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WESLEY AND THE SOCIETY AT COLCHESTER.

The Centenary of Culver Street Methodist Church on January 14, 1936, has afforded an occasion for the publication of a useful little booklet on the *History of Methodism in Colchester*. With the exception of Norwich, no town in East Anglia was visited by Wesley more frequently than Colchester. When he first visited the town he said that a Society of 120 persons had been gathered together in three months. This indicates July, 1758, as the date of the beginning of Methodist work in the place. When he was there the second time he said he found that the Society had decreased since Lawrence Coughlan went away. From this it would appear that Coughlan was the preacher who had gathered the Society.

In 1759 Wesley preached in "the shell of the new house. It is twelve-square, and it is the best building of the size, for the voice, that I know in England." It was unique in having twelve walls, which made it appear round in shape. Mr. Crabb Robinson as a youth of fifteen heard Wesley preach therein, a few months before his death; describing the occasion in moving words which have often been quoted, he called the place a great round meeting-house. It was sometimes called a polygon. The building served the Methodists until 1800, when it was re-built, and remained the headquarters of Methodism in the area until 1835. The successive formation of separate Circuits, as the work was consolidated, is told in this attractive booklet, which brings the story down to the present day.

By the courtesy of the Rev. J. A. Asquith Baker we are able to give a facsimile of a page in the Colchester Society Book, written by John Wesley on November 5, 1772, a very interesting specimen of Wesley's pastoral oversight.

THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY.

The Story of "The Christian Community," an International Society for the preaching of the Gospel in Poor Law Institutions, Hospitals and Infirmaries, Lodging-houses, Mission Halls, and in the Open Air. Established by the Huguenots in 1685. Re-organised under the patronage of John Wesley in 1772. A brief survey of 250 years of service 1685-1935.

A recently published brochure bearing this title tells an interesting story of a movement in which Wesley played a worthy part. Though this enterprise has been in existence for so long the compilers are doubtless right in stating that the story of the Community and its work is not widely known.

The coming to England of many thousands of Huguenots, fleeing from the persecution following the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, left its mark upon the country in many ways. A large number settled in Bethnal Green and Spitalfields, and in these places they produced hand-made fabrics of exquisite quality, benefitting England by their skill.

For religious fellowship they banded themselves in *La Communauté*.

In 1772 the name *La Communauté Chrétienne* was borne by a band of young men who were undertaking Workhouse Visitation. They called on John Wesley, and obtained his advice about their work. At this time, although the Community maintained its independence, all of its members were Methodists attached to Wesley's headquarters at the Foundery, and were transferred to City Road Chapel when that was opened in 1778. Wesley gave them the use of the large vestry, where they met every Sunday morning and made their plans for the day.

For nearly fifty years all went smoothly, and then an unfortunate clash took place between the Community and the Methodist authorities. Slightly abridged, the compilers' account of what happened is as follows:—The members had gathered for a business meeting one evening in 1818, when the Circuit ministers walked in and unceremoniously took charge of the meeting. The superintendent delivered a harangue against the Community, stating that, as a self-governing and irresponsible body, it was considered unconstitutional. He was determined to stop it, and, claiming power to dissolve the Community, said that he had come to the meeting for that purpose. His intention was that if any

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of its preaching stations were worth having, they should be placed on the Circuit plan: they would then be supplied with *accredited* preachers, and if any of the members would be willing to submit to a regular probation, they could be received as Local Preachers to act under his direction. The members were in a state of consternation. At first the superintendent, Rev. Charles Atmore, refused them the right to reply to his charges, but eventually he he was prevailed upon to allow a few to speak. At a later meeting a compromise was suggested [apparently by one of the Circuit ministers] that the members should allow the places they visited to be put on the Circuit plan, and that they should be admitted as accredited preachers without further probation. Some of the Community agreed to work under the jurisdiction of the ministers, but others, declining to do so, broke away from the Methodist Church and carried on independently.

It is good to note that despite this incident the work grew, and more was attempted in the open air. The Community gradually recovered its old position under the patronage of the Methodist Church, for in 1827 the same question arose but was not pressed.

In 1835 the Poor Law came into operation, and amongst its provisions was one that the Guardians should appoint chaplains for each Workhouse. At first the Community was shut out from the Workhouses, but in the course of time the privilege of entry was restored.

The Community encountered rough weather in 1849, in the troublous days of Methodist agitation. A number of the members having expressed sympathy with the Methodist Reformers, all the members were struck off the roll of membership at Wesley's Chapel, and expelled from the vestry in which they had met ever since the opening of the Chapel. This is viewed by the compilers as a blessing in disguise, setting the Community free from denominational limitations.

The name "Methodist Community" was apparently bestowed on this body when it was reorganised under Wesley's guidance. This name continued after the Society had left City Road, for a reproduction of a work-house and lodging-house "Plan" is given bearing that designation in 1856. But the title was felt to be no longer correct and it was altered to "The Community," and later to "The Christian Community" as at present.

The centenary of the reorganisation by John Wesley was celebrated by the erection of a Memorial Hall in Bethnal Green.

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It will be noted that the word "reorganisation" is used in the above story to describe what took place in 1772. Doubtless the compilers have ground to go upon in tracing the work back, as they do, to the Moravians. They are certainly not actuated by any desire to minimise the work of Wesley, for in their eyes the association of the Society with John Wesley is a high privilege. But it should be observed that the Plan of 1856, which they reproduce, says, Instituted under the Patronage of the Rev. J. Wesley, 1772. Tyerman speaks of the widespread nature of the work a hundred years later, and says: Into such a Society has been developed the small band of godly Methodists, sent forth by Wesley in 1772, to visit London paupers and London vagabonds.

