

TABULAR VIEW OF METHODISM IN ENGLAND, 1838.

COUNTIES.	Area in Square Miles.	Population in 1831.	Crime in 1835, Committals as one in	Methodism in England in 1838. Number of Members.					Proportion to Population, as one in	Proportion of Wesleyans in 1832, Vide Jowett's Tables
				Wesleyan Con- nexion.	Methodist New Con- nexion.	Primitive Metho- dists.	Wesleyan Associa. 1837	Total.		
Bedford.....	463	95383	552	3473	..	..	..	3473	27	46
Berks.....	752	145289	769	2261	..	2079	..	4340	33	91
Buckingham..	202	146529	660	1208	..	260	..	1468	99	139
Cambridge...	857	143955	682	1572	..	535	..	2107	68	114
Chester.....	1052	334410	627	6836	1491	2827	1284	12438	27	43
Cornwall.....	1330	302440	1461	18980	313	1466	1155	21914	14	17
Cumberland..	1523	169681	1697	2752	..	967	300	4019	42	60
Derby.....	1028	237170	1088	7160	360	2446	900	10866	22	33
Devon.....	2585	494168	955	7523	..	..	500	8023	61	75
Dorset.....	1006	159252	861	3024	..	..	700	3724	43	61
Durham.....	1097	253827	1567	8619	1006	3446	1488	14559	17	27
Essex.....	1533	317233	546	2248	..	..	..	2248	136	178
Gloucester...	1258	386904	512	6501	..	200	..	6701	58	69
Hampshire...	1625	314313	714	2434	..	620	..	3054	102	161
Hereford....	863	110976	800	1174	..	1432	..	2603	43	121
Hertford....	630	143341	602	517	..	..	..	517	277	888
Huntington...	372	53149	794	832	..	..	..	832	64	67
Kent.....	1557	477155	536	7305	..	..	..	7305	65	66
Lancaster....	1766	1336854	503	24588	3643	6374	8295	42900	31	48
Leicester....	806	197003	716	4887	..	1643	438	6958	28	42
Lincoln.....	2611	317244	1629	16960	75	3665	..	20703	15	26
Middlesex...	282	1358541	395	9537	..	..	660	10197	133	113
Monmouth...	496	98136	818	1637	..	..	..	1637	60	276
Norfolk.....	2024	390054	582	7619	189	6013	..	13821	28	56
Northampton	1016	179276	1188	4471	..	206	..	4677	38	56
Northumberl.	1871	222912	1755	4176	914	1629	79	6446	33	63
Nottingham..	837	225320	656	6744	1386	1257	400	9787	23	35
Oxford.....	756	151726	561	2685	..	330	..	3015	50	75
Rutland.....	149	19385	1292	286	..	..	..	286	75	74
Shropshire...	1343	222503	1082	3558	517	2162	..	6237	36	76
Somerset....	1645	403908	591	8167	..	763	..	8930	45	57
Stafford.....	1184	410485	574	9680	2417	3681	..	15778	26	40
Suffolk.....	1515	296304	658	2355	..	2053	..	4408	67	155
Surrey.....	759	486326	483	3110	188	..	..	3298	147	*
Sussex.....	1466	272328	754	1462	..	..	..	1462	186	204
Warwick.....	897	336988	445	3267	266	800	..	4333	78	125
Westmorel...	762	55041	2201	978	..	..	191	1169	47	69
Wilts.....	1367	239181	717	2202	..	960	..	3162	79	104
Worcester...	723	211356	760	3567	1897	965	257	6686	31	92
York.....	5836	1371296	956	65456	5905	15445	3086	89892	15	48
	50380	13091005	740	270801	20567	66244	19733	377315	35	55

\* In 1824, the number of members for Surrey was included in the Middlesex Return, which gives the appearance of there being a smaller number now in Middlesex than there was at that time.

# THE ORIGIN OF METHODISM IN MANCHESTER

*Continued*

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On July 19th, 1754, Grimshaw sent to Dr. John Gillies, of Glasgow, for his *Historical Collections*, a brief sketch of these earliest years.

This year (1746) the work began at Manchester. A few for some time met together being awakened and brought to the faith under the Ministry, I think, of one John Bennet: Since that time it has flourished prodigiously there, and various parts around it.

