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# Proceedings

OF THE

## Wesley Historical Society

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

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Volume XXXIV

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### THOMAS COKE, PREACHER

[The following article, by the minister of Young Harris Memorial Methodist church, Athens, Georgia, U.S.A., is a welcome contribution to our commemoration of Dr. Coke. Unfortunately it arrived too late for inclusion in an earlier issue.—EDITOR.]

THE year 1964 has marked the 150th observance of Thomas Coke's death—he died on 3rd May 1814, en route to Ceylon. An increased and long-overdue interest in Coke raises the question: What of Coke as preacher? He is remembered as bishop, inveterate traveller, founder of missions: he indeed filled these roles. He was also, by "calling" and "vocation", a preacher.<sup>1</sup>

The ebullient Dr. Coke was a Welshman—enough said! The Welsh term is *hwyl*—a condition of near-ecstasy, a mood or temper peculiar to Welsh intonation. Welsh preachers have long been famous for it. Whilst Coke probably spoke almost no Welsh, all the exuberance—the *hwyl*—was his to a marked degree. He loved preaching, and in it found personal fulfilment and discipleship.

After rather diligent years as a student at Oxford, earning a Master of Arts and later a Doctor of Civil Law degree, young Coke in 1770 entered his first parish at South Petherton. During these early Anglican days he was a sincere, stilted reader of homilies. Through Thomas Maxfield he was introduced to Methodist warmth. The more familiar he became with Wesley's writings, the more he departed from prayer book and manuscript. He laboured assiduously, night after night, preparing his sermons. A story—very likely apocryphal—is that such crowds came to hear him that a balcony had to be added to his South Petherton church. We do know that attendance at Holy Communion tripled. Stuffey vestrymen eventually ousted the young curate who had taken on Methodist enthusiasm.

Coke's first published homily appeared in 1774. It was *A Sermon Upon Education*, preached on Tuesday, 14th September 1773, at Crewkerne, Somerset, on the anniversary of a public school. The purpose of the printing—"... the principal, if not the sole motive,

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Coke: *Four Discourses on the Duties of a Minister of the Gospel* (Nashville: Southern Methodist Publishing House, 1880), pp. 208, 245, 272-5.

. . . is the vindication of his [Coke's] character . . ."—may have been achieved in spite of the tedious style of writing.

In the Methodist Mission House, London, the present writer discovered three unpublished sermons in Coke's neat handwriting which belong to this period. The first, undated, is based on Proverbs iii. 17, and contains the following:

There are two opinions which the inconsiderate are apt to take upon trust. . . . a vicious life . . . of liberty, pleasure, and happy advantages. . . . a religious life is a servile and most uncomfortable state.

The second, on the parable of the prodigal son, Luke xv. 17-18, was delivered in South Petherton, 6th September 1772. The third sermon, on Matthew vii. 24, stresses building on a rock—

And may God Almighty so guide and enable us to live here, that we may be completely and eternally happy in the world to come.

In the Methodist Archives Centre in London there are two Coke sermons: one dated 27th September 1772, from Acts x. 4; the other based on Philippians iv. 6. A manuscript dated 7th February 1773, on Luke viii. 15 is at Wesley's Chapel, London. The October 1960 issue of *World Parish* contained a Coke sermon from John xvi. 6-11.

Coke's becoming a Methodist in 1777 witnessed the full change in preaching style. Vast crowds are said to have heard him in London—at the Foundry in Moorfields, at West Street, and at the new chapel in City Road. Dorothea Jordan, actress and society leader, wrote to the Duke of Clarence (whose mistress she was):

We went to the Methodist Chapel last night to hear a famous preacher of the name of Coke. The place was crowded beyond imagination. His doctrine was very good and perfectly orthodox as far as faith goes, . . . but his manner and delivery were so truly [sic] ludicrous that I was forced to pinch myself to keep from laughing. Mr. Coke told us that he was once nearly drowned . . . , but that his faith saved him for God or Jesus Christ, he does not know which, threw in his way a limb of a lime tree on which he got and rode triumphantly to land. He also told us that he should preach tomorrow, and take that opportunity to ordain two young men whom the societies of brethren in London was going to send out to preach the Gospel to the blacks.<sup>2</sup>

In 1786 John Wesley criticized one of his preachers who spoke so low that they lost a good part of what he said; and what they could hear was spoken in a dead, cold, languid manner, as if he did not feel anything he spoke. . . . Dr. C. leaned to the other extreme.<sup>3</sup>

Coke was an intense preacher. "What an afflicting spectacle", he wrote, ". . . a lukewarm . . . minister."<sup>4</sup> And again: "Frozen discourses will never set on fire the souls of hearers."<sup>5</sup> What causes preachers to fail? He answers: ". . . a dull, lukewarm spirit: zeal is a holy fervour. . . . Alas! he who can indulge . . . a stupid, lethargic spirit, will make but a miserable reprover of the deadness of devotion which he observes in others. . . ."<sup>6</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Written from Liverpool, 9th October 1809 (see *Proceedings*, xxx, p. 188). In 1787, Coke had dined with the Duke of Clarence (Prince William Henry) in Antigua (see Coke's *Journal*, p. 57).

<sup>3</sup> *Letters*, vii, p. 346.

<sup>4</sup> *Discourses*, p. 267. <sup>5</sup> *ibid.*, p. 266.

<sup>6</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 210-12.

