

THE REV. SAMUEL WESLEY AND THE SPALDING GENTLEMEN'S SOCIETY

In Spalding, now-a-days famous for its culture of flowers, there is evidence that a castle was erected in the days of William the Conqueror. This country town also boasts of a Society which is the second oldest of its kind, the Royal Society being the first; whilst another source of pride is the possession of the second museum to be established, the first being the Ashmolean at Oxford.

The Gentlemen's Society, as it is called, was founded in 1710 by Mr. Maurice Johnson and had amongst its members such well known men as Sir Isaac Newton, Alexander Pope, John Gay, Joseph Addison, Sir Hans Sloane, Dr. Bentley, and Dr. Stukeley, F.R.S. In later years we find such names enrolled as Alfred Lord Tennyson, Sir Walter Besant, Earl Curzon, and many other notabilities. The courteous Honorary Secretary, Mr. G. W. Bailey, F.R.S.A., thought I would be specially interested in the fact that the Rev. Samuel Wesley, M.A., and the Rev. Samuel Wesley, Junr. M.A., were also members. The father of the founder of Methodism was elected in 1723. The purpose of the Society was the encouragement of learning and Samuel Wesley was a true scholar. The son of Susanna may have derived from his mother the peaceable methodical and emotional side of his nature; but the son of Samuel derived from his father the patience, pertinacity, and intellectual ability which he displayed to such a remarkable extent.

One wonders, moreover, how far Charles is indebted to his father for the encouragement of his poetical gifts which have laid not only Methodism but the whole Christian Church under an obligation to him. His father wrote many poems, one of which, his translation, so-called, of *Eupolis's Hymn to the Creator* called forth special commendation. There is a manuscript poem on *The Song of the Three Children* by Samuel Wesley in the possession of the Spalding Gentlemen's Society.

Maurice Johnson was evidently a friend of the Rector of Epworth. They had this in common, both were the fathers

of large families; Johnson had twenty-six children and Wesley nineteen. My attention to the association of Samuel Wesley with the Spalding Society was first aroused when reading Adam Clarke's *Memoirs of the Wesley Family* (2nd Edn. I, 327) in which the following statement occurs:—

In the history of the Spalding Society, contained in the *Bibliotheca Topographica Britannica*, vol. iii., it is said, Mr. Maurice Johnson read to the Society, in 1730, a dissertation in Latin, drawn up by him, at the instance of the Rev. Samuel Wesley, in 1727, entitled, *Jurisprudentia Jobi*; with critical notes and drawings of the *Diphros*, or SEAT from whence Job administered justice, Job xxix. 7 (LXX): "When I prepared my SEAT in the street." The dissertation on this article is very short in Mr. Wesley's book, pages 258-260; perhaps an abridgement of Mr. Johnson's, whose assistance is acknowledged in the preface.

This dissertation is the one numbered XXXII and entitled: *Jurisprudentia Jobi. 1. Legis agrariae and juris haereditatis. 2. Verba forensia and processus actionis.*

It was formerly a custom for those who joined this society to present a book for the Library or a curio for the Museum. Samuel Wesley presented a copy of the *Dissertation upon the Book of Job*, his ponderous magnum opus. As there were only 500 copies issued the volume must be rare to-day. In the copy which I was permitted to inspect, there is written, evidently in the hand of Maurice Johnson, at the top of the title page:—

Liber Soc. Gen. Spalding 1735.

Samuel Wesley Nuper Rectore de Epworth in Diocesis Lincolnensi, ET Soc. GENEROSAE SPALDING ibidem Socio Cui ex Votis Dono communicavit.¹

Under the frontispiece are the words, also written by Maurice Johnson:—"This is the author's own picture, in the Habit and Character of his Hero and Very like him who was not unlike Job in his Manners and many Circumstances." M.J. invenit.

Dr. Adam Clarke comments on this frontispiece that it is "well imagined and well done." Towards the conclusion of his life Samuel Wesley, in giving a description of his personal appearance, he says "it is very likely that the picture engraved

¹ This seems to mean "A book belonging to the Spalding Gentlemen's Society, 1735 [given by] Samuel Wesley, recently Rector of Epworth in the Diocese of Lincoln and a member of the said Spalding Gentlemen's Society, to which he promised to present [a copy of this book]."

