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Proceedings OF THE Wesley Historical Society

Editor: REV. WESLEY F. SWIFT.

Volume XXX

March 1955

EDITORIAL

OUR thirtieth volume commences with this issue, and before we reach its closing pages the *Proceedings* will have celebrated its diamond jubilee. The Society may anticipate this event with pardonable pride, and congratulate itself on a growing membership and an established place in the affairs of Methodist history.

* * *

We have a new printer. Our publishing manager, Mr. Alfred A. Taberer, has set up in business in Leicester, and by a long-standing "gentleman's agreement" the executive committee has transferred to him the printing of the *Proceedings*. We know that Mr. Taberer's technical skill and personal supervision will be at the Society's service, and that in other ways the new arrangement will be to our advantage. Various teething troubles caused by the transfer to the new printer are responsible for the delay (which we much regret) in publishing this issue, but we have Mr. Taberer's assurance that, subject to editorial efficiency, publication in future will be both regular and prompt.

* * *

The supply of material for publication, like the widow's cruse of oil, shows no diminution. We are grateful to all our contributors, and are always glad to receive manuscripts from friends both old and new. We hope to print in June important illustrated articles in commemoration of the bi-centenary of the death of John Cennick, and are glad that one of these is by a younger member of the Society. So the bright succession runs!

* * *

We are glad also to report that the preparation by Mr. John A. Vickers of a "Master Index" to the *Proceedings* progresses steadily, and its compilation should coincide with the end of this present volume. This will be a great asset to our work.

JOHN FLETCHER'S PULPIT PRAYERS

[Four years ago I put together an article on "John Fletcher's Sermon Notes", and in the course of it reproduced the prayers which he had written inside his sermon-case. My main purpose was to make available Fletcher's own manuscript, though it did seem desirable to add some kind of comment, however inadequate, upon those prayers. That my comment was inadequate, and my impressions mistaken, Mr. Lawton amply proves in the following article. I am very happy, however, that my own comparative ignorance of the minutiae of this particular field of study has indirectly led to such a valuable contribution from my friend Mr. Lawton. In view of his exhaustive work on Wesley's use of proverbial expressions, so well known to our members, I feel somewhat timid about referring to one in his hearing. The present article, however, brought to birth by my own unpretentious jottings, does seem to offer a reversal of the old fable—the mouse has laboured, and brought forth a mountain!—FRANK BAKER.]

JOHN FLETCHER'S Sermon Notes formed the subject of a paper by the Rev. Frank Baker in *Proceedings*, xxviii, pp. 30-32. This apparently simple subject opens some provocative questions from the point of view of Anglican liturgy and its relation to Methodism.

I

The article draws attention to a Fletcher sermon-case preserved at Cliff College, and gives the prayers which Fletcher has written inside the covers. The article comments on these prayers thus:

While based in part on the Book of Common Prayer, there is much Methodist freedom of phrase in them, and one wonders whether the good vicar ever startled his parishioners by using them in the parish church at Madeley. More probably, however, they were intended to impart a general background of something like Anglican prayer to the less formal Methodist gatherings.

This is a most unfortunate paragraph. With the exception of the phrase "In whose prevailing Name and Comprehensive words we conclude our imperfect prayers" and a word or two in the ascription (p. 32), all the rest is the very language of the Church of England.

The prayer on the inside of the front cover is that commonly known as the "Bidding Prayer". It is not to be found in any authorized version of the Prayer Book, but it may be found as Canon 55 of the *Constitutions and Canons Ecclesiastical* set forth in 1603. Contenting ourselves for the moment with the textual question, we may set down Canon 55 verbatim, alongside of Fletcher's version, in order to make comparison easier.

CANON 55.

The form of Prayer to be used by all Preachers before their Sermons.

Before all sermons, lectures and homilies, the preachers and ministers shall move the people to join with them in this form, or to this

FLETCHER'S PRAYER.

effect, as briefly as conveniently they may. Ye shall pray for Christ's holy catholic Church, that is for the whole congregation of Christian people dispersed throughout the whole world, and especially for the Churches of England, Scotland and Ireland; and herein I require you most especially to pray for the King's most excellent Majesty, our sovereign lord James, King of England, Scotland, France and Ireland, defender of the faith and supreme governor in these his realms, and all other his dominions and countries, over all persons, in all causes, as well ecclesiastical as temporal; ye shall also pray for our gracious Queen Anne, the noble prince Henry, and the rest of the King and Queen's royal issue; ye shall also pray for the ministers of God's holy word and sacraments, as well Archbishops and bishops, as other pastors and curates, ye shall also pray for the King's most honourable council, and for all the nobility and magistrates of this realm; that all and every of these, in their several callings, may serve truly and painfully to the glory of God, and the edifying and well governing of his people, remembering the account that they must make, also ye shall pray for the whole commons of this realm that they may live in the true faith and fear of God, in humble obedience to the King, and brotherly charity one to another. Finally, let us praise God for all those which are departed out of this life in the faith of Christ, and pray unto God that we may have grace to direct our lives after their good example; that, this life ended, we may be made partakers with them of the glorious Resurrection in the life everlasting; always concluding with the Lord's Prayer.

In Fletcher's MS. prayer there are some unimportant erasures; the terms "England" and "Scotland" yield to the phrase "Gt. Britain", and the word "God" is replaced by the pronoun. It is apparent, therefore, that the prayer differs from the canon only by

Let us pray for the whole congregation of Xn. People throu'out the whole world & Especially for the Churches of Great Britain & Ireland — And Especially herein particularly for the Kings most Excellent Majesty Our Sovereign Lord George — King of G : B : France & Ireland defender of the faith & supream governour in these his realms & all other his Dominions. Let us also pray

for his Royal Highness &c.

for the Ministers of Gods holy word & sacramts. as well Archbishops & bishops as other persons and Curates —

for all the Nobility gentry & Commonalty of this Realm ;

that remembering the account they must one day give they may live in their respective stations in the true faith & fear of God, in humble Obedience to the king, and brotherly charity one to another. Finally let us praise God for all those who are departed out of this life in the faith of Xt. & pray to him that we may have grace to follow their good Ex: that this life ended we may be made partakers with them of a glorious Immortality thro' J. C. in whose prevailing Name we present the prayer which he taught us Saying Our Father &c.

way of omission and trifling variation—as though he had written it down from memory. Dr. Baker expresses the view that probably the prayer for the King's Majesty would follow the phrase "Let us also pray for his Royal Highness, &c". This is a very unconvincing conjecture. Fletcher's "&c" simply indicates freedom to insert the royal names appropriate at the time. It is unlikely that an Anglican clergyman would insert the collect for the King, whether from the Liturgy or the daily office, in the middle of the Bidding Prayer, especially as the King had previously been mentioned specifically. It will be noted that Fletcher is in line with the canon in putting the Lord's Prayer after the Bidding Prayer.

