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Proceedings

OF THE

Wesley Historical Society

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

Volume XXXVII

October 1969

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS (1943-68)

(Continued from page 36)

II. Methodist Studies

WHEN we come to assess Methodist historical and theological scholarship during the period under review, we must first consider the situation in 1943. So much had been done; yet so much has been done since! Members of our Society had given the world its first major editions of Wesley's works—Curnock on the *Journal*, Telford on the *Letters*, and Sugden on the *Sermons*. Green's *Bibliography of the Works of John and Charles Wesley*, and his *Anti-Methodist Bibliography*, were unchallenged. The latest "life" of John Wesley was Simon's five-volume *magnum opus*, but it did not quite oust the eighty-year-old "Tyerman" in three volumes. Upon Tyerman we were also dependent for biographies of Samuel Wesley, Whitefield, Fletcher, and the Oxford Methodists. There was no significant modern treatment of Susanna Wesley. Three important studies had come from abroad—Augustin Leger's *La Jeunesse de Wesley* (1910), the same writer's *Wesley's Last Love* (1910), and Maximin Piette's *La réaction Wesleyenne dans l'évolution Protestante* (1925). One-volume "lives" of Wesley are too numerous to mention,¹ but the work of those who specialized in various aspects of Wesley's life ought to be noted: J. Ernest Rattenbury on *Wesley's Legacy to the World* (1928), *The Conversion of the Wesleys* (1938), and *The Evangelical Doctrine of Charles Wesley's Hymns* (1941);² Henry Bett on the literary aspects of the Wesley hymns, and his *Spirit of Methodism*; Maldwyn Edwards,³ E. R. Taylor,⁴ J. Wesley Bready⁵ and R. F. Wearmouth⁶

¹ See *Proceedings*, xxiv, p. 24.

² His book on the Eucharistic Hymns came in 1948.

³ *John Wesley and the Eighteenth Century* (1933); *After Wesley* (1935); *Methodism and England* (1943); *This Methodism* (1939).

⁴ *Methodism and Politics, 1791-1851* (1935).

⁵ *England before and after Wesley* (1938).

⁶ *Methodism and the Working Class Movements in England, 1800-1850* (1937).

had written on the social effects of Methodism, A. H. Body⁷ on education, S. G. Dimond⁸ on psychology, and F. C. Gill⁹ and T. B. Shepherd¹⁰ on literature. From the United States we had G. Croft Cell's *Re-discovery of John Wesley*, Umphrey Lee's *John Wesley and Modern Religion*, and Bishop McConnell's *John Wesley*.

The union of 1907 had inspired *The New History of Methodism* (1907, 2 vols.), whilst H. B. Kendall's *Origin and History of the Primitive Methodist Church* (n.d., 2 vols.) held the field for that denomination. The larger union of 1932 produced *The Methodist Church: its Origin, Divisions and Re-union* and *The Story of the United Methodist Church*.

So we come to the period under review. Interest in the life and work of the Wesleys has increased rather than abated. J. Brazier Green¹¹ and Eric Baker¹² have produced studies on the relations between John Wesley and William Law. V. H. H. Green has written an admirable one-volume "life" (1964), which followed an intensive study of the Oxford years—*The Young Mr. Wesley* (1961), the latter taking into account unpublished work done on Wesley's Oxford diaries by Wesley F. Swift. Martin Schmidt's *John Wesley* (1962) was the first volume of "A Theological Biography", and whetted our appetite for a subsequent volume—of which, we understand, an English translation is now being prepared. W. L. Doughty gave us *John Wesley, Preacher* (1955), which has now been supplemented by A. Skevington Wood's *John Wesley, Evangelist* (1968). George Lawton has meticulously investigated the use of proverbial and colloquial expressions,¹³ and has also given us a comprehensive study entitled *John Wesley's English* (1962). A. Wesley Hill, a medical man as well as a Methodist minister, turned to Wesley's medical activities in *John Wesley among the Physicians* (1958), and this was followed by a re-publication of Wesley's *Primitive Physick*.

The growth of the ecumenical movement has sent scholars back to a consideration of Wesley's ordinations and kindred subjects. In 1956-8, under the general title of "Episcopé in Methodism", a series of articles appeared in these *Proceedings*. Then in 1964, when the Conference was taking first soundings in Anglican-Methodist unity, another series dealt with "Catchwords of the Conversations". Books on the subject were E. W. Thompson's *Wesley, Apostolic Man* (1957), John Kent's *Age of Disunity* (1966) (chapter 6), and Albert Lawson's *John Wesley and the Christian Ministry* (1963).

The place of Wesley's marriage with Mrs. Vazeille has not yet been discovered, but Frank Baker startled us all with "John Wesley's

⁷ *John Wesley and Education* (1936).

⁸ *The Psychology of the Methodist Revival* (1920); *The Psychology of Methodism* (1932).

⁹ *The Romantic Movement and Methodism* (1937).

¹⁰ *Methodism and the Literature of the Eighteenth Century* (1940).

¹¹ *John Wesley and William Law* (1945).

¹² *A Herald of the Evangelical Revival* (1948).

¹³ See many articles in these *Proceedings*.

First Marriage" (*London Quarterly and Holborn Review*, 1968). Arthur Saunders has exploded many a myth relating to the Wesley coat of arms (*Proceedings*, 1966), and Mr. Peter Grant has found a new claimant for identification as the Wesleys' "Conversion Hymn" (*Proceedings*, 1966). Wesley's puritan background has been investigated by J. R. Monk in *John Wesley: his Puritan Heritage* (1967), John Newton in *Methodism and the Puritans* (1964), and A. Skevington Wood on "John Wesley's reversion to type" (*Proceedings*, 1965).

New light on Wesley's parents has come from Robert Walmsley in an article which first appeared in *The Manchester Guardian* in July 1953 and was subsequently published in our *Proceedings*. The title was "John Wesley's Parents: Quarrel and Reconciliation" (correspondence between Susanna Wesley and Lady Yarborough). From Miss H. A. Beecham there came "Samuel Wesley, Senior: New Biographical Evidence"; this was published in *Renaissance and Modern Studies* of the University of Nottingham.¹⁴ Samuel's residence in Lincolnshire has also been discussed in the *Proceedings* (1967 and 1968). We have had the best book on Susanna Wesley for many a year from Dr. John Newton: the title is *Susanna Wesley and the Puritan Tradition in Methodism*. Mrs. Harmon's rather simpler study of this great lady has also appeared this year. In recent years, Dr. Maldwyn Edwards's books *Family Circle* (1949), *The Astonishing Youth* (1959) and *Sons to Samuel* (1961) have done much to introduce the Wesley family to the general reader.

A major work on Charles Wesley came from the pen of Frank Baker in his massive *Representative Verse of Charles Wesley* (1962), whilst his lesser *Charles Wesley as revealed by his Letters* (1948) shows how much we need a standard edition of Charles's letters. F. C. Gill has given us *Charles Wesley, the First Methodist*, which is probably the best popular book on the hymn-writer that is on the market today. The 250th anniversary of Charles's birth was celebrated by a series of articles and portraits in the *Proceedings* in June 1957. In 1948 J. E. Rattenbury had published *The Eucharistic Hymns of John and Charles Wesley*; and to these should be added *The Hymns of Charles Wesley: a study of their Structure*, by R. Newton Flew (1953), George H. Findlay's *Christ's Standard Bearer* (1956), and Hodges and Allchin: *A Rapture of Praise* (1966).

In the field of doctrine, one could mention Arthur S. Yates's study of *Assurance* (1952), Deschner's *Wesley's Christology* (1962), Eric Baker's *Faith of a Methodist* (1958), Starkey's *Work of the Holy Spirit* (1962), Cox's *John Wesley's Concept of Perfection* (1965), Lindström's *Wesley and Sanctification* (1950) and W. E. Sangster's *Path to Perfection* (1943). In recent years, probably under the influence of the ecumenical movement, the Methodist doctrine of the Church has been receiving attention. A volume of papers, edited by Dow Kirkpatrick, and prepared under the direction of the World

¹⁴ See also *Proceedings*, xxxiv, p. 148 (June, 1964).

Methodist Council, entitled *The Doctrine of the Church*, and Reginald Kissack's *Church or No Church?*, are valuable. A series of papers given at the Oxford Institute of Methodist Theological Studies in 1959 gave us "Biblical Theology and Methodist Doctrine" (*London Quarterly and Holborn Review*, July 1959). Early in our period W. R. Cannon produced *The Theology of John Wesley* (1946), which has been followed by Colin Williams's *John Wesley's Theology Today* (1960) and Albert Outler's *John Wesley in Oxford's "Library of Protestant Thought"*. Horton Davies's *Worship and Theology in England*, volumes 3, 4 and 5 (1961-5) set the Methodist message in its wider context.

Studies in Methodist history have proceeded apace. The period opened with Leslie Church's studies on the early Methodist people (two volumes), and contained several anniversaries producing commemorative studies: William Clowes (1951),¹⁶ Hugh Bourne (1952),¹⁶ John Cennick (1955),¹⁷ William Grimshaw (1962),¹⁸ Thomas Coke (1963-4).¹⁹ Robert F. Wearmouth continued his studies with *Methodism and the Common People of the Eighteenth Century* (1945), *Some Working-Class Movements of the Nineteenth Century* (1948), *Methodism and the Struggle of the Working Classes, 1850-1900* (1954), *The Social and Political Influence of Methodism in the Twentieth Century* (1957) and *Methodism and the Trade Unions* (1959). Now, however, Dr. Wearmouth's work has to be offset by the studies of E. P. Thompson—*The Making of the English Working Class* (1964), G. R. Taylor—*The Angel-Makers* (1958), and E. J. Hobsbawm—*Labouring Men* (1964) and *Primitive Rebels* (1959). Robert Currie and David Gowland have recently contributed useful articles on this subject to the *Proceedings*.²⁰

On the history of Methodism as such, primary place must be given to volume I of *The History of Methodism in Great Britain*. As this consists of a number of contributions by individual scholars, perhaps a more appropriate title would have been "Essays in the History . . .". However, we eagerly await further volumes, but feel that the writers will have to reckon with the findings of Robert Currie's *Methodism Divided* and the writings of John Kent, especially the latter's efforts to rehabilitate Jabez Bunting²¹ and his re-assessment of Halévy on the nineteenth century.²²

Much good work has been done on the history of the non-Wesleyan bodies. In 1959 Oliver Beckerlegge gave us his book on the United

¹⁶ See J. T. Wilkinson: *William Clowes* (1951); *Proceedings*, xxviii.

¹⁶ See J. T. Wilkinson: *Hugh Bourne* (1952); *Proceedings*, xxviii.

¹⁷ See *Proceedings*, xxx; Wesley Historical Society Publication No. 5.

