

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

PayPal

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for the *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_whs_01.php

Proceedings

OF THE

Wesley Historical Society

Editor: E. ALAN ROSE, B.A.

Volume 50

October 1995

PRACTICAL PIETY OR LETTERED LEARNING

The Wesley Historical Society Lecture 1995

Introduction

THE title derives from two of the people who feature in this study, from different sides of the Atlantic, Jesse Lee and Adam Clarke. This paper is not a rehearsal of the early history of theological education in British Methodism. That has been done by Bardsley Brash, telling *The Story of our Colleges, 1835-1935*, as well as his individual histories including that of my own college, Didsbury, later to be known as Wesley College. Others, notably Lowery, Garlick and Rowe,¹ took up the story which we celebrated as the 150th anniversary with a service at City Road, London, in 1985. My own interest in the subject was kindled when in 1991 we celebrated the 200th anniversary of the birth of John Hannah. He was the first Theological Tutor appointed by Conference, initially to Hoxton in 1835 and later to the newly-opened Wesleyan institution at Didsbury, Manchester, in 1842. I traced the origins of his contribution to the debate surrounding and development of theological education in the 1820s and 1830s in a short paper given to the Bristol Branch of the WHS in 1992.²

¹ Garlick, K., 'The Wesleyan Theological Institution: Hoxton and Abney House 1834-1842,' *Proceedings* xxxix, pp104-112

Lowery, Ralph, 'The Wesleyan Theological Institution, Hoxton: A Further Study'. *Proceedings* xxxix, pp 128-136

Rowe, T. 'One Hundred and Fifty Years of Ministerial Training', *Epworth Review*, Vol. 12, No. 1, 1985

² Macquiban, T., John Hannah and the Beginning of Theological Education in Methodism, Bristol Branch WHS, March 1992

Three years on, in another Methodist foundation of higher education, Westminster College, and with the benefit of a period of study leave in the States, I have had a chance to develop thoughts which have been suggested by this period of reflection. It has struck me quite forcibly that we need to recognize many of the parallels between the British and American experiences when we wrestle with the question of whether formal ministerial training in colleges or seminaries was appropriate or helpful for the growth and well-being of Methodism. This comes at a crucial time in the life of our present Methodist Church as we once again look at the future of residential colleges and their place in the training of ministerial students. This paper may be one more resource, from a historical perspective, which may inform the coming debate when the Working Party on Ministerial Training reports to the Conference.

That debate continues to be rehearsed in the United States as the Association of Theological Seminaries too wrestles with the nature of institutions training women and men for ministries. Clark Gilpin points to the ambiguous legacy of the eighteenth century in American theological education. He characterizes it as a tension between two models, of **formation**, in which students are allowed in the right environment to grow in grace, and **reformation**, in which students, charged mightily by God in conversion, are given the gifts to reflect on their experience in response to God's call to ministry. This relation of learning to piety and education to ministerial character is crucial in any discussion of both the early period of Methodist growth in Britain and America, and in our own assessment of the role of theological education in a shrinking Methodist Church.³

Jesse Lee and Adam Clarke epitomize the distinctions in background and understanding of what it means to be an itinerant Methodist minister/preacher. Jesse Lee, one of the early travelling preachers in Virginia, rose to prominence as a minister, a man of simplicity and great zeal, who became Chaplain to Congress.⁴ His sermon, *Practical Piety: the substance of a sermon preached at a Watchnight held in Johnstown, Delaware State.. in 1785* was reprinted in

³ Gilpin, W Clark., 'The Seminary Idea in American Protestant Ministerial Education, 1700-1808', *Theological Education*. Spring 1984, Vol. 20, No.2

⁴ Stevens, Abel, *A Compendious History of American Methodism*

1814. Taking the text of Mark 13:37, 'Watch and Pray', he exhorted his hearers to guard against the honour, riches and love of the world, watching the temptations of the flesh and the devil, emphasizing the moral character of the ministry. Adam Clarke, by contrast, railing as much against the dangers of illiterate piety as lettered religion which was learned, was a gentleman-scholar of great social distinction in British religious life, rising to prominence in a ministry which was increasingly less itinerant and more specialized, through his contribution to biblical scholarship and record-keeping.⁵ It was Clarke who, in 1789, when stationed in the Halifax Circuit, was declared by the ladies of that town to be 'dull though learned'.⁶

The rival claims of practical piety and lettered learning continue to be heard in our historical hermeneutics. As Dean Campbell of Duke University Divinity School points out in his article on *What's going on in Seminaries Today?*, the predominance of an academic culture in the twentieth century has resulted in 'perpetual gripes from the clergy about the lack of immediate applicability of much of what is studied in seminary'. Let us heed the dangers for today as we listen to the voices of the objectors to those who espoused the cause of theological education on both sides of the Atlantic in the early nineteenth century. What were these?

