

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

Proceedings

OF THE

Wesley Historical Society

Editor: REV. WESLEY F. SWIFT.

Volume XXX

December 1955

JOHN WESLEY AND PROVERBS

A Concluding Essay with special reference to Proverb Lexicography

FOUR articles on Wesley's use of proverbs and proverbial phrases have appeared in *Proceedings*. They cover respectively the Letters, Sermons, Journals and Treatises. Each of these articles gave a numerical analysis of the proverbs, numbering four hundred and fifty, plus hundreds of allusions, which had been noted so far. These figures are now rendered approximate only, a fresh examination of Wesley's writings having revealed another hundred or so proverbs. It has also produced further instances of proverbs already noticed. The literature, being that of a virile movement, shows these figures of speech in a life-setting, which makes their value for literary history important. The more carefully one looks at the matter the more impressive becomes Wesley's dexterity and originality in handling this large stock-in-trade of common speech.

The main purpose of this paper is to view the newly-discovered material with the aid of the *Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs*, second edition.

I

It will be convenient, first, to glance again at some proverbs mentioned in previous articles.

Wesley's use in a sermon of the phrase "You may begin at the lowest step" was referred to in *Proceedings*, xxviii, p. 26. A letter dated January 1756 (*Letters*, iii, p. 364) contains an earlier and more complete version of the proverb. Wesley says to William Law: "Am I then to step first on the highest round of the ladder?" It would appear that the proverb "He who would climb the ladder must begin at the bottom" is in this context linked with another proverb, "Crosses are the ladders that lead to heaven", referred to in *Proceedings*, xxix, p. 175.

It was observed in *Proceedings*, xxvi, p. 130, that Wesley's words

"If we think with the wise we must speak with the vulgar" would make a good definition of a proverb. According to the *O.D.E.P.* (p. 651) the phrase is one, and Aristotle is noticed as commending this style of writing. Wesley's rule is but proved by an interesting exception found in *Works*, viii, p. 159,¹ where he scorns the "minute wisdom" of those who reject the doctrine of Particular Providence. He states that it would be "wisest for once to think with the vulgar".

It was asserted in *Proceedings*, xxix, p. 65, that Wesley exemplified but did not use the proverb "the best thing for the inside of the man is the outside of a horse". His advice to Fletcher in 1776 is, to say the least, in line with the proverb, antedating the *O.D.E.P.*'s only example by 130 years: "Remember that riding on horseback is the best of all exercise for you" (*Works*, xi, p. 304). Twelve years earlier he had written: "I must be on horseback for life if I would be healthy" (*Letters*, iv, p. 255).

The phrase "bear no more sail than necessary" was mentioned in *Proceedings*, xxix, p. 65, as used by Samuel Wesley. It should be added that John himself used the proverb, and in its correct form. In a letter to an exuberant young lady he suggests that her sickness will have value since she "was in danger of having more sail than ballast" (*Letters*, v, p. 277).

The *Journal* mentions an Irish proverb, "no gown, no crown" (*Journal*, iii, p. 338). The reader is referred to *Proceedings*, xxix, pp. 64 and 94, for discussion of the matter. The similar proverb "no cross, no crown" does not occur verbatim in Wesley's writings, due perhaps to the fact that he had a horror of religious jargon. He believed implicitly in this law of Christ's Kingdom, but he avoided religious clap-trap when he wrote to Ebenezer Blackwell: "take up the cross till you receive the crown" (*Letters*, ii, p. 114).

Wesley used some proverbs oftener than was at first thought. These items, chiefly of lexicographical interest, are here simply listed.

1. "A friend will help at a dead lift." Wesley's use of this phrase in *Letters*, ii, p. 348, is fifteen years earlier than the instance used in *Proceedings*, xxix, p. 63.

2. "No man ought to be judge in his own cause." This occurs in *Works*, x, p. 340, an instance which is eleven years earlier than the reference used in *Proceedings*, xxvi, p. 131.

3. "One acre of performance is worth twenty of the land of promise." This is referred to in *Proceedings*, xxix, p. 64, from the *Journal*, iv, p. 280 (not 290). The proverb occurs in a letter written in 1749 (*Letters*, ii, p. 348)—nine years earlier.

4. "What has been may be." John, in these words, encourages his brother Charles to believe that God will still bless their work (*Letters*, iv, p. 108). This use in 1760 is fourteen years earlier than that quoted in *Proceedings*, xxix, p. 176.

¹ The references to the *Works* are to the third edition, 1829.

5. "A copy of his countenance." This was noted in *Proceedings*, xxix, p. 177, as having occurred in *Works*, xi, p. 493, i.e. 1779. Wesley used the proverb at least seven times, e.g. *Letters*, iv, p. 107, i.e. 1760. It would seem to have been in common use in the eighteenth century.

6. "A blot is not a blot until it be hit". This proverb, discussed in *Proceedings*, xxix, p. 171, is used by Wesley eight or nine times. If *Letters*, ii, p. 213 is compared with a parallel passage in *Works*, viii, p. 360, it will be seen that the latter—the earliest of all—reads "blow" for "blot". In all other places the word is "blot". In most cases Wesley is repudiating the unchristian love of exposing or "hitting" people's moral failures or weaknesses.

II

Turning now to those proverbs which are the special concern of this paper, we may dwell for a moment upon some very common phrases. All these are noted in the *O.D.E.P.* The phrase "to beg the question" drops from Wesley's pen scores of times, e.g. *Letters*, ii, p. 63. The hackneyed "last but not least" can be found twisted one way in *Letters*, iii, p. 204, and another in *Letters*, vi, p. 16. Phrases like "harping on one string" (e.g. Sermon CII, *Works*, vii, p. 161) and "sink or swim" (e.g. *Letters*, iii, p. 58) are frequently used. In several places Wesley has recourse to the phrase "set by the ears". The most interesting of these is in *Works*, xi, p. 124, where it expresses the disruption worked amongst Christians by the Devil. The Devil figures largely in proverb literature, and Wesley's name for him in this place (p. 123), i.e. "Old Serpent", is itself a proverb. The cliché "short and sweet" springs to his mind with delightful irony in relation to his opponent Mr. Hill (*Works*, x, p. 445).

There are many idiomatic figures so common that they pass unnoticed. Wesley often succeeds in lighting up even these. For example, he takes the saying "to eat one's heart out" and applies it not to disappointment, or anything of that kind, but to inactivity arising from being ashamed of the gospel—this eats out the heart of religion (*Letters*, iii, p. 71, and *Journal*, vi, p. 316). A similar idea is conveyed in the *Advice to a Soldier* (*Works*, xi, p. 199) by the words "Are they not vipers gnawing thy heart?", which recall the snake of Æsop's fable.

A second example is the Bible phrase "to heap coals of fire upon the head". Its correct use was noticed in *Proceedings*, xxviii, p. 3. In the tract headed *Predestination Calmly Considered* (*Works*, x, p. 228), Wesley takes the Pauline figure for returning good for evil and makes it do service to delineate the fiendishness of the predestinarians' God. The idea of a gracious bestowal of undeserved good is dismissed, and its terms are taken literally and related to undeserved suffering in hell, by divine appointment. He could hardly have pilloried his opponents' malevolent God better, or more forcefully expressed his own scorn of such a being.

The Bible proverbs amongst this newly-discovered material may be brought together at this point. From the Book of Proverbs come the following: "A scorner seeketh wisdom and findeth it not" (Sermon XI, *Works*, vi, p. 442); "In a multitude of words there wanteth not sin"—a biblical sanction against what he calls pious chit-chat (*Works*, xi, p. 432); "the unhappy contention which cometh of strife" (*Works*, xi, p. 121); "righteousness exalteth a nation" (*Works*, xi, p. 125); "O train me up in this good way, that when I am old I may not depart from it" (*Works*, xi, p. 220).

The Old Testament proverb "Tell it not in Gath" is used at least half a dozen times. Even this is given a characteristic turn in a letter where "Constantinople" is substituted for "Gath" in order to shame a so-called Christian country by comparison with the Turks (*Letters*, v, p. 351). Incidentally Wesley's use of the proverb, without quotation marks, is five years earlier than the first literary reference (Richardson, 1751) in the *O.D.E.P.*

The following come from the New Testament: "Evil communications corrupt good manners" (e.g. *Letters*, ii, p. 31), an instance which antedates the *O.D.E.P.*'s first reference, apart from Scripture, by eighty-five years. In half a dozen places can be found the proverb "Never be weary in well-doing". An example of his informal use of it occurs in *Letters*, v, p. 120, in 1768. The *O.D.E.P.* gives only Collections of Proverbs and its biblical origin as references. The proverb "A prophet is not without honour save in his own country" is used in connexion with a stationing problem in *Letters*, vi, p. 319. But the *Journal* (v, p. 504) mentions a happy case, to describe which the proverb has to be reversed.