¹⁸ See Frank Baker: *William Grimshaw* (1963).

¹⁹ See *Proceedings*, xxxiv and John A. Vickers's recently-published biography of Coke.

²⁰ Robert Currie: "A Micro-Theory of Methodist Growth" (*Proceedings*, xxxvi); D. A. Gowland: "Political Opinions in Manchester Wesleyanism, 1832-57" (*ibid.*, xxxvi).

²¹ John H. S. Kent: *Jabez Bunting, the Last Wesleyan* (1955); *The Age of Disunity* (1966); *Proceedings*, xxxi.

²² *ibid.*, xxix.

Methodist Free Churches, and in these pages has written on "Non-Wesleyan Class Tickets",²³ and "Forgotten Methodism in Scotland".²⁴ E. A. Rose has written on the Methodist New Connexion,²⁵ and Thomas Shaw on the Bible Christians.²⁶ The origin of Primitive Methodism was dealt with by Leonard Brown,²⁷ and the Book-room of that denomination by Frank Baker.²⁸ In 1952 Wesley Swift wrote an illuminating article on "Women Itinerants",²⁹ and, more recently, in a long series of articles, Mr. Donald M. Grundy has brought to light the story of a forgotten offshoot of Primitive Methodism—the Original Methodists.³⁰ By generous help of the Pilgrim Trust, most of the Trevecka manuscripts have been transcribed and published.³¹ The history of Irish Methodism has been brought up to 1960 by R. Lee Cole, continuing the work of C. H. Crookshank, who took the story as far as 1860. Minor episodes in Methodist history have been dealt with: Frank Baker on John Bennet and early Methodist polity,³² Brian Greaves,³³ D. Dunn Wilson³⁴ and A. M. Lyle³⁵ on the persecutions suffered by the early Methodists, David Pike on the Religious Societies of the eighteenth century³⁶ (complementing the earlier work of Dr. J. S. Simon), G. F. Moede on *The Bishop in Methodism*, Gordon Wakefield on *Methodist Devotion* (1966) and on the idea of the diaconate in Methodism,³⁷ and the present writer on "The Local Preacher in Methodism".³⁸

The last twenty-five years have seen a marked revival in liturgical studies. So far as Methodism is concerned, the present writer has contributed *The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in Early Methodism* (1951) and *The Lord's Supper in Methodism, 1791-1962* (1962), supplemented by articles in the *Proceedings* on "Non-Wesleyan Service Books" and the "Open Table".³⁹ Wesley Swift gave us his incomparable articles on "The Sunday Service of the Methodists"⁴⁰ and "Methodism and the Book of Common Prayer".⁴¹ John Bishop's *Methodist Worship* (1951) was followed by Frank Baker's *Methodism and the Lovefeast* (1957), J. R. Parris's *John Wesley's Doctrine of the Sacraments* (1963) and Franz Hildebrandt's monumental *I offered Christ* (1967). We now have the first full-scale treatment of the Covenant Service in a book by David Tripp (on which subject see also Frank Baker in the *London Quarterly and Holborn Review* for July 1955).

Not everyone has the temperament for compiling bibliographies,

²³ *ibid.*, xxxii.

²⁴ *ibid.*, xxxii.

²⁵ *ibid.*, xxxvi.

²⁶ *The Bible Christians* (1965); see also *Proceedings*, xxxiv.

²⁷ *ibid.*, xxxiv.

²⁸ *ibid.*, xxx.

²⁹ *ibid.*, xxviii.

³⁰ *ibid.*, xxxv-xxxvi.

³¹ Gomer M. Roberts: *Selected Trevecka Letters (1742-47)*; *Selected Trevecka Letters (1747-94)*. T. Beynon: *Howell Harris, Reformer and Soldier; Howell Harris: Visits to London; Howell Harris: Visits to Pembrokeshire.*

³² *Proceedings*, xxxv.

³³ *ibid.*, xxxi.

³⁴ *ibid.*, xxxiii.

³⁵ *Methodism Mocked* (1960).

³⁶ *Proceedings*, xxxv.

³⁷ *Service in Christ* (1966).

³⁸ *The Preachers' Handbook*, Nos. 8, 9.

³⁹ *Proceedings*, xxxii-xxxiii.

⁴⁰ *ibid.*, xxix, xxxi.

⁴¹ *ibid.*, xxvii.

but we are fortunate in having those who are willing to spend their time and temper on this worthy cause. Richard Green set the example seventy years ago, and it is on the foundation of his work that Frank Baker is building his definitive bibliography for the new edition of Wesley's *Works*. As a tribute to his predecessor, Dr. Baker is using Green's enumeration as a basis for his own much fuller work. Mention should also be made here of Wesley Swift's articles on "Conference Admission Tickets and Handbooks",⁴² "Minutes of Conference",⁴³ "Wesley's *Works*",⁴⁴ and "Wesley's Lectionary".⁴⁵ More recently, Miss Sandra Judson has compiled, as an exercise for her diploma in librarianship, a bibliography listing 2,700 books and pamphlets on the life and work of John Wesley. Oliver Beckerlegge's *United Methodist Ministers and their Circuits* (1968) is a complete list of all ministers, including those who left the ministry, in those Churches which joined in the union of 1907. As the well-known "Hill's Arrangement" covers the Wesleyan and post-1932 ministers, the need now is for a similar work for Primitive Methodism. It would be an exacting task, but well worth doing.

It is hoped that this account of recent contributions to the study of Methodist history will be of interest to our readers and useful to those wishing to know what has been written on this or that aspect of our Connexion. It would be unwise, even if it were possible, to predict future trends—unless it be to say that much research is likely to be directed to the nineteenth-century divisions and their ultimate healing in 1907 and 1932. Robert Currie has not said the last word on this intriguing subject!

JOHN C. BOWMER.

⁴² *ibid.*, xxxi.

⁴³ *ibid.*, xxxi.

⁴⁴ *ibid.*, xxxi.

⁴⁵ *London Quarterly and Holborn Review*, 1958.

We gratefully acknowledge the following periodicals, some of which are received on a reciprocal basis with our *Proceedings*.

The Journal of the Historical Society of the Presbyterian Church of Wales, July and October 1969.

The Journal of the Friends' Historical Society, 1968.

Transactions of the Congregational Historical Society, October 1969.

Transactions of the Unitarian Historical Society, October 1969.

The Baptist Quarterly, July and October 1969.

Methodist History, July 1969.

In addition, the following publications of interest coming to hand have been placed in the Library.

Publication No. 4 of the Japan Wesley Association, *Wesley and the Holy Spirit*.

"*Griff*"—the story of the Rev. and Mrs. Harry Griffiths (a publication of the South Australia Methodist Historical Society).

In memoriam Bishop Ferdinand Sigg—a collection of tributes.

John Wesley a Chymru [*John Wesley and Wales*], by A. H. Williams.

Die Hand am Pflug—a well-produced illustrated brochure on Methodism in Europe.

METHODISM AND AGRICULTURAL TRADE UNIONISM IN OXFORDSHIRE

The 1870s

IT was in the year 1872 that the first nationally-organized trade union was established among farm-workers. This was the National Agricultural Labourers' Union, led by Joseph Arch, a South Warwickshire agricultural worker and champion hedge-cutter. Almost immediately the links between nonconformity and the leaders of this organization became apparent, so that, for example, a contemporary observed that nearly half of the sixty delegates who attended the inaugural meeting of the union at Leamington in 1872 were local preachers. Numbers of them "used phrases redolent of the village pulpit. 'My Christian friends', 'Beloved brethren', 'Dear fellow Christians', slipped out incessantly . . ."¹

Joseph Arch himself was in this category, having been a Primitive Methodist local preacher from the 1840s. It was this experience which prepared him for his later work of union agitation.

As a poor labourer he had little opportunity for education. Regardless of his deficiency in that respect the Primitive Methodists gave him liberty to preach, and in chapel and on village green he grew to be proficient in public speaking . . .²

Through his proficiency he was able to sway his rural audiences when he came to speak on the subject of trade unionism, in the 1870s and beyond.

Given these general links between the NALU and the nonconformist churches, therefore, it is now proposed to examine how far they worked out in practice in the county of Oxford.

Within the county the NALU had two separate district organizations; the larger of them was the Oxford district, centred—as its name suggests—around the county town. The second was the Banbury district, covering North Oxfordshire and the adjoining portions of Warwickshire and Northamptonshire (where about a third of the branches were situated). In view of its greater concentration in Oxfordshire and of its greater size, it is the former that is the particular concern of this study. (In 1875, for example, the Oxford district had a membership of 3,515, as against the Banbury district's 2,300.)

The Oxford district was formally established as the result of a meeting held in Oxford Town Hall in October 1872, and presided over by Professor J. E. Thorold Rogers of the University. It is significant that *all* of the chief officers then appointed were active Methodist local preachers.

¹ "Labourers in Council" (anonymous article in *The Congregationalist*, 1872, p. 423).

² R. F. Wearmouth: *Methodism and the Struggle of the Working Classes, 1850-1900* (Leicester, 1954), p. 202.

The first chairman of the district was Christopher Holloway, a farm-labourer from the village of Wootton, near Woodstock. Holloway had been an active member of the Wootton Wesleyan Methodist society from at least the early 1860s, and in February 1864, when new trustees of the chapel were being appointed, he was among those selected—at the relatively youthful age of thirty-five. He also became a local preacher, and from 1870 attended the Quarterly Meetings of the Oxford circuit. He was clearly respected by his fellow trustees at Wootton, and the chapel account book reveals, for example, that on 8th February 1868 he and his fellow class leader were given the task of overseeing repairs carried out on a cottage which belonged to the chapel.

Nevertheless, when Christopher became connected with the union in the spring of 1872, some of his fellow local preachers did not approve. In June, as trade union activity in Oxfordshire was gathering momentum, he asked to be relieved of some of his preaching duties, so that he could concentrate on the union work. The other circuit committee members resolved, however, that he be “requested to attend his own appointments or provide a substitute whose name is on the plan . . .”⁸ Later, at a similar meeting held in September of the same year, one of those present objected to “Brother Holloway . . . on account of his taking so prominent a part in the labour agitation.” Although this objection was rejected by the meeting, the complainant and one other member seem to have felt strongly enough over the matter to resign from the committee at the end of the meeting.