Coke's preaching style was florid—aimed to reach emotion rather than cool intellect. Little wonder that he was received with less than enthusiasm by the Scottish Calvinists! Coke's friend and biographer aptly commented:

As a preacher, his talents were always displayed to the greatest advantage, when he applied himself to the hearts of his hearers; and at this point he seemed invariably to aim. . . . His public address, however, was too rapid for the tardy movements of sober, theological discussion. Into a detail of argument he seldom entered; but he supplied the deficiency by a copious appeal, which he generally made to Scripture, with which his mind was abundantly stored.<sup>7</sup>

Coke's sanguine approach aroused a similar enthusiastic response in his American congregations. On 6th July 1789 he wrote:

All the shouting seasons, in spite of my proud reluctance . . . were a matter of great praise and rejoicing to me. . . . I shall defend them, both from the pulpit and the press. . . .<sup>8</sup>

A casual reading of Coke's *Journals* reveals the vast amount of preaching to such responsive congregations in brush arbour, Anglican churches, private dwellings, taverns, and the United States Congress. His preaching to negro slaves in the West Indies is revealing: "Since my visit to the islands, I have found a peculiar gift of speaking to the blacks."<sup>9</sup>

Coke's personal letters and *Journal* show a rashness and a marked tendency to overstate a case. These qualities mean a loss of preciseness, but show a verve and a vigour which could well give his preaching evangelistic warmth and appeal.

Coke's voice was rich and melodious, but in times of excitement reached a very high pitch, and after preaching three sermons a day he became hoarse. Thomas Ware noted ". . . his voice . . . [was] of a woman rather than of a man." Said Samuel Woolmer:

He possessed naturally a good understanding, and a lively imagination. . . . His principal *forte* in preaching, was bold assertion and warm declamation. He was generally too warm for a theological reasoner. His subjects were seldom in an argumentative strain; but he was sound, sensible and lively, calculated to arrest the attention and captivate the heart. He was rather luminous than profound. His style was generally glowing and flowery; and often eloquent and sublime.<sup>10</sup>

At the Christmas Conference, 1784, Coke delivered his *Sermon on the Godhead of Christ*, John i. 1. As was his custom, proof texts were massed to demonstrate Christ's divinity: in creation, preservation of natural life, forgiveness of man's sin, miracles, works of grace and regeneration. At Asbury's consecration as General Superintendent, Coke presented his well-known *Sermon Preached at*

<sup>7</sup> Samuel Drew: *The Life of the Rev. Thomas Coke, LL.D.* (New York: T. Soule and T. Mason, 1818), p. 381.

<sup>8</sup> *History of American Methodism* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1964), i, p. 300. (Letter written to Freeborn Garrettson.)

<sup>9</sup> *Extracts of the Journals of the Rev. Dr. Coke's Five Visits to America* (London: G. Paramore, 1793), p. 93.

<sup>10</sup> Samuel Woolmer: *The Servant of the Lord* (London: T. Cordeux, 1815), pp. 18-19.

*Baltimore* based on Revelation iii. 7-11, on the nature and task of a Christian bishop: "Humility . . . Meekness . . . Gentleness . . . Patience . . . Fortitude . . . Impartiality . . . Zeal . . . Wisdom . . . Communion with God and Confidence in Him."<sup>11</sup>

Coke published other sermons—this was the tract age—including numerous, wordy, stiff funeral orations. Any reading of these will indicate that Coke's appeal must have come from the spirit and personality of Coke the man and preacher, not Coke the writer.

The doctor was at his eloquent best when preaching on missions, e.g. from Psalm lxxviii. 31: ". . . Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God." Theologically he was highly orthodox, especially in his view of the Trinity and of the divinity of Christ. On several occasions he bordered on heresy-hunting. In October 1779 he bluntly charged Joseph Benson and other fellow-Methodists with Unitarian leanings. Woolmer noted:

When opposing the adversaries of his Master, especially the Arians and Socinians, he was violent, hardly knowing when to put his sword into the scabbard, and sometimes rather unguarded in his expressions, which were more calculated to provoke anger, than to convince of evil.<sup>12</sup>

At Taunton in 1807, so heated was his charge that Job David described him as damning "all Arians and Socinians indiscriminately to *hell flames without the faintest hope of their salvation.*" David criticized Coke for the

dogmatic and magisterial tone in which you conveyed your sentiments . . . the *coarse, vulgar, degrading epithets* you employed . . . [He then asked Coke:] Do you consider yourself infallible? Are you the centre of all wisdom, knowledge and piety? . . .

Alas, Coke possessed the eighteenth-nineteenth century habit of borrowing other preachers' materials, and for this he received due criticism, as did Wesley before him.

Coke must be seen as a peripatetic preacher who did not have time for careful Sunday-by-Sunday preparation. He naturally developed certain basic themes which he used repeatedly. He was constantly "on the go". Notices in Paris, during the Revolution, announced "the eminent English divine" lately arrived to preach "in French" (and three people came to hear him).

Coke's zealotry must not be dismissed as pious emotionalism. Said he:

The man who engages in this solemn work is not merely accountable to God for his own soul, but becomes responsible also for the souls of those who have been committed to his care.<sup>13</sup>

At the close of his addresses on the ministry, and almost at the close of his life, Coke prayed:

O my God, give to all the ministers of Thy gospel a tender and paternal heart toward their people.<sup>14</sup>

W. THOMAS SMITH.

<sup>11</sup> *The Substance of a Sermon Preached at Baltimore* . . . (London: G. Paramore, 1785), pp. 14-22.

<sup>12</sup> Woolmer, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

<sup>13</sup> *Discourses*, p. 195.

<sup>14</sup> *ibid.*, p. 312.

## THE REAL PRESENCE AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

*To every faithful soul appear,  
And shew Thy real presence there.*

HYMN CXVI, HYMNS ON THE LORD'S SUPPER,  
BY JOHN WESLEY AND CHARLES WESLEY.

THE phrase "the Real Presence" has not been as much quoted in recent discussions as some of the other "Catchwords" in this series; but it is a convenient peg on which I have been asked to hang a discussion of the Methodist doctrine of priesthood and sacrifice.