Wesley used the proverbial "sufficient unto the day" with the kind of freedom which has long been customary. For example, in the *Journal* (vi, p. 497) it is used of the labours of a day; in Sermon XLII (*Works*, vi, p. 42) it is used with the word "grace" to inculcate a day-to-day holiness. The *O.D.E.P.* gives Scott, 1824, as the first literary reference.

The proverb "Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's" is found in *Works*, viii, p. 238, applied to the patriotism of the Methodists.

III

The appearances of proverbs upon the stage of literature, their fortunes, and in some cases their demise, is an intriguing study. Wesley's writings afford evidence that the earliest appearance of some proverbs has not yet been recorded. All the items listed in this section antedate the earliest examples respectively offered by the *O.D.E.P.*

1. In a racy letter to Charles, John ejaculates: "My wife continues in an amazing temper. Miracles are not ceased" (*Letters*, v, p. 21). The usual form of the proverb is "Wonders will never cease". Wesley here gives the saying in a pathetic real-life setting; it antedates the *O.D.E.P.*'s reference to Garrick by ten years.

2. The proverb about "waiting for dead men's shoes" is used in a letter to an Anglican clergyman (*Letters*, v, p. 293). It would seem to condemn what Wesley considered to be an unworthy reliance upon preferment. At any rate the *O.D.E.P.* gives Scott, 1815, as its first instance. Wesley's letter affords an instance forty-four years earlier, i.e. 1771.

3. In a letter about the needs of one of his preachers (*Letters*, v, p. 334) the proverbial phrase "waste not, want not" is twisted and has its clauses torn apart. This man, Wesley says, is frugal—he will waste nothing. All the same, in spite of the proverb, he may still want. This Wesley is anxious to prevent. The society must see that his needs are met. This instance of the use of the proverb, in 1772, is twenty-four years earlier than that from Maria Edgeworth given in the *O.D.E.P.*

4. Wesley is often cryptic and at his wittiest when writing to his closest associates. A short letter to Joseph Benson (*Letters*, v, p. 178) opens with the quip "All is well. We have no need to 'dispute about a dead horse'." Behind the letter lay a situation the tension of which had just eased. Two possible explanations of the phrase spring to mind: (a) that it is a simple variant of the proverb "to flog a dead horse"; (b) that Wesley has fused with this proverb the further proverb "to dispute about the shadow of an ass", which goes back to a story of Demosthenes. On the whole the latter is the more reasonable. Wesley's point is that the matter is not now worth arguing about, and not the futility of trying to revive an extinct subject. Whichever explanation is preferred, both are earlier than the first dates respectively given in the *O.D.E.P.*, which in the case of (a) is 1879, and of (b) is 1876. Wesley's letter is dated over a hundred years earlier.

5. The proverb "one thing at a time" is cautiously offered to a correspondent as indicating mental strength (*Letters*, v, p. 299, i.e. 1772). The letter is in fact a little exposition of Christian practical wisdom. The first reference offered by way of example of the use of this proverb in the *O.D.E.P.* is Sydney Smith, 1825.

6. The proverbial "Nothing so bad but it might have been worse" is seen with reference to an actual situation, though with a little adaptation of phraseology, in the account of a local controversy in Pembrokeshire (*Journal*, v, p. 230, i.e. 1767). Wesley remarks that his followers, by swallowing the bait, had "made a bad matter worse". The *O.D.E.P.* has not traced the proverb back beyond 1876.

7. In two places Wesley calls upon the proverb "Every sin brings its own punishment with it", and sets his own stamp upon it. The cumulative effect of sin upon the soul is vividly set forward in the words "One sin will punish another till the day of grace is at an end" (*Letters*, iii, p. 164, and Sermon LXXVII, *Works*, vii, p. 4). What Wesley says is that the wages of sin is more sin, a present dastardly punishment which makes a man a wretch. The *O.D.E.P.*'s first literary reference in the strict sense is dated 1824. The letter just mentioned was written in 1756.

8. One of the first sermons Wesley ever wrote (*Works*, vii, p. 468) contains a proverb in stiffer dress than those of a later date. Having spoken of the uncertainty of life as a gloomy prospect he adds: "let us immediately recur to the bright side". The proverb "Look on the bright side" is one of those frequently heard in speech but not easily found in literature. Wesley's sermon antedates the *O.D.E.P.*'s first instance by 140 years.

9. The proverb "To prove that black is white" occurs in *Works*, ix, p. 220. Wesley is here enumerating various ranks and professions amongst men in order to emphasize the extent of corruption—sin in mankind. He incorporates here a paragraph, perhaps from Cowley, which is full of delicious irony about the legal profession. Wesley himself frequently hints that honest lawyers were very rare birds. This quotation states that lawyers are paid to prove that white is black and black is white. This instance of the use of the proverb is six years earlier than the *O.D.E.P.*'s sole reference. If the paragraph is properly a quotation it must be dated earlier still.

IV

Collections of proverbs assemble the materials upon some simple plan, making more interesting and informative arrangements easier. A dictionary on historical principles will seek to furnish true literary instances wherever possible. This section of the essay will suggest several Wesley proverbs to set alongside the lexicographical authorities offered by the *O.D.E.P.*

1. "Puff not against the wind." (*O.D.E.P.*, p. 523—Camden, 1614.) Wesley sets down in the *Journal* (iii, p. 306) that one of his arch-enemies had given up the futile struggle. He had been driven to assert that "one may as well blow against the wind". John was himself reduced to similar impotence with respect to certain moods of his brother Charles (*Letters*, v, p. 19, i.e. 1766).

2. "Touch me not on the sore heel." (*O.D.E.P.*, p. 666—Ferguson's and Kelly's *Collections*.) A clerical opponent had resented Wesley's charge that he was amongst those who love pleasure more than God. The charge is delicately maintained in the proverbial phrases, linked naturally enough: "I doubt they touch a sore point; I am afraid the shoe pinches" (*Letters*, v, p. 246, i.e. 1771).

3. "The first step is the only difficulty." (*O.D.E.P.*, p. 620—Withal's and Clarke's *Collections*.)

4. "Such beginning, such end." (*O.D.E.P.*, p. 31—Heywood's *Collection*.) With these two proverbs Wesley opens a letter to a lady who was about to be married (*Letters*, vii, p. 166, i.e. 1783). Sayings of this kind take free forms. Wesley here speaks of the importance of the first step, not of its difficulty. The other proverb appears in its workaday dress: "begin exactly as you hope to go on". This occurs also in *Letters*, v, p. 132, i.e. 1769.

5. "Wavering as the wind." (*O.D.E.P.*, p. 695—Heywood's

Collection.) In *Letters*, v, p. 152, i.e. 1769, the phrase "variable as the wind" is used to express the state of unregenerate human nature, as distinct from life governed by the fixed principle of religion.

6. "Better be happy than wise." (*O.D.E.P.*, p. 38—Heywood's and Ferguson's *Collections.*) This is not Wesley's philosophy, of course, but in three places he clearly has the proverb in mind. He comes nearest to verbal similarity at the point where he is farthest from its moralism. In his *Compendium of Logic* (*Works*, xiv, pp. 165 and 174) he illustrates one of the propositional forms by saying "If he is wise, then he is happy". The other references are in Latin, and suggest that the maxim may be classical. In Sermon LXX (*Works*, vi, p. 424) he takes up the challenge that the doctrine of perfection is an error. In asserting that those who hold it are "*felices errore suo*—happy in their mistake", he is not by any means agreeing that they are mistaken. Quite the contrary. His meaning is illustrated by the remaining reference (*Letters*, v, p. 251). Here Wesley says that if Methodists are deceived, as his critics asserted, it was into keeping the golden rule. That being so, it is better to be happy (and wise) in the Methodist sense than wise in the anti-Methodist sense.

7. "If you put nothing into your purse, you can take nothing out." (*O.D.E.P.*, p. 526—Fuller.) A more idiomatic form of this proverb is found in a letter to Charles Wesley (*Letters*, v, p. 269, i.e. 1771). This is one of the rare places in Wesley's writings where ambiguity exists. It appears likely, from the context, that his meaning is that since some sort of a doctrine of merit is in Scripture it simply has to be accepted: "We cannot put out what we never put in" (cf. *ibid.*, p. 264). Whatever view is taken of its meaning, the literary use of the proverb, with a characteristic twist, remains.