Of the two prayers (other than the Lord's Prayer) which Fletcher had placed inside the back cover of his case, the one beginning "Prevent us, O Lord, in all our doings with thy most gracious favour" is the Prayer Book verbatim; while the other, "Grant, we beseech thee, Almighty God, that the words which we have heard this day", etc., varies from the Prayer Book only by omission of the words "to the honour and praise of thy name" after the word "living". These are the fourth and third collects respectively out of the six placed at the end of the order for Holy Communion in the Prayer Books of 1549, 1552 and 1662. These collects were used to conclude the ante-Communion when, for lack of communicants, the priest was obliged to stop at the prayer for the Church Militant. In the earliest book one collect was intended for each weekday. In the later books they were authorized to be used also at Morning and Evening Prayer, and with the Litany, at the minister's discretion. The collect for a blessing on what the congregation had heard was composed in 1549. The lovely ancient collect "Prevent us, O Lord" comes from the Sacramentary of Gregory. These two prayers certainly would not startle any Anglican in his parish church. There is indeed just this about the Bidding Prayer—that it might startle Madeley people as being considered a very high-church practice for their evangelical vicar to adopt, but not otherwise. As for Methodist freedom of phrase, it is non-existent so far as Fletcher's written copies are concerned. Even the pious prayer which is the last in Fletcher's sermon-case is more Anglican than Methodist. Ascriptions of this kind themselves owed something to the Bidding Prayer, being watered-down imitations of similar pulpit prayers.

II

Fletcher's use of these prayers, in particular the Bidding Prayer, in connexion with preaching is much more than a textual question. If, as Dr. Baker thinks likely, they were used "at less formal Methodist gatherings", then they do far more than "impart a general background of something like Anglican prayer". On the other hand, to use the Bidding Prayer before sermon at matins or evensong in church, or before a sermon preached in the communion service, indicates a more rigid churchmanship than many people would credit Fletcher with possessing. Further, if Fletcher ministered in church

at odd hours, and his "service" consisted of "the preaching" (to use the revival phraseology) and these prayers, he would seem to have anticipated by more than a hundred years one of the attempted revisions in 1879 of the Act of Uniformity, i.e. "A sermon may be preached at a separate service, preceded by a collect with or without the Lord's Prayer, or by the Bidding Prayer . . ." (Proctor & Frere, *New History of the Book of Common Prayer*, p. 224).

A custom believed to have been inspired by Zwingli (cf. e.g. *Liturgy and Worship*, p. 143) prevailed at Zurich whereby on the non-Mass Sundays the service consisted of the sermon only, with its Prone, i.e. Bidding Prayer, Lord's Prayer, the Commemoration of those recently departed, and Confession and Absolution. In France the Bidding Prayer at sermon in the Mass survived until the mid-nineteenth century. One wonders whether Fletcher was influenced by something of the kind from his native Switzerland. Whether he was following a continental precedent, or whether it was simply his own solution of the problem which revival preaching brought to sympathetic clergymen, one thing is certain, and that is that the Bidding Prayer is the true (and probably the only) meeting place of the liturgical and the extempore in catholic worship. If a serious Anglican clergyman who had been swept into the revival was troubled about how to relate preaching out of service hours to "lawful authority", then resort to the Bidding Prayer, which custom had put to such various uses, was a commendable solution.

This may become clearer if we sketch the history of this prayer. Long before the Reformation, as far back as the Anglo-Saxon Church at least, a prayer, or strictly an invitation to prayer, often in the vernacular, was introduced into the order of the Mass. It was known as the "Bidding of the Beads". The word "bede" is an old term for a prayer. For a collection of forms of this prayer, and for much information about it, the reader is referred to Rock's *Church of our Fathers*, ii, pp. 286-305, and to Brightman's *English Rite*, pp. 1020-45. The study of numerous recorded forms of the prayer reveals three constant elements—mention of the three estates of the Spiritual, the Temporal and the Departed—, but (and this should be noted) this prayer was often extempore and ordered to be brief.

The effects of the Reformation upon the Bidding Prayer were (1) to purify it of popish elements by order of Henry VIII, (2) to make it available in the primers for lay use, and (3) to bring it into direct connexion with preaching, because, originally, the vernacular prayer used to come near to the place in the Communion office where the sermon was ordered—the only place of its kind in the Prayer Book.

The post-Reformation use of the prayer is not stereotyped. Cranmer used it after the sermon. Others used it before. But sometimes the text was given out and the "scheme" of the sermon announced, and then followed the prayer, as we should say, in the sermon.

Nowadays the Bidding Prayer is chiefly confined to university sermons and formal occasions, apart from any Prayer Book service.

III

We may now return to Fletcher and his pulpit prayers, in order to make several points, chiefly in the form of queries.

1. Did Fletcher use these prayers in Methodist buildings, and if so, why? There he was surely free from "lawful authority". Yes, free maybe in law, but not free in outlook. His Methodism existed within the Church framework. It is indeed just possible that his motive might have a political tinge, i.e. to assert and to encourage loyalty to the Crown and the established order.

2. Did Fletcher use the prayers within matins and evensong and Holy Communion? One wonders how often in his day even high-churchmen were so loyal to the canons. This use of liturgical prayers at the very point where Fletcher was most extempore is doubly interesting.

3. Did Fletcher really anticipate the modern desire for freedom in the matter of prayers and sermon unaccompanied by any Prayer Book service? And if so, was it the result of Methodist impact upon parish life? It may interest some Methodists to learn that writers like Percy Dearmer have urged the Church of England to recover the use of the Bidding Prayer as sound catholic practice. What evidence is there other than Fletcher of the use of the Bidding Prayer at Methodist preaching? It would be interesting if it could be proved that the revival of preaching in the eighteenth century resuscitated the prayer which an earlier revival had brought to the fore. Abbey and Overton assert that, except at universities and on formal occasions, the canon was obsolete by 1750. It would be strange if John Fletcher proved to be a stauncher churchman at this point than, say, John Wesley.

4. The question of how these prayers were used is just as interesting as that of the context in which they appear. It is very unlikely that Fletcher extemporized upon the collects. But it is just possible that the Bidding Prayer, so near in his copy to that of the canon, was regarded as an outline. If he did enlarge upon that, he would be in line with old catholic custom, and of course closer to the extemporary practice of Methodism.

GEORGE LAWTON.

John Lawson has followed his excellent volume of explanatory notes on Wesley's *Sermons* with *Selections from John Wesley's Notes on the New Testament*, systematically arranged with explanatory comments (Epworth Press, pp. 219, 15s.). The extracts are arranged under twelve headings, mostly doctrinal, whilst Mr. Lawson's notes are helpful and adequate, the whole being preceded by a most valuable introduction. This book should help many local preachers and others to see that the *Notes on the New Testament* are by no means out-moded.

EARLY GLASGOW CHAPELS

ILLUSTRATION: The handsome portico of the former Bridge Street chapel, Glasgow.