Samuel Wesley died 25th April 1735 before the book was quite ready. It was on the 12th October of the same year that his son John handed the presentation copy to Queen Caroline.

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by Vertue and prefixed to his *Dissertations on the Book of Job*, was a correct resemblance; the hands, however, are out of all proportion to the rest of the picture." Another criticism made is that of the presence of the arch and portcullis, which "most certainly did not exist in the days of Job."

Vertue, who did some of the engravings in this Book, also executed the Spalding Society's book plate which shows the goddess Venus supported by two tritons, symbolical of the reclamation of the Fenland from the sea. Between the Tritons is a shield bearing the arms of the Society, adapted from the arms of the Earls of Chester and Lincoln, which were also the arms of the Spalding Priory. The motto is "Vicinas Urbes alit"; and underneath the date of institution, MDCCX.

In his *Prolegomena*, the author expresses his indebtedness to Mr. Maurice Johnson in the following words:—

Neque animi ingrati notam effugere potuiffem nisi libertiffime agnoscerem beneficia quam plurimi, et auxilio proposito nostro allata a Viro Doctiffimo Maur. Johnson Armigero, Fundatore Societatis Generosorum Spaldingae, eifque per annos viginti jam ab Epistolis.²

Also on the map, page 170, Dissertation XX11, there is this information. Mauritio Johnson J.C.

Soc: Gen: Spalding: Secr:

Amico suo Amicissimo.

Hanc Triplicis Arabia tabulam

sua ipsius manu Decoratam

D D D

Sam Wesley.

2 Dr. Ryder Smith, who has kindly helped us in the elucidation of the Latin paragraphs, refers us to p. 74 of Sir Charles Oman's *Memories of Victorian Oxford* where it is stated that *armiger* is the correct rendering of *Esquire*. The above extract from the *Prolegomena* means, "Nor could I escape the mark of a thankless mind if I were not to acknowledge very heartily the services of the greatest possible value and help, which have been rendered to our design by the very learned Maur. Johnson Esquire, Founder of the Spalding Society of Gentlemen, services which have now through twenty years been rendered by his letters."

The words on the map appear to mean, "To Maurice Johnson, Chancellor (of the Diocese), Secretary of the Spalding Gentlemen's Society and his very great friend, Samuel Wesley dedicates this plan of three-fold Arabia, which has been adorned by his own hands." (The word three-fold refers to the division of Arabia usual in those days, into Arabia Deserta, Arabia Petraea, and Arabia Felix, the last-named being Milton's "Araby the blest.") D.D.D. stands for *dat, donat, dedicat*, i.e., gives, presents, dedicates.

As we gaze at this large brown-backed volume we recall the great expectations which were associated with it. The author believed it would bring him both fame and fortune. It undoubtedly enhanced his reputation. Alexander Pope was interested in its publication and wrote as follows to Dean Swift:—

This is a letter extraordinary, to do and to say nothing, but to commend to you (as a clergyman and a charitable one) a pious and a good work, and for a good and honest man . . . I shall think it a kindness done to myself if you can propagate Mr. Wesley's subscription for his "Commentary on Job" among your divines (bishops excepted, of whom there is no hope), and among such as are believers or vendors of the Scriptures. Even the curious may find something to please them, if they scorn to be edified. It has been the labour of eight years of this learned man's life. I call him what he is, a learned man; and I engage you will approve his prose more than you formerly did his poetry. Lord Bolingbroke is a favourer of it, and allows you to do your best to serve an old Tory, and a sufferer for the Church of England, though you are a Whig, as I am. April 12th 1730. (See Clarke: *Wesley Family*.)

We find that Samuel Wesley in reply to the charges made against him for not husbanding his resources rightly, refers to his hopes of improving his finances by the publication of this book.

"For the greater part of those last ten years he has been closely employed in composing a large book whereby he hoped he might have done some benefit to the world, and in some measure amended his own fortunes. By sticking so close to this; he has broken a pretty strong constitution; and fallen in the palsy and gout." (John O'Styles' apology against the imputation of his ill husbandry. See Clarke: *Wesley Family*.)