8. The last item under this heading is the proverb "It is good to nip the briar in the bud." (*O.D.E.P.*, p. 453—Kelly, etc.) A pious clergyman, whom Wesley does not name, uses the colloquial form of the proverb to assert the value of Sunday-schools in checking evil tendencies amongst children (*Works*, xi, p. 336, i.e. 1786).

V

In this division of the subject, nine common proverbs and three with a more distinguished pedigree are mustered because they could be employed to fill large gaps in the *O.D.E.P.*'s instances.

1. "Blind men can judge no colours." (*O.D.E.P.*, p. 51.) In Sermon CXIII on "Walking by sight and by faith" (*Works*, vii, p. 263) Wesley repudiates the ability of men of the world to estimate spiritual experience. They are, he says, bound to dismiss this as mere day-dreaming. Not content with the proverb as it stands, he describes his worldly-wise critics as "men born blind". The phrase may be simply a recollection of St. John ix, but it may be a reference to their unregenerate state. In any case their total incapacity to reason about light and colours is asserted. The *O.D.E.P.* has no example between 1618 and 1908.

2. "The darkest hour is that before the dawn." (*O.D.E.P.*, p. 129.) This proverb is common enough in speech but not in writing. It occurs in one of Grimshaw's letters, written in 1760, and incorporated in the *Journal* (iv, p. 498). With reference to believers' struggles after full redemption, Grimshaw offers encouragement in the terms of this proverb. Linked with it is another proverb: "Man's extremity is God's opportunity". The *O.D.E.P.* gives instances of the former dated 1650 and 1849.

3. "To be at death's door." (*O.D.E.P.*, p. 134—references from Shakespeare and Trollope.) Only once does Wesley use this figure of speech (*Journal*, vi, p. 428, i.e. 1783); his usual ways of expressing this idea are "one foot in the grave" and "on the brink of the grave".

4. "Every man has his faults." (*O.D.E.P.*, p. 178.) In Sermon IX (*Works*, v, p. 101) we read: "Every man has his infirmity". Another sermon (*Works*, vi, p. 163) gives it as the teaching of some refined heathens that "no man is born without vices of some kind or other". This is written in both Latin and English in *Works*, ix, p. 306, and Seneca is referred to in the immediate context. The *O.D.E.P.* has no strictly literary instance after Shakespeare.

5. "Hand over head." (*O.D.E.P.*, p. 273.) The root idea of this proverb is that of thoughtlessness or recklessness. In a letter to the press (*Letters*, iv, p. 126, i.e. 1760) Wesley thus alludes to the assertions of one of his controversialists. The *O.D.E.P.* offers an instance dated c. 1655 and another dated 1839.

6. "One man's meat is another man's poison." (*O.D.E.P.*, p. 416.) Wesley paraphrases rather than gives this proverb (Sermon LXVIII, *Works*, vii, p. 18): "One man that drinks a cup of wholesome wine may be as sick as another that drinks poison." The maxim is then subjected to the searchlight of John's logic. This later eighteenth-century instance would reduce the *O.D.E.P.*'s gap stretching from 1721 to 1908.

7. "Your money burns [a hole] in your pocket." (*O.D.E.P.*, p. 428.) Here, in a letter to his sister, is an excellent example of Wesley's free phraseology (*Letters*, v, p. 108, i.e. 1768). He says that he gets rid of money as quickly as possible lest it should burn—his heart. The *O.D.E.P.* gives no example of its use between 1573 and 1846.

8. "Roar like a bull." (*O.D.E.P.*, p. 545.) This proverbial simile, with the addition of the words "in a net", is used in the *Calm Address* (*Works*, xi, p. 135, i.e. 1777) to describe the rabid anti-British virulence of the Americans, which Wesley so strongly deprecates. Elsewhere (*Works*, xi, p. 292) he slips into writing the phrase "he roared like a lion". The proverb occurs also in the *Journal* (iv, p. 319, i.e. 1759) in a document which Wesley incorporates at that point. The gap in the *O.D.E.P.*'s list of instances extends from 1545 to 1840.

9. "Take it or leave it." (*O.D.E.P.*, p. 640.) This phrase is twice used in the *Letters* (iv, p. 182, i.e. 1762, and v, p. 264, i.e. 1771) in connexion with literary expressions. The proverb means "that or nothing", allowing only that option. Wesley intends by it a wider choice, i.e. "this phrase or some other, I don't mind". The gap in *O.D.E.P.* extends from 1664 to 1930.

The three more dignified proverbs to be examined under this heading are:

1. "Art consists in concealing art." (*O.D.E.P.*, p. 14.) Twice in writing to Samuel Furly on the subject of style Wesley gives his advice in the terms of this proverb. Dr. Middleton's writings break this canon; his "art glares, and therefore shocks a man of true taste" (*Letters*, iv, p. 232). The Latin *Artis est celare artem* is given in the other letter (iv, p. 257). The *Dictionary* gives Swift's application of the proverb to oratory as an instance. Its next reference is dated 1907.

2. "No herb will cure love." The *O.D.E.P.* (p. 292) traces this back to the Latin of Ovid. In the preface to his Abridgement of Dr. Cadogan's book on *Gout and Chronic Diseases*, Wesley speaks of those disorders of heart and mind which medicine cannot heal. "The poor patient must still cry out as did those, two thousand years ago, *Hei mihi, quod nullis amor est medicabilis herbis*" (*Works*, xiv, p. 269). The editor's footnote on this page gives a translation and regards it as a quotation from Ovid. This writer was not alive two thousand years before Wesley, but he doubtless formulates a proverbial sentiment which existed long before his time. Wesley uses the word *medicabilis*; Ovid's term is *senabilis*. The *O.D.E.P.* gives no instance of the proverb's use between 1386 and 1832.

3. "A poet is born not made." (*O.D.E.P.*, p. 509.) This proverb, used with naïve confidence, though indubitably applying to his brother Charles, occurs in that most characteristic bit of writing, the Preface to *A Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People called Methodists*, 1780 (*Works*, xiv, p. 341). The whole sentence will bear repetition. "By labour a man may become a tolerable imitator of Spenser, Shakespeare, or Milton; and may heap together pretty compound epithets, as *pale-eyed, meek-eyed*, and the like; but unless he be *born* a Poet, he will never attain the genuine spirit of Poetry." The *O.D.E.P.* has no eighteenth-century instance.

GEORGE LAWTON.

(To be concluded.)

The Cargate Press has published the biography of John Hunt of Fiji under the title of *In His Armour*, by Allen Birtwhistle (pp. 196, 7s. 6d.). The beginnings of our work in Fiji have a fascination all their own in the annals of missionary enterprise, and John Hunt is a Methodist hero whose brief but crowded life of only thirty-six years receives a new and deserved recognition in this definitive biography. The book is a model of cheapness, and should have a wide sale amongst all missionary workers and enthusiasts.

WAS JOHN WESLEY A METHODIST?

WAS John Wesley, the medical practitioner, a Methodist? It may be objected that this is an unfair question since such a space of time separated the author of *Primitive Physick* from those Greek physicians who founded medical Methodism in Rome during the reign of Augustus. It must be remembered, however, that the Methodist doctrine persisted in some measure through the centuries, and in the eighteenth century we find Dr. John Brown rehabilitating the Methodist ideas of *strictum and laxum*. And even if these ideas did not reach the widely-read and widely-investigating John Wesley it would still be fair to postulate that the type of mind that set going religious Methodism would have such kinship with the type of mind that set going medical Methodism as to lead us to expect to find similarities between the medical ideas of Wesley and those of Themison.

Themison of Laodicea lived between the years 128 and 43 B.C., and is generally regarded as the founder of Methodism; but the germ at least of Methodism was already to be found in the teaching and practice of his master and mental superior Asclepiades. Following him, Themison and Thesallus (A.D. 60) and others claimed that they had a method by which medicine was made easy to understand. They simplified medicine, and dissipated the idea that it was the most difficult of all the sciences. Thesallus promised to teach his disciples medicine in six months, and consequently had a remarkably large following.