NOT the least important and interesting part of the history of local Methodism is the identification of the site of, and where possible, the original chapels themselves. This is particularly important among us Free Churchmen who, unlike those of the Established Church, have frequently in our early days moved our place of worship and sold the disused buildings. The result is that they have gone out of our possession, we have no more control over them, and consequently even the erstwhile outward and visible sign of our inward and spiritual grace disappears for ever.

This may be true anywhere—particularly in big cities; but nowhere can it be more true than in Scotland, and especially in Glasgow. The purpose of this article is therefore to try and identify the sites of the original Methodist chapels in Glasgow, and to distinguish which of the original buildings still exist, though put to other uses. The information will certainly be incomplete, but at any rate it will be a beginning. And it will have the additional value perhaps of encouraging other members to do similar research in their own areas, and, what is most important, make pictorial records, where such do not yet exist, of our early scenes of grace while there is yet time. On more than one occasion the present writer has had a photograph taken only just in time: the building was later altered or demolished.

JOHN STREET.

The first Glasgow chapel was erected in John Street and opened on 27th May 1787.¹ It served for nearly a century, till the chapel and site were purchased in 1879 by the Corporation for the new Municipal Buildings, and John Street was closed on 31st December 1881, the opening services of the new chapel in Sauchiehall Street, the "Cathedral of West of Scotland Methodism", being held on New Year's Day, 1882.

The John Street chapel stood on the ground where now is the archway in the Municipal Buildings leading to the City Collector's Department.

BRIDGE STREET (earlier known as "Tradeston chapel").

This, the most handsome of the Glasgow chapels, was opened in 1813. Until recent months the portico still stood, forming part of the frontage of a furniture store and offices; previously it had served as the frontage to the Bridge Street railway station, from 1839, when it was purchased by the Glasgow, Ayr, and Kilmarnock Railway Company (later the Caledonian), being opened as a rail terminus the following year. It had a short life as such, being closed soon after the St. Enoch station north of the river was opened in 1876.

¹ A room was hired c. 1765 in Stockwell Street, but Wesley F. Swift tells the story of this in *Methodism in Scotland*, p. 50. There is no point in repeating here information that is found therein.

The *Glasgow Herald* of 16th February 1954 reported that the portico was being demolished to make way for developments of the premises of the Clydesdale Supply Company Ltd., the owners. Only the frontage had remained unchanged during the century and a half of its existence. The site is on the left hand side of Bridge Street as one approaches Jamaica Bridge from the south side of the Clyde.

GREAT HAMILTON STREET.

This street is now part of London Road. This handsome building, still standing, whose side rather than whose frontage faces the road, was erected by Valentine Ward in 1816—the date is still to be seen high up in the centre. Its life as a Methodist chapel was very short. Already in 1821² a map of Glasgow describes it as “St. James’ Church”, and this is corroborated by the following passage in *Glasgow Delineated, or a Description of that City*, by Robert Wardlaw (Glasgow, 1821), p. 16: “St. James’ Church is a neat, plain and commodious building. It was erected by the Methodists, but was lately purchased by the magistrates, and fitted up for a parish Church.”

It served as such for over a century, but since about 1950—perhaps a year or so earlier—has been the property and workshop of the Star Optical Company. The pews from the ground floor have of course been removed, but the staircase and gallery still stand.

ANDERSTON.

This chapel, still standing, was built in 1819. It is a plain chapel of medium size, facing the road, standing to the left hand side as one goes down Warroch Street (formerly Warwick Street) from Stobcross Street (shewn on the 1821 map as Finniestone Road). Sold in 1826 (*vide* Swift, *op. cit.*), it is now the property of the adjoining St. Mark’s parish church.

GREEN STREET (described in early directories as “Calton Chapel”).

This building was originally a Lancasterian School, but the Great Hamilton Street society moved there when their chapel was sold, and remained there until 1852. After that date the building reverted again to its original use as a school, and as such it still stands. In 1852 a chapel used previously as a chapel of ease for the famous Dr. Chalmers (his parish church being too small for his would-be hearers) was no longer needed, Dr. Chalmers having left the Established Church at the Disruption of 1843; and this was bought for £1,300 by the Green Street officials, and is now our St. Thomas’ church, Gallowgate.

EAST CLYDE STREET.

This chapel, described on the 1821 map as a “Methodist Connexion Chapel” (a mistake for “Methodist New Connexion”), was erected

² Not 1840, as in Swift, *op. cit.*, p. 88.



THE FORMER BRIDGE STREET CHAPEL, GLASGOW,
showing the handsome portico, recently demolished.

in 1818,⁸ but closed some time before 1834; £500 remained from the sale after all trust debts were paid. The site of the chapel, in what is now known as Clyde Street, is now occupied either by the Salvation Army hostel, "Hope House", or the firm next door of Messrs. Andrew Paterson & Co.

SPREULL'S COURT.

Here a Wesleyan Association society met from 1837 to c. 1840. The court is a smallish, darkish yard, approached by a passage at 182, Trongate. Shops and warehouses now occupy most of the buildings round the yard, but there is a more dignified building (originally a house?), facing the passage, which may well have housed the society.

CANON STREET.

By 1842 this society had moved to Canon Street, which is a continuation of Ingram Street. The chapel, which has now disappeared, stood just past Montrose Street. It seems likely that this chapel remained till c. 1859, by which time the cause had died out.

LESSER CITY HALL.

This, as of course is most probably the case with Spreull's Court, was not a chapel, but a hired preaching place. It was used by the Wesleyan Reformers from about 1855 onwards. This accession of strength to the Free Methodist cause does not appear in the U.M.F.C. *Minutes* till 1857 (when the bulk of the Reformers up and down the country joined with the Wesleyan Association), but we have evidence of the church existing at that meeting-place in the *Glasgow Directory* for that year. Hence it is highly likely that the society existed a year or two previously; but by 1859 it had died out. This building, now rather "down in the world", stands in Albion Street South, among the markets.

EAST REGENT PLACE.

The *Glasgow Directory* for 1851-2, under the heading "Wesleyan Association", lists a church meeting here, its minister one John Graham, Ph.D. But as this name is, as far as I know, unknown to Methodism, and as his church was in the following year's *Directory* described as "Congregational Presbyterian", the earlier entry may be a slip.

It is possible however that they were a group of Reformers who did not rejoin their fellow-Methodists, and took a new title to distinguish themselves. Their chapel has gone: East Regent Place, off Blackfriars Street, disappeared when a railway goods yard was constructed.

A street in which they later met (1855), Barrack Street, off Gallowgate, has also disappeared.

⁸ For further details, cf. my article in *Proceedings*, xxix, p. 160.

CHARLOTTE STREET.

In the 1832 *Directory* a "Methodist" society is shewn as meeting in Charlotte Street, to the right off Gallowgate. This was an Independent Methodist chapel, described in Vickers' *History of Independent Methodism* (1920), p. 38, as a "spacious structure". From what date it had served, I cannot say;⁴ the Independent Methodist cause was established in Glasgow by Alexander Denovan and others in 1820 (he was then 26). There is no trace of this chapel now; perhaps the Central Church of Scotland occupies the site.