As is well known,<sup>1</sup> the sacramental hymns of Charles Wesley "constitute an indispensable exposition of Methodist eucharistic doctrine".<sup>2</sup> Actually the *Hymns on the Lord's Supper* have the names of both John and Charles Wesley on the title-page; and, although it is generally supposed that Charles was the author of most of them, we cannot think that John would readily have lent his name to anything of which he disapproved. They had as a preface *The Christian Sacrament and Sacrifice*, extracted from the Caroline divine, Daniel Brevint; and of this work they were almost a paraphrase. But there are other relevant passages in John Wesley's writings. We must also remember that throughout his long life he ardently practised that "Constant Communion" which was the theme of one of his sermons.

The headings of the various sections of *Hymns on the Lord's Supper* give a brief conspectus of the Wesleys' doctrine:

- I As it is a Memorial of the Sufferings and Death of Christ.
- II As it is a Sign and a Means of Grace.
- III The Sacrament a Pledge of Heaven.
- IV The Holy Eucharist as it implies a Sacrifice.
- V Concerning the Sacrifice of our Persons.
- VI After the Sacrament.

Many of the emphases here contained—on remembrance, on communion, on eschatological expectation, on the dedication of ourselves—are common ground among the churches, and are expounded in a non-controversial way in the relevant passages of the *Report*.

In the relevant chapter of the *Report*, Chapter 4, "The Sacraments", the Anglican doctrines are held not to require further statement, as

<sup>1</sup> Cf. J. E. Rattenbury: *The Eucharistic Hymns of John and Charles Wesley*, which contains also a convenient edition of the Hymns; John C. Bowmer: *The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in Early Methodism*; A. Raymond George, in Dow Kirkpatrick (ed.): *The Doctrine of the Church*, pp. 140-60. The Hymns are hereafter cited as *LS*, and the present *Methodist Hymn-Book* as *MHB*.

<sup>2</sup> *Conversations between the Church of England and the Methodist Church: A Report* (hereafter cited as *Report*), p. 31.

they are to be found in the Articles, the Catechism, and the Prayer Book services. The Methodists do not, as they might have done, refer simply to the services in the *Book of Offices*: this we can well understand as far as concerns Baptism. They give instead a brief statement

which, without claiming to be official, may be taken as fairly representative of Methodist teaching, though here, as in the Church of England, some differences of practice and interpretation exist. (p. 29.)

This chapter of the *Report* did not at first cause as much controversy as much else in the *Report*, though the "Dissentient View" (p. 61) refers to "some disquiet" about it. But among the numerous pamphlets which the *Report* has provoked, there is one which deserves special mention because of the attention it gives to this theme. This is *The Church of England and the Methodist Church: Ten Essays*, edited by J. I. Packer. The chapter on "The Gospel and the Sacraments" is by R. T. Beckwith, who has now expanded what he there wrote in a book *Priesthood and Sacraments: A Study in the Anglican-Methodist Report*.<sup>3</sup> These two works, representing the position of conservative evangelical Anglicans who are critical of the *Report*, assert that the Methodist statement makes such a full use of the doctrine in the eucharistic hymns because these have long been claimed by Anglo-Catholics as supporting their views. Beckwith then claims that the Anglo-Catholic interpretation of the *Hymns* is a complete anachronism, and that when Brevint or the Wesleys used the same language which Anglo-Catholics subsequently used, they did not use it in the same sense.

We shall not then here attempt yet another general exposition of the eucharistic doctrine of the Wesleys, on which there are standard works, but immediately begin the comparison of the *Hymns* and the other writings of the Wesleys with the *Report* in the light of this controversy. The phrase which constitutes our title, "The Real Presence", is a crucial case, for it undoubtedly occurs both in the Wesleys in the passage cited at the head of this article,<sup>4</sup> and in the *Report*, in a passage on communion, which concludes:

Holy Communion is a sacrament of the Real Presence; catholic and evangelical could readily unite in Charles Wesley's hymn:

Thy presence makes the feast;  
Now let our spirits feel  
The glory not to be expressed,  
The joy unspeakable.<sup>5</sup>

Now it is true that Anglo-Catholics have tended to use the phrase "real presence" as a sort of shibboleth, to distinguish those theories

<sup>3</sup> In the footnotes the pamphlet is cited simply as Beckwith. In references to the book the full title is given. As pamphlets are being constantly published, there will probably be other relevant pamphlets before these pages are printed.

<sup>4</sup> *LS* LXVI; CXVI, which, with the substitution of "here" for "there", and the omission of two verses, is *MHB* 771.

<sup>5</sup> p. 32; the hymn quoted is *LS* LXXXI (in which the second line of this passage is actually "And now our bosoms feel"), *MHB* 761.

of which they approve, whereby Christ is present in the elements,<sup>6</sup> from those of which they disapprove, such as receptionism and virtualism, whereby He is present in some other sense. Beckwith contends that the doctrine of the real presence in this Anglo-Catholic sense was unknown in the Church of England before the Oxford Movement; Wesley, like other Anglicans of his period, used it in a virtualist or receptionist sense. It is indeed not easy to fit the Wesleys into these categories; some of the attempts to do so involve such awkward terms as "dynamic receptionist".<sup>7</sup> John Wesley certainly uses a word characteristic of Calvinist rather than of Roman or of Lutheran doctrine when in expounding the words of institution he says: "*This bread is, that is, signifies or represents, my body, according to the style of the sacred writers*", for which use of the verb "to be" he then cites three biblical parallels.<sup>8</sup> A similar argument is used in *A Roman Catechism . . . with a Reply thereto*, which contains also an explicit attack on the doctrine of transubstantiation, together with this positive statement:

The mystical relation which the bread by consecration has to Christ's body is sufficient to give it the name of his body.<sup>9</sup>

A similar line of thought might perhaps be discerned in the words:

No local Deity  
We worship, Lord, in Thee.<sup>10</sup>

Yet this, so far as it goes, is actually compatible with the Roman view that Christ is in the elements not as in a place (*in loco*). In general the teaching of the Wesleys, confirmed by that of Brevint, supports the view that they did not use the phrase "real presence" in a narrow Anglo-Catholic sense.

