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# Proceedings

OF THE

## Wesley Historical Society

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

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### CORNELIUS BAYLEY AND THE MANCHESTER METHODISTS

RECENT articles on the Church Methodists in England and Ireland (*Proceedings*, xxxiv, pp. 63-5, 73-5) have drawn attention to the relationship of Methodism with the Established Church in the eighteenth century. This theme is illuminated further by a glance at the career of Cornelius Bayley (1751-1812) and his relations with the Manchester Methodists.

Bayley was born at Ashe, near Whitchurch, Salop, but "his father seems to have migrated to Manchester while Cornelius was young and to have been a leather-breeches maker there".<sup>1</sup> This was a lucrative trade in posting days, and his father seems to have made a small fortune—enough to send his son to school. His father was a Methodist<sup>2</sup> and his mother a devoted Anglican.<sup>3</sup> He was sent to Whitchurch Grammar School, where he proved to be an apt pupil, and when the master died, Bayley was elected in his place, at the age of seventeen.<sup>4</sup> The *Dictionary of National Biography* says that he acted as master "for a short time". Bayley himself, writing in 1796,<sup>5</sup> says he held the position "for some years". During this period he must have met John Wesley, and in 1773 he became English teacher at Kingswood, and later second master.<sup>6</sup> While at Kingswood he published his famous Hebrew Grammar, commended by Wesley in a letter to Bayley in 1778,<sup>7</sup> and for which he was awarded an honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity by the University of Aberdeen.

<sup>1</sup> *Dictionary of National Biography*, iii, p. 441.

<sup>2</sup> T. Swindells: *Manchester Streets and Manchester Men* (1906), i, p. 247.

<sup>3</sup> *Christian Observer*, 1812, p. 477.

<sup>4</sup> C. Hulbert: *Manual of Shropshire Biography* (1839), Appendix, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup> *A Reply to the Personal Reflections in a Pamphlet lately published . . .* (February 1796), p. 5.

<sup>6</sup> *History of Kingswood School*, pp. 76, 79-80; L. Tyerman: *The Life and Times of the Rev. John Wesley*, iii, p. 397.

<sup>7</sup> *Letters*, vi, p. 323.

*D.N.B.* states that he became a Methodist preacher. This point needs to be qualified. He was never a travelling preacher, but there is no doubt that he did preach to the Methodist societies from time to time. In 1780 he visited Manchester, and preached at several places in the circuit. The memoir of one of his hearers states:

The first Methodist preacher he heard was Mr. Bayley (afterwards Dr. Bayley of the Established Church at Manchester) under whose ministry his mind was much enlightened . . . He followed Mr. Bayley to all parts of the circuit, although it then embraced Manchester, Stockport, Ashton, New Mills and many other places.<sup>8</sup>

On 16th May 1780 he was ordained deacon,<sup>9</sup> but he appears to have remained at Kingswood until the summer of 1781. On 6th June Fletcher, who had returned to Madeley a few days previously, but who was still not in good health, appealed to Wesley for a suitable curate:

Could you spare me Brother Bayley? It would be a charity. Unless I can get a curate zealous enough to stir among the people, I will give up the place . . .<sup>10</sup>

and a few days later he wrote to Joseph Benson:

. . . I am at present, without an assistant here, but hope soon to have Mr. Bayley, one of the masters at Kingswood School . . .<sup>11</sup>

Bayley remained at Madeley until the end of April 1782, when Fletcher postponed a visit to Dublin because "Mr. Bayley, my curate, being wanted at Kingswood School, I must serve my own church myself".<sup>12</sup>

For a time Bayley was also curate to Dr. Conyers at Deptford,<sup>13</sup> another Evangelical, but it is not clear whether this was before or after the period at Madeley. He finally left Kingswood early in 1783, presumably when he was ordained priest. He returned to Manchester, and assisted Wesley on 18th May at the morning service, at which there were thirteen or fourteen hundred communicants.<sup>14</sup> The following Saturday, 24th May, Wesley married Bayley to Rachel Norton at Buxton,<sup>15</sup> and all three went on to Nottingham, where on the Sunday Bayley read prayers and assisted at the service. Afterwards the couple went back to Manchester, which was Rachel Bayley's home town, and settled there.

The population of Manchester was growing very rapidly at this time: 23,000 in 1773; 50,000 in 1790. In 1783 there were in the town four Anglican churches in addition to the collegiate church, several Dissenting chapels, and one Methodist chapel—Oldham Street, opened in 1781, and attended by some of the rising cotton

<sup>8</sup> Memoir of Joel Shuttleworth in *MNC Magazine*, 1829, p. 3.

<sup>9</sup> J. A. Venn: *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, part II, vol. i.

<sup>10</sup> L. Tyerman: *Wesley's Designated Successor* (1882), p. 461.

<sup>11</sup> *ibid.*, p. 462.

<sup>12</sup> *ibid.*, p. 508.

<sup>13</sup> C. Hulbert, *op. cit.*, Appendix, p. 1; *Christian Observer*, 1812, loc. cit.

<sup>14</sup> *Journal*, vi, p. 410; *Proceedings*, vii, p. 22.

<sup>15</sup> *Journal*, vi, p. 410.

merchants of the town. Bayley seems to have preached in the circuit in 1783 and 1784.<sup>16</sup> The trustees and leaders were mostly of the "high church" party, and in 1784 they sought Wesley's advice about asking Bayley to read the service each Sunday. Wesley replied:

Norwich, October 31, 1784.

I had some doubt concerning another person; but I have none at all concerning Dr. Bayley. I believe his eye is single, and that he has no other view than that of promoting the glory of God. If, therefore, the steward and trustees, and upon mature consideration, judge it expedient to invite Dr. Bayley to officiate every Sunday in the new chapel, I have no objection. It seems to me it might be productive of much good.<sup>17</sup>

This arrangement appears to have lasted only a short time, and Bayley accepted it only as an interim measure until he was able to secure his object—a church of his own. This is clear from a paragraph he wrote in 1796:

Soon after my coming to Manchester . . . in 1783, I formed a design in my own mind, to build a church; which was founded upon the idea of the great increase of population since the last building of that kind was erected. I communicated my thoughts upon this subject to some of my most select and particular Friends, who encouraged me in the undertaking, and advised me to put my design into execution as soon as I could make it convenient, and other concurring circumstances would allow. Several obstacles were in a little time removed by the advice and assistance of a late Worthy and Reverend Gentleman of this Town . . . who bought the ground for me, procured me the Presentation, and engaged to purchase the first pews that were sold in it.<sup>18</sup>

The site was in George Street, off Piccadilly, in an area which was developing as a high-class residential quarter. The new church was dedicated to St. James, and Bayley laid the foundation stone in 1786. It was opened in March 1788, and consecrated on 18th August of that year.<sup>19</sup> It was a proprietary church, supported entirely by the sale of pews: there were seats for fourteen hundred.<sup>20</sup> The great shortage of church accommodation in Manchester, the favourable situation of the new church, and Bayley's own popularity, made it an immediate success. Its congregation was the most fashionable in the town until 1794, when St. Peter's was opened and that church in its turn was besieged by the "genteel sinners" of Mosley Street.<sup>21</sup> Nevertheless St. James's continued to have the largest Anglican congregation in Manchester. De Quincey in 1801 refers to "Dr. Bailey [sic] in his overcrowded church",<sup>22</sup> and a writer in 1804 declared: "The congregation is supposed to be the most numerous of any of the established churches."<sup>23</sup> Throughout his ministry the number of communicants was generally between five and six hundred.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>16</sup> *Letters*, vii, p. 211.

<sup>17</sup> *ibid.*, vii, p. 246.

<sup>18</sup> *A Reply* . . . , p. 9.

<sup>19</sup> J. Aston: *A Manchester Guide* (1804), p. 109 f.

<sup>20</sup> C. Hulbert: *Memoirs of Seventy Years of an Uneventful Life* (1852), p.

150.

<sup>21</sup> C. W. Bardsley: *Memorials of St. Ann's Church [Manchester]* (1877), p. 99.