Holloway overcame these difficulties, however, and remained both a union supporter and a local preacher until the beginning of the 1880s. And it is significant that when he accompanied a party of labourer-emigrants to New Zealand in 1873-4, he also, while he was in the colony, helped in the erection of a Wesleyan chapel at Nelson.⁴

If Holloway was the first chairman, the first secretary of the Oxford district was Joseph Leggett, a tradesman from the village of Milton-under-Wychwood, which is situated about twenty miles from Oxford. It was in this village that the first movement among the Oxfordshire agricultural workers seems to have manifested itself, with a meeting held on the local recreation ground on 16th April 1872. At this meeting fifty of the labourers present decided to form a union, and Leggett agreed to act as secretary. Later he accepted the same situation in the newly-created Oxford district. He too was an active local preacher, and when he ultimately emigrated with a party of Oxfordshire labourers early in 1874, it is interesting to note that his first employment was obtained for him by Christopher

⁸ Minute Book of Local Preachers' Meetings: meeting held on 26th June 1872. (MS.D.D. Oxford Methodist Circuit e.6, Bodleian Library.) For some further details of Holloway's work, see my article, “Farmers' Defence Associations in Oxfordshire, 1872-74”, in *History Studies*, Vol. I, No. 1.

⁴ See his letter in the *Labourers' Union Chronicle*, 5th September 1874.

Holloway. It was at a new school which was being built adjoining the "splendid new Wesleyan Church" in Nelson. Unlike Holloway, Joseph Leggett settled permanently in New Zealand.

The third significant official was of course the district treasurer, and here again the labourers looked outside the ranks of their own occupational group. Gabriel George Banbury was born in January 1815, and by the 1870s had become a prosperous Woodstock draper. He had been a Methodist local preacher from 1835, but when the division occurred in Wesleyan Methodism in 1849, he was among the reformers. Soon he became an extremely active member of the Oxford UMFC circuit, which comprised about twelve societies. Banbury was not only circuit steward throughout the 1860s (and, indeed, later), but he was also circuit treasurer, and was obviously a very valuable acquisition to the labourers' cause. Like many more of the union's supporters, he was a convinced Liberal. In addition, during his period of office he worked with Christopher Holloway in the emigration field, and both he and his son, who was also a member of the district's consulting committee, remained advocates of the union until 1879. In that year internal disputes caused a split in the Oxford district membership, and those branches which remained loyal to the NALU were then attached to the Banbury district. At that time both Gabriel and John Banbury severed their official connexion with the movement. But Gabriel himself retained his political interests, being elected mayor of Woodstock in 1899 and 1900, and an alderman in 1903. He lived on until 1911, dying in October of that year at the great age of ninety-six.⁵

A final example of the close links between the Oxford district leadership and Methodism is provided by the third district secretary, Thomas Bayliss. Although Bayliss was the son of a farm worker from the village of Brailes (just over the county border, in Warwickshire), his very earliest working life was spent in a Wednesbury iron-foundry. However, by the 1860s he had returned to agriculture and to Oxfordshire, his name appearing as a local preacher on the plan of the Oxford Methodist circuit from 1865.⁶ When the union movement began, Bayliss quickly became involved, and in March 1874 was formally engaged as a district delegate, at a salary of 24s. a week.⁷ So great was his enthusiasm for the union, in fact, that when he married, in September 1874, his bride and her bridesmaid were both dressed in the union colour—royal blue! Not surprisingly, it was noted that "the union men of the locality showed much interest

⁵ When Mr. Banbury died, in 1911, his fellow circuit trustees recorded "the deep loss . . . sustained in the death of our oldest trustee Ald. G. G. Banbury J.P. by whose energy and help most of the Chapels belonging to this trust were built. At the same time we desire to express our thanks to Almighty God for permitting his long life to be spared to see all the Chapels with one exception free of debt." (MS.D.D. Oxford Methodist Circuit d.31, Bodleian Library.) It is worth noting, perhaps, that as late as 1893 Mr. Banbury was a trustee of at least eight of the circuit's chapels.

⁶ *Methodist Local Preachers' Who's Who* (1934).

⁷ Oxford District Minute Book. (Cole Collection, Nuffield College.)

in the event . . ." At the beginning of 1875, Bayliss became secretary of the Oxford district, his predecessor, Leggett, having emigrated to New Zealand, as we have seen, in 1874.

Bayliss remained district secretary until 1878, when he and some of his fellow members broke with the Leamington leaders of the NALU over the allocation of union funds. Within about a year of the split, his interest in agricultural trade unionism seems to have been lost. By 1883, he was employed as a newsagent and coal-dealer in Oxford, and then in 1890 he became Liberal agent for the Horncastle Division of Lincolnshire—a position he held for about twenty years. However, his interest in nonconformity was of longer duration. He acted as steward of the Rose Hill United Methodist chapel in Oxford, and continued as a local preacher until well into his eighties, being able to preach on 17th February 1934, for instance, when he had just passed his eighty-sixth birthday. At the time of his death, on 24th April 1939, at the age of ninety-one, he was probably the only surviving member in the whole country of the NALU movement of the 1870s. His fellow Methodists at Rose Hill aptly called him their "Grand Old Man".⁸

Given the importance of Methodists at district level, therefore, it is worth noting that at branch level also they could play an active part. For example, Joshua Cripps of Bletchington was apparently not only serving as a local preacher in the Oxford Primitive Methodist circuit from September 1864, but also represented his branch at Oxford district NALU committee meetings. Equally, Thomas Bayliss, when Oxford district secretary, noted the high proportion of Primitive Methodists among the rank-and-file membership of the district. And in this connexion, in November 1874, Joseph Arch's second daughter, Annie, preached at Primitive Methodist services at Banbury in addition to addressing a union meeting. (Annie was an ardent supporter of Primitive Methodism, and eventually married a PM minister, the Rev. John E. Leuty.)

However, perhaps the most significant tribute to Primitive Methodism was paid by Professor Thorold Rogers, who had presided over the Oxford district's inaugural meeting in October 1872. Professor Rogers wrote: "I do not believe that the mass of peasants could have been moved at all, had it not been for the organization of the Primitive Methodists." It was the local preaching elements which were, nevertheless, important—rather than the ministers. This fact was underlined by Thomas Bayliss when he wrote in the union newspaper during October 1876:

As for the Dissenting ministers, the less said the better. I believe that there is one solitary instance on record of a Baptist minister taking part in a Union meeting; but for the most part these gentlemen look very shy on the Union . . .⁹

⁸ *Oxford Methodist Magazine*, June 1939. The magazine also noted that Mr. Bayliss was very fond of giving "quite lengthy recitations, of which 'The Lifeboat' was his favourite!"

⁹ J. E. Thorold Rogers: *Six Centuries of Work and Wages* (London, 1903), p. 516. *English Labourer*, 14th October 1876.

In addition to the contribution of Methodism to the leadership of the NALU in Oxfordshire, however, it had another significant role. In many villages it was extremely difficult for unionists to find rooms large enough to hold their meetings. Whilst during the summer such meetings could be held out of doors, on the cold winter evenings this was obviously impracticable. Consequently, the loan of chapels for meetings was a very valuable aid, and in this respect Primitive Methodists appear to have been particularly generous. For example, in the second week of December 1873, PM chapels were used at Tadmarton, Shutford and Warmington in the Banbury district of the union, whilst in the last week of January 1875 the PM chapel at the village of Benson and the UMFC chapel at Bicester were both "kindly lent" for the use of union-members. At Wiggington, in the same week, when the chapel was borrowed, "melodies were sung and a collection of 4s. was made for the chapel", in addition to the normal speech-making activities which usually marked union meetings. These are but random examples of chapels being used in this fashion.

Sometimes the Methodists lent not only their chapel, but also their presence at the meetings. At Bicester, Mr. Ryder, a leading member of the UMFC there, presided at the meeting already mentioned, and gave what the NALU's own newspaper called "a good speech". Obviously this would be one sympathetic to the union's cause. Mr. Ryder was a grocer and boot- and shoemaker in Bicester. Similarly, at the small town of Burford, in November 1873, when the PM chapel was used, Mr. G. Rose took the chair. He was a local corn-, coal- and salt-dealer, and "spoke warmly of the great work the Union had already done, and urged the men not to relinquish their efforts . . ."¹⁰

It is clear, therefore, that the agricultural trade union movement in Oxfordshire during the 1870s owed a good deal to Methodism. Not only did many of its leaders serve their apprenticeship in the difficult art of public speaking through their local preaching work, but the chapels could and did provide much-needed accommodation for meetings during the winter months. Finally, there is no doubt of the deep sincerity of many of the union leaders for the justice of their cause. Perhaps, as Dr. Wearmouth has suggested, their religious background imbued them with "faith and fervour" and a

sense of dedication . . ., some believing that the movement for the amelioration of the conditions of life had divine sanction; passionately they desired and strove for the well-being of their fellow men . . ."¹¹

There have been far worse ambitions than that!

PAMELA R. HORN.

[Dr. Horn is lecturer in Economic and Social History at the Oxford College of Technology.]

¹⁰ *Labourers' Union Chronicle*, 29th November 1873 and 6th February 1875.

¹¹ R. F. Wearmouth: *Some Working Class Movements of the Nineteenth Century* (1948), p. 300.

THE METHODIST MAGAZINE

1778 - 1969

[Methodists the world over will regret the passing of *The Methodist Magazine*. That this sad event should not pass unmarked, the former Book Steward—the nineteenth (and last) in succession from John Wesley—was asked to write the following article.—EDITOR.]

“HOW few of the things we hold most dear—Ever reach the hundredth year”, wrote the editor of the *Methodist Magazine* (presumably Benjamin Gregory) in 1877, with possibly a greater philosophic content than poetic (and certainly rhythmic) excellence. “It has twice changed its name, more than once changed its price, again and again varied its size and shape; but it has never changed its principles!” The Magazine was to know a third name-change (back to the second name); and certainly anyone comparing the format and general appearance of (say) the Wesleyan magazine of 1925 with the slick and modern layout of the last issue will notice the difference!

A modern generation, living in a world furnished with all manner of means of communication, can only with difficulty appreciate the supreme—the vital—importance of “the Magazine” in the life of the Methodist churches which came together in 1932. Earlier on, as stresses and strains of various kinds led to the formation of independent Methodist bodies, we may read, high up on the agenda of their opening Conferences, the question “What shall we do for books?”, and the kindred question of a magazine. Within months of the inauguration of the Methodist New Connexion in 1797 a denominational magazine appeared, almost precisely modelled upon the *Arminian Magazine* of “the old Body”: it was possibly this which prompted the change of title of the original magazine of the Methodists to *The Methodist Magazine*. It was the same about twenty years later with the Primitive Methodists, the first number of whose magazine carried an article written long before by Wesley himself; and the title-page of the Bible Christian magazine bore as a sub-title “Being a Continuation of the Arminian Magazine”. In so many ways “the people called Methodists” acknowledged themselves to be one.