SUFFOLK STREET.

The 1842-3 *Directory* lists an "Independent Methodist" (in a later directory described as "Independent Primitive Methodist") society as meeting at "Waterloo Veteran Chapel", Suffolk Street. This small street runs from Ross Street (earlier called South St. Mungo Street) to Kent Street, off Gallowgate. Clearly, from its name, the society was using a building previously in occupation of some other Christian fellowship. How long they used it I cannot say: they were still there in 1847. The place still stands, on a corner site, now converted into a garage, but unmistakably once a chapel. It may be that the later designation better described the society who worshipped here, and that it was in fact an early Primitive Methodist chapel.

LOW GREEN STREET.

From 1854 onwards (perhaps earlier) the Independent Methodists, now calling themselves "Church Presbyterians" according to the *Directory* (see also Vickers, *op. cit.*, p. 40), met in premises in Low Green Street. Mounfield, *loc. cit.*, suggests it was not a chapel of their own. It is impossible now to identify the building; Low Green Street is now called Turnbull Street, but the only place of worship there today is St. Andrew's Episcopal Church. Later (1896?) the society moved to Robson Street; but I am informed there is no Independent Methodist church in Glasgow now.

There were of course other chapels in Glasgow, but of them I have been able to obtain no information. It should however be set on record that the present Maryhill Mission had a predecessor in Radnor Street, and Bridgeton Mission in the Greenhead Hall, and that another church existed in Radnor Street. Where the early Primitive Methodist chapels were I have been unable to trace.

⁴ This conflicts with the statement in Mounfield, *Short History of Independent Methodism*, p. 105, that the society met in Low Green Street from 1822-62, in Charlotte Street 1862-96, and in Robson Street, Govanhill, from 1896 onwards. But Charlotte Street figures, as above noted, in the 1832 *Directory*; and when the society met in Charlotte Street Denovan started open-air preaching on the nearby Glasgow Green (Vickers, *op. cit.*, p. 38). It seems more likely that a young man, say in his thirties, started open-air preaching than a man of 68, as he was in 1862. For these reasons I am inclined to doubt Mounfield's accuracy on this point.

One or two closing observations may be of worth. In the first place, *Directories* are of use, but are not infallible; they are almost proverbially conservative in that they often do not list chapels until some time has elapsed since they were opened—and often continue to list them after closure. In Scotland, too, ignorance of Methodism causes confusion, so that the *names* of the earlier sections of Methodism are not always accurately stated; this—or perhaps sometimes a change of name by the local Methodists—may explain why the United Methodists (or Independent Methodists?) in 1849 are described as “Congregational Methodists”.

In the second place, it may be worth while setting on record the means used for tracing these places. Local early Methodist records and local directories will list the chapels, whose situation can then be fixed with the aid of contemporary maps. These are generally obtainable in the local library, of course, though often in the local Town Clerk's or Borough Engineer's office. These maps should be carefully scanned for chapels described as Methodist which are not listed in the *Directory*. Occasionally it may be possible to examine the deeds of the present owners of the property; this would give us at the very least the dates of building (or purchase) and sale, and often the price given and obtained.

May I again in closing stress the urgent importance of obtaining photographs of buildings still standing, however defaced, which were once ours and are no longer in our hands. In these days of town planning, we never know how long this opportunity may be available to us.

OLIVER A. BECKERLEGGE.

A History of Christianity in Yorkshire, edited by F. S. Popham (Religious Education Press, pp. 160, 8s. 6d.), published primarily for teachers using the West Riding Agreed Syllabus, is a remarkably cheap book of considerable importance, and will be of interest far beyond the county of the broad acres. Yorkshire has claims to fame in the sphere of religion as in so many other spheres: its world-famous Cistercian abbeys, the Moravian Settlement at Fulneck, the influence of men like John Nelson and William Grimshaw in Methodist affairs—these alone would justify the book. But its nine chapters cover all the denominations, and give a faithful (and surprisingly non-partisan) account of their development and present status. The chapter on “Methodism in Yorkshire” is ably written by Dr. C. W. Towson, and this, with the chapters on “The Moravians” and “The Post-Reformation Church of England”, gives an over-all picture which will inform and delight every Methodist who loves Yorkshire and wants to know it better.

Dean Hook, by C. J. Stranks (A. R. Mowbray, pp. 119, 9s. 6d.) is a disappointing biography of a picturesque personality whose name still commands respect in Leeds, where he was vicar from 1837 to 1859. He found Leeds a stronghold of Dissent, and he left it a stronghold of the Church, and he was one of the first clergymen to interest himself in education and industrial affairs.

JAMES CRAWFOOT: THE FOREST MYSTIC

ON 6th April 1790, John Wesley paid his last visit to Chester, and following the preaching service, at a meeting held in the vestry, he gave his final message to a group of travelling and local preachers. He closed by saying: "Fellow labourers, wherever there is an open door, enter in and preach the Gospel, if it be to two or three, under a hedge or tree; preach the Gospel—go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor, and the maimed and the halt, and the blind: and the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room." Wesley then lifted up his hands, and with tears flowing down his cheeks, repeated: "And yet there is room, and yet there is room"—and then added: "and this is the way the primitive Methodists did." Little could Wesley have realized that listening to him on that occasion was a village rustic who would exercise a mighty influence on the Methodist societies in that part of the country, or that the time would come when this village rustic's recollection of the scene, and his repetition of the words of Wesley, would prove to be the decisive factor in giving a name to one of the main sections of the great world-wide Methodist family.

The village rustic was James Crawfoot, who was born at Stapleford, in the parish of Tarvin, near Chester, in the year 1758. His parents belonged to the Church of England. Early in life he came into contact with the Methodists, and after much spiritual conflict, which reminds one of the experiences of John Bunyan, he passed through a vivid experience of conversion. "On the 7th of February," he says, "(at two o'clock on the Sabbath morning) in the year 1783, and in the twenty-fifth year of my age, I received the remission of my sins through the blood of the everlasting covenant." As a result of this experience he joined the Methodist society, and was shortly afterwards placed on the Plan of the Chester circuit. He was a great admirer of John Wesley, and embraced every opportunity of hearing him preach.

Before his conversion Crawfoot had married, and for some years lived at Duddon, near Tarvin. Some ten years after his conversion he went to live in Delamere Forest, in Cheshire, which at that time must have been very extensive. A society was formed near his home, at Brinn, in the Northwich circuit. Crawfoot was a zealous Methodist, and his home soon became a centre of interest to people over a wide area. A meeting was held at his home on the last Saturday evening of each month. On these occasions, it was reported, strange things happened. People fell into trance and saw visions. These "Forest Methodists" were often called "Magic Methodists", and there were those who said that they were in league with Satan. Such reports were not greatly to be wondered at,

considering the period, and the remoteness of the place. The experiences reported, however, were not novelties. Similar things had often occurred in the earlier period of Wesley's ministry, and they occurred elsewhere during the period now under consideration.