This book, moreover, calls up the picture of John Wesley, who was small of stature, struggling with this large *Dissertation*, into the Court of Queen Caroline to whom he made a present of a copy. He has left on record his experience of Sunday, October 12th, 1735, that "when he was introduced into the royal presence, the Queen was romping with her maids of honour; but she suspended her play, heard and received him graciously, took the book from his hand, which he presented to her kneeling on one knee, looked at the outside, said, 'It is very prettily bound,' and then laid it down in a window without opening a leaf. He rose up, bowed, walked backward and withdrew. The Queen bowed

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and smiled, and spoke several kind words, and immediately resumed her sport."

One wonders whether this copy is still in the royal library.

The strong room of the Society contains a second folio of Shakespeare, a copy of Gower's *Confessio Amantis* printed by William Caxton, and other books printed by the most famous followers of "the art which is the preservative of all arts," Kobourgher, Kesler, Plantin, Aldus and others.

There are also manuscripts and cartularies, one of which is sometimes borrowed by the authorities of the British Museum.

Here you may see early copies of famous papers, such as the *Tatler* which was then printed in a single sheet:—one is dated 1709. The *Spectator* began to be published in 1711 and a copy of that year may be inspected. Other learned magazines which have seen the light and now cease to be published can be read in the quietness of the library. Among the other noteworthy possessions are a chained Bible in the French language, and a well-preserved copy of a thirteenth century illuminated manuscript Bible presented by Collins, the miniature painter, who, himself, was a member of the Society.

SOME UNPUBLISHED LETTERS

Spalding Gentlemen's Society possesses a number of letters from eminent individuals, several of which have never been printed. Among them are the following, written by Samuel Wesley, Senr. and Samuel Wesley, Junr.

Letter of Rev. Samuel Wesley to M. Johnson.

To

Maurice Johnson
Junior Esq:
in Spalding
Lincolnshire
per Shilton Bagg—

Dear Sir

re: Job Epworth
Febr 12. 172^g

I received your obliging letter of yr last of December, which lay a good while by the way; being directed to Epworth (near Bawtrey) when it should have been (near Gainsborough)

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But having been sometime at my Ld Moulton's in Yorkshire: who has granted me the Liberty of Studying in his fine Library and encouraged me to go on with & finish my Dissertations upon Job. I had not time till now to answer yours as became the Important Contents of it. Wee soon found the Effects of your kind offices for my Son Lambert,³ for which we both return all the Thanks wee are able. He having recd Orders for Instruction a little after Xtmas, whereas Several hereabouts have waited for theirs half a year or more, & as yet hear nothing of 'em. He has been actually Surveying under the Officer, for some weeks, who say's he is able & Diligent, & I hope will continue so. He hopes to be certfyd for about Lady Day. Woud it be improper for me to write a letter of Thanks to Mr. Gale, and how must it be directed? Prais'd be God for the Happy Increase of your Family! But I find nothing of your Father's & Mother's health: am I unconcern'd in it? And now for what you write about Job I have seen some parts of the *Bibliotheca Biblica*, & thought, tho I read it but cursorily that it was a work of great Industry, and Good Learning and Judgment. May God prosper their further Proceedings: & I know not what that Person would be that should not wish the same & promote it to the utmost of his Power Nor do I see that their Design & mine would clash for their's is a Commentary on the Whole, mine, as being Conscious "Quid valeant humeri", some particular Conjectures, & Dissertations only Their's in English, mine in Latin, with many and large critical observations, both on all the versions I cou'd find, & on the Original wherein tis possible there might be some things found not unusefull towards a mere Compleat Commentary on this Noble Book which will come out first I know not tho' I've a great deal to do before mine will be ready, & shou'd be glad to see theirs Publish'd that I might inform, & tis likely in many things Correct, & alter my own by their maturer Judgments. In the meantime I'm ready to do all that's fitting to further their Design, & wt ever [whatever] can be reasonably expected from one author to another, Engaged at the same time on the same subject and if they think fit to communicate to me their

3 Anne Wesley, the seventh daughter and fourteenth child of the Rector, married John Lambert, a land-surveyor well known at Epworth.