On March 7th 1747 Bennet reported to Wesley that, of these first believers, "some young men . . . . have begun a Society and took a room, and have subscribed their names". The two-hundredth Anniversary of this Society is being held in the current month (March 1947) and this article is written in honour of that Bi-Centenary.

## FROM THE GARRET TO A BAPTIST CHAPEL.

Christopher Hopper, the Methodist "Apostle of the North" says in *The Lives of Early Methodist Preachers*—

The latter end of the year 1749 I left the Dales. . . . I called at Chester [le-Street], Stockton, Thirsk, and Knaresborough . . . . I spent a few days at Leeds, I preached at Birstal . . . . I rode on to Halifax . . . . Rochdale . . . . Next day [January 24th, 1750] I rode to Manchester and preached that evening in a little garret by the river-side . . . . The old wooden house shook under us and put the congregation in confusion. Many trembled and some believed. The next evening they procured me a Baptist meeting-house.

This was a barn which had been converted or rebuilt. It was called Coldhouse Chapel and was in Thorniley Brow off Shudehill. The area was called Coldhouse because the clay was cold or sour.

Bennet's ms. *Journal* of February 15th 1750, shows that he went to Manchester where he met Grimshaw and Darney who had been there several days.

I found that Bror. Hopper had been very much blessed amongst this People, and yet many were added unto the Society. Mr. Grimshaw preached [in this Baptist Chapel] from ye 91st Psalm. I lodged at Mr. Fanshaw's and was took ill of the Fever so that I could not preach at 5 next morning".

## AN APPEAL TO WESLEY.

A building had become imperative and on March 6th 1750 Bennet wrote to Wesley—

Your letters dated January 23rd and February 9th I found at Chinley . . . I should be glad if you can send me some of the Brethren to assist me. My circuit enlarges daily so that I shall have near Two hundred Miles to ride each fortnight. *Wt think you of Building a House at Manchester?* [my italics C.D.L.] The Society is small and at present very far from being established in the Truth. There is certainly many more Persons of late come to hear an Exhortation than heretofore, and I doubt not but Bro. Hopper has been an instrument of great good to some. However the People are much distracted running on the Sabbath hither and thither as Sheep without a Shepherd. It is easy to foresee what the event will be". . . .

It is clear that no Sunday Service could yet be provided, and the Baptists may have reserved the Coldhouse Chapel for their own use on Sundays.

Methodism was in its infancy and the building of a preaching house was no light undertaking. Charles Wesley had heard from Bennet of a proposal to build at Birstal and on March 4th, 1750, wrote to him; "It were madness to begin before they have the wherewithal to finish. This Church [the Foundry, London] cannot help them, neither that in Bristol. So tell John Nelson from us".

But, whatever he was told, John Nelson, the sturdy stonemason, went ahead hewing stone by day for his Chapel and preaching every evening. Horatio Nelson used a blind eye, John Nelson used a deaf ear.

## WESLEY'S RESPONSE.

John, with more courage and hopefulness than Charles, gave full encouragement, and doubtless money, to Manchester, for as Hopper testifies, "they immediately bought a piece of land and laid the foundation of their first preaching house".

Wesley showed great faith and enterprise, for Methodism had not yet entered its teens. Yet now in 1750 four new preaching houses were projected—Liverpool, Leeds, Birstal, and Manchester.

## THE BACK ALLEY, (BIRCHIN LANE), SITE.

This land situated between Market Street and Church Street was off a narrow lane called Back Alley which ran parallel to and between the present High St. and Tib St. The site is shown as No. 46 on Casson and Berry's *Plan*

## PROCEEDINGS

(editions published 1750-54) and is listed as "Methodist Meeting". No. 49 is the Coldhouse Chapel, listed as "Anabaptist Meeting". This ground was nearly in the centre of the island bounded by the present Church St., Birchin Lane, Bridgewater Place and Joiner Street. The area was 15 yards by 31 yards 22 inches, 474 superficial square yards. It did not abut on to Back Alley (Birchin Lane) but was approached from the Alley by a passage through which there was a right of way. The only other entrance, also off Back Alley, led to the S.W. end of the site.

### BACK ALLEY BECOMES METHODIST STREET.

Methodist influence grew steadily and soon Back Alley became officially known as Methodist Street.

The first *Manchester Directory*, published in 1772, names five householders as living in Methodist Street, viz :—

Mrs. Dauntsey, widow; Robt Hill, Gentleman; Henry Hope, Bricklayer; John Kay, Hosier and Warehouseman; Thos. Townley, Bricklayer.