Do we not catch an echo of these teachings as we read in the Preface of *Primitive Physick*: "a mean hand has made here some little attempt toward a plain and easy way of curing most diseases"; and again in the ironic observation: "Hence rules for the application of these [i.e. the abundance of new medicines], and medical books were immensely multiplied; till at length physic became an abstruse science, quite out of the reach of ordinary men."?

Methodism stemmed from and belonged to the school of empiricism rather than the school of dogmatism, these being the two factions that divided the medical profession of those days. Dogmatism was inclined to abstract reasoning based on philosophical conceptions, whilst empiricism tended to the belief that reasoning was useless and that experience alone was necessary in healing art.

"The Dogmatists," says Cumston in his *History of Medicine*, although recommending the study of Anatomy, and proclaiming the importance of facts observed, accorded to reason an importance it cannot have in medicine for discovering the cause and essence of disease. They pretended with only the resources of the mind and only from the observation of certain facts to be able to attain the notion of the primal reason of the phenomena of life.

Opposed to dogmatism and in contradiction with it, but less given

¹ All the quotations in this article, unless otherwise stated, are from the Preface to *Primitive Physick*.

to hypothesis, empiricism not only rejected reason but the study of anatomy as well!

Now although Wesley had made a study of anatomy, as he himself tells us, it cannot have been done as a basis for philosophical spinning of theory but for more practical design. So he can write in his Preface to *Primitive Physick* how

Men of a philosophical turn . . . examined the human body, and all its parts; the nature of the flesh, veins, arteries, nerves; the structure of the brain, heart, lungs, stomach, bowels; with the springs of the several kinds of animal functions . . . Men of learning began to set experience aside, to build physic upon hypothesis; to form theories of diseases and their cure, and to substitute these in the place of experiments.

And further on he speaks of "Some lovers of mankind" who "have demonstrably shown, that neither the knowledge of Astrology, Astronomy, Natural Philosophy, nor even Anatomy itself, is absolutely necessary to the quick and effectual cure of most diseases incident to human bodies." And in the phrase "quick and effectual" one is strongly reminded of Asclepiades, whose maxim, according to Celsus, was to cure his patients *tuto, celeriter et jocunde*.²

The Methodists, with the empirics, had a supreme regard for experience in the practice of medicine. Experience was divided into three categories. First, there was the experience that comes as the result of mere chance; second, the experience that is obtained on purpose, and thirdly, the experience that may be repeated and so verified by the reproduction of what chance or intention has demonstrated.

No more vivid and startling illustration of the second of these categories—the experience that is obtained on purpose—could be conceived than that given by John Wesley in his Preface to *Primitive Physick* in the direction: "Are you in a burning heat? Leap into that river, and then sweat till you are well." Here indeed is the full-blown Methodist doctrine, *Contraria contrariis curantur*.³

And turning to the first and the third categories of experience—the experience that comes by chance and the experience that comes from verification by the reproduction of what chance has discovered, what more delightful illustration could be found than the gentle story of

one walking some years since in a grove of pines, at a time when many in the neighbouring town were afflicted with a kind of new distemper, little sores in the inside of the mouth, a drop of natural gum fell from one of the trees on the book he was reading. This he took up, and thoughtlessly applied to one of those sore places. Finding the pain immediately cease, he applied it to another, which was also presently healed. The same remedy he afterwards imparted to others, and it did not fail to heal any that applied it.

Well could Wesley then exclaim against the philosophers: "Those who understood only how to restore the sick to health, they branded with the name of Empirics."!

² safely, swiftly and pleasantly.

³ contraries cure by contraries.

Again, the Methodists by their simple therapeutic procedure of *contraria contrariis* did much to discourage polypharmacy. How averse also was John Wesley to this multiplying of ingredients, this blunderbuss prescribing! Of their fall from ancient simplicity he says:

Physicians now began to be had in admiration, as persons who were something more than human. . . . They introduced into practice abundance of compound medicines, consisting of so many ingredients, that it was scarce possible for common people to know which it was that wrought the cure . . . The common method of compounding and de-compounding medicines can never be reconciled to common sense. Experience shows, that one thing will cure most disorders, at least as well as twenty put together. Then why do you add the other nineteen?

When John Wesley defines what he means by any disease one is again reminded of the Methodists. The Methodist description of disease was said to be of the briefest character, the important data being given in a few lines or words. Now regard Wesley's description of asthma: "An asthma is a difficulty of breathing from a disorder of the lungs. In the common (or moist) asthma the patient spits much." How brief, how comprehensive! Or again regard him as he succinctly describes apoplexy: "A total loss of all sense and voluntary motion, commonly attended with a strong pulse, hard breathing and snorting." Why worry about astrology or obscure questions concerning the essence of disease? As a true Methodist Wesley recognizes the facts to be dealt with, the symptoms to be treated.

Perhaps the closest connexion between Wesley and those early Methodists lies in their common belief in the efficacy of physical means of diet and exercise as therapeutic agencies. In cases of acute disease the rule was to commence treatment with three days' abstinence. Later, during convalescence, they allowed wine and a liberal diet. They adopted passive movements, special baths and diet. Indeed, this Methodist insistence on regimen was of splendid service to all later generations of medical history.

Wesley would most heartily have agreed with all this. We recall how he discovered the beginning of preventive medicine wrapped up as a precious blessing in the primal curse that God pronounced upon erring humanity—a veritable pearl in the toad's head if ever there was one. "One grand preventative," he says, "of pain and sickness of various kinds, seems intimated by the grand Author of Nature in the very sentence that entails death upon us: 'In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return to the ground'. The power of exercise, both to preserve and restore health, is greater than can well be conceived." And again he writes:

abstain from all mixed, all high-seasoned food. Use plain diet, easy of digestion; and this as sparingly as you can, consistent with ease and strength. . . . Use as much exercise daily in the open air as you can without weariness. Sup at six or seven, on the lightest food; go to bed early, and rise betimes.

There is much in the same vein that one could quote if space

permitted, but one cannot resist his advice to the studious: "The studious ought to have stated times for exercise, at least two or three hours a day. . . . They should frequently shave, and frequently wash their feet."

Judged by the standard of practice, Wesley may fairly be pronounced a Methodist. When judged by the standard of Methodist doctrine, however, his position is more problematical. Behind Methodist practice was a doctrine just as metaphysical as the concepts of humoralism or pneumatism, or that propounded by Hahnemann (which has a peculiarly modern air) that "the cause of disease is a dynamic aberration of our spiritual life". This specific Methodist doctrine was an outgrowth or continuation of the Atomism of Epicurus. Asclepiades taught that the body, like all other matter, is composed of small unchangeable and indivisible atoms, and that the soul is similarly composed, howbeit of atoms of more subtle quality. Themison, his disciple, laid stress upon the interatomic spaces or pores rather than upon the atoms, and developed the doctrine that "health results from a correct proportion of pores in relation to the matter which they should absorb and allow to pass". From this he taught that all diseases fall into one of three categories according to whether there was constriction of the pores (*strictum*) or relaxation of the pores (*laxum*) or a mixture of these two (*mixum*).

This was the metaphysical conception behind all Methodist empirical practice. All diseases had to group themselves into one of these three categories. Thus medicine became a simple thing. If the disease was of the *strictum* type, then, employing opposites, the cure lay in a laxative agent; if it was of the *laxum* type, then astringents must be exhibited. The only real difficulty lay with the *mixum* type. Ideally to the Methodist mind all diseases should have fallen into the categories of obstruction or flux. Unfortunately the facts of life can be awkward and unideal, and this third class of *mixum* had to be created to cover the large number of exceptions to the ideal. Still, it was a neat, tidy little body of doctrine to cover man's physical salvation.

But would John Wesley have subscribed to such a doctrine? We have much reason to think he would not. It belonged to the realm of philosophical and hypothetical speculation that he so much detested. It was in that abhorrence that he wrote his great Preface to *Primitive Physick*. He compiled that book in order "to reduce Physick to its ancient standard . . . to explode it out of all the hypotheses, and fine spun theories, and to make it a plain intelligible thing, as it was in the beginning: having no more mystery in it than this, 'Such a medicine removes such a pain'." This indeed is his definition of primitive physic.

So while Wesley falls short of Methodism doctrinally, perhaps it is the word "primitive" that will help us if we are to attach any label to this compassionate, large-hearted and clear-minded physician of body and soul. We may call him a Primitive Methodist.