<sup>22</sup> T. De Quincey: *Works* (Masson edn., 1889), I, p. 395.

<sup>23</sup> Aston, *loc. cit.*

<sup>24</sup> *Christian Observer*, 1812, p. 477.

Initially, many of the congregation and a large proportion of the communicants were Methodists. The often-quoted passage from J. T. Slugg's *Reminiscences of Manchester Fifty Years Ago* (1881), page 122, makes this clear:

For some time after the Church was built it was the practice of the Wesleyans to assemble at Oldham Street Chapel on a Sunday morning at 9 a.m. and hold a service which lasted an hour and a quarter, after which they adjourned to Dr. Bayley's Church and formed a considerable part of his congregation.

A quarter of the original seat-holders were Methodists.<sup>25</sup>

Up to this time, therefore, Bayley was on good terms with the Methodists. He attended the Leeds Conference of 1784,<sup>26</sup> and entertained John Wesley on his visits to Manchester in 1784 and 1785.<sup>27</sup> However, not all the Manchester Methodists were as respectful towards the Establishment as the wealthy Oldham Street trustees, and a group of them demanded services within church hours. They seem to have been active in 1787,<sup>28</sup> but they did not attain their end until 1791, when Gravel Lane chapel, Salford, was opened. Even then, they had to wait for five months after the opening until Christmas Day 1791, when morning service was for the first time held at 10 o'clock. Oldham Street continued to hold services at 7 a.m., 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. for another twenty years.<sup>29</sup> The opening of Gravel Lane chapel seems to coincide with the beginnings of a split between Bayley and his former friends.

In a letter to the Manchester superintendent, Richard Rodda, in January 1791, Wesley refers to "the dissensions at Mr. Bayley's chapel".<sup>30</sup> No details are given, but we may infer from a pamphlet published by Bayley in 1796 that the cause was the transformation of travelling preachers into ministers of the Word and Sacraments which followed the death of Wesley. By 1795 the break was complete. In August of that year Bayley published his *Questions for Children on the Ministerial Office*. It is a defence, in question-and-answer form, of Episcopacy and the threefold order of the ministry: ". . . Without Ordination no one may take upon himself the public function of a Minister—as that of preaching." Sectaries are guilty of the sin of schism. This publication called forth a reply: *The Primitive Gospel Ministry*—"by a Layman" (1795), clearly written by a Methodist and answering Bayley's arguments with assertions that bishops, elders and presbyters are of the same order, that laymen can preach and baptize without ordination, and so on. The argument about the ministry is, however, prefaced by a personal attack on Bayley, which accuses him of levelling his pamphlet against the Methodists, "towards whom he has evinced a narrow and bigoted spirit", of leaving them for a better income—

<sup>25</sup> *A Reply* . . . , p. 9.

<sup>26</sup> *Journal*, vii, p. 7; *Proceedings*, ix, p. 193.

<sup>27</sup> *Journal*, vii, p. 65.

<sup>28</sup> *Proceedings*, i, p. 45.

<sup>29</sup> R. Gill: *Gravel Lane Chapel* (1890), p. 2.

<sup>30</sup> *Letters*, viii, p. 251.

What makes all doctrines plain and clear?  
About two hundred pounds a year . . .

and which ends with a series of questions "as a gentle jog to bring to his remembrance 'the rock from whence he was hewn'".

Bayley answered these personal questions in *A Reply to the Personal Reflections in a Pamphlet lately published . . .* (February 1796). Some of his answers have already been quoted. The nearest to an explanation of his break with Methodism occurs on page 33 :

But supposing a person were under those obligations mentioned by the Writer . . . may he not be allowed to retain and keep the sentiments which he at first imbibed and which they professed? Must he veer about [?] . . . Is it not rather his duty to come out from among them? and to be separate from those who have separated themselves from the Church of which they so long professed themselves members?

In 1791 one of the Gravel Lane trustees, Thomas Hamer, acted as Bayley's clerk at St. James's.<sup>81</sup> But by 1796 most of the Methodists had sold their pews and presumably no longer attended.

Deserted by the Methodists, Bayley was despised and disliked by his fellow clergy, in particular the Warden and the Fellows of the collegiate church.<sup>82</sup> This was caused by a combination of his humble origins, his evangelical opinions, and his popular success. In 1781 he had been admitted at Trinity as a "ten-year" man. He took his B.D. degree in 1792, and was awarded a Cambridge D.D. in 1800. On his return from Cambridge a caricature appeared in Manchester representing the young doctor "as rising in all the glories of his scarlet hood out of a pair of leathern breeches".<sup>83</sup> Bayley was the leader of the Church of England Evangelicals in the town. Simeon, Crosse, David Simpson and local evangelical clergy preached at St. James's.<sup>84</sup> A story is told in Hulbert's *Memoirs of Seventy Years of an Uneventful Life* (1852) of the writer's occasionally attending St. James's, and explaining this to the Rev. Joshua Brookes of the collegiate church. "Oh, he's a rank Methody," said Brookes, "and you may as well go to John Wesley's preaching shop in Owdham Street at once!"<sup>85</sup>

In August 1784 Bayley had published *An Address to the Public on Sunday Schools*, and he was a prominent member of the inter-denominational committee set up in Manchester to promote Sunday-schools.<sup>86</sup> After fourteen years tensions sprang up between the Dissenters and the Anglicans on the committee, and in 1800, largely at Bayley's insistence, the committee broke up, and Anglicans and Dissenters each set up their own schools.

<sup>81</sup> Gill, op. cit., p. 7.

<sup>82</sup> Article by E.E.P., "Centenary of a City Church", in *Manchester City News* Notes and Queries, 28th July 1888.

<sup>83</sup> J. Harland: *Manchester Collectanea* 2 (Chetham Soc. vol. 72, 1867), p. 196.

<sup>84</sup> Hulbert: *Memoirs* . . . , p. 150.

<sup>85</sup> *ibid.*, p. 150.

<sup>86</sup> A. P. Wadsworth: "The Early Manchester Sunday Schools", in *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, vol. 33 (1951), p. 299.

Bayley seems to have been a popular and respected figure in Manchester: he held week-day meetings, and was a diligent pastor. Particularly remarkable was his visitation of the sick and poor. He remained at St. James's until his death in 1812. His funeral was attended by forty clergymen, and a thousand people were unable to gain entrance to the church for the service.<sup>87</sup>

De Quincey in 1801 gives a gently ironic picture of him in his *Autobiography*:<sup>88</sup>

The doctor was the most unworldly and guileless of men. Amongst his orthodox brethren he was reputed a "Methodist" and not without reason: for some of his Low Church views he pushed into practical extravagance that looked like fanaticism, or even like insanity.

He refused to accept a present from an admirer "unless it assumed a shape that might be available for the service of the paupers amongst his congregation". Three years earlier the *Ancient Mariner* had been published in *Lyrical Ballads*. De Quincey read it to his pupil, Lady Carberry:

Lady Carberry suggested that the latter part of the *Ancient Mariner's* homily to the wedding guest clearly pointed him out as the very man meant by Providence for a stipendiary curate to the good Dr. Bailey in his overcrowded church—With an albatross perched on his shoulder, and who might be introduced to the congregation as the immediate organ of his conversion, and supported by the droning of a bassoon, she represented the Mariner lecturing to advantage in English; the doctor overhead in the pulpit enforcing it in Hebrew. . . . Once she repeated to Dr. Bayley the passage:—

"It ceased, yet still the sails made on . . ."

asking what he thought of that? The simple child-like doctor had more sensibility than herself . . . for though he had never in his homely life read more of poetry than he had drunk of Tokay or Constantia—in fact, had scarcely heard tell of any poetry but Watts' hymns—he seemed petrified: and at last, with a deep sigh, as if recovering from the spasms of a new birth, said "I never heard anything so beautiful in my whole life."

E. A. ROSE.

[NOTE—An article in *Proceedings*, i, p. 45, deals with Bayley at Oldham Street, and suggests that he was ordained by Wesley. There seems no evidence for this. Bayley's Christian name is given as Edward, and there are other errors of fact in the article.—E.A.R.]