Tyerman refers to the obituary notice of Mr. George Mackie, senior, of the City Road, London, published in the *Methodist Magazine* for 1821. He had been a steady member of the Methodist Society for more than fifty years, and for forty years a zealous and respected Local Preacher in the London Circuit. He died on October 25, 1821, in the 71st year of his age. About the year 1776, the record says, he, in conjunction with a few other young men, formed a plan for visiting the sick, and instructing the poor in the workhouses. This good work was sanctioned by Mr. Wesley, in a note which says, "I approve of your design; *let it be well-conducted*; and it will be much to the glory of God." Being soon taken from this sphere of usefulness, and appointed to act as a Local Preacher, he left the plan with his companions; who have, with others who have since acted in the same way, been made a blessing to hundreds of the indigent and ignorant.

Tyerman identifies this movement with the Christian Community, and apparently knows nothing of any link between it and any previous work.

Dr. Simon in *John Wesley the Master Builder* gives substantially the same account of the matter. It would be interesting to have the exact facts of the case.

The pamphlet above referred to says the first recorded set of Rules was issued in 1800. Tyerman refers to Rules published in 1811 in terms which seem to indicate that he thought them to be the first published. These required, he says, that in order to admission, every candidate must be a member of the late Rev. John Wesley's Society twelve months, a man of strict piety and irreproachable character, &c.

F. F. BRETHERTON.

LETTERS TO HENRY BROOKE, OF DUBLIN.

A LETTER FROM JAMES MORGAN.

About James Morgan,¹ who occupies a peculiar niche in the gallery of Wesley's preachers, we have information

"enough, yet not too much
to long for more."

He was born in 1736, at Clonakilty, Co. Cork, where he was

1. For authorities I have relied chiefly on the *Standard Journals* and *Letters*, Crookshank's *History*, Atmore's *Memorial*, and the *Arminian Magazine*.

converted in his teens. We next hear of him from Walsh, who wrote² to Wesley on October 8, 1755: "Brother Morgan, after labouring usefully for some time in Waterford, is running away from the work, from a consciousness of his inability; yet it seems he has more extensive gifts than some who have preached for years." In 1764 he was at Bandon, with Taylor for Assistant, and in January, 1765, was transferred to Dublin. During the next few years his fame as a preacher was far flung in Ireland from Londonderry in the north to Youghal in the south. In 1766 he was appointed one of five Assistants on the north-west round, whom subsequently³ Wesley described as "devoted to God, men of a single eye, whose whole heart is in the work, and who constantly trample on pleasure and pain." In the summer of 1767 he accompanied Wesley on tour, and preached more than once in his hearing, and to his satisfaction.⁴

1768 is made interesting by a meeting of Morgan with the Rev. Henry Goldsmith. The latter was Oliver Goldsmith's brother and slightly his senior.⁵ Oliver in 1764 dedicated *The Traveller* to him, and in the prose epistle mentioned "an income of forty pounds a year." This suggests that Henry at least shares with his father the honour of having sat for the famous portrait in *The Deserted Village*. The stipend was attached to the curacy of Kilkenny West, which Henry then held, but it was during a temporary visit to Athlone that he met Morgan. A member of the society invited them to tea in her house. "In the course of conversation Mr. Goldsmith made numerous inquiries concerning Mr. Morgan's views, and proposed some objections, which were answered so much to his satisfaction that he said there was but one other point which he wished to have cleared up; but as it was time to go to the public service, he would wait another opportunity. He listened with deep interest to the sermon, and at the close of the meeting, having stopped to speak to Mr. Morgan, told him that the discourse had completely cleared up the point in question, so that his mind was entirely satisfied." Unhappily they never saw each other again, for soon afterwards Goldsmith died of a sudden fever, speaking of Morgan, it is said,⁶ with his latest breath.

The rest of Morgan's life is briefly told. His itinerancy had

2. *Arm. Mag.*, 1798, 440-1.

3. *Letters*, v, 46-7.

4. *Journals*, v, 210.

5. cf. Dr. Balderston's edition of Oliver Goldsmith's letters, p. 57.

6. Crookshank's *History*, I, 215, from which the previous quotation is taken.

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often been interrupted by physical and nervous sickness. These no doubt help to explain those quarrels in which, as we shall see, he took a rather too prominent part. Repeatedly he had to leave his circuit and recuperate, and according⁷ to Atmore "he afterwards sunk into a deep *mysticism*" and "buried his most excellent talent in the earth." In 1762 he published a biography of Walsh, describing himself on the title page as "a member of the Church of England"; and in 1772 three sermons with the general title *The Crucified Jesus*. He died at Dublin in 1774.

Wesley's high opinion of his gifts and character cannot be reasonably disputed. In 1760 he regarded him⁸ as the Irish colleague nearest to "the spirit of Thomas Walsh." Nine years of various intercourse were not enough to alter this judgment, witness a carefully worded letter⁹ that Wesley addressed to Prof. John Liden. There deliberately he placed Morgan at the head of a list of his fifteen best preachers. In his Will of 1768 he bequeathed his watch to Morgan. Yet he was well aware of his friend's faults. On September 3 of the same year he wrote¹⁰ to him: "Unto you it was given to suffer a little of what you extremely wanted—obloquy and evil report. . . . O Jemmy, you do not know yourself. You cannot bear to be continually steeped in poison—in the esteem and praise of men." Either to this, or what is more probable, to a similar but subsequent letter Morgan replied¹¹ from Bristol on May 9, 1771.

This date and place help to identify the authorship of a letter that is in Mrs. Rainsford's collection. It is signed "J.M." and written from Bristol on May 1, 1771. It is addressed to Henry Brooke,—whom Morgan received into the Dublin society in April, 1765,—and beside the address is a scholium that mentions Morgan's name. Its publication adds to the small number¹² of his letters that have hitherto been printed.

My dear Friend,

I neither upbraid or complain. I only observe that formerly the Intervals between your Letters, were not so long. There are few I either do, or desire to correspond wth. I think *you* are pretty nearly to me w^t you ever were; if not altogether.

I am almost afraid of that big priced House. But I think you do nothing hand over head: therefore must

7. See p. 286 of his *Memorial*.

8. *Letters*, IV, 94.

9. *Letters*, V, 154.

10. *Letters*, V, 103-5.

11. *Arm. Mag.*, 1784, 447.

