henry George but because he embraced a Whitmanesque American dream, of a society of a common men, free, brash, secular and egalitarian. It is hard not to feel sympathy for McGlynn's Archbishop.

There is a rebel here who proves a point. Edelmann (Reg Ward) is yet another illustration of how it was disaffected pietists who spawned the German enlightenment. There are also rebels who are frankly bizarre. Clyde Binfield (at his most winsome) tells of Vivian and Dorothy Pomeroy who presided over the penultimate phase of the ultra-liberal Greenfield Congregational Church, Bradford between 1909 and 1923, a pair who could well have escaped from the pages of that other great Bradfordian, Peter Simple.

There is even a rebel whom most might consider to be outside the Christian pale altogether until Henry Rack, stretching the parameters somewhat, lassoes him and draws him in again, demonstrating that Matthew Arnold's 'morality touched by emotion' is a viable interpretation of Christianity and has in fact been taken up by significant twentieth-century thinkers such as Braithwaite and Maurice Wiles. (And not only, we might add, by individuals: *The Bible Designed to be Read as Literature* (1937) (pure Matthew Arnold) had quite a cult following in its day, and now the Sea of Faith movement not only takes its name from Dover Beach, but,

appears to draw its theology from Arnold too.)

Two essays remain, H.J. Hanham's on 'Kent in context', a personal reflection of John's undergraduate formation, and Stuart Mews on John Day Thompson, the turn-of-the-century Primitive Methodist rebel. These deserve to be read together, for what we miss in Hanham is any reference to John's childhood in a Primitive Methodist household, exposed to the kind of influences which Mews brilliantly analyses. Whether or not we take Thompson to be the cause of the sea-change which came over the great movement or merely a symptom thereof, the characteristic features of Ranterism's Silver Age are here laid bare. Mews enables us to judge how much of the Primitive Methodist there is in John Kent's approach to history: the quizzical, probing, ransacking, myth-shattering style. Yet in his early forays into historical research, when he first got to grips with the major tradition of post-union Methodism, the iconclasm was subdued: he came to the Bunting era to analyse, he stayed to appreciate, even to admire, which is why some of us still think that *The Age of Disunity* is his best book.

What of the future? Will John, his hatchet work accomplished, now do as Hanham hopes, and give us his vision of a future world and the kind of Christianity, its cumbersome and unnecessary baggage left behind, which will travel light therein? Disconcertingly for those of us on the religious right this will probably turn out to be a variety of theological minimalism with a few Catholic trappings. (Just what Dr Erasmus ordered.) There will be plenty of rebels about then.

IAN SELLERS

Early American Methodism by Russell E. Richey. (Indiana University Press, 1991, pp.xxii, 137. No price quoted.)

This slender little book has given me pleasure out of all relation to its size, as much pleasure in fact as any work of Methodist history I have read for a long time. This fact alone is sufficient reason to urge members of this society to go to some trouble to get hold of it in the assurance that their pains will be well rewarded. The author, a research professor of church history at Duke University, does not seek to dazzle by offering new material (like so many theses which add little to knowledge and even less to understanding); he ruminates quietly upon things which are for the most part perfectly well known, but which come out looking refreshingly different as a result of his reflection upon them. He does, however, turn his back on some hackneyed questions such as the effect of transplanting Methodism to a New World context, the supposed transition from sect to denomination and so forth. His object is to write about early American Methodism from the bottom upwards, and his method is to distinguish four languages of Methodist discourse, which co-existed but were never harmonized, an evangelical and biblical language of 'melting', 'finding liberty' and the 'prosperity of Zion', a Wesleyan language of constitutional organisation, a largely Anglican language of episcopacy, and a somewhat later, republican language, which had its Kilhamite counterpart in England.

Methodist vernacular notions of community were set forth in the Quarterly Meeting which attracted throngs and worked its way through love-feast to revival; indeed Professor Richey holds that the camp-meeting was a device by which the next generation could persuade itself that nothing had changed when in fact Methodist organisation had become heavily routinized and the context in which it operated had also changed, in some ways beyond recognition. Thus a Methodism which had begun as a southern device to enable men to be English without being Anglican, had pulled down the establishment in Virginia, and had offered a thoroughly subversive alternative community in which black and white mixed in love, had now lost its anti-slavery witness, captured part of the ruling elite, and was stranded with anti-upper-crust moralisms now devoid of their original function. Equally the vernacular language of lovefeast and revival which gave a better account of Methodist hopes of Zion than the Reformation formulations of Wesleyan and Anglican provenance, but had not been appropriated theologically nor exploited to form a civic religion; to the early preachers 'America' was a continent, but what they created became an American religion in a sense quite unintended.