1. The danger that theological educators might mould students in a way which was out of touch with the church community - how does one provide students with an education which does not alienate them from those people they are called to serve?
2. The danger of theological education becoming a political issue over questions of doctrine and theological issues - the issues of biblical authority and human sexuality are deemed to be too sensitive to leave the selection of theological educators to the few. Issues of the balance between ministers and laity, pastors and people, and the question of teaching authority are clearly focused in the debate over theological education.
3. The danger of such seminaries being places of moral formation - in a context where every student is confronted with the moral

⁵ Everett, J., *Adam Clarke Portrayed*, i, (1843) p 314

⁶ Dawes, Stephen B., *Adam Clarke: Methodism's First Old Testament Scholar*, (1994) p4

character of ministry and the need to reflect theologically on that ministry. This makes theological educators more than lecturers or teachers.⁷ Stanley Hauerwas, a professor at Duke, says that

it is not enough to train people in scripture, church history, theology and ethics..that training must serve to make their lives, and their professors' lives, available to God's shaping as officials of the Church.

That is perhaps why theological education was such a political hot-potato in the Methodism of the 1830s and why it remains so. The future of the Church hangs upon its ministry training.

But why try to make a parallel between two rather different Methodist situations in Britain and America? I believe that, in the period under review, there are crucial reasons why to ignore such links is to misunderstand the development of theological education in both countries. The friendship of John Hannah who counts Dr Wilbur Fisk, a pioneer in American Methodist education, as 'his intimate friend', the attendance of Hannah at the General Conferences of 1824 and 1836 in years when developments in theological education were under discussion, Hannah travelling to the States in 1824 and Fisk coming to the British Methodist Conference of 1836, and the bestowal of American doctorates on both Hannah (1824) and his mentor, Jabez Bunting (1833), are ample evidences of the interconnection between the two churches and the cross-fertilization that occurred.⁸ Hannah's 'ever revered friend Dr. Bangs' of the Methodist Book Concern in New York was another source of mutual support in the campaign to raise standards through theological education for Methodist ministers on both sides of the Atlantic.⁹

⁷ Campbell, D., *Theological Education and Moral Formation* (1992).

⁸ Jobson, Frederick J., *America and American Methodism*, (NY, 1857) pp 184, 242

⁹ Letter of John Hannah to Mrs Thomas Mason, 28 Nov. 1836 (Drew University Archives, NJ)

Developments in American theological education to 1830

Russell Richey has shown how the development of Methodism in the Chesapeake region of the eastern seaboard of America provided a model for the growth and pattern of Methodism elsewhere.¹⁰ The period after the Revolutionary War and the noteworthy Christmas Conference of 1784 witnessed a rapid growth of Methodism which perfectly matched the aspirations and abilities of the new nation. He writes of Methodism's contribution:

to reform the continent and spread scriptural holiness over the land; the principles of class-meeting, itinerancy and connection which transmitted the vision and sinewed Methodists into one people, Arminian theology which taught responsibility and morality; hymnody and popular literature which met individuals on their own terms; a missionary zeal which impelled Methodists towards every new frontier; and a general superintendency which kept the "great iron wheel" in motion.¹¹

Methodism was in its infancy as a movement in America, a dynamic evangelical phase in which British Wesleyan theology was the doctrinal basis but the American frontier experience was the means of delivery. In this era, up to 1840, American Methodism drew heavily on the work of British 'scholastic theologians', such as John Wesley, Joseph Benson, Adam Clarke and Richard Watson, while developing its own patterns of style and growth in church order (i.e. bishops and two-tier conferences) and evangelism (the circuit riders).¹²

The question of how the preachers were to be trained was for some time a much lesser concern. God called and enabled men and women to serve. The burning down of Cokesbury College (established in 1787 and destroyed in 1795) built along the lines of Kingswood School, Bristol, put an end to an early scheme for Methodist higher education. Francis Asbury apologized for its very

¹⁰ Richey, Russell, 'The Chesapeake Coloration of American Methodism' in *Methodism in its Cultural Milieu*, ed. Tim Macquiban (1994) pp 111-129

¹¹ Richey, op.cit., pp 112-113

¹² Chiles, Robert E., *Theological Transition in American Methodism, 1790-1935*, (Abingdon, 1965) pp 38-39

existence in his *Journal*: 'The Lord called not Mr. Whitefield nor the Methodists to build colleges. I wished only for schools - Mr. Coke wanted a College.'¹³ In the same decade a Methodist magazine failed through lack of interest, not to be revived until 1812, a mark of the antipathy towards education and learning among American Methodists, who reacted against the seminary training of the established denominations, of the Presbyterians and Congregationalists, particularly in New England.

Francis Asbury (1745-1816) contrasted the situation in America and Britain by applauding the missionary zeal of the American preachers, describing them thus: 'In England men of great learning, advantage of books. In America unlearned poor men, woods boys.'¹⁴ He placed much confidence in the experience of the men called and in the Spirit's help in preaching and in encouraging study, but not philosophy and abstract speculative theology. For him 'Learning is not an essential qualification to preach the gospel.'¹⁵ While the 1784 Conference had enjoined learning and piety as a necessary combination for the ministry, it is clear where Asbury's own sympathies lay.

Here was Asbury, the model circuit rider, exercising an apostolic ministry. God's call to ministry meant that for him the individual was bestowed with the gifts necessary for the task. As God had not required them to go to school or college before their call, why should it then be necessary after? Such was the logically compelling argument he used, an argument which held sway and was underpinned by the success of the Methodist movement in the 1780s and 1790s. If Methodism was so successful in spreading the Gospel, who needed College education?¹⁶ What was most crucial was that the itinerants were essentially preacher-evangelists, equipped for delivering sermons of a persuasive evangelistic type, in plain language which was pointed and blunt, not polished and flowery, 'to press the people to conviction, repentance, faith and holiness.' Practical piety was more important than theological refinement.¹⁷

¹³ Asbury's *Journal*, II p 41, quoted in Howard, I.C., *Controversies in Methodism over methods of Education of ministers up to 1836*. Iowa PhD. (1965).

