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Proceedings

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POLITICAL OPINION IN MANCHESTER WESLEYANISM, 1832-57

ON the whole, the nature and content of the present article would have either enraged or stunned most early-Victorian Wesleyans by its apparently false hypotheses and misunderstanding of a political philosophy. The conflict between the writer's intentions and the subjects' protests offers a useful introduction to an aspect of human behaviour which, despite the plea of religious motives, unquestionably affected political relationships. The underlying theme of this article concerns the diversity and interaction of political feeling within Manchester Wesleyanism during the period 1832 to 1857 and the political traits of those Wesleyans who left the society to join the Wesleyan Association in 1835 and the Wesleyan Reform movement after 1849. In this respect it is necessary to examine how far Wesleyanism acted as a minor political machine inflexibly committed to a prescribed course of action and motivated by the highest considerations for the Tory party.

The political education of the Manchester Wesleyans, derived from an evangelical theology and economic considerations as opposed to involvement in secular schools of thought, was inherently conducive to a form of conservatism. From an aversion to the revolutionary turmoil of childhood days to the loyal support for the civil authorities during the Peterloo era, the leaders of Manchester Wesleyanism had clung to the *status quo* in fear of radical changes, though they were not wholly hostile to certain reforms. By background, therefore, they were not in a position to sponsor new or revived forms of political dissent. Furthermore, the Wesleyan manufacturing class had its roots in an economic order governed by the teachings of political economists, so that loyalty to the "Glorious Constitution" was allied to—charitable works aside—the social implications of the factory system. A further factor also influenced Wesleyan thinking in the late 1830s, when the Tories won overwhelming support in the Manchester society. As Tories, the

Wesleyans subscribed to a political philosophy which appeared to be intrinsically religious. In practice they ignored political strife and fought shy of party labels, mainly because they saw politics in the one-sided terms of a Tory establishment which, owing to its peculiarly English qualities, scarcely required justification and certainly called for no alternative government. Hence, party politics were usually stigmatized as the creation of an unruly and irreligious opposition. The following description of the political activities of a Wesleyan Tory in one of Benjamin Love's novels illustrates this mentality:

He was canvassing, not to serve a party, without reference to principle; but from the highest principles he was endeavouring to oppose a party, whose influence he conscientiously believed it to be his duty, as a Christian man, to oppose. His exertions sprang from a well-founded conviction of needful duty, and were not the offshoots of party zeal, inflamed by personal rancour.¹

In conjunction with an all-embracing view of Toryism, the Wesleyans invariably used the term "Christian politics" to signify that they were guided by religious motives. Accordingly, the slave question, Orange politics and the education controversy fell into the category of religious and moral problems despite the need for political settlements. The finely-drawn distinction between religious motives and political action sometimes placed the Wesleyans in the anomalous position of participating in party politics under a false name. To the host of critics, this practice represented either irresponsibility or rank political dishonesty, particularly when the Wesleyans ingeniously eschewed certain agitations.

Irrespective of party ties, most Wesleyans viewed political life in a similar fashion. The importance of personal qualities, religious principles and denominational considerations cut across the grain of political bitterness and antagonism which invited sordid compromise and petty intrigue. Avoiding the less reputable side of politics, the Wesleyans often boasted that they neither made enemies nor lost friends during a Parliamentary election. However, impeccable Christian behaviour did not always bring its own reward, for, as a self-styled independent participant or neutral observer, the Wesleyan was rarely treated as a serious political animal.

Between 1832 and 1857, Manchester Wesleyanism, excluding the Association and the Reform movement, contained three strands of political opinion exemplified in the lives of leading members. In the first place, James Wood, a keen apologist of the "Church and Tory" party and a man with considerable manufacturing interests, served as leader of the Wesleyan Tories in the education debate and the Protestant Association. Opponent of the ballot and of the abolition of Church Rates, Wood welcomed the Reform Bill of 1832, and in

¹ B. Love: *Records of Wesleyan Life* (1843), p. 317. Part of this novel (Chapter XXVI) is set against the background of the Manchester Parliamentary election of 1832.

theory he opposed the Corn Law system, although he steered clear of the Anti-Corn Law League. The firm religious foundations of his views were poignantly illustrated in 1837 when he contested the Ashton-under-Lyne Parliamentary election. Opposed by Charles Hindley, a Moravian who had recently presided over a Wesleyan Association meeting in London, and by Joseph Rayner Stephens, whose views on Disestablishment had been censured by Conference,² Wood clearly intended to use the election to defeat two opponents of Wesleyanism. However, neither his intentions nor his programme were sufficient to oust Hindley.

Secondly, George Chappell personified the chief characteristics of Whig businessmen within the Wesleyan society. A non-Wesleyan background explained his antipathy to the "Church and Tory" Wesleyans, but the main difference between Wood and Chappell lay in the latter's more radical approach to commercial reform. Although he disagreed with the political aspirations of either Cobden or Bright, Chappell supported the move towards the total and immediate repeal of the Corn Laws.

Finally, there existed a body of moderate or liberal Tories whose leading representative, Holland Hoole, a Salford cotton-spinner, disliked Wood's unreserved support for Anglicanism and objected to William Bunting's introduction of "Christian" politics into the pulpit. Hoole was a Free-Trader who accepted the League's arguments but failed to work in unison with the leading campaigners, as evidenced in his disagreement with the rest of the members belonging to the first League delegation to London.³

To a certain extent, the differences between the political views of Wood, Chappell and Hoole were more apparent than real. Common attitudes towards certain questions weakened the distinctions, particularly before 1832, when Catholic Emancipation and the slave question secured undivided attention. Although Wesleyan opposition to the former was quashed largely as a result of Jabez Bunting's intervention, the Manchester Wesleyans included themselves amongst the rightful leaders of the Anti-Slavery Society in the town. Meanwhile, the Reform Bill and the termination of the major slavery agitation diverted attention away from religious and moral problems relished by the Wesleyans to a more direct form of political involvement. With an enlarged electorate, the question of political ties became less academic in nature.

Within the decade marked by the controversy surrounding the formation of the Wesleyan Methodist Association, the Manchester Parliamentary elections of 1832 and 1839 acquired importance both in a political and in a religious sense. The first Parliamentary election set the pattern for a series of Whig triumphs, of which the 1839 contest was one. From the Wesleyan viewpoint, both elections were removed from the secession of 1835 by an almost equal space

² See *Proceedings*, xxxvi, pp. 16 ff.—EDITOR.

³ MS. Anti-Corn Law League Letter Book, vol. I, p. 110.

of time, and in this respect they throw some light on the causes and the effects of that controversy.

In the 1832 election, five candidates fought for the two seats, namely: Mark Philips—a Whig and a local cotton-merchant, Poulett Thomson—an outsider of well-known Free Trade views, Samuel Loyd—a local Whig banker, John Hope—the sole Tory candidate, and William Cobbett, whose radical views were contained in fourteen propositions. Since the Tories were outnumbered, and Cobbett's party was limited by voting qualifications, the result depended on the preferences of a lower middle class which included a large number of Wesleyans. Disturbed by Cobbett's views on the slave question, and unsympathetic to Hope's Toryism, most Wesleyans voted for the Whig candidates.⁴ Consequently, the voting behaviour of most Wesleyans corresponded with that of the electorate at large in that the Philips-Thomson alliance was the most popular in both cases, with the Loyd-Hope combination in second place, closely followed by the Loyd-Philips vote. Apart from the slave question, which adversely affected the chances of Loyd and Cobbett, the absence of any overriding issue encouraged the Wesleyan to make an uninhibited expression of his political views. A purely political approach prevailed over religious considerations, so that many Wesleyans were in tune with a mild liberalism. And yet, within the Wesleyan electorate, this alliance rested on the small tradesman class as opposed to the manufacturers, who favoured the more conservative views of Loyd. This distinction had important consequences, not only in 1835 but also in 1839, when the tradesman class proved more susceptible to the political influence of the Tories. However, for the time being, Manchester Wesleyans followed the strong political currents, and seemed prepared to play a natural rôle in the political life of the town until the intervention of other factors changed their mood.

Within seven years of an overwhelming vote for the Whig candidates, the Wesleyans—in many cases the same persons—gave similar support to the Tory candidate in the election of 1839. Several factors explain this disenchantment, not the least being the nationwide drift away from the Whigs during the 1830s, but local circumstances and features peculiar to Wesleyanism were just as influential as external conditions, if not more so. Hence, it is useful to examine the influence of the Tories alongside the impact of the Wesleyan Association in order to discover to what extent the two extremes influenced the electoral behaviour of the Manchester Wesleyans.

The Manchester bye-election of 1839, caused by Poulett Thomson's retirement, involved two main candidates, viz. R. H. Greg, a

⁴ An observation based upon an examination of the poll book. An analysis of the voting behaviour of the Manchester Wesleyans in this and other elections may be found in the writer's unpublished Ph.D. thesis, *Methodist Secessions and Social Conflict in South Lancashire, 1830-1857* (Manchester University, 1966).

Whig manufacturer, and G. Murray, a Tory of military fame. (The third candidate, Thomas Thompson, secured only 93 votes.) Apart from Greg's adherence to the Anti-Corn Law League, the Wesleyan voters confronted two candidates whose views were similar to those of the representatives of their respective parties in the 1832 election. However, the Wesleyan Tories—Wood, Westhead and Thomas Bunting to the fore—used Greg's Unitarianism as a means to blacken his character. Although relations between the Wesleyans and the Unitarians had been strained by the Lady Hewley's case, this factor alone probably had little effect, since many Wesleyans had voted for another Unitarian (Mark Philips) in previous elections. In effect, the strength of the Tory appeal lay elsewhere, particularly in the Education proposals of 1839.

The Education issue, linked to a virulent anti-Roman Catholic campaign embodied in the Protestant Association, gave the Wesleyan Tories more solid foundations in religious prejudice. While the Wesleyan Conference unhesitatingly rejected a scheme which allowed "the propagation of the corrupt and tyrannical system of Popery",⁵ the local Wesleyan societies dutifully returned impressive petitions to London. Even so, the Manchester petition, signed three months before the bye-election, specifically disclaimed any political motive in such a protest. Certainly, the Tories exploited the issue for political ends, and claimed a monopoly of Protestant truth and patriotic spirit in the face of Whig treachery, thereby affecting the electoral behaviour of several Wesleyans. Although the Education and anti-Roman Catholic agitations were inseparable, the Education issue *per se* was not sufficient to produce a marked change in political opinion. For example, George Chappell, the chief financial backer of Wesleyan day-schools in Manchester, was neither perturbed by the voluntarist arguments of the Tories nor convinced that Greg intended to overthrow the Protestant constitution any more than Murray. Nevertheless, Chappell failed to stem a Tory attack which combined political skill and religious fervour.

Besides these issues, the Tories used the newly-formed Anti-Corn Law League in order to discourage support for Greg. In a barrage of criticism the League appeared as the symbol of either Whig capitalism or radical politics, and in both cases the Wesleyan Tories questioned the desirability of such an organization. However, the Tories gained little from this procedure, since the League was, as yet, firmly committed to the abolition of the Corn Laws alone. Moreover, the Wesleyan Conference had still to take up a position of official aloofness.