<sup>87</sup> *Christian Observer*, 1812, p. 477.

<sup>88</sup> De Quincey, op. cit., pp. 394-5.

It is, we hope, more than a pious expectation that the majority of our members treasure their *Proceedings*: we know, in fact, that some have their copies bound in volumes, adding considerably to their value. At the same time, it has to be admitted that there are others who do not keep old copies, and these may wonder how to dispose of them. This is just a note to say that we are always glad to receive back numbers, for we use a lot as "samples" when inviting prospective new members to join us. Please send your unwanted copies to Mr. Alfred A. Taberer, 7, Portland Road, Clarendon Park, Leicester. If you wish, we shall refund postage.

# CHARLES WESLEY AND THE AMERICAN WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

[This is the first of two articles on Charles Wesley and America. The second, "Charles Wesley and the American Loyalists", will appear in the next issue.—EDITOR.]

THE various African territories which have recently gained independence present a situation in the twentieth century not unlike that which prevailed in America after the signing of the peace treaty between Great Britain and the newly-recognized United States in 1783. The main parallel to be drawn is that between the plight of the Loyalists, as those who had fought in America on the side of the British Government were called, and those colonists, particularly in Kenya and the Rhodesias, who, at least as far as their relationships with Great Britain are concerned, claim to have been betrayed. Undoubtedly there is much to be said on both sides in the African affair, but to Charles Wesley there seemed to be only a divinely-inspired unilateral approach to the American rebellion.

In a long reflective poem entitled "The American War / under the Conduct of S [i] r W [illiam] H [owe]",<sup>1</sup> Wesley deals at length with the historical aspects of the War, whilst in a little MS. volume with the somewhat cumbersome and emended title "Hymns and Verses / on Modern Patriotism, & the American / Rebellion and Independancy [sic] &c. / Miscellaneous Poems",<sup>2</sup> he considers the theological aspects of the American War and the state of British politics during that time, and includes a large group of poems—they can hardly be called "hymns"—on the fate of the Loyalists.

Much of the narrative poem is concerned with attacking General Sir William Howe, Commander-in-Chief of the British troops in America until early in 1779. Howe defended himself before the House of Commons in April 1779, denying that he failed to prosecute the war with the necessary and required application to military campaigns. In fact Howe was barely able to pursue the war at all, owing to Lord George Germaine's refusal to send reinforcements and the British Government's complete misunderstanding of American conditions. But for Charles Wesley the blame rested without a shadow of doubt upon the unfortunate British commander, as the following quotations show :

Ask Will, why he refus'd to join  
And save the resolute Burgoyne  
Marching (his rival to betray)  
Their thousand miles another way?<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> There are extant two MSS. of "The American War", one of which appears to be a rough draft and is much emended. Where line-references are given, they are to my transcription.

<sup>2</sup> Referred to throughout as "Hymns on Patriotism . . .". References are to the pagination in Wesley's volume, but line-references are to my transcription.

<sup>3</sup> "Hymns on Patriotism . . .", p. 99, ll. 23-6.

And in "The American War" he adds a hint of treason to his comments:

Commanded by his King to join  
The brave, unfortunate Burgoyne . . .  
He flies, impatient of delay,  
But turns—and flies another way:<sup>4</sup>

It seems very likely that most of the background material for "The American War" and the "Hymns on Patriotism . . ." was derived from Joseph Galloway, who became an ardent Loyalist and British spy. During his enforced exile in Britain, Galloway whiled away his time by producing vitriolic pamphlets on the character of Sir William Howe, whom he depicted as a voluptuary, gambler, and drawing-room soldier. Apparently Galloway never forgot that throughout the British occupation of Philadelphia, and while living next door to him, the General called only once! Whatever may be the reasons for Galloway's comments on Howe, John Wesley, who met him in November 1779,<sup>5</sup> thought them worth while collecting in his volume of "Political Extracts". Certainly Charles could not refrain from the use of such valuable ammunition as this against Howe, of whom he already had a preconceived opinion, since they were of opposing parties; but his criticisms must have been given an edge by the pamphlets, the phraseology of which is echoed in both "The American War" and the "Hymns on Patriotism . . .".

Charles Wesley's attitude to the War was that of a fairly orthodox High Church Tory. The War was not really war, but rebellion, not only in a political sense against the mother country, but against God, symbolized in the figure of George III, whom Wesley delighted in describing as His "dread Vicegerent here". Wesley's whole attitude to the Americans and to their French allies is one of horror and utter amazement that such events could happen:

Why do the Christen'd heathen rage,  
And furiously their powers engage  
Against the Lord most High?  
Against his dread Vicegerent here,  
Throw off the yoke of legal fear,  
And God himself defy?<sup>6</sup>

These lines clearly reflect the close correlation between politics and theology, which inspired one section of the community to a deep and very sincere devotion to the King and the mystique of Monarchy of which, though despised by some and pitied by others, he was a human symbol.

The War itself was primarily due to a political theory, which the King refused to recognize as defunct. To many Englishmen, including Charles Wesley, this refusal was based on a well-founded doctrine of kingship. In some ways, then, the war in America was

<sup>4</sup> "The American War", ll. 305-10.

<sup>5</sup> See *Journal*, vi, p. 261, footnote to entry for 13th November 1779.

<sup>6</sup> "Hymns on Patriotism . . .", p. 1, ll. 1-6; also published in *The Arminian Magazine*, December 1789.

a struggle for principles similar to those at issue in the English Civil War of the previous century. The American Revolution may have had fiscal manifestation in the taxation disputes, but its temper and inspiration were religious. It is a significant fact, which did not escape the notice of the British Government, that many of the colonists were men who had found life under an arbitrary political—or very often religious—authority impossible, and in America had already established for themselves a tradition of religious freedom. Now they sought autonomy in political affairs. Presbyterians were especially obnoxious to American Tories on account of their suspected republican sympathies. In Boston, however, the established church was Congregationalist; but both denominations were anathema to most Englishmen for whom “the established church” could mean only one thing—the Church of England with its episcopalian system. Moreover, there was a tendency for Anglican preachers to describe all those outside the Anglican communion as no better than heathen.

Thus it is not surprising to find Wesley, in company with others of similar High Church persuasions, believing that the Americans were reviving the issues of the Civil War, and that these issues were undoubtedly theological and fraught with horror :

The horror of the good old Cause,  
The hate of Kings and Church and Laws  
Thou wilt, O God, expel,  
And then the kingdom of the Fiend  
Shall come to a perpetual end  
And sink again to hell.<sup>7</sup>

There are frequent comparisons of the American Revolution with the English Civil War in the “Hymns on Patriotism . . .”. “Cromwell with his desperate crew”<sup>8</sup> are denounced in terms not unlike those in which the Parliamentarians themselves had described the “zeal of the Lord” cleansing the country from its corruption, sin, and monarchy. There is a very strong element of Old Testament apocalyptic in Charles Wesley’s vehement denunciation of the American “rebels”, and one feels that Charles is beginning to see himself as a prophet of doom, proclaiming his message over a Britain riddled with the sin of criticizing her sovereign’s authority and being punished for this sin by the loss of her American colonies :

The national calamity  
With stony eyes can Britons see,  
With stupid carelessness?  
Nearer it draws, and nearer still  
The dreadful storm of public ill  
To swallow up our race.<sup>9</sup>

Presumably by “race” Charles was referring to the inhabitants of Britain, who, he believed like many other Tories, were not only to be threatened by “Numberless hosts and fleets combin’d”,<sup>9</sup> but by “Thousands of secret traitors”.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>7</sup> *ibid.*, p. 23, ll. 67-72.

<sup>9</sup> *ibid.*, p. 7, l. 7.

<sup>8</sup> *ibid.*, p. 7, ll. 1-6.

<sup>10</sup> *ibid.*, p. 7, l. 19.