In that year the Post Office introduced into Manchester the practice of numbering the houses; at the same time some street names were altered, and in the 1773 *Directory* the above householders are all shown as residing in Birchin Lane, and Methodist Street has disappeared.

### WHERE CAN THE SITE BE FOUND?

This place was our only site until the Oldham Street land was bought about 1779. The original Chapel became redundant and the site was sold in 1812 to a notable Methodist bleacher, Richard Bealey of Radcliffe. He and his successors, Mary Bealey and Son, used the Chapel as a warehouse until it was demolished about 1842. In rebuilding they preserved the wide passage leading into the heart of the site and erected five small warehouses around this roadway. This roadway thus became a rectangular cul-de-sac and is shown as Chapel Square on the Ordnance Survey Map of 1849.

The Bealeys sold this property in 1874 to another Methodist, Mr. H. Spenser, the founder of the Pall Mall Property Co. Ltd., which retains the site, subject still to a chief rent of £45 payable to the Trustees of Oldham St. Chapel. Through the expert and kindly aid of Mr. G. P. Fletcher A.S.A.A., the Agent of the Company, and a study of the deeds, we have been able to pin-point the site.

About 1925 the Company built Pall Mall House, 20/24 Church Street. This nine storey block of offices and warehouses extends from Church St. right across our former site. In this great reconstruction the old passage, Chapel Square, leading into the heart of the site was preserved for use as a loading way for warehouse vans and extended to Joiner St. Pall Mall House consists of two blocks separated by Chapel Square which is bridged by three overhead and covered viaducts in the familiar Manchester manner. The historic site is thus buried under a mountain of masonry, but happily a valley (Chapel Square) remains, through which one can take a glimpse into the cradle of Manchester Methodism. The approach is by Birchin Lane, Church St.

#### WHITEFIELD PREACHES AT "THE NEW BUILDING".

Bennet reports on June 8th 1750—I and my wife (tho' big with child) went to Manchester to meet Mr. Whitefield, he came the Night before Us, but found him better in health than we expected. Mr. Grimshaw was wth. him & they both Lodged at Capt. Gallantines [Gallatin's] at the Ancotes [Ancoats]. Mr. Whd. pr(eache)d that eveng. at the new Building, from John VI, 35.

Bennet gives other details of preaching over this weekend, including Sunday 10th, when Whitefield preached in a "Field [Piccadilly] near ye Town to a great No. from the Clay mar'd by the Potter. Whitefield, the Awakener, in this, the heyday of evangelism, found "thousands and thousands flock to hear the Word".

#### THE ORIGINAL PREACHING HOUSE ?

No drawing, plan, or description can be traced of this house, in its original condition when it seated less than 200 people. Four deeds of 1750 and 1751, relating to the site, have been discovered. They are of much historic interest and value but do not describe the building. One may assume that the place was of spartan simplicity and that some austere rooms were provided for the travelling preacher, and a stable in the yard for his horse.

T. Swindells, in *Manchester Streets and Manchester Men*, (Third Series) describes the house as it was after its enlargement in 1753.

The building was plain in appearance, and was built entirely of brick. There were no pews, but forms were provided for worshippers. Inclusive of the gallery it would accommodate about 300 persons.

## PROCEEDINGS

The cost is unknown ; but the Birstal house was expected to cost £400. Grimshaw laboured valiantly in begging money for the new houses at Manchester and Bolton.

Wesley visited Manchester practically every year from 1751 till 1765 when this humble house entertained the Conference of about 150 preachers. This earliest cell was for 30 years the Headquarters, and the only Chapel of Methodism in Manchester, until Wesley opened the Oldham St. Chapel in 1781. Yet despite all his visits Wesley never refers to the building nor has any other preacher thrown light upon this historic Chapel which, with Liverpool (1750) should be bracketed as the first in Lancashire. And have not these the high honour of being amongst the first ten Chapels built in Methodism after the pioneers in Bristol, London and Newcastle-on-Tyne.

### WHO OPENED THE PREACHING HOUSE?

It is very probable that Whitefield preached in the *shell* of the new building on June 8th, 1750. When Wesley followed at Easter 1751, this preaching house was not yet finished, probably owing to the usual scarcity of funds.