On the whole, the evidence suggests that Wesleyan opinion did respond to the pre-election issues expounded by the Tories, but there is insufficient proof to lead one to suppose that Orange politics fully explains the dramatic change in political loyalties. In this respect, highly efficient canvassing methods affected the result as much as

⁵ *Minutes of Conference*, viii, p. 154.

the actual issues. Insidious pressure, unseen influence and corruption were common features in most contests, and the Manchester election of 1839 contained all three ingredients in an extreme form. Few incidents high-lighted this aspect of the election more than the scandal over certain forged letters designed to ensure the absence of a number of voters from the poll. The *Manchester Guardian* ascribed these letters to a leading Wesleyan Tory, Thomas Bunting, who subsequently satisfied the newspaper of his innocence, but who evidently knew of the existence of the letters prior to the election. In any case, forged letters scarcely matched the subtle techniques of the Wesleyan Tories. A printed circular to all Wesleyans criticized Greg and eulogized Murray, whilst more effective electioneering techniques caused one Wesleyan to comment :

To this has been added personal visitations by influential members of the body (*Wesleyan Society*) . . . to parties with whom they do business. This is the most unpleasant part of this kind of interference, and is evidently intended to put the poor elector into the very annoying position of violating his conscientious opinions, or of displeasing a customer.⁶

Ignoring the few Whig manufacturers in the society, the Tories aimed to win the votes of tradesmen and skilled artisans. Accordingly, the shopkeeper, by the nature of his clientèle, and the dyer or bleacher, through business connexions with Wesleyan factory-owners, were vulnerable to the threats and intimidation of their social superiors. In most cases they easily succumbed to the artful practices of the Tories, for they were, by party label, adherents of a political liberalism which had fallen into disrepute after the secession of 1835. At this point the political inclinations of the Wesleyan Associationists help to explain both religious controversy and voting behaviour.

By electoral standards, the Association constituted a body of insignificant religious opinion which could be disregarded by Parliamentary candidates and political commentators alike. Nevertheless, the important characteristic of the Associationists was their political homogeneity prior to secession. Whereas the Philips-Thomson voting alliance was only the most popular amongst the Wesleyans in 1832, it proved even more appealing to the future Associationists, who gave no consideration to the other candidates except Cobbett. However, widespread support for one party did not imply whole-hearted acceptance of either the views of the popular candidates or the orthodoxy of the Wesleyan Whig. As the owners of cottages and the tenants of shops, the Associationists belonged to a poorly-organized class which hankered for the introduction of the ballot and an extension of the franchise. In general, an ill-defined programme and a partially-developed political instinct induced the Associationists to fall back on Philips and Thomson as the "friends of religious and civil freedom". They failed to attach any precise meaning to the extent of this freedom, for it required a Church Rate contest, a

⁶ *Manchester Guardian*, 4th September 1839.

religious controversy, an incorporation agitation, and a many-sided Anti-Corn Law League to clarify the issues. Hence, on John Bright's nomination in 1847, the Associationists eventually discovered a Parliamentary candidate whose views were more acceptable than those of Philips, Thomson and Greg.

Within Wesleyanism, political views found expression in the events of 1834-5 through a crude dichotomy between polished conservatism and immature liberalism. Frequently the Associationists asserted that party politics had been used by their opponents to create ill-feeling against an organization which was primarily interested in the restoration of ecclesiastical rights. To a certain extent, the complaint was justified on the grounds that the Associationists did not brandish a simple political formula designed to change the whole structure of Wesleyan government. During the early months of the agitation, the constant references to the rights and freedom of Englishmen had an historical tang distinct from a post-1832 setting. However, as the agitation moved to a climax, the Associationists applied the form of a nascent liberalism to the patterns of ecclesiastical government. In effect, lay delegation broke the back of an argument which had hitherto relied on a return to the virtues of a bygone age. The Associationists adopted this position of their own accord, but they had also been pushed to the extreme by men whose political sentiments and belligerent manner dispelled all hope of a sympathetic hearing. At this juncture the Associationists, who had always known their political enemies though unsure of their friends, reacted to the criticism of bristling Tories.

To the Wesleyan Tories, the Association conjured up alarming visions of a secular republic, replete with violent demagogues, pot-house orators and misguided followers.⁷ The Tories directed the campaign against the Association through the organization of James Wood, the writings of William Read, the zeal of Thomas Bunting, and the financial support of men like George Lomas, Joshua Rea and William Burd. In a show of force and the battle for the control of the society, these men emerged as the defenders of Conference and the chief critics of the schismatic body. In strenuous efforts to uphold certain principles without compromise, they accentuated the divisions so that the Associationists became more conscious of their own political ideas.

Political dissatisfaction was mainly confined to the agitation and

⁷ One of the more polite pieces of Tory scurrility appeared in a lengthy poem concerning Samuel Warren and the Manchester Association, from which the following verse is taken :

And various measures are projected
By rabble leaders thus collected,
A constitution *free* is fram'd,
Hesketh, their secretary nam'd,
And Warren *President* proclaim'd.
Poor Dr. Warren !

—MS. "An Anticipatory Epitaph on Dr. Warren".

almost wholly dependent upon the presence of a minority of militant Tories. Some Associationists, suitably imbued with the spirit of a post-1832 age, did believe that admission to a conclave of ministers logically followed the acquisition of political power through the franchise. However, there was another side to the coin which portrayed the effects of political inhibitions. As a safety-valve, politics offered an antidote to religious controversy in the sense that the hostile feeling which flared up in 1834 could have burnt itself out in a political form. This interpretation is open to criticism from the familiar argument that political ideas necessarily affect the structure of ecclesiastical government. Frustration as opposed to bitter political hatred characterized the mood of men who opposed a Conference which had always advised its members to avoid the excitement of secular politics. As a minority movement ignored by political and social superiors, the Association satisfied the bystander's appetite for political excitement. In short, some Manchester Associationists indulged in semi-political outpourings in order to compensate for inconsequential proceedings in other spheres of life. The adoption of an impressive though somewhat non-religious title—the Grand Central Association⁸—and the way in which delegates often referred to their “constituents” served to enhance the dignity of men who were inclined to play at politics because social status and religious upbringing tended to prevent the absorption of these energies in other quarters. Hence, Wesleyanism lost the Manchester Associationists not only because Conference and certain laymen were alleged to have deviated from a course of political neutrality, but also because a Wesleyan upbringing thwarted the often unspoken views of a particular social class.

After 1835 the Associationists settled into the mould of artisan-class reformists. They formed part of the loyal rank-and-file which responded to Cobden's call for incorporation and the repeal of the Corn Laws. Unlike the Wesleyan Whigs, who received their political education from the *Manchester Guardian*, and the Tories, whose confidence was bolstered up by the *Manchester Courier*, the Associationists responded to the journalism of Archibald Prentice in the *Manchester Times*, identifying themselves with this middle-class radical on issues like the ballot and an extension of the franchise based upon an education test.

The Parliamentary election of 1839 revealed the differences between two religious bodies. By solidly supporting Greg's programme, the Associationists' votes gave meaning to a political conviction which cut across denominational interests and hostilities. The type of electoral behaviour which was determined by one issue rather than by a general programme puzzled the Associationists, and they could not understand the hope, expressed by one leading

⁸ Adopted at a meeting of Manchester and Liverpool delegates held in Manchester (November 1834), this title was soon changed to “Wesleyan Association”, but was altered again in 1839, when the body became known as the “Wesleyan Methodist Association”.

Wesleyan, "that no Wesleyan elector, whenever another opportunity came, would set free trade before protestantism".⁹ In their opinion this distinction engendered artificial priorities and gave undue precedence to religious politics in the face of a much-needed economic reform. But the really important feature of the 1839 election lay in the voting behaviour of the Wesleyans. In this connexion, substantial support for Murray embodied a political reaction to the secession of 1835. The saviours of Wesleyanism now reaped rewards as the defenders of Protestantism.

Besides the other influences already mentioned, two factors aided the cause of the Wesleyan Tories in 1839. In the first place, they used the secession as convincing proof of the irregularities attached to any views which smacked of political liberalism. Furthermore, the losses of 1835 made the loyal Wesleyans more gregarious and anxious to follow the voice of authority. For the first time the local press referred to the society in terms of a political body which had become aware of its corporate strength. The Tories had been unable to create this feeling in 1832, but they benefited by the different circumstances of a post-secession age. Secondly, there was little substantial resistance to the emotive appeals of the Tories, since the Association accounted for the more zealous reformers. However, the select band of Tories had won a temporary victory which was soon followed by discontent and eventually by defection.

The result of the 1839 election suggested that Manchester Wesleyanism was now irrevocably tied to one political party. With the Protestant Association still engaged in vigorous controversy, and ministers like William Bunting and James Dixon in command of the pulpits, the Tories had good cause for optimism. But they mistakenly believed that a massive vote of confidence, secured in singularly favourable circumstances, offered a solid basis for future supremacy. Instead, an efficient organization lost the support of the rank-and-file and then the adherence of its leaders. When Thomas Bunting voted for John Bright in the 1847 election, he demonstrated the extent to which political revisionism superseded, albeit temporarily, the intransigent mood of earlier years.

To a certain extent the Tories had only themselves to blame for the subsequent loss of sympathy, because they overplayed their hand after the triumph of 1839. Tory efforts to exploit the Education issue in the 1841 election raised fierce objections, for opinion had hardened against the supposedly religious motives of the Tories; and few men, though unwittingly, were more responsible for this change than William Bunting and James Dixon. Alongside Anglican Evangelicals and Wesleyan laymen, Bunting and Dixon stood foursquare on the Protestant Association platform. Moreover, "No Popery!" enthusiasm matched a spirit of aggressive Toryism which overflowed into the pulpit. Bunting's Manchester ministry (1838-41) was

⁹ *Manchester Guardian*, 16th April 1845.

marked by controversy, and he defended the contents of one of his sermons in the following manner:

. . . the Christian pulpit is the very fountain from which the scripture stream of political, and of all, theoretic morality most rightfully and purely issues,—I shall treat the cry of "No pulpit politics", on the part of those who would wholly secularize politics, education, and every element of society, exactly as I should treat the cry of "No fountain water". . .¹⁰

If anyone still believed in the "No Politics rule", except in the peculiarly Tory sense which allowed Bunting to view politics in purely theological terms, then this passage offered convincing proof that the "rule" had been set at naught. The frail nature of neutral pretensions had already been buffeted by Bunting's presence at a dinner in honour of Murray, and his later actions added insult to injury. However, Bunting rode the protests in close alliance with one of his colleagues, James Dixon, who, as an unrepentant Tory, delivered several addresses against Whigs, Chartists and Owenites during his Manchester ministry (1840-3). Designed to further the Tory cause, the vocal support of these men had the opposite effect, for some Wesleyans left their services in disgust, and even Holland Hoole, himself a moderate Tory, warned Bunting of the dangerous practice of making political allusions from the pulpit.¹¹ Consequently, by 1841 the Tory ranks had become thinner, so that one Wesleyan—and nobody felt inclined to disagree with the comment—was able to make the following pre-election observation:

As to the real politics of the Wesleyan Society . . . they are liberal; opposed to the monopolising, selfish spirit of toryism . . .¹²

Whilst popular support began to crumble, certain Wesleyan Tories were soon discouraged by Peel's Government. Criticism of the Factory Bill (1843) was subdued, but the Maynooth Bill aroused strong opposition, and gave some credibility to the view that anti-Roman Catholic feeling was not solely used for political purposes. The post-1846 political situation also undermined Wesleyan Toryism in so far as party labels became less meaningful. The blurring of distinctions and the generally confused state of party politics enabled a young Manchester Wesleyan like Thomas Champness to hold strong radical views and a more influential Wesleyan like Joshua Westhead, hitherto a Tory stalwart, to break free from reliance on a party label, eventually becoming Liberal Member of Parliament for York (1857). Finally, the death of James Wood (1849) removed the linchpin of the traditional brand of Wesleyan Toryism, although he left several disciples who revived the war-cries of an earlier age.