It was in 1778 that Wesley started his *Arminian Magazine*; he said that for nearly forty years he had been “desired” to do this. When Benjamin Gregory looked back from 1877, he said that the Magazine “was much more a sword than a trowel”; and its principal purpose was polemic, in opposition to the Calvinistic views of the *Spiritual Magazine* and of the *Gospel Magazine* (both long since defunct). There would be eighty pages; in fact the first number contained forty-eight, and it was generally fifty. The price was one shilling—a considerable sum, remembering the value of money in those days. Wesley, who (of course) had decided views upon everything, offered a characteristic prospectus:

This work will contain no news, no politics, no personal invectives, nothing offensive either to religion, decency, good nature or good manners. Nor would it contain snippets.

I have frequently been disgusted by the many bits and scraps of various kinds, which make up a great part of publications of this nature. Before one has well entered upon any subject, it is at an end, and referred to the next number—a mere trick to decoy the reader to buy another and another number . . .

There would not be reviews.

I have two objections: (1) I scruple of my own efficiency for the work, (2) I would not at any price be bound to read over all the recent productions of the press.

Umphey Lee has well remarked that Wesley (that *homo unius libri*) read everything, and that his *Journal* reads "like the work of a book-reviewer extraordinary of the eighteenth century". The magazine was to contain "Lives and Letters": the marrow of experimental and practical religion; "Religious Intelligence—the Kingdom of God enlarged", and letters from missionaries. The heading "Missionary Intelligence", appearing later in its columns, was the precursor of the later publication *Missionary Notices*. It is evident from this that when Wesley promised that his magazine would contain no "news" he was interpreting that word in a specialized sense; in other senses, the columns would be filled with news—the glad news of the Kingdom.

However, after a few numbers, says the 1877 article, "one can observe much sentimental poetry—refined and elegant, but not with the slightest infusion of positive Christianity". This included Prior's metrical love-tale *Henry and Emma*—fourteen pages of it. Readers complained; Wesley must have realized the truth which Thomas Jackson was later to utter when he in turn became editor: "I was aware that to please all the readers of the Methodist Magazine was an impossibility". Wesley admitted that Prior's poem was "not strictly religious", but he defended it on the ground of its exquisite sentiment and diction.

There is nothing in it contrary to religion, nothing that can offend the chastest ears . . . many truly religious men and women have profited thereby.

One can imagine the "Yes, *but* . . ." of captious readers! Cowper, Byrom, and Mrs. Barbauld figured in 1793 issues.

As the years went by, there appeared more and more articles of a general sort, especially reports from travellers—Captain Wilson's "Pelew Islands", Bruce's "Travels in Abyssinia", and the like. Shipwrecks, naval engagements, the exploits of Nelson and the Mutiny of the *Bounty* are also recorded; scientific articles, extracts from other periodicals, together with "circuit intelligence" and theological discussions. Natural History tends to be stressed, the articles apparently addressed to young people, though *Youth's Instructor* [sic] had appeared in 1817 to cover that field.

Benson, Jabez Bunting (inevitably) and Thomas Jackson must be

counted among the most influential editors. Bunting insisted on the need for "piquancy", and certainly increased the circulation. A very striking advance in the literary qualities of the Magazine must be attributed to the care and talent of Thomas Jackson. The importance which the Church attached to the publication appears in the fact that in 1804 four of the ablest men Methodism had were spending their time on the Magazine, as their sole official job: though we may suspect that Joseph Benson had been awarded a canonry, to enable him to produce his celebrated *Commentary*.

The magazines of the various Methodist bodies were very similar in content and character; it is often difficult to decide which one is reading, without a covert glance at the spine. Uniformly, they were concerned with *people*. The New Connexion prospectus promises that "the lives and deaths of those who have taken happy departures from this world to those fairer mansions on high will be cheerfully [sic] introduced". The MNC magazine was designed to be a newsletter, and each circuit was directed to send "a short statement of the work of God" to the Book Steward. Even the threat of a five-shilling fine, however, failed to elicit these reports.

The Primitive Methodist magazine followed the same policy, and this included a column headed "Lives and Happy Deaths of . . .", with the names neatly arranged in alphabetical order. The 1799 Conference of the "Old Body" had directed, indeed, that "the circumstances of all remarkable deaths shall be drawn up at large and sent to the Editor, who is to publish these as far as he judges proper". There were not lacking, for just measure and balance, warning stories of the passing of evil-doers; and around 1834 the PM magazine also maintained a column of "Awful Deaths", though in the *Methodist Magazine* for 1798 there had been "An Account of the Life and Dreadful Death of a notorious Backslider". Another admirable PM classification was "Providence Department". Such contents certainly held no charm for Emily Brontë, who spoke of "these mad Methodist magazines, full of miracles and apparitions and preternatural warnings, ominous dreams and frenzied fanaticisms".

But there was good psychology in this personal element: Christianity is principally shown in the lives of Christians—and contemporary advertising seems to have taken the hint. A bank today is as likely to use its expensively-acquired newspaper-space to picture the very human living of an individual bank-manager, complete with his hobbies and his family, as in detailing more soberly the direct business advantages of its services. It *is* people who matter!

It is possibly the Wesleyan magazine which includes more stories and serials. The MNC magazine may well hold the world record for serials of another kind, for it "ran" the history of the Church from 1798 to 1806 inclusive! The Primitives may be commended on a 1910 article, "The Miracle of Television", complete with some formidable-looking scientific details, though the Rev. Arthur Wood does not fail to draw some very useful spiritual morals and adjurations from these.

An element of comedy arises from the "portraits" which regularly graced the magazines, generally as frontispieces. The worthies of those days had very definite views about this, "requesting" that their own likeness should appear. Book Committees and even Conference spent valuable time discussing this issue; at one it was resolved that "Brother —— should be informed that since his picture has appeared twice (or thrice) he must wait until less favoured brethren have appeared." It was the PM Conference of 1870 which took the logical course of decreeing that portraits of the preachers should appear in order of seniority.

Circulation difficulties must be considered to have ended, in 1969, the life of "the world's oldest magazine": this was a factor from the very beginning in all the Methodist churches. Book-Room reports to the various Conferences often consisted mainly of the difficulties inherent in distributing the magazines. It was a prominent part of the duty of Wesley's "Assistants". The Primitive Methodists listed the sales circuit by circuit (how a modern computer would have helped them here!), and put pressure on the unhelpful, giving prizes for the best increases in circulation. A UMFC magazine has a marvellous cautionary tale, "Stopping the Magazine", which has all the compulsive force of modern technique as it recounts the manifold embarrassments certain to follow such an act. Nowadays this would infallibly have been presented in strip cartoon form!

The magazines were of tremendous value in their time, even if, as Gordon Wakefield philosophically suggests in his last (August 1969) editorial,

What John Wesley intended for the *Arminian Magazine* is being fulfilled in other ways, notably by the *Preacher's Quarterly* and the *Church Quarterly*, to say nothing of the *Kingdom Overseas*, *Women's Work* (it is significant that these two are shortly to become one, under a new title), *Youth*, the *Christian Citizen* and the *Methodist Recorder*!

Ernest Barrett, the last Primitive Methodist Book Steward, wrote to me: "The arrival of the Book Room parcel at the manse was an event. It was looked forward to, and deepened the tie between the minister and the Book Room." Barrett stressed the fact that in the earlier days "the Magazines gave the ministers good reason for entering the homes—especially of the less keen". Primitives were urged to be loyal to their Magazine. Gain, said Barrett, was not the motive; most of the preachers lost money on it (and that was my own experience in circuit, in more recent days!).

Time ever marches on; but there could be some profit in meditating awhile on all that the Methodist magazines of the bodies joined into one since 1932 have meant down the years in edification and encouragement, in challenge and in information, to the people called Methodists—especially to those in the small and scattered societies of earlier days. Benjamin Gregory, had he been asked in 1877 whether some successor of his would take up his strain in 1977, might well have confidently affirmed this; it is not to be. But there

is room to thank God for all that so many faithful and talented Book Stewards, Editors, "correctors of the press" and gifted writers of the Methodist people have done, as represented in all those pages—and to remember thankfully too the service offered by so many distributors, from the early "Assistants", who trudged or rode over the English countryside, to the ministers of today who have remained mindful of their opportunity, and the active workers of the Women's Fellowship who are now laying down their task.

FRANK CUMBERS.

[The Rev. Frank H. Cumbers, B.A., D.D. has just retired after a term of 22 years as Book Steward under the British Methodist Conference.]

WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Financial Statement for eleven months ended 30th April 1969

EXPENDITURE.	£ s. d.	INCOME.	£ s. d.
Printing of <i>Proceedings</i> (3 issues), etc. ...	325 14 4	Subscriptions in advance br't forward from previous year—	
Secretarial and Editorial Expenses ...	19 17 8	Ordinary Members ...	479 19 9
Insurance ...	4 9 7	Life Members ...	280 0 0
Lecturer's Honorarium ...	10 10 0	Received during year ...	282 14 10
Sundry Payments ...	4 7 6		1,042 14 7
Cheque Book ...	5 0	Less Unexpired Subscriptions (see Balance Sheet)	712 2 9
Balance of Income over Expenditure ...	73 18 1		330 11 10
	£439 2 2	Irish Branch ...	36 0 0
		Share of Lecture Collection	5 8 3
		<i>Proceedings</i> (back numbers) and Advertisements ...	20 12 3
		Publications sold ...	9 17 6
		Donation ...	5 0 0
		War Stock Dividend ...	7 15 6
		Bank Interest ...	23 16 10
			£439 2 2

Balance Sheet as at 30th April 1969

LIABILITIES.	£ s. d.	ASSETS.	£ s. d.
Unexpired Subscriptions—		Cash in hand—Treasurer ...	161 14 8
Ordinary Members ...	425 2 9	Registrar ...	92 0 0
Life Members (82 at (say) £3 ros. od. each) ...	287 0 0	War Stock (at cost) ...	225 0 0
	712 2 9	(Market Value £88)	
Accumulated Funds b/fwd.	213 2 10	Trustee Savings Bank ...	520 9 0
	925 5 7	Library, Publications Stocks, Filing Cabinet, etc. unvalued	
Add Excess of Income over Expenditure ...	73 18 1		
	£999 3 8		£999 3 8

10th July 1969.

ROWLAND C. SWIFT, *Treasurer.*
F. HAMMOND, F.C.A., *Auditor.*

THE ANNUAL MEETING AND LECTURE

THIS year's Annual Meeting and Lecture were held in the "Gothic revival" church at Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield. The number of members present at the tea and business meeting was smaller than usual owing to the timing of the Conference sessions, and possibly also to the fact that we had a smaller representation among this year's Conference representatives. There was, however, considerable local support for the lecture, and the church was comfortably full. At the tea-table we were once again the guests of our generous though invisible hostess, Mrs. G. Ibberson of Barnsley.