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acquiesce in your, no doubt, digested Reasons.

I am glad you have had a busy winter. The spirit of this world in me w^d wish you a couple of score more of them. Tho' if wishing w^d do, that same Spirit w^d wish those winters otherwise employed.

Blessed be the goodness of our Lord that you have had Health to be abroad, & so closely to apply at home.

The disturbances at the House between P. & L. has given me Concern ; tho' I have heard no particulars.

I heard wth true pleasure, before the recep^t of yours, of the Letter & Donation of y^r worthy Brother. I truly share in that Gift of Love. Ye are indeed a favoured Family. The Spring of your Mercies can never dry !

My Soul has often panted to be released from its Prison since I saw you. The period at times, & not very long since, seemed at hand. One thing is certain, the Life of Faith has been more fully open^d to my View, & Rest in HIM has sweetly sufficed. O my dear H. let us not lose our Sight & relish of those real Goods. Of the clamour of Words & Swell of Profession, you & I have been long weary. A deeper Good is still our Object. Let us pray much that new Occurrences or multiplicity of avocations do not, (I will not say, deprive us the moral & spiritual Sense ; but) blunt the Edge of our spiritual appetite. May the ONE THING needful be *felt* by us with encreasing Reality, *the one thing indeed*.

Our Friend M^r Lunell, enquires concerning you. He says he wrote lately. Six Weeks ago he drooped & seemed to fade indeed. Of late, he is allowed another Spring ; His character is nearly the same—a Companion for all Casts ; which (*entre nous*) makes your Friends Visits the fewer.

Last week I put on board the Duke of York, Cap^t Davis, of Dublin, a pint Bottle containing a famous Liquid for the Scurvy, & a Letter, for Miss Wright at M^r Simpsons. You will please to inform her of it, that when the Ship arrives, if they should delay to deliver it, she may send for it.

Accounts I had of my Mother sometime ago almost determined me to cross the Water without delay. I was not indeed well equal to it. Later accounts are more favourable. Yet I am apprehensive that every post may bring me Intelligence which w^d render it highly expedient I should be

12. *Arm. Mag.*, 1783, 217 ; 1784, 446 ; 1798, 491.

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at the other side with all convenient Speed. In this as in *all* things our rest is the same—"Thy Will be done"!

I am with ever affectionate Love & regards to the whole house as to your dear Nancy.

ever & sincerely yours

J. M.

Bristol

May 1. 71.

I expect wth our Lord's help to be shortly in London.

How shall I omit presenting my Love & affectionate respects to my (still I will say) worthy Friends in Will^m Street?

The calm that pervades this is too halcyon to be normal. The suspicion is abundantly justified that Morgan not long before was himself a centre of disturbance. In 1767 Helton and Olivers were appointed to Dublin. Morgan, without an appointment, came to stay there too. Olivers, to use his own words,¹³ was "grieved to see so much levity" in the society, and in opposition to it spoke his mind "very freely." Morgan considered this discipline too rigid, and openly dissented. "The consequence was," says Olivers, "he and his friends rose up against me, and quite bore me down." In the following year Taylor was Assistant, and sought to continue Olivers' strict rule. Again Morgan was present, though contrary to Wesley's wishes,¹⁴ and led the opposition. In 1770 the dissentients built a chapel in Gravel Walk, with the hope, it may be, of one day becoming independent. To win Wesley's approval, however, and to maintain the general confidence, they included Brooke, Garrett and Martin among the trustees.¹⁵ In the April of 1771 Wesley tried, with only a measure of success, to bring peace by explaining the structure of a Methodist society, and by expressly forbidding the Leaders to usurp the authority whether of the Stewards or of the Assistant.¹⁶

Through lack, not only of space but also of knowledge, the remaining notes must be skimpy.

Morgan's solicitude and joy over Brooke's prosperity can best be explained by quoting Strickland.¹⁷ Brooke after his marriage seems to have lived on his capital. "An unfortunate speculation, however, obliged him to resume painting, and we find

13. *Arm. Mag.*, 1779, 142-3.

14. *Letters*, V, 105.

16. *Journals*, V, 404-6.

15. Crookshank's *History*, I, 239.

17. *Dictionary of Irish Artists*, I, 97.

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him in 1770 established in Stafford Street as a drawing-master. In that year he exhibited 'The Raising of Lazarus' at the Society of Artists in William Street, and obtained the premium of fifteen pounds from the Dublin Society 'for the second best History Piece.'" Since Morgan's letter was addressed to Stafford Street, presumably the "big priced House" was there.

As for the two subjects of "the disturbances at the House," one was probably Samuel Levick, who in 1770 was appointed Assistant in Dublin. The identity of "P" it may be charitable not to pursue. In 1773 Wesley made a scathing comment¹⁸ on the Dublin leaders: "their distractions finished the life of Samuel Levick, one of the most sensible and amiable men breathing." Levick was frail in health, but mighty as a preacher. He too was included in the list sent to Prof. Liden.

No doubt the "worthy Brother" was Captain Robert Brooke, who after soldiering in India returned in 1775 to Co. Kildare, and established the town of Prosperous. To this particular "Donation" there may be a reference in an affectionate letter¹⁹ that Henry Brooke wrote in 1774: "'Tis not the bounties of your benevolent heart, that affects me so -- no, my dear Robert! . . . You have indeed, blessed be God, smoothed the down hill of life for them [our parents], free from labour and care."

William Lunell, a partner of the banking house of Lunell and Dickson, belonged to a Huguenot family, and from 1747, thanks chiefly to Thomas Williams, was intimately associated with Dublin Methodism. Both the Wesleys and Whitefield appreciated his generous hospitality. He lived in Francis Street, and in later life developed pronounced Calvinistic sympathies. Valuable notes on him occur in *Proceedings* II, 33; IV, 87; XVI, 17.

Samuel Simpson spent his early life at Oatfield, and built the first Methodist chapel in Athlone. Subsequently he came to Dublin, and in 1771, according to Wesley's list of members,²⁰ was living in William Street. Possibly his family are the "worthy Friends" of Morgan's postscript.