¹⁴ Asbury's *Letters*, III, p 369

¹⁵ op.cit. p 481

¹⁶ Miller, Glenn T., *Piety and Intellect: The Aims and Purposes of Ante-Bellum Theological Education*, (1990) p 401

¹⁷ Asbury, *Letters* III, p 66

Peter Cartwright (1785-1872), one of the more colourful and energetic of the circuit riders was typical of many of his colleagues. He could read and write and 'cipher a little', but his education was very rudimentary. He wrote:

Many of us early travelling preachers had little or no education; no books and no time to read or study them if we could have them. We had no colleges, nor even a respectable common school, within hundreds of miles.¹⁸

Like many of his fellows, he was highly critical of college-trained preachers and ministers, maintaining that circuit training, that is guided reading and reflection on experience, was far superior to college training. While he was prepared to accept a case for college training for the Methodist people, he vigorously opposed any such training as a preparation for ministry. Such an education, he believed, would spoil the preachers and destroy their zeal.

Nevertheless there was some concern for the fostering of some learning and study among the preachers, a movement hastened by the development of schools and widened literacy among the settlers, and the subsequent enlargement of the religious press. Asbury developed a model of ministry where ideally he and senior ministers trained young men in the two years before they were ordained as deacon and in the subsequent two years before final ordination as elder. The bishop was the primary educator of the younger ministers, such as Nathan Bangs and John Emory, who went on to contribute much to the expansion of Methodist education in the next generation. It has been demonstrated that some at least were able to read widely, to learn Greek and Hebrew, and to engage in more serious studies, drawing on the limited theological resources available. In 1816, a scheme of probation studies including formal lists of reading material was introduced, which some saw as the demand for a more literate ministry from more settled urban middle-class congregations on the eastern seaboard.¹⁹ The sudden drop in gains in membership may have been one spur towards a re-examination of hostility towards formal

¹⁸ Howard, *op.cit.*, p 23

¹⁹ Howard, *op.cit.*, pp 405ff

training, just as it was in the wake of the Liverpool Conference of 1820 in Britain. The Committee of Ways and Means set up to investigate did not, in its report, rule out collegiate education as a possibility. Because of the large numbers employed (704 preachers in 1816) over wide areas, the supervisory system for such studies was very patchy. Indeed some Conferences, notably the less urbanized areas, ignored the regulations. New England forged ahead. It was in this region that theological colleges for other denominations were first developed, at Andover in 1808 and then at Yale and Princeton. Such seminaries aroused great suspicion among the itinerant circuit riders.

The revival of the Methodist religious press, through the continuance of the *Methodist Magazine* and the publication in New England of *Zion's Herald* and its successors, stimulated the call for more study and training. The 1820 General Conference looked at the question of education and recommended that each Conference establish a 'literary institution', with a desire to protect Methodist young people from non-Methodist scholars in an environment in which more people desired education for their children. As Methodist social mobility ensured that such a desire for more learning became as strong as in other denominations, the period 1820-1840 saw a tremendous growth of church established schools and colleges in an unholy inter-denominational scramble to keep ahead. Many feared that the Churches were setting their faces against revivalism and, in becoming too settled, were deserting the divine mission of evangelism. Old school adherents of Methodist revivalism considered college-trained preachers as inferior to those trained on the circuits. This account from one such preacher was printed in a contemporary history of Methodism:

What I insist upon my brethren and sisters is this: Larnin' isn't religion and eddication don't give a man the power of the Spirit. It is the grace and gifts that furnish the real live coals from off the altar. St. Peter was a fisherman - do you think that he ever went to Yale College? Yet he was the rock upon which Christ built his Church. No, no - beloved brethren and sisters. When the Lord wanted to blow down the walls of Jericho, he didn't take a brass trumpet, or a polished French horn; no such things; he took a ram's horn - a plain, natural ram's horn - just as it grew... He don't take one of your smooth, polite, college, larnt gentlemen, but a plain natural ram's horn sort of a man like me!²⁰

²⁰ Boase, quoted in Howard, *op.cit.*, p 160

In describing the period of 1797 to 1830, the so-called Second Awakening, when the surge of evangelism was characterized by the camp meetings and rapid expansion of Methodism on the frontiers, beyond the Appalachian Mountains and southwards, Miller has concluded that this was the main reason for the hostility towards formal theological education in America: 'Revivalism demoted the ideal of the learned pastor..doctrine was not the main stay of the awakening. The revivalist moved the heart, not the head, and inspired action, not reflection.'

In such a situation, 'the most important Methodist teacher was experience', the experience of belonging to classes and societies, through bible study, singing hymns, hearing exhortation and preaching and testimonies. The thought that preachers could study for up to five hours a day as recommended in the 1816 scheme to sustain a ministry of evangelism and leadership was quite impractical in the frontier situation. Many dropped out from sheer exhaustion or the need to find a homestead and a wife.²¹

From Asbury's earlier logical argument for such a soul-winning ministry free from the constraints of study, one has reached the point where a formal education endorsed as a good thing for the laity was deemed to be unsuitable for the ministry. Was college education to be denied the preachers of the future?