Business Meeting

The Rev. Dr. Oliver A. Beckerlegge presided in the unavoidable absence of the President (Dr. Maldwyn Edwards). As is customary, the list of members deceased during the year was read over, and tribute paid to their lives and service.

Miss Joan Gilbert's last report as registrar showed that we now have 910 members—still 90 short of the elusive 1,000 that we hope some day to obtain. A total of 35 new members had been enrolled during the year, 13 had retired or lapsed, and 10 had died—giving in all a net increase of 12. The treasurer's report showed that the total assets of the Society amount to £999 3s. 8d., of which sum £712 2s. 9d. represents subscriptions paid in advance. The complete financial statement is printed on the opposite page.

The meeting considered reports from the Branches and from the officers of the Society. Mr. William Leary and the West Midlands Branch were congratulated on the worthy Exhibition of Methodist history on show at the Birmingham Art Gallery. Mr. A. A. Taberer reported that stocks of *How to write a Local History of Methodism* were running low and a reprint would soon be necessary. There was some discussion about ways in which more elementary material on Methodist history could be made available to schools.

The meeting recorded its sincere thanks to Miss Joan Gilbert, who this year relinquishes her office as registrar, for her faithful five-year stint. The Rev. Kenneth B. Garlick of Addlestone was then elected to this office. The remaining officers were re-elected.

The Annual Lecture

Mr. Gerald Botteley, T.D. of Four Oaks presided at the lecture, a circumstance doubly appropriate, for he is a grandson of the late Mr. James Botteley, whose magnificent collection of Wesleyana is among the treasures of City Road. The lecturer was the Rev. Dr. William Strawson, of Handsworth College—the last time one of our lecturers can be so designated. Speaking on "Methodist Theology, 1850-1950", Dr. Strawson gave a masterly survey of the Methodist contribution to theological thought from William Arthur through William Burt Pope, John Scott Lidgett and Arthur Samuel Peake to J. Alexander Findlay and his recent successors. Time did not allow the lecturer to do more than outline his history, and for that reason those present will be among those who will look forward to reading it in full in its forthcoming publication.

THOMAS SHAW.

JOHN WESLEY'S INTRODUCTION TO WILLIAM LAW

THERE is not the slightest doubt about John Wesley's spiritual indebtedness to William Law. There is very serious doubt, however, about the beginnings of that debt. Wesley lived so swiftly that he made frequent errors over quotations and dates, and seems seldom to have attempted any research to verify a point of this kind. In this instance there is strong reason to believe that, contrary to his own statements, he did not read Law's two best-known works until long after their original appearance, and that he read them in reverse order of their publication.

In the well-known account of his spiritual pilgrimage leading to the "warmed heart" of 24th May 1738 the fifth paragraph reads:

5. Removing soon after to another College . . . I began to see more and more the value of time. I applied myself closer to study . . . But meeting now with Mr. Law's *Christian Perfection* and *Serious Call* (although I was much offended at many parts of both, yet) they convinced me more than ever of the exceeding height and breadth and depth of the law of God. The light flowed in so mightily upon my soul, that everything appeared in a new view. I cried to God for help, and resolved not to prolong the time of obeying Him as I had never done before. And by my continued *endeavour to keep His whole law*, inward and outward, *to the utmost of my power*, I was persuaded that I should be accepted of Him, and that I was even then in a state of salvation.¹

These words are heavily charged with remembered emotion. This was undoubtedly a spiritual landmark for Wesley. Although no date is given, the implication is that the two books were read (in the order noted) shortly after Wesley had become a Fellow of Lincoln College in March 1726. Yet this could not possibly be, for although Law's *Treatise upon Christian Perfection* appeared in 1726, his *Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life* was not published until 1729, or at the earliest November 1728.² Thus Wesley must have been a Fellow of Lincoln for nearly three years at least before he could have read the *Serious Call*. As we shall show, it was in fact longer.

In a letter to John Newton written in May 1765 and first published in his *Journal* three years later, Wesley summarized his earlier statement:

In 1727 I read Mr. Law's *Christian Perfection* and *Serious Call*, and more explicitly resolved to be *all devoted to God*, in body, soul, and spirit.³

¹ John Wesley's *Journal* (Standard edn.), i, p. 467 (Wesley's italicizing restored from 1st edition.)

² The title-page bears the date 1729, but printers frequently used the date of the following year if a book were published in November or December, thus making it appear a "new" publication for a longer period. John Byrom bought a copy early in February 1729—see his *Private Journal and Literary Remains* (Manchester, Chetham Society, I, part 2 (1855), pp. 328-9).

³ *Journal*, v, p. 117 (italics added from 1st edition). The phrase "all devoted

This crisper claim is even more demonstrably inaccurate. In his *Plain Account of Christian Perfection* (1766) Wesley returned to vague imprecision:

In the year 1726⁴ I met with Kempis's *Christian Pattern*. . . . A year or two after, Mr. Law's *Christian Perfection* and *Serious Call* were put into my hands. These convinced me more than ever of the absolute impossibility of being *half a Christian*. And I determined through His grace . . . to be *all-devoted* to God, to give Him *all* my soul, my body, and my substance.⁵

None of this vagueness and inaccuracy stems from any weakening of the impression made by the books. The spiritual impact was so important, indeed, that it dwarfed the need for historical accuracy, and Wesley's pressing round of evangelical opportunities seemed far more urgent than the research necessary to verify or correct his recollections of such data. The amorphous statements of the 1738 narrative and the *Plain Account* were clearly more defensible than the rash attempt at being specific in his letter to Newton, but each merely provides additional evidence that in Wesley's memory past events, even important events, changed dates and even relative positions with kaleidoscopic ease. Less than a decade after his introduction to William Law, he was confused about his reading of Law's famous books.

Unfortunately we have often tried to hold Wesley down too rigidly to such supposedly factual statements, and to search out evidence which can so be interpreted as to confirm our reluctance to acknowledge that in some matters his methods were far from meticulous. Nehemiah Curnock (or one of the contributors of editorial notes in the Standard edition of Wesley's *Journal*) was at fault in leaping to too hasty a conclusion. The footnote to the Aldersgate account of Wesley's first reading of Law notes:

In 1726 William Law's *Christian Perfection* was published. In December of the same year, immediately after a long visit to Stanton, as we learn from the Diary, Wesley was diligently reading William Law.⁶ Unfamiliarity with Wesley's diary can lead even careful scholars seriously astray, as in this instance, and we look forward to the day when we have a definitive edition of that storehouse of information. The diary for December 1726 does indeed contain one explicit reference to "Law", but the context makes it quite clear that the writer of that name was not intended: "t[alk] w[ith] Mr. K. of Law, Juries . . ."⁷ What almost certainly led Curnock astray, however—and following him two generations of Wesley scholars—were several

to God" is also underlined in the original letter, which is at the Perkins School of Theology, Dallas, Texas, USA.

⁴ In the 5th and 6th editions (of 1785 and 1789 respectively) this date was altered to "1729", apparently by error, though it may have been a deliberate correction of the Kempis statement, which incidentally improved considerably the statement about Law.

⁵ *Works* (ed. Thomas Jackson), xi, p. 367 (italics added from 1st edition).

⁶ *Journal*, i, p. 467 n.

⁷ MS. diary, 27th December 1726 (at Methodist Archives, London).

early morning entries at the beginning of the month which read "W.L.—." Few scholars would approach these inscriptions so readily as did my graduate student and colleague, Richard P. Heitzenrater, who knows more about Wesley's Oxford diaries than any person living: these documents indeed provide the core of his Ph.D. dissertation. When I showed him the entries, he immediately said: "Of course—*wall lectures!*" Nor can there be any real doubt that Wesley's diary did indeed note examples of his own participation in this ancient Oxford institution,⁸ though it was easy for his abbreviated references to be mistaken by the uninitiated for "William Law"—especially when just such an inscription was being sought. (In this there is an important moral for research workers!)

When, then, was Wesley in fact introduced to Law? Here we must interject a note of caution about our own findings. It is impossible to be absolutely certain about what is here claimed, for some of the evidence is missing, and likely to remain missing. The most important kind of documentation is the contemporary diary or letter written while the facts are still fresh, even though their full significance may not yet be realized. Even here it must be pointed out that not even Wesley's diaries and letters may be regarded as sacrosanct: they contain numerous errors in detail, such as incorrect dates or days of the week, as well as inaccurate naming of places and people; although most of these errors can be discovered by cross-checking, some will remain undetected. Wesley's diary is missing, however, from 20th February 1727 to 29th April 1729, and there is very little contemporary evidence, except his manuscript accounts. Any argument from silence, therefore, cannot be conclusive, though it must not be disregarded.

In Wesley's extant diary for 1726 and 1727 there is no mention either of William Law or of his *Christian Perfection*: in his diary between April 1729 and December 1730 neither William Law nor his *Serious Call* appear. It is barely possible that Wesley did read *Christian Perfection* in 1727 or 1728, barely possible that he read the *Serious Call* during the open weeks of 1729. Possible, but highly unlikely. If he had done, why was there no more evidence of his enthusiasm for these works among his pupils? On 22nd November 1729 he returned to Oxford from Lincolnshire, and immediately made contact with his brother's nascent "Holy Club". The following year he became a tutor, and took a batch of pupils under his wing, recording in a memorandum the dates when they came to him and the books he set them to read, and in his accounts the amount they paid him for tutelage.⁹ Most of these young men

⁸ Wesley was preparing for his M.A. degree, and the exercises for this included the preparation of six *solennes lectiones*—dissertations read in almost empty rooms, whence they were thought of as "lecturing to the walls", and the term "wall lecture" became current coinage.

⁹ Wesley's diaries, 5th April 1725 to 19th February 1727 and 30th April 1729 to 18th June 1732 (Colman volume III), both in the Methodist Archives, London. The list of pupils is in Colman volume VII, and the accounts for 1731-3 in Colman volume XVIII, also at the Methodist Archives, London.

men were set to reading (and in some cases abridging) *The Whole Duty of Man*, Jeremy Taylor's *Holy Living* and *Holy Dying*, Archbishop King's *Origin of Evil*, John Norris's *Christian Prudence*, Peter Browne's *Human Understanding*, or a selection of other works. Yet of fourteen men who were enrolled under his care in July 1730 and the following few months, only one was set to read Law's *Serious Call*, and none his *Christian Perfection*. Why?