R. E. KER.

18. *Letters*, VI, 9.

19. D'Olier's *Life of Henry Brooke*, 165.

20. *Journals*, V, 407n.

WELSH WESLEYAN METHODISM 1800-1858.

ITS ORIGINS, GROWTH AND SECESSIONS,

BY A. H. WILLIAMS, M.A.

Published by the Methodist Bookroom, Bangor. (6/-, Post 6d.) 378 pp.

Our Welsh friends are to be congratulated on the appearance of this volume, and we hope that their courage in issuing such a work in English will be rewarded by a good response from the larger constituency to which it is thus made available. The story has in some measure been told already, but never with such a wealth of detail. The substance of the book was submitted as a thesis for the M.A. Degree of the University of Wales. Part of it is reprinted from *Proceedings*, xviii.

Wesleyan Methodism has never obtained in Wales a shadow of its hold on England. Arising out of the Methodist Revival pioneered by Howell Harris and Daniel Rowland, Calvinistic Methodism accomplished for Wales the work done by Wesleyan Methodism for England, becoming the dominant Methodist body in the country.

John Wesley paid forty-six visits to Wales, the majority of them being to South Wales, where the language difficulty apparently troubled him less than it did in the North. The long list of churches in which he preached reveals widespread friendliness on the part of the clergy. It was very early in the history of the Methodist Movement that Wesley met Howell Harris, and shortly before the latter's death in 1772, Wesley preached "at the request of my old friend Howell Harris . . . and we found our hearts knit together as at the beginning."

In 1741, however, Harris sided with Whitefield against Wesley on doctrinal matters, this causing Welsh Methodism to become overwhelmingly Calvinistic. Mr. Williams points out that at first the two movements were friendly to each other, Wesley virtually promising to confine his activities to the English in Wales, leaving the Welsh parts of the country to the care of the Welsh Methodists. Methodists, whether Calvinists or Arminians, emphasized holiness, not notions. In those days Methodism was essentially fluid. Howell Harris and John Wesley could attend each other's Conferences and Associations, and yet remain leaders

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of their own peoples, and, as Mr. Williams shows in detail, individuals could serve both Wesleyan and Calvinistic Methodism without inconsistency.

As time went on discussion between Calvinists and Arminians became violent. Much of it consisted in futile battles of words. But it may be claimed that these controversies were not entirely wasted. Men were encouraged to read and think, and the stirring of men's mind produced ultimately many rich harvests in literature and politics.

The term Calvinistic Methodist was not officially heard till 1801, and it was not until 1800 that a Mission to establish Welsh Wesleyan Methodism was set up by the Wesleyan Conference.

But there were Welsh Wesleyans before there was Welsh Wesleyan Methodism. Denbighshire and Flintshire heard Wesleyan Methodist preaching during a considerable part of Wesley's life time.

A number of Societies such as Wrexham, Mold, Caergwrle, Rackery and later Ruthin, Denbigh and Northop, were enrolled in the membership book of the Chester Circuit. Mr. Williams brings out more fully than previous historians, the fact that the Chester preachers, both itinerant and local, did much preaching in the area extending a few miles beyond the Welsh border. He gives an interesting account of the three outstanding pioneers, Richard Harrison of Northop, Evan Roberts of Denbigh, and Edward Jones of Bathafarn. The latter he thinks has been given somewhat disproportionate prominence by previous historians. It was the redoubtable Dr. Thomas Coke who persuaded the Conference of 1800 to create the Welsh Wesleyan Methodist Mission. In the course of his numerous journeyings through North Wales on his way to Ireland the conviction had arisen in his mind that something should be attempted for the former country in the way of vernacular preaching, a method which had been greatly blessed in the latter. The Conference agreed at once. Owen Davies and John Hughes were appointed to Ruthin, a circuit that existed in prospect rather than in fact.

In 1801 John Bryan, a preacher of popular gifts, who was the most striking figure in the early history of his denomination, was admitted on trial as a Welsh itinerant preacher, and the first Welsh Wesleyan Methodist Chapel was opened at Denbigh on New Year's Day, 1802. Dr. Coke visited the area in 1805, and recorded, "Our Missions among the Welsh in North Wales in their own language have indeed been successful beyond our most

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sanguine expectations." This year Welsh Wesleyan preachers were sent to South Wales also.

Chapel building progressed very rapidly, under the inspiration of a faith that was not always sufficiently mindful of ways and means, and in 1815 it was reported that no less than 120 had been erected. Unhappily, however, the work showed a decline after 1811, the reasons for which are fully described. Better days came in time; the cholera epidemic of 1832 rendered many people susceptible to religious appeal; the Temperance Movement of 1836 partook of the character of a revival; Wesleyan Methodism gaining many adherents thereby; Centenary celebrations in 1839 resulted in revival; and the peak of the membership, in the period under review, was reached in 1841. Then a decline set in, the results of which were not neutralised until the great Revival of 1859.

The story is summed up in the words "From 2 Societies numbering 45 members, forming part of the Chester Circuit, it had grown by 1858 into a distinct denomination of two Districts, 33 Circuits, 68 ministers, 252 local preachers, and 12,839 members."

Entering upon a phase of the subject which has hitherto received very little attention, the writer records the influence upon Welsh Wesleyan Methodism of Independent Methodism, the Wesleyan Methodist Association and the Wesleyan Reformers, shewing their relationship to a specifically Welsh secession known the "Wesle Bach." This movement, the results of which were strongly felt in North Wales, was an attempt by certain local preachers to throw off the ministerial yoke.

Asking the question what was the peculiar contribution of Wesleyan Methodism to the religious life of Wales, the author makes three suggestions:

First it helped to tone down Calvinism; secondly, its bold policy of Chapel building not only helped to hold its own converts, but encouraged others to make similar provision. Thirdly, says Mr. Williams, it was a novel sight in 1800 for Welshmen to see two Nonconformist ministers living entirely by the Gospel, and actually forbidden to undertake any secular work. Wesleyan Methodism laid emphasis, which made a great impression, upon a full-time ministry with its accompanying responsibility for all Church members. And all this, of course, is additional to its endeavours to fulfil the primary aims of all religious work.