I am fairly certain that the poem from which these two phrases are taken belongs to the autumn of 1779. Wesley was, therefore, merely repeating what a good many people believed: that France was about to launch an invasion upon Britain. In fact a fleet did appear off Plymouth on 17th August 1779, but withdrew owing to an outbreak of smallpox amongst its crews. Moreover it was commonly supposed, without much substantiating evidence, that the Opposition was in league with the French and only awaiting a favourable time to make its sympathies open and active.

Wesley is quite convinced that these sympathies derive from the Devil; in any case the Opposition was mainly composed of hell's angels!

Monsters unnatural, who dare  
Usurp the patriot's character,  
And even art and means employ  
Their dear-lov'd Country to destroy !<sup>11</sup>

The arch-fiend in 1782 when the negotiations for peace were concluded was the Prime Minister, Lord Shelburne, upon whom Wesley continually heaps abuse. One example, headed "The memory of the just is blessed, but the name of the wicked shall rot. / Prov. 10. 7", is typical:

Accurs'd by all his memory shall rot  
Yet let the wicked never be forgot,  
But while the memory of the just is blest,  
Stand it in Britain's chronicles confest,  
That smooth, perfidious, perjurd Sh[elburne] sold  
His King, his Country and his God for gold.<sup>12</sup>

The Articles of Peace were finally drawn up in November 1782, and signed early the following year. From November onwards Wesley unleashed a bitter attack on the Peace itself, but more especially on the negotiators. In a poem headed "To the Patriots / Written Dec. 1782" he describes the new situation:

Spirits perturb'd, ye now may rest,  
Nor stir the hell within your breast,  
The Rebels have their purpose gain'd,  
Ye see your heart's desire obtain'd,  
And in their Independance see  
Secur'd your own impunity.<sup>13</sup>

Throughout the War and the events leading up to it, Charles Wesley's attitude to the colonists never wavered, and was always far more uncompromising than that of his brother. John showed, at least at the beginning of the controversy, a marked degree of tolerance and understanding. His famous letter to Lord North is written in quite a different spirit from that which inspires Charles's poems. John writes:

I do not intend to enter upon the question whether the Americans are in the right or in the wrong. Here all my prejudices are against the

<sup>11</sup> *ibid.*, p. 27, ll. 5-8.

<sup>12</sup> *ibid.*, p. 98.

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*, p. 87, ll. 1-6.

Americans; for I am an High Churchman, the son of an High Churchman, bred up from my childhood in the highest notions of passive obedience and non-resistance. And yet, in spite of all my long-rooted prejudices, I cannot avoid thinking, if I think at all, these, an oppressed people, asked for nothing more than their legal rights, and that in the most modest and inoffensive manner that the nature of the thing would allow.<sup>14</sup>

For Charles, obedience was not interpreted in terms of non-resistance, but failure to obey was to be met by punishment both corporal and capital. In a poem written probably in December 1782 this idea of punishment is clearly expressed:

Britons their bleeding brethren see  
 Beneath their saws and axes torn,  
 Left to their savage cruelty;  
 Nor deign to sympathise or scorn  
 Till by a common doom they fall,  
 And wrath divine destroys them all.<sup>15</sup>

In the second part of this poem the sentiments are reminiscent of Jewish eschatology, and are so exaggeratedly violent as to border on the ridiculous:

But will not God the Just arise  
 Their depths of treason to display,  
 Scatter their evil with his eyes,  
 Drag out the fiends to open day,  
 Blast all the sons of wickedness  
 And save us in our last distress?<sup>16</sup>

There is little doubt as to the attitude of Charles Wesley towards the outcome of the Peace settlement: it was a calamity, a catastrophe from which Britain would not, or could not, recover. The establishment of republicanism in America was the final blasphemy to which the political actions in Britain, mainly directed at a reduction of the sovereign's power, had been leading. He takes his stand with the heritage of Divine Right and King's prerogative behind him—fearfully, but perhaps prophetically, aware of the rumblings ahead soon to rise to a crescendo in the horrors of the French Revolution. And always in his mind there lurks the grim shadow of Cromwell's Commonwealth.

The Peace of 1783 marks the end of an epoch in which British politics had been largely theocentric and autocratic. The United States of America, it seemed, was a practical demonstration of the theory of the "Rights of Man", and had now made politics anthropocentric and democratic. Wesley may have been obscurantist and narrow in his attitude towards reform, but at least he saw the dangers inherent in it. As the events of the last few years in our own time seem to indicate, republicanism can divide a country more completely than any other form of government, and there are not a

<sup>14</sup> *Letters*, vi, p. 161; see also *Journal*, viii, p. 325.

<sup>15</sup> "Hymns on Patriotism . . .", p. 80, ll. 31-6.

<sup>16</sup> *ibid.*, p. 86, ll. 49-54.

few wistful glances at Great Britain with its curiously vague political system based on an equally vague relationship between State and Government. Yet Charles Wesley is clear about one thing—that no system of government is of any real value unless it be permeated with the love, power and justice of God. And perhaps his advice “To the American Republic” applies equally well to Britain in particular and the world in general:

Great Peacemaker 'twixt God and man,  
Who God and man hast join'd in one,  
Turn and unite our hearts again,  
That all Jehovah's work may own,  
And Britons thro' the world proclaim  
The wondrous powers of Jesus' name.<sup>17</sup>

DONALD S. BAKER.

<sup>17</sup> *ibid.*, p. 20, ll. 43-8.

We acknowledge, with thanks, the receipt of the following journals, etc.

*The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, April 1964.

*The Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, May 1964,  
with *Report and Thesis Supplement No. 25*.

*The Amateur Historian*, Winter 1964 and Spring 1964.

*The Journal of the Friends' Historical Society*, 1963.

*The Baptist Quarterly*, April and July 1964.

*Wesley's Chapel Magazine*, January, April and July 1964.

*Methodist History*, April 1964.

*The Lincolnshire Historian*, 1964.

*The Journal of the Historical Society of the Presbyterian Church of Wales*, March and June, 1964.

*Journal and Proceedings of the Australasian Methodist Historical Society*, December 1963 and June 1964.

We commend to our readers the following histories of local Methodism, and give, where possible, prices and addresses to which applications for copies can be made.

The Heptonstall Octagon—by Mrs. E. V. Chapman and Rev. Gordon A. Turner, Wesley Villa, Luddenden, Halifax, Yorks.

Bridgeway Hall, Nottingham—edited by Rev. Harry Salmon, 55, Must-ers Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham (2s.).

“The Methodist Church at Launceston”—by H. Spencer Toy. Copies from Rev. A. G. du Feu, 6, Tavistock Road, Launceston (3s. 6d. post free).

“Nonconformity in a Village” (Methodism in Silverton, Devon)—by William R. West. Copies from Mr. H. Darch, Egremont, Silverton, Devon (3s. plus postage).

Cullompton—no price or author given.

Chapel Street, Handsworth—by Dennis S. Keen (2s. 6d.).

Manor Park, London, E.7—no price or author given.

“A Short History of Methodism in Whitchurch”—by D. H. Morgan and F. S. Pritchard.

Bowlee Methodist Church Centenary—no price or author given.

“A Hundred Years of Methodism at St. John's Hill, Wandsworth”, with historical inset—no author given (2s. 6d.).

## THE ANNUAL MEETING AND LECTURE

**A**BOUT thirty members of the Society met at Millhouses, Sheffield, for the Annual Meeting, which was preceded by a tea bountifully provided by Mrs. Herbert Ibberson. Our thanks to Mrs. Ibberson and to the ladies who prepared the meal were expressed by the Rev. Dr. O. A. Beckerlegge.

### Business Meeting

The President (the Rev. Dr. Maldwyn L. Edwards) opened the meeting with prayer. Standing tribute was paid to members who had died during the year. The meeting heard with regret the resignation of Mr. Sydney Walton from the office of Treasurer; for a number of years he has been of great service to the Society. Mr. Rowland C. Swift also asked to be relieved of the office of Registrar, but fortunately he will be continuing his service by becoming our new Treasurer. The resignation of Mr. John F. Mills as honorary Auditor was also regretfully received. The new appointments made were: Miss Joan Gilbert, Registrar; Mr. B. P. M. Hollow, Hon. Auditor; and (a new office) Alderman Horace Hird, Exhibitions Secretary. Alderman Hird had once again arranged the Exhibition of Methodist History in the Conference city, and the new appointment is both a mark of appreciation of past exhibitions and a means of ensuring their continuance in the future. Dr. Frank Baker, who was present at the meeting, was given a special welcome.