It seems almost certain that until December 1730 Wesley had not read anything by William Law, though he probably knew of his high reputation, and especially of the acclaim which had greeted his *Serious Call*. Although this is rank speculation, it is entirely possible that the impetus for Wesley himself to read the *Serious Call* was furnished by the pupil, Robert Davison of Durham, to whom he officially assigned the book for reading under his supervision. He seems himself to have begun reading it from a borrowed copy on Thursday, 3rd December, and continued at this task during his early morning devotional hours until Wednesday, 16th December. Although the diary itself speaks only of "Law", the monthly summary of his reading for December 1730 makes this more explicit, "Law's Call to a H. Life", which is echoed by the annual summary (with the addition of "Mr.").¹⁰

So impressed had Wesley been with his reading of the *Serious Call* that on 9th April 1731 he began "collecting" it—making a digest in a notebook, which has disappeared. He continued at this task intermittently during his morning devotions until 1st November that year.¹¹ In May 1732 he paid 5s. to buy a copy for himself, reading passages to his mother and sister on 6th May during a brief visit to Epworth, and re-reading it himself between 7th and 11th July. This was the prelude to a pilgrimage to Law's home at Putney on Monday, 31st July 1732, when he spent an hour or so with Law in his garden. Law seems to have pressed upon him a copy of *Theologia Germanica*, which he read at intervals until 7th November. The minute he set down this book he took up Law's own *Christian Perfection*, apparently for the first time, and read this during the remainder of November and December, though again intermittently, not so avidly as he had the *Serious Call*.¹² In February he began others of Law's writings, and that same year "collected" *Christian Perfection*.¹³

The influence remained; the memory for detail speedily passed.

¹⁰ MS. diary, Colman volume III (Methodist Archives, London).

¹¹ *ibid.*; the monthly summaries read: for April 1731, "Coll 1/3 of Law", and for October "end Coll. Law's S. Call."

¹² The monthly summary for December 1732 reads "End Law's Xtian Perfection", but the diary itself contains no note of his actually ending it—the entries simply cease.

¹³ A summary of his studies in English, French, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and Philosophy during 1731-4 noted under the first heading in 1731 "Collect Law's Call", and in 1733 "Coll. Law's Xtn Perfection". (Colman volume XVIII at the Methodist Archives, London.)

Within five years, or at the most seven,¹⁴ Wesley was associating both these books, in the order of their publication rather than of their apparent reading, with a quickening of his spiritual life, but speaking as if this had happened before the birth of the Holy Club. The evidence of his own contemporary manuscripts, however, goes far to prove that he met neither book until a year after he had returned from Lincolnshire to assume his full duties at Lincoln College, and that the *Serious Call* made the first and greatest impression upon him, eventually leading to a personal interview with Law, and thus to his acquaintance with the earlier but less well known work on *Christian Perfection*. Of both works he published abridgements—of *Christian Perfection* in 1743 and of the *Serious Call* in 1744—which passed through many editions, especially in the United States of America.

FRANK BAKER.

¹⁴ The *Journal* narrative may well have been written at the end of May 1738, but it was not published until the summer of 1740 (see my forthcoming article, "The Birth of Wesley's *Journal*", in *Methodist History*).

¹⁵ See Frank Baker: *Union Catalogue of the Publications of John and Charles Wesley* (Durham, North Carolina, 1963), Nos. 45, 48. See also the same numbers in Richard Green: *Wesley Bibliography* (2nd edn., London, 1906). For Law's influence on Wesley, see Eric W. Baker: *A Herald of the Evangelical Revival* (London, 1948) and J. Brazier Green: *John Wesley and William Law* (London, 1945).

MORE LOCAL HISTORIES

We acknowledge, with many thanks, the following handbooks and brochures which have been sent to us recently. We are always glad to have such evidence of the work of local historians, and they constitute a valuable addition to our Library.

Parkwood 100—centenary of Parkwood Methodist chapel, Huddersfield (pp. 76): copies, price 4s. 6d. post free, from the Rev. Keith A. Reed, 213, Scar Lane, Golcar, Huddersfield, Yorks.

Dumfries Methodist Church—One hundred years in Buccleuch Street (pp. 32): copies from the Rev. Eglon Sercombe, The Manse, 184, Annan Road, Dumfries, Scotland; no price stated.

One Hundred Years—centenary of Short Cross Methodist chapel, Halesowen: copies from the Rev. Thomas Soulsby, 28, St. Kenelm's Avenue, Halesowen, Worcs; no price stated.

Clement Street Church, Truro, 1875-1967 (pp. 22), by R. E. Tonkin: copies from the author at 19, Broad Street, Truro, Cornwall; no price stated.

Rosebery Road, Norwich, 150th anniversary (pp. 13): copies from Mr. Donald C. Taylor, 21, Clabon Road, Norwich, NOR 52 0; no price stated.

Methodism in Galleywood (Essex) (pp. 2), by Leslie W. Kinsey: copies from the author at 34, Hill Road, Chelmsford, Essex; no price stated.

Whickham (Co. Durham) West End centenary (pp. 70): copies, price 2s. 6d., from the Rev. Edwin Thompson, 9, Buttermere Avenue, Whickham, Newcastle upon Tyne.

THE METHODIST DENOMINATIONAL PATTERN IN ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE, 1797 - 1914

COMPARATIVELY little attention seems to have been given to the problem of the balance between the various Methodist denominations in different localities. The overall dominance of the Wesleyans concealed wide variations in their strength, particularly in the industrial towns of the North. The Ecclesiastical Census of 1851, for example, revealed that in the four cotton towns of Stockport, Ashton-under-Lyne, Rochdale and Blackburn, the strongest Methodist bodies were respectively the Wesleyans, the Methodist New Connexion, the Wesleyan Association and the Primitive Methodists.¹ This article is an analysis of the changing pattern in one town—Ashton-under-Lyne. All figures refer to the present borough, although the municipal boundaries were less extensive in the nineteenth century.

Ashton-under-Lyne is an industrial town some six miles east of Manchester whose population grew from about 6,500 in 1801 to 57,000 in 1911 with the expansion of the cotton industry. Ashton parish was probably the first in Lancashire to be touched by the Evangelical Revival, and by the late eighteenth century Methodism was strongly established, with a chapel in the town and two more within a three-mile radius. In 1797 the greater part of the society joined the Methodist New Connexion,² leaving a small Wesleyan rump. After several false starts, the Primitive Methodists had a continuous existence in the town from 1834. Finally, the United Methodist Free Churches established a cause in 1865. In the latter part of the century, therefore, there were four competing Methodist bodies.

Precise and continuous membership figures are not available before 1841, but the main trend is clear. The New Connexion majority retained the original chapel until 1799, when a new building was erected in the main street. In 1804 this became head of a separate Ashton MNC circuit. By 1812 three branch schools, which were later to grow into independent societies, had been established in outlying areas. Finally, in 1832 the town chapel was considerably enlarged. Up to about 1830 this was the leading nonconformist place of worship in Ashton, attended by many of the early mill-owners and by the town's wealthiest citizen, Samuel Heginbottom.³ After this, however, the New Connexion was outstripped in wealth and numbers by the Congregationalists. Nevertheless, the rapid rise in population carried the membership up to 400 by 1841. The Barkerite secession

¹ K. S. Inglis: "Patterns of Religious Worship in 1851", in *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, xi (1960), p. 86. ² *Proceedings*, xxxvi, p. 13.

³ *Methodist New Connexion Magazine* (1850), pp. 41 ff. Heginbottom was the architect of both the Beneficent Fund and the Paternal Fund of the New Connexion.

of that year, in which 150 members were lost, checked this growth for a time, but within six years the losses had been made good, and in 1851 membership reached 500 for the first time.

The Wesleyans worshipped in cottages until 1804, when a small chapel was opened, which continued in use until 1851. This became a circuit chapel in 1812. Only one other Wesleyan cause was started in this period—a small school-chapel built in an isolated industrial hamlet in 1837. By the early 1830s, Wesleyan membership had recovered considerably, but any chance that the “old” Connexion might overtake the New was destroyed by the disastrous secession which followed the suspension of Joseph Rayner Stephens in 1834.⁴ Recovery again followed, but the Wesleyans still lagged behind the New Connexion with a membership in 1851 of 280.

Despite an heroic beginning,⁵ Primitive Methodism did not gain a permanent footing in Ashton until 1834; a small chapel was opened in 1846, and a small preaching-room was also obtained in another part of the town. In 1851 the combined membership of these two causes was a little over one hundred.

This pattern of strength was largely borne out by the results of the 1851 Census, which yielded the following estimates of single attenders:⁶

Methodist New Connexion ...	1,437
Wesleyan Methodist ...	775
Primitive Methodist ...	592

The total of Methodist attenders was 2,804, which represents 25 per cent of the 11,457 total attenders. This compares with a national average of 19 per cent.⁷ Total Methodist membership in 1851 was around 890 out of a population of 34,000 (2.62 per cent), as compared with 2.2 per cent for Great Britain as a whole.⁸ Thus, both Census and membership figures show Ashton Methodists as being slightly more numerous than in the country as a whole. Apart from the period of the Cotton Famine, 1861-5, the population continued to increase up to 1914, though at a slower rate. Total membership expanded steadily up to 1891, and, after a setback, reached a peak of 1,430 in 1906. Within this total the various Methodist denominations fared differently.

Most of the increase was contributed by the New Connexion, who were particularly successful in the industrial village of Hurst, now

⁴ *Proceedings*, xxxvi, pp. 16 ff. The circuit membership fell from 1,100 to 450.

⁵ *A Report of the Proceedings on the Trial of Mr Samuel Waller for Misdemeanour and Nuisance by Street Preaching at Ashton-under-Lyne* (2nd edn., 1821).

⁶ i.e. the total attendances at the main service, plus half the total at the second service, plus a quarter of the total at the third-best-attended service. See Thomas Shaw: *A History of Cornish Methodism* (1967), p. 96.

⁷ O. Chadwick: *The Victorian Church*, Part 1 (1966), p. 365 n., quoting the *Congregational Year Book*, 1855, p. 39.

⁸ Robert Currie: *Methodism Divided* (1968), p. 90, Table Two.

a suburb of Ashton. Under the patronage of the Whittaker family, who gave employment to virtually the entire local population at their cotton mills, the society had 243 members by 1857, worshipping in a spired Gothic chapel; and Hurst became head of what was, in effect, a second Ashton circuit in 1859. Two more New Connexion causes were established in Ashton proper—one in 1862 and a mission chapel in 1888, making six in all. As a result of this activity, MNC membership increased from 500 in 1851 to a peak of 940 in 1905.

By contrast, the Wesleyans made very little overall headway after 1851. They founded two more small causes, both in areas where the New Connexion was already strong, and also a short-lived mission church. The main town chapel was rebuilt in 1851, but its many empty pews testified to the continued weakness of the Ashton Wesleyans. Membership oscillated gently around the 300 mark up to 1914.

As the weakest body of the three, the Primitive Methodists found it impossible to establish chapels in areas already well served by the Wesleyans and the MNC, despite the repeated efforts to which the circuit records bear witness. Their main chapel was enlarged in 1877, and appears to have been quite prosperous. New schools were built in 1890. The second PM cause managed to find accommodation in a small chapel relinquished by the New Connexion in 1864, and, after a precarious existence for many years, they managed to build a school-chapel in 1911. In 1907 the two societies were formed into a separate circuit with 163 members.