Parallel moves in British Methodism to 1830

That John Wesley wanted to provide the means by which his preachers were to be encouraged to study is above dispute. The Conference of 1744 prescribed a daily schedule for such studies. Wesley founded Kingswood School for not only the sons of the preachers but also the benefit of the courses he ran there. And in key places his volumes of the *Christian Library* were to be found in order to edify the preachers.²² Nevertheless there was little enthusiasm among the people for such distractions from the work of evangelism. As Johnson notes: 'the demands of the work prevented the luxury of preachers taking time off from their activities to go to school.'²³ More essential than study were the

²¹ Miller, *op.cit.*, p 405

²² Rowe, T., *op.cit.*, pp 22-23

²³ Johnson, Dale, *The Methodist Quest for an Educated Ministry, Church History*, 51, (1982) pp 304-305

power of preaching, the purity of ministerial life and the spiritual successes which might ensue if the rapid growth of Methodism in Britain was to be sustained. Could enough men be recruited and trained in-service to fuel the Methodist movement?

In the first decade of the nineteenth century, there was a growing swell of agitation for the introduction of more formal methods of training, mainly from the urban centres of Methodism where a more settled and urbane ministry was the preserve of high-church bastions of Wesleyanism. Adam Clarke's comments, published in Bristol in 1800, *To the Junior Preachers (both Local and Travelling) in the Methodist Connexion*, originally drawn up with a young preacher in London in mind, challenges the notion that learning is a dangerous thing for ministers. Whilst enjoining the junior preachers to pray and read the Bible regularly (all the way through once a year), he goes on to encourage further study: 'Don't let your reading *end* there..take care that all your reading be directed to the increase of your knowledge and experience in the things of God.' not merely in theology but also in history and literature, geography and the sciences, helped by an acquaintance with languages other than English. He advocated a broad liberal education for all the ministers proceeding to attack the limitations of an unlearned ministry and to defend a learned ministry, in a passage which sets the scene for the debates of the following decades: 'Illiterate piety may be useful in exhorting sinners to return to God..but it certainly cannot explain and apply the deep things of God.' He defends the pursuit of wisdom, through studies in philosophy and theology and 'of the utmost importance to the ministerial character and success.' The preacher who is so opposed to learning offers preaching with little or no variety, no new ideas: 'A treasury he has none; his coffers are all empty.'

These trenchant comments were taken up by the societies in London who were demanding such increased standards of preaching as evidenced in a wide reading and studying of literature as well as scripture. A manifesto for Continuing Ministerial Development through studies was launched in 1806-1807 based on

Clarke's letter to the anonymous author (? Joseph Butterworth, MP). It complained of 'the want of direction' in the studies of junior preachers. While not wishing to 'substitute human learning for vital religion', the pamphlet enthusiastically supported Clarke's idea of having 'some kind of seminary for educating such workmen for the vineyard of our God', where preachers could have instruction in 'Theology, Vital Godliness, Practical Religion, English Grammar and the Rudiments of General Knowledge.'²⁴

In acknowledging the likely criticism, it declined to call such a place an academy or college such as those of the other denominations where it sees dangers of 'social intercourse and retirement', where mutual criticism in the cloistered environment might lead to a situation in which 'the spirit of piety evaporates in the fermentation of brainless witticisms' as young men get puffed up with their own sense of knowledge. Citing the example in contrast of the equal danger of 'illiterate piety', the poor young man who delivered a Christmas Day sermon 'full of blunders' which greatly upset the intelligent among the congregation is singled out for criticism. For these reasons, the pamphlet concludes, a PLAN for an institution to promote further studies among the junior preachers was proposed.

That such strictures were generally accepted is evident. The level of studies among the preachers was clearly falling short of the rising aspirations of Methodist congregations. Yet while the critics of Methodism pointed to the deficiencies among the preachers, there were senior colleagues in the Methodist ministry who challenged Clarke's analysis of what needed to be done.

John Pawson wrote *A Serious and Affectionate Address to the Junior Preachers in the Methodist Connection* from London in 1798. He pours scorn on those who devote themselves to the study of languages, and those who have acquired 'a good degree of what is commonly called learning'. He promotes knowledge, especially 'as it tends to make them useful in the hand of God' above learning; never mind if they are more learned: 'will they have more of the mind of Christ and of the power of the Holy Ghost attending their ministry? I pray God they may.'

²⁴ *Observations on the importance of adopting a Plan of Instruction for the Preachers who are admitted upon Trial into the Methodist Connexion..* 1807, p 5

Having dismissed foreign authors and the learning of languages, he goes on to demolish the Bard himself:

Will any man...go to the writings of a Shakespear (*sic*), (however entertaining so ever they may be) in order to learn how to preach the Gospel of Christ!

Pawson is typical of the older preacher who is sceptical of the new learning:

By erecting schools and colleges, in order to qualify young men for the work of ministry, by giving them a good stock of human learning, and by thus means taking the matter out of the hands of Christ, and endeavouring to make Ministers for him, in the room of his making them for himself...have they not ruined religion root and branch?