The annual reports, presented in person or by communication, were received and considered by the meeting. The Treasurer's statement showed a balance in hand of £448 15s., together with £225 in War Stock, and estimated liabilities (i.e. for the supply of *Proceedings* to members paying subscriptions in advance) of £592 2s.

The President read a letter from Mrs. J. J. Perry informing us that the late Rev. J. J. Perry had bequeathed £25 to the Society. It was agreed that this sum should be earmarked as the Perry Bequest, and reserved for a suitable purpose in the future.

The Registrar reported the enrolment of 66 new members during the year—a net increase of 32. The present membership (804) is the highest yet on record. The majority of the new members this year have come through the membership drive, the usefulness of which still continues. Thanks were expressed to all our members who had helped by providing names and addresses of potential members.

The Editor and the Manuscript Journal Secretary both reported a successful year, and referred to the increasing volume of local material now appearing in the journals of the Branches.

The Librarian stated that over fifty callers had made use of the Library, and over 250 books had been borrowed during the year. The Society continues to receive gifts of books. The damp-proofing of the library floor has been carried out at a cost of £108 11s. 6d., but the work is still to be completed by the provision of a ventilating system.

Branch reports were received from Ireland, East Anglia, Cornwall, Yorkshire, North-East, Lincolnshire, Plymouth and Exeter, South Wales, and Lancashire and Cheshire. The lengthening list is an indication of the attention being paid to local Methodist history in many parts of the country, and the meeting was glad to hear of the forthcoming publication

*How to write a Local History of Methodism*, which it is hoped will be both a useful "tool for the job" for local historians and also a further advertisement for our Society. The meeting was also pleased to hear that *John Wesley's First Hymn-Book* [i.e. the "Charleston" hymn-book of 1737]: a Facsimile with additional material, edited by Drs. Frank Baker and George W. Williams, a joint project in which Anglicans and Methodists on both sides of the Atlantic have an interest, was also on the eve of publication.

The greetings of the Society were sent to the President and the Vice-President of the Conference, both of whom are members of our Society.

### The Annual Lecture

The Rev. G. Thackray Eddy presided at the very well attended lecture, and introduced Mr. John A. Vickers, who shared with us some of the fruits of his researches into the life and significance of "Thomas Coke, Apostle of Methodism". It was unfortunate that the book itself could not have been on sale at the time of the lecture, and this is not the place to review a book that has not yet appeared. Suffice it to say that Mr. Vickers was the master of his subject, and he helped his hearers to assess the importance to Methodism of Thomas Coke, whom perhaps we ought now to call "Thomas Cook". Our thanks were expressed to the lecturer by Dr. Frank Baker.

THOMAS SHAW.

## WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

### Financial Statement, 1st July 1963 to 30th April 1964

RECEIPTS.			£	s.	d.	PAYMENTS.			£	s.	d.
Balance in hand, 30th June 1963	...	...	433	17	2	Printing of <i>Proceedings</i> (4 issues), etc.	...	...	366	17	11
Subscriptions and Donations	...	...				Secretarial and Editorial Expenses	...	...	23	1	6
General	...	...	426	3	9	Lecturer's Honorarium	...	...	7	7	0
New Life Member	...	...	10	10	0	Insurance	...	...	3	11	8
Irish Branch	...	...	21	3	0	Advertising	...	...	22	1	3
Advertisements	...	...				Travelling Expenses	...	...	4	5	0
Share of Lecture Collection	...	...	3	18	4	Damp-proofing Library Floor	108	11	6		
Chairman's Donation	...	...	10	10	0	Bank Charges	...	...	2	2	0
Donation re 1964 Lecture	...	...	4	4	0	Balance in hand, 30th April 1964	...	...	448	15	0
Sundry Income	...	...									
<i>Proceedings</i> (back numbers) and Publications sold	...	...	71	16	10						
War Stock Dividend	...	...	3	17	9						
			£986	12	10				£986	12	10

### Balance Sheet

LIABILITIES.			£	s.	d.	ASSETS.			£	s.	d.
Subscriptions in advance	...	...	338	6	0	War Stock (at cost)	...	...	225	0	0
Life Members—	...	...				Cash in hand—Treasurer	...	...	314	3	3
72 at (say) £3 10s. 6d. each	...	...	253	16	0	Registrar	...	...	134	11	9
						Librarian	...	...	26	0	0
						Back numbers of <i>Proceedings</i> , Library, Filing Cabinet, etc. unvalued					

8th July 1964.

SYDNEY WALTON, *Treasurer*.

B. P. M. HOLLOW, *Auditor*.

## EPISCOPACY

*I study to be little; you study to be great . . . One instance of this, of your greatness, has given me great concern. How can you, how dare you, suffer yourself to be called Bishop? I shudder, I start, at the very thought! Men may call me a knave or a fool, a rascal, a scoundrel, and I am content; but they shall never by my consent call me a Bishop.*

THE LETTERS OF JOHN WESLEY, viii, p. 91.

WHEN the last few words quoted above are repeated out of context they can give the impression that Wesley was irreconcilably opposed to episcopacy in any form. In fact, however, he sent Coke to America to set up the Methodist Episcopal Church of America, and he gave to that Church an amended form of the Book of Common Prayer which included a threefold ordinal (almost identical with the Anglican) in accordance with which Asbury was successively set apart as Deacon, Elder, and Superintendent. Far from despising the episcopal office, Wesley honoured it, provided for it, and claimed it for himself. "I know myself to be as real a Christian bishop as the Archbishop of Canterbury."<sup>1</sup>

The truth is that, whilst honouring the episcopal office, Wesley found it very hard to honour those who occupied it in his day. He says:

I submit still (though sometimes with a doubting conscience) to "mitred infidels". I do, indeed, vary from them in some points of doctrine and some points of discipline—by preaching abroad, for instance, by praying extempore, and by forming societies; but not an hair's breadth further than I believe to be meet, right, and my bounden duty.<sup>2</sup>

It was because of the unhappy associations of the word "bishop" that he substituted "superintendent" in his ordinal (words derived respectively from the Greek and Latin, meaning "one who has oversight"). It was because he feared that Asbury's assumption of the style "bishop" (when Wesley had used "superintendent") was an instance of pride that he wrote the words which head this article. They do not indicate a rejection of episcopacy.

The significant thing is that, despite his opinion of the contemporary holders of episcopal office, Wesley continued to honour and provide for the office itself—even setting apart Alexander Mather as a Superintendent for England. Some indication of the reasons for this attitude can be seen when he says:

I still believe the Episcopal form of Church government to be both scriptural and apostolic. I mean, well agreeing with the practice and writing of the apostles. But that it is prescribed in Scripture I do not believe . . . Since I read Dr. Stillingfleet's *Irenicon* . . . neither Christ nor His Apostles prescribed any particular form of Church government.<sup>3</sup>

As the *Report* on the Conversations puts it:

<sup>1</sup> *Letters*, vii, p. 262.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*, vii, p. 285.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*, iii, p. 182.

Next to scripture is the appeal . . . to primitive Christianity. This is not only the characteristic appeal of a succession of great Anglican divines, but the insistent constant reference of John Wesley.<sup>4</sup>

It is necessary to answer the assertion that Wesley claimed the office of a scriptural episcopos because he believed that "presbyter equals bishop". At the risk of being misunderstood, and despite the sentence "bishops and presbyters are (essentially) of one order",<sup>5</sup> it must be said that Wesley did not believe that "Presbyter equals Bishop". Bishop Lightfoot's commentary on Philippians had yet to be written. If Wesley had believed this it would be strange indeed to provide an ordinal for a threefold ministry. Wesley accepted the position set out by Lord Peter King in his *Primitive Church*.<sup>6</sup>

King argued that in the first three Christian centuries each bishop had one church or parish, and each church had one bishop.