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notions of the Lands, Uz, the Country of Job and where they fix it whereon I am not yet fully resolv'd with their Reasons if I make use of it in mine. I shall mention theirs with due Honour, in lieu whereof if they please to pitch on any one article in the Book, & to accept of my rough, & crude thoughts concerning it, they are entirely at their Services; which I hope is fair, & all that will be desir'd of me. And if I live to print the book which cant be less than a guinea the whole subscription Wherein I shall make Honourable mention of Your Society, taking the Liberty to own myself a member of it, one of them shall be at your Service.

You'l give all Dues, & pardon the Trouble

From

Your Humble Servant

Sam' Wesley.

Appended to this letter is a postscript somewhat difficult to read, and another is written on the side of the letter reading as follows :—

I think t'was some years ago I saw an advertisement in the Prints for Publishing Pliny's *Natural Historie*; & as I remember one Mr. Parker was engag'd in it, I'd gladly know whether it be come out, & what is the Price of it.

From Rev. Samuel Wesley, Junr. to the same.
Epigrama de VII classibus Sch. Reg. Westm.

Sir

I cannot at present get any more of the verses to send you, but those you desir'd I have here sent. Wishing you a good journey and Journeys End, I am Sir,

Your Oblig'd & Obedient

Humble Servant

S. Wesley.

Feb 27

Sch. Westm. Submode.

The address of the letter is as follows :—

To Mr. M. Johnson at

Mr. Harwoods next door
to the Grecian Coffee -

House in Devereux Court.

Frith.

Rev. Samuel Wesley Junr. was for a long period a master at Westminster.

Submode seems to be an abbreviation of Submoderator.

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The ten Latin lines contained in the letter are a poem about the seven classes or forms at the Royal Westminster School. A copy can be furnished to any one who is specially interested in them.

In volume 2 of the *Minutes* of the Society the receipt of the letter is recorded as follows: "Epigram spoken at Westminster by one of the scholars there upon their Anniversary 17th November last being Queen Elizabeth's, their Foundress's day, communicated by the Rev. Mr. Sam Wesley, usher there, in a l to y^e Soc^y"

From the same to the same
Epwth, March 15th 1730/31

S.S.S.

Good Sir

I had the Great Favour of yours, and your Learned Pains in ye Illustrating of my *Jurisprudentia Jobi* dated at Spalding January 30 but recd it not till a few Days since and send you all the Thanks an honest Man can do for your great Trouble in it. The same thanks I return to your Good Father and Mother for still remembering their old Friend as likewise my best Respects to yr Brother John, your Lady, and the rest of the Family. My book is at last in the Press and the *Prolegomena* are printed.

I'm just recover'd from a fit of the Gout and have only time to add that I am and ever shall be —

Very much

Your Friend, and Servant

Samuel Wesley.

MAURICE JOHNSON

ESQ.

LLOUR AT LAW

IN SPALDING

LINCOLNSHIRE

[This page is partly torn]

Mr. Johnson has endorsed the letter, "From the Rev. Mr. Westley, brought me by George Hall of Epworth, 15th March 1730 . . . by whom I sent John Romley his Homer's *Iliad* and [other books]."

One notes regarding these letters that Mr. Johnson spells the family name Westley, whilst the writer himself uses the

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form Wesley. It is interesting to note that in the *Gentlemen's Magazine* for February, 1736, p. 99, the book to which we have specially referred is advertised in the following terms :—

Dissertation et Conjecturae in Librum Jobi ; Tabu et Geographicis et Figuris aeneis illustratae. By S. Westley. Sold by C. Revington and S. Bort.

Both spellings seem to have been used indiscriminately. I suppose that the T has been dropped owing to what I once heard Prof. Lemare describe as the principle of the least action, which is responsible for the shortening of many words in the English language.

Mr. Telford states that the name was spelt Westley until the t was dropped by John Wesley's father. These letters confirm this.

It is also interesting to observe that he sometimes concludes with the letter S, the shorter form Sam. Wesley, and also uses the full name Samuel.

The *Minutes* of the Spalding Society have been carefully kept. Indeed they are more than *Minutes*, for they contain summaries of addresses, and are illustrated with sketches. The original ones were written on sheets of paper and later bound. The first of them is on vellum and dates from 1710 to 1729. The motto which appears on the title page is taken from Ecclesiasticus XXV, 3. and reads—"If thou hast gathered nothing in thy youth, how canst thou find anything in thine age." Vol. II also gives pre-eminence to a passage of Scripture, "Surely there is a vein for the silver," Job XXVIII. 1. and is appropriately dedicated to its distinguished member, Sir Isaac Newton, F.R.S. Master of the Mint. The person who selected that text, must also have had a vein of humour.