The alternative was to rely on experience; he stresses the importance of preaching which is direct, 'speaking out of deeply-felt experience.'²⁵

That Pawson spoke for many of the older preachers, suspicious of Coke and Clarke, of Benson and Watson and the rest of the Methodist intelligentsia, is evidenced by the strictures of the Anglican establishment at a time when preaching which was irregular and unpolished was regarded by many not merely as an affront to decency but also as a threat to public order. Wainwright, a Cambridge don, dedicating his work to Lord Sidmouth who tried in vain to restrain such preaching by Act of Parliament, wrote *Observations on the Doctrine, Discipline and Manners of the Wesleyan Methodists* in 1818 in which he justified Sidmouth's actions. Pointing to the 'notorious deficiencies of the Methodist preachers in education and learning and the absence of literary attainment rendering them unfit for the sacred office,' he paints a sorry picture. He claims

There never was a greater mistake than to imagine that any well intentioned man of fair character...who feels himself impelled to display by his powers of speech to his less confident neighbours, and who has stored his memory with a reasonable number of insulated and perhaps difficult texts of Scripture, is really entitled to become a teacher of the people.

²⁵ Pawson, J., *Affectionate Address*. . . pp 10-13, 21

Arguing from the development of society since primitive Christianity first started, he claims that a learned character is the only guard of the Church against error. The local preachers and ministers of Methodism are a disgrace:

Born in a humble sphere of life, occupied from their youth in some laborious and mechanical employment, entire strangers to the advantages of instruction in any department of literature, and not only incapable of writing their vernacular idiom with tolerable propriety and correctness, but often unable to convey their ideas in common conversation without violating the plainest rules of grammar, they have yet hardihood enough to imagine themselves summoned by a call from Heaven to enlighten the minds of the ignorant. ²⁶

Not only was such a description offensive to most Methodist ministers, some of whom *had* such attainments, but in many it confirmed a hostility to such prejudiced lettered learning which carried the social baggage of a hierarchical Church out of touch with the aspirations of the lower orders of society.

Chairmen of Districts meanwhile struggled to make sure that preachers on trial had completed their recommended theological reading. The *Methodist Magazine* of 1823 published a sermon by Archdeacon Jubb on the 'Scripture-Character of a Minister' in which the advantages of study alongside active duties were promoted. Clearly Conference was concerned with the quality of its ministers. The Annual Address of the 1824 Conference reminded ministers that they were under the 'godly judgement of Methodist people' concerning their conduct. 'Personal and vital piety' was 'its very essence' and the President urged all means of grace to direct their efforts to cultivate practical and experimental religion. A small committee comprising Jabez Bunting, Thomas Jackson, Richard Watson and John Gaulter, was asked to report to the Conference on the means of improving the support of ministry, in the light of the crisis of the early 1820s and the decline in the growth of [Wesleyan] Methodism. The 1827 Conference resolved to encourage Chairmen of Districts to examine more carefully 'the health, piety, moral character, ministerial abilities, knowledge and belief of our doctrines, attachment to our discipline and freedom from debt' of all ministers. But it is clear that the impetus for this came more from

²⁶ Wainewright, L., *Observations..* pp xiv,135-143

the desire for purity and good order rather than from any real desire for a more learned ministry.²⁷

Among other enthusiasts for the cause of ministerial improvement were John Hannah, lately returned from the 1824 General Conference in America and conversations with Wilbur Fisk and Nathan Bangs, and Jonathan Edmondson. The latter reflects the more puritanical streak within Methodism which saw good education as a means of insulation against the evils of the world. In his *Advice to Young Men* (1821) Edmondson pointed to the need to avoid classical learning in 'the schools of those heathen moralists' and urged his pupils to 'go to the school of the prophets, to Jesus and his holy Apostles.' Selected reading, with a 'decided preference to the Word of God' good company and prudent conversation were encouraged. The avoidance of plays, card-parties, dance, carnal society and parties was strongly urged. He returns to these themes in his *Essay on the Christian Ministry* with a detailed scheme for ministerial studies and pastoral duties for the young preachers (1828). Whilst he recognized that 'human learning might injure piety', he urges that Conference consider creating a 'respectable academy' to provide further help for the more able men. These should be men whose piety is not in doubt under the instruction in the seminary of 'men of decided piety'. The Institution could be erected by the gifts of wealthy and enlightened friends, and supported by the circuits and the Missionary Society. He itemizes the contents of a Christian Liberal Education programme which stresses ministerial formation far more than literary and biblical studies. At a time of instability (the Leeds Organ case was in full swing) he viewed such a development as vital for the future leadership of a Church needing to defend its doctrines.

The 1829 Conference resolved on a series of measures for 'the improvement of our young preachers', beginning the process to consider a 'more systematic and effectual plan' for the better direction of their studies. A General Committee was formed and a sub-Committee of those most concerned appointed to revise the plans. In addition to Bunting, Watson and Jackson, the names of Entwisle, Edmondson, Galland and Hannah were added as those most interested in taking forward any plans for reform.²⁸

²⁷ *Minutes* 1827, VI, pp 279-280

²⁸ *Minutes* 1829, VI, p 514

Clearly by 1830 there was a recognition of the need for improvement in ministerial education. But the debate was not over between those who regarded the model of teacher/disciple in circuit as the ideal, of in-service training, and those who wanted to argue for the benefits of collegiate education as a preparation for ministry. In the unsettled socio-political milieu of Wesleyan Methodism of the 1830s, this issue was to prove to be not merely a debate about better standards but a debate about where power lay in the Connexion.