In August 1751 Wm. Grimshaw wrote :

I preached in the latter end of July in the new house (which is now finished) at Manchester. The house was full, and many out of doors.

Did Whitefield, Wesley and Grimshaw respectively open the house by instalments, Bennet perhaps anticipating them all?

Local brochures on Manchester Methodism have often stated that Wesley opened the original house on Easter Sunday, April 7th, 1751. His *Journal* however does not support that claim and there are other good reasons to think that it is untenable.

Thus on Tuesday March 12th, 1751, Wesley wrote to Bennet regarding his itinerary . . . .

I expect . . . to be at Alpraham on Thursday April 4th, whence I think (at present) to go to Manchester. The Saturday following I am to be at Whitehaven.

Wesley had obviously no knowledge that any opening of a new preaching house was expected of him in Manchester. He preached, or addressed Class Meetings, eight times during his four days visit. None of his texts, as shown in his

*Sarmon Register*, seem to have been chosen for use at an "Opening" Bennet makes no mention of such an event, nor can one find any authority for that tradition, which is comparatively modern. Wesley's visit to the "new church" on April 7, 1751 refers to St. Ann's which had been rebuilt about 1750.

THE FIRST SECESSION.

Bennet's final breach with Wesley twelve months later, at Bolton in April 1752 almost wiped out that Society for 107 out of 126 members (all but 19) followed Bennet in his secession. Manchester Methodism, also founded by Bennet, was shaken to its foundations. But, unlike Bolton, the bulk of the membership adhered to Wesley.

Two letters from Grimshaw to Mrs. Gallatin show that a rapid recovery was made, and new advances.

June 23rd. 1752. All things go well at Manchester. I was there about twelve days ago.

April 12, 1753. Last week I was at Manchester and Bolton with Mr. and Mrs. Wesley. In both places the work of God prospers greatly, especially in Manchester; they are 250 in Society there, and this summer must enlarge the preaching house as much again as it is.

C. DEANE LITTLE.

(To be continued)

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## A WESLEY LETTER

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The following letter has recently come into the possession of the Rev. R. Douglas Ord of Guernsey. It does not seem to have been printed until it appeared recently in *The Methodist Recorder* from whose columns we extract it by the kind permission of Mr. Ord and the Editor.

The hand-writing of the letter is stated to be very clear, with a signature remarkably so for a man aged eighty-three. The letter, in its present condition, bears no address,

Bristol  
Sept. 11, 1784

My Dear Brother,

I am afraid John Accutt is weary of the Cross, and does not design to be a travelling preacher any longer. He is now

## PROCEEDINGS

quietly and comfortably lodged at home, and I doubt will not be dislodged easily.

I gave the "Scripture Text", together with other Papers to Thomas Olivers long ago, with order to insert it in ye Magazine as soon as there should be room. I know (not) what has so long delayed the publication of it, and shall make enquiry.

Sept. 12. I have been talking this afternoon with your son. He seems to be in a good Spirit. I have great hopes he will live to be a comfort to you.

I am,  
Your Affectionate Brother,  
John Wesley

In July 1781 Wesley wrote to Miss Hannah Ball a letter in the course of which he said, "Surely you should take an opportunity to warn Jo. Accutt of his danger". In 1783 he was appointed to the Kent Circuit. In 1908, when I was preparing a *Souvenir* for the centenary of the Margate Circuit I investigated some old papers at Rochester. I found a curious note amongst them about John Accutt which suggested that his unworthiness went deeper than a loss of zeal. In 1784 his appointment was to Cornwall West; it seems reasonable to infer from the letter that he did not enter upon his work. He "desisted from travelling" in 1785.

Rev. F. Baker says it would be interesting to know the recipient. He points out that the *Journal* shows that Wesley made a chaise-journey to Kingswood on Sunday afternoon, 12th September 1784, so that it seems obvious that the recipient's boy was a scholar there. Perhaps this clue could be followed up.

F.F.B.

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## CHARTERHOUSE NOTES

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### 1. JOHN WESLEY'S NAME IN A CHARTERHOUSE SCHOOL-BOOK

The Library at Charterhouse School contains a considerable number of classical texts and grammars, which were used at the School in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Many of these contain scribbled signatures, often dated, and form lists of boys at the School. An unusual number is to be found in a copy, from which many pages are missing, of the *Epigrammatum Graecorum* of John Brodier (Frankfort, 1601). Two lists written in the margins include the name of John Wesley, who was a Scholar or Gownboy of Charterhouse from 1714 to 1720.

