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Proceedings

OF THE

Wesley Historical Society

Editor: REV. WESLEY F. SWIFT.

Volume XXXII

March 1959

A NEW LETTER OF DR. ADAM CLARKE

THE following letter has been received by the Rev. J. Kingsley Sanders for presentation to the trustees of the Adam Clarke Memorial Church, Eastcote, Pinner, Middlesex.

ADAM CLARKE TO HIS WIFE

The letter is addressed to Mrs. Clarke, Haydon Hall, Pinner, Middlesex, and is postmarked "Bath".

5 a.m. Jan. 20, 1832.

My very dear Mary,

For some days we have been waiting hourly for the demise of Mr. Scott, but he is still here, in almost the lowest state of humiliation. He has eaten nothing for 6 or 7 days. . . . From all lips and from all hearts the prayer to God for his release is constant and fervent. The thread of life is already spun out to extreme tenuity, but even in this state the staple has been so strong that Death seems as if unable to snap it asunder. I would have waited for a few hours longer before I wrote, as I think the conflict will soon be over, but the post goes out in the morning and if I write not *now* I cannot write before Sunday. Mrs. Scott, who is sadly broken down, for she has had no rest and scarcely ever takes off her clothes, earnestly begs me not to go away till I have seen him placed in the earth and I think I cannot leave till that is done. . . . [Many words are here illegible owing to discoloration.] I have not received a line from you nor from John. I *hope* all is well. I have had a letter from Miss Rutter, with a strong invitation to go out to Weston to see her and the orphan—but yesterday I received an uncommonly well written and affectionate letter from *Mrs. Brooke*, begging me to come and visit her at Clifton, or offering to come *anywhere to see me*. I, in course [sic], answered by the same post. She has got more than satisfaction from the Commentary. Mr. and Mrs. [? Ware] have come here to see me; very affectionate indeed. They are both well; she not a great way from another confinement. I must, if I can, call to see *them*.

Yesterday Mr. Roberts was buried at Portland Chapel. I could not go. All the Preachers of Bath, Bristol, Kingswood, etc., were at the funeral and no less (with the hearse) than *six* mourning coaches, with the attendants, officers, staves, feathers etc., of a first-rate funeral. Alas, alas!

Sorry pre-eminence of high Descent,
Above the vulgar form, to rot in state.

She, Mrs. R[oberts], has sent a deputation to me, to preach his funeral sermon on Sunday morning at King's Street. Of course, I could not consent, for while the breath is in poor Mr. Scott, I cannot leave this house.

I should see Joseph and, by one thing or another, I shall, I am afraid, be long detained from you. Indeed, it is *long* already. The cold I got in the overturning is now affecting my nose and breath. I pray God that it may not be very afflictive. I hear that Mrs. Hill (Mary Arthur) is ill. From the account I sent you of her treatment in his [?] her] last confinement, I should not wonder if she have an untimely grave. Dewsnap [?] is one of Mr. S[cott]'s executors—Mr. Grainger, her nephew, a Mr. Hunter [?] and herself are the others. I have not inquired about the will or anything concerning it. I suppose there is not less than from 60 to £70,000 left. She told me that as much was left for *Shetland* as would amount to about £100 per an. This is, I think, more than the interest of £3,000 in the 3½ per cents will cover. The last instalment, in a half £50 note, I am sending off to Mr. [?]Mason] this morning—so you may enter this in your book. I have written to M.A., to Joseph, to Mrs. Tomkins, to the Hobbs and to all others to whom I was indebted. *We* hear that the cholera has got to London. Wherever it may be, there is *God*—and perhaps both you and I are immortal till our work is done.

With love to all at home, I am, my very dear Mary, your very affectionate,

ADAM CLARKE.

MR. SCOTT. This was Mr. Robert Scott, who lived at Pensford, in the Bristol (Langton Street) circuit, and had been a close friend of the writer for many years, he having travelled in Bristol in 1789 and again from 1798 to 1800. At the London Conference of 1822 Adam Clarke became President for the third time, and heard the impassioned appeal of Daniel McAllum for religious work to be undertaken among the people of the Shetland Islands. So impressed was he that he supported the appeal, secured the appointment of two ministers to this new station, and practically made himself responsible for raising the necessary funds. His interest never waned, and he himself visited the Islands on two occasions.

Robert Scott was the first person whom the President approached. He promised to subscribe £100 per annum for the support of the missionaries and to give £10 towards the cost of every chapel that might be built in the District. In his will he bequeathed £3,000 in trust for the Shetland Mission. Robert Scott was of the company of those whose good deeds live after them in practical fashion, for the benefaction has continued unbroken to the present day. The current financial statement of the Home Mission Department (1958) shows the Scott Bequest with a balance of £3,657, after making a grant of £110 to the work in Shetland.

When the foregoing letter was written the will was about to become operative, for Robert Scott died on 21st January. There were other generous bequests, including £1,000 each to the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society, the Methodist Preachers' Annuitant

Society, and the British and Foreign Bible Society. Although it is not clearly stated in the letter, Adam Clarke was one of the executors. In a brief obituary notice by his minister, Thomas Stead, which appeared in the *Methodist Magazine* for 1832 (p. 312), Robert Scott is described as "a man of sound Christian experience, habitual piety and extensive benevolence".

THE OVERTURNING. This is a reference to the serious coach accident in which Adam Clarke had been involved earlier in the month. He was returning to his residence, Haydon Hall, in Eastcote, when the coach overturned. He was severely bruised on the right shoulder and trampled upon, and in that condition had to stand in the rain and the mud for about an hour. After having tramped over the hill to Harrow, he was refused admittance to a house where he applied for assistance. Those were days when "burkeing" was rampant and people were afraid of being murdered. So perforce he went on foot to Pinner, where he was so ill that the people at the inn treated him kindly, and the landlord yoked his gig and took him home.

In a letter written on 10th January 1832 to one of his children, he refers to this accident in some detail,¹ and then goes on to relate how the next day I received a letter from Mr. Scott and one from his wife, begging me to come to see him, as his life hung in doubt, and he wished to see me before he died. . . . After my late shaking this is a serious experiment.

Adam Clarke was then at least seventy years of age, but he responded to the appeal, and in a letter written on 16th January described his arrival at Pensford and Mr. Scott's condition.

This morning he performed the last act of his life; viz., signing a cheque for £50 for Zetland, exclaiming, "There, for the work of God in Zetland, I send my last cheque to heaven for acceptance; and the inhabitants will see that the writer will soon be there himself."

There is a reference to this cheque in the foregoing letter. The MR. MASON to whom it was sent was probably the Rev. John Mason, at that time the secretary of the Committee of Privileges.

MR. ROBERTS. The Rev. Thomas Roberts, M.A., who had been compelled through ill-health to live in retirement for about twenty years, and was then resident in Bristol. He had been appointed to the itinerant ministry in 1786 by John Wesley, and his obituary notice testifies to his faithful service and upright character. "For many years he was a great sufferer and his last illness was a gradual and gentle decay, in which he was graciously supported and kept in perfect peace." In a letter written at this time Adam Clarke tells how he "now lies dead in Bristol. I hoped to see him, but he was gone before I reached the city. I should have been glad to see him. Forty-seven years ago I sent him out to preach his first sermon. He was an amiable, sensible and pious man."²

¹ See Etheridge: *Life of Dr. Adam Clarke*, pp. 431-2.

² *ibid.*, p. 433.

4 PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

JOSEPH was one of Adam Clarke's sons, the Rev. Joseph Butterworth Bulmer Clarke. He had entered the ministry of the Church of England, and at that time was a curate at Frome. Father and son were deeply devoted to each other, and the latter wrote a memoir of the former. Etheridge gives a detailed account of him.⁸

JOHN was another son.

M.A. Mary Ann, a daughter, who married Richard Smith, and wrote memoirs of her mother and of the Rev. Henry Moore.