It was not long before the experiences and the doings of the "Forest Methodists" reached the ears of Hugh Bourne and William Clowes, who had recently been converted and were already engaged in vigorous missionary campaigns in Cheshire and Staffordshire. Through the good offices of James Lowe, a farmer friend who had gone from the Mow Cop district to live not far from the Forest, and who had attended some of these meetings, Hugh Bourne was led to visit the home of this remarkable old man, and to attend one of the meetings, in the company of William Clowes. Both these co-founders of Primitive Methodism have given accounts, which agree in the main, of their first experience of the doings of the Forest Methodists. The visit took place on 26th June 1807. Emphasis is laid upon the fact that the house was situated in a very lonely part of the Forest, yet there were large numbers of people present. The meeting was led by Crawfoot, and consisted of the reading of passages of Scripture, singing and prayer and testimony. An invitation was given to anyone to speak who felt led by the Spirit to do so. A respectable-looking farmer's wife gave an exhortation. The only unusual feature was that a woman who was present fell into a trance. The meeting went on till midnight. Bourne and Clowes left about two o'clock in the morning, apparently after taking some refreshments. The next day they heard Crawfoot preach, Clowes being much more favourably impressed than Bourne.

From this time onwards Crawfoot's home became a centre for the evangelization of a wide district. References to these visits in the Journals of Bourne and Clowes are very numerous—particularly in that of Bourne. Frequently Bourne spent a night in this home in the Forest, and on numerous occasions he remained there for several days, always remunerating the old prophet for his hospitality. Often these visits were close together, separated only by days or weeks. In fact, at one period "old James", or "the old man of the Forest", as Bourne usually calls him, seems to have affected him with the force of a magnet. This is remarkable when it is remembered that the distance between the two homes was nearly thirty miles, and was always covered on foot. Testimonies to the help he received during these visits are exceedingly numerous. A typical entry is this: "I attended to J. Crawfoot's discourse till Thursday morning: when he spoke, that line in 'Parnel's Hermit' was constantly in mind—'Surprise in secret chains his words suspends'. Just so was my attention chained. He has seen many miracles."

Bourne repeatedly speaks of the illumination he received from the way in which Crawfoot "opened up the Scriptures", both in preaching and in private conversation. He speaks also of his great power as a preacher. Of one occasion when he had listened to him, he

writes: "He preached one of the most extraordinary discourses I ever heard." Yet it was not as a preacher that Crawfoot chiefly excelled. As one of his biographers points out, his power as an evangelist was most strikingly expressed in "conversation preaching". Very often it is related how some man or woman was led to Christ by Crawfoot's private conversation. This surely is a rare gift, and one to be coveted by all who are concerned for the coming of Christ's Kingdom.

The time came when Hugh Bourne felt led to ask Crawfoot to give himself to the work of an evangelist among the camp-meeting Methodists, making himself responsible for his maintenance. Under date 7th November 1809, he says: "I agreed with old James Crawfoot to give him ten shillings a week till lady-day, to labour in the vineyard. This I believe God required at my hand. O Lord, bless him." He explains that this was done partly to help Crawfoot, who as a farmer's labourer was then unemployed; but also because he sensed the value which his labours would have in furthering the work in which he was passionately interested—the saving of souls and the building-up of the Methodist societies. James Crawfoot thus became the first travelling preacher or minister employed among the Primitive Methodists. On the first printed Plan of 1812 his name stands first, above the names of Hugh Bourne and his brother and Clowes. Crawfoot laboured with so much success that when Lady Day came he was re-engaged, Hugh Bourne and his brother finding the ten shillings a week for his support. This continued until the Primitive Methodist Connexion as a whole became responsible for the payment of its travelling preachers. By this time the two Bournes had spent over forty pounds on Crawfoot's support.

At first the converts won were invited to attach themselves to any Methodist society they chose. It was only after separation came by reason of the expulsion of Bourne and Clowes over the camp-meeting issue that separate societies of camp-meeting Methodists were formed, and chapels built to house them. Crawfoot himself had already been expelled from the Wesleyans in 1807 because he had preached in the Quaker Methodist chapel at Warrington (then in the Northwich circuit), where he happened to be on business and they were disappointed of a preacher. When he was arraigned on this account he pleaded guilty, but refused to express regret. He referred to the remarks made by Wesley at Chester seventeen years before, and said: "Mr. Chairman, if you have deviated from the old usages, I have not. I still remain a primitive Methodist." Thus it was that he was already free to respond to the call of Hugh Bourne in November 1809.

The words of Wesley were used with a striking result on yet another occasion. In February 1812, in a meeting at Tunstall, a discussion took place as to the name by which the camp-meeting Methodists should be known. During this, Crawfoot recalled the last occasion on which he had heard Wesley at Chester, and recited

the words he spoke which have already been quoted, closing with: "and this is the way the primitive Methodists did." In this way it was decided that the camp-meeting Methodists, with special reference to open-air preaching, should be known as "the Society of Primitive Methodists".

Crawfoot's chief claim to fame and honour, however, is found in the fact that he so clearly embodied Wesley's spirit in the matter of evangelism: "Wherever there is an open door, enter in and preach the Gospel, if it be to two or three." Wesley's doctrine and methods were indelibly printed upon his personality; and he in turn was largely responsible for moulding the characteristic teaching of Bourne and Clowes. All the biographers of Bourne testify to his great indebtedness to "the old man of the Forest". George Herod says: "His house was the college in which the Bournes and Clowes received instructions that were of paramount importance to themselves and to the thousands of our Israel. He was the means of increasing their knowledge of the deep things of God." The time came when Crawfoot ceased his association with the camp-meeting Methodists (in 1813), and considerable feeling was aroused; but Walford, the nephew and biographer of Bourne, though critical of Crawfoot's action at this time, gives unstinted praise to the greatness of his influence for good on Bourne and Clowes. He says that such was Bourne's opinion of the old man's talents and greatness in winning souls that he thought there was not another such man on the face of the earth. Walford tells of a personal interview he had with him in his later days, long after this period, and how deeply impressed he was with his personality: "his words were clothed with such an air of dignity and patriarchal authority, that our minds were affected with awe and reverence for the venerable and holy man . . . we do not wonder at Hugh Bourne's saying, 'his words soaked in me like rain'."

As a native of Delamere Forest, born and living till early manhood within a few miles of the place where formerly stood Crawfoot's house, the present writer can testify to the fact that the "Delamere prophet's" name is still remembered and honoured among the Methodists.

EDWARD LANGTON.

We have received *Two Hundred Years of Methodism in Mousehole*, by John J. Beckerlegge (pp. 38, 2s. 6d., from R. J. Ladner, Vanguard House, Mousehole, Penzance, Cornwall). Also *One Hundred Years, 1854-1954*, the history of Ebenezer Methodist church, Whitfield, Glossop, by Alfred E. Francis (pp. 20, 2s. 6d., from Edmund Ogden, 23, Primrose Crescent, Glossop, Derbyshire). Both these booklets are well written and well produced, and reach a standard worthy of the highest commendation. The "Moravian Pictorial Calendar" (Moravian Book Room, 42, Onslow Gardens, London, N.10, 2s. 6d.) commemorates the John Cennick bicentenary this year with some delightful photographs and annotations of interest to Methodists as well as Moravians.