Page 237  
 York C.A.  
 Wesley C.A.  
 Toller C.A.  
 Dennet

The name, Hotchkiss, was included and crossed out. C.A. doubtless stands for "Carthusianus Alumnus". If, as is probable, the last name refers to Richard Dennett, another Scholar, the list must be earlier than 1719, as he left in the previous year.

Page 544  
 Sexta classis 1719  
 Smith  
 Yorke  
 Lewis  
 Wesly  
 Blomberg  
 Oates  
 Turner  
 Mitchell  
 Hotchkis  
 Toller  
 Prescott  
 Roberts  
 Cornwall  
 Owen  
 1719

(The margin is cut, but the only loss seems to be the initial or Christian name of Oates. Only the "n" of the Christian name of Owen remains, but his full name, John Owen, is found on several other pages).

Yorke was no doubt William Yorke, son of the Rev. John Yorke, Rector of Culworth, Northants. He was at Charterhouse from 1714 to 1720, became an attorney's clerk, and rose to be Chief Justice of Ireland in 1753, Chancellor of the Exchequer of Ireland in 1761, and a Baronet of Ireland. He died from an overdose of laudanum in 1776 and was buried at Charterhouse. (Marsh and Crisp: *Alumni Carthusiani*, 77.)

James Hotchkis was the son of a Canon of St. Pauls, and was born in 1702. He was at Charterhouse as a boy from 1714 to 1720, became Usher of Charterhouse in 1731, and was Schoolmaster (Headmaster) from 1732 to 1748. He

## PROCEEDINGS

died in 1751 and was buried at Charterhouse. (Marsh and Crisp, 75.)

Henrick Prescott, born in 1702, was at Charterhouse as a boy from 1717 to 1720, was Usher from 1732 to 1736, became Master of St Catherine's College, Cambridge in 1741, and was Vice-Chancellor of the University in 1744. He died in 1779. (Marsh and Crisp, 80.)

The name of John Owen, last in the list, appears once on another page with another name, which is undecipherable as the margin has been cut, with the comment added in another hand, "Two great blockheads".

Toller, on leaving the School, was bound to his father, an Attorney of Clifford's Inn. Dennett became a Surgeon in Midhurst and died in 1729.

In a scrap book made up by Mr F. K. W. Girdlestone, an assistant master at Charterhouse, are preserved several scraps of paper with various lists of names of boys at the School in the eighteenth century. These scraps may be blank pages from books. John Wesley's name appears in three lists.

G. Boys  
Smith  
Yorke  
Wesley  
Turner  
Mitchell. Toller  
Prescott

(G. Boys must stand for Gownboys, the name used for the Scholars.)

5 Form 1718  
Yorke - Westley  
Toller. Hotchkis  
Prescott. Dennett.  
1717. 4 Form. Forder. Yorke  
Westley. Blomberg - Toller  
Turner - Mitchell - Hotchkis  
Prescott - Denner - Harneis - Cornwall  
Wynn

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This is the first of four notes derived from Charterhouse records and kindly prepared for us by Mr. Robert Birley, M.A., Headmaster, Godalming. The remaining three will appear in successive issues of the *Proceedings*.

## METHODIST STATISTICS, 1838

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*The Tabular View of Methodism in England*, which is here reproduced, was inserted in *Dearden's Miscellany*, Vol. 1, January 1839. This Magazine had only a short life. Its joint editors were apparently William Dearden, Nottingham printer and bookseller, and the Rev. Henry Alford, at that time Vicar of Wymeswold, Leicestershire, later Dean of Canterbury. Alford himself contributed a number of sonnets.

As early as 1832, William Dearden had a printing establishment at 3, Carlton St. Nottingham. He was still printing in 1863, higher up the same Street, and between these dates he had a place at Stoncy St. He had far wider interests than just the commercial aspects of printing and bookselling. In 1844 he had a Patent Medicine Store along with his book shop, which ran for at least 9 years. An 1853 Directory of Nottingham shows that he had a News Room, one of three in the town, in the same building. He encouraged popular medicine further by publishing a volume of Hints for Invalids. Local poets also came in for his help, for besides publishing their works, as e.g. those of Robert Howitt and Thomas Wragg, he opened a subscription for Robert Millhouse who had fallen upon hard times in 1839. Mellors, in *Men of Nottingham* says of the *Miscellany* "He sought to make the book a convenient book of reference for contemporary inventions, and the advancement of science". The preface of the 1840 volume, after referring to the editors' dispassionate reception of religious and political articles for the *Miscellany*, runs "At the same time we claim and exercise the privilege of appealing to, and taking our stand upon, universally acknowledged Christian truths, as the fountains of right judgement even in departments of thought not seemingly connected with them".