MR. GRAINGER. A family name. A sister of Mrs. Clarke, Miss Grainger, of Bath, contributed to the fund for Shetland.

CHOLERA. Asiatic cholera was spreading through England at the time (1832), and became particularly virulent in Liverpool, where the Conference was held. Adam Clarke had engagements there, and insisted on keeping them. He returned home, far from well; went to Bayswater on Saturday, 25th August, to preach there on the following day, but was stricken by the cholera on the Sunday morning, and died the same day in the house of his host, Mr. Hobbs, to whom reference is made in the letter.

Other names, some of uncertain spelling, are of persons of whom no information is forthcoming.

With the foregoing letter is a short one from Mrs. Adam Clarke to her daughter, Mary Ann Smith, dated 14th May 1832, in which she writes:

They are working your father too much. I wish they may not altogether overdo him. He is ever willingly active and oftentimes overgoes his health and strength. I shall be glad when he gets home again.

W. L. DOUGHTY.

⁸ op. cit., p. 433 f.

Local histories of Methodism vary in size from mere pamphlets to full-size cloth-bound volumes, and in quality through various grades of inadequacy on the one hand and excellence on the other. The latest to hand is *Early Methodism in Camborne*, by J. F. Odgers (pp. 152, 5s. 9d. post free from the author at 68, Mount Pleasant Road, Camborne, Cornwall), and it combines quantity and quality in the highest degree. Methodism in Camborne began in 1743, but the historic Wesley chapel was not built until 1828, when Camborne was separated from Redruth and became the head of a circuit. Mr. Odgers has chronicled the events of over two hundred years very fully indeed, and has embellished his pages with some fine illustrations. A whole chapter is devoted to the four Wesleyan Conferences held at Camborne. The first, in 1862, necessitated a guarantee fund of only £350 (nowadays it is nearer £3,000), and 60 lb. of beef and 20 lb. of ham were daily consumed by the representatives. Those were the days! Dr. George Smith, the Wesleyan historian, was a member and trustee of Camborne Wesley, and Mark Guy Pearse was once a boy in its Sunday-school. This book is a splendid record of a church with a great history, and it deserves a wide sale at the low price made possible by a generous subsidy.

THE SLANG AND COLLOQUIAL EXPRESSIONS IN WESLEY'S LETTERS

JOHN WESLEY'S English is often strikingly colloquial. His *Letters* in particular are conversation-pieces of his extraordinary Methodist family. Except for a few, they were not written for publication, but to meet immediate needs. This, more than anything else, makes them an excellent guide to eighteenth-century spoken English. Cant—the language of hypocrisy, not that of the underworld—is frequently condemned in his writings. The jargon of religious groups is often examined, and in most cases rejected. But slang and colloquialisms from many walks of life abound. This essay will be concerned with slang and its analogues, to take the title of a famous work on the subject, used in the *Letters*.

The object is primarily to bring together those terms and phrases which are used in a different way from their proper literary meaning. They are immediately perceived to be striking, pointed and effective, and to carry a suggestion beneath the surface. Many of those noticed are unmistakably slang or slangy. The rest are almost all obviously colloquial. Practically every term, except those in section eight, is listed in some slang dictionary. Many have the authority of several dictionaries. The authorities used here are Grose, *Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue* (1785, etc.); J. C. Hotten, *The Slang Dictionary* (1859, etc.); Farmer and Henley, *Slang and its Analogues*, 7 vols., 1890-1904; Eric Partridge's *Slang Yesterday and Today* (1935), and his *Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English* (4th edn., 1950).

The question of what is slang, and what is not, cannot be settled simply by appeal to dictionaries. Doctors differ, as Wesley often said. Often it is not a term itself, but the manner of its use, which is the distinguishing feature. Wesley's resort to slang, and also his restraint in using it, can be judged in its sober effectiveness by comparing his writings with, for example, those of Tom Browne in the seventeenth century and Pierce Egan in the nineteenth. Here is no coarseness, no vulgar cleverness. Yet he sees and often exposes just what they did. Two examples from Egan's *Life in London* will illustrate this point. He gives a very slangy account of the London night-watchmen. When Wesley thinks of these inept creatures, he too expresses himself in slang, and speaks of the "poor tools of watchmen" (*Journal*, iii, p. 224; cf. *Letters*, iii, p. 173).

From Egan we gather that there were numerous self-made men in London who were commonly referred to as "architects of their own fortune". Wesley sometimes had difficulty in stationing moneyed preachers, and in a letter written in 1770 (*Letters*, v, p. 196) he says that Mr. Murlin insists he must be in London, upon which he adds "for you know a man of fortune is master of his own notions". If that is not strictly slang, it is slangy against the London background.

I

A few slang terms are noticed in the dictionaries as having been used by Wesley. So, too, have several terms related to Methodism. It will be convenient to draw these together here, even though it means going outside the *Letters* in several cases.

1. "Every bullet has its billet" (*Journal*, v, p. 130). Partridge has taken this reference from the *Oxford English Dictionary*. It is proverbial, of course, and like some other proverbs later to be noted was "pure" slang in the eighteenth century.

2. "Blab" (noun or verb). Partridge under this word simply gives "Wesley" as a reference. The term does not occur in the *Letters*. It is doubtful if John uses it at all. Perhaps it was used by Samuel Wesley, senr.

3. "Chum" (here verb), cf. "college-chum" or "chamber-fellow" —Johnson. Once again Partridge merely notes that Wesley used it. It occurs in a letter (i, p. 33) about the possibility of Charles's sharing a garret with some "honest fellow". Partridge gives it as university slang, 1730. It probably was so earlier than that. Was the phrase "honest fellow" also university slang?

4. "New Light". Partridge gives this as a colloquialism for a Methodist from about 1785. Wesley himself does not use it, at least not in the *Letters*. But in a letter to Dr. Horne in 1762 (iv, p. 172) he quotes the term in what may well be its origin. Dr. Horne had spoken of "the new lights at the Tabernacle and Foundery", i.e. of Whitefield and Wesley. The word "lights" had the flavour of religious jargon much earlier, and its association with enthusiasm accounts for its application to Wesley by an anti-Methodist writer. This nuance of the term may be seen in the letter quoted in the *Journal* (i, p. 426).

5. "Sacramentarian". This was, of course, the nickname for members of the Holy Club. Partridge takes the term from the *Oxford English Dictionary*, and gives its slang life as lasting from about 1733 to 1810.

6. "Preaching-shop", "Workus" (workhouse). These slang words for a Methodist chapel were popularized against the growth of the Oxford Movement, but their roots lie much farther back. Partridge notes that the former is pejorative on Wesley's term "preaching-house", which he dates 1760. This was Wesley's word as early as 1746, and eight or nine years before that, in Georgia, he spoke of "The House". The fact that he sometimes wrote "House" with a capital H makes the identification with the other "House" (of Industry, Workhouse) practically assured as time goes on.

7. "Swaddler", etc. Under this colloquial nickname for a Methodist, Partridge cites Charles Wesley's *Journal*, 10th September 1747, for an account of its origin. John, in a letter to John Bailey in 1750 (iii, p. 279), shows the term in its life-setting. Here we see an Irish mob hunting Methodists to the cry of "Five pounds for a

Swaddler's head!". The term was begotten in ignorance. By 1848 it had gathered to itself such odium as to mean "a pitiful fellow, a Methodist preacher who preaches on the highroad, when a number of people are present his accomplice picks their pockets". So states the *Flash Dictionary* which accompanies the salubrious volume entitled *The Dens of London*, 1848.

8. "Hike". Many think of this as a modern colloquialism. Vallins, in his *Making and Meaning of Words* (p. 202), states that it is a word "which is said to have been used by no less a person than John Wesley himself". Where is the authority for that, one wonders? The *Oxford English Dictionary* under "Hike" gives an instance (spelt "hyke") from a letter of S. Wesley, 1809. Perhaps Vallins's loose remark is to be traced to this source by way of some ambiguous Wesley references.