A. WESLEY HILL.

JOHN CENNICK: A HANDLIST OF HIS WRITINGS

(Continued from page 58)

III. Sermons: Collected

The evidence seems fairly clear that Cennick published at least two volumes of collected sermons during 1753-4, commencing in London, and finishing at Dublin. So far, however, neither of these volumes has been seen in its entirety. The very lack of evidence suggests strongly that these early collected editions consisted, as did their immediate successors, of bundles of single sermons bound together, preceded by four pages of preliminary matter, viz. title-page and preface. These preliminary pages seem completely to have disappeared. The reconstruction of the volumes (53, 54) can only be conjectural, and the process is made more hazardous because our knowledge of the early editions of the single sermons seems to be incomplete.

53. Cennick's preface to the first collected edition was dated "Dublin, Dec. 12, 1753". It stated: "Several of these sermons have been published some years ago, and our Saviour has blessed them in the world; may he do the same by the others which are now, or may be, added to them. . . ." This preface is retained in Vol. I of 57.

This collection apparently contained the following items: **16, 24, 27, 30, 35, 41, 43, 23, 42.** These were all printed by John Hart of London, and apparently all for the first time. To these should be presumably added the only three sermons which are so far known to have been "published some years ago"—**17, 18** and **22.** Of these, however, **17** was certainly reprinted by Powell for the 1754 edition of Cennick's sermons, and **18** and/or **22** may well have been reprinted by him at the same time. Whether this volume did in fact contain other sermons reprinted by Powell it is impossible to say, though it appears unlikely, in spite of the fact that the preliminaries must surely have been printed by him, since the preface was written in Dublin.

54. The preface to the second collection of sermons was dated "Dublin, August the 9th, 1754". It opened: "These Discourses, as well as the Former, were written at different Times. . . . Some indeed were taken down by others at the Time of my Preaching, but not so accurately that they needed no Correction or Alteration; . . . and with no other View have I consented to publish them, but to endeavour to spread the Gospel where ever they may come. . . ." This preface is retained in Vol. II of 57.

With the basic composition of this volume we are on firmer ground. On the evidence of Powell's signatures we can reconstruct with some certainty the order in which the sermons were intended to be bound together, apparently all in one volume: **32, (18 or 22?), 19, 33, 20, 14, 31, 17, 46, 21, 25, 36, 34, 15, 28, 37, 13, 38, 39, 29, 26, 40, 44, 45.**

55. In 1756 Matthew Lewis of London seems to have reprinted all the sermons printed by Powell, usually describing them as second editions. To the left of the printer's signature on most he added a serial number, so that we are able to determine the order in which the sermons were intended to be bound together, which was completely different from that of Powell. Whether the collection thus published by Lewis was in one volume or two, and whether it contained 22, 25 or 34 items, is uncertain, nor has any title-page for it so far been seen.

The following items were numbered respectively 3-22: **31, 21, 37, 33, 40, 20, 36, 39, 19, 15, 38, 44, 45, 13, 29, 25, 26, 28, 34, 14.** Items **31** and **46** were re-

printed in 1756 by Lewis without any number, as were **23** and **43**, originally printed by Hart. Items **17**, **18** and **22** have not so far been seen.

56. "[Six Sermons]". It seems practically certain that Matthew Lewis published a tiny bundle of sermons under some such title as this in 1756, though so far no title-page has come to light. The six sermons which Lewis thus added to the thirty-four already published were items **47-52**. It will be seen that though each is complete in itself and readily separated from its fellows, the signatures and serial numbers show that they were printed as a unity. The 1786 reprint of "Serm. VI" concludes with the word "Finis", which does not appear on the preceding five sermons.

This series was reprinted by Lewis in 1765 and 1772, by H. Trapp in 1786, and still later without imprint, as may be seen from the entries under the single sermons.

57: I. "Twenty Discourses on the following important subjects, viz. I. The Cries of the Son of God. II. The Gift and Office of the Holy Ghost. III. The New-Birth. IV. The Danger of Infidelity; or, the Necessity of a living Faith in Christ. V. Naaman cleansed. VI. The bloody Issue healed. VII. St. Paul's Conversion. VIII. The good Shepherd. IX. The best Foundation. X. The good Samaritan. XI. Simon and Mary. XII. The Marriage of Isaac. XIII. The two Covenants. XIV. The Benefits of the New-Testament. XV. The Divinity of Christ. XVI. The Sower. XVII. The lost Sheep, Piece of Silver, and prodigal Son. XVIII. The Syrophenician. XIX. The Shadows of Christ. XX. The Fall and Redemption. By John Cennick. Vol. I. London: Printed and sold by M. Lewis, in Paternoster-Row, near Cheapside. MDCCLXII." 8vo, pp. (iv). 24, 20, etc. BM FB.

"Preface. . . John Cennick. Dublin, Dec. 12, 1753." See **53**.

The title-page and preface are followed by copies of the sermons listed, inserted in the volume irrespective of their edition, and with different copies of the volume showing different combinations of the various editions. My own copy, for instance, though composed basically of the 1754 Powell issues, contains the first (1744) edition of **18**, and the 1765 reprints (sic) of **16**, **23**, **27** and **30**.

II. "Twenty Discourses on the following important subjects, viz. I. The Woman of Samaria. II. The first Principles of Christianity. III. The Sufferings and Satisfaction of Christ. IV. The Beatitudes. V. The Daemioniac. VI. Dives and Lazarus. VII. The hidden Treasure. VIII. The offices of the Messiah. IX. The great Sacrifice. X. Lot's Flight. XI. Deliverance from Death. XII. The Privilege of Believers. XIII. The Patterns of Mercy. XIV. The vision of dry Bones. XV. The Safety of a true Christian. XVI. The Assurance of Faith; or, The Experience of a True Christian. XVII. The Linsey-Woolsey Garment. XVIII. The Reproach of the Cross. XIX. The Widow of Nain. XX. The beatific Vision: or, beholding Jesus crucified. By John Cennick. Vol. II. London: Printed and sold by M. Lewis, in Paternoster-Row, near Cheapside. MDCCLXII." 8vo, pp. (iv). 20, 36, etc. BM.

"Preface. . . John Cennick. Dublin, August the 9th, 1754." See **54**.

This volume is assembled on exactly the same principles as **57: I**, and contains items **33-52**.

57a. Ditto. 2 vols. Lewis (I), 1770. BM.

Assembled on the same principles from separate sermons printed both before and after 1770, and containing the same prefaces.

57b. Ditto. 2 vols. "London: Printed and sold by H. Trapp, Successor and Son-in-Law to M. Lewis, [No. I] Paternoster-Row, Cheapside. 1777." BM FB (Vol. I only).

57c. Ditto. 2 vols. H. Trapp, 1790. BM DU FB MH (Vol. I) OX (Vol. I).

58: I. "Village Sermons on the following Important Subjects, viz. The Cries of the Son of God. The Gift and Office of the Holy Ghost. The Danger of Infidelity; or, the Necessity of a living Faith in Christ. Naaman cleansed. The bloody Issue healed. St. Paul's Conversion. The best Foundation. The

good Samaritan. Simon and Mary. [In second of two columns of titles:] The Marriage of Isaac. The two Covenants. The Benefits of the New Testament. The Divinity of Christ. The Sower. The lost Sheep, Piece of Silver, and Prodigal Son. The Syrophenician. The Shadows of Christ. The Fall and Redemption. By John Cennick. Vol. I. London: Printed and Sold by V. Griffiths, No. I, Paternoster Row." 12mo, pp. (iv). 24, 20, etc. RY.

Preface as in **57: I**.

Only eighteen sermons are listed on the title-page and included in this volume, those omitted being the **New Birth (15)** and the **Good Shepherd (20)**. The sermons included are of various editions, but dated mainly around 1790.

II. "Village Sermons on the following Important Subjects, viz. . . . [items **33-52** listed in two columns of ten items each, unnumbered.] By John Cennick. Vol. II. London: Printed and sold by V. Griffiths, No. I, Paternoster-Row." 12mo, pp. (iv). 20, 36, etc. RY.

Preface as in **57: II**.

A collection of individual sermons assembled as in **58: I**. Items **47-52** are issued with drop-titles, with no imprint, but designated "Serm. I", etc. The signatures run consecutively in sixes except for a break between **E'** and **I**, i.e. between **49** and **50**.

There follows an eight-page "Catalogue of Books published by V. Griffiths, No. I, Paternoster Row, London", which includes (on p. 5) "Forty Sermons by John Cennick, recommended by the Rev. Mr. Whitefield. In 2 vols. Price bound 8s. With his Life and other Tracts 9s." From the "Forty" in this advertisement it seems that **58: I** represents an intermediate stage in the publication of Cennick's Sermons by Griffiths. Griffiths advertises himself as the printer of the *Gospel Magazine*. He had taken over from M. Trapp at some time between 1793 and 1797.