Professor Richey provides English readers with more than entertainment, with an invitation to reconsider what they know of domestic Methodist history. On two points especially it would be good to hear him further. English Quarterly Meetings seem never to have been quite the occasions for letting down the corporate hair that they were in America (American Quarterly Meetings are separately indexed as a distinct phenomenon in the *Lives of the Early Methodist Preachers*); why was this? And much of the Methodist vernacular which so delights him was what was known in Europe as 'The language of Canaan'. This was not Methodist in origin - Zinzendorf, for example regarded it as a means of escape from theological Babel - but how it began, and how it became so congenial to early Methodists is, so far as I know, unexplained. Whatever the answers to these questions, Professor Richey has mercifully steered the discussion away from the high Wesleyan doctrine of the pastoral office.

W. R. WARD

Thomas of Tonga. 1797-1881: the unlikely pioneer, by Janet Louisa Luckcock. (Methodist Publishing House for World Methodist Historical Society, nd (1990) pp.196, £8.40 ISBN: 0 946550 85 9)

I am defficient in Grammer, a sense of my own Ignorance casts me down, I am loath to speak in public because of it. The pain I feel has been deepened lately through two of my Brethren in the Ministry taking advantage of my defects. I need correction, I know, often, and I wish to be set right, but I do not think I deserve to be laughed at and triumphed over.

The lament which the young missionary recruit confided to his private journal is eloquent. It reflects a consciousness that rarely left him; genuine

humility and desperate fidelity to his calling combined with a hurtful sense of inferiority and a suspicion that people were getting at him. John Thomas was a village blacksmith from the Midlands catapulted into missionary service. He served in the island group which now forms the state of Tonga from 1826 to 1850 without a break, and again (though the period is barely mentioned in this book) from 1855 to 1859. For years he was chairman of a district which also included Fiji and Samoa. On any reckoning he is the single most important missionary in the history of Tonga. Tonga became a Methodist kingdom before the middle of the last century; and the story of the establishment of the kingdom, under the massive, if controversial figure of *Taufa' ahu* (baptized 'George' by Thomas, in compliment to the 'good old king' long deceased) is inseparable from that of the progress of Christianity. If George *Taufa' ahu* was Tonga's Saul, John Thomas was its Samuel.

Dr Luckcock's valuable study, originally a doctoral thesis for the Open University, is soundly based on Thomas's copious journals (official and private), and on other WMMS records, and has made use of two extensive manuscripts that Thomas wrote on Tongan (Christian) history and mythology. It concentrates rigorously on Thomas himself, and is straightforwardly chronological in method. This brings gains and losses. We get a vivid and sympathetic portrayal of the man (and – a bonus, this – of his wife Sarah, too) in his solid strengths and his patent limitations. We see all that he saw – kings, colleagues and committees – through his eyes, and frequently through no other. It is a coherent and convincing portrait, and in its latter end a rather sad one; for both the Tonga and the Methodism that this loyal, lonely man knew and loved best moved on, and left him standing. But we get little real sense of the interaction with Tongan society and religion (what is said on these matters is rather perfunctory) and thus of the dynamics of the situation in which Thomas operated. Even the place of Thomas's simplistic old-fashioned Toryism in the political and ecclesiastical development of Tonga is not closely examined. Indeed, Thomas is credited with an admiration for 'British democracy' (a term which would probably have made his flesh creep) and Wesleyan polity is described as 'democratic - hierarchical'.

Dr Luckcock tries, perhaps a little too hard, to deliver Thomas from his traducers, contemporary and modern. But she has accomplished something far more important. She has shown an ordinary, representative missionary of his day - and Thomas is a figure of transparent, sterling ordinariness - whose ministry, full of disappointments, covered a social and religious revolution and the emergence of an independent expression of the Christian faith in another culture. And that is the history of the missionary movement.