Just at the point when Manchester Wesleyanism seemed politically less monochrome, three issues favoured a renewed form of Toryism. First, the Roman Catholic question gave solidarity to the Tory ranks. In 1848 James Wood directed the opposition to Lansdowne's bill designed to establish diplomatic relations between England and Rome, and in 1850-1 Wood's son, Peter, led a similar platform

¹⁰ *Manchester Guardian*, 15th February 1840: letter from W. M. Bunting.

¹¹ *Manchester Guardian*, 22nd February 1840. ¹² *ibid.*, 28th June 1841.

against the restoration of a Roman Catholic hierarchy in England. Opposition to "papal aggression" had political advantages, for the Tories were able to use familiar appeals even though the Whigs were no less fervent in their protests. Secondly, the course of events in the sphere of education induced the Tories to present a more united front. For the most part, they had been dumbfounded by the decision of the Wesleyan Education Committee to abandon pure voluntarism, and dismay turned to anger when, despite assurances to the contrary, the Roman Catholics joined the Wesleyans on similar terms. Meanwhile, the formation of the Lancashire Public School Association¹³ provided the Tories with an opportunity to rally their forces against an organization which was unacceptable to a majority of Wesleyans. Furthermore, since John Bright, a Member of Parliament for Manchester, was actively engaged in the Association, the Tories were able to use the issue for electioneering purposes.

Neither Education nor "papal aggression" affected the Tory reaction as much as the internal condition of the Wesleyan society. Engrossed in a Reform controversy permeated with political antagonism, the loyal Wesleyans proved more susceptible to Tory influence. In contrast, most Wesleyan Reformers classified themselves as liberals who opposed arbitrary government and upheld democratic ideals. In many ways the Manchester Reformers were products of their own age in that they sympathized with the struggles of the continental liberals and, in their own situation, looked forward to 1868 and beyond. They derived confidence from a belief in the inevitability of progress which assured them that Wesleyanism could not remain immutable in a changing political climate. Thus, William Martin, a prominent figure on both local and connexional platforms, aptly described the driving force behind the Reform movement when he declared:

Christianity does not merely conform to existing political conditions, it does more. It contributes to the due development of all the political elements existing in society, and consequently to that of democracy among the rest. . . . Despotism of every kind in Europe is tottering to its fall. The reign of priestcraft is drawing to a close.¹⁴

Martin's interpretation of events frightened most Wesleyans into a conservative position, and the attitude of certain ministers antagonized the Reformers still further, particularly when George Osborn (superintendent of the Oxford Road circuit, 1848-51), resorting to a familiar argument in a period of crisis, maintained that Wesleyanism had nothing to do with vote by ballot and universal suffrage. Osborn's emphasis on spirituality might have been heeded if some of his colleagues and himself had not been involved in dubious methods to ensure Wesleyan opposition to the Lancashire Public School Association. Furthermore, the Manchester Parliamentary election of 1852 confirmed the Reformers' worst fears about the influence of

¹³ Mainly formed (1847) by leaders of the Anti-Corn Law League resident in Manchester, this organization advocated an unsectarian and comprehensive education based upon local rates and independent of the Government.

¹⁴ *Wesleyan Times*, 18th March 1850.

Wesleyan Toryism. Strong pressure had been used in various quarters, especially in the case of the Rev. G. C. Taylor (superintendent of the Oldham Street circuit), who, intending to remain neutral, had voted for the Tory candidate after receiving a cryptic message from Thomas Bunting.¹⁵

After the 1852 election, John Bright lost what little support he had possessed among the Wesleyans. He cast aspersions on the integrity of certain laymen, and his comments on Thomas Bunting, in particular, hardly endeared him to Wesleyan voters, who respected Bunting's confidence and authority in the face of the Reform agitation. Consequently, on the defeat of the Manchester school in Manchester itself, the Wesleyans voted for the popular candidates. Bright's downfall in 1857 was a resounding victory for those Wesleyan Tories who had always opposed the League party. With considerably more consistency than the cotton-masters who turned against Bright after 1846, some Wesleyans were able to oust the League leader on the original basis of opposition to his political intentions.

Throughout the period 1832 to 1857 the political behaviour of Manchester Wesleyans was generally governed, as the Tories wished, by the varied forms of religious politics. In 1832 it had seemed likely that the layman intended to approach political issues as an independent elector rather than as a person conscious of his Wesleyan status. However, the rise of the Wesleyan Methodist Association and the intervention of the Education issue prevented this kind of development. The often loose political chatter of the seceders, combined with rebellious proceedings, offered few alternatives to the loyal Wesleyan but to acquiesce in Toryism. Meanwhile, the ill-defined "No Politics rule" lost its meaning through repeated transgressions, although the chief offenders pleaded innocence. The Tories welcomed a rule which was only a short step from practical support of reaction. In more positive terms, they regarded the rule as a natural expression of their own political opinions. Hence, there was no room for party politics in pulpit or vestry because the Tories believed that Wesleyanism, by definition, belonged to their own side of the political fence. Once the Associationists and Reformers challenged this assumption, the Tories abandoned their "non-political" posture in order to dismiss the rebels and to protect the waverers.

By 1850, the ecclesiastical politics of an evangelical body had been invaded by the harsh realities of political division. The fragile "No Politics rule" had been shattered by men who believed that religion and politics were inseparable. In this respect, the main distinction between William Bunting and William Griffith lay in their positions at opposite ends of the political spectrum. In Manchester the Wesleyan Tories had managed to overwhelm dissentient opinion, but they had dropped their most useful disguise in the process.

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¹⁵ *Manchester Examiner and Times*, 7th July 1852.

JEREMY TAYLOR'S PLACE IN JOHN WESLEY'S LIFE

THE place of Jeremy Taylor in the life of John Wesley has been obscured by a curious mistake (as I regard it) which has persisted for more than half a century. According to Wesley's own words, there were three writers whose books had a great influence upon him in his early manhood. His letter to John Newton, 14th May 1765 (*Letters*, iv, pp. 297 ff.) makes this plain :

In 1725 I met with Bishop Taylor's *Rules of Holy Living and Dying*. I was struck particularly with the chapter upon Intention, and felt a fixed intention to *give myself up to God*. In this I was much confirmed soon after by the *Christian Pattern*, and longed to *give God all my heart*.

Then follows reference to William Law's *Christian Perfection and Serious Call*.

In his *Plain Account of Christian Perfection* he begins with Jeremy Taylor; later, he says, he "met with Kempis's *Christian's Pattern*"; and "a year or two after William Law's *Christian Perfection and Serious Call* were put into my hands".

In the *Journal* he has a long note for 24th May 1738, in which he rather strangely omits any reference to Taylor; he mentions à Kempis and Law. This is an omission, not a variation in order. There is no possible doubt that Wesley read Taylor's book, and if we are to include it we must place it where Wesley places it. There is no inconsistency or difficulty in his accounts. The record is perfectly clear: Taylor first, then à Kempis, then William Law.

In the light of this, it is very strange that in the first volume of *A New History of Methodism* (Townsend, Workman and Eayrs, 1909) Thomas E. Bridgen in his essay on John Wesley places à Kempis first, then Jeremy Taylor and William Law. He quotes the words of Wesley concerning à Kempis (from the *Journal*), and then he continues: "Taylor deepened the convictions awakened by à Kempis" (p. 181). This, I submit, is quite incorrect, and is in contradiction to Wesley's own account as given above.

The same year, 1909, saw the publication of Nehemiah Curnock's great edition of the *Journal*. He too gives the order: à Kempis, Jeremy Taylor, William Law (i, p. 15). Whether this error occurred earlier than 1909 I do not know; but since that time it has been repeated endlessly. John S. Simon in the first of his five volumes on Wesley's life (*John Wesley and the Religious Societies*, 1921, pp. 79-84) gives the same order as Bridgen and Curnock. When three of the standard authorities on the subject agree, it is not surprising that other writers follow suit. In the recently-published first volume of *The History of the Methodist Church* (Rupert Davies and Gordon Rupp) (p. 43) the same order is retained.

It may be asked: Does this really matter? In reply it should be said not only that we ought to be accurate, but that this unfortunate

error has had the effect of concealing the vital influence that Jeremy Taylor exerted in Wesley's life. We have just been celebrating (1967) the tercentenary of the bishop's death, and this is an appropriate time to call attention to this matter and to make some attempt to set the record straight.

Two matters of less importance may be mentioned:

(1) Curnock says (*Journal*, i, p. 16) that Varanese probably suggested the reading of Jeremy Taylor to Wesley, as well as the reading of à Kempis. This seems to be impossible on the evidence of the *Diary*. It was on 5th April 1725 that he began to keep a strict daily account of his doings; it is with that day that his diary begins. This was before he went to the Kirkhams' home; this event and his first meeting with Varanese are recorded half-way down the first page of the diary. He "first saw Varanese" on 14th April 1725 (see *Journal*, i, pp. 14-15, 37).

Now the diary proper is preceded by "Rules", which are demonstrably based upon Taylor's rules. As Curnock says (p. 47), the Rules "immediately precede the first page of the Diary". Moreover, Wesley himself says in the preface to the published *Journal* that his habit of keeping a diary was in pursuance of an advice given by Bishop Taylor. It is interesting to note that in the middle of the Rules, which were perhaps not all drawn up on the same day, the date "Fri. Mar. 26" occurs (*Journal*, i, pp. 48-9). This was clearly the same year as "Mon. Apl. 5" when the diary proper begins, i.e. 1725.

It seems therefore that the sequence of events was as follows: first came the reading of Taylor; then as a result he started to keep a diary (5th April); a little later he "first saw Varanese" (14th April). There is no difficulty about this, and it agrees with all the facts recorded.

(2) If one examines the shorthand and cipher shown in the facsimile of the Rules (*Journal*, i, p. 49), it would seem that the rendering of the first of the "General Rules as to Intention" should be "In every action reflect on the end", not, as Curnock has rendered, "reflect on your end". The symbol preceding the word "end" is clearly used for "the" in the later statement a few lines lower down, "the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost". A different symbol is used for "your".

The words are taken from Taylor; the first of his "Rules for our Intentions" is:

In every action reflect upon the end; and in your undertaking it, consider why you do it, and what you propound to yourself for a reward, and to your action as its end.

This is apparently taken from Ecclesiasticus vii. 36: "Whatsoever thou takest in hand, remember the end, and thou shalt never do amiss" (A.V.).

However, the main point of this note is to draw attention to the fact that the faulty order in which the three spiritual masters have been repeatedly given has obscured the important influence of Jeremy

Taylor and the far-reaching results of his great book. The following four matters are each of immeasurable importance.