II

Almost any of the letters selected at random would provide a starting-point for the exploration of the mass of colloquialisms they hold. Two are here selected, not only because of the terms they contain, but also because they make clear Wesley's conscious employment of them. First, then, a public letter—to the Editor of *Lloyd's Evening Post*, dated 5th March 1767 (v, pp. 43-4). Here we see one of his common devices—the employment of the phrase "as the vulgar say". The phrase thus introduced is "his fingers itch to be at me". That is slangy, to say the least. A few lines further on (and again in viii, p. 220) we read the phrase "told all the world". According to Partridge the phrase "tell the world" only qualifies as slang about 1930. Wesley's letter raises the question: is this merely a personal anticipation, or a general use? It reads like common speech. Later on we read "Will you pin it upon me in spite of my teeth?". Wesley often uses the phrase "pin it upon", etc. The words "in spite of my teeth" are colloquial. This is a good example of the sheer physical robustness of spoken over literary language; the latter would put it in some such way as "charge me with it in spite of my disclaimer".

This same letter gives us an example of another device which frequently indicates popular forms of speech, viz. italics in the Standard Edition, which presumably represents underlining in the autographs. Here the italicized words are "brutum fulmen", harmless thunderbolt. If Wesley's use of the words is catachrestic, that too is slang. It may be, however, that he is thinking of the proverb "the thunderbolt has but its clap".

The second letter is a personal one to Charles, written in 1771 (v, p. 269). Here the justification for a change of appointment is stated in pure slang: "I will not throw away T. Rankin on the people of London". A sentence or two lower down Wesley seeks to prevent Charles's easily-roused panic, in the words "do not cry murder". This affords an instance of yet another way of indicating the force and value of colloquialisms, i.e. by the use of single commas. Concerning

the phrase itself, we may notice that elsewhere (v, p. 55) he writes "cry bloody murder". "Bloody" there is not slang, but may we not have here the eighteenth-century (respectable?) parent of the slang phrase "Cry blue murder" given by Hotten, and dated 1851? This letter closes with a proverbial and slang allusion to his wife's dangerously ruffled high temper in the words "on the high ropes". The phrase originated in circus life.

III

Many proverbial phrases are slang. Of the hundreds of proverbs which Wesley manipulates with such dexterity in his letters, the following belong to this class:

1. "Not worth a rush" (ii, p. 147)—"a straw" (ii, p. 359). These both occur in letters to clergymen, and in a context unmistakably ironical in tone. They are certainly colloquial, even if not slang.

2. "Draw the line" (iii, p. 48, etc.). Partridge gives no date for this slang term prior to 1885. This date is itself only two years earlier than its recognition as a proverb. Wesley used the phrase, in what appears a perfectly accepted fashion, as long ago as 1750.

3. "Cast of your office" (iii, p. 269). Partridge states that this phrase, meaning "a touch of your employment", was colloquial in the eighteenth century. Wesley uses it in a letter to Bishop Lavington, and its mild sarcasm expresses the thought "Now let's see what kind of a bishop you are!".

4. "Billingsgate", i.e. coarse, foul language (iii, p. 293 and often elsewhere). It is noticeable that Wesley never couples with this the word "fishfag", which produces an exceedingly slangy phrase. Probably his innate courtesy to women leads him to prefer the less offensive word "fishwife" (vi, p. 165, etc.).

5. "If the sky falls we shall have larks" (iv, p. 122, etc.). This proverbial catch-phrase, a retort to any unlikely proposition, was "pure" slang in Wesley's day. Wesley never gives the complete saying, but stops short at "falls", and an exclamation mark does the rest. In all probability that is how it was commonly used in speech, and so with added effect.

6. "Hand over head" (iv, p. 126). The phrase occurs in a letter to the Editor of *Lloyd's Evening Post*. In this way he points out that a correspondent by his ignorant assertions was simply tying himself in knots. The phrase has survived only in dialect, according to Partridge. It was perhaps generally colloquial in 1760.

7. "Off the hooks" (v, p. 19). This phrase had a variety of meanings. It is here used to describe Charles's state of mind. One meaning—"peevish"—is ruled out, because John says his brother is either "off the hooks" or in a humour of contradiction. John may be suggesting that Charles is "out of order"—his usual way of referring to sickness. But the very ambiguity of the term may be the best expression of John's feeling that he didn't know where he was with Charles.

8. "Money never stays with me; it would burn me if it did" (v, p. 108). Here he recalls the colloquialism "Money burns a hole in your pocket". Partridge gives an example of its use in this same year 1768. Note how Wesley bends it to his own purpose. The sense "itch to spend" becomes transmuted into that of fear lest money burns its way into the soul.

9. "Cock and bull story" (vi, p. 82). Here the slang phrase has come forth as "Cock-lane story", by association with the celebrated London hoax.

10. "Knot in a bulrush" (viii, p. 177). This proverbial way of speaking of the complicating of a simple matter is here linked with another phrase, not proverbial—"to puzzle the cause". The latter occurs at least ten times in the *Letters*, and is itself slang-inspired. The term "puzzle-cause" was for the best part of Wesley's lifetime a slang expression for a muddle-headed lawyer. In this very case it is the mention of an attorney which suggests the words. He does not use even the slang expression in the usual way. He likes the noun, and proceeds to use it adverbially.

11. "One foot in the grave" (viii, p. 209, etc.) Outside the letters he sometimes writes of standing on the edge or brink of eternity, but with the advance of old age he applies the language of the streets to himself.

There is no need to particularize at length. Amongst other slang phrases occurring in the *Letters* we may note that "Break the ice" (iii, p. 39) and "Tell it not in Gath" (iii, p. 294—in a colloquial way ante-dating Partridge's first example by one hundred years) are given in Grose's *Dictionary*.

IV

From this consideration of proverbial slang it is a natural procedure to inquire to what extent the colloquialisms of everyday speech form part of Wesley's style of letter-writing. There is no doubt that many people who think of the neat clergyman will be surprised at his knowledge and use of some of the language of the cottage, the inn, the country market, and so on. It is not always easy to find literary illustrations for the use of proverbs. The literary uses of the colloquialisms noticed in this section are even rarer. The *Letters* are therefore valuable from that point of view.

The slang terms form a pattern of a very virile movement. For instance, to one who had boasted of the local chapel, Wesley retorts "If it be at all equal to the new chapel in London, I will engage to eat it" (viii, p. 30). This has become crystallized into our "eat one's hat", etc.

An erring preacher whose frequent lapses have tried Wesley's patience to the uttermost is said to have "pinned the casket" (v, p. 108). Has he here imperfectly recollected the slang phrase "pin-basket", i.e. the last child of a completed family, hence, as Grose states, used generally to mean "to settle a matter"? Or does he deliberately change the word lest it be thought he was implying immorality? Anyway, so difficult is this man to place that he

suggests he would like to "drop" him (that is slang) on the way over to Ireland.

Wesley had to deal with some dogged controversialists, amongst whom he liked James Deaves least of all. This man he laments "will dispute through a stone wall" (viii, p. 132, etc.). Partridge gives several versions of the phrase. He cites Dickens as an example of the use of the form "swear your way through a stone wall", which was current in legal circles. Wesley uses a good many legal terms, and had legal friends. Note once again how he makes it serve his purpose by substituting the word "dispute" for "swear".

Some of his preachers were rough diamonds indeed. He came half-way to using the term when he said of Thomas Olivers, "He is a rough stick of wood" (iv, p. 168). That inevitably recalls the familiar "queer stick". But sermons were dubbed "sticks" in Wesley's day, and so were clergymen, in parts of the Midlands. They were good or bad "sticks" according to their delivery. Probably it is Olivers' unpolished manner in general that is here alluded to.