A. F. WALLS

William Arthur, First among Methodists by Norman W. Taggart. (Epworth Press) 1993, pp.viii, 184, £10.50. ISBN: 0 7162 0489 4)

Norman Taggart, Gordon Shaw, David R Hall, and Frank Whaling were among the group of missionaries with whom I sailed to India in October, 1962. Like most really able and intelligent men they were modest about their abilities and achievements. I was in the first flush of intellectual conceit at just having gained my London B.D., and it was left to others to tell me what outstanding scholars these men were. Norman Taggart's appreciation of William Arthur is written in characteristically modest vein. Apart from one implied reference to his own background as a former secretary in the Irish Council of Churches, a secretary in the Methodist Church Overseas Division, and as chairman of the Belfast District of the Methodist Church in Ireland, when he tells us that despite being a member of the Wesleyan Establishment William Arthur still retained his evangelistic fervour, Norman Taggart's personality is firmly subordinated to the task of making lucidly and comprehensively clear why William Arthur was regarded as the foremost Wesleyan minister of his generation. This aim is achieved with a series of thematic chapters on William Arthur as preacher, missionary, writer, evangelical, educationist, philosopher, and controversialist. These chapters are preceded by a short chronological account of his life, and succeeded by a chapter evaluating his personality. As an invalid of some five years standing with a steadily declining physical constitution, I was intrigued by the fact that William Arthur, whose career as a minister was dogged and handicapped with illness to such an extent that he was virtually given leave to work as and when he felt able, nevertheless found the strength and energy to make two strenuous journeys to North America as a Methodist delegate, and several demanding journeys to the south of France for the good of his health! An expression perhaps, in what was otherwise an exemplary character, of what John Kent once dubbed as 'the self regard of the saints.' One minor complaint is that the book tends to be a pedestrian read. Norman Taggart is an adventurous character. Where I was content to feel that I should be living and working among the people of Benares rather than sheltering in the security and comfort of the cantonment, Norman Taggart actually took his wife and family to live and work among the people in that part of South India where he was stationed. The book could have done with some adventurous phrases and flashes of Irish wit. Nevertheless, Dr. Taggart has put his fellow scholars, and all serious students of Methodist history, in his debt with this comprehensive and meticulously researched account of William Arthur's life, thought and contribution to late Victorian Wesleyan Methodism. It merits a place on all our bookshelves.

CHARLES GOODWIN

John Wesley on the Origins of Evil by Barry Bryant (Occasional Paper No. 7 of the Wesley Fellowship, 1992, pp.ii, 26, £2.25 available from Cherry Tree Cottage, Glaston Park, Glaston, Oakham, LE15 9BW).

This scholarly work is the 1992 Annual Lecture of the Wesley

Fellowship, by Dr. Barry Bryant, who has been associated with the Church of the Nazarene. Under the heading 'The Aesthetic Theme' he explores the evil in nature, ascribed by Wesley to the fall of angels, and makes the interesting remark that 'Wesley quotes Scripture and Milton side by side in such a way that only the scholars of the Bible or Milton could tell them apart' (p. 15 n. 64). Then under the heading 'Wesley's Moral Theme' he emphasises human free will. Dr. Bryant does not discuss the relationship of these two themes nor plausibility of such a two-part theodicy today, though he observes that a more modern version of the mythological explanation was put forth by N.P. Williams in 1924 (p.25). He concludes that as the soul was for Wesley the source of free will, the body was morally neutral; and therefore Wesley could argue for the possibility of entire sanctification in this life. Thus an aspect of theology wrongly regarded as trivial had in fact important practical consequences.

A. RAYMOND GEORGE

The Counting House. Thomas Thompson of Hull (1754-1828) and his family by Arthur R.B. Robinson (York: William Sessions, 1992, pp. 120, £10.95. ISBN: 1 85072 102 5)

Hull was a centre of one of the great Evangelical 'cousinhoods' with the Milners and the Wilberforces among the best-known. Thomas Thompson fits into this banking and commercial world. A 'church Methodist', he opposed separation from the Church of England when Wesley died (the Hull circular of May, 1791). He was the first local preacher to enter Parliament where he served from 1807 to 1818. The first lay treasurer of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society, he was typical of the lay aristocracy who supported Jabez Bunting and others who sought to refloat Wesleyanism financially. Thompson's wife - Philothea Briggs - was the daughter of William Briggs, an early Book Steward and related to the Perronet family whose links with the Wesleys were very close. In Parliament Thompson was a valuable ally for Thomas Allan and Joseph Butterworth (1770-1826) in the 'Sidmouth Bill' debates of 1810-12 and we find him speaking about a minimum wage for weavers and against the national lottery! Mr Robinson, in a well researched and beautifully illustrated book, conveys the world of his ancestor well and we would agree with Robert Southey that it was men like Thompson who enabled Methodism to survive and grow.