59. Sermons, selected from the Works of that labourious and Faithful Servant of Christ the late Rev. John Cennick. To which are added two admirable sermons by that Great, Learned, and good Man, the late Rev. Jonathan Edwards, President of New Jersey College in North America. At the end of the Sermons are annexed some Letters, by that Eminent, Pious, and Sincere Christian, the late Mrs. A——'s of Goodman's Fields, London. . . . Bath: Printed by S. Hazard, for C. Adams. 1796." 12mo, pp. (iv). 308. BM.

The sermons selected from Cennick's works by Adams are items **15, 16, 27, 31, 35, 36, 48, 49** and **50**, in that order.

60. "Discourses on Important Subjects. By the late Rev. John Cennick. A New Edition, in two volumes. Vol. I. To which is Prefixed, The Life of the Author, Revised and enlarged, by Matthew Wilks. London: Printed by H. D. Symonds, No. 20, Paternoster-Row; and T. Williams, Stationers' Court, by Bye and Law, St. John's-Square, Clerkenwell. 1803." 2 vols. 12mo, pp. lvi. 353 + 3 pp. adverts.; x. 353 + 3 pp. adverts. BM MH.

Portrait of Cennick, engraved by Atkinson after Jenkins.

Wilks's Preface, dated 18th May 1803, shows that for Cennick's Life he relied on Cennick's own account (**68**), together with information derived from "Mr. Adams, his fellow labourer", another "brother minister", but chiefly from "his only surviving daughter, the wife of the Rev. Mr. Swertner of Bristol".

Wilks also reprints item **10**.

60a. "Forty Discourses on Important Subjects; particularly adapted to village and domestic worship. By the late Rev. John Cennick. A New Edition, in two volumes. Vol. I. To which is prefixed, The Life of the Author, revised and enlarged, and a recommendatory preface, by Matthew Wilks. London: Printed for Sherwood, Neely, and Jones, (Successors to Mr. H. D. Symonds), No. 20, Paternoster Row; and Williams and Smith, Stationers' Court; by Law and Gilbert, St. John's Square, Clerkenwell. 1809." 2 vols. 12mo, pp. lvi. 353 + 3 pp. adverts.; x. 353 + 3 pp. adverts. EP.

Portrait as last. No material alterations.

60b. "Village Discourses on Important Subjects: particularly adapted to domestic worship. By the late Reverend John Cennick. To which are prefixed, The Life of the Author, Revised and enlarged, and a recommendatory preface, by Matthew Wilks. Part I. London: Printed for Sherwood, Neely, and Jones, Paternoster Row. 1819." 2 vols. 12mo, pp. xlvii. 353 + 1 p. adverts.; (ii). 353 + 1 p. adverts. BM MH OX.

Portrait by Atkinson after Jenkins, "Feby. 1819".

Wilks's preface reprinted, but without date.

Each volume is in three parts, which were issued with separate title-pages and contents.

60c. "Village Discourses: or, Forty Plain and short Sermons on the more important doctrines of the Gospel. To which is prefixed, The Life of the Author, Revised and Enlarged, with a Recommendatory Preface, by Matthew Wilks. A New Edition. London: William Tegg and Co., 85, Queens Street, Cheapside. 1852." 8vo, pp. (ii). xxxiv. 383 + 1 p. of Tegg adverts. GC.

Preface dated 18th May 1803.

61. "Village Discourses: or Thirty-Nine short, plain, and forcible Sermons, on the more vital doctrines of the Gospel. By the Rev. John Cennick. With a Life of the author. Two volumes in one, complete. A New Edition. Liverpool: Thomas Johnson, 35, Dale Street, 1840." 12mo, pp. xiv. 3-420. BM.

Portrait by Atkinson. Index.

The preface is neither by Cennick nor Wilks.

pp. 3-24, "Life of the Rev. John Cennick, written by himself."

The omitted sermon is **Naaman Cleansed**, item 17.

61a. "Village Discourses: or, Thirty-Nine . . . Sermons . . . A New Edition. Manchester: S. Johnson and Son, No. 3, Oldham-Street; and 48, Church-Street, Liverpool. MDCCCXLIV." 12mo, pp. xiv. 3-420. MH.

Portrait by Atkinson. Index.

62. "Twelve Sermons. By the Rev. John Cennick: London: The Religious Tract Society; Instituted 1799. Sold at the Depository, 56, Paternoster Row, and 65, St. Paul's Churchyard; and by the Booksellers." 12mo, pp. iv. 8, 12, 8, 8, 12, 12, 8, 12, 12, 8, 12, 8. MH.

The separate sermons are listed on p. iv, and comprise items **15, 46, 17, 20, 23** ("Simon and the Penitent Woman"), **29** ("Christ Receiving Sinners"), **26, 27, 28** ("The Parable of the Sower"), **19** ("The Conversion of St. Paul"), **14** ("The Gift and Office of the Holy Spirit"), **18** ("The Issue of Blood Healed").

FRANK BAKER,

(To be concluded.)

"CIRPLANOLGY". The word doubtless appears unfamiliar to our readers. It does not appear in any dictionary. Its derivation is simple, nevertheless. It is a word newly coined to denote the study of Methodist circuit plans, and as Dr. Oliver Beckerlegge is the founder and first president of the Society of Cirplanologists, the blame for this etymological monstrosity may well be laid at his door!

The Society exists "not simply as a Club for those who collect plans, and as a medium of exchange for such enthusiasts, but also as a means for the study of the history of plans". We quote from the cyclostyled first number of *Cirplan*, the official organ of the new Society, whose aims must therefore command our sympathy and support. The earliest printed plan known to the new Society is dated Sheffield, 1796/7: can this record be beaten? What is the earliest missionary plan? Whence arose the old custom of printing certain plans on silk? To solve these and kindred puzzles is the aim of our latest contemporary, and we hope that thereby some grist may come to our own mill. Intending members should correspond with the secretary, Mr. W. H. Hodgson, Lloyds Bank House, Henleaze, Bristol, enclosing 2s. 6d. subscription.

THE ARCHIVES OF THE METHODIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY

[The writer of this article, Miss Irene Longstaff, is about to retire from her position as archivist at the Mission House which she has held for many years. This account of the Society's archives will be useful to students both at home and abroad.—EDITOR.]

TO work on the archives of the Methodist Missionary Society is to experience afresh something of the fire of enthusiasm which ran through Methodism during the early days of our work overseas. From their letters and journals one obtains a vivid picture of the men and women who, often with meagre education and training as a background, went out one hundred and thirty or one hundred and fifty years ago, and laid the foundations of Churches of which Methodism today is justly proud. As an example, we think of John Thomas, a blacksmith from Hagley in Worcestershire, called by the Missionary Committee to resume the work in Tonga which Walter Lawry had been obliged to leave after only fourteen months service. John Thomas was very conscious of his defects, and reluctant to take such a responsible post; but the Committee were determined, and for twenty-three years he worked in the Friendly Islands. Under his guidance the King was led to accept Christianity, and was baptized as George Tubou—the first of a long line of Christian rulers who have made Tonga an outstanding example of a Christian nation.

The archives of the Society fall into four main groups: (1) Letters from missionaries to the secretaries of the Society in London; (2) Journals of missionaries; (3) Minutes of the annual Synods of the Overseas Districts; (4) Committee minute books.

1. The letters form a very interesting set of records, covering most of the work of the Society, though there are a few unfortunate gaps. Work in the West Indies started in 1786, when missionaries appointed by the Conference of that year landed in Antigua; no manuscript letters from the West Indies have been discovered with a date earlier than 1804. This early period is the time when the work was entirely under the care of Dr. Thomas Coke, and it is to be feared that some of his papers were destroyed, for the original of his Journal is also missing. Another serious gap in the records is that no letters of the United Methodist section have been found. The Primitive Methodist section is fairly complete, though, as with the Wesleyan section, some of the earliest letters are not available. Other groups of letters are missing, and it is probable that they were borrowed many years ago by the writers of books, and not returned.

Among the early letters appear such countries as Sweden, Switzerland, Belgium, Germany, Austria, and Egypt, long since ceased to be regarded as "mission fields".