Though the Society has been in existence so long it shows no signs of old age. During the Winter season lectures are delivered sometimes to the members only, at other times to a wider public. It has a worthy band of officers. Mr. G. W. Bailey, the Hon. Curator and Secretary placed everything he could at the present writer's disposal and an expression of gratitude is due to him.

W. B. HOULT.

EARLY TRUSTEES AND THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF THEIR CLAIMS

In Stevenson's *History of City Road Chapel* in his account of the unfortunate dispute that arose with Dr. Whitehead about the possession of Wesley's papers and the publication of an official life of Mr. Wesley the author makes the following statements, "A majority of the trustees of the Chapel took the part of Dr. Whitehead against Dr. Coke, Mr. Rogers and the preachers. In this way the lay element came in direct collision with the preachers, which resulted in the former claiming uncontrolled authority over the finances of the chapel, and the latter uncontrolled authority over the pulpit and the ordinances of the sanctuary" (p. 132) and "The preachers having defended themselves and their own rights, the laymen resolved upon a course of procedure which looks very like revenge. The trustees were divided into parties; five only took the part of the preachers, and nineteen linked themselves with Dr. Whitehead in opposition. The majority resolved to levy a rent of £50 per annum on the preacher's house and a like sum of £50 per annum on the book-room, which carried on business under the Morning Chapel." (p. 133). "This strife continued through the whole of the years 1792 and 1793." In law suits between Dr. Coke and Dr. Whitehead "a compromise was accepted, the London Society bearing the costs of both sides, more than £2000. Not so, however, the trustees in defence of their supposed right to demand rent for the preacher's house and the book-room. From attested copies of three several depositions filed in the Court of Chancery relative to a suit now pending in the said court, between Messrs. Dewey and others, plaintiffs and Messrs. Duplex and others, defendants, printed in 1794, it appeared that the majority of the trustees maintained their right to collect any rents from those premises which they might levy in accordance with the trust-deed. We learn further that the resistance went so far as to lead the stewards to insult, and even assault, in the chapel, the servants of the trustees, the hatch-keepers." (p. 134).

The list of pamphlets, broadsheets and so forth, mentioned by Stevenson as being in his possession is impressive, but is

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Stevenson's putting of the case correct, and is the imputation that the majority of the trustees were moved by revengeful feelings justified? In 1825 a case was prepared for the opinion of counsel with regard to a claim made by Henry Moore under a clause in Wesley's will, and a study of that document puts a very different complexion on the action of the majority of the trustees.

The death of Mr. Wesley raised a number of questions all of which could have been settled by friendly discussion and agreement, without having recourse to a court of law. Two of the matters in dispute arose from statements in the will of Mr. Wesley. He bequeathed his books and MSS to Dr. Coke, Henry Moore and Dr. Whitehead. The high-handed action of Dr. Whitehead was the starting-point of the trouble. Accounts of that dispute are to be found in many pamphlets and in Stevenson and in the *Life of Henry Moore*. The second point arose from the clause in the will naming "the persons who are to preach in the new Chapel in London." This point was settled amicably in the Conference that took place in the July following Mr. Wesley's death. That settlement was not disturbed in any way till the Rev. Henry Moore tried in 1825 to revive his claim.

The third point that arose was the general management of the Society and of the property at City Road, and in 1792 and 1793 there was bitter contention over this. Naturally the persons involved were also the persons largely concerned in the other two disputes, but the management of the new chapel at City Road was quite a distinct issue and it is the purpose of the present article to consider this.