JOHN MUNSEY TURNER

Gwennap Pit, John Wesley's Amphitheatre: A Cornish Pardon, by Thomas Shaw (Busveal Methodist Church Council, 1992, pp.72, £2.50. ISBN: 0 9520163 0 3)

Himself an immigrant, Thomas Shaw has made Cornish Methodist history his study and Gwennap Pit his speciality. This must be the definitive

book on the subject: anything that you can want to know, or that can be known, is there. The book is in seven chapters: 'The Scarred Landscape', 'John Wesley's Amphitheatre', 'The Pit Remodelled', 'Whit Monday at the Pit', 'Spring Bank Holiday', 'Busveal' and 'Pilgrims' (though this becomes 'Gwennap Pit Today' in the notes. But one could wish a bibliography at some point had spelt 'WB' and 'Gaz' in full.) But these seven chapter heads adequately summarize the contents of the book, which is illustrated by photographs old and new, early plans and prints. One passage deals with the question, how many people can get in and about the pit? Mr Shaw casts doubt, as many have done, on Wesley's estimate and quotes R.R.Blewett's *very* modest modern estimate; though I seem to recollect that when I was present for the first time in 1951 the police estimate gave a figure of 10,000.

To pick out errors is almost churlish. But one notices that Mr Shaw speaks of Busveal chapel as having three windows on either side (p.53) when all his photographs show but two; and a passage on page 18 suggests that the grass 'seats' were constructed in 1806-7, while Thomas Wills speaks of 'circular benches' in 1781; and on page 52 we find both 'Busveal' and 'Bosveal'. But these are minor points. To all lovers of Cornish Methodism the book will be warmly welcomed and treasured; - and if the sub-title, 'A Cornish Pardon' puzzles you, read A.K. Hamilton Jenkins's explanation on page 31.

OLIVER A. BECKERLEGGE

Local Histories

Shelford Road, Radcliffe-on-Trent Methodist Church 1893-1993 Souvenir Booklet (40pp). Copies, no price stated, from: D Harrison, 5 Rushcliffe Avenue, Radcliffe-on-Trent, Nottingham, NG12 2AF.

Lichfield Methodist Church 1892-1992. Centenary History. (33pp). Copies, £1.50 plus postage, from Michael Butler, 14 Longbridge Road, Lichfield, WS14 9EL.

History and Mystery in Sampford Peverell [Devon] by Roger Thorne A4 (22pp). Copies, £1.50 post free from the author at 31 St Mary's Park, Ottery St Mary, Devon, EX11 1JA.

Chilla [Devon] Methodist Chapel Centenary Year 1893-1993 by Roger Thorne (20pp). Copies, £1.00 post free from the author.

St John's Methodist Church, Settle, Centenary 1893-1993. (24pp). Copies, from H. Longbottom, 10 Town Head Avenue, Settle, North Yorks, BD24 9RQ, no price stated.

The Story of Warwick Methodism... by Paul Bolitho (vi,66pp). Copies, £5.45 post free from the author at 17 Oken Court, Warwick, CV34 4DF.

The Dunstable Methodist Circuit. One hundred and fifty years of witness 1843-1993. ed. Colin Bourne (viii, 190pp, inc 120 illus). Copies, £5.95 plus postage, from J B Stevens, 12 Friars Walk, Dunstable, Beds., LU6 3JA.

Nearly One Hundred and Forty-Two Years (Gold Street Methodist Church, Northampton) by Alan Bowles (A4, 80pp). Copies, £3.25 post free, from the author at 69 Broadway, Abington, Northampton, NN1 4SG.

The History of Tibberton [Salop] Methodist Church 1843-1993 (24pp) by John H Lenton. Copies from Mr G. Fletcher, 45 Mason's Place, Newport, Shropshire, TF10 7JS, no price stated.