A presbyter is a person in Holy Orders having thereby an inherent right to perform the whole office of a Bishop, but being possessed of no place or parish, not actually discharging it without the permission or consent of the Bishop of a place or parish.

Modern comparison would be a vicar and curate. Thus "Presbyters were different from the Bishop in gradu or in degree, but yet they were equal to them in Ordine or in Order."

It will be obvious that in this sense Wesley was called of God to have the oversight of the Methodist people, that his Helpers exercised their office with his permission and consent, and because he was a scriptural episcopos he could lay hands on Coke, Mather, and his ordinands. True, no bishop had laid hands on him to set him apart to his episcopé of Methodism, he had not been outwardly inducted to that office—but he knew that God had set him apart to it. Consider his letter of 18th January 1780 to Thomas Taylor<sup>7</sup> referring to the "power which God had given me". No one with the slightest knowledge of Wesley would say that he considered his function in Methodism identical to that of his Helpers. Charles Wesley in a letter to one of the Helpers refers to his brother John as "Superintendent".<sup>8</sup> Wesley no more believed that Superintendent equals Helper than he believed Bishop equals Presbyter (all four terms being viewed from the point of view of their function as distinct from questions of Order).

One part of the letter to Thomas Taylor referred to above deserves to be quoted in full:

You seem likewise to have quite a wrong idea of a Conference. For above six years after my return to England there was no such thing. I then desired some of our preachers to meet me, in order to advise, not control me. And you may observe they had no power at all but what I exercised through them. I chose to exercise the power which God had

<sup>4</sup> p. 18.

<sup>6</sup> See *Proceedings*, xxxi, pp. 65 ff.

<sup>8</sup> Quoted by J. S. Simon in *John Wesley the Master Builder*, p. 74.

<sup>5</sup> *Journal*, iii, p. 232.

<sup>7</sup> *Letters*, vi, p. 375 f.

given me in this manner, both to avoid ostentation and gently to habituate the people to obey them when I should be taken from their head. But as long as I remain with them the fundamental rule of Methodism remains inviolate. As long as any preacher joins with me he is to be directed by me in his work.

This is clearly Wesley exercising a personal episcopé—yet through a corporate body. What did he intend at his death? His search for a personal successor is well known, and his setting-apart of Mather as Superintendent in England is significant. Equally significant is the sentence above “gently to habituate the people to obey them when I should be taken from their head”. The Deed of Declaration followed four years later. Evidently he intended both personal and corporate episcopé to work together, though it would be difficult to suppose that he expected anyone to exercise the dominance in Methodism that he had himself exercised.

This working together of personal and corporate episcopé continued after Wesley's death. Conference became (in Bunting's phrase) “the living Wesley”, and in 1796 the first preacher in the circuit became the superintendent. There were several attempts<sup>9</sup> to place superintendents or bishops over the newly-established Districts, but they failed, principally because those who made the proposals were considered to be “aspirants after honour”. Whether the man who exercises personal episcopé is over a circuit or a District makes no difference to the principle that he holds his authority under the Conference. The recent creation of separated Chairmen would have had the support of those closest to Wesley who succeeded him. Similarly the proposals in the *Report* envisage that “Methodist bishops would be elected by the Conference and be responsible to the Conference”.

There is nothing contrary to Wesley's practice, and nothing contrary to Methodist practice since Wesley, in the joining together of personal and corporate episcopé. It is a matter of practicalities rather than of principle whether the personal episcopé should be exercised over a circuit rather than over a District. Judgement on which is better for Methodism depends on (a) whether Methodism can provide sufficient men of sufficient stature to fill adequately the post of circuit episcopos, and (b) whether a District episcopos can give adequate oversight in a large District. The ideal in a united church would appear to be the smallest possible diocese consistent with the availability of suitable men as bishops.

Finally, it would appear to the present writer to be incontrovertible in view of Wesley's ordinal, his setting-apart of Coke and Mather, and his prior application to the Bishop of London, that providing other aspects of the *Report* were acceptable, Wesley would approve the taking (or developing) episcopacy in our system.

VICTOR E. VINE.

<sup>9</sup> Described in detail in *Proceedings*, xxx, pp. 164 ff.

## NEWS FROM OUR BRANCHES

THE number of Branches has, happily, grown to such an extent that it has now become impossible to publish the accounts of their manifold activities in the traditional manner. Furthermore, the time has come for us to impart some order to this section of the *Proceedings*, so our policy will be to compile summaries of Branch activities from accounts received from the secretaries and to publish the composite articles in September and March. In response to several requests, we shall include names and addresses of Branch secretaries, together with an acknowledgement of Bulletins received and (in March only) membership figures. We hope this new arrangement will commend itself to all our readers, and especially to Branch enthusiasts.<sup>1</sup>

THE summer meeting of the **Yorkshire** Branch was held on Saturday, 30th May at Heptonstall Octagon chapel. This building has been in constant use for Methodist worship since 1764. Mrs. E. V. Chapman told the story of William Darney, one of the pioneers of Methodism on the Yorkshire-Lancashire border. After a business session, members paid a visit to the farmhouse on Todmorden Edge which was the scene of the first Quarterly Meeting (1748).

*Next Meeting*: Saturday, 17th October, at Leeds Brunswick.

*Bulletin*: No. 5 received.

*Secretary*: Rev. W. Stanley Rose, 1, York Road, Knaresborough, Yorks.

THE **North-East** Branch held its spring meeting on Saturday, 23rd May at Sheephill, near Burnopfield, Co. Durham, where there is an impressive memorial to John Wesley's visits to that area. At the afternoon meeting the Rev. John C. Bowmer spoke on "Archives and Today". In the evening an Eve-of-Wesley Day rally was very well attended. Between the meetings a business session of the Branch committee was held, and members gathered for a short open-air service at the Wesley memorial.

A summer outing to Blanchland was held on Saturday, 18th July, with Professor H. Cecil Pawson as guide. The return journey was made via Keenly and Cambo—two places mentioned in Wesley's *Journal*.

*Next Meeting*: Saturday, 24th October, at Victoria Road, Darlington.

*Bulletin*: No. 4 received.

*Secretary*: Rev. Harold R. Bowes, 42, Essex Gardens, Gateshead, 9.

THE spring meeting of the **East Anglia** Branch was held at Museum Street church, Ipswich, on Saturday, 30th May, when the Rev. Dr. Frank H. Cumbers spoke on "The Historical Development of the Book-Room". The chairman, the Rev. Hubert J. Martin, made reference to the loss sustained by the Branch in particular and by Methodism in general in the death of the Rev. John J. Perry.

*Next Meeting*: Saturday, 3rd October, at Ashwick Hall, King's Lynn.

*Bulletins*: Nos. 10 and 11 received.

*Secretary*: Mr. W. A. Green, 5, The Avenues, Norwich, Norfolk, NOR.27G.

THE inaugural meeting of the **South Wales** Branch was held under the chairmanship of Dr. Maldwyn Edwards on Saturday, 25th April, at the

<sup>1</sup> Our oldest Branch, the Irish, is not for the present included in these arrangements.

Coke Memorial church, Brecon. Twenty-six members were enrolled and officers appointed. The newly-formed Branch then celebrated the 150th anniversary of the death of Dr. Thomas Coke, a famous son of this Welsh county town. Mr. John A. Vickers spoke about Coke's career, and members visited the house where he was born, St. Mary's Church, where he was baptized, the Cathedral, where a tablet is erected to his memory, and the museum, where the curator had arranged a display of Coke manuscripts and relics.

*Next Meeting* : Tuesday, 24th November, at Cardiff Trinity.

*Bulletin* : No. 1 received.

*Secretary* : Rev. W. Islwyn Morgan, 15, King Edward Road, Brynmawr, Brecon.