(1) It was Taylor's book which marked a turning-point in Wesley's life when he was 22 years old. According to his own account given in the preface to *Christian Perfection* :

In the year 1725, being in the twenty-third year of my age, I met with Bishop Taylor's "Rule and Exercises of Holy Living and Dying". In reading several parts of this book, I was exceedingly affected; that part in particular which relates to purity of intention. Instantly I resolved to dedicate all my life to God, all my thoughts, and words, and actions; being thoroughly convinced, there was no medium; but that every part of my life (not some only) must either be a sacrifice to God, or myself, that is, in effect, to the devil.

(2) The rules which Wesley drew up for the ordering of his life were taken from Taylor. The general rules of employing time, and the general rules as to intention, are quite clearly Taylor's rules reduced in number and much compressed.¹ Even in the *Twelve Rules of a Helper*, the first, with its emphasis upon diligence, goes back to Taylor's directive: "Let every man that hath a calling be diligent in pursuance of its employment".

(3) Scriptural holiness was said by Wesley to be the great *depositorium* of the Methodist movement; it was for the spreading of this throughout the land that Methodism had been raised up. The quest for perfection runs right through Wesley's life. When asked by John Newton to elucidate the subject, his answer begins with Jeremy Taylor:

But how came this opinion into my mind? I will tell you with all simplicity. In 1725 I met with Bishop Taylor's *Rules of Holy Living and Dying*. . . .

Then follow the words quoted in the opening part of this article.

(4) It may be claimed with justice that we owe Wesley's *Journal* to Taylor. The latter had written that for every hour of our lives we must give account to God. Wesley accordingly began to record the activities of every part of each day in his diary; and it was upon the *Diary* that the *Journal* was based, the brief notes being transcribed and amplified into a more connected and readable narrative. When he published the first volume in 1740 his Preface began:

1. It was in Pursuance of an Advice given by Bp. Taylor, in his *Rules for Holy Living and Dying*, that about fifteen Years ago, I began to take a more exact Account than I had done before, of the manner wherein I spent my Time, writing down how I had employed every Hour.

When one considers these four ways in which Taylor holds a key place, one is compelled to recognize that there was no more important and influential figure connected with Methodist origins.

T. FRANCIS GLASSON.

[The Rev. T. F. Glasson, M.A., D.D. is lecturer in New Testament Studies at New College, London.]

¹ Some of the parallels may be conveniently studied in the Rev. H. Trevor Hughes's article in the *London Quarterly and Holborn Review*, October 1949 — "Jeremy Taylor and John Wesley".

A PROTESTANT STUDY OF THE MASS

TO a Methodist the phrase *I offered Christ*—the title of Dr. Franz Hildebrandt's latest book (Epworth Press, pp. 342, 63s.)—usually means "I preached". But others might take it to mean "I offered the sacrifice of the Mass". Dr. Hildebrandt, as is shown by the sub-title "A Protestant Study of the Mass", investigates this question. It is well known to Methodist scholars that the Wesleys' *Hymns on the Lord's Supper*, following Brevint, contain several expressions which suggest our offering Christ in the Eucharist, which is perhaps why they are rarely sung. In 1948 Dr. J. E. Rattenbury's re-publication of them in his book *The Eucharistic Hymns of John and Charles Wesley* drew attention to the theological issue. Clearly the hymns go beyond what is commonly supposed to be the Protestant view—that the Eucharist is a memorial and not a sacrifice. Yet a careful study of Brevint and of Wesley (e.g. the heading "The Holy Eucharist as it *implies* a Sacrifice"—my italics) shows that the Wesleys' view was by no means identical with the Roman.

Since then there has been in ecumenical circles a considerable rapprochement between "catholic" and Protestant views, as for instance in the Lutheran Bishop Aulén's *Eucharist and Sacrifice*. Several voices have, however, been raised against it. The conservative Anglicans do not like it: Mr. R. T. Beckwith, for example, in *Priesthood and Sacraments*, drew a very sharp distinction between "catholic" and Protestant views, but thought that the Wesleys, when properly understood in their historical setting, fell clearly on the Protestant side of the "great divide". Dr. Hildebrandt ignores him, but makes constant reference to the conservative Roman, Fr. Francis Clark, S.J., who in his *Eucharistic Sacrifice and the Reformation*, whilst virtually ignoring the Wesleys, exposed the errors in many Anglican attempts at rapprochement, and held that the basic tension is entirely unresolved.

Now comes the conservative Methodist, Dr. Hildebrandt. He is in a difficult position. True to his Lutheran origins (did he not publish a German work on the subject called *EST?*), he holds a "high" view of the eucharistic presence, but is implacably opposed to the idea of eucharistic sacrifice. But as a Methodist with a great admiration for the Wesley hymns, must he admit that here his models have gone astray? Yet, as he says, the primary question about Rome is not whether Epworth and Rome can agree, but whether the Roman doctrine is true. And about this question he has no doubt whatever. When it is brought to the bar of scripture, especially of the Epistle to the Hebrews, it is seen to be utterly false. On the secondary question he is not so clear: he often quotes the Wesleys with his customary affectionate approval, but sometimes quietly allows that the hymns need to be "sorted out".

My personal view is that he is right in asking for more thought to be given to this subject before the rapprochement is proclaimed too confidently. There does seem to be a world of difference between participating in the benefits of a sacrifice and participating in the sacrifice itself. Much "catholic" scholarship still seems unconvincing in its handling of the biblical evidence, and I hope that the biblical part of this book will be taken very seriously, and that it may provoke some serious replies.

This being so, it is unfortunate that the argument in Dr. Hildebrandt's mind, before ever he gets to the exegetical section of his work, is really this: If the two doctrines were seen to be the same, then we should be free

to attend each other's worship : this is absurd : therefore the two doctrines cannot be the same. " In our separate sanctuaries we worship, as Christians, in two completely different ways ; the one form of ' offering ' absolutely excludes the other " (p. 93). But why ? I fail to see why we cannot occasionally attend celebrations of the Lord's Supper (as we call it) by those whose doctrine of it is admittedly different from our own.

Moreover, the account of Roman worship is out of date : " We wait for the words of institution, and they are inaudible and in a foreign tongue " (loc. cit.). At just about the time when the book was published, this ceased to be true, as might have been foreseen. Dr. Hildebrandt knows of the tendencies to renewal in the Roman Church (he was an observer at the Vatican Council), but he is not impressed, and the account of the liturgical renewal on page 30 is extremely inadequate. He knows of the ecumenical movement, but he hardly shares its spirit. He is so anxious to deny the existence of any real rapprochement that he seems to have lost all desire for it : in denouncing the false, he does not pause to inquire whether there may not be in it some element of truth.

Beside this the secondary issue may seem insignificant, but not entirely so. For if the Wesleys, like many others, seem to have one foot on either side of the " great divide ", does this not call into question the existence of the chasm ? To prove that two positions widely diverge is not the same as to prove that these cannot be reconciled. I would rather substitute the metaphor of a spectrum with a great variety of hues, or a scale which has not only extremes but a middle point ; and, whilst not uncritical of the Wesleys, I should welcome their guidance in seeking a genuine middle way. The whole question turns on the relation of a present commemoration to a past " once for all " event, and incidentally the common " catholic " habit of riding off on the phrase " eternal sacrifice ", though helpful up to a point, is very questionable. But the frequent use of " as " (" as now ", " as slain ", " as newly slain ", " as though ") by which the Wesleys handle this problem is surely due to the influence of Revelation v. 6—a point which our author fails to note on page 125. And thus the " fatal word " which he there criticizes has a scriptural origin.

On the other hand, his defence of some of the hymns on the ground that they either originally had or in current hymn-books have no connexion with the Eucharist would not prevent their being used at the Eucharist, regarded as the centre of Christian worship and the Christian life, nor does it really protect them from the kind of objection which his view requires.

The book is not easy to read, because of the number of references ; a briefer work might have been more effective. But this is due to Dr. Hildebrandt's extensive knowledge and profound scholarship. We must respect his integrity in using these in support of an unpopular cause in which he passionately believes. To this important subject, whatever we may think of his conclusions (or rather perhaps his presuppositions), he has made a major contribution.

A. RAYMOND GEORGE.

The Methodist Conference 1968 will meet in London, and the Wesley Historical Society's Annual Lecture will be delivered in Wesley's Chapel, City Road, E.C.1, on Thursday, 20th June, at 7-30 p.m., by the Rev. A. Kingsley Lloyd, whose subject will be " The Labourer's Hire : the payment and deployment of the early Methodist Preachers, 1744-1813 ". The chair will be taken by Mr. John E. Pater, C.B., M.A.

JOHN WESLEY'S FIRST MARRIAGE

ANYONE who is disposed to believe that the last word has been written about John Wesley must surely have reckoned without Frank Baker, whose latest contribution to our knowledge is (we do not hesitate to say) one of the most significant that has appeared for many years. It is contained in an article, title as above, in *The London Quarterly and Holborn Review* for October 1967.

"Wesley's first marriage" refers, of course, to his relationship with Grace Murray considered as "a legal contract rather than as a personal relationship"¹ and as seen against "the forgotten marriage laws of Wesley's England" which were so different from those with which we are familiar today.

Dr. Baker begins with an examination of the marriage laws of England as expounded in Bishop Edmund Gibson's *Codex Juris Ecclesiastici Anglicani* (1751), Henry Swinburne's *A Treatise of Spousals* (1686) and Richard Burn's *Ecclesiastical Law* (1763). These works point out the difference between a private promise of marriage, "spousal *de futuro*", and the private marriage itself, "spousal *de præsenti*". The former was "a mutual promise or covenant of marriage to be had afterwards"; the latter "a mutual promise or contract of present matrimony".

The important point to notice is that it was into a "spousal *de præsenti*" that John Wesley entered with Grace Murray in 1749, and in so far as this was (until 1754) "a legal marriage with or without written agreement, with or without a religious ceremony, with or without consummation", John and Grace became legally man and wife, "technically subject to all other matrimonial procedures and duties under pain of death".

Now to the Wesley student this is news of the first order, so Dr. Baker's next step is to examine the Wesley-Murray narrative as reproduced in Augustin Leger's *John Wesley's Last Love*. It is a tangled skein, but emerging with no uncertainty is the fact that Wesley did go through a *de præsenti* form of marriage with Grace Murray. In fact, he did it twice—the first time in July 1749 in Dublin without witnesses, and again on 21st September of the same year in the presence of Christopher Hopper. So, concludes Baker, "they were legally married; in fact twice legally married even though as yet there had been no Church ceremony and no consummation".

However, we all know what happened—eventually Grace married John Bennet at a Church ceremony. So questions arise in our minds. Does not this mean that first Grace, and later John Wesley himself when he married Mrs. Vazeille, was guilty of bigamy? Further, if Wesley really wanted Grace, and knew that in view of his *de præsenti* contract with her her marriage with Bennet was bigamous, why did he not sue them for bigamy? Dr. Baker answers these questions by further reference to the marriage laws of the day and also by unearthing an obscure incident buried in Wesley's Oxford diary. During his student days Wesley had been involved (merely as an intermediary) in a lawsuit over a marriage to which his own with Grace Murray was to be an exact parallel. In 1749 it remained in his memory to remind him "to what extended heartache and frustration" as well as expense "such matrimonial litigation might lead". One must refer to the article itself for details of this Oxford

¹ All quotations, unless otherwise stated, are from the article in the *London Quarterly and Holborn Review*.

incident, but it served as a deterrent (says Baker) from bringing the Bennets to a court of law.