The religious literature of Wales has been enriched for more than a century by *Yr Eurgrawn Wesleyaidd* which has appeared

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without a break from 1809 to the present day. It is the oldest Welsh periodical extant.

Mr. Williams is bilingual, an indispensable qualification in the case of a worker in this subject. The footnotes, which are extremely numerous, following a custom which is much beloved by writers of University essays, reveal that a vast mass of printed and manuscript material in both languages has been searched with great diligence.

What difficulties must be presented to Welsh historians by the paucity of surnames in their country. For instance, the name Jones occurs no less than 139 times in the Index alone!

The book is excellently printed and bound, and is reasonably priced at 6/-

F. F. BRETHERTON.

A LETTER FROM CHARLES WESLEY TO HIS BROTHER SAMUEL.

Xt. Church

Jan. 29, 1734

Dear Brother

Your Letter came very seasonably in arrest of Judgment, after I had got a Purchaser for my Pictures. They will ask little trouble in ye upraising, because I kept an account of my Cartons & Scripture pieces, & the Buyer must judge what they are ye worse for wearing. Those you gave me I do not know how to value, & hope that at present there is no need of doing it any more than of accepting your very kind offer; for if my shirts can but hold out till spring, my good Friend Horn (the second Boss I have in ye World, for my sister & you go but for One) has promised then to help me out a little. You give a most terrible account of your present situation, but I hope eernow the waves and storms are well-nigh gone over you. I wish I cd have the same assurance yt all things wd work together for my good, wch I have yt they will for yours & my sisters! Certainly she who believes a Particular Providence, has no Reason to be frighted either at the Air or the Prince, of it. My Br. & I have many things to hear & say; nor is it in ye Power of even Jeffry himself to deter us from coming as soon as Providence permits. In ye

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meantime you will let us hear from you as often as you can.
Our heartiest Love attends you all.

I am

Your ever obliged &
affectionate Brother

CH. WESLEY

I believe I told you Mr. Morgan was sent for home. Thereby hangs a Tale, of wch more hereafter.—If you have any Pupils to send, pray send 'em to my Brother. For my part, *Omnia habeo, neq̄ quicquam habeo nil cum est nil deest tamen.*

I dare say Jeffry can't fright my sister from her Hours of Retirement. Twd be worth his while to station half his Legions with you, to carry yt Point. But ye Prayer of Faith can vindicate ye sacred Time, as it did in my Mother's case, from his Disturbances.

To the Rev. Mr. Wesley

at Tiverton, Devon.

(Posted at Oxford)

This transcript is kindly contributed by Mr. W. H. V. Bythway, who has the original. He says that the date is not very clearly written, but looks like 1734 or 1735. The address to Tiverton appears to have been written at the same time as the body of the letter.

The fact that Samuel Wesley, junior, was Headmaster of Blundell's School is well known, but the various references to the date of the entrance upon his duties there are rather indefinite and conflicting. Stevenson tells us that at the end of 1731 he was disappointed at not receiving expected advancement at Westminster School, and quotes verses written on January 22nd, 1732, expressing his distress. He goes on to say that a door *soon* opened to the post at Tiverton, and quotes, "A Poetical Epistle to my brother Charles," dated April 20th, 1732, as probably the first theme which occupied his pen at Tiverton.

Dr. Adam Clarke says that there happened to be a vacancy at Tiverton "about the year 1732."

Rev. T. E. Brigden stated in *Proceedings* xi, 148, that Wesley appears to have accepted the Headmastership of Blundell's School in 1733, and to have entered upon his duties there 1734.

A letter from Rev. Samuel Wesley senr., to his son Samuel, suggesting that he should follow him in the Rectory of Epworth,

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is dated, according to one printed version, February 28, 1732, and in another February 28, 1732/3. It contains the sentence, "Neither of you have your health in London."

The tombstone of Rev. Samuel Wesley at Tiverton says he died November 6, 1739, having been for seven years headmaster.

To clear up this point application was made to the Bursar of Blundell's School, and a reply followed with kindly promptitude.

Mr. E. G. Pierce says that Mr. F. J. Snell, a historian of the School who has recently died, gives 1732 as the date of Wesley's appointment. But the source of his information does not appear, and in face of the following extracts seems to be incorrect.

Att a Meeting of the Feoffees of Mr. Blundells good uses at the Schoolhouse in Tiverton on Wednesday the 10th day of Aprill 1734

Ordered that the Rev^d M^r Sam^l Wesly Master of Arts be elected & chosen and is hereby Elected & chosen Master of the Gramar School in Tiverton afores^d in the roome of the Rev^d M^r Jones Deceased according to the Will and is to have fifty pounds yearly paid him by Quarterly payments.

Jan 3^d 1739* Memorand that pursuant to notice given to the Feoffees of Tiverton School to meet on this day at the School afores^d to elect a Master in the room of M^r Wesley deceased.

* This date evidently follows the "old style."

FROM THE GREAT "ACCOUNT BOOK"

1734

Jan 7	paid Mr. Jones the Schoolmaster half a years salary ending at Xmas	25 0 0
July 28	paid Mr. Wesley the Schoolmaster one quarters salary ending at Midsummer last	12 10 0

1740

Jan 7	paid Mrs. Wesley the late Masters Widow the Quarters salary exclusive of the 2 : 10 : 0 paid to Mr Greenway the Assistant Master due at Christmas by Mr Greenway	12 10 0
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Mr. Morgan,—William Morgan, one of the first Oxford Methodists, died in 1732, but Richard Morgan, his brother, was active at a later stage. F.F.B.

WESLEY.—HERVEY.—SANDEMAN.