The continuing debate of the 1830s

In the case for British Methodist formal education in colleges, the cause of Hannah and others was strengthened by the example of the success cited amongst American institutions in promoting higher education even though the Methodist Episcopal Church had not yet accepted the case for college training as preparation for ministry. Wilbur Fisk (1792-1839) was its main proponent. A graduate from New England, he was elected Principal of the Wesleyan Academy at Wilbraham, Massachusetts before selection as the first President of the Wesleyan University at Middletown, Connecticut in 1831. In that year for his inaugural address he chose the subject of 'The Science of Education'. He believed that, contrary to the view that colleges quenched revivalism, they could become hotbeds of revival influence if morality and religion were at the heart of their purpose.²⁹ He continued to press for the extension of liberal arts schools promoted by Conferences. His slogan was his belief that 'A cultivated Church will have a cultivated ministry.'³⁰ It was for that reason that he urged the creation of schools of divinity within such institutions for the preparation of Methodist ministers. Throughout the 1830s he argued the case for seminaries of learning, where immorality and religion were to be banished and education made 'subservient to the spiritual and eternal welfare of men.'³¹ His maxim was that 'sanctified learning' with a 'deep vein of evangelical piety' was essential to the success of such a proposal.

²⁹ George Prentice, *Wilbur Fisk*, p 64

³⁰ op.cit., pp 138ff

³¹ Quoted in Nathan Bangs, *A Discourse on the occasion of the death of Rev. Wilbur Fisk*, 1839

Nathan Bangs (1778-1862), almost entirely self-educated under the tutelage of Francis Asbury, had become the head of the Methodist Book Concern in New York and Editor of the *Methodist Magazine*. As such he was responsible for this transatlantic transmission of the promotion of views in favour of formal theological education. In 1834, he reprinted Clarke's views in the *Preachers' Manual* including his own *Letters to young ministers of the gospel on the importance and method of study*. While clearly not hostile to the idea of reading and learning 'from the book of experience' and not merely from 'mental application', he believed that all things should relate to the saving of souls: 'every study should be made to contribute to its attainment'. Education was to be driven by the evangelistic task of the Church, rather than a quest for wisdom and truth *per se*.

At the same time as the debate in England, the controversy raged in America surrounding the adequacy of Study Courses arranged by Conferences. An attempt to strengthen these and make them mandatory failed in General Conference, but other Annual Conferences, notably those in New England, made great strides in promoting more general and theological reading among the preachers. While literary institutions mushroomed in the period 1820-1840, there was still fierce resistance to the idea of seminaries or colleges sponsored by Conferences. Typical of the attack on such views was that of Ezekiel Cooper writing in the late 1830s, criticizing seminaries:

They appear to profess to be educating pious young men..for the ministry, for missionaries, for parish priests for hireling, begging preachers..It is to be feared that too many of those would-be, men-made ministers, are lazy, proud young men, aiming at dignity, ease and fortune, getting their education at the expense of the hard earnings of many benevolent poor industrious people, more worthy and more pious ..their cry is, *give, give!* We want money or whatever you have to give: for what? For missionary societies and purposes..for education societies.. What for now? Theological seminaries - give us more money: What now? To build, endow, furnish theological seminaries - more money. To build splendid houses for the presidents of the seminaries and to furnish them. More money: to build fine houses for the vice presidents - more money yet. To build houses for the professors, tutors, etc. - more

money.. to support poor pious young students, to create professorships, and for many like such things.³²

When J. P. Durbin urged the adoption of seminaries in the *Christian Advocate and Journal* of August 1834, he was quickly forced to retreat. But in the following year a lively debate broke out in the *Methodist Magazine and Quarterly Review* when La Roy Sunderland responded vigorously to all the objections raised by David Meredith Reece in his extraordinary attack on colleges. Sunderland cited the support given by the leaders of American Methodism to the idea of developing educational institutions, men like Fisk and Bangs. He defended the right of those who had received the call to ministry to cultivate their gifts through education, citing John Wesley, Adam Clarke and Richard Watson as prime examples. He launched into the criticism of the superior learning and extraordinary qualifications of such teachers by drawing attention to those who, through their poor learning, have been the greatest drones in the gospel ministry, idlers in the vineyard, useless cucumbers of the ground, who ever afflicted and cursed the Church. He appealed to the example of the Wesleyan Institution in Britain as taking up the development started in the USA but not yet completed, drawing parallels in their concern for the cause of general literature and education. He held up to ridicule the views of Reece who had stated:

There may be found individual members of our Church who really think it a sin for a preacher to look into a dictionary or English Grammar, and would lose all faith in a minister who used a Greek NT were he College bred.