The preachers were a rare handful. In dignified language it would be said that Wesley was sometimes inclined to lay his burden down. He expresses it tersely thus: "'Tis well if I do not run away soon and leave them to cut and shuffle for themselves" (iii, p. 39). We immediately think of cards. Such a figure would be inapposite here all the same, for at cards the players do "cut and shuffle". The point is that without him they would as we say "cut a sorry figure". This probably gives a clue. The "cut and shuffle" was a variation of a step-dance common in the northern counties of England. It was popular with young men at street corners. Wesley will not be led such a dance; he will leave them to their capers.

In one place (viii, p. 97) he expressly states that the preachers in Scotland "are got above my hand", which may mean either that they are out of hand or that they have an advantage of him in some way.

His pastoral theology was often couched in strange language even to those who could never be called "rough sticks". Adam Clarke, for example, is told to deal gently with a certain couple. "Love will break the bone", Wesley urges (viii, p. 22). It is placed within single commas. It may be an echo of a quotation, but it is more likely slangy. Partridge notes that the wearing-down properties of ague and fever were in the nineteenth century expressed by the term "bone-breaker". In the *Journal* (ii, p. 514) Wesley wrote "The fever came rushing upon me as a lion, ready to break all my bones in pieces."

Slang springs from and cements good fellowship. The bond between Wesley and his preachers is nowhere better seen for what it is than in the slang written to them or about them. Not many men would write to a bereaved family, only ten days after the loss of a charming child, and describe the healing power of work as "far better than to sit mooning at home" (vii, p. 111). Partridge's treatment of this slang term is indefinite, and his first date is 1848. Wesley's letter suggests that it was colloquial if not slang sixty-six years earlier.

A letter to Samuel Bradburn dated 1781 (vii, p. 68) contains the phrases, printed in italics, "moan over him" and "fairweather preachers". The former is used in a slangy way. The latter anticipates the much later slang phrase "fair-weather friend", i.e. a summer-time correspondent, etc.

Wesley uses slang terms of societies, as well as of preachers. The value of the Bands is that without them societies will "fly in pieces" (vii, p. 47). We would expect to read "fall to pieces". Forty-three years earlier he used the phrase "fall in pieces" of the Bands (i, p. 272). The term "fly" used as meaning "to become damaged" takes on a pugilistic sense by the year 1866, according to Partridge. Wesley's use suggests that it may have had a similar and perhaps more general meaning much earlier.

Wealthy members of society sometimes roused him to sharp utterances. He expects more money from parts of Yorkshire, and he directs Christopher Hopper to go there "in a trice". What is needed is a "hard-mouthed man" (v, p. 86). His only concession to taste is that he writes "man" in place of the low "un". The phrase is not exactly a compliment to Hopper. It was no uncertain stricture upon the wealthy, who are in the same breath referred to as "lumber".

Some of the most vivid glimpses of Wesley at work may be obtained by studying his living language. To a preacher who sat too lightly to the "Rules" he raps out "I will be on or off" (v, p. 64). The colloquial phrase "off and on", meaning to vacillate, is thus bluntly shaped to express a fixed determination. A weak but well-meaning man is said to have given an address "without head or tail" (iv, p. 360); critics of the work are called "croakers" (viii, p. 92); an arm-chair prophet of doom is discounted as "sitting-snug" in London (iii, p. 191); unordained preachers, effective if unofficially recognized, are referred to as "quacks" (v, p. 84); a woman who robbed her preacher-husband of the health-giving properties of the itinerancy, and wore him out in marital duty, is said to have "exercised him well" (vii, p. 18); to be sick is to "throw up" (viii, p. 49); flatulence is called "the wind" (vii, p. 306); a muddle-headed member of society is derisively described as governed by "Irish reason" (v, p. 236); a gentleman who has reformed his life in order to marry a pious and accomplished lady is said to have "set on well" (viii, p. 62); John Newton is bidden not to "wiredraw" Wesley's words (iv, p. 300); the average parish clerk is called a "humdrum wretch" (iii, p. 227); a singer is described as "capital" (vii, p. 290); the reflexive effect of undue pressure upon his wife is expressed in the words "I should hear of it another day" (iii, p. 127); an irreligious man is a "block-head" (v, p. 336); preachers are said to be "at the bottom of" the opposition to the Conference Deed (viii, p. 72). Slang terms like "mob" (ii, p. 154, etc.) and "pretty" well, etc. (i, p. 115, etc.), "palm upon" (ii, p. 336, etc.), "father upon" (ii, p. 17, etc.), occur many times. The list might be extended indefinitely.

(To be continued) GEORGE LAWTON.

THE WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY LIBRARY

MEMBERS of our Society have long been aware of the need for a Wesley Historical Society Library. At long last, after many hindrances and frustrations, our cherished scheme has come to fruition, and we are happy to announce that the Library, now an established fact, is to be officially opened by Mr. Frank O. Bretherton, of Sunderland, in the crypt of Wesley's Chapel, London, on Friday afternoon, 3rd April, at 3 o'clock. We hope that all members of the Society in or near London will try to be present on this historic occasion.

There will be general agreement that no more desirable place in which to house our Library could be found than the crypt of Wesley's "New Chapel", and we are most grateful to the minister and trustees for their benevolence and courtesy. A large area on the south side of the crypt has been partitioned off, and there, beneath the huge original oak beams which support the chapel above, is housed on accessible shelves the large collection of books and other treasures (such as pottery and pictures) which the Society has accumulated through the years. The nucleus of the collection is, of course, the large library of Wesleyana bequeathed to the Society by our late President, the Rev. F. F. Bretherton, B.A. Within the meagre limits of our financial resources every necessary facility has been provided for students who wish to consult the Library, and postal borrowing arrangements are available on application to the Honorary Librarian, Mr. Leslie E. S. Gutteridge, at Epworth Secondhand Books, 25-35, City Road, London, E.C.1. A catalogue of the Library will shortly be compiled, and will be available in due course. All inquiries relating to the use of the Library, both personal and postal (in the latter case accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope), should be made to Mr. Gutteridge at the address stated.

At the same address also the Librarian will be pleased to receive any further subscriptions which members or their friends may feel able to send towards present expenditure, the cost of future upkeep, and further desirable extensions to the minimum facilities so far available. Offers or gifts of books which may enhance the value of the Library and enlarge its usefulness will likewise be cordially welcomed.

The Society owes an immense debt of gratitude, not only to the Bretherton family and to the many other subscribers and donors of books, but also to Mr. Gutteridge himself. He has devoted untold hours of his leisure time, with such professional assistance as our funds could supply, to this work, and for him the opening of the Library is a dream come true. Few who use the Library can have any idea of a transformation which has demanded from Mr. Gutteridge not only hard and dirty manual labour, but also a determination to see this self-imposed task through to a successful conclusion. We are indeed grateful to him, and also to the Book Steward, the Rev. Dr. Frank H. Cumbers, who has kindly given to Mr. Gutteridge and to the Society assistance of a kind which we could not readily have found elsewhere.

The Friday of Easter week will be a red-letter day in the annals of our Society. A long-felt need will have been efficiently met, and our Society will be able to congratulate itself on possessing the largest lending library of Wesleyana in the world. It is a heritage which we shall pass on to future generations in the confidence that its fruits will be found in greater prosperity for the Society and an enlargement of its work. EDITOR.