On the other hand, the hymn which is said to show the Wesleys' appreciation of the need for an Epiclesis, while it may perhaps be called virtualist, is certainly more than receptionist:

Thy life infuse into the bread,  
Thy power into the wine.<sup>11</sup>

The Wesleys may perhaps be allowed to dismiss the need for precise classification with their words:

Who shall say how bread and wine  
God into man conveys!<sup>12</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Even this narrower sense of "real presence" does not necessarily involve the doctrine of transubstantiation, which is only one theory among several which seek to define how Christ can be present in the elements.

<sup>7</sup> G. B. Timms: *Dixit Cranmer*, p. 28, cited in Bowmer, op. cit., p. 176.

<sup>8</sup> *Notes upon the New Testament*, Matthew xxvi. 26.

<sup>9</sup> *Works* (3rd edition), x, p. 118. This was not an original work by John Wesley, but by publishing it he adopted it as his own.

<sup>10</sup> *LS LXIII*.

<sup>11</sup> *LS LXXII*; *MHB* 767. Cf. A. Raymond George: "The Work of the Holy Spirit in the Sacraments", in *London Quarterly and Holborn Review*, July 1955, pp. 188-9.

<sup>12</sup> *LS LVII*. Cf. the use of "Conveyances" in *Report*, p. 29, as a description of the sacraments.

But if we grant that the Wesleys did not use the phrase "real presence" in an Anglo-Catholic sense, are we to say that the *Report* makes out that they did? Beckwith does not press this charge as he does a corresponding charge about eucharistic sacrifice. But he is disturbed by the sentence in the *Report* (p. 32): "The act of remembrance leads to communion." In the passage which thus begins he rather fears that he sees the theory of Dix, i.e. that the real presence results from the remembrance. He thinks that J. C. Bowmer introduced this theory into Methodism, under the erroneous impression that Wesley expressed it in the *Hymns* and so anticipated Dix. But he maintains that the characteristic teaching of Methodism is a belief in a personal but purely spiritual presence, which he finds maintained by C. Ryder Smith and implicitly by myself. Moreover he admits that this is the teaching which Mr. Bowmer ascribes both to Wesley and to Methodism, despite his acceptance of Dix's view of remembrance.<sup>13</sup> If then Mr. Bowmer, on Beckwith's view, despite his use of Dix, ascribes to Methodism a theory acceptable to Beckwith, why must the *Report*, simply on the ground that it shows traces of Dix, be deemed to hold another theory? Why does Beckwith assume that the authors of the *Report* were so bewitched by Anglo-Catholicism that they used terms always in an Anglo-Catholic sense?

But the fact is that there are not just two views, either of the Eucharist in general or of this phrase "the Real Presence"—an Anglo-Catholic view that is wrong and a virtualist or receptionist view that is right. Apart from the fact, which of course Beckwith admits, that the terms "virtualism" and "receptionism" were not used in the time of the Wesleys, it may be doubted whether they do justice to Anglican theologians before the Oxford Movement; we may also wonder whether Anglo-Catholic teaching is as "literal" as Beckwith implies. Eucharistic theology just cannot be fitted into this either-or strait-jacket. I am not therefore happy with the suggestion that the Methodist doctrine of the real presence is "purely spiritual": "purely", like "merely", is in effect a negative word, and I should wish to inquire more closely what it is supposed to exclude.<sup>14</sup>

The discussion on sacrifice follows a similar pattern, but the question is more complicated. The *Report* (p. 32) says: "The sacrament of Holy Communion is a sacrifice." Then, after a reference to the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross (which, it is implied, is unique and unrepeatable, though those actual words are not used), it says: "It is that<sup>15</sup> we represent, and re-present and renew by our remembrance and communion." With this formidable list of verbs we may compare a similar use of "re-enacted" in an earlier passage. The passage quoted is followed by some further observations about speaking of the Eucharist as a sacrifice, which include the assertion that "The sacrifice offered by Christ on the Cross is eternal" (p. 33).

<sup>13</sup> Beckwith: *Priesthood and Sacraments*, p. 75.

<sup>14</sup> A careful attack on Beckwith, as he appears in the pamphlet edited by Packer, is to be found in E. Gordon Rupp: *Consideration Re-considered*, pp. 20-5, 33-6. On this particular issue, see pp. 22-4.

<sup>15</sup> Possibly "which" has fallen out.

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

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BOOK NOTICES

by

Revs. John C. Bowmer, M.A., B.D., Archie Bradford, W. Lamplough Doughty, B.A., B.D., Maldwyn L. Edwards, M.A., D.D., Ph.D., A. Raymond George, M.A., B.D., John H. S. Kent, M.A., Ph.D., Thomas Shaw, Victor E. Vine and A. Skevington Wood, B.A., Ph.D.; Messrs. William Leary and John A. Vickers, B.A., B.D.

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 ERRATUM

VOL. XXXIV.

 Page 95, 7th line from foot. For *Samuel Drew* read *Samuel Dunn*


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[We are grateful to our Manuscript Journal Secretary, Mr. John A. Vickers, B.A., B.D., for his careful work in the compilation of the Index.—EDITOR.]