SOME NOTES ON SCOTTISH METHODISM

LIKE most people, I find that with the years my range of interests widens and increases, but in the field of Methodist history—Methodism in Scotland, my first love, has remained my chief concern. In this article I have gathered together some small items, unrelated to each other, which add to our general knowledge of this subject and may be of interest on other grounds. They have come to me through various channels, and I am grateful to my correspondents for their help.

Elgin

One of my earliest articles in *Proceedings* was on "Methodism in Elgin" (xvi, pp. 104-6). I outlined the brief history of this society and its vicissitudes, and told of the purchase in 1808 of a large chapel seating 1,300 persons at a time when the society numbered only thirty members. Later investigation suggests that the date is more likely to be 1815, and that the purchase was one of the ill-starred ventures of Valentine Ward.¹

No society illustrates better than does Elgin the optimism with which some societies were established in Scotland and their hopeless struggle against overwhelming odds. If further proof than my previous article contains were necessary, it is to be found in ten pages of the Elgin society account book which have been donated to me as an "interested party" by the Rev. W. L. Doughty. These loose sheets cover the year 1808 and part of 1809, and are in the handwriting of two of the preachers who were at that time stationed in the Inverness circuit, which included Elgin—Robert Melson and Samuel Ward. They make pathetic reading, and help us vividly to understand the hardships and discouragements which afflicted the preachers in the Inverness circuit—a circuit of which Jonathan Crowther had written: "No man is fit for Inverness, unless his flesh be brass, his bones iron, and his heart harder than a stone's."

The weekly collections varied from 7d. to 4s. 7d. On 20th June 1808 a disgruntled Samuel Ward made the entry: "Collected the vast sum of . . . —3s. 6d.", and on 14th May 1809: "Collected the vast sum of 1/7 thrice preaching. Instruction is for them that will learn. Is the gospel wanted nowhere more than here?" On the other hand the missionary and ordinary collection on 28th November 1808 was £1 16s. 3½d., "one guinea of which was the Donation of that good Gentleman Mr. Sellers". On the same day, "By Class and one Ticket 1/5½". One curious entry strikes the eye: on 5th June 1808 Samuel Ward "omitted Preaching Sabbth. Nt: Had to move for the District Meeting".

From the "Money Disbursed" pages we find that the rent of the preaching house was £1 16s. 9d. for the half-year from Whitsunday

¹ See my *Methodism in Scotland*, pp. 75, 88.

to Martinmas, that the average cost of a preacher's board was just over a shilling a day, and that a load of peats cost 1s. 8d. Here is a specimen entry (28th November 1808) in the immaculate handwriting though not too perfect spelling of Robert Melson :

To Seven days Board 8/9½, Candles for the House and Chapel 1/3½, a parcel of Books from Inverness -/6, A Parcel from Banff -/8, Bror. Ward to & myself from Invss in part 8/-, Servants Wages and Washing for my own and House lining [sic] 2/-. R.M.

The deficiency on the society's accounts which had to be paid by the Conference was £11 3s. 6½d. in 1808 and £7 4s. in 1809. In such circumstances did Valentine Ward purchase the large chapel already referred to! There is no wonder that Methodism in Elgin had disappeared by 1828.

Administration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in Scotland

Over twenty years ago, in an article on "Wesley and Scottish Methodism" in *Proceedings*, xviii, pp. 1-6, I referred to a special resolution of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference which was printed in the *Minutes* of 1930. The resolution read as follows :

ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS IN SCOTLAND.—In the administration of the Sacraments there shall be a strict adherence to the order sanctioned in Scotland by Mr. Wesley, which is the same as that prescribed in the Church of Scotland.

This resolution, dated 1842, was extracted from a manuscript book containing copies of resolutions specially pertaining to Scottish Methodism, in the possession of the Chairman of the Scotland District. The curious fact is that no trace of the resolution can be found in the Conference Journal or *Minutes* of the period.

Through the kindness of the Rev. John C. Bowmer I now have a copy of an entry in the circuit steward's book for the former Ayr circuit under the year 1845. This extract gives the full text of the 1842 resolution, which in its second paragraph greatly amplifies and illuminates the brief sentence which hitherto has been the extent of our knowledge of this subject. It is printed here *in extenso*.

Resolutions passed at the Conference of 1842 in reference to the Wesleyan Methodist Societies in Scotland.

First.—That our brethren in Scotland be directed to cultivate the kind and conciliatory spirit manifested by Mr. Wesley and to conform to the order and usages established by him in that country; that in their public ministrations they be required to dwell chiefly on those great doctrines which have ever been regarded by us as essential to vital godliness and which are so pronounced in the sermons and other writings of our venerable Founder; that those rules which require frequent meeting of our societies apart from the public congregation, be carefully observed, the members showing their quarterly ticket on admission; that as frequently as possible the members shall be visited at their own houses for the purpose of pastoral oversight and instruction; and, that such visitation may be made regular and efficient, lists shall be taken of those members who are householders or to whom access may be obtained, with columns in which to record the visits made to each person and such lists shall be produced and examined at the Annual District Meeting.

Second.—That in the administration of the Sacraments there shall be a strict adherence to the order sanctioned in Scotland by Mr. Wesley, which is the same as that prescribed by the Church of Scotland, except that the communicants may occupy the pews; that no one but a minister duly ordained shall administer the sacraments, except baptism in such cases only as are allowed by the Minutes of 1829; that our ministers shall avail themselves of the special opportunities for preaching afforded by the public sacramental fasts, and in addition to the usual week-day services, a sermon shall be preached on the Friday or Saturday evening before the celebration of the Lord's Supper; that the privilege allowed by our Rule to persons in England who are not members of Society to communicate with us on condition of their receiving a note of admission from a minister shall be equally allowed in Scotland; and that such persons as may in future desire such privilege shall not be precluded from it while they walk as becometh the Gospel of Christ. The Conference also recommends that all communicants, whether meeting in classes or otherwise, shall be alike admitted to the Lord's Table by such Tokens as were sanctioned and appointed for that purpose by Mr. Wesley, the tokens being given by the ministers after personal conversation with the parties.

A Sidelight on Baptism in Scotland

I am indebted to Mr. James J. Fowler, of Ayr, for the following extract from the Records of the Kirk Session of the parish of Newton upon Ayr, now known as Newton on Ayr Old Church. It speaks for itself.