In addition to the Table on Methodism, the first volume has a table and notes on the Statistics of the Church of England for the year 1835, and another table and notes on those of "Dissent" for the same year. This latter table contains a column of "Calvinistic Methodist" congregations, on a County basis, the total number being 734, 607 of which are in Wales. The note on this runs:—"The term 'Calvinistic Methodist' includes three distinct connexions. First the

Tabernacle Connexion, originally formed by the labours of the Rev. G. Whitfield [Whitefield], in London, Bristol, etc; the name of Tabernacle having been given to several of his places of worship. Secondly, the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion. The number of chapels belonging to this body is about sixty, in all of which the liturgy of the Church of England is read. And thirdly, the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists, who arose about the time that Methodism began in England, and may be traced to the zealous exertions of Howell Harris, Esq. of Trevecca; but the body was more regularly organised in 1785 when it was joined by the late Rev. T. Charles, A.B. of Bala. More than twenty years ago, (according to Bogue and Bennett) there were in the whole of the Principality about two hundred preachers, and upwards of 30,000 members. The number since then has considerably increased and their chapels are said to more than treble the number of their churches".

In the notes on these Statistics of Dissent, the editors explain that they do not class the "Methodists" as Dissenters. Hence the reason for a separate table. Although it was common for writers to swell the figures of Dissent by including those of Roman Catholicism and Methodism, Dearden writes. "The Wesleyans, who form the original and by far the largest body of Methodists, totally disclaim being opposed to the principles of an Established Church, believing in both the utility and necessity of one, (see *Wesleyan Mag*: for July 1834); and the last prayer uttered by their founder was for God to bless the Church and the King".

The *Tabular view of Methodism* is introduced by the following editorial note:—"Purposing occasionally to give insertion to statistical articles, Ecclesiastical, Commercial, Political, Literary, etc. we present the first that has come to hand from the pen of the Rev. S. Woodhouse. The *Miscellany* will form no hypothesis, or make any deductions from such tables, but simply have them prepared with extreme care and accuracy for the information of the public and the use of those who may require them".

Simeon Woodhouse was a native of Nottingham, born in 1787. His father, a Leader and Steward, supported the Kilhamite secession in 1797. Simeon travelled as a Methodist New Connexion Preacher from 1808 to 1854. He is described as "of an humble and peaceable spirit, of earnest and

uniform piety . . . an example of neatness and punctuality". He was elected President of the Conference in 1826, and again in 1839. He was twice stationed at Nottingham. On retirement he settled there. He has one or two small publications to his credit, including a pamphlet entitled "*Centenary of Methodism—1839. The Moral Influence and National Importance of Methodism.*" This included the statistical table reprinted from *Dearden's Miscellany*, along with additions. Though published by Mason, Wesleyan Book Room, it was printed by Dearden.

Turning now to the *Tabular View* itself, we note that it takes account of the parent body and three seceding bodies. Figures for the Bryanites, or Bible Christians, were not procurable on a County basis.

The editors state in the notes that the only table of County Methodism hitherto published was drawn up by the Rev. Arthur Jewitt in 1824, based on the 1823 returns, and dealt only with Wesleyan Methodism. [Where is Jewitt's *Table* to be found? Was it published?] Jewitt had a short ministry—from 1816 to 1828, when he died. References occur in *W.M. Mag.* 1829, p. 70 and p. 642, and *W.M. Mag.* 1833, p. 313, but details are meagre.

A column from Jewitt's *Table* is put alongside of Woodhouse's *Tabular View*, so as to compare the proportion of Wesleyans to the population in 1823, with that of the Methodists generally in 1838. The two final columns reveal that Methodism's progress between these dates was registered in every County in England, with the smallest proportionate increase in Kent, and the greatest in Monmouthshire. The *Table* shows at a glance the counties where the three seceding branches of Methodism were established, and in what strength, as well as those counties where the parent body was unchallenged.