Sermons and Stocking Frames (Methodism in Ruddington) by Stuart B Jennings. Copies, £3.00 post free from the author at 180 Loughborough Road, Ruddington, Nottingham NG11 6LF.

A Brief History of the Methodists in Ponders End (74pp). Copies from P. Charters, 10 Kennedy Avenue, Enfield, Middlesex, EN3 4PA, price £4.75 post free.

Irwell Vale: A Centenary History of the Methodist Church by John Simpson (38pp). Helmsore Local History Society, 1993, price £2.95.

Methodism in the Staffordshire Moorlands by John Leach (67pp). 2nd ed. 1993. Copies from 43 Bath Street, Leek, Staffs, ST13 6JQ, no price stated.

Prees Green (ex-Primitive) Methodist Church Commemorative History. by Pat Edwards (A4, 45pp). Copies from the author, 1 Eckford Park, Wem, Shrewsbury, SY4 5HL, price £3.00 post free.

NOTES & QUERIES

1468. GREEN'S COPY OF HIS BIBLIOGRAPHY

The Newberry Library in Chicago possesses a copy of the second edition of Richard Green's bibliography of *The Works of John and Charles Wesley* (London, 1906) which originally belonged to Green and was annotated by him. I made a note of these additional items in the hope that they may be of value.

An introductory note explains that he did not own copies of 75, 99, 109, 180, 342 & 370. He also notes that the following items were wholly or partly in manuscript - 244, 299, 328, 332A, 374, 398 & 402. Four post-1791 items have been added at the end of the books (418-421).

The remaining entries of interest are:

40. *Hymns & Sacred Poems*, 1742. 'The corrections in pale ink are written by Charles Wesley.'

222. *Paradise Lost*, 1763. 'The gift of John Wesley to Elizabeth Emwood, 1774.'

297. Herbert's *Sacred Poems*, 1773. 'The Gift of Charles Wesley to Mr. Harvey Mortimer.'

369A. *Birstal House*, 1783. 'containing original letter on the subject signed by J. Wesley.'

398. *Dublin minutes*, 1788. 'in M.S. bound with 332a etc.'

EDWIN WELCH

1469. PRIMITIVE METHODIST POSTCARDS

In 1984 (Note 1379) J.S. English queried how many official sets of postcards were published for the Primitive Methodist centenary. He noted that the Conference Handbook for 1907 advertised centenary publications including 'Centenary picture postcards, price 1d per packet of six'. The vast range of items produced for the 1907-1910 centenary is worth a study in itself, for it included ceramics and books as well as postcards. The *Primitive Methodist Magazine* for 1907, where it survives in unbound condition with wrappers, contains advertisements which make it clear that there were seven sets of the 'Centenary Picture Postcards' and a further set of 'Real Photo Post Cards', all produced by the Book Steward, Edwin Dalton.

The 'Real Photo Post Cards' consist of seven sepia portraits of Connexional officials: the Rev. G. Armstrong, organising secretary to the Centenary Committee; the Rev. G. E. Butt; the Rev. James Flanagan; W.P. Hartley; Professor A.S. Peake; E.C. Rawlings, the connexional solicitor and the Rev J. Travis. Regarding the 'Centenary Picture Postcards', sets 5, 6 and 7 are printed in black and white and each set has six views of the Centenary Camp Meeting held at Mow Cop in 1907. I have not been able to identify satisfactorily which cards make up each of these three sets nor which people are on the various stands. However, many of the views are reproduced in *The Church that Found Herself* by J. Day Thompson (1912).

Sets 1-4 are colour tinted and Mr English has largely identified set 1 which consists of: Hugh Bourne; James Bourne; Bemersley Farm; Fordhays Farm; the first connexional chapel and Englesea Brook cemetery. Set 2 has postcards of Aliwal North Church and Training School; Thomas Bateman, lay President in 1857 and 1867; a native wedding at Santo Isabel P.M. Church; Hartley College and 'Sacred Corner' in Hull General Cemetery, where William Clowes is buried. Set 3 consists of William Clowes; Mow Cop; Burslem a century ago (c1807); Joseph Pointon's House; Kidsgrove

Colliery and the first P.M. pulpit, today one of the exhibits at Englesea Brook. Set 4 contains postcards of the Rev. G. Lamb; the Rev. Colin C. McKechnie; missionary graves; Tunstall Jubilee Chapel; the Centenary Motto Card, which was available also in a larger format, and a facsimile of the 1811 preaching plan.