3rd April 1820. The Moderator represented to the Session that John McFadzen who was married about nine months ago had on Saturday last applied to him for baptism to his child. As usual he had examined him with respect to his knowledge and found him very ignorant. He told him that he could not read and in so many words said he did not know who appointed baptism. He also acknowledged that though he had resided for the last three years in this Parish, he had not even so much as once attended religious worship in this Church or any other of the Establishment, but that he had gone two or three times and heard the Methodist Preachers . . . and being called he compeared, and being asked if he purposed to apply his mind to get more religious knowledge and to attend religious worship regularly, he replied that he had nothing to say to the Session on these things, for he had applied to the Methodist Preacher to baptize his child. The Session having considered this case find that said John McFadzen treats with disdain the discipline of our Church and is a very improper person to receive any Church privileges, and if he should go to any other Society for Church privileges, the Session consider that he cannot in any future period apply to them for such. The Clerk is appointed to transmit an Extract of this minute to the Methodist Preacher for information, in the full confidence that he will not baptize John McFadzen's child in the present circumstances of the case. Said minute being read to him, he [McFadzen] used very insolent and impertinent language to the Session and was dismissed.

1st June 1820. [The Clerk had called on the Methodist Preacher and read minute "in consequence thereof he was prevented from baptizing the child". The Moderator reported that John McFadzen had applied to him.] . . . he was desired to attend the Session this evening and he accordingly appeared. The former minute was read to him and he pro-

mised to apply his mind to obtain more religious knowledge and likewise to attend public worship regularly. He also acknowledged he was wrong in going to the Methodist Preacher for baptism to his child, for which he was rebuked. The Session having considered the whole of this case allow him to receive baptism for his child.

Edinburgh

In an article on "Early Methodism in Edinburgh" in *Proceedings*, xvii, pp. 78-86, I quoted from Gregory's *Sidelights on the Conflicts of Methodism* the statement that at the Wesleyan Conference of 1835 "thanks were voted to the Town Council of Edinburgh, which had voted £3,000 towards the debt on our Chapel in that city". I repeated that statement (although with some misgivings) in my Wesley Historical Society Lecture, *Methodism in Scotland*.

Light has come from an unexpected source. Mr. John Birnie of Edinburgh was not happy about this statement, and he searched the Minutes of the Town Council for some mention of the reputed gift. He drew a blank,² but did discover some information which may be related to the transaction in question. Through the kindness of Mr. Birnie and of my old friend and former circuit steward Mr. Charles T. Nightingale copies of the relevant extracts from the Minutes have been made available to me.

It appears that in 1829 extensive restoration was commenced in St. Giles' Cathedral. At that time four separate congregations were worshipping in the Cathedral, and other accommodation had to be found for them. Two places of worship in the city were found willing to provide accommodation for the temporarily homeless congregations—Albany Street chapel and the Methodist chapel in Nicolson Square. The minutes of the Town Council (the responsible authority in the matter) reproduce the Agreement which was made "between the Committee of Council and the Minister and Committee of Managers or Trustees of the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel", as follows:

1. The Magistrates and Council are to have a lease of the said Chapel from the Managers or Trustees thereof for such period as they may require it not exceeding four years from Martinmas next at the rent of £650 per annum, with power to the Lord Provost, Magistrates and Council to continue in possession of the said Chapel so long as they may require the same, during the said period, provided they give notice of their intention to do so three months previous to Martinmas 1830 . . . The rent to be paid in advance by moieties half yearly at Martinmas and Whitsunday.

2. The Magistrates and Council are to have possession of the said Chapel from and after Sabbath the 19th July, inst . . .

3. That the occupancy of the said Chapel to be had for the said rent is agreed to be for the forenoon and afternoon services of each sabbath during the year, the two fasts, preparation, Sacrament and thanksgiving days. It being understood that the Trustees or Managers are to make

² The records were also searched for the years 1813 to 1836 by Dr. Margaret Wood, of the Archives Department, but without success.

use of the Chapel on the Sabbath evenings, (except on the two sacraments) and at any other time through the week that they may require it for public worship, but they are expressly prohibited from using it on the Sunday mornings, or on the mornings of the Fasts, preparation or thanksgiving days above mentioned. The Trustees or Managers, however are not precluded from using the school-room below the Chapel for public worship at those periods, provided always that they meet for that purpose half-an-hour at least before the meeting of Dr. Gordon's Congregation who are to occupy the Chapel so as to prevent any inconvenience from the singing at those meetings for public worship.

4. That as the Chapel is let at present till the term of Martinmas, and a few of the occupants may be unwilling to surrender their seats till then, ten or twelve sittings shall be reserved for their use till that term in case they may be required.

5. That the Committee of the Managers or Trustees of the Chapel, bind themselves and their constituents as Trustees to warrant this agreement, and they and the magistrates are to enter into a regular lease, if either party shall require it, at their mutual expense. In witness whereof the parties have subscribed these Minutes of Agreement this 20th day of July, 1829 (Signed). James Hill, O.G. Robert Anderson, Trustee, Jonathan Bladworth, Trustee, James McKenzie, Trustee . . .

The congregation which was thus housed at Nicolson Square was "Dr. Gordon's congregation" of the Tolbooth church. In 1833, when the four years agreement came up for renewal, Nicolson Square was required for "Dr. Bruce's congregation" of the New North church. The new agreement was for two years only, and the conditions were the same as before, except that Dr. Bruce's congregation was to be allowed to use the chapel on an occasional week evening. The annual rental dropped to £500 per annum. When this second agreement lapsed in 1835, the Lord Provost's committee inquired from the trustees for terms for a further lease for five years. The Nicolson Square trustees asked for £400 per annum, but the days of "big money" were over, and the lease was not renewed. Nicolson Square was undercut by the managers of Brighton Street chapel, who offered their premises for £300, and so there came to an end this interesting early chapter in the history of "Leasing of Trust Premises". We have heard of some queer happenings under this heading in recent years, but it would be interesting to know the reaction of the General Chapel Committee today if they were asked to sanction an agreement such as the one narrated here.

It is a fair assumption, I think, that the £3,000 which was supposedly voted by the Town Council of Edinburgh "towards the debt on our Chapel in that city" was in fact the rental for five years' use of the chapel on the terms as stated. The picturesque turns out to be in fact prosaic, but the practical advantage to the trustees, who faced unpaid debts of over £4,500, was the same whichever way the money had come.

Banff

That indispensable volume *Hall's Arrangement* is not infallible. Indeed, there are some facts for which in the very nature of the

book it can make no provision, such as the "calling out" of a student or a man on the "President's List" to supply a vacancy during a connexional year. The Rev. W. L. Doughty has given me a manuscript letter which yields one such scrap of information. The letter was written by the Rev. Zechariah Taft to Robert Melson and his wife, to whom he was related by marriage. It is dated 10th December 1817, and the relevant part reads:

Your father & mother Mr. & Mrs. Barritt are now with us here. They came yesterday with their son John who is set off this morning to Banff in Scotland to fill up the vacancy occasioned by the death of Brother Jackson [John Jackson, the second preacher in the Banff circuit]. He was on the list of reserve & is appointed to this place by Mr. Gaulter the Chairman [sic: he meant President] of the last Conference. His being appointed now will give him one year next Conference, this is a favourable circumstance.