**Plymouth and Exeter** is also a newly-formed Branch, and its first meeting was held on Tuesday, 10th March at St. Thomas's Methodist church, Exeter, with the Rev. J. Russell Pope in the chair. After the appointment of officers, the Rev. Philip R. Price spoke on some aspects of Tiverton's association with the Wesley family, especially with Samuel Wesley, jun., John's elder brother. On Saturday, 13th June, the Branch met at Tiverton, visiting St. George's Church, where Samuel Wesley was buried, and also Halberton, a village with early Methodist associations.

*Next Meeting* : Saturday, 3rd October, at Plymouth.

*Proceedings* : Nos. 1 and 2 received.

*Secretary* : Mr. W. R. West, 8, Redvers Road, Exeter.

**Lincolnshire** Branch held its spring meeting on Saturday, 30th May, at Epworth Old Rectory, under the guidance of the Rev. W. Le Cato Edwards and Mrs. Edwards.

*Next Meeting* : Saturday, 10th October, at Lincoln Central.

*Journal* : No. 2 received.

*Secretary* : Mr. William Leary, Woodlands, Riseholme Lane, Riseholme, Lincoln.

THE **Cornish** Branch have arranged two summer pilgrimages—on Saturday, 18th July, from Wadebridge, and on Thursday, 30th July, from Heston. On Friday, 29th May, the Rev. Michael S. Edwards lectured on "The Divisions of Cornish Methodism", and on Thursday, 25th June, the Annual Meeting was held at Truro.

*Next Meeting* : Thursday, 26th November, at Redruth.

*Journal* : II. 1 and 2 received, also Occasional Publication No. 7, *The Divisions of Cornish Methodism, 1802-1857*, by Michael S. Edwards, price 2s. 6d.

*Secretary* : Rev. Baynard P. Evans, The Manse, St. Keverne, Helston, Cornwall.

The attention of members is drawn to our new publication, *How to write a Local History of Methodism*, which can now be obtained from our publications manager, Mr. Alfred A. Taberer, for 2s. 10d. post free. This is a reprint, with considerable additions and emendations, of an article in *Proceedings*, xxix, pp. 103 ff. by the late Rev. Wesley F. Swift. Our Secretary, the Rev. Thomas Shaw, is to be congratulated on producing this edition, which will be an invaluable tool in the hands of all who may be compiling a local history. It is excellent value for money, and ought to have a ready sale.

## DR. JOHN SPEED'S ATTACKS ON METHODISM

AMONGST the Speed-Davies manuscripts<sup>1</sup> at Southampton University Library are two manuscript attacks on the Methodists. They were both written by Dr. John Speed, a prominent inhabitant and antiquary of Southampton in the later eighteenth century, and, like the rest of his works, were never published. Neither manuscript is dated, but the earlier is "The Anatomy of Methodism", which may well be an early draft of the other, and contains numerous erasures and interlineations. It consists of twelve pages of foolscap in one gathering fastened with a pin. There is no title-page, and the last two pages are blank. The other manuscript—"The Sentiments of a Member of the Church of England by a Gentleman"—is a fair copy and written in a curious imitation of printing which Speed affected.<sup>2</sup> It is a sewn gathering of twenty folios. The outside folios are left blank for a cover, and the second folio is the title-page. The text begins on the third folio, and is paginated 1-25. The last few folios are blank. Because of its close resemblance to certain other Speed manuscripts,<sup>3</sup> it is possible that Speed circulated this and other works amongst a select circle of his friends. Otherwise it is difficult to see why he should have taken so much care with such ephemeral items. Most of them were written between 1769 and his death in 1781.

John Speed was born at Southampton in 1703, the son and grandson of local doctors and the great-grandson of John Speed the cartographer.<sup>4</sup> His grandfather, also called John Speed, was a satirical writer, and his *Batt upon Batt, a Poem upon the Parts, Patience and Pains of Barth. Kempster, Clerk, Poet, Cutler of Holy Rood Parish in Southampton* was printed several times. The grandfather was twice mayor of Southampton, but his father and himself were only burgesses.<sup>5</sup> John Speed the historian was one of those men who appear in most boroughs at some time in the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries. He was better educated than many of the local inhabitants, having been a fellow of St. John's College at

<sup>1</sup> The Rev. J. Silvester Davies was a descendant of Dr. John Speed, the local historian, and inherited most of his papers. He began to prepare Speed's manuscript history of the borough for publication, but eventually wrote his own history—*A History of Southampton* (Southampton, 1883). The papers which he accumulated are now divided between the Southampton Record Office, the University Library, and various other institutions.

<sup>2</sup> One of the other University manuscripts is actually composed of letters cut from books.

<sup>3</sup> In particular "An Account of the ancient town of Gotham", an attack on Southampton corporation.

<sup>4</sup> Some details about the family can be found in *Speed's History of Southampton*, ed. E. R. Aubrey (Southampton, 1909), pp. xx-xxxii.

<sup>5</sup> The borough had only a comparatively small number of burgesses from whom the mayor was chosen. At the end of his year of office he automatically became an alderman.

Oxford, but was unable or unwilling to convince them of his abilities. His usual attitude might almost be described as "agin' the corporation", as he opposed their scheme for a body of pavement commissioners, but urged them to elect commissioners of sewers for the salt-marsh.<sup>6</sup> His historical writings are disfigured by his prejudices, and on any subject related to a contemporary political dispute his work is not to be trusted.

At the time when Speed wrote the two attacks on Methodism he was at least seventy years old. Southampton was recovering from two centuries of depression with a brief period of prosperity as a spa. There were five parish churches in the town: two, Holy Rood and St. Mary's, were held by pluralists; St. Michael's and All Saints' were held in plurality, and the incumbent of St. Lawrence with St. John may not have resided in the town.<sup>7</sup> Amongst the nonconformists, the Baptist congregation had almost disappeared, and the Quaker meeting was quite small. Above Bar Congregational church dominated the religious life of the town, as it was to do for many years to come.<sup>8</sup> Unlike many Independent churches, it does not seem to have suffered a serious decline in the early eighteenth century. There is in existence a letter written by Dr. Isaac Watts in 1729 to the minister, Henry Francis, about the difficulties under which the chapel laboured, but as the chapel had just been rebuilt by the congregation, these cannot have been serious.

Under the ministries of William Kingsbury (1764-1809) and Thomas Adkins (1810-68) there was a Calvinistic Methodist revival and vigorous missionary activity in the district. As a result, the Wesleys left Southampton to the Calvinists for many years. John Wesley passed through the town on his way to the Isle of Wight on several occasions, but it was not until 1783 that he found "two or three who feared and loved God" there. The local tradition is that a society was formed in Canal Walk after John Wesley's visit of 1787. A second society was founded in the eastern suburb of Bitterne in 1809, but neither of these societies flourished until the middle of the century.<sup>9</sup>

Under these local circumstances it is perhaps not remarkable that John Speed, writing about 1770, concentrated his attack on the Calvinistic Methodists; but it is surprising when he assumes that all Methodists are Calvinists, and never mentions John or Charles Wesley. The "Anatomy of Methodism" was intended to refute

the most remarkable Tenets of the Methodists, which they have openly avow'd by writing in defence of them, and these are

<sup>6</sup> Small tracts expressing his views on these subjects are amongst the University manuscripts.

<sup>7</sup> Davies's *History*, pp. 349-94.

<sup>8</sup> Dr. Williams's Library, Thompson MS., 1773.

<sup>9</sup> John Wesley's *Journal*, vii, p. 309; Davies's *History*, p. 432; Public Record Office, H.O. 129/105, 13 and 106, 6. On Wesley's visit in 1787 he was taken by Mr. Taylor (a member of the Above Bar church) to hear the musician who played on glasses.

1. Man is justified by Faith alone, without good Works.
2. Predestination, or the unavoidable election of some particular Men to salvation and the unavoidable Reprobation of other particular Men to Damnation.
3. Once a Child of God, and allways a Child of God.
4. The Influence of the Spirit is to be waited for.