The publication of James Hervey's *Theron and Aspasio; or a Series of Dialogues*, in 1775, initiated a theological controversy which profoundly disturbed religious circles in Great Britain and America during the second half of the 18th century. Hervey himself was a man of mild and gentle disposition, averse to controversy, and little anticipated the effects which his work would produce. The book, which deals particularly with the Way of Salvation, met with a mixed reception. While some hailed it as a masterly treatment of the doctrine of Justification, others regarded it as an inadequate representation of New Testament teaching. Among the latter was John Wesley, with whom Hervey had been associated in the "Holy Club" at Oxford. Wesley strongly disapproved its extreme Calvinism and expressed his dissent in a pamphlet entitled, "A Preservative against Unsettled Notions in Religion." But the severest strictures came from the pen of Robert Sandeman, the son-in-law and colleague of John Glas, a Scottish minister who had been finally deposed by the General Assembly in 1730, after which his followers were organised in churches on the Independent model. Sandeman's *Letters on 'Theron and Aspasio'* (2 vols. 8vo, 1757) fell like a bombshell into the Evangelical camp. Soon a stream of controversial literature began to pour from the press. Among those who replied to Sandeman was John Wesley who in the same year (1757) published a small tract of twelve pages—*A Sufficient Answer to Letters to the Author of Theron and Aspasio* (12mo.). Wesley's pamphlet received a rejoinder in *Remarks on the Rev. Mr. Wesley's Sufficient Answer*.

Who was the writer of this rejoinder? The pamphlet bears only the initials of the author, viz., "J.D." The most likely person answering to those initials is John Dove, a layman who took an active part in the Sandemanian controversy. John Dove was by trade a tailor, but his learning won for him the title "The Hebrew Tailor." Dove was a member of the Independent Church meeting at the Three Cranes in Thames Street, London. This Church was seriously disturbed by Sandeman's *Letters*. Its pastor, Samuel Pike, one of the most scholarly ministers of his time, read the *Letters* with mingled feelings. He entered into correspondence with Sandeman, but was finally won over to the latter's point of view, and ended his days as a Sandemanian. Dove had already proved himself a friend and supporter of his pastor, for

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when the latter's *A Form of Sound Words* (1755) was attacked by the Socinian champion, Dr. Caleb Fleming, in *No Protestant Popery* (1756), John Dove entered the lists in defence of Pike, in *Remarks upon a Pamphlet written by the Rev. Mr. Caleb Fleming* (1756). Sandeman's *Letters* was introduced to Pike by certain members of his congregation, and it is very probable that Dove was among the number. Pike's church was sharply divided over the teaching of Sandeman. In 1759, William Fuller, a member of the church, issued a pamphlet, *Reflections on an Epistolary Correspondence between S.P. and E.S.*, in which he deprecated Sandeman's influence upon the pastor. Another member who objected to Pike's views published an answer to his *Free Grace Indeed*, viz., *The Scripture Doctrine of Justifying Faith* (1760) by Thomas Uffington. Again Dove came forward in support of Pike with his *Rational Religion Distinguished from that which is Enthusiastic*.

In view of Dove's attitude during this controversy in which he leans decidedly in the Sandemanian side, probability is given to the inference that the defence of Sandeman against Wesley in the earlier pamphlet under the initials "J.D." is from the same pen.

Literature :—

- Wilson, *History of Dissenting Churches in London*, II, 85 ff
III, 261 ff.
Bogue and Bennett, IV, 121 ff.
New Evangelical Magazine, VI (1820), 361 ff.
Green, *Wesley Bibliography*, p. 102.

J. T. HORNSBY.

AN ANGLICAN VIEW OF BAPTISMS IN EARLY METHODISM.

Mr. URBAN,

Aug. 13, 1807.

I beg to be favoured, through the channel of your Magazine, with a solution of the following theological question. It has happened that, in the parish where I reside, several children have been baptised in the Conventicle belonging to the Methodists, of course by the self-constituted Teacher who officiates there. The Minister of the Parish, as the most likely means to prevent the recurrence of such

irregularities, has adopted the resolution of refusing to bury such children ; on the authority, I suppose, of the rubrick prefixed to the Burial office, which directs, that this office be not used for any "that die unbaptised." Now the question is, whether such a refusal is legal? Wheatly assumes the affirmative, Shepherd the negative side of this question. For myself, I incline to the affirmative ; and for these reasons: In the rubrick prefixed to the office of Private Baptism, it is ordered, that the Minister of the parish, or in his absence, any other *lawful* Minister that can be procured, with them that are present, call upon God, &c. But the Methodist Teacher, not having received Episcopal ordination, cannot, we know, be accounted a lawful Minister of the Established Church. Now I admit, with Shepherd, that our Church considers the Baptisms of Roman Catholics, and of *professed Dissenters from the Church*, to be valid ; and, therefore, that no Minister can deny the use of the Burial-office to persons having been so baptised. But I see a material difference in the present case. Many of the Methodists, and certainly those of whom I am speaking, profess to live in communion with the Establishment, and regularly attend the celebration of her solemnities. It seems clear, therefore, that *their* children must be baptised by a *lawful* Minister, as the rubrick enjoins ; or, that the baptism of such children is to be considered irregular and invalid. Consequently that they have no just claim to the use of the Burial office.

Yours, &c.

CLERICUS.

This extract from *The Gentleman's Magazine*, is contributed by Mr. George Brownson.

EARLY METHODISM IN WHITCHURCH (SALOP)

On Thursday, April 4, 1751, Wesley entered Whitchurch for the first time, but does not appear to have preached there. It is likely that there was then not one Methodist in the town.

Not long after this another Methodist preacher named Thomas Olivers, entered the town. It is not recorded whether he preached or not.