THE INTERPRETATION OF JABEZ BUNTING

(Continued from volume xxxi, page 154)

ONE seems to have been stalking Benjamin Gregory in this essay for a long time. Popular opinion—never very accurate—thinks that his *Side Lights on the Conflicts of Methodism*¹ was an important book which produced immense quantities of hitherto unknown facts about Jabez Bunting and first enabled us to understand him. Gregory has been treated not just as the editor of Joseph Fowler's notes on the debates of the Wesleyan Conference, but as a reliable interpreter of them. Quotations from the *Side Lights* have become almost a variety of historical scripture upon which no Higher Criticism may be practised. There is nothing new in this: the Infallible Source is a recurrent feature of historical study. But in fact Gregory's book was not, as many have half-supposed, the foundation of the study of Bunting, but rather the rock on which that study nearly foundered. For what resistance his flooding text did not wash away he overcame by a luxuriant concentration on personality which shifted the interpretation of Bunting back to where it began—in the pages of George Smith.² Gregory's bland suggestion that no one had really coped with the problem of Bunting before proved enough to throw many off the scent; the work of the Evolutionary School disappeared, leaving no trace in later studies.

The unwary reader assumes that the subject of the *Side Lights* is the personality of Jabez Bunting. In fact, the book was just as much an apologia for Joseph Beaumont—an attempt to explain the Disruption of 1849 purely in personal terms. Although Gregory supported moderate revision of the Wesleyan constitution after 1850, he did not think that the reformers had any case in principle; he believed in concession for the sake of peace, on the ground that the behaviour of the old order of superintendents had made any other course impossible. There are moments when Gregory reminds one of Indian Army officers at the time of what Hindus now call the First Freedom Struggle (1857), who were so often unable to believe that *their* sepoys could revolt: the Disruption "laid waste some of the fairest and most fruitful Circuits in Methodism, on which I or my father or grandfather had looked with exultant thankfulness, and had laboured with success and shouting, bringing our sheaves with us" (p. 494). There could have been nothing wrong internally with these circuits, nor with the system that produced them: poison must have been injected from outside. The source of this poison Gregory

¹ *Side Lights on the Conflicts of Methodism, during the second quarter of the nineteenth century, 1827-1852.* Taken chiefly from the Notes of the late Rev. Joseph Fowler of the Debates in the Wesleyan Conference. By Benjamin Gregory, D.D., President of the Conference, 1879. The dedication is dated December 1897. "in the centenary year of 'The Plan of Pacification' and the 'Leeds Regulations'."

² See *Proceedings*, xxxi, p. 125.

found within the annual Conference, and in the notes of the debates taken by Fowler he possessed just the kind of evidence that he needed to support this idea.

But his position really rested on another and much larger assumption, never stated explicitly, and not always consistent with some of his comments. Gregory—unlike every other student of the period—saw no more than a superficial continuity between the quarrel over the Theological Institution in 1834 and the renewed agitation for reform in 1849. He seems to have thought that the earlier withdrawal of the Wesleyan Association, and its absorption of such other seceding bodies as the Leeds Protestant Methodists, had drained off most of the restless laity, provided a home for those who still wanted change, and left a situation which could have been calmed completely by judicious government. This underlies his conviction that if Everett alone had been expelled the Connexion would have accepted his dismissal as just. Instead, the agitators, he felt, were made a present of a solid case on which to renew their demands—by the reckless handling of Dunn and Griffith, as well as of the author of *Wesleyan Takings*. This mistake occurred because the Conference of 1849 was swept by an extraordinary mood of hysteria, which had been growing since 1840, and which was caused by a clash of personality inside the Conference for which Gregory held Jabez Bunting only partly responsible.

Thus Gregory confused the personal quarrels only too common in a public body with the deeper contradictions in the Wesleyan system which made the renewal of the reform movement inevitable in the long run. There was, of course, a distinction between those who thought that the expelled ministers were treated unfairly and those who were reformers on principle, but this does not account for what seems the fact that people seized on the actions of the Conference of 1849 as symptomatic, that they scented the hysteria to which Gregory bears witness, but that they attributed this inflamed state of mind to the principles rather than to the personalities of the Conference majority. It was characteristic of the position of James Everett that he reached the same conclusion only several years after his expulsion.

Gregory's standpoint had important effects on his use of Fowler's records of the Conferences. He sought to guarantee the picture which he gave by printing on the title-page of the *Side Lights* Bunting's alleged comment on Fowler's activities: "I have great confidence in one individual who has been accustomed to take from year to year copious notes of the proceedings of Conference". But it is worth underlining that Bunting spoke of the notes as copious: within the pattern of the whole he was prepared to take his chance. Now where something like this copiousness was reproduced by Gregory, Bunting's confidence was not misplaced: for example, in the long account of the debate which preceded the withdrawal of Rayner Stephens in 1834 there is a complete refutation of the secular

historian's assertion that Stephens was ruthlessly expelled on political grounds by a fanatical assembly. But Bunting did not mean to guarantee a selection from Fowler's material not even made by Fowler himself; still less would he necessarily have welcomed Gregory's part-publication of the notes, half buried under a magisterial commentary. The *Side Lights* shattered the attempt to understand Bunting's policy; once again, but in greater detail than ever before, Bunting's character was the subject.

One sees in such a book as William Redfern's *Modern Developments in Methodism* how wrong Bunting had been if he supposed that Fowler's notes would conciliate the Wesleyan Reformers. William Redfern was a prominent minister of the United Methodist Free Churches, and he wrote *Modern Developments* as part of a series called "Eras of Nonconformity", edited by Silvester Horne, to which Samuel Chadwick contributed the volume on eighteenth-century Wesleyanism. The series was sponsored by the National Council of the Evangelical Free Churches; *Modern Developments* came out in 1906, a time at which Wesleyan Methodism stood as close as perhaps it ever did to the older Free Churches. Redfern, not unnaturally, seized on the *Side Lights* as his principal source.

Redfern saw the history of nineteenth-century Methodism as the conflict of two ideals. "On the one side there was the clerical ideal, which insisted on the supremacy of the Pastoral Office, which was rooted in the High Churchmanship of Wesley, and which had been strengthened by Methodist institutions and traditions. Opposed to it was what, for want of a better word, may be called the Scriptural ideal, which insisted on the brotherhood of the Church, was rooted in spiritual experience, and strengthened by all the liberal and progressive tendencies of the nineteenth century" (p. 131). (What a century the nineteenth was in its radical heyday!) Redfern's position was clear: he made no bones about his support of the second ideal. He regarded Bunting as the "ablest champion" of the ideal of pastoral supremacy, and no one, he added, understood Bunting who had not studied the *Side Lights*. There Gregory "furnishes an absolutely trustworthy and unanswerable indictment of Bunting's policy and conduct in the Wesleyan Conference" (p. 101). The weakness of this assertion was the suggestion that Gregory indicted Bunting's policy as well as his conduct: on page 163 Redfern quoted J. H. Rigg as telling the Methodist Union Committee that in Wesleyanism the power of the pastorate "has not been changed one iota", and in 1896 at any rate Gregory would have agreed. But while Redfern does not represent an important link in a literary chain of influences, he is a typical example of the conclusions that men drew from Gregory's *Side Lights* right down to the somewhat perverted account of Wesleyanism given by Elie Halévy.

This is not to say that Redfern's use of the *Side Lights* was always beyond criticism. For example, on page 131 he dealt with the question of the *Fly Sheets*. He defended their anonymous

publication on the ground that the writers would have been "connexionally exterminated" if they had given their names: "the Conference simply revelled in the exercise of its despotic power". He offered to prove this by four quotations from the *Side Lights*. The first of these was that the Conference deposed one man for "mal-administration which had caused disturbance". Redfern, however, omitted the next sentence in the *Side Lights*, in which Gregory said that "Dr. Bunting, objecting to the sentence, was in a minority of one" (*Side Lights*, p. 424). Anxious to show the tyranny of the Conference, in which he no doubt sincerely believed, Redfern, one guesses, left this out as unduly favourable to Bunting. Gregory, however, made his comment for exactly the opposite reason, to imply that even when the Conference unanimously decided against a superintendent, Bunting, always on the side of authority, defended his man. Neither Gregory nor Redfern was anxious to underline the possibility that Bunting, even occasionally, was in a minority at all. And since Gregory gave no facts about the case in the *Side Lights*, it would have been a fair assumption that the Conference, in this case at any rate, acted justly. This absence of detail was the significant aspect of Redfern's next instance, also from page 424, where Gregory wrote: "A brother was charged with having 'spoken against certain members and acts of the Conference'. His defence was: 'I thought I had a right to take which side I pleased'." Redfern quoted this accurately, apart from the addition that the defence was "given innocently enough". Two comments suggest themselves: that Gregory again gave no details, and that he also did not say what, if anything, was decided about the case. Redfern followed the general implication and introduced the adverb "innocently", but little seems left of the despotic power.