The Fourth column, Crime in 1835, has no obvious connection with the statistics. Its presence is perhaps explained by the fact that one of the avowed objects of the *Miscellany* was "to counteract as far as our influence extends, the pernicious effect of the introduction of low criminal life into the narratives of so many of our contemporaries". One would like to think that where Methodism was strong, crime was lower, and a study of the *Table* would seem to point in that direction. If we take the counties where

Methodism is strongest, e.g. Cornwall, Lincoln and York, the crime figure is proportionately lower. In Middlesex, the county with the highest crime rate, Methodists were only one in 133. On the other hand, if the figures for Berkshire and Buckinghamshire, e.g. are compared, it will be seen that out of an almost identical total population, where Methodists were in the proportion of 1 in 33 and 1 in 99 respectively, the crime figures are not proportionate to these. And in the county where Methodists were fewest in relation to the total population, i.e. Hertfordshire, 1 in 277, the crime figure is not very different from that for the county of Bedford where Methodists numbered 1 in 27.

During the period of his residence in Wymeswold, Henry Alford was frequently in Nottingham. Woodhouse was stationed there in 1839-40. They may have met at Dearden's establishment during the early days of the *Miscellany*. And it is not unlikely that the great Dean, whose catholicity and loveliness of spirit were outstanding, stood beside Woodhouse on Methodist as well as on Nottingham civic platforms.

GEORGE LAWTON.

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## "THE PLEASANTNESS OF A RELIGIOUS LIFE"

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One of the early entries in the Rev. Richard Green's *Bibliography of the Works of John and Charles Wesley*, (5, the second item) reads; "'The Pleasantness of a Religious Life" (Proverbs III.17). By John Wesley, 8vo., 1735.' Green quotes Heylin as saying 'This I give on the authority of Watts' *Bibliotheca Britannica*. I have never seen it, and it appears in no edition of Wesley's sermon or works.' Other references to the sermon all appear to rest upon the authority of Watts, and Green concludes that it is a mistake for the first published sermon of John Wesley on Job III, 17, (see the same entry in Green, the first part) particularly as some authorities who refer to the sermon on Proverbs III, 17, omit any reference to the one on Job III. 17. Green's note on the sermon ends with these words; "there is not the slightest probability of the existence of the latter sermon."

Whatever the reason for Watts' mistake in crediting Wesley with the authorship of this sermon there can be little

doubt that the sermon he had in mind was preached by the commentator, Matthew Henry. *The Miscellaneous Writings of Matthew Henry* (A New Edition, Samuel Bagster, London, 1811) contains a sermon preached from the text Proverbs III. 17, entitled 'The Pleasantness of a Religious Life, displayed, proved, and recommended to the consideration of every one, particularly of the young.' In a brief introduction to the sermon Matthew Henry states that it was preached in the year 1713, and as this introduction is dated May 31st. 1714 it must have been amongst the last of his writings, since he died in July of the same year.

Perhaps this sermon is not without interest to Wesley students even apart from the entry in Green's *Bibliography*. Isaac Watts, Matthew Henry and John and Charles Wesley all have many references to "the pleasantness of Religion", these very words being familiar to everyone as the first heading under Section II. of Wesley's Hymns, but many years before the publication of Wesley's Hymns we meet the phrase in Matthew Henry's introduction to his sermon on Proverbs III. 17; "for the doctrine of the *Pleasantness of Religion* is what I have been long delighted with" . . . .<sup>1</sup> A discarded verse of Isaac Watts' hymn "Come we<sup>1</sup> that love the Lord" contains the couplet,

Religion never was design'd  
To make our pleasures less,

and many familiar hymns of both Watts and Wesley will be recalled in the same connection.

Perhaps it may be thought that it has been the endeavour of preachers of every generation to persuade their hearers of "the pleasantness of religion" and particularly so where religion has gained a reputation of being morose and puritanical, yet I cannot help thinking that there must be some special reason for the recurrence of the theme in the hymns and sermons of Watts, Henry and Wesley. Mr. Bernard Manning reminds us (*The Hymns of Wesley and Watts*, p. 79.) that Watts was a philosopher, and his hymns bear witness to the width of his interests and scholarship.