Speed in the "Anatomy" compares these doctrines with the appropriate parts of the Thirty-nine Articles and the Bible, and traces their origins back to the Manichees, the Family of Love, the Quakers and the Anabaptists. He objects most strongly to "their extempore Harangues", which he says are "an impious affront they put upon the Holy Ghost, by pretending to make him the Author of such Stuff". Speed praises instead the clergyman who "sits down to compose a Sermon, with a pious and sincere intention to explain the Scriptures, and to shew his hearers the way to Salvation". Methodism to him "is a Medley of all the impious and Enthusiastical Errours of all the Sects that have appeared since the Reformation", and he concludes that the sooner the Methodists leave the Established Church the better.

The "Sentiments of a Member of the Church of England" begins by stating five similar positions which Speed claims to have found in *Pietas Oxoniensis*:<sup>10</sup>

That they deny Free Will.

That they assert Faith alone, without Good Work, to be sufficient for our Justification.

That they assert Personal Election and Reprobation or Absolute Predestination.

That they hold that he that is once a Child of God is allways so; or that it is impossible to fall from Grace.

That they insist on the Operations of the Spirit, in the Sense of Preternatural Inspiration.

These he denies with the same arguments as before, but with the addition of quotations from Peter Heylin's *Aerius Redivivus or the History of the Presbyterians* (1670) and Gilbert Burnet's *History of the Reformation* (1714). The treatment is more historical, and there are fewer comparisons with other denominations. The final paragraphs of this manuscript are concerned with the Arian attempt in 1772 to get the Thirty-nine Articles abolished. It is typical of Speed's notions that he interprets this as an attempt by the Calvinists to force their own doctrine and discipline on the Church of England. Speed calls on the two universities to eject those who do not accept the Articles wholeheartedly. The conclusion of this manuscript is more familiar abuse of the Methodists:

As this Attempt concerning Subscription has been made at a time when great numbers of fugitive and exiled Jesuits are said to be lurking

<sup>10</sup> Richard Hill: *Pietas Oxoniensis or a full and impartial account of the expulsion of six students from St. Edmunds Hall* (London, 1768). Amongst the manuscripts is a copy of another pamphlet about this incident.

about the Cities of London and Westminster, in various Disguises, there is no absurdity in supposing that those *Foxes and Firebrands* have a great hand in promoting, if not in first setting on foot, that Design: their unwearied Zeal to embroil the Church of England is notorious; and they have, more than once, made a Cat's Paw of the *Dissenters*.

All this suggests that Speed's acquaintance with Methodism was very limited and acquired chiefly from a few books or pamphlets. It is a shock to find that an educated and knowledgeable man like Speed could write about the Methodists without mentioning either John or Charles Wesley. These two manuscripts tell us nothing new about the early Methodists, but they give a clear picture of the mind of one of their opponents.<sup>11</sup> EDWIN WELCH.

<sup>11</sup> I am indebted to Mr. B. M. Bland, the University Librarian, and Mr. A. Anderson of the University Library, through whose kindness I have been allowed to examine the manuscripts; also to the Editor for checking that they had not been printed previously.

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The Wesley Historical Society is pleased to announce the publication of a facsimile edition of John Wesley's first hymn-book, the *Charlestown Collection of 1737*. The publication is a joint undertaking with the Dalcho Historical Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina (U.S.A.), and is thus a united work of Methodists and Anglicans, British and American. The *Collection of Psalms and Hymns* was originally printed in Charlestown in South Carolina, and was used by John Wesley with his congregation in Savannah, but it was superseded by the London *Collection of 1738*, and was virtually forgotten. It was reprinted by the Rev. George Osborn in 1882.

The present publication includes a facsimile of the *Collection* reproduced from the copy in the Methodist Archives Centre (one of only two known to exist), an introduction by Dr. Robert Stevenson describing the background of Wesley's life and thought in colonial America against which the hymn-book was prepared, a study by Dr. Frank Baker tracing the hymns and psalms to their original sources or translations, and an analysis by Dr. George Williams of the printing of the 1737 volume.

The publication has been made possible through the generosity of Dr. Baker on behalf of the Wesley Historical Society and by the Diocese of South Carolina on behalf of the Dalcho Historical Society. Copies may be obtained from Mr. Alfred A. Taberer, Portland Road Printing Works, Leicester, or the Epworth Bookshop, 25-35, City Road, London, E.C.1 at 17s. 6d. plus 9d. postage, and from the Dalcho Historical Society, Box 337, Charleston, South Carolina, U.S.A. at \$2.50 plus 10c. postage.

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The Lent 1964 *Bulletin of the Society of Cirplanologists* is a very commendable production. Among many useful articles, we specially notice "some notes" on "The Evolution of the Circuit Plan"; this could well supply the necessary initiative to the writing of a detailed and comprehensive history of the subject which very much needs to be done. Why don't more of our members support this society and the excellent work it is doing?

## NOTES AND QUERIES

## 1130. THE FIRST METHODIST NEW CONNEXION HYMN-BOOK.

It is fairly well known that among the earliest books published by the Methodist New Connexion was a small collection of 276 hymns "designed as an Appendix to the Large Hymnbook" (i.e. Wesley's 1780 hymn-book). It is fairly well known, too, that the MNC Conference authorized the publication of a new edition of Wesley's Hymns, with the addition of sacramental hymns and others for special occasions; but hitherto it has been doubted whether this project was ever carried out. In an article in *Proceedings*, xiv, pp. 21-3, Mr. W. Bainbridge states categorically: "Such a hymn book was never published", suggesting that only the 1800 book of 276 hymns was published before 1834.

A later article by the late Rev. J. D. Crosland, the historian of the New Connexion (*Proceedings*, xxvii, pp. 84-5), mentions the advertisement of the Appendix in the 1800 *Minutes*, commenting that this was the first time advertisements had appeared in the *Minutes*. But, curiously enough, there were *two* editions of the very first *Minutes* of 1797 (both presumably printed, though no imprint appears, by Edward Baines of Leeds, who printed the 1800 book). One edition has the verso of page 23 blank, and presumably this was the edition known to Mr. Crosland. But another edition has advertisements on this page. After notices of "Fletcher's 'Life', Pocket Size, Fine Paper, in Boards, Price Nine-pence", "Wesley's Primitive Physic, Price Nine-pence", "Thomas A' Kempis, Price One Shilling", comes "A Neat Small HYMN BOOK, Containing upwards of 400 Hymns, chiefly intended for Prayer-Meetings, Price One Shilling". And finally there is announced "(In the Press, and will be published in a few weeks) The Large Hymn Book, In a very small Size, and printed on wove Paper; to which will be added near One Hundred Festival and Sacramental Hymns. Bound in Sheep 2s6d, in Calf 3s." One may assume that, as this book was stated to be "in the Press", it was indeed published later that year (1797); but no copy seems to have turned up. Nor does the book "for Prayer-Meetings" seem to be known.

But that is not the end of the story. The fact of many pirated editions of the 1780 hymn-book has long been well known. It was the increasing spate of these which called forth the Wesleyan Hymn-book of 1830; and James Everett's services in combating this threat to the Book-Room will be remembered. Until recently the present writer had assumed that an edition of the 1780 hymn-book published in Nottingham in 1806 was just such a pirated edition produced for the Wesleyan public (as we must now begin to call the parent body)—so profitable did booksellers find it to publish local editions. But second thoughts suggest that it may well be otherwise—in fact a far more interesting publication. For this book, with its 47 additional hymns, starting with Sacramental Hymns, was "Printed at the Office of Sutton and Fowler, Bridlesmith-gate, and sold by C. Sutton, and the Booksellers in general, 1806". Now this firm printed several of the MNC *Minutes*—in 1799 and 1804 (under the name of C. Sutton) and, significantly, in 1807, under the name of Sutton and Fowler, and in 1812 (C. Sutton). Clearly this firm, under either name, was a frequent printer for the New Connexion in those early years. May it not well be that this 1806 hymn-book, though bearing only a private printer's imprint (as opposed to a Conference Book-Room imprint), was in fact a Methodist New Connexion publication—a second edition indeed of the hitherto unknown 1797 edition with Supplement?

OLIVER A. BECKERLEGGE.