Now Beckwith does not deny that similar passages are to be found in Brevint and the Wesleys, as also the expression that we "offer" Christ's sacrifice, but he asserts that before the Oxford Movement these expressions were not meant literally, but metaphorically, figuratively, and symbolically; and this distinction he regards as overlooked by the *Report*.<sup>16</sup>

With this in mind we turn to the Wesleys. They thought, as the section-heading in the *Hymns* makes clear, that the Holy Eucharist implies a sacrifice. But the Eucharist is not a propitiatory sacrifice.<sup>17</sup> Christ was "Once offer'd up to die no more";<sup>18</sup> and to repeat this offering would be superfluous and impossible. But in remembering at the Eucharist Christ's offering, we plead it or indeed present it as what Brevint called a "commemorative sacrifice":

In this tremendous mystery  
Present Thee bleeding on the tree,  
Our everlasting sacrifice.<sup>19</sup>

The Wesleys went indeed beyond this in the words:

With solemn faith we offer up  
And spread before Thy glorious eyes  
That only ground of all our hope,  
That precious, bleeding sacrifice,  
Which brings Thy grace on sinners down,  
And perfects all our souls in one.<sup>20</sup>

This hymn is reminiscent of the eucharistic doctrine of Cyprian rather than of the now popular Irenæus and Augustine; it is said to be the origin of the well-known eucharistic hymn of William Bright: "And now, O Father, mindful of the love".<sup>21</sup> I should myself have preferred "plead" to "offer". Similarly I find some difficulty in those hymns in which Christ is spoken of as still offering up Himself to God. It would seem more scriptural to say that Christ offered Himself once for all, and now as our High Priest makes intercession for us (Hebrews vii. 25; ix. 24) on the basis of His finished work. However, I think it is not difficult to see how the Wesleys slipped into using these expressions; in any case, I am not here concerned with my own doctrine, but with that of the Wesleys.

The difficulties begin when we attempt to compare the doctrines about sacrifice contained in this rich treasury of eucharistic devotion with various other views. Thus some have thought that the *Hymns* were tainted with dangerous Roman error. Rattenbury and others, by calling attention to the strongly anti-Roman expressions in Brevint and the Wesleys as well as to the emphasis on the uniqueness of Christ's death, have rejected this view, and here Beckwith, with his

<sup>16</sup> Beckwith, pp. 21-3; *Priesthood and Sacraments*, pp. 65-9.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. *Works*, x, p. 120.

<sup>19</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> *LS CXXXIV.*

<sup>20</sup> *LS CXXXV, MHB 723.*

<sup>21</sup> This is admitted by Beckwith (*Priesthood and Sacraments*, p. 65). Rupp, *op. cit.*, p. 25, calls Bright's hymn "simply a weaker presentation". On the placing of the Wesley hymn in its present position in *MHB* Mr. Bowmer's view seems sounder than the criticism of it in Beckwith, *Priesthood and Sacraments*, p. 71, n. 15.

view that the apparently Roman expressions are figurative, supports them. It is clear that the Wesleys were strongly opposed to what has usually been regarded as the Roman view. But recent Roman theology has been more cautious, and attention has been drawn to more evangelical aspects of even medieval Roman theology, so that it is now not clear what is Roman theology and what is a crude misrepresentation of it.<sup>22</sup>

Much the same can be said about Anglo-Catholic theology. If this is what Beckwith thinks it is, then certainly the Wesleys did not hold it; but if the Anglo-Catholics have believed in eucharistic sacrifice in a less literal sense than Beckwith supposes, the gap between them and the Wesleys is correspondingly narrowed.

Some gap, however, remains. What then of the charge that the *Report* uses the language of eucharistic sacrifice in the Anglo-Catholic rather than the Wesleyan sense? On the face of it, the *Report* avoids the more extreme expressions in the *Hymns*, as that we offer Christ, or that Christ is still offering Himself. On the other hand, the expressions "re-enact" and "re-present" do not occur, so far as I can recall, in the *Hymns*. Beckwith drives his wedge between the two positions in this way. When before the Oxford Movement some spoke of the offering of Christ's body and blood, "all they meant was that the rite was a memorial symbol of Calvary".<sup>23</sup> We may note in passing that "all they meant" is in effect a dangerously negative expression like "merely" or "purely", and that both "memorial" and "symbol" are much richer words than Beckwith would admit. But the *Report*, especially in its treatment of "re-presentation", uses the characteristic language of Dix and Mascall, and is "strongly suggestive of Anglo-Catholic teaching".<sup>24</sup> Beckwith admits that even Brevint's good Protestant teaching is contained in language which "to superficial readers . . . may nowadays suggest something different". Might not a similar charity be extended to the *Report*? A document is not to be condemned because it has some points of contact with two Anglo-Catholic writers. The document may embrace some of their views and not others. Beckwith's method of attack involves "guilt by association". Moreover it is at least arguable that Dix and Mascall are not so much representing the views of older Anglo-Catholic writers as expressing new insights, common to a number of traditions, which seek to transcend the old controversies.

Beckwith also attacks the Statement in the *Report* by contrasting its teaching with that of the New Testament. Here he makes two points. The first is that "whereas the Statement defines Jesus' sacrifice (p. 32) in terms of obedient self-offering in which we can share,

<sup>22</sup> Beckwith: *Priesthood and Sacraments*, pp. 65-9; Rupp. op. cit., pp. 22-5; but see also F. Clark: *Eucharistic Sacrifice and the Reformation*, which strongly discourages any idea of a rapprochement between Roman and Evangelical eucharistic theology.

<sup>23</sup> Beckwith, p. 21.