The fact is, "Wesley knew without any shadow of doubt (as possibly Grace did not) that in the eyes of the law they had been married ever since their first marriage *de præsenti* in July". Furthermore, "there would have been little difficulty in overthrowing Grace's union with Bennet as bigamous". Why, then, did Wesley acquiesce? The answer lies in his own reputation, the good name of Methodism, and (as we have just remarked) the remembrance of the case of his Oxford friend.

To the further question, "Then did not Wesley himself commit bigamy when he married Mrs. Vazeille, his former 'wife' still living?", the reply is that "Swinburne's *Spousals* allowed for the dissolution even of a contract *de præsenti* by the mutual agreement of the parties before consummation". Grace's marriage to Bennet and John's acquiescence therein was tantamount to "mutual agreement", so John was free until "yet another convalescence gave him leisure to study yet another widow who used the gentle hand in nursing him and to whom he proposed marriage". If Dr. Baker (or anyone else, for that matter) could pierce the veil of secrecy under which the latter marriage took place, he would render us all a distinguished service and satisfy a tremendous amount of curiosity!

Copies of *The London Quarterly and Holborn Review* for October 1967 can be obtained, price 5s. plus postage, from The Epworth Press, 25-35, City Road, London, E.C.1. We strongly recommend all Wesley students to "purchase and read" for themselves. JOHN C. BOWMER.

ORDINATIONS IN METHODISM, 1791-1836

MY previous article on post-Wesley ordinations brought welcome comments from several of our members (to whom I tender sincere thanks). As a result, I append the following notes on the list given in *Proceedings*, xxxvi, pp. 37-40, together with some additional comments.

FRANCIS THURSBY—date, 6th October 1793; place, Liverpool; destination, Jamaica; copy of certificate at the Mission House.

THOMAS DOBSON—date and place presumably the same as for Thursby.

EDWARD THOMPSON—date, sometime in September 1802; place, Hull; by Dr. Coke; see letter from Coke to John Brownell, 27th Sept. 1802.

ADAM CLARKE—In spite of Pawson's letter to Atmore, Adam Clarke himself says: "I have no ordination . . .", and on the grounds of this he refused to be called "Reverend" (*Proceedings*, xxxiii, p. 134).

NEWCASTLE ORDINATIONS, 1792—Stamp, in his *Orphan House*, p. 169, says that these took place "at the close of the District Meeting held in the Orphan House". Stevens's *History* (one-volume edition, p. 417) says 8th May, and Kilham's ordination certificate is dated 19th May.

Elijah Hoole, in the *Methodist Magazine*, 1867 (p. 626), concludes that the three preachers ordained at the Newcastle District Meeting in 1792 were Snowden, Taylor and Bradburn, but according to Taylor's certificate he (and presumably the other two also) were ordained on 5th April (*Proceedings*, x, p. 158). Hoole has apparently confused the two centres where, in each case, three preachers were ordained.

A further list of authenticated ordinations is given on the next three pages.

JOHN C. BOWMER.

Date and Place	Name	Assistants	Destination	Authority
1791: 17th Oct. Place unknown	Richard Pattison (as Deacon)	Unknown	Unknown	Etheridge: <i>Life of Dr. Coke</i> , p. 554
1792: 19th May Newcastle	Alexander Kilham	J. Cownley C. Atmore	Home	<i>MNC Magazine</i> , 1861, p. 327 Eayrs, G.: <i>Wesley</i> , p. 198 (facsimile certificate)
1794: 15th April Place unknown	James Alexander	Dr. Coke	West Indies	
1796: Place unknown	Robert Yelalee	Dr. Coke	Foula Mission, Africa	Barclay: <i>Early American Methodism</i> , i, p. 115
1800: London Conference	Francis Hallett	Unknown	Unknown	Parker: <i>The Church in the Sun</i> , p. 43
1804: 24th July Place unknown	John Remmington	Dr. Coke	Newfoundland	Certificate at Drew Seminary
1804: Sept. Probably at Hull	George Johnstone	Dr. Coke	Antigua	Letter of Coke to the Missionary Commit- tee, 17th September 1804 (MMS Arch- ives)
1809: 10th Oct. Liverpool	George Poole Myles Dixon	Dr. Coke	West Indies	<i>Proceedings</i> , xxx, p. 188
1809: 11th Oct. Liverpool	John Charrington	Unknown	West Indies	Letter of Coke to the Missionary Commit- tee, 10th October 1809 (MMS Archives)
1810: 22nd April Todmorden	William Dowson William Jewett	Unknown	West Indies	Dowson's <i>Journal</i> , ed. Deans Peggs, p. 1

Date and Place	Name	Assistants	Destination	Authority
1813: Dec. London: Great Queen Street	Thomas Squance William Havard	Dr. Coke	Ceylon	Havard: <i>Narrative of a Mission to Ceylon</i> , p. 46
1813: Dec. London: GtQueenSt	John McKenny	Dr. Coke	South Africa	Havard, op. cit.
1813: Dec. London: St. George's in the East	George Erskine Benjamin Clough	Dr. Coke	Ceylon	Havard, op. cit.
1813: Dec. London: Lambeth	William Ault James Lynch	Dr. Coke	Ceylon	Havard, op. cit. For Lynch's certificate, see Chandler's <i>Life of Coke</i> , p. 381.
1813: Place unknown	George Marsden	Dr. Coke	India	Findlay and Holdsworth: <i>History of Wesleyan Missions</i> , i, p. 428.
1815: 13th Nov. Place unknown	Barnabas Shaw Samuel Broadbent Robert Carver John Callaway Elijah Jackson	Probably S. Bradburn J. Benson	Ceylon	Pamphlet in the Methodist Archives publishing the address delivered at the ordination service
1816: 16th Aug. Place unknown	William Wilson	T. Vasey W. Myles J. Gaulter T. Wood J. Buckley	West Indies	Certificate at the Mission House
1816: Place unknown	James Booth Henry Pope Richard Pope John de Putron	Unknown	Canada	Findlay and Holdsworth, op. cit., i, p. 379 (ordination inferred)

Date and Place	Name	Assistants	Destination	Authority
1822: Place unknown	John Hodge	Dr. Coke	West Indies	Findlay and Holdsworth, op. cit., ii, pp. 169-70
1823: 10th Nov. Place unknown	Samuel Young	Walter Griffith G. Morley W. Martin	South Africa	Certificate at the Mission House
1824: 10th Feb. Deptford	Robert Hawkins	Unknown	Unknown	Fox, W.: <i>West Africa</i> , p. 283
1824: 17th Nov. Place unknown	Thomas Jones	R. Reece J. Stephens G. Morley	Drowned en route for Antigua	Certificate at the Mission House <i>Minutes</i> , vi, p. 115
1826: Place unknown	Joseph Rayner Stephens	John Stephens	Sweden	Letter of J. R. Stephens to the Mission House, 9th December 1826 (MMS Archives)
1828: 17th Sept. Greenwich	William R. Peck William Munro	Unknown	Sierra Leone	Fox, op. cit., p. 323
1833: 15th March Walworth	Thomas Dove William Fox	Unknown	Africa	Fox, op. cit., p. 343
1835: 6th Jan. Place unknown	Henry Wilkinson	J. Taylor W. Toase J. Hannah E. Hoole	Gambia	Certificate at the Mission House
1835: 19th Oct. Place unknown	Henry Blaine Foster	R. Reece W. Fisk (U.S.A.) J. Beecham R. Alder	West Indies	Certificate at the Mission House

A HISTORY OF THE ORIGINAL METHODISTS

(Continued from page 85)

VI

IN September 1853 the editor of the *Original Methodists' Record* received the following letter :

Chester,
September, 2, 1853.

Dear Brother Tomlinson,

I have taken the liberty of sending you a brief sketch of our first camp meeting, held on the top of Mow Hill, a few miles from the Staffordshire Potteries (the hill famous for the first Primitive Methodist camp meeting) in the year 1808. One reason why we wish it to be published in the "Original Methodists' Record" is, that we may thereby acknowledge the assistance rendered by brothers James Green and S. Bridgett upon the occasion, and shall feel obliged by its appearance in the next number.

I am, dear Brother, yours truly,

J. DUCKERS.

The details of the first PM camp meeting held on 31st May 1807 are well known to all Methodist historians; but the Free-Gospel camp meeting, held on 31st July of the following year, received scant recognition outside the district where it took place. The date for the meeting having been fixed, the subsequent events were, briefly outlined, as follows: Luke Butterworth and Esther Jackson from Stockport, accompanied by J. Duckers, arrived at Snead Green on Friday evening, 29th July, and preached in the room there to a good congregation. On Saturday the 30th, James Green from Selston and Samuel Bridgett from Green Hill Lane, Riddings, arrived by rail. On the Sunday morning, after holding a prayer meeting, they set off in their light conveyance for Mow, a distance of eight miles, reaching the hill between ten and eleven o'clock. They were there joined by the brethren and sisters from various churches in Staffordshire and Cheshire, with Thomas Lees from Stockport, brother Yates from Macclesfield, and other preachers from the surrounding country. All these took part in the open-air service,¹ and were supported by John Clowes, the brother of William who was one of the founders of Primitive Methodism. At one point in the proceedings James Green and John Clowes spoke at the same time to separate congregations.

The weather was unfavourable, and consequently the congregations were not so large as otherwise they would have been; and yet four counties were represented at this camp meeting, by preachers from Staffordshire, Cheshire, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire.

Brothers Green and Bridgett, with the Staffordshire friends, returned to Hanley, where they held a lovefeast. The following evening they both preached at Snead Green to crowded congregations.

¹ Mr. Duckers gives further details of the preachers and their sermons.

In addition to the publication of the letter and details of the arrangements in connexion with the camp meeting, the *Record* of 1st January 1854 includes a footnote from the editor :

We feel desirous to see the spirit extended which brought together the component parties of this Mow Hill camp meeting. We are persuaded that if all the Free Gospellers in Great Britain would unite in one great union, waving [sic] peculiarity of names—Churchmen, Dissenters, Friends, Methodists of all grades, and any others who receive the Gospel as the rule of faith and practice—it would be productive of great good. Not a union to forge fetters for men's judgments and consciences ; but a union to promote love, and freedom from Hirelingism among Christians.