There are some letters of special note, such as the one written by the party of missionaries who accompanied Dr. Coke on the first mission to India and Ceylon. A description is given of the voyage,

of the death of Mrs. Ault, wife of one of the missionaries, and then in one poignant sentence, underlined, we read: "Dr. Coke is dead." We feel the distress of the missionaries at the loss of their leader, and sympathize with them in their cry: "We are now left to lament the departure of our Elijah and to tremble for the cause of God."

2. Missionaries of the Society in the early days were requested to keep a journal, and in a number of cases these were sent in serial form to the secretaries, and filed with the letters. Other missionaries started out with a large leather-bound book, sometimes to be filled, but sometimes to be returned on the death of the missionary after only a few months of work. One such is the journal of Joseph Dunwell, the first missionary appointed to the Gold Coast, who died within six months of his arrival. The last entry was made nine days before his death, and part of it reads: "I passed an exceedingly restless night, having great pain of body so that I rested very little. (Yet O the composure of mind, I believe I can say 'in life and death I am the Lord's')." Another outstanding set of journals are those of the Rev. Arthur Baldwin, written when he and other Primitive Methodist missionaries were trekking north to start work in Rhodesia.

3. Missionaries throughout the world meet annually in the District Synods, and the Minutes of these Synods form another important section of the archives. The first District Synod Minutes available are for the Sinhalese District, of a Synod held at Caltura in January 1821, though Synods were being held earlier than this date. During the war some of the early records were sent out of London for safety, and unfortunately two boxes of early Synod Minutes were damaged by water, some of the papers beyond hope of repair.

4. Committee minute books represent all three of the uniting sections of the Methodist Church, though here again the United Methodist Church has little to offer. The earliest minute book is one dated 1798 to 1816, and the first committee was held on 9th April 1798, the description being: "The regulations, accounts, etc. etc. of the Committee of Finance for the support of the Methodist Missions in the West Indies, formed in London for the benefit of the said Missions." Dr. Coke was in the chair of this meeting.

Grants have been received from the Pilgrim Trust for the care of the archives, which during the past three years have been re-sorted and filed into new boxes. Readers from many parts of the world refer to the documents when preparing a history, thesis or other special study. Topics chosen by some of the readers indicate the scope of the material available: "Education in Tropical Dependencies", "Secondary Education in the Gold Coast", "Christian Education in Ceylon", "Geography and History of Fiji", "Missions and British Expansion in Southern Rhodesia", "Missionary Activity in Egypt in the 19th Century".

If any reader of this article knows of manuscripts, journals or books which would be of value to the archives, the Missionary Society would be very grateful for information concerning them.

IRENE LONGSTAFF.

BOOK NOTICES

Selections from the Journal of John Wesley, ed. Hugh Martin. (S.C.M. Press, pp. 176, 8s. 6d.)

Sparks among the Stubble, by Margaret Cropper. (Longmans, Green & Co., pp. xiv. 226, 12s. 6d.)

To abridge John Wesley's *Journal* is a fascinating and rewarding occupation. In the introduction to his abridgement (1902) P. L. Parker says he wonders that it had not been done before. But it had! It had been done in 1891, in time for the centenary of Wesley's death, and published under the title of *Wesley his own Biographer*. This was a work of some 300,000 words, designed to be "attractive to the young especially into whose hands it would not be easy to put a more usefully entertaining or a more healthily stimulating book". This seems to have been used by Nehemiah Curnock in his abridgement (1903). The latter is still obtainable, and is improved by being not more than two-thirds the length of the larger work.

Parker's abridgement is shorter still. He seems not to have known *Wesley his own Biographer*, and plainly did not use it. The latest endeavour in this field is that of Dr. Hugh Martin. This is not more than a third of the length of Parker's abridgement, but so skilfully has Dr. Martin performed his task that with few exceptions he has not omitted anything one feels should have been included. It is to be regretted, however, that he has left out parts of the *Journal* for 24th May 1738, and also Susanna Wesley's account of her evangelical experience at the Lord's Supper (3rd September 1739).

It would have added to the interest and value of this book if names of places had been inserted where appropriate after the date of each entry. Dr. Martin has usually done this where Parker has done it, but not frequently otherwise: e.g. it appears that 7th September 1768 refers to Bristol, whereas Wesley was actually in Penzance.

Dr. Martin follows Parker's abridgement very closely. In only fifteen instances does he include material not in Parker, and always with good and evident reasons.

It is a pity that the dates show so many errors. There are eleven inaccuracies: p. 15, Sat. 17 should be Sat. April 17; p. 93, Nov. 25 should be July 25; pp. 115f., Sat. 5 and Sun. 6 should be Sat. 4 and Sun. 5; p. 118, Wed. 24 should be Wed. Aug. 24, and Thurs. June 25 should be Thurs. Aug. 25; p. 128, Sun. 30 should be Sun. July 30; p. 139, Aug. 22 and 23 should be Aug. 21 and 22; p. 148, Oct. 6 has been omitted; p. 151, July 4 should be July 14; p. 161, Wed. June 28 refers to the year 1786. In one instance Parker is corrected: p. 161, Tuesday, 26th September, where Parker has the previous day. Why only one "n" in "Gwenap" (p. 99), and why "anle-deep" (p. 159)?

Miss Cropper has written a very charming book about some "Anglican saints" of the eighteenth century—Robert Nelson, Thomas Bray, William Law, Hannah More, William Wilberforce and Robert Walker. There are a number of characteristic and quotable quotations from their writings which will enhance the value of this book for preachers.

The introduction explains why Wesley is not included. He has not lacked biographers. Also "the main stream of his genius flowed into the Wesleyan body, and not into the Catholic Church." O subtle distinction!

Miss Cropper calls his "secession" a tragedy. How few Anglicans seem to be able to do him justice! Less than twelve months before his death, an article appeared in the *Arminian Magazine* in which he reiterated: "I declare once more that I live and die a member of the Church of England; and that no one, who regard my judgement or advice, will ever separate from it."

KENNETH H. CROSBY.

The Augustan World: Life and Letters in Eighteenth Century England, by A. R. Humphreys. (Methuen, pp. x. 283, 16s.)

This is an admirable book for the general reader who desires to have a comprehensive view of eighteenth-century England and to sense the atmosphere of the times. There are six sections, dealing respectively with Social Life, Business, Public Affairs, Religious Life, Philosophy and Science and the Visual Arts, each with clearly marked sub-divisions.

Our readers will be specially interested in the sections on Religion and Philosophy. The bitterness which had bedevilled the theological controversies of the preceding century had yielded to a spirit of toleration, engendered in part by the revolt from the mental gymnastics of mediæval Scholasticism in favour of that direct appeal to nature which characterized the philosophy of Locke. The dominant religious ideas, including those of the Deists, are clearly set forth, and the writer helps to save us from those perhaps too easy generalizations with which we are apt to sum up the characteristics of an age. Among the cultured classes interest in religion was widespread, however faulty might be its practice.

A fuller treatment of the influence of Methodism would have been welcome, but lack of space seems to have precluded this. Of John Wesley, Mr. Humphreys states that "there are few greater Englishmen . . . and to compress his achievements into a paragraph is like trying to see the world in a grain of sand and eternity in an hour". He praises the Wesley hymns, and commends the Methodists for the Arminian emphasis in their preaching.

There are copious illustrations of the temper of the times, taken from contemporary literature, and a valuable list of contemporary and later writings for those who wish to make a closer study of the period. An excellent and readable book!

W. L. DOUGHTY.

Hoof Beats to Heaven: A True Chronicle of the Life and Wild Times of Peter Cartwright, Circuit Rider, by Sydney and Marjorie Greenbie. (Traversity Press, Penobscot, Maine, pp. xxii. 623, \$6.00.)

This is the first volume of a projected trilogy, and only takes us as far as Cartwright's conversion. The story of the Cartwright family is used as the connecting link for people and events involved in the settlement on the Military Tract of Kentucky in the years 1783-1802, the authors' thesis being that it was here "rather than at Plymouth or Jamestown that American democracy began, and that the G.Is. of the American Revolution, toting their wives and their children and their household gear over the Alleghenies, deserve their specific place in American history even more than the brave little band on the *Mayflower*". Against this background we have glimpses of Asbury and other Methodist preachers, Methodist worship and class meetings, rivalry with Baptists and Presbyterians. A novel in style, the authors claim that their story is based on scrupulous documentation, but, unfortunately, fear of "piracy" has led them to reserve publication

of their authorities in detail until the third volume is completed. Racy, readable and fascinating, it is to be hoped that the two subsequent volumes will do more to establish the claim that "no such figure as the American circuit rider is to be found this side of the apostles".