When the new chapel was built complete direction of the affairs of the Society and Trust was in the hands of Mr. Wesley. In the conduct of the services in the chapel, the meeting of classes and so forth, the 'Assistants' worked under the direction of Mr. Wesley. The property was vested in 25 trustees, (John and Charles Wesley being among the number) a treasurer from among the trustees was appointed by Mr. Wesley, the accounts were audited by Mr. Wesley, and no meeting of the trustees was held during Mr. Wesley's lifetime. At the Conference following the death of Mr. Wesley, James Rogers (who was resident 'Assistant' with Mr. W.) became the superintendent of the London circuit. He resided in Wesley's

house and presumably felt that as far as the London circuit and in particular the New Chapel were concerned, especially as he was one of the twelve mentioned in Wesley's will, all the powers that had been exercised by Mr. Wesley were to be exercised by him as of right. The trustees thought differently and were determined to enforce their rights to carry out their responsibilities under the trust.

CHARLES POLLARD.

(To be Continued)

THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE W.H.S.

This was held on July 17th at the Oxford Hall, Manchester, the President of the Society being in the chair. Under all the circumstances the attendance was very encouraging and a hopeful tone prevailed.

Mr. Herbert Ibberson, the Treasurer, was prevented by duties arising out of his office as Vice-President of the Conference from attending, but the statement of accounts, duly audited by Mr. Duncan Coomer was presented. The financial position is sound, there being a satisfactory working balance and a good reserve.

It was reported that the membership of the Society, including Libraries and kindred Societies, but exclusive of the branches, amounted to 375. During the year 22 new members had been enrolled in addition to 2 new life-members, and 19 had been lost by death or retirement. The names of those who had died since the last meeting were read and their memory honoured. The minutes of the last meeting were read by the Rev. Dr. Harrison, and confirmed. The officers of the the Society, as printed on the cover of the *Proceedings* were thanked and re-elected. The Rev. F. Baker, B.A., B.D., was added to the Secretariat and Editorial Council. As from January 1, 1943, Mr. Baker will undertake the responsibility of collecting the subscriptions.

The jubilee of the Society will be celebrated next year.

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The New Zealand Branch has adopted a changed method of working, as explained in our March *Proceedings*.

The Irish Branch pursues its work steadily, and held a most interesting meeting at the time of the Irish Conference. Mr. F. J. Cole was reappointed President, and Rev R. W. Olver as Treasurer and Curator. Mr. Norman Robb was appointed Secretary in succession to Rev. R. C. P. Crawford.
F.F.B.

W.H.S. ANNUAL LECTURE

The eighth in the now well-established series of lectures delivered under the auspices of the W.H.S. at Conference time attracted an excellent audience at the Oxford Hall, Manchester, on Friday, July 17. The lecturer was the Rev. Dr. Maldwyn Edwards, M.A., who has many friends in Manchester. The chair was taken in a sympathetic manner by Alderman T. R. Ackroyd, M.A., J.P.

The lecture was already in print, but the speaker did not follow the text at all closely; his direct form of address held the interest of his hearers throughout, as he made the remarkable Dr. Adam Clarke live before them.

There are four chapters in the little volume (issued by the Epworth Press at 1/6): Adam Clarke and his period; Adam Clarke as a preacher; Adam Clarke as a Scholar; Adam Clarke the man.

Though at least seventeen Lives of the great commentator have been published, there is room for this successful endeavour to portray him to this generation. Dr. Edwards has rendered us all a great service.
F.F.B.

THE FERNLEY-HARTLEY LECTURE

The lecture delivered this year by arrangement of the Fernley-Hartley Trust makes a particular appeal to our

members, inasmuch as Dr. A. W. Harrison was the lecturer and the subject *The Evangelical Revival and Christian Reunion*.

Much more than half the space is devoted to the first of the subjects mentioned in the title; this may disappoint some who approach the book with the second subject mostly in mind, but they, as well as others to whom the historical aspect makes the greater appeal, will find much of value here. Moreover, what is described in the first part of the book makes its own definite contribution to the problems discussed in its concluding portion.

The book is extremely readable, and very comprehensive. Many trees are sketched, but one sees the wood too; when reading a most informative chapter on Personalities one realises how the Breath of the Spirit (the theme of the opening chapter) was indeed at work. "The German contribution," "Methodism in the American Colonies," "Methodism outside the Established Church" and many other chapter headings are signposts to fruitful pastures.

Readers who are also students of Methodist sources will find much to help them in "Notes on Authorities" at the end of the book.

F.F.B.

NOTES AND QUERIES.