<sup>24</sup> Beckwith, p. 22; cf. Beckwith, *Priesthood and Sacraments*, pp. 77-91; Rupp, op. cit., pp. 22-5.

the New Testament always defines it in terms of vicarious sin-bearing, in which we cannot share".<sup>25</sup> This I regard as a very inaccurate view of the New Testament. His second point is that the statement that the sacrifice offered by Christ on the Cross is eternal is contradicted by the Epistle to the Hebrews.<sup>26</sup> I am inclined to agree that this type of statement, which is fairly common in discussions of eucharistic sacrifice, though possibly pointing to some important truth, is unscriptural and somewhat misleading. But the sentences which follow this in the *Report* (p. 33) and elucidate it are much more scriptural and emphasize Christ's continual intercession. In any case the reference to the sacrifice as eternal does not go beyond what the Wesleys wrote about Christ still offering Himself. Probably they too were saying in a vivid way that Christ still pleads for us and that the effects of His unique sacrifice for us on the Cross are still available.

Space does not permit me to deal also with the doctrine of priesthood at any length. Beckwith follows a similar line, with Moberly taking the place of Mascall and Dix. In the light of the Korah Sermon it would be very difficult to sustain the case that the *Report* here goes beyond Wesley. It is another question whether it goes beyond the views of modern Methodism. But we cannot here go into the whole doctrine of the ministry, which in my judgement is more relevant to the question of the celebrant than is the doctrine of eucharistic sacrifice.

On the whole, then, I think that the Wesleys' eucharistic doctrines and especially the *Hymns* have been fairly used in the *Report*. Certainly as historians we must all be glad that new attention has been drawn to them. Mr. Beckwith has done a notable service in calling attention to the complexity of these issues, and, although I think the charge against the *Report* of using the same language as that of the Wesleys in a different sense can be rebutted, it was perhaps unwise in the limited space available to use other expressions such as "re-enact" which paraphrase rather than repeat the language of the Wesleys. A fuller exposition could no doubt show that they were intended in the same scriptural and evangelical sense as the expressions taken straight from the *Hymns*, but for this there was no room in the *Report*. Without such exposition they are perhaps capable of being misunderstood. But clearly the intention was not to say anything divisive. The very sentence in the *Report* (p. 32) (already quoted) which contains the phrase from which we began reads:

Holy Communion is a sacrament of the Real Presence; catholic and evangelical could readily unite in Charles Wesley's hymn . . .

Clearly then the intention of the *Report* was to use these expressions in an eirenic and comprehensive sense, which is itself faithful to the spirit of the Wesleys.

A. RAYMOND GEORGE.

<sup>25</sup> Beckwith, p. 22.

<sup>26</sup> Beckwith, loc. cit., and *Priesthood and Sacraments*, pp. 87-91. It is only fair to point out that, though I have touched on most of the points contained in the relevant passages of the pamphlet, there is a great deal more detailed argument in the book, into which it is not possible to go here.

## BOOK NOTICES

*The Angel-Makers*, by Gordon Rattray Taylor. (Heinemann, pp. xviii. 388. 42s.)

*The Making of the English Working Class*, by E. P. Thompson. (Gollancz, pp. 848, 73s. 6d.)

Historians of Methodism have not always spent enough time considering the historical context in which Methodism has existed. No very profound attempts have been made to explain the rise of eighteenth-century Methodism, for example. The attention of readers of the *Proceedings* may therefore be drawn to two books which have treated Methodism in this more general way. One of them, *The Angel-Makers*, by G. R. Taylor (1958) seems to have escaped notice in most places; the other, *The Making of the English Working Class*, by E. P. Thompson (1963) has had better luck. Mr. Taylor's book was a *tour de force*; it was an essay in the psychology of religion, and offered, among other things, sexual explanations of the rise and nature of Methodism. The weakness of the genre is that it is easier to think of sexual hypotheses of this kind than it is to check them. Mr. Taylor has influenced Mr. Thompson, however: at one point Mr. Thompson describes Methodism as "a ritualised form of psychic masturbation"; at another he says that "Methodism is permeated with teaching as to the sinfulness of sexuality and as to the extreme sinfulness of the sexual organs". He even takes Hazlitt seriously as an authority on Wesleyan Methodism, quoting with approval his description of Methodism as "a collection of religious invalids". Such a conclusion casts doubt on Mr. Thompson's whole approach.

He regards Methodism as the transforming power which disciplined the early nineteenth-century working-class in England. Methodist conversions produced

the psychic ordeal in which the character-structure of the rebellious pre-industrial labourer or artisan was violently recast into that of the submissive industrial worker. . . . It is a phenomenon almost diabolic in its penetration into the very sources of human personality, directed towards the repression of emotional and spiritual energies.

In fact, by page 370 we realize that it was the sexual teaching of Methodism against which D. H. Lawrence reacted in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Was it really, Mr. Thompson?

All this is exaggerated, but readers of the *Proceedings* ought to realize that this book is going to colour a good deal of teaching about Methodism in the next few years. (The author, I am told, is a Kingswood product.) Of course the early working-class had to be disciplined before it would consent to work for long hours under factory conditions with very brief week-end rests and little annual holiday, etc.; but if one looks, for instance, at an article by Sidney Pollard (*Economic History Review*, December 1963) on "Factory Discipline in the Early 19th Century", it is clear that Methodism played only a very minor role in the process. The employers used beatings (especially of the children in the textile mills), dismissal or threats of dismissal, blacklisting of awkward men in a whole area, heavy fines for absenteeism, the break-up of unions, and the building of factory villages in which the owner had tremendous coercive powers, as methods of negative discipline. Incentive payments were the chief positive approach; drinking and swearing were tackled through fines. Mr. Pollard

thinks (*pace* Mr. Thompson) that sexual irregularity was of no great interest to the factory-owner. The employers certainly compelled their labour force to attend church or chapel whenever possible: behind this lay the hope of persuading the workers to accept the ideal of "respectability"—not Christianity—as a goal to be achieved through regular hard work. Any respectable variety of religion would do: there is little evidence that manufacturers had the enthusiasm for Methodism which one would expect on Mr. Thompson's argument.