The Original Methodists were well aware of the activities of other Free-Gospel sects throughout the land, and frequently urged the unity of these bodies. They were in contact with the Society of Friends, the Plymouth Brethren, the Independent Methodists, the Independent Primitive Methodists, and many other bodies of Free Gospellers. The progress made by many of these denominations during the late '40s and early '50s encouraged the Original Methodists by 1852 to prophesy that very soon they would "be able to exhibit a compact and well-organized front of 100,000 regularly enrolled members of the Free Gospel Churches".²

Their confidence at that time must have seemed to be not without some justification. The heroic period in the history of the Primitive Methodists was over, and for the first time their membership figures showed a decrease. The Gold Rush in California (1848-9) and in Australia (1851) followed by increasing emigration in the early '50s undoubtedly had an effect on Primitive Methodist membership. After a loss of 1,132 members from emigration alone from 1852 to 1854, there came the Crimean War, when the high prices of provisions would tend to make the anti-"hireling" denunciations of the Free Gospellers particularly attractive to those who had difficulty in meeting the increased costs. Divisions within the established Church and confusion among the Wesleyan Methodists at this time gave further encouragement to the advocates of an unpaid ministry :

The Wesleyan Methodists, the largest dissenting denomination in this country, we see in a more distracted state still. Their angry contentions have continued until a division is formed, which the divisionists say is not a division ; and it is yet uncertain whether the offspring will not ultimately swallow up the parent.³

To the Original Methodists, therefore, the '50s were years of hope and expectancy. It was mistakenly believed that "hirelingism" was about to disappear, and that the future would witness "the long-foretold millennium".⁴

The desire on the part of the Original Methodists to unite with others of similar beliefs is most clearly seen in the *Annual Report*

² *Original Methodists' Record*, 1st January 1852.

³ *ibid.*

⁴ *ibid.*

of the *Original Methodist Connexion* for the year ending 1st September 1851. They state in this report that

in the latter part of the year we have become acquainted with a numerous and respectable body of Christians, who in all their leading features of faith and practice bear considerable resemblance to ourselves, especially in employing no hired ministry, numbering upwards of sixty societies and three hundred preachers; this has rejoiced us greatly and encouraged us in our work. We shall endeavour to cultivate this acquaintance to the benefit of both bodies, without either party sacrificing any principle or even peculiarity. . . . We long for the day when all Free Gospel Churches shall fraternize and assist each other. Our principles are taking strong hold of the public mind, and ere long Christians will be convinced that they are competent to manage their own affairs, without paying men to be their masters.

During the years of Original Methodist ascendancy in Selston and district, considerable alarm must have been experienced by nonconformist ministers, who frequently expressed their contempt for the "free-gospellers" in scathing pamphlets circulated throughout the district. Two of these pamphleteers deserve special mention: the Rev. Thomas Colledge, Independent (i.e. Congregationalist) minister of four churches—Selston, Riddings, Alfreton and Pentrich—from 1837 to 1862, and the Rev. T. Barnett, a newly-appointed Baptist minister of Riddings.

The first indication we have of actual enmity between these two ministers and the adherents of Original Methodism is to be found in the report of a meeting held in the Riddings Congregational chapel on 10th August 1852, when teachers, friends and representatives from seven Sunday schools met to form the first Sunday School Union to be organized in that district. (This Union was destined to attain great numerical strength, for by 1877, twenty-five years after its inception, the annual report showed that its ten constituent schools had a combined membership of 240 teachers and 1,737 scholars.) After the opening devotions, it was necessary to appoint a chairman to preside over the business of the meeting. As there were only two ministers present, Mr. Barnett immediately proposed Mr. Colledge for that position. This act aroused indignation, since many of the laymen present were also experienced in conducting public meetings, and they resented what seemed to them an unseemly attempt on the part of "paid" preachers to gain an advantage over the unpaid. John Tomlinson in particular suspected that instead of attending

a Union of Sabbath-school teachers, there was a combination of money-bought preachers, who were making use of the word UNION in order to obtain additional, personal, official, and profitable influence.⁵

Mr. Tomlinson's impression was soon strengthened by the two ministers telling the meeting that the state of ignorance and incompetence of Sabbath-school teachers could not meet the requirements of the age unless they were instructed one night in each week by

⁵ Letter of John Tomlinson to the Rev. T. Colledge, 28th September 1852.

ministers like themselves, who would instruct them both how and what to teach. How popular were these remarks may be judged from the following quotation from Tomlinson's letter :

How strange it is that Sabbath-school teachers generally have been able to conduct their own affairs without the aid of your fraternity for sixty years, and you have just made the discovery that they are incapable of doing so any longer ; surely you, with all your boasted wisdom, must have forgotten how many church members have been raised out of Sabbath-schools—how many eminent preachers of the gospel—how many enterprising merchants, clever manufacturers, skilful artizans and mechanics, trustworthy book-keepers and confidential managers of firms, factories, forges, etc., etc., have been raised out of Sabbath-schools. Surely you had forgot that such a man as Mr. J. Smith sat at Mr. Barnett's left elbow—a man of untiring industry, acknowledged talent and real respectability, raised, as he himself informed the meeting, out of the first Sabbath-school ever commenced in this locality, taught in a small room about eleven feet square, by one teacher only. With such facts as these before our eyes, how can we believe your statement about the necessity of your officious interference with Sabbath-school teachers?

But not content with endeavouring to lower Sunday-school teachers in the estimation of the meeting, thereby kindling considerable resentment, Mr. Barnett added fuel to the flames by drawing a comparison between ignorant Sunday-school teachers and some preachers of the gospel. Mr. Tomlinson allowed the Baptist minister to repeat his words, and then, since no one else showed initiative, he considered it his duty to take up the speaker on this point, which he felt to be a stigma upon lay preachers. Mr. Tomlinson realized that the subject was a delicate one, and therefore approached it with caution, endeavouring to avoid every word which he thought might stir up angry feelings. However, he was interrupted in his protest by the chairman, Rev. T. Colledge, who told him he had come to the meeting "prepossessed". Mr. Tomlinson in his turn informed the Independent minister that however he might have *come* to the meeting, he went away from it "with a strengthened conviction that priestcraft is, in principle, the same in all ages, countries, and denominations . . .".⁶

For the next ten years, until his retirement in 1862, Mr. Colledge continued to assail in no uncertain terms from his pulpits and through his church magazine the doctrines of the Original Methodists. Mr. Barnett, however, went to the much greater trouble and expense of writing two considerable pamphlets against them. The Baptist minister was provoked not so much by the stormy Sunday School Union meeting as by a series of articles written for the *Original Methodists' Record* by Thomas Shone, an author capable of extraordinarily vitriolic invective, and appearing over a period of two-and-a-half years, from 1st April 1850 to 1st October 1852 ; but of the ensuing battle we are not disposed to write.

DONALD M. GRUNDY.

(To be continued)

⁶ *ibid.*

NEWS FROM OUR BRANCHES

ON Saturday, 10th June 1967, the **Bristol** Branch joined the West Midlands Branch in a pilgrimage to "Wesley's Cotswolds", visiting the villages of Stanton, Buckland and Broadway.—The autumn meeting was held at Victoria church, Bristol. The Chairman of the District (the Rev. Leslie M. Wollen) presided, and read some interesting extracts from a Bible Christian Bristol District minute-book covering the period 1827-48. [See Mr. Wollen's article on this subject on pages 124-6.—EDITOR.] The Connexional Archivist (the Rev. Dr. John Bowmer) spoke on Methodist records and historical treasures, illustrating his talk with coloured transparencies.—Before these notes appear in print, the first meeting for 1968 will have been held at the New Room, Bristol, Saturday, 3rd February.

Bulletin: Nos. 2 and 3 received.

Secretary: Mr. G. E. Roberts, 21, Ormerod Road, Stoke Bishop, Bristol, 9.

Membership: 50.

Cornish Branch. In conjunction with the local Guilds, meetings and exhibitions have been held at Hayle and Newlyn, resulting in additions to membership and increased interest in the branch's work.

"Cornish Methodists and Emigrants", an Exeter University Extension Lecture, by Dr. John Rowe, has been included in the branch's Occasional Publications, together with one on "Walter Lawry, Cornwall—Australia—Tonga—New Zealand", tape-recorded in New Zealand by his great-great-granddaughter, Mrs. Lucy C. Marshall, and given in Gorran High Lanes chapel, Roseland circuit (with which Lawry was associated as a youth), on Thursday, 12th October 1967. On this occasion the branch presented a framed portrait of Walter Lawry to the chapel trustees.

On Whit-Monday, 15th May, joined by members of Helston Old Cornwall Society, members visited the grave of Samuel Drew, the Cornish historian and Methodist local preacher, in Helston churchyard, following the restoration of the memorial, the cost of which had been shared by the two societies.

Chapels in the Roseland circuit, with sites or remains of former ones, were visited on 30th June; and on 8th September Porthtowan (spiritual home of Richard Hampton, the quaint pilgrim preacher), Mingoose, and the parish church of Perranzabuloe.

A pilgrimage to the "Teetotal" chapels around St. Ives and Penzance is being arranged for the evening of Friday, 3rd May, and a visit to St. Agnes on the evening of Thursday, 16th May 1968. The annual meeting is to be held at Gwendroc, Truro, on Monday evening, 27th May.

Journals II. Nos. 7 and 8 have been received, and Publications Nos. 11 and 12.

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

Membership: 310. [Cornwall.]

THE **East Anglia** Branch held its spring meeting at Cambridge on Saturday, 27th May 1967. Dividing into three groups, the company made a short tour of the city, returning for tea to Wesley House and the cordial hospitality of the Rev. and Mrs. W. F. Flemington. An epilogue in the college chapel concluded the day.—The autumn meeting was held on Saturday, 8th October, at Downham Market, when the Rev. W. D. Horton spoke on "The story of eighteenth-century Independency and Methodism

in East Anglia".—The next meeting is to be held at Long Stratton, Norfolk, on Saturday, 27th April 1968, when Miss Rachel Walker will speak on "The struggle to establish Methodism in a Norfolk village".

Bulletin : Nos. 17 and 18 received.

Secretary : Mr. W. A. Green, 60, Brian Avenue, Norwich, NOR 28 C.

Membership : III.

THE spring meeting of the **Lancashire and Cheshire** Branch was held on Saturday, 22nd April 1967 at Baillie Street chapel, Rochdale. Mrs. E. V. Chapman spoke on her researches into the life and work of William Darney.—On Monday, 3rd July, at Stamford Street, Ashton-under-Lyne, the Rev. Michael S. Edwards lectured on Joseph Rayner Stephens.—The autumn meeting, held on Saturday, 28th October, at the Central Hall, Manchester, was addressed by Prof. W. R. Ward of Durham University. His subject was "Class and Denomination—or, What happened to English Religion, 1790-1830".—The spring meeting 1968 is to be held at Hartley Victoria College, Manchester, on Saturday, 27th April; and on Saturday, 15th June, there will be, in conjunction with the West Midlands Branch, a pilgrimage to historic Primitive Methodist sites in Cheshire and Staffordshire.

Bulletin : Nos. 6 and 7 received.

Secretary : Mr. E. A. Rose, 18, Glenthorne Drive, Ashton-under-Lyne,

Membership : 90.

[Lancs.]

THE **Lincolnshire** Branch gathered for its summer meeting at Scunthorpe Museum, where there is a small collection of Wesleyana. Tea was served at our Centenary chapel, and was followed by an address by the Rev. W. Le Cato Edwards.—The autumn meeting was held at Nettleton on Saturday, 9th September, with the Annual General Meeting in the afternoon, and in the evening an address by Mr. William Leary on "Early Methodism in Lincolnshire".

Journal : Vol. I Parts 8 and 9 received.

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

Membership : 110.

THE **London** Branch met in spring and autumn 1967. On Saturday, 10th June, the Rev. Norman Goldhawk conducted members around Richmond College; and on Saturday, 7th October, the usual autumn venue, Wesley's Chapel, provided plenty of interest.

Bulletin : Nos. 4 and 5 received.

Secretary : Mr. W. Pendry Morris, 8, Moresby Avenue, Surbiton, Surrey.