The third instance also came from this unlucky paragraph. Redfern reported that "another man was censured for having allowed his beard to grow. He was told either to shave or to resign." Gregory actually wrote: "Another brother was reported to be afflicted with 'a strange idiosyncrasy—he declines to use a razor'. It was decided he should be sent for and conversed with by selected ministers. This committee recommended that he should either shave or sit down. This reads very strangely after the lapse of seven times seven years." In a paragraph like this Gregory was paraphrasing, not reporting Fowler in full. But the decision to appoint a committee suggests that this was not simply a matter of Conferential whimsy: the minister concerned may have been ill, or the victim of a doctrinal aberration which does sometimes occur. Gregory left the story incomplete; Redfern, perhaps too easily, accepted the implication of despotism.

These three instances all come from the account of the Conference of 1848, which Redfern chose no doubt as the nearest to that of 1849, to show that the attitude of the "Fly Sheet Committee" was justified right to the end of the play. But the choice was not very

fortunate. For this was a Conference at least so much at liberty that Joseph Beaumont could return three times to open attack of Bunting, putting down an interrupter in a style which Gregory thought never surpassed except by "Professor Huxley's terrible report to Bishop Wilberforce of Oxford at the British Association of 1860 (p. 430). On the following page Gregory added of Bunting that "under Dr. Beaumont's strictures the working of his facial muscles told plainly of severe and steadfast self-suppression". The final quotation given by Redfern was not from a report of a Conference, but from notes on a meeting of the Book Committee later than 1843 (*Side Lights*, p. 515). The instance was more material, but once again the absence in Fowler's notes of any detail to show that disciplinary action was *not* justified is the weak point in the argument. On the whole these passages do little for the anonymity of the *Fly Sheets* except contrast it with the open warfare of Beaumont.

Redfern, of course, would have defended himself by saying that he tried to give the impression which the *Side Lights* made upon him as a whole. The point which neither he nor some of his successors have always kept clear is that Gregory was using Fowler's notes only to show that there was a deep-seated division within the ministerial Conference, for which he held Bunting's will to power partly responsible. Redfern quite sincerely misused this picture as evidence of the soundness of the Reformers' criticism of pastoral supremacy over the laity, a matter with which *Fowler's* notes have little to do. Gregory had no sympathy with the Reformers' attitude to the pastoral office: his intention was the much more limited one of showing that the ministerial opposition to Bunting in the Conference both existed and had a case against him.

JOHN H. S. KENT.

Four more volumes of the reprint edition of *The Works of John Wesley* have been published since our last issue was printed. They are volumes viii-xi (Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, U.S.A., 35s. each, obtainable through the Epworth Press). Not the least remarkable feature of this series is the absolute punctuality with which the advertised schedule has been carried out. This is most commendable in a major publishing enterprise of this kind. These latest volumes are probably the most important of the series. They contain material indispensable to theological and historical students alike, as the following selection of their contents will indicate: volume viii contains the "Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion", the "Farther Appeal", "A Plain Account of the People called Methodists", and "The Principles of a Methodist". The greater part of volume ix is occupied with "The Doctrine of Original Sin"; and of volume x with "A Roman Catechism . . . With a Reply thereto", "Popery Calmly Considered", and "A Treatise on Baptism". Volume xi contains "A Plain Account of Christian Perfection", the famous "Words" (to a Drunkard, a Swearer, a Smuggler, etc.), and Wesley's collections of prayers. Much of this material is obtainable only in the *Works*, and these four volumes should command a wide sale. Only three volumes remain to be published (including the Index) at regular monthly intervals.

FREEBORN GARRETTSON AND NOVA SCOTIA

THE Rev. Freeborn Garrettson (1752-1827) was one of the greatest of the early American-born Methodist preachers, both able and devout. As a result there was some competition for his services among the leaders of Methodism, and for a time he became a bone of contention between John Wesley and the newly-formed Methodist Episcopal Church of America. The provinces of "British America" constituted the chief area of dispute, and the borders of the United States and Canada long continued a source of friction.

The short but fruitful Nova Scotian chapter in Freeborn Garrettson's life has been frequently told, perhaps best of all for the general reader in G. G. Findlay and W. W. Holdsworth's *History of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society*, vol. i, pp. 291-5, and in Wade Crawford Barclay's *History of Methodist Missions: Early American Methodism*, vol. i, pp. 166-72, which is more fully documented. The great pioneer work of William Black was consolidated by the appointment of two official missionaries by the Christmas Conference at Baltimore in 1784. These were Freeborn Garrettson and a less outstanding but experienced preacher, James Oliver Cromwell. They set off for Nova Scotia in February 1785, and after a stormy voyage landed at Halifax. After a month's effective ministry there Garrettson went on a three-hundred-mile tour through deep snow, preaching twenty times, making converts, and forming several new societies.

The work made rapid progress, and a Conference was planned for Nova Scotia late in 1786, Dr. Coke sending word that he himself would come and would bring further missionaries from England. It will be remembered that these missionaries, together with Coke, were diverted by storms to the West Indies, which thenceforth ranked higher in Coke's affections than Nova Scotia. The following spring Coke asked Garrettson to return to his native Maryland for a Conference which assembled in Baltimore on 1st May 1787. Garrettson was asked by Coke (at Wesley's desire, as well as Coke's) to become the "Superintendent" of the work in British America, including the West Indies. After some hesitation, Garrettson said that he was ready to tour the area for a year, and then to return for his ordination as "superintendent" if he found a "cordiality in the appointment with those whom [he] was requested to serve". This would have made him the third "superintendent" or bishop in American Methodism after Coke and Asbury, though having his sphere of labour actually outside the borders of the United States. There would have been one British-born "superintendent", Francis Asbury, exercising jurisdiction within the United States, an American-born "superintendent", Garrettson, exercising jurisdiction over all the adjoining British territories, and another Briton, Coke, exercising

general oversight in the name of John Wesley. It would have been an interesting situation.

The American Conference, however, changed its mind, and refused to part with Garrettson. The details of this change of tactics have never been discovered, and were not even known to Garrettson himself. Wesley, Coke and the Methodists of Nova Scotia were deeply disappointed, so much so that there was continual pressure upon Garrettson and others to attempt a reversal of the decision, even if it meant his severing his connexion with the American Conference. His letter on the subject to John Baxter of Antigua (who would have been under his episcopal wing) is quoted by Dr. Barclay from Nathan Bangs's *Life of the Rev. Freeborn Garrettson*, p. 159, but it is there given inaccurately in a number of points. In view of its importance for the history of both Canadian and American Methodism, it seems desirable to present a full and accurate transcript from the original, which is in the Lamplough Collection of our British Conference.

The letter is written on one of four quarto pages of laid paper watermarked "1776". The fourth page contains the simple address "The Revd. Mr. Baxter / Antigua" and the endorsement "1787 / To Mr Baxter". There are no signs of either seal or postmark, and the letter seems to have been delivered by hand. It reads:

Maryland
Sept. 10, 1787.

My very dear Br.

Grace Mercy and peace rest upon you.