Such people, he suggested, were not faithful to the Discipline or legacy of John Wesley. Here was a struggle for the soul of the concept of education in Wesleyan Methodism.³³

Wilbur Fisk's letter to the Editors of the *Christian Advocate* of 12 March 1834 was published in the British *Methodist Magazine* in an article on the Methodist Episcopal Church, pointing to the advantages of such college or university education when set in a religious context for the advancement of religion, emphasizing morality and echoing with 'the voice of prayer and praise.'³⁴

³² Ezekiel Cooper, *For the Reformer*, n.d., quoted in Miller, op.cit., pp 137- 138

³³ *Methodist Magazine and Quarterly Review*, XVII No.2, April 1835, pp 204-221

³⁴ MM 1834, pp 599ff

But could the British Wesleyan Methodist establishment convince its constituency that such places could become useful training grounds for its preachers and ministers? How were the objections to be met? The articles in the *Methodist Magazine* of 1831 put the matter succinctly:

It may be pleaded that Methodism has done very well hitherto, without any extraordinary means for educating its ministers. It may be suggested that learning might possibly destroy the simplicity and zeal which are the best features of the ministerial character...a college or an academy, seems scarcely adapted to the forms and usages of Methodism.

The writer declares it hopeless to try to train all ministers to the same high level but acknowledges the need to help those who might become 'truly learned', through a more complete and efficient directed studies course which might highlight such special cases for further education.³⁵

The Committee appointed by Conference came to a different mind, promoting the American model of a liberal education in a theological context in college. It dismissed the directed studies model as impractical, given the heavy workload of the senior preachers in circuit, and the difficulties of reading at a distance from the teacher, which resulted in a lack of focus and direction for junior preachers struggling to do the job of ministry. It concluded in its *Proposals* that a theological institution with residential training and a prescribed curriculum and examinations for a short time, followed by probation in circuit, was the best means of promoting the improvement of the junior preachers.³⁶

The example of their brethren in the United States of North America where there was 'commendable zeal in the promotion of scholastic and theological Establishments' was cited as a good reason for their introduction into British Methodism. It was clear that the growing realization that a more literate Methodist people demanded a more literate ministry was a powerful reason for Bunting and others to press their case, against anticipated opposition. Joseph Sutcliffe had suggested to Bunting that the danger was that the Methodist people would 'either look up to the

³⁵ *MM* 1831, pp 382ff

³⁶ *Proposals for the formation of a Literary and Theological Institution, with a design to promote the improvement of the Junior Preachers in the Methodist Connexion, 1834*

sanctuary or they will wander elsewhere', while Joseph Entwisle observed that 'unless young preachers were given as good an education as those of their peers, then 'our ministry will not be supported..the Clergy and our brethren the Dissenters will take our glory from us.'³⁷ In the development of the concept of the Pastoral Office within the Wesleyan ministry, the creation of pastors who were learned teachers as well as preachers was a key feature.³⁸ The role of education in this process was, in the minds of many, another unwelcome feature of the centralizing tendency of Wesleyan Methodism in an era of bureaucratization which, fairly or unfairly, was laid at the feet of Bunting. The debate about the establishment of the Wesleyan Institution therefore attracted to itself other concerns, about the extension of the power of Conference and the concentration of that power in the hands of a few.

The *Proposals* tried to anticipate certain objections to such an institution and, on creating it in 1835, tried to ensure that such objections, where valid, were met. But the vigorous pamphlet war which broke out in 1834-1835 was a measure of the concern deeply felt within Methodism. Samuel Warren's own personal feelings of vindictiveness against Jabez Bunting contributed to this but cannot be isolated as the only reasons for the campaign.

The proponents of theological education did not see it as at variance with the plans of John Wesley; he had not ruled it out but merely postponed its introduction. They claimed that 'since his days, the want of an efficient method of ministerial training has always been felt.' The 'Disciple of the Old School' found their arguments 'Un-Wesleyan, Unscriptural, Unnecessary, Impolitic and Dangerous' in a pamphlet in response to their proposals. To their views he countered Wesley's own views at the 1747 Conference and the Discipline agreed in 1797 which should be maintained and upheld. Were Benson and Fletcher not proper tutors if John Wesley had really intended to have a seminary? And was not the *Christian Library* and the reading Wesley recommended not sufficient?

The Apostolical training which the Bible demonstrated he maintains did not involve college training. The disciples Jesus employed were 'unlettered and untrained men'. Paul did not send

³⁷ Letters of Sutcliffe (17 July 1834) and Entwisle (23 June 1831) quoted in Brown, K., *A Social History of the Nonconformist ministry in England and Wales 1800-1930*, (1988), p58

³⁸ see Bowmer, J., *Pastor and People*, (1975), section on the Training of the ministry, pp 121 - 125

Timothy to school but kept him, while *improving* himself, close to the *work* of the *ministry*. When he said 'give attendance to reading', he did not mean men to abandon pastoral work and take up an interest in philosophy or chemistry.³⁹

The college training advocated would lead, he says, to insufficient occupation in the pulpit and a neglect of pastoral duties whatever steps were taken to involve the students in the 'large and uncultivated field of labour' in London or elsewhere. It would lead to ministers regarding the main scene of labour as the study rather than the pulpit, indoors as authors defending Christianity by the pen rather than outdoors on the highway of life.

Nor did the answer to the charge that college education would lead to indulgence in delicate habits satisfy him. Even though discipline might be rigorous and strict, the college system would get priorities wrong, 'civilizing first and evangelizing next', 'cooling zeal and quickening heaviness', creating clones of the teachers, 'a race of the same systemized beings who would absolutely pall the community by their monotony,' dulling originality and stifling initiative.