All in all, then, I don't find Mr. Thompson convincing on Methodism. May I add, as one who has spent some time on the problem of Jabez Bunting, that I can't help feeling that historians like Mr. Thompson ought to have progressed beyond the bland acceptance of a portrait of Bunting dictated by his enemies. Halévy—one wonders how many more times one will have to say it—was not an authority on Methodism.

JOHN H. S. KENT.

*Methodism and the Puritans*, by John A. Newton. (Friends of Dr. Williams's Library, Lecture No. 18, pp. 20, 4s. 6d.)

The continuance and interrelation of various traditions within the Church both before and after the Reformation—traditions which cross and re-cross denominational and confessional frontiers and sometimes reappear among groups in which they were thought to have no place—is a subject to which an increasing amount of attention is being given. Methodism itself is a veritable "Crewe junction" of such traditions, and we are indebted to writers such as Dr. E. Gordon Rupp and Dr. Martin Schmidt for indicating the continuous lines through the network of points.

In this lecture Dr. Newton has made a valuable contribution to this study by colouring the Puritan strand, which along with others makes up the thread of Wesley's Methodism, so that we can examine it in isolation. He begins with Samuel Johnson's definition of the word "Methodist" in his *Dictionary*: "One of a new kind of puritans lately arisen", which from so informed a man as Johnson itself points to the clearly-marked Puritan inheritance in Methodism.

Dr. Newton is surely right when he speaks of Epworth rectory as a Puritan home with a High Church atmosphere, though the terms might be reversed and still be true. Susanna Wesley was herself trained in a Puritan home; the Puritan Baxter was always one of her mentors; she kept a strict Puritan sabbath, and followed the Puritan custom of keeping a spiritual diary. She was converted to High Anglicanism, and taught her sons from Anglican text-books, but she remained a Puritan personality.

Wesley's own Puritan features are clearly marked, though it is difficult when considering the ascetic traits in him to decide whether to attribute them to his High Church or to his Puritan upbringing. The discipline of the Holy Club which underlay the whole of Wesley's life and ministry surely had its roots in both traditions.

His admiration for the Puritan divines is evidenced by the large place he gave to them in his *Christian Library*, though he was not uncritical of those "holy confessors". In Methodism itself the Puritan tradition is seen in its ethical rigorism, and takes shape in its "Rules", its extempore prayer and preaching, and even in its liturgy.

THOMAS SHAW.

*Church or No Church? A study of the development of the concept of Church in British Methodism*, by Reginald Kissack. (Epworth Press, pp. 164, 16s.)

It is often assumed that Methodism has no real doctrine of the Church. This book shows conclusively what a fascinating story can be made out of the ecclesiological writings of Jabez Bunting, Alfred Barrett, Benjamin Gregory, J. H. Rigg, Hugh Price Hughes and R. Newton Flew. It consists of lectures originally given in the Waldensian College in Rome, with which Mr. Kissack maintained such happy relations during his notable ministry in Italy. As the book proceeds it becomes more and more polemical, so that it is no surprise to read on the jacket that the material is now reshaped in order to relate it to the situation of the present Anglican-Methodist Conversations.

History degenerates into mere chronicle if it is not written from some particular point of view and to elucidate some particular problem. But as one who does not share the author's view of these Conversations I wish that he had left the material as it was, because I fear lest my disagreement with his conclusions may lead me to be unfair to a book which is of great importance. No doubt speakers of Barthian sympathies were influential in the Faith and Order Conference at Lund, but as one intimately connected with that movement today I cannot accept the account given of it on page 113, nor the account of the differences between the pre-Lund and the post-Lund methods on pages 12, 13 and 104. I do not care for the implication on page 113 that Methodism is a left-wing Church.

The author works up to a contrast between what he calls Catholic Ecumenism and Federal Ecumenism. He contends that the latter is scriptural: it is really mutual recognition with intercommunion, as in the Acts of the Apostles (page 133). I do not know how he reconciles this with his own statement that "*History* has so far known only . . . *original disunity* in the Church" (page 145). Like many others who claim that denominationalism is scriptural, he quite overlooks the difference between the relations of churches in different cities and the relations of separately-organized groups of Christians in the same city.

Moreover, the term "pluralism" is ambiguous. It may refer, as on page 125, to the admission that the Church throughout is in a state of schism; and until such divisions can be healed, Methodism certainly stands for a high degree of recognition and intercommunion. And if Federal Ecumenism is simply a means to a further end, as his favourable reference to the union in Canada seems to imply (page 154), then by all means let us be at the moment Federal Ecumenists. But there is also a strong suggestion that pluralism is the goal. I think the author underestimates the hostility to this view in the Conference Statement of 1937 (page 108).

I hope all will read this book and judge for themselves, and side by side with it read the chapter "Do Methodists have a Doctrine of the Church?" by Professor A. C. Outler in the book *The Doctrine of the Church*, edited by Dr. Dow Kirkpatrick [which we notice below.—EDITOR.]

A. RAYMOND GEORGE.

*The Doctrine of the Church*, edited by Dow Kirkpatrick. (Epworth Press, pp. 215, 25s.)

This volume consists of papers which were delivered at the Oxford Institute of Methodist Theological Societies which met at Lincoln College in 1962. Ten of the eleven contributions come from Methodist scholars,

the remaining one being by Dr. C. H. Dodd, who writes on "The Biblical Doctrine of The People of God". The subject is one of extreme importance today, and it is good to know that we are tackling it from the Methodist angle. The book as a whole can be warmly commended to our readers, but to us the most stimulating contribution is the opening chapter by Dr. Albert C. Outler: "Do Methodists have a Doctrine of the Church?" Well, have we? Read Outler and see!