Membership : 53.

ON Saturday, 20th May 1967, the **North-East** Branch met at Hawkey's Lane, North Shields, and was addressed by the Rev. Rupert E. Davies on "Methodism: Church or Society?".—On Saturday, 1st July, the opening of the Conference Exhibition at Middlesbrough was made the occasion of the summer outing. The opening ceremony was performed by the then chairman of the branch, the Rev. R. Walters Duustan. Special thanks are due to the officials and members of the North-East Branch for contributing in so many ways to the success of the Exhibition.

The branch suffered a serious loss last September, when both its chairman and its secretary left the Newcastle District. However, we are glad to report that new officers have now been appointed as follows: chairman,

the Rev. Edwin Thompson; editor, the Rev. Leslie D. Cox; secretary (pro tem.), Miss C. M. Bretherton. Some new members who will be a great asset to the branch have also been enrolled. These include Mr. W. M. Tulip (who has returned to the North-East upon retirement), and Professor W. R. Ward and Mr. R. Moore, both of Durham University.

The autumn meeting was held at St. John's, Sunderland, on Friday, 13th October, when Mr. W. M. Tulip entranced his audience with his talk on "Wesley's Orphan House".

Plans are being made to visit in May the County Records Office at the new County Hall, Durham, where it is hoped in time to have complete Methodist circuit records for the whole of the county.

Bulletin: No. 9 received.

Secretary: Miss C. M. Bretherton, 6, The Craiglands, Sunderland,

Membership: 75.

[Co. Durham.]

ON Saturday, 22nd April 1967, members of the **Plymouth and Exeter** Branch met at Dulverton to explore part of the Kingsbrompton circuit. Under the expert guidance of Dr. Glyn Court, some of the chapels in this glorious countryside were visited.—On Saturday, 20th May, Dr. John Bowmer visited the branch, meeting at Paignton. He spoke on the Methodist Archives, and reminded his listeners that the only gap in the set of Conference Journals was in Bible Christian records for the period 1855 to 1907. He hoped that perhaps branch-members would be on the alert for the possibility of the missing volume or volumes turning up.

Proceedings: Nos. 11, 12 and 13 received.

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

Membership: 109.

South Wales Branch met for the spring meeting at Garth House, the ancestral home of Sarah Gwynne, the wife of Charles Wesley. The outing also included a visit to the church which stands on the site of the building in which Charles and Sarah were married. The annual lecture was delivered by Dr. Maldwyn Edwards on "Charles Wesley and Sarah Gwynne".—The date and place of the 1968 annual outing have been provisionally fixed for Saturday, 25th May, at the New Room, Bristol.

Bulletin: Nos. 5 and 6 received.

Secretary: Rev. W. Islwyn Morgan, 5, King Edward Road, Brynmawr,

Membership: 40.

[Brecon.]

THE outing to the Cotswolds on 10th June 1967, reported in connexion with the Bristol Branch, was also shared by the **West Midlands** Branch. The *Bulletin* describes it as "a memorable occasion".—The autumn meeting was held on Saturday, 14th October, at Lynton church, Solihull, with Mr. John A. Vickers lecturing on "Thomas Coke and the Church of England: some sidelights on Anglican-Methodist relations".—The spring meeting in 1968 is planned for Saturday, 16th March, when Mr. David Eades will be in charge of a tour of historic Methodist sites in Cradley and Quarry Bank.

Bulletin: Vol. I Parts 6 and 7 received.

Secretary: Mrs. E. D. Graham, B.A., B.D., 34, Spiceland Road,

Northfield, Birmingham, 31.

Membership: 106.

SINCE we last reported **Yorkshire** Branch activities, three meetings have been held. On Saturday, 29th October 1966, a visit was paid to the city of Kingston-upon-Hull, when an introduction to Methodism in that locality was given by Mr. Bernard Blanchard and an address on "William Clowes in Hull" was delivered by the Rev. Leonard Brown.—On Saturday, 27th May 1967, the branch marked the closing of Wesley College, Leeds, by a last look at the Wesleyana. The Rev. A. Raymond George was a worthy guide to the treasures, and the Rev. H. Morley Rattenbury to the college itself.—The autumn meeting was held on Saturday, 14th October, at Shelley chapel, Huddersfield, with an address by Mr. E. A. Rose (of our Lancashire and Cheshire Branch) on Methodist New Connexion history. Shelley chapel is the oldest former MNC chapel still in regular use.

Bulletin : Nos. 10 and 11 received.

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

Membership : 116.

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

The Transactions of the Congregational Historical Society, October 1967.

The Transactions of the Unitarian Historical Society, October 1967.

The Baptist Quarterly, July and October 1967 and January 1968.

The Journal of the Historical Society of the Presbyterian Church of Wales, July and October 1967.

"Heritage", *The Journal of the Methodist Historical Society of Victoria* (Australia), October 1967.

Journal and Proceedings of the Australasian Methodist Historical Society (Sydney), No. 87.

Journal of the South Australian Methodist Historical Society, Vol. i.

The Amateur Historian, Vol. vii, Nos. 7 and 8.

Bathafarn (the Welsh Methodist historical journal), 1967.

Methodist History, January 1968.

Performance and Promise is the title of an interesting and well-produced brochure by the Rev. W. Oliver Phillipson. Written to celebrate the centenary of the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes, it traces the history and nature of that vital department of Methodism since its inception. No price is given, but copies may be obtained from the Secretaries, The Department for Chapel Affairs, Central Buildings, Oldham Street, Manchester, 1.

Among the latest additions to the Wesley Historical Society Library is a copy of *The Proceedings of the Eleventh World Methodist Conference, London, 1966*, edited by Lee F. Tuttle and Max W. Woodward. Reported in full are the speeches made at the Conference itself and at that of the World Federation of Methodist Women, together with Minutes of the Council and Executive Committee. This volume of 292 pages is published by the Epworth Press (London) and the Abingdon Press (Nashville), price 35s.

IRISH NOTES

Wesley Day, 1967. The message of salvation for all, which was proclaimed by Wesley and which was the strength of the early Methodists, is still the message and strength of the Methodists of County Fermanagh today. This was the theme of the address, "Methodism in Fermanagh", delivered by the Rev. Alan G. Hanna at the Wesley Day meeting of the Wesley Historical Society Irish Branch in Epworth Hall, Aldersgate House, Belfast. Mr. Hanna did not just deal with the events of the past, but showed clearly the continuing life of the people of God in evangelical zeal and steadfast faith. Those present were particularly interested in his account of the forward-looking nature of young people's work at the present time. After the meeting the treasures of the Historical Room were on display. Mr. John H. Weir (secretary) and Mrs. Victor Kelly (archivist) were there to describe exhibits to the visitors.

Pilgrimage to Armagh. By kind invitation of the Rev. Dr. James M'Cann, Archbishop of Armagh, members of the Society visited the Primate's residence as the first halt on their pilgrimage on Saturday, 27th May. The Archbishop and Mrs. M'Cann welcomed all the visitors warmly, and spent much time in showing them round. It was during Primate Robinson's time that John Wesley paid his visits to Armagh, and looked over the residence and demesne on at least four occasions. (As one recalls the bitter weather in May 1967, it is interesting to note that in May 1785 also there were low temperatures, when Wesley described it as being "as cold as it used to be in December".) Mr. Fred Jeffery, our vice-president, read the relevant extracts from the *Journal*, showing Wesley's great admiration for the taste shown by Primate Robinson. Dr. M'Cann made interesting comments on the points raised by Wesley, and then showed the visitors the private chapel nearby, also mentioned in the *Journal*. Thanks to Dr. and Mrs. M'Cann were expressed by the Rev. R. D. Eric Gallagher (then President-Designate of the Methodist Church in Ireland), and afterwards the assembled company sang one of the hymns of Mrs. C. F. Alexander, who was once a resident in the palace there.

A visit to Armagh Cathedral followed, and then there was tea provided by the ladies of Armagh Methodist church, before Mr. Fred Jeffery delivered an address in the evening on "Methodism in Armagh". Mr. Jeffery traced the story from the day when a certain Mrs. Russell was the agency whereby John Wesley came to Armagh the first time and preached in Mr. M'Geough's avenue, just below where the present Methodist church stands, and in which the lecture was being delivered. On the wall of that church is a tablet to the memory of John Noble, who was a local preacher for almost fifty years, beginning in the time of Wesley himself, and took a leading part in the establishment of Methodism as a separate church during the 1815-16 controversy over the administration of the Lord's Supper. Later the history of Armagh Methodism is very much expressed in the life and witness of Dr. Joseph Lynn, the surgeon to the Armagh militia. To-day Armagh still shows its concern for vital and practical religion through the many men and women it sends into Christian service of all kinds.

The Annual General Meeting was held during the Irish Conference, June 1967, and a membership of 140 was reported. Mr. Norman Robb was re-elected president, Mr. Frederick Jeffery vice-president, and Mr. John H. Weir secretary and treasurer. Mr. Weir can arrange for visitors to Belfast to see the Wesley Memorial Room which the Society has established if they will get into touch with him at 50, Meadowbank Place, Belfast, 9.

AN EARLY BIBLE CHRISTIAN DISTRICT MINUTE-BOOK

THE minute-book of the Bible Christian Bristol District for the years 1827-48 has recently come to light. In 1827 the District consisted of four circuits: Bristol, Weare, Somerton, and Monmouth, with a mission in the Forest of Dean. There were 513 members in all, with eight ministers. Work in Bristol proved very hard, numbers fell to about 50, and although a meeting-room had been found at a lower rental and the minister was living rent-free in the home of a friend, application was made to the Weare circuit to consider union, Bristol to appear as a place on the Weare plan. Two years later, in 1829, the work in Bristol had ceased completely. At the end of the minute-book, in 1848, the circuits remained as in the beginning, with the exception of Bristol, but to the Forest of Dean Mission had been added Bedminster, Pontypool and Cwm Avon, the total membership being 996, with 11 ministers.

Every year the spiritual and temporal conditions of the circuits and missions are vividly described: cottage meetings are opened and closed, membership ebbs and flows, revival breaks out and dies down, ministers (some of them women) come and go, missionary money fairly steadily increases, and towards the end of the period Sunday schools are started.

The struggling church has much to contend with. In the 1820s the big problem is the emigration of the promising young men. Thus several members, including no fewer than five local preachers, are reported leaving the Weare circuit for America in 1832, and three more preachers follow the next year. Occasionally an epidemic breaks out—typhoid and black fever in the Forest of Dean in 1831, and a virulent influenza in the Somerton circuit in 1848. Economic depression hits hard, and sometimes the people want for bread, and all church funds suffer. The Puseyites are “awfully prevalent” around Somerton in 1843 and in the Monmouth circuit in 1846, whilst the Plymouth Brethren are reported as causing trouble in the Somerset countryside in 1845—stealing members, taking over chapels, and dividing the societies. Accommodation is costly either to build or to hire. A friendly farmer who loaned his kitchen for services turns hostile in the Weare circuit in 1845, and a leader at Nailsea in 1839 is taken to the lunatic asylum, leaving the small society suddenly homeless.