H. MORLEY RATTENBURY.

The Eighteenth Century Country Parson: 1689 to 1830, by A. Tindal Hart. (Wilding & Son, Shrewsbury, pp. 176, 14s.)

Free Churchmanship in England, 1870-1940, by John W. Grant. (Independent Press, pp. viii, 418, 19s. 6d.)

John Wesley was brought up in an eighteenth-century country parsonage. The day-to-day life and affairs of the country parson must therefore be of interest to Methodists, who will find in Dr. Hart's racy and readable little book an admirable account of these matters, culled largely from the diaries of a few selected clergymen of the period. Incumbents of two hundred years ago had (it seems) more trials and tribulations than their modern counterparts, and we should be grateful that so many, with no thought of posterity, confided their secrets to the intimate pages of a private journal. This book, well-produced (apart from a few "literals"), is not cheap, but it is always scholarly, entertaining and informative, and is enriched by the addition of a selection of letters from the correspondence of John Sharp, the archbishop of York who helped Susanna Wesley when Samuel was imprisoned for debt, and whose biography Dr. Hart published a few years ago. The raconteur will also find that Dr. Hart has added some choice gems to his store of clerical anecdotes.

It is a far cry from the atmosphere of Dr. Hart's chapter on eighteenth-century dissenters to the organized dissent of the last eighty years. The "mild, benevolent" vicar of Harlow who in 1806 was "often seen arm in arm with the dissenting Minister who is settled in his parish" is a stranger to the pages of Mr. Grant's study of later English Free Churchmanship, for mutual tolerance had by 1870 given way to bitterness and misunderstanding. Relations between the Church of England and nonconformity have never been worse than they were in much of this period, due very largely to the long-continued battle about the Establishment and the passing of the Education Act in 1902. In these controversies Methodists had their share, but Mr. Grant is careful to exclude Methodism from the purpose of his book. We applaud his acumen in discerning what many contemporary Methodists either cannot or will not see—that if Methodists are dissenters at all they are of a different order from those commonly termed "the Three Denominations". For that reason alone Methodists of all shades of churchmanship should read this book. But a purely negative appraisal would be quite unfair. Mr. Grant unfolds the story of events, many of them within living memory, which in themselves are full of interest and significance, and his pages are studded with names which are still household words in Methodist as in other circles: P. T. Forsyth, Spurgeon, Dale of Birmingham, R. J. Campbell, Joseph Parker and John Clifford. These men, and others like them, have left their mark on the life and thought of every denomination, and we are all their debtors. This book, with its "special reference to Congregationalism", is warmly to be commended. Its extensive bibliography is of special value, but the lack of an index in a book so crammed with names and facts and whose chapter headings are simply dates is very much to be deplored.

WESLEY F. SWIFT.

NOTES AND QUERIES

966. UNITED METHODIST "HALL'S ARRANGEMENT".

In *Proceedings*, xxix, pp. 103-11, a valuable article appeared on "How to write a Local History of Methodism", with the remark that "the other Methodist denominations unfortunately have nothing that corresponds to *Hall's Arrangement*". This was corrected on page 143, where attention was drawn to the *Handbook of the United Methodist Free Churches*. The Rev. Wesley F. Swift assumed in that paragraph that there were other editions of that work beside those of 1877, 1887 and 1899. But there were not. The compiler, the Rev. Edwin Askew, left a mass of notes intended for a future edition, and twelve years ago his daughter promised to try and find them and let me have them, but her search was unsuccessful.

On the other hand, two other books contain material of the same nature. W. J. Townsend's *Handbook for the Methodist New Connexion* (1899) contains an "Alphabetical Arrangement of Ministers and their Circuits" and a list of "Deceased Ministers", with dates of entry into the ministry and death. There was a similar volume in 1875.

For the Bible Christians, F. W. Bourne's *The Bible Christians: their Origin and History* (1905) is divided into chapters, each covering a decade, and each chapter concludes with a brief biographical sketch of the ministers who died within that period. It is thus an elaborated list of "Men who have died in the work", but there is no complete list of Stations.

Mr. Swift's article refers to Kendall's two-volume *Origin and History of the Primitive Methodist Church*, and says "none of the other denominations have anything to compare with it". But Bourne's work just mentioned is very similar, giving a mass of photographs of men and chapels.

OLIVER A. BECKERLEGGE.

[As the writer of the article and note referred to, I am glad to have the information in the first paragraph above. Dr. Beckerlegge is quite wrong, however, in describing Townsend's *Handbook* as "of the same nature" as *Hall's Arrangement*. It is "of the same nature" as *Hill's Arrangement*, which is a very different kind of work from *Hall's Arrangement*, and of considerably less value to the student, dealing as it does more with the living than with the dead. And Bourne's work on the Bible Christians, excellent though it is, cannot compare either in size or in exhaustiveness with Kendall's two volumes on Primitive Methodism. I stand by the statement as originally printed!—EDITOR.]

967. EAYRS ESSAY PRIZES.

The subjects of the essays, and the prize-winners, for the last five years, are as follows:

16. 1950-1. "Methodism in Australia up to 1853".

First prize not awarded this year.
Second prize—Rev. William Leary.

17. 1951-2. "The Rise of Primitive Methodism".

First and second prizes shared equally between Rev. T. Denis Featherstone and Rev. Peter S. Robinson, B.D.

18. 1952-3. "The Training of Methodist Ministers, 1800-50".

First prize—Rev. Albert B. Lawson, B.D.
Second prize—Rev. Ralph Lowery, B.D.

19. 1953-4. "Adam Clarke, 1760-1832".
 First prize—Rev. William H. Middleton.
 Second prize shared equally between Rev. William Leary
 and Rev. Jeffrey W. Harris, B.D.
20. 1954-5. "John Wesley as Letter Writer".
 First prize—Rev. Philip Hodgson, B.A.
 Second prize not awarded this year.

Details of the essays and prize-winners in earlier years were given in *Proceedings*, xxiii, p. 22; xxv, p. 13; xxvi, p. 62; and xxvii, p. 188.

WESLEY F. SWIFT.

968. ARTICLES OF METHODIST HISTORICAL INTEREST.

The following articles of Methodist historical importance have appeared in the *London Quarterly and Holborn Review* since the last list was printed in *Proceedings*, xxix, p. 72:

- OCTOBER 1953—"John Wesley and Ireland", by John C. Bowmer, M.A., B.D. (concluded in January 1954). One of the prize-winning Eayrs essays in 1949.
- OCTOBER 1953—"An Annotation to Wesley's *Journal*", by Frederick Pilkington. Information gleaned from the Journal of Thomas Rutherford.
- JANUARY 1954—"John Wesley's Six Formative Years" [1735-40], by William S. Kelynack, M.A. A reprint of an article in an American magazine.
- JULY 1954—"The Call to Preach in early Methodism", by Leslie F. Church, B.A., Ph.D.
- JULY 1954—"George Whitefield: his influence on his time", by Albert D. Belden, D.D.
- OCTOBER 1954—"Jonathan Swift and the Wesleys", by Frank Baker, B.A., B.D., Ph.D.
- JANUARY 1955—"Thomas Fuller and the Wesleys", by W. L. Doughty, B.A., B.D. Points of resemblance between the Wesleys and a Cavalier ancestor.
- APRIL 1955—"A Study in Wesley Six-Eights", by George H. Findlay, M.A. An article on one of Charles Wesley's hymn metres.
- JULY 1955—"John Cennick: 1718-1755", by William S. Kelynack, M.A.
- JULY 1955—"The Beginnings of the Methodist Covenant Service", by Frank Baker, B.A., B.D., Ph.D.
- OCTOBER 1955—"Prison Visitation in the Methodist Revival", by Peter J. Collingwood, B.A. One of the essays submitted for the Wesley Historical Society essay competition in 1953-4.

WESLEY F. SWIFT.

It is a pleasure to commend the centenary souvenir of Hatfield House Lane Methodist Church, Sheffield (pp. 24, 25). It has been compiled by one of the most promising of our younger members, the Rev. William Leary (from whom the booklet may be obtained at 33, Firth Park Avenue, Sheffield, 5). This careful historical record has two illustrations.

From the Epworth Press comes a reprint of Henry Carter's *The Methodist* (pp. 79, 55). Wesley's "Rules" are no longer obligatory, but this exposition of them is almost a classic.