817. CHARLOTTE BRONTE AND WESLEY'S KEMPIS.—It has been doubted whether the influence of Methodism on the Brontë family was quite as strong as maintained by Mrs. Harrison in *Methodist Good Companions* and *Haworth Parsonage* (W.H.S. Lecture. No. 3). One point briefly mentioned by Mrs. Harrison (*Methodist Good Companions*, p. 134) is of sufficient interest to enlarge upon. In Mr. Clement Shorter's *The Brontës: Life and Letters* (Hodder and Stoughton, 2 vols, 1908), there is a reference to the Methodism of the Cornish Branwells, and to a copy of Wesley's *Kempis* which belonged to Maria Branwell. (Vol. 1, pp. 27-5). The *Kempis*, of

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course, is a copy of the popular "Extract" (Green 26), not of the original complete version (Green 3), the imprint being "London: Printed at the Conference Office, North Green, Finsbury Square. G. Story, Agent. Sold by G. Whitfield, City Road. 1803. Price bound 1/-"

This book is inscribed "M. Branwell, July 1807." In 1812 the Rev. Patrick Brontë married this same Maria Branwell, who had been on a visit to her Uncle in Yorkshire, John Fennell, a Methodist Local Preacher, and the first Governor of Woodhouse Grove Academy, where Patrick Brontë conducted the first examination of the boys. (Fennell was apparently the only layman ever to occupy the position of "Governor." After a year of this office he entered Holy Orders.)

Mrs. Brontë died in 1821, and five years later someone—presumably Patrick Brontë—gave this volume of hers to young Charlotte, who had just passed her tenth birthday. Later Charlotte wrote on the fly-leaf: "C Brontë's book. This book was given to me in July 1826. It is not certainly known who is the author, but it is generally supposed that Thomas A. Kempis is. I saw a reward of £10,000 offered in the *Leeds Mercury* to any one who could find out for a certainty who is the author."

Thus we have here a definite example of a Methodist publication used by the Brontës, in addition to their assumed use of the "mad Methodist Magazines full of miracles and apparitions, and preternatural warnings, ominous dreams, and frenzied fanaticism," which formed part of Caroline Helstone's library in *Shirley*.

The Catalogue of the Museum & Library at Haworth (1927) and the *Catalogue of the Bonnell Collection* (1932) show that this relic is not deposited at Haworth. To the present writer at any rate its whereabouts is unknown.

Rev. Frank Baker, B.A., B.D.

818. OSBORN'S METHODIST LITERATURE.—Addenda. .

Page 83. Add the following :

An humble attempt to defend THE BIBLE against the aspersions of Mr. Paine, in his second part of THE AGE OF REASON by A. Suter, Sunderland: Printed

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for the Author by W. Dobson 1796 (Price Six-Pence) pp. 72.

Page 185. Osborn notes only the third edition (York 1781) of a curious little pamphlet by Thomas Taylor entitled *A Cry to the Professor's Conscience: or the Professor's Looking-Glass concerning his Thoughts, Words and Actions*. No name on title, but at end of preface. I have a copy of the first edition, which is anonymous, printed in 1771. Mr. Baker says there was a second edition in 1775 also anonymous. In the preface to the third edition Taylor says, "'Tis about ten years since I first published the ensuing little performance." Mr. Baker mentions a fourth edition 1786 and points out that *The Catalogue of Wesleyana* wrongly gives the first edition as 1775. In the first edition the author, or the printer, gives professor a double f which with the old fashioned double s makes a strange looking word. *F.F.B.*

819. Mr. W. H. V. Bythway, of Pontypool, informs us that he has recently acquired "The Holy Club," 1732, with John Wesley's name on the vellum binding, being the original manuscript metrical versions of the Psalms set to music. On the fly-leaf is inscribed, The Holy Club, Oxford, 1732.

We have received some interesting communications arising out of Mr. Hunter's article on Wesley's revision of the Prayer Book, and the N. & Q. about "on" or "in" a Circuit. These are being considered and will be dealt with in our next issue, we hope.

The Rev. Dr. W. F. Howard has accepted an invitation from the annual meeting of the W.H.S. to give the annual Lecture at the time of the Conference at Birmingham in 1943. The Lecturer will deal with John Wesley as a letter-writer.