In 1865 the Manchester District of the United Methodist Free Churches discussed the possibility of founding a Free Methodist cause in Ashton. A small society was established, followed by an ambitious building-scheme, as a result of which an ornate chapel was opened in 1869. The expected support did not materialize, and the society was only kept alive by grants and repeated District bazaars. Apart from a brief period, membership never rose much above 40. In addition, a very small Independent Methodist society existed in the town from 1818.

In summary, from 1797 the New Connexion assumed a position as the leading Methodist denomination in the town. Further secessions prevented the Wesleyans from challenging this dominance in the fluid situation of Ashton's boom years up to 1840, and after 1851, as the pattern hardened, the New Connexion further increased their strength *vis-à-vis* the other Methodist groups, until in 1906 MNC membership accounted for 64 per cent of the total Methodist membership. In this Ashton-under-Lyne was unique among British towns.

E. A. ROSE.

Methodist History for July 1969 contains (inter alia) two articles of general interest to our readers: "The Churchmanship of Thomas Coke", by John A. Vickers, and "An Annotated Bibliography of Publications about the Life and Work of John Wesley", by J. Gordon Melton.

BOOK NOTICES

The Musical Wesleys, by Erik Routley. (Herbert Jenkins, "Studies in Church Music" series, pp. xvi. 272, 50s.)

For the most part, this book ascends into the higher realms of musical criticism, and in that respect will be beyond the interest (if not beyond the ken) of most historians. It provides a subtle analysis of the major musical works of the Wesleys, with special reference to those of Samuel Sebastian. It also gives an account of music in the Anglican Church for the better part of the nineteenth century. All who know Dr. Routley will accept him as an authority in this sphere.

Our interest lies mainly in his treatment of the Wesley family historically. Perhaps Dr. Routley did not intend this to be a definitive biography of Charles jun. and Samuel; in any case, as he says, "the amount of 'hard' information available is tantalizingly small". Be that as it may, we wonder if he has fully explored the Wesley MSS. at the Archives, where there are 52 letters of Charles jun. and 45 of Samuel, together with some of their music in manuscript form. Is this what he means by "a number of letters at the Wesley Archives"? The yield of "hard information" may be small, but no serious student ought to overlook them. The concert programmes, too, so one would think, are worthy of consideration, for they provide fascinating background material on the music played, and such human touches as, among sundry expenses, "New gloves for Sally".

Otherwise, the book is wholly commendable, for it is as readable as anything we have come to expect from this author. He examines all the references to music in Wesley's *Journal*, and reprints with comments John Wesley's essay *The Power of Music* and Charles Wesley's "Account" of his two sons. The book is rounded off with seven very useful appendices dealing, inter alia, with hymn-tunes of Samuel Sebastian and the Handel-Wesley tunes.

At the bottom of page 11 Dr. Routley has confused Jabez Bunting, who was "Doctor", with his son "W. M.", who was the hymn-writer but not "Dr.". Again (page 30, line 18), it is more than a tradition that the verse "In age and feebleness extreme" was written towards the end of Charles Wesley's life, for we have in the Archives, in Mrs. Charles Wesley's own handwriting, the very lines as she took them from "the Rev. Mr. Charles Wesley's repeating a few days before he departed this life". Perhaps this is another indication that Dr. Routley has not fully explored what he calls "the Wesley Archives".

JOHN C. BOWMER.

Many Waters Cannot Quench: A Study of the Sufferings of Eighteenth-century Methodism and their Significance for John Wesley and the First Methodists, by D. Dunn Wilson. (Epworth Press, pp. 214, 45s.)

Unlike the Quakers, to whom they may have been indebted in some degree for the Quarterly Meeting,¹ the early Methodists never established a Meeting for Sufferings. It may be said, on the one hand, that Dr. Wilson's book now before us shows how appropriately they might have done so, for he has summarized an abundance of evidence of the active opposition faced by Wesley and his followers which might have led them to establish such meetings. On the other hand, it might be said that, serious as their outward sufferings were on occasion, the attacks on them were sporadic

¹ See *Proceedings*, xxxv, pp. 1-4.

and often petty, and at no time reached the level which would have demanded the organization of such spiritual and financial help.

The first half of Dr. Wilson's book impressively outlines "The Sufferings of the Methodists" at the hands of the law, the gentry, the aristocracy, the clergy, the universities, the satirists, the actors, their neighbours and employers, even their own families, and—not least—the violent mobs. To this catalogue of outward sufferings is rightly added the weight of their own spiritual conflicts. John Wesley's own afflictions, both physical and spiritual, are considered along with those of his followers. The second half of the book, "John Wesley's Understanding of Suffering", is a convincing account of Wesley's own reaction to the suffering brought upon himself and his Methodists by their engaging in the work—indeed the warfare—of God.

This book, like Dr. Strawson's *Methodist Theology, 1850-1950* (the Wesley Historical Society Lecture for 1969), is more theological in content than most of the books we review, and the present writer does not regard himself as having any special competence in this field; but if he may be allowed to isolate the historical undergirding of the book, he would like to question whether the bringing together of so many references to sufferings, large and small—few of which, in the nature of the case, can be adequately documented—can really give more than a tentative picture. It may be the case in other parts of the country, but in Cornwall (usually regarded as one of the main areas of opposition) instances of persecution and mob violence have often been overwritten. "It is important to remember," so John Pearce reminds us in *The Wesleys in Cornwall*, "that the Wesleys' opposers, like their supporters, were a very mixed lot, and the evidence [against them] is always that of one side and often taken at second hand. We should prefer to judge after hearing a case for the opposition . . ." To say this is not to cast doubt, of course, on the sufferings of the early Methodists, but to make a plea for a sense of proportion when we deal with this subject: neither Dr. William nor Dr. Walter Borlase (see Dr. Wilson's footnote 4 on page 16 and *Proceedings*, xxxvi, p. 157) were friends of Methodism.

THOMAS SHAW.

The Christian Socialist Revival, 1877-1914, by P. D. A. Jones. (Princeton University Press; London: Oxford University Press (1968), pp. 459, 119s.)

For a long time we have lacked a detailed account of the post-Maurician period of Christian socialism, nonconformist as well as Anglican. Mr. Jones has now supplied the need by his 459-page book. It is divided into three parts. First the broad general setting of the Christian socialist revival is considered; then follows an examination of the various Anglican movements—the Guild of St. Matthew, the Christian Social Union, and the Church Socialist League. Finally the socialism of nonconformity is described in its organizational and denominational aspects. Mr. Jones concludes that "the very idea of 'Christian socialism' . . . is difficult and ambiguous . . . an enigma" (p. 453). This is due to the inherent tension between its "religious" and "secular" elements.

Despite its interesting detail, the book is not altogether satisfying. Some of Mr. Jones's conclusions are scarcely unexpected. It has long been accepted that Christian socialism prevented socialism from being entirely secular, whilst preventing Christians from equating it with atheism. It is also common knowledge that Christian socialists were too middle-class to

capture the Labour movement. More interesting is the analysis of the weaknesses of Christian socialist movements. They were concerned to socialize the churches rather than the nation, though more could have been made of this. There were too many small and often ephemeral societies, who by no means agreed among themselves. Mr. Jones shows how the principal denominations overcame the challenge of Christian socialism by the process he calls "social unionism". In this process a small original group of socialists are gradually outnumbered by a milder, vaguer band of reformists who are much more acceptable to the denomination as a whole. Thus socialism was effectively by-passed in favour of its more respectable camp-followers.

The nonconformist section of the book is in some ways unsatisfactory. Methodists will be surprised to read that "On into the Victorian age, Non-conformist individualism penetrated deeply into the evangelical wing of the Established Church . . ." (p. 12), as if Anglican evangelicals had no already-existing individualism of their own—an individualism which was so intense that it later produced far fewer Christian socialists than many nonconformist denominations. There is no real treatment of the Non-conformist Conscience, although Hugh Price Hughes and John Clifford are described; yet the political activities of the Conscience are essential to an understanding of the smallness of the nonconformist contribution to Christian socialism. The section on Methodism (pp. 403-12) relies heavily on the somewhat loaded volumes of the late Dr. Wearmouth—hence the statement in Table 6 on page 405 that the Wesleyans were "Tory until 1890's; Gladstonian later". Wesleyan Toryism has been and continues to be grossly exaggerated. Mr. Jones is right, however, in adding to the above-quoted statement the words "while claiming at all times to be 'non-political'". S. E. Keeble is given his rightful place as "the most thorough-going socialist among the Wesleyan Methodists", although his *Industrial Daydreams* was published in 1896, not 1899 (p. 410), and his later book, *The Ideal of the Material Life* (1908), is omitted from the bibliography. Mr. Jones correctly states that Keeble refused to be absorbed by "social unionism", but does not go on to say that as founder of the Wesleyan Methodist Union of Social Service, he watched the very process which Mr. Jones describes take place within it. It did not take long for Keeble's socialism to be overshadowed by Scott Lidgett's socially-flavoured Gladstonian Liberalism, so that J. E. Rattenbury could write to Henry Carter in 1910 that among the Wesleyan leadership "people do not care a jot about the M.U.S.S.". Nor is the much more socialist Sigma Club (formed in Wesleyan Methodism in 1909) mentioned. Despite all these drawbacks, it is good to find a book which has a place for nonconformist as well as Anglican Christian socialists.

MICHAEL S. EDWARDS.

In addition to the list printed on page 82, we give below particulars of further local histories reaching the Editor's desk.

Sherburn (Yorks) circuit centenary (pp. 12): copies from the Rev. Thomas E. Capsticks, Wesley Manse, Sherburn, Malton, Yorks; no price stated.

Barrow on Trent, history of Methodist church and Manor Court (pp. 34): copies from Mr. Frank Clayton, 35, Nelson Close, Mickleover, Derby, DE3 5LX; no price stated.

Ealing Broadway centenary (pp. 16): copies from Miss Ruth Allcock, 11, Lowfield Road, London, W.3; no price stated.

NOTES AND QUERIES

1202. THE COLMAN COLLECTION.

Preparation of the Colman Diaries for microfilming has necessitated a revision of the enumeration listed in *Proceedings*, xxi, pp. 93-7. The following is the official list, to which alone reference should be made in future. The figures in parentheses indicate the old enumeration, and are given here for reference only.