I have been earnestly solicited by ye. Doct. and others, to become a member of ye. Conference in British America. I expect to meet Br. Asbury within a few Weeks, and know not but I shall be with you late this fall. I want to act in that sphere, in which I shall ye. Most glorify my dear Lord. The Cause of God lays near to my heart. Tho' my Connections hear [sic], are very near to me, yet at ye. Call of my God, I could chearfully leave them. I expected to have been in Halifax before now, but there was no one to take Charge of ye. work in this Quarter, so that Necessity Called me to stay. I fear lest our Societies should decline in that Country. The work is very great in ye. states.

Extract of a letter I recd. from a pious Preacher in Virginia.

"Petersburg Augt. 3, 1787.¹

Glory, Glory to God for ever, There is ye. greatest work here, that I ever saw in any place, or read in Mr. Wesleys Journal. I was at a Qt. Meeting last Sat. & Sund. The Power of God Came down in a wonderful Manner before Preaching began—so that there was no other way to do, but to take near two Thousand People from ye. Cryes, and groans of ye. Mourners, a distance in ye. Woods, and Preach to them. There were five, or Six Thousand People at ye. Meeting. It was thought at this, and an other Qt. Meeting not far off, there were five hundred souls Converted. Within two Months in Brunswick, and Sussex-Cir[cui]ts we suppose there has been near a Thousand Souls

¹ Garrettson's writing is untidy and inconsistent, and this date actually looks more like "1769", though it seems certain that "1787" is intended.

set at Liberty. Oh, what a wonderful work of God: if it continues so rappid much longer, few will be left behind. I hear ye. flame is spreading 150 Miles to ye. South of this & C.Q.C."²

Blessed be my good and gracious God for ye. revival in ye. four Cir[cui]ts I have ye Charge of. I feel my poor heart knit to my Jesus, but am ye. most unworthy of his Servants. I love you my dear Br. Give my love to Sist. B. and ye. Preachers with you. Sure some of my letters have missed your hand. do not forgit to write—I have not written to you as often as I might, but for ye. future I hope I shall not Neglect you. Pray for your unworthy

Tho' Sincere friend & Ser[van]t

FREEBN. GARRETTSON.

Though his labours were eventually denied to Nova Scotia, the rest of British America, and the West Indies, Freeborn Garrettson did not lose the love and the confidence of his friends in Great Britain. In 1789 John Wesley wrote:

My dear brother,

It signifies but little where we are, so we are but fully employed for our good Master. . . . You are following the order of His providence wherever it appeared, as an holy man strongly expressed it, in a kind of holy disordered order.

Wesley went on to press for a copy of Garrettson's journal for publication in the *Arminian Magazine*. Actually Wesley died before this arrived, and it was published in the United States. Nevertheless Joseph Benson presented serial instalments of the "Experience and Travels of Mr. Garrettson, in North America" in the 1794 issues of the magazine, and when Garrettson died in 1827 he was still sufficiently remembered and beloved in British Methodism for both an obituary notice and a portrait to appear in the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*.

FRANK BAKER.

² "C.Q.C." apparently stands for some "Quarterly Conference" (i.e. "Quarterly Meeting") of the preachers and churches supervised by an elder—possibly "Carolina" or "Cumberland" or "Campbell", though I find it so difficult to secure details of the early organization that these are little more than guesses. I would also hazard the guess (with a little more confidence) that the writer of the letter to Garrettson was James O'Kelly, the elder giving oversight of eight circuits in southern Virginia and North Carolina. It was he who led the first main secession from the Methodist Episcopal Church, in 1792.

Members of the Wesley Historical Society may be interested in the Society of Cirplanologists, which has been mentioned before in these pages and is devoted to the study of circuit plans, a hitherto neglected field. The Society is chiefly engaged at present in compiling a register of all plans still in existence dated before 1861. Would any member who possesses any such plans please write to Mr. E. A. Rose, 9, Silverdale Street, Higher Openshaw, Manchester, 11.

The President of the Society is the Rev. Dr. Oliver A. Beckerlegge, and the annual subscription is 2s. 6d., which includes two issues per year of the Society's bulletin. Interested members should write to the treasurer, Mr. A. Whipp, 29, Mather Lane, Whitefield, Manchester.

BOOK NOTICES

Where London Ends. English Provincial Life after 1750, by E. W. Martin. (Phoenix House, pp. 312, 30s.)

This book is a plea against the malady of urbanization, and proposes as remedy an increase of regionalism or provincialism in order to secure a proper balance of urban and rural life. "The provincial cities and country towns are vital centres for democracy" (p. 292). Various aspects of provincial life are examined: trade and industry, local government, education and leisure, public health, the newspaper; but the author is in no doubt that among the re-creative forces religion must play a large part. A separate section on "Wesley and Methodism, 1750-1833" is followed by one on "The Anglican Response, 1833-1900", and there are further reflections on "The Christian Community". The author has plain words about the way in which Methodism has become controlled by middle-class standards and opinions, but affirms that Methodist district and circuit organization, alongside that of Anglican diocese and parish, is one of the sources from which the necessary partnership between city and country will draw its strength. In the discussions taking place over district developments and rural Methodism, as well as for its setting of Methodism in the provincial life of the last two hundred years, this book is one that ought not to be overlooked.

H. MORLEY RATTENBURY.

The Astonishing Youth. A Study of John Wesley as men saw him, by Maldwyn L. Edwards. (Epworth Press, pp. 128, 10s. 6d.)

Dr. Edwards's latest book is a study of John Wesley "as his contemporaries saw him". It provides a fascinating portrait of Wesley emerging "from the concealing mists of popular misunderstanding and prejudice". Considering the many studies of Wesley which have been written from different and, as time has passed, increasingly distant points of view, it is very desirable that our memory of the original Wesley should be refreshed.

Has Dr. Edwards succeeded in revealing the contemporary Wesley, the pre-Industrial Revolution, pre-Oxford Movement, pre-Wesleyan Wesley? In regard to his description of Wesley's character, we think that no more just assessment will ever be made. In contrast to the contributors of the articles on the Wesleys in the *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, who damn John by describing Charles as "a more balanced and livelier character", Dr. Edwards is prepared to describe John as "gay and lovable . . . the friend of all and the enemy of none". All the evidence available agrees with this conclusion.

What we feel is less satisfactory about this revelation of the contemporary Wesley is the attempt to determine his churchmanship. Perhaps this is inevitable, for here we have to reconcile the testimony of Alexander Knox and the fathers of the 1793 Conference with some of Wesley's own actions. From the evidence available it is possible to draw two pictures of Wesley—either as a loyal though irregular minister of the Church of England, the reluctant founder of a Society which he half-foresaw would become a Church, or as a more or less self-conscious Methodist, impatient with the teaching and discipline of the Church to which he officially belonged. Dr. Edwards has to come down on one side of this fence, and he does so when he writes: "though John would emphatically have denied it, he was an Anglican Methodist". This seems to mean that he was really a Methodist, although he called himself an Anglican. One inaccuracy stands out (p. 122): Wesley did not speak (*Journal*, ii, p. 275) of "some

points of difference with the Church of England"; he spoke of a difference with those clergy who did not accept the teaching of their own Church—quite a different thing.

THOMAS SHAW.

Primitive Physic: John Wesley's Book of Old Fashioned Cures and Remedies, edited by William H. Paynter. (pp. 80, paper covers, 3s. post free from Mr. Paynter at 18, Castle Street, Liskeard, Cornwall.)

Look back in love, by Beatrice Hawker. (Longmans, pp. vi. 149, 15s.)

The Glorious Company: Lives of Great Christians for Daily Devotion, by Frederick C. Gill. (Epworth Press, pp. vi. 186, 10s. 6d.)