JOHN C. BOWMER.

*John Wesley, Anglican*, by Garth Lean. (Blandford Press, pp. 130, 12s. and 6s.)

*John Wesley*, by V. H. H. Green. (Nelson, "Leaders of Religion" Series, pp. 168, 25s.)

*John Wesley*, edited by Albert C. Outler. (Oxford University Press, "Library of Protestant Thought" Series, pp. xvi. 516, 52s.)

Books about John Wesley break out as an occupational disease among publishers these days, and were it not for the greatness of the man (which we would be the last to deny), we would question the necessity for them all. We deal first with the smallest of the three books now before us.

*John Wesley, Anglican* is a mere introduction to the subject, and carries a title which, to say the least, is misleading. One wonders why the word "Anglican" is there at all, for no attempt is made specially to delineate this aspect of Wesley's career. Whoever buys the book for its title will be disappointed. Apart from this, the author tells his story simply, and one can commend it to anyone coming to Wesley for the first time. To the more advanced reader it will be a rehearsal of well-known facts.

Dr. Green's book is, in our estimation, one of the best one-volume studies of Wesley that has appeared for many years. Those who know the same author's *The Young Mr. Wesley* (see *Proceedings*, xxxii, p. 46) will expect the informed account and the balanced judgement of the mature historian, and they will not be disappointed. Considerable attention is paid to Wesley's Oxford period, and here the author is able to do what so many writers on Wesley fail to achieve—to give us something new on the subject. When a judgement has to be expressed, evidence on both sides of the question is carefully marshalled. Dr. Green knows Wesley too well either to minimize his greatness or to ignore his faults. Only three minor points call for mention: (1) it was under the SPG, not SPCK, that Wesley went to Georgia (p. 39); (2) it should be made clear that the first secession after Wesley's death formed the Methodist New Connexion, not the Primitive Methodists (p. 157); (3) the author of *John Wesley and William Law* is the Rev. J. Brazier Green (p. 162).

The third volume is the stoutest of them all, running to over 500 pages, the bulk of which reproduce the text of Wesley's own writings. It is one of a series entitled "A Library of Protestant Thought", in which "the voices . . . speak for themselves with only as much introduction and commentary as is needed to allow them to be heard". So here we find selected works of Wesley with excellent introductions by Dr. Outler. The work is divided into three sections: (1) The Theologian Self-Interpreted, (2) Theological Foundations, and (3) Theologies in Conflict. We congratulate Dr. Outler on the production of this massive tome, and as we commend it to our readers we would ask them carefully to note what he says about the texts used. It is good to know that at last the lack of a definitive edition of Wesley's *Works* is to be made good. A volume like this emphasizes the need of it!

JOHN C. BOWMER.

## NOTES AND QUERIES

## 1131. KILHAM MSS.: INFORMATION WANTED.

Among the MSS. housed at the former United Methodist Victoria College, Manchester, was a collection of about four hundred letters written to and by Alexander Kilham at the time of the New Connexion agitation, 1795-8, together with a number of MS. and printed addresses and pamphlets of the same period. When the college was closed in 1934 the material was divided: part of it went to the Book-Room in London, and the residue to Hartley College, Manchester (then re-named Hartley Victoria). In the process the letters seem to have disappeared, since they are not now at Hartley Victoria College nor have they been located at the Archives Centre. All that survives is a MS. index to the letters in the Hartley Victoria College library.

I should be grateful if any reader having knowledge of this collection would write to me at 18, Glenthorne Drive, Ashton-under-Lyne, Lancs.

E. A. ROSE.

## 1132. THE GILBERT FAMILY.

Referring to Note 1127 (*Proceedings*, xxxiv, p. 151), the Rev. Nathaniel (4) Gilbert was a child of Nathaniel (3) Gilbert, by his first wife, Mary. He was born in Antigua in 1761, and became vicar of Bledlow, Bucks, 24th November 1798, remaining there until his death on 18th November 1807. He married in 1784 Sarah, daughter of Darby Ford, of Coalbrookdale, Shropshire. Their only son, the Rev. Nathaniel (5) Gilbert, married his cousin Grace, daughter of the Rev. Melville Horne.

It was only after writing my previous note that I came across the excellent account of the Gilbert family by the Rev. Dr. Frank Baker: "The Origins of Methodism in the West Indies. The Story of the Gilbert Family" in *The London Quarterly and Holborn Review* for January 1960, pp. 9-17.

CHARLES EVANS.

## 1133. WILLIAM WARRENER'S ORDINATION CERTIFICATE.

A transcript of the ordination certificate of William Warrener as elder was given in *Proceedings*, xviii, p. 112, and it was stated that the original was at Buxton Road, Huddersfield. According to *Proceedings*, xxvii, p. 142, it was later given to the New Room, Bristol, and it was so recorded in the Rev. H. Edward Lacy's list (*Proceedings*, xxxiii, p. 119). But it is now at the Mission House in London. A photograph of it which hangs on the wall of the Mission House staircase is accompanied by a statement that the original is in the Mission House, and I have been permitted to verify this by inspecting the original there. This reveals, as of course does also the photograph, that the transcript after the word "Supper" omits the sentence "And I do recommend him as such to all whom it may concern."

A. RAYMOND GEORGE.

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**Mr. Sydney Walton, C.B.E., M.A., B.Litt.**

WE very much regret to record the death of Mr. Sydney Walton, who was Treasurer of the Wesley Historical Society from 1959 until July of this year. During his term of office he served the Society in more ways than caring for its finances. He was a valued counsellor, and his presence at our Committee meetings will be greatly missed. The Editor represented the Society at the funeral service, which was held in Hinde Street church, London, on Thursday, 17th December.