The point is a small one, but not altogether unimportant. John Wesley Barritt, who travelled from 1817 to 1861, was a fortunate man. The old rule which made a man on the list of reserve lose a year unless he was "called out" before Christmas has now been relegated to the limbo of forgotten things.

Dumbarton

In the first half of the nineteenth century, probably in the twenties, there was a Methodist society at Renton, in the vale of Leven, about three miles north of Dumbarton on the road to Loch Lomond. The membership was small, and the society was eventually dissolved. A revival of interest took place in the neighbourhood in the late fifties, with the result that a minister—George Latham—was appointed to Dumbarton in 1860 in the hope that he would be able to establish Methodism firmly in the town. He worked to such good purpose that the foundation-stone of a chapel was laid on 26th April 1861 by Mr. William Campbell of Tillichewan Castle. At that time the society had seventy members. The chapel seated 280 people, and cost about £800.³

The Dumbarton society passed through many vicissitudes during the next fifty years, and it was eventually disbanded and the chapel sold about 1916.⁴ There my information ended, until a chance contact five years ago with the Rev. Edward Taylor of the Knoxland parish church, Dumbarton, gave me the later history of this erst-while chapel. Between the two world wars it was used as a youth welfare centre. During the second war it was used for A.R.P. purposes as a decontamination centre. In 1949 it was taken over by the Dumbarton People's Theatre, and has since been known as the Levensgrove Theatre, seating 140 people. The building, Mr. Taylor tells me, is situated on the west side of the main road bridge across the river Leven, on the banks of that river very near its junction with the river Clyde.

WESLEY F. SWIFT.

³ *Methodist Recorder*, 9th May 1861.

⁴ The annual contributions from Dumbarton to the Relief and Extension Fund for Methodism in Scotland ceased in 1916.

BOOK NOTICES

The Methodist Bedside Book, compiled by the Rev. Ralph Kirby. (Hulton Press, pp. 384, 15s.)

Mr. Kirby has provided us with a companionable volume, and one which will afford us much pleasant browsing. His generous selection of extracts, illustrating the origins and development of Methodism, are drawn chiefly from contemporary sources and presented with a modest minimum of commentary. While his emphasis falls inevitably on the eighteenth century, he also finds room for a glance at the more important nineteenth-century offshoots, for the development of American Methodism and missionary activity in various parts of the world. Other chapters are devoted to the life and worship of the Church, its social witness, and its place in the ecumenical movement.

This is a book which should prove an ideal gift in Methodist circles, and the President scarcely exaggerates when he writes in his Foreword that "no Methodist home should be without a copy". The layman will learn a great deal that is worth knowing about the origins and growth of his Church; the preacher will find that Wesley's rules and advice for the early preachers remain surprisingly relevant and challenging; and, while this is not intended as a source-book for the student, even the most learned members of our Society can scarcely fail to gain some new insight from its pages.

Though his measure is a generous one, Mr. Kirby's anthology will still afford us the pleasure of differing with him over his personal choice of passages; but our only serious regret is that he has not found it possible to make a more extensive use of the Wesley hymns, especially perhaps in the chapter on the Methodist "Gospel". The format, apart from an inferior binding, is pleasant, and the volume is enhanced by a number of well-chosen illustrations.

JOHN A. VICKERS.

John Wesley, Preacher, by W. L. Doughty. (Epworth Press, pp. 211, 18s. 6d.)

In the preface to this most interesting volume the author disclaims any attempt to write a biography of John Wesley, but, assuming that the general course of his life is well known, offers a "study" of one of the greatest of English preachers. Mr. Doughty's obviously encyclopædic knowledge and discerning appreciation of the whole range of Wesley literature is here placed at our disposal. From all the available references to sermons, sermons and preaching he has selected all the interesting quotations and anecdotes to weave into the pattern of this book.

While not attempting a biography the author does in fact begin with some account of the preachers in Wesley's ancestry, and especially of his mother, who might claim to be the first Methodist lay preacher. Wesley himself is shown as being prepared for his life's task in his earlier years, although this was unrecognized by him at the time. As a preacher the real turning-point in his life was on 2nd April 1739, on which day he wrote in his *Journal*:

At four in the afternoon I submitted to be more vile, and proclaimed in the highways the glad tidings of salvation.

It was this acceptance of Whitefield's challenge to revolutionary action which Mr. Doughty rightly notes as a turning-point of his life, and although there is no consideration of the Aldersgate experience in this book we should note this 1739 decision as being the decisive factor which ended Wesley's own doubts and hesitation about his "conversion".

Two very informative chapters describe the many types of Wesley's congregations, while a chapter on "Voice and Gesture" includes an account of the little-known tract entitled *Directions Concerning Pronunciation and Gesture* which he referred to as "Rules for Action and Utterance". The length of his sermons and services, the frequency of his preaching, his use of old sermons, and insistence on the five o'clock service, are here considered together with an analysis of his sermon register.

Yet despite the wealth of detail the book contains, the reader is not allowed to forget the main aim of the preaching which is so cogently expressed in a quotation from *An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion* where he gives his reply to a man who asked:

I hear you preach to a great number of people every night and morning. Pray, what would you do with them? Whither would you lead them? What religion do you preach? What is it good for?

To which Wesley replied:

I do preach to as many as desire to hear, every night and morning. You ask, what I would do with them: I would make them virtuous and happy, easy in themselves and useful to others. Whither would I lead them? To Heaven; to God the Judge, the lover of all, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant. What religion do I preach? The religion of love; the law of kindness brought to light by the gospel. What is this good for? To make all who receive it enjoy God and themselves: to make them like God; lovers of all; contented in their lives; and crying out at their death, in calm assurance, "O grave, where is thy victory! Thanks be unto God, who giveth me the victory, through my Lord Jesus Christ."

Mr. Doughty has put all students of Wesley in his debt by his painstaking and careful scholarship.

RONALD V. SPIVEY.

Methodism and the Struggle of the Working Classes, 1850-1900, by Robert F. Wearmouth. (Edgar Backus, pp. xvi. 269, 21s.)

Even Dr. Wearmouth would probably admit that his writings have not the sparkle of those of, say, an Elsie Harrison or a Mabel Brailsford, but they have an importance which will gain them a permanent place on the shelves of authoritative Methodist literature. His latest work is really outside the period in which our Society is normally interested, but we are glad to commend it as exhibiting the same exact scholarship, careful research and meticulous detail as its three predecessors. Dr. Wearmouth shows something of the political effects of the "spiritual earthquake" of the mid-nineteenth century, and discusses the Methodist impact on social service, trade unionism and politics. His book is all the more interesting because the period is comparatively near to us; indeed, many of its names are of men whom we ourselves have known and heard. This book is a valuable contribution to our knowledge of the sociological implications of Methodism, and should have a wide appeal.

WESLEY F. SWIFT.