Thomas Hobbes was one of the greatest figures in English philosophy in the period immediately prior to the birth of Watts. Hobbes' ethical teaching, strongly inclined to

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<sup>1</sup> Watts wrote *we* not *ye*. A.K.L.

hedonism as it was, dominated moral philosophy for more than one hundred years up to the time of John Stuart Mill. Is it not probable that in speaking of the pleasantness of religion Watts was answering Hobbes and showing that the pursuit of pleasure was not inconsistent with the service of God? Such a philosophical background is certainly suggested in Matthew Henry's sermon on the "Pleasantness of Religion". Henry More, the Cambridge Platonist, is quoted in the preface to the sermon; "That distinction that the learned Dr. Henry More insists so much upon, in his explanation of the Grand Mystery of Godliness, between the Animal life and the Divine life, is certainly of great use to lead us into the understanding of that mystery." And again later; "The conflict is between these two" (the animal and the divine life). "Nothing draws more forcibly than Pleasure; in order therefore to the advancing of the interests of the Divine Life in myself and others, I have here endeavoured, as God has enabled me, to make it evident, that the pleasures of the Divine Life are unspeakably better, and more deserving, than those of the Animal Life." When we remember that the Cambridge Platonists were among the chief opponents of Hobbes' philosophy, there can be little doubt that in his sermon Matthew Henry had in mind the ethical theory associated with the names of Gassendi and Hobbes.

It seems to me therefore that in Wesley's hymns on the "Pleasantness of Religion" we catch an echo of Isaac Watts and of Matthew Henry and beyond them of one of the most famous of English philosophers.

A. KINGSLEY LLOYD-

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## NOTES AND QUERIES.

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863. JOHN HICKLING, THE LAST OF WESLEY'S PREACHERS. One of our members, Mr. A. W. Edwards, has kindly sent us a transcription of an interesting bill from the collection of the late Mr. J. Steel, of Sutton. It raises an interesting point as to Wesley's ordinations. The bill reads as follows:

CHAPEL ANNIVERSARY  
On Sunday, January 24th., 1858,  
Two  
SERMONS  
will be preached in the  
Wesleyan Chapel, Silsden

WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

by the  
REV. J. HICKLING,  
of Audley, Newcastle under Lyme,

Service to commence at half past One o'clock in the Afternoon and  
and at half past Five in the Evening. [one line only]

A Collection will be made after each Sermon, and Silver will be  
thankfully received from those/who enter the Gallery, in aid  
of the Chapel Funds. [two lines, dividing at /]

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Also on Tuesday Evening January 26th

a

LECTURE

will be delivered in the above Chapel, on  
"EARLY METHODISM"

by the  
REV. J. HICKLING,  
to commence at half past six o'clock

After which a Collection will be made in aid of the above Chapel.  
This venerable Minister is in the 93rd year of his age, and is the  
only Minister living who was ordained by the [one line]

REV. JOHN WESLEY.

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J. L. Crabtree, Printer & Stationer, Changegate, Keighley.

The claim that John Hickling was ordained by Wesley is almost certainly incorrect, though it is quite probable that like many other preachers he was solemnly set apart by Wesley for the work of preaching the Gospel. (Cf. W.H.S. *Proc.* ix: 146) By Wesley's "ordinations", however, we understand the authorization to administer the Sacraments. For such an ordination there seems no confirmation. The error might have arisen either from an incautious statement made by Hickling himself, or through the over-enthusiasm of the Silsden officials responsible for the above bill.

As the last preaching link with Wesley's days, John Hickling was naturally a venerable figure. His last sermon was preached from a seat in the Kidderminster pulpit on October 17 of this same year, when the reporter added—"The appearance of the patriarch, was itself an impressive sermon." A week or two later Hickling was still delivering his lecture on "Early Methodism", saying "I am not tired yet". On November 9, however, he went to his rest, shortly before his ninety-third birthday. The official obituaries speak of him as "the last-surviving Minister of all who had been called into the work by Mr. Wesley" and "the last link that united the present race of Methodist Preachers with those who laboured under the immediate direction of Mr. Wesley". There is no suggestion, however, that he was actually ordained by Wesley. The question appears to be settled by the *Minutes*, for whilst Hickling was received as a Preacher On Trial by Wesley in 1788, he was still a Preacher On Trial at Wesley's death in 1791, not being admitted into Full Connexion until 1792.

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