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|--------|--|------|
| I. | Miscellaneous verses. 6th February 1729/30 | (1) |
| II. | Lists of Class-members, 1742, 1743, 1746
Copies of various letters, 1730-1 | (2) |
| III. | Diary, 30th April 1729 to 17th June 1732
Questions for self-examination | (3) |
| IV. | Keziah Wesley's Note-book. 28th May 1729 | (4) |
| V. | <i>On Human Understanding</i> . Christmas Eve 1730
Poem in German. 6th January 1788 | (5) |
| VI. | Aspasia letters, August 1730 to July 1734 | (6) |
| VII. | List of pupils, 1730-1
<i>The Art of Divine Meditation</i> . March 1733/4 | (7) |
| VIII. | Prayers | (8) |
| IX. | Diary, 17th June 1732 to 30th September 1733
Resolutions, 1733 | (9) |
| X. | Diary, 1st October 1733 to 21st April 1734 | (10) |
| XI. | Diary, 17th October 1735 to 30th April 1736 | (12) |
| XII. | Diary, 13th February 1737 to 19th July 1737 | (13) |
| XIII. | Diary, 15th October 1739 to 8th August 1741
Letter to Mr. Burton re Georgia
List of Expenses | (17) |
| XIV. | Summaries of books read, etc., 1733 and 1734
(This is to be found in volume X, reading from back to front.) | (14) |
| XV. | List of books for the poor
Names of members of society, 1789 | (15) |
| XVI. | Diary, 7th September 1734 to 8th February 1735 | (11) |
| XVII. | Diary, 1st April 1738 to 6th May 1739 | (16) |
| XVIII. | Cash account, 1st January 1731 to December 1733
Inventory of goods and chattels | (18) |
| XIX. | Sermons, Class-lists, Prayers, French Grammar | (19) |
| XX. | Statutes of Lincoln College
<i>On the Lord's Supper</i>
Class-lists, 1745-6
Plans of preaching appointments | (20) |
| XXI. | Sermon Register, 1747, 1760-1 | (21) |

JOHN C. BOWMER.

1203. INFORMATION WANTED ABOUT THE REV. JOHN MOORE.

In the process of doing research into the influence of the American revivalist Charles G. Finney, I have found various references to the Rev. John Moore, a Wesleyan minister (died 1873). He apparently wrote some essays, and a pamphlet entitled *A Vindication of President Finney*, which I am trying to track down. If any readers can throw any light on this man or on Finney's influence on the Methodist churches, I should be grateful if they would write to me at 47, Eton Hall, Eton College Road, London, N.W.3.

RICHARD A. G. DUPUIS.

1204. CHARLES WESLEY'S ENGAGEMENT.

Attention deserves to be drawn to certain statements made in an article entitled "Charles Wesley's Engagement: Light from Unpublished Letters" appearing in *Proceedings*, xxxvi, pp. 33-5. There are quotations from several letters which Charles wrote to Miss Sally Gwynne, and the paragraph in question, which the article says was written from Manchester on 2nd November 1748, states:

In a reference to George Whitefield's Calvinistic preaching, he says:
 What woes and miseries and curses await me if this prophet of God speaks true. But the threatenings do not reach me—I hear all, suffer all, blessed be God and keep my temper and my love.

Charles's handwriting is at times somewhat difficult to make out, and the author of the article was probably hurried in his task; but what Charles actually says in this letter is:

. . . This morning we had a still happier time of refreshing. It renewed my strength and patience; so that I could bear the buffets of an old messenger of Satan whom you know:—whose behaviour I can no otherwise account for than by resolving it into "The Peevish Rage of a Disappointed Lover." What woes, and miseries, and curses await me if this Prophet of Evil speak true! But the threatenings do not reach me; or twist my patience from me. I hear all and suffer all, blessed be God, and keep both my temper and my love.

The statement in the *Proceedings* is in error in the following respects: (1) The letter was written not from Manchester, but from Kingswood. (2) In no way whatever does the letter suggest that Charles is referring to Whitefield or to Calvinistic preaching. (3) Whitefield was not in Manchester or Kingswood at this time, but by 2nd November, having recently concluded a six weeks period of evangelism in Scotland, had just crossed the border into northern England on his return journey.

It would appear that in his words "an old messenger of Satan" and "a Disappointed Lover" Charles is referring to some man in the Bristol area who also had shown attentions to Sally Gwynne, and who, since Charles had replaced him in her affections, had become bitter.

In 1748 relations between Whitefield and Charles were very cordial. Just a few months earlier (5th July 1748) Whitefield had reached England after nearly four years in America. While still in the port of Deal, he wrote a letter to John and Charles Wesley, telling them of his arrival, and saying:

. . . I come in the spirit of love, desiring to study and pursue those things which make for peace. This is the language of my heart,
 O let us find the ancient way,
 Our wond'ring foes to move;
 And force the heathen world to say,
 See how these Christians love.

Numerous evidences of the affection that Whitefield and Charles had for each other might be cited. It is to be regretted that their happy relationship has been so often overlooked. Since the above-mentioned erroneous reference to Whitefield was listed in the Index to volume xxxvi (*Proceedings*, October 1968), the reader would do well to make a deletion at that point.

ARNOLD A. DALLIMORE
 (Cottam, Ontario, Canada).

1205. PRIMITIVE METHODISM AND THE MINING UNIONS.

In the June 1969 issue of the *Proceedings*, Dr. G. M. Morris considers that I did less than justice to the Primitive Methodists in my article on "Methodism and Trade Unionism in the Nottinghamshire-Derbyshire Coalfield, 1844-90" (*Proceedings*, xxxvii, pp. 2-9), and he refers me to his own researches, which, he says, "have revealed that it was pre-eminently the Primitive Methodists . . . who provided the most important and outstanding leadership to the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire miners' unions."

As it happens, I have read Dr. Morris's doctoral thesis, and I must say frankly that I have no faith in his logic. He argues in a circle. First, he accepts as a fact that radical Methodist activity is Primitive Methodist activity; then he examines particular examples of Methodist radicalism; and he reaches the inevitable conclusion that since they are radical and Methodist they must derive from Primitive Methodism.

To make this clear, let us take an example drawn from my recent article. During the 1844 mining dispute, a group of miners in Pinxton organized collections for the dispute fund. Teams of "beggars" went from village to village throughout the East Midlands, singing hymns and appealing for help. The idea was suggested by Matthew Hayes of the Wharf Wesleyan (later UMFC) chapel, who borrowed the idea from Dr. Coke's method of raising funds for overseas missions; and Primitive Methodism had nothing to do with it. However, for Dr. Morris, since the idea originated with Methodists, and since it was radical, it was therefore Primitive Methodist-inspired. (Thesis, p. 299.)

There is, again, the case of William Brown, who was the most important miners' leader in the Midlands during the period covered by my article. He was a radical, and therefore for Dr. Morris he was a Primitive. Dr. Morris also implies that the *Miners' Hymn-Book* which Brown distributed was Primitive-inspired. In fact, as readers of my article will know, Brown belonged to the Methodist New Connexion. It is true that he sometimes preached in Primitive Methodist chapels, but so did many local preachers from other connexions. I suspect that this circumstance is responsible for some of Dr. Morris's other mistakes.

Thus he credits George Alfred Spencer—the most prominent Nottinghamshire miners' leader of the twentieth century—with being a Primitive Methodist local preacher, whereas he was a Wesleyan, and a well-known one at that. Dr. Morris's description of Spencer as "of Portland Row" provides a clue as to the source of the error. Portland Row, Selston, had a chapel which was mentioned by Mr. Grundy in one of his articles on the Original Methodists (*Proceedings*, xxxvi, p. 147). Spencer no doubt preached there occasionally, and I suppose that Dr. Morris has been told so (as I have) by old residents.

Dr. Morris's mis-statement that John Spiers (of the UMFC) was a PM is no doubt ascribable to the same source; but the fundamental reason for this mistake, along with the rest, is that Dr. Morris apparently formulated his conclusion before examining the evidence.

Some of his evidence is derived from me—most of it acknowledged. I suspect that I am the source of Dr. Morris's reference to the *Butterley Co. Survey of 1856* (Thesis, p. 178), because this is the shortened name by which I refer to it in lectures. However, as readers of my article will know (*Proceedings*, xxxvii, p. 3), its full title is the *Statistical Report on*

Butterley Company employees and their families living in the Parishes of Aldercar, Langley, Loscoe, Codnor and Eastwood. Nevertheless, Dr. Morris draws from this document (I think at second or third hand) the inference that the average wage of miners in Selston (a different parish altogether) was 3s. a day in 1856. In fact, even for the parishes which are covered by the survey, 3s. will not do as an average in a work of scholarship.

In criticizing my article, Dr. Morris gives a list of names of "Primitive Methodists". Assuming that all of them except John Spiers were Primitives, the list is nevertheless an unscholarly compilation. Some of the prominent people on it (e.g. William Carter and Charles Bunfield) belong to the period after 1890, and they can therefore have no relevance to an article on the period 1844-90. Again, it is quite untrue to say that "the early Executive Council of the Nottinghamshire Miners' Association was almost entirely composed of Primitive Methodists". Some of the people on this list (e.g. Matthew Holland) were relatively minor figures who were on the EC for a very short time. If all the EC members who held office at some time in the period encompassed by Dr. Morris's list were set down, it would be found that a majority were not members of any congregation.

I accept that the Primitive Methodists were extremely important in the miners' unions of Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, as elsewhere; but the notion that the Primitives were radical, the Wesleyans conservative, and the other Methodist connexions somewhere in between but veering to the right, is a gross over-simplification.

The temper of a congregation was determined in the main by its social composition and environment; and for this reason most Methodist congregations in mining villages were radical in character.

A. R. GRIFFIN

(Special Lecturer in Industrial Relations and
Industrial History, University of Nottingham).

1206. G. B. ROBSON AND THE COVENANT SERVICE.

In *Proceedings*, xxxvii, p. 55, in the course of a review of Mr. Tripp's new book on the Covenant Service, Mr. Raymond George stresses G. B. Robson's contribution to the service as we now know it. Evidence in my possession shows, however, that this contribution was greater than has been supposed.

I have before me Robson's own copy of the last Wesleyan order, which bears, on its blue cover, in his inimitable hand, the note: "Committee appointed 1923 Conference. First and final drafts prepared by G.B.R.". This order is thus less of an enigma than Mr. Tripp found it (*The Renewal of the Covenant . . .*, p. 76). Robson further identifies the author of the introductory *Some Facts about the Covenant Service*, who was, as might have been expected, John Telford (Connexional Editor from 1905 to 1934).

I also have Robson's copy of his own 1921 order, with a number of pencilled alterations, in his own hand, which show a process of continuous revision. The most interesting of these is that which changes the Covenant Prayer from the first person singular to the first person plural and its rubric from "Minister and People" to "Minister". Four contemporary press notices pasted to the back cover reveal the mixed reception this order was accorded.

PETER HOWARD.