It is not known for certain who was the first Methodist preacher to preach in Whitchurch. John Nelson went up and

down Cheshire. Christopher Hopper, who was certainly one of the earliest preachers at Alraham and Chester, records concerning one of his earliest evangelistic tours:—"I rode through Cheshire." Peter Jaco wrote, "At the Conference in London the 4th of May 1754, I was appointed for the Manchester Circuit which then took in Cheshire, Lancashire, Derbyshire, Staffordshire and part of Yorkshire." Thomas Olivers informs us that early in his Itinerant life he was appointed a year to Chester. Robert Roberts, born near Chester, and at different periods, labouring in that part of England as a Local Preacher, and afterwards as an Itinerant Preacher, was a man of great enterprise and daring¹

One or more of these brave hearted servants of Christ would find, or make, an opportunity for preaching in the open air at Whitchurch or the immediate vicinity, and probably also at Dods-green and Bronington. When the weather proved unfavourable, some persons would prove willing to furnish house room to the Evangelists.

The name of the first Class-Leader seems to have been Joseph Brown. There is reason to think that he and his wife Ann, were the first persons in Whitchurch to welcome the Methodist Preachers into their house, and to allow preaching in it. The second Class-Leader in Whitchurch so far as can now be ascertained, was Samuel Roberts. At a very early period a class was also formed at Dodsgreen in the charge of William Mate. At Bronington the Leader of early times was Joseph Winn. Duckington also had a Methodist class meeting while the work was still recent, the leader being James Woolridge.

On Friday, March 15, 1771, Wesley again visited Whitchurch. He had preached that day in Wem and was on his way to Chester; but on this occasion he also preached to a large congregation in Whitchurch. He recorded:—"We were more at a loss what to do with the congregation at Whitchurch in the evening. At length we desired all that could to squeeze into the house; the rest stood quietly without: and none, I believe, repented their labour, for God was eminently present." We have reason to believe that Wesley was, on this occasion, entertained by a gentleman of considerable property. We gather also that

1. I have found an old record of Methodist beginnings in this locality. "The latter end of 1790 missionaries came at different times and preached on the borders of Wales and Shropshire, on the Commons, in the open air. During that period there was one John Tregortha, from Staffordshire, preached about the country." So wrote the late Mr. R. Thursfield Smith. *Proceedings*, v, 192.

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there was already a meeting house provided for the congregation. This would be the one in Clay-Pit Street, most likely transformed from cottages into a Chapel, as it was afterwards, when a commodious Chapel was built in St. Mary's Street, re-transformed into cottages. According to a very common usage in those days, the Methodist chapel, in which Wesley thus preached in 1771, was a little distance from the main street, access being by a narrow entry. As there was a somewhat commodious yard in front of the little chapel, secluded from the thoroughfare, the accommodation for the outside portion of the congregation was perhaps, on the whole preferable to that experienced by those who had succeeded in squeezing into the building. On Wesley's return from Ireland, four months afterwards, being at Liverpool, he be-thought himself of his pleasant visit, and actually rode all the way to Whitchurch chiefly to enjoy and cement a friendship formed in March. He recorded, "Thursday July 25th, 1771. I rode across the country to Whitchurch, and spent an agreeable evening with that lovely family."²

John Parsons was born in 1730. On Sundays he generally went to Church, but had not the faintest idea of finding his highest gratification in fellowship with God. Mr. Parsons had sufficient wealth to secure any kind of earthly gratification, and though he never directly opposed religion, he lived in pleasure and without God. He was a man of some culture, and fond of reading.

His curiosity was excited by the descriptions given in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of a new sect of religionists, generally known as "Methodists," whose headquarters were in London. To one specimen of the sort of trash provided in those days for "the upper classes" we must refer, for without such reference the history of John Parsons, Esq. (as he was generally designated) could scarcely be fully understood. In 1741 an absurd letter was inserted in the *Gentleman's Magazine* which purported to be written by a Methodist and addressed to a Clergyman. The writer charges the Clergyman with turning "the *Scriptures* upside down," and so forth. Appended to the letter are annotations of a scurrilous and indecent character.

Mr. Parsons resolved that, when he next went to London, he would ascertain something more definite concerning this sect. On

2. A footnote in the *Standard Journal* at this date says that Mr. R. Thursfield Smith believed that the "lovely family" was named Brown. A descendant was still living when the information was given. But the Rev. Benjamin Smith's statement that it was the home of Mr. Parsons which is referred to is doubtless derived from careful inquiry.

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his next visit to the Metropolis he was informed that John Wesley was announced to preach in the open air on Blackheath. Thither he repaired. Intensely desirous to make the most of his opportunity, he succeeded in getting very near to the preacher. He was disappointed. So far as he could discern the declarations made were much like what he was accustomed to read in the Bible and Prayer Book. During the sermon, however, some miscreant in the crowd threw a stone which cut the preacher's face. Wesley would not allow the injury to suspend his discourse. He used his handkerchief to wipe away the blood oozing from his cheek, but went on with his preaching. The attention of the hearer from Whitchurch was now fully aroused. He was indignant that any man, especially a Clergyman manifestly trying to do good, should be so treated. Before he left London he was fully convinced that statements made in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, *Weekly Miscellany*, and similar periodicals concerning the Methodists were basely libellous. When he returned to Whitchurch it was with the desire to hear more; from these Methodist Preachers. He speedily devised means to ensure this. He had some property in Clay-pit Street. He caused a large preaching room to be formed behind the front cottages, yet near to the street and airy. To that room he requested the Methodists to bring their preachers and stated that he intended to hear them. Eventually he became so enamoured of the services that he had one of the front cottages fitted up so that whenever such arrangement was needful, from inclement weather or other causes, refreshment and shelter could be provided for the preacher and also for Mr. Parsons' family and himself, so that the Lord's Day might be without inconvenience entirely devoted to sacred purposes. At other times hospitality could be extended to the servants of Christ at Wirswall, about a mile distant from Clay-pit Street Chapel. There can be little doubt that it was Mr. Parsons' dwelling which was twice visited by Mr. Wesley in 1771, and that it was of the inmates of that home that he employed that designation :— "That lovely family." It seems that the property in Clay-pit Street, including the Chapel, remained in the possession of Mr. Parsons. In 1879, when the beautiful St. John's Chapel was opened, that property was still owned by his descendants.

(This article, abridged from notes written by the late Rev. Benjamin Smith, will be continued).