Backsliding is frequent, and is dealt with summarily. In Somerton in 1842, for example, whilst there are no fewer than 177 new members, 34 are removed for “returning to the world”, including six through drunkenness. Alcohol takes its toll of members in Monmouth the following year, causing an eloquent superintendent to cry out: “When will that Stygian lake be dried up?”, and the year after: “When will the treacherous ape be chained?”!

On the other hand, the generosity of the members is most impressive. In 1827 approximately 10s. is contributed by each member for the support of the ministry, with additional money given to connexional funds and trust expenses. The ministers live extremely frugally on about £12 a year, with small added allowances for a wife and children. Clearly they depend considerably on the hospitality of their people. They shine through the pages of the minute-book as for the most part heroic men and women, travelling widely and enduring hardship. "We will have a woman if she can manage the rough roads and keep up with the men", says the Monmouth circuit in 1828. Mary Ann Taylor of the Weare circuit is a great favourite, and is wanted for more than the three statutory years. "If the Conference cannot let her stay," they ask, "send us another one like her." Very occasionally a minister gets into trouble and is refused the annual certificate of good standing. In one case he has "acted injudiciously" in a certain unspecified matter, and in yet another he is judged guilty of "taking improper liberties with a woman member". Discipline is swift and sure. In 1847 Conference is asked to allow two District representatives to attend the Stationing Committee to reassure the brethren that justice is being done; "to promote peace among the brethren, for in the multitude of counsellors there is safety." The actual cause of the dissatisfaction is not revealed, and the District Superintendent signs the minutes with his usual confident flourish!

Doctrinal matters are rarely mentioned. In 1831 Conference is asked to draw up rules and regulations for the baptism of children, the administration of the Lord's Supper, and the burial of the dead, "for the purpose of uniformity among the preachers". In 1839 the District records its dissatisfaction with the name "Bible Christian" on the grounds that it casts reflection on other Christian communities and that in its presumption it is calculated to give offence to both pious and profane. Answering the question, "What other name do we propose?", the District Meeting records its reply in big block capitals: UNITED METHODISTS.

A question is regularly asked after 1839 about the preachers' reading and habits of study. Some, it is suspected, may be reading unhelpful books, and some none at all. The preachers themselves admit dissatisfaction with their achievements and ask for guidance, although in 1841 they speak up for themselves pertinently: "Till we have less ground to travel and fewer inconveniences we shall not do much in the way of improvement." In 1843 objection is recorded to the using of the "skeleton sermons" of others!

Salvation may be thought of in exclusively individualistic terms, but the superintendent of the Somerton circuit surely expresses himself well in 1832:

Two members have exchanged mortality for life, but many others have been awakened to their concern and made happy in the love of Christ. Their world may be a narrow one (strong objection is taken to the

training of day-school teachers at Shebbear College, and the connexional collection withheld), but the impression is made generally of a people upon whom life presses very severely, but who find release from a degrading hopelessness in a deep conviction of the Divine love, and who are united in the common purpose of sharing their joyful discovery with others.

LESLIE M. WOLLEN.

[The Rev. Leslie M. Wollen, M.A., B.Sc. is Chairman of the Bristol District of the Methodist Church in Great Britain.]

We acknowledge, with many thanks, the following handbooks and brochures, which constitute a valuable addition to the Local History section of our Library.

A Methodist Tapestry, the story of Methodism in Bognor from 1810 to 1967 (pp. 36) : copies from the minister, the Rev. Alfred Cartwright, Cartref, Albert Road, Bognor Regis, Sussex. No price is stipulated, but a donation to trust funds is requested.

Methodism in Wokingham, 1817-1967, by the Rev. E. Ralph Bates (pp. 50 plus) : copies from the author at 3, Hansford Close, Combe Down, Bath ; no price stated.

Middleton Methodist Church (Morecambe and Heysham circuit), centenary brochure (pp. 8) : copies from the Rev. Eric W. Dykes, 67, Broadway, Morecambe, Lancs.

One Hundred Years On, the story of St. John's, Whitstable (pp. 20), by Gladys J. Wilkinson : copies from the Rev. Michael J. Gilyead, St. John's Manse, Hillview Road, Whitstable, Kent.

Wesley Memorial Church, Oxford, 1818-1968 (pp. 60), by J. E. Oxley : copies from the Rev. Donald Rose, Wesley Memorial Church, New Inn Hall Street, Oxford ; no price stated.

Trinity, Kidwelly (Carmarthen) centenary brochure (pp. 24) : copies from the author, Mr. W. H. Morris, Sunnymead, Kidwelly, Carmarthenshire ; no price stated.

Methodism in the Village, the story of East Halton (Lincs), 1790-1953 (pp. 36), by members of a Local History class : copies from the Department of Adult Education of the University of Hull, 4s.

In connexion with the opening of the new church at Cheadle Hulme on 2nd March, a special one-day postmark is being issued by the GPO for use locally. A first-day cover is also being produced. Orders for covers, using the special postmark, should be sent to Mr. J. T. Aungiers, 5, Cherry Walk, Cheadle Hulme, Cheshire. These are 1s. each, or 1s. 6d. if autographed by the minister (the Rev. Amos S. Cresswell). Mr. Aungiers is publishing, also on 2nd March, a 28-page booklet, *Methodism on Stamps and Postmarks*, price 2s. 10d. post free.

Methodism has been featured on two stamps recently. The establishment of the autonomous Conference of the Caribbean and the Americas is celebrated by stamps of St. Vincent and St. Kitts. The former feature Mount Coke (2c.), Kingstown Methodist Church (8c.), First Marriage Licence (25c.), and the Coat of Arms of the Conference (35c.). The latter depict John Wesley (3c.), Charles Wesley (25c.) and Thomas Coke (40c.).

BOOK NOTICES

A History of Cornish Methodism, by Thomas Shaw. (D. Bradford Barton, Truro, pp. 148, 30s.)

Thomas Shaw is most widely known among students of Methodist history as the General Secretary of the Wesley Historical Society and author of *The Bible Christians*; but in Cornwall he is principal founder of the Cornish Methodist Historical Association, its first secretary and now its editor, and an unflinching help to those who study and research. So everyone has looked forward to the publication of his new book, and it bears out their expectations. In 140 pages and seven chapters he phases out the great span of Methodism in Cornwall from the coming of the Wesleys, or rather the eve of their coming, in 1743, to 1967 and the question of the future—the foundation, the making of the societies, their preachers and their people, the “great advance” of the early nineteenth century, the “remodelling”, in sects and sections, as Wesleyanism settled for its social and other bearings, the great Victorian times and a kind of dominance in various aspects of popular culture, on into the twentieth century, reconsideration, and reunion. Methodism was carried by the rising tide of natural growth and repeated waves of revival to its peak in Cornish membership of 26,000 in 1840, enjoyed the full day of the true Victorian decades, and then suffered numerical decline with the dying-off of convinced generations, but above all through the emigration in thousands of the men and women in whose lives it lived.

All this is brought out or lies in the folds of the narrative. But Mr. Shaw contrives to describe in their local setting the familiar institutions, the society and circuit, the class, the full-time and part-time preachers, the building and form of church (née chapel), and their interaction with a county and society of marked characteristics—whether Celtic or no! But he gives particular human interest, and makes his book so readable, in spite of enforced brevity, with the individual stories, characters or incidents—not excluding the humour, the handed-down yarn and phrase, the very stuff of affectionate tradition. A little spice of dialect is added, but, more important, now and again the true idiom of the people and their lives is caught.

The whole, however, is not a repeated “Story of Methodism”. It is based on, it grows from, the most recent research. It is for the general reader and all who are interested in the past of Methodism in itself and as introduction to today, and at the same time it will be essential for the student and any who wish to promote their own original studies. This again is aided by a good selected bibliography and a very good index. With it all goes a very generous allowance of illustrations, and each tells something significant to those who will read the pictures as well as the text. (The implications of those on pp. 107-8 alone, in their portrayal, deliberate or no, of subject, situation, art form and all, would, on analysis, tell in depth a great deal about Methodism.) Altogether this is a volume of very good value.

F. L. HARRIS.

The Michaelmas 1967 issue of *Cirplan* contains articles on “Alphabetical Sequence of Plan References”, by E. A. Rose, “Plans of my Native Shire [Berkshire]”, by N. P. Nickless, “Circuit Plans”, by J. C. Ledgard, and “Highlights from a Nonagenarian Methodist Local Preacher”, by H. Hodgson. The subscription is 2s. 6d. per annum, and the secretary is Mr. Arnold Whipp, 38, Stanley Avenue North, Prestwich, Manchester.

NOTES AND QUERIES

1173. "REVIVALISM AND SOCIAL REFORM": A CORRECTION AND AN APOLOGY.

Because of an unfortunate mis-reading of notes compiled for my review of *Revivalism and Social Reform*, by Timothy L. Smith (*Proceedings*, xxxvi, p. 61 f.), I fear that Dr. Smith has received scant justice on one most important point. In order to correct this, and at the same time to apologize for the error, may I be allowed to put the record straight?

The words "Methodist preachers who professed sanctification meant to claim sinless perfection" do *not* (repeat *not*) appear in the text of the book, and I deeply regret that a not-too-well-scrutinized typescript of the review was allowed to pass to the Editor.

This work of outstanding interest to all who would seek to understand the ethos and labours of nineteenth-century American Wesleyan revivalism is now available in a paper-back edition (Abingdon Press).

WILLIAM PARKES.

[Smith's precise words are: "Scholars do not pretend to have achieved absolute objectivity, any more than the old-time Methodist preachers who professed sanctification meant to claim sinless perfection"—EDITOR.]

1174. ARTICLES OF METHODIST HISTORICAL INTEREST.

Since the last list was published in *Proceedings*, xxxv, p. 135, the following articles of Methodist historical interest have appeared in *The London Quarterly and Holborn Review*:

JANUARY 1966—"A Revised Covenant Service", by David H. Tripp.

JULY 1966—"John Wesley Presides", by Geoffrey F. Nuttall; "The Fletcher-Toplady Controversy", by J. Maycock; "A Sociological Study of Lapsed Membership", by John R. Butler.

OCTOBER 1966—"The Methodist Book of Offices", by John C. Bowmer; "Ablutions and the Methodists", by E. Gordon Rupp; "Methodism and the Chartist Movement", by Michael S. Edwards; "'Aldersgate' and Wesley's Editors", by Frank Baker.

JULY 1967—"William Wilberforce", by John H. S. Kent.

OCTOBER 1967—"John Wesley's First Marriage", by Frank Baker.

EDITOR.

1175. METHODISM AND OLIVER CROMWELL.

The historical journal *Past and Present* hopes to assemble source-materials illustrating the importance of Oliver Cromwell as an inspiration to nineteenth-century radicals of all colours. No doubt there are many appropriate references in Methodist and Nonconformist literature of the period. I would be grateful for any which articulate a popular Roundhead tradition in the nineteenth century. JOHN D. WALSH (Jesus College, Oxford).

1176. CHANNEL ISLANDS PRIMITIVE METHODISM.

I have recently examined the "Local Preachers and Full Board Minutes" of the old PM Scotter circuit, 1832-42. Apart from their obvious Lincolnshire references, there are also some useful notes on what were called the "Channel Island Stations". In addition, there are references to the Retford and Doncaster Branches, though most items relative to these are dismissed with the words "Branch Minutes approved". The book is kept in the safe of St. Mark's Methodist church, Scunthorpe. WILLIAM LEARY.