At least some of these cards appear to have been on sale at the Centenary Camp Meeting in 1907, although it is unlikely that sets 5-7 were available. I possess a card of Professor Peake postmarked 'Mow Cop, 25 May 1907'. In addition I have a postcard of the 'Primitive Methodist Memorial Chapel, Mow Cop' sent home by my grandfather and postmarked 'Mow Cop, 20 June 1910'. On this Monday a camp meeting was held in conjunction with the Tunstall Conference. Was this card a piece of local initiative or were further official sets published in 1910?

Over eighty years later it is of interest to know how many of these cards have survived. In the Englesea Brook Museum are examples from all of these official sets but no set is complete. The Society's Yorkshire Branch has recently been given a complete set of the seven 'Real Photo Post Cards'.

D. COLIN DEWS

1470 THE SINGERS' PEW

SEVERAL of the rural Primitive Methodist chapels in the Berwick circuit, Northumberland (formerly in the Lowick PM circuit) had the unusual feature of a 'singers' pew', similar to the Welsh '*set fawr*'. This was a pew forming a square around the pulpit, facing inwards. The occupants, like the deacons in a Welsh chapel, would turn to face the congregation during the hymns. A very small communion table was contained within the square, and at a communion service the whole of a small congregation would sit in the pew, around the table, as used to be done at Donaldson's Lodge Chapel, near Coldstream. Refurbishment at Donaldson's Lodge has now removed this feature. Although the work has been carefully done and the original pulpit has been retained, with a communion table on a small platform in front of it, this has removed the last example of this type of pew from the Methodist chapels in the area. Others have been removed during much earlier refurbishments, and the other extant example, at Allerdean near Berwick, is in a chapel which has closed and is being converted into a house. The practice of choir singers sitting round the pulpit facing the preacher, but turning round for the hymns, is still followed in the circuit's Eyemouth chapel, over the Border, but chairs provide the seating.

ALAN BEITH

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1471. A WESLEYAN PEACE INITIATIVE IN BATH

In the city of Bath, which in pre-1914 days contained a large number of retired Service officers, anti-German feelings were strong even in Edwardian times. By 1909 enthusiasm for recruitment into volunteer military organisations, led by Lord Roberts, had reached fever pitch.

The Wesleyans boldly expressed the minority sentiment when the Rev Stephen Burrow, the Superintendent Minister, secured the December 1909 Quarterly meeting's support for his resolution appealing to all classes in Germany and Britain to promote a mutual spirit of goodwill and friendship despite attempts by sections of the Press to foment strife between the nations, and expressing a desire that the bond of peace between the two peoples might be preserved and strengthened. This action may not have achieved much but it demonstrated that the Wesleyans were already aware of the dangerous trend in public feelings, and did not shirk from taking the unpopular view.

BRUCE D. CROFTS

1472. MORMONS AND METHODISTS

D. W. Bushby in his introduction to the 1851 Religious Census in Bedfordshire (Bedfordshire Historical Record Society, 1975) notes the success of Mormon missions in the 1840s and adds that 'Many of their early preachers and adherents were in fact, former Methodists'. I would be glad to hear from anyone who has local evidence supporting or illustrating this assertion.

JOHN A. VICKERS

'Methodism in its cultural milieu' was the title of the WHS/WMHS international Conference held at Cambridge in July 1993. The major papers will shortly be published from Westminster College, Oxford as the first in a proposed series of 'Westminster Wesley Studies'. Copies (£7 post free in the UK) should be ordered by March 31 from the Rev Tim Macquiban, Westminster College, Oxford, OX2 9AT.

The Longman Companion to Victorian Fiction edited by John Sutherland (paperback edition 1990) gives a wealth of information about minor as well as major authors including a number of Methodists, among whom are 'John Ackworth', Ellen Thorneycroft Fowler and the Hocking brothers. Of perhaps greater interest are the host of now-forgotten writers with Methodist backgrounds such as John Edward Jenkins (1838-1910), son of a Wesleyan missionary, author of *Pantalas* (1897), the original novel of the 'Elephant Man'.