It seems at first sight incredible that after more than two hundred years a review of John Wesley's *Primitive Physick* should be called for. Yet perhaps this is not so surprising after all, for the book ran through twenty-three editions during Wesley's lifetime, reached its thirty-sixth edition in 1840, and was still being reprinted in the later decades of the nineteenth century. It has inspired innumerable articles by doctors and laymen alike, and the recent stimulation of interest in its contents by Dr. Wesley Hill's Wesley Historical Society Lecture last year on *John Wesley among the Physicians* makes Mr. Paynter's reprint a most timely event and will ensure for it a wide sale—especially as the price of the book is so astonishingly low.

Wesley's original edition in 1747 contained 725 "receipts" for 243 ailments and diseases. By the twenty-third edition the respective numbers had been increased to 824 and 288. Mr. Paynter's reprint has reduced the number of ailments to 223 (the omissions include such items as Abortion (to prevent), To prevent Gangrene, and Weakness in the Ancles), and within the various categories there are frequent and often disappointing omissions of specific remedies. In other words, this reprint is no more than a selection from Wesley's original compilation, though a very substantial one. It is a great pity that no room could be found for Wesley's "witty and sagacious" Preface (as Green called it), or for Wesley's "tried" which he added to those remedies which he "found to be of the greatest efficiency". However, Mr. Paynter has retained Wesley's advice on Cold-Bathing, the cures effected by Electricity, and the use of water-drinking as a preventive.

Mr. Paynter has interpreted his editorial function rather widely. He has introduced occasional sentences of comment or explanation, and here and there has slightly altered Wesley's phraseology. The proof-reading leaves something to be desired: for example, "Wife parents should dip their children in cold water every morning" becomes "Wife parents . . .". However, we must not be unduly critical of small points, for Mr. Paynter has done good service in making this curious book available to a new generation at a negligible cost.

Look back in love is a book of reminiscences of Methodist life and customs in a Somerset village in the early years of this century. Mrs. Hawker was born and bred a Methodist, and became a local preacher. She is now a Roman Catholic, but looks back in love and gratitude to all that Methodism gave her in her spiritual pilgrimage. The identity of many of the personalities met with in these pages is skilfully concealed, but others who are named—such as T. Ferrier Hulme, J. Ernest Rattenbury and Alfred E. Whitham—will find their place in history. No praise could be too great for this charming book, whose every page breathes a divine

charity which is rarely found in those who change their ecclesiastical horses in mid-stream. Our one regret is that Mrs. Hawker fails to tell us why she made her submission to Rome. We should like to know how and where Methodism failed her, but there is no clue save the one phrase "I have been given a surer, fuller light to live by".

Mr. Gill's little devotional book for daily use covers the months January to June, and a second volume will follow. A page a day (in deplorably small type) is devoted to the biographies of great saints of the Church, both famous and little-known. The Wesleys, Asbury, Coke and Silas Told are among the older Methodist representatives, whilst Percy C. Ainsworth and James Hope Moulton have the joint distinction of representing the moderns. Quite apart from its devotional purpose, this is a most informative book; and as a source-book for "children's addresses" (if such there must be) it is invaluable. WESLEY F. SWIFT.

The Journal and Letters of Francis Asbury, edited by J. Manning Potts, Elmer T. Clark and Jacob S. Payton. (Epworth Press, 3 vols., pp. xxiv. 778; 871; xviii. 603, £7 10s. the set.)

This joint publishing venture by Epworth of London and Abingdon of Nashville is an impressive three-volume work re-editing Asbury's *Journal* and presenting for the first time to the public a substantial collection of his correspondence. The editorial work was done in America under a resolution of the World Methodist Council meeting at Oxford in 1951.

The *Journal* (two volumes) has been much edited since it left Mr. Asbury's pen. In his lifetime he published brief sections in the short-lived *American Arminian Magazine*. After his death the entire *Journal* was published in 1821. Destruction of the manuscript by fire in 1836 cuts us off from any substantial improvement on this first edition. The subsequent 1852 editions and this new edition have endeavoured to reconcile the chronology, etc., but the text remains virtually unchanged. The new editors have added biographical notes on early Methodists and identified locations. Those who know the Eastern seaboard of America will enjoy these notations. We might predict annual feast-days "when Asbury slept here". Some cross-indexing with the letters is included, but this point could be improved.

Asbury's literary style is more pedestrian than the *Wesley Journal* with which it must be compared. But as a document to understand the character of American Methodism it is indispensable. The cumulative weight of the dry record of endlessly repeated hardships builds up a fascination in the reader. What one begins as a duty becomes an absorbing task.

Mr. Asbury's correspondence is more lively than the *Journal*. Through it we see the growth in stature of the Staffordshire blacksmith-preacher to the patriarchal bishop of American Methodism.

The usefulness of the volume of letters is marred by the quality of the transcription, which is so filled with error as to become at times unintelligible. Twelve letters transcribed from holograph copies were compared with the originals selected at random. Four showed little or no error, two slight errors such as might be expected in any work, but six showed serious error.

For example, the omitted word in the second letter (vol. iii, p. 7) is plainly "Calvinistical"—"keep at a distance from those who hold the Calvinistical tenets". More serious errors occur. The printed letter of 24th January 1773 (p. 15) omits the whole postscript: "Shew my letters if you

please but don't let them be lost as I have not time to take coppys of them." In a letter to George Roberts, 4th February 1801 (p. 199) we are disturbed to read "As to staying in Charleston I always paid to drink for the [whistle]." Which should correctly read, in an old English idiom, "As to staying in Charleston I always paid too much for the whistle [i.e. paid too much for my caprice]." And in the same letter the modern usage of "dedication" is erroneously read for Asbury's "deliberation". Again, the printed transcription reads (p. 199): "It is a subject of serious consequence where the East Conference will be no fear in cities where we abound in friends. The preachers are slack in going to their circuits . . ." Corrected, this becomes ". . . serious consequence where the West Conference will be. We find in cities where we abound in friends the preachers are slack . . ."

These are random examples of error. Two dozen errors occur in the Roberts letter, four dozen in the first letter in the book! How such a mass of error could come to press is inexplicable.

J. HAMBY BARTON, JR.

George Whitefield, Wayfaring Witness, by Stuart C. Henry. (Abingdon Press, pp. 224, \$3.75.)

A new study of the life of George Whitefield is long overdue. John Wesley outlived much of the opprobrium which was attached to early Methodism, and the subsequent writings of many students of his life have more than established his worth. The same may be said of other religious leaders of the eighteenth century; but, alas, in the case of George Whitefield many of the worn-out calumnies still persist.

The study of Whitefield's career demands the labour of some true historian. One must be prepared to search out the copious new material which is now available, and then, having gathered every possible shred of information, scrutinize and analyse it all, separating the false from the true; and above all, peering down beneath the surface to discover the real man—his aims, his motives and his ideals. Only with work such as this may a biographer know his subject, and interpret him to the public.

One looks in vain for this type of endeavour in this new book on Whitefield. The author lists an extensive bibliography, but seems content to make snap judgements, seldom if ever weighing the evidence on any given aspect of his subject. He states: "A strong case can be made for Whitefield as a devil or a saint" (p. 175); he accuses him of "an unbecoming pride of ignorance", and "an arrogant hostility to learning" (p. 96); he stigmatizes him as "a theological cuttlefish" (p. 178), and as one whose "success intoxicated him till his dying day" (p. 16). But the unkindest blow of all comes when he gives credence to the wretched old canard that Whitefield drove the Moravians off his Pennsylvania property in the middle of winter because of a doctrinal disagreement; the truth of the matter is that Whitefield lost the property through inability to pay for it, and any unkindness to the Moravians came from the Pennsylvania Indians.

The author, Dr. Stuart C. Henry, has a few good things to say of the great evangelist, but utterly fails to present a true, full and proportioned portrait of him. His picture at best is of a hazy figure, somewhere between his given extremes of "devil" and "saint". In this reviewer's opinion this book cannot fail to confuse the reader and bring reproach upon the memory of a holy, humble and mighty man of God.

ARNOLD A. DALLIMORE.