ROBERT MORGAN, DUBLIN. (IN MEMORIAM).

With the passing, on January 13, 1936, of Robert Morgan, in his 86th year, Irish Methodism has lost a most loyal and distinguished son, whose service throughout his long life was noted for its distinctive and characteristic qualities.

The absorbing interest of his life was religion, and in the Church of his choice he found scope for his special gifts. He was identified for some seventy years with Blackhall Place Church, Dublin. The date over its doorway is 1770, and it was appropriate that he more than any other should, by his consistency of devotion exercised over a long tract of years, have carried on with singular effectiveness the Wesley spirit and heritage associated with this old sanctuary, whose history he has recorded in his attractive brochure, *Old Gravel Walk*,—its former name. His loyalty, however, was not restricted to one Church, nor could one Church have contained him, for Robert Morgan was Connexional to his finger tips. He was a familiar, indeed we look upon him as an essential, figure at the Dublin Methodist Council, and not less so at the Annual Conferences of the Methodist Church in Ireland, while he took a personal interest in the work of several of our Methodist philanthropic and evangelistic agencies.

As a local preacher, Mr. Morgan was eagerly welcomed in any of our city churches when opportunity offered. Dignity and reverence, with freshness of outlook and vividness of style, marked the presentation of his message. His flair for the treasures of our hymnology was shown both in the extent of his knowledge and in his selective and fastidious taste. He was, moreover, a most appreciative hearer, and his retentive memory was stored with lore concerning the great preachers of his time.

Intensely as he was attached to his own Church, there was a broad catholicity in his interests. A striking personality himself, he was a close observer of the men and movements of his day, he quickly responded to the allure of literature, and his racy and original pen was seldom idle.

To those of us who have known him for many years, Robert Morgan, even physically, never appeared to grow old. His wide human sympathies and buoyant temperament, his sense of humour, never far away, and his abiding and rejoicing faith, maintained to the last the zest and vitality of his prime.

Some years ago he initiated, with the co-operation of the

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Rev. William Corrigan, the Irish Branch of the Wesley Historical Society, and was instrumental in forming the collection of historical material which is now housed in Edgehill College, Belfast. There has followed, consequently, a quickened interest in the work of Wesley and his coadjutors in Ireland, and in the effort to preserve Church records of value. This has been the last, but not the least, of Mr. Morgan's many services to Irish Methodism.

The morning of the day on which he was taken ill was spent in sending out copies of the *Proceedings* of the Wesley Historical Society addressed, as usual, in his steady, virile hand. It was his last bit of work on earth, done with the last stroke of his pen. Two days later he entered into the life which is life indeed.

D. B. BRADSHAW.

NOTES AND QUERIES.

753. **EAYRS ESSAY AWARDS.** Our readers will be pleased to note that in memory of the late Rev. Dr. George Eayrs, whose work in the sphere of Methodist history is well-remembered, a scheme of prize essays has been arranged. Sums of £15 and £5 are offered for an essay of about 5000 words, "showing freshness of treatment and evidence of research." This offer is limited to ministers who have "travelled" not more than fifteen years.

The subject for 1935-6 is "John Wesley's Christian Library"; for 1936-7, "The Influence of Moravianism on the Organization of Methodism"; for 1937-8, "Methodism and the Chartists." See *Minutes of Conference*, 1935, p. 42.

754. **RELIGIOUS SOCIETIES.** Dr. Simon chose as the title of the first volume of his work on Wesley, the title *John Wesley and the Religious Societies*. He described, with greater fullness than previous writers, the influence of these Societies upon the development of Methodism, and the relation between the old movement and the new. He quotes largely from the "Account" by Dr. Woodward. This is not readily met with by modern students, and we are pleased to note that the fourth edition (the edition used by Dr. Simon) has recently been reprinted, so far as relates to its salient portions. Mr. D. E. Jenkins, M.A., Litt.D., of Denbigh, contributes an introduction, tracing with care the history and

progress of the Societies and their relationship to other movements, such as the Society for the Reformation of Manners. After stating that to follow the movements of the Wesleys and of Whitefield among these bands of Christians would need a large volume, he proceeds with a review of what was accomplished in Wales, showing the influence of Dr. Woodward's book in the Principality. Here, as indeed throughout the introduction, Dr. Jenkins presents concisely valuable facts the gathering of which must have involved much research. "Dr. Woodward's little book is referred to in scores of books on Church History, and in hundreds of biographies; but no one seems to have cared to say more of his life than that he was a minister of Poplar." Dr. Jenkins tells us, amongst other things, that he was the son of the Rev. Joseph Woodward, Rector of Dursley, and was born February 14, 1655, and educated at Oxford. He was appointed minister of Poplar by the East India Company in 1689. He resigned his post there in 1711, having been appointed Rector of Newchurch, Kent, and curate of Maidstone, where he died, August 6, 1712. He was buried in the chancel of that church.

The book reprinted (in part) is entitled: *An Account of the Religious Societies in the City of London, &c., and of their Endeavours for Reformation of Manners, by Josiah Woodward, D.D. The fourth edition, enlarged. London: Printed and sold by J. Downing in Bartholomew-Close near West Smithfield, 1712.*

What about Scotland? I have before me a little pamphlet of 112 pages which seems to open up a promising field of enquiry. It is called: *The duty and advantage of Religious Societies, proven from Scripture and Reason: with proper Directions to all who either are or may be engaged in such Societies. In two Letters, One from the Reverend Mr. John Willison, Minister of the Gospel at Dundee, and the other from the Reverend Mr. John Bonar, Minister of the Gospel at Torphichen; Both directed to a private Society in Edinburgh, Anno 1740. To which is subjoined, An Inquiry into the Nature, Obligation and Advantages of Religious Fellowship: Together with an Attempt to direct in the proper Exercise of it. First published in the year 1746 by Mr. John Warden then Minister of the Gospel in Campsie.*

Kilmarnock: Printed and sold by J. Wilson, Bookseller. M,DCC,LXXXIII.

F.F.B.