Worst of all, the 'Old Disciple' sees revival quenched. What Warren called 'our primitive simplicity' would be lost. He reminded the Methodist people that the Revival of Religion in America was chiefly affected by *unlettered* men, like Peter Jones, the Indian chief from the wilds and not the groves of academe, whose preaching was 'like the song of the birds in his own native woods.' The hale, open, rustic simplicity of the country' was contrasted with the 'prim refined sickly sentimentality of the city' which demanded college men. They would be puffed up by such training and prone to disappointment if sent to poorer circuits. Better they be sent to circuit for two or three years first.⁴⁰

College education was not the answer to the problems besetting Wesleyan Methodism. The 'Disciple' echoes the fears of Dr. Warren when he saw a growing divide between rich and poor, urban and rural, pastors and people, connexion and circuits. The quest for respectability, manifest in 'showy chapels' and anticipated in 'showy ministers', would quench the revival which had benefited the Primitive Methodists. Other pamphlets focusing on the political

³⁹ The Old Disciple, p57

⁴⁰ Disciple, op.cit., pp 63, 72

aspects of the dispute, saw the Institution as the creation of the 'Bunting party' among the preachers, typical of an 'unjust, anti Methodistical assumption of power.' For many, in Liverpool and Manchester, the Institution represented an undue concentration of power in a cause which was unnecessary and politically harmful to the 'simple but powerful genius of Methodism'.⁴¹

While the opening of the Institution at Hoxton in 1835 forged ahead as a precursor of a regular system of residential theological education, there was a recognition in the minds of those who promoted it that such objections had to be taken seriously. *Learning and Piety* had to be *United*, as the author of *Horae Britannicae* expounded in a vigorous defence of the Institution: 'The Church of God has a right to expect, and they ought to pray for Pastors, who can and will feed them, with words of truth and soberness, with wisdom and understanding.' These men would address the well educated of 'large and elegant chapels' with zeal as well as with knowledge. No longer would the 'progress of religion [be] hindered by the rudeness of its professors and the illiteracy of teachers'.

It may be that for this reason, the education of ministers was entrusted to Joseph Entwisle and John Hannah, two rather contrasting characters. Entwisle, a very senior and more traditional preacher, with a deep pastoral concern and evangelical zeal was at the end of his ministry. The notes on *Hints for Conversation with the students of the Wesleyan Theological Institution, Hoxton* reveal his love of Methodist ministry and practice.⁴² His role was to form the character of the Methodist preacher, exhorting a zeal and a passion for holiness and purity. He regarded the Institution as a large family where 'love, harmony and peace on Christian principles' should prevail in a disciplined life characterized by 'order and regularity'. His notes reflect a concern for the practice of ministry and adherence to Methodist discipline. Clearly there were problems in the early days which jeopardized the whole scheme, particularly when one student was accused of levity, crowing like a cock and braying. One wonders whether Entwisle himself, an old man losing control of his senses, was the cause of such levity. In March 1836 he stressed the need for a growing fervent piety amongst the students

⁴¹ *An Affectionate Address of the United Wesleyan Methodist Association*, Nov 1834, p 5

⁴² Baker papers, Box 4, Duke University, North Carolina, USA

upon whom so much rested for the future of the Institution. He gathered them together in classes and exhorted the use of prayer meetings to ensure piety and counter frivolity. The advice he had given to John Bell of Wakefield in 1794 at the beginning of his ministry was now systematized and given the benefit of over forty years experience of circuit itinerancy. His appointment to Hoxton clearly appeased many opponents of the scheme who felt he was the right man for the job. He realized the enormity of the task of this important office; he was convinced

that the only way to keep up proper authority is, to make the young men think I am better informed and more holy than they, by really being so, I must be much with God, walk with him, and derive constant supplies of wisdom.⁴³

He started, with hopes of success, to combat the dangers of factions, levity and pride, hoping 'to make them hardy, zealous Methodist preachers', but ill and overburdened with sorrow, he retired after only two years.

While Entwisle provided for their growth in purity, John Hannah and his colleague Samuel Jones, offered lectures and guided reading to increase the students' knowledge of theology and literature. In his later synopses of lectures on the study of Christian Theology, it is clear that Hannah accepted that he was not in the business of *making* ministers, for their call had been confirmed by the Church. His task was to help them by his experience, 'to train the mind and to teach it how to use its own powers.' What was needed was less knowledge and more discipline. He was not attempting to inculcate 'an accumulation of matter on all possible subjects' but to study a few good books which would help students to employ their own minds, consulting the scriptures or texts in the spirit of prayer. Notes taken from his lectures and copied later indicate the general heads of theology by which he sought to guide the students allocated to him.⁴⁴

John Hannah was himself a self-taught practitioner with over twenty years experience of ministry. He was to spend the rest of his life in theological education, devoting himself to the tasks of

⁴³ Entwisle, *Memoir*, p 393

⁴⁴ *Synopses of Lectures on the Study of Christian theology by J.H.*, n.d., Drew University Archives, Madison, New Jersey, USA

building up the Theological Institution newly-founded at Didsbury in 1842. As he later reflected, his was the task of nurturing and promoting the student's own experience as a Christian, leading their minds to a 'fuller apprehension of the grand system of Christianity', with all the tools of the trade, including literature and science, as well as encouraging them in the practice of ministry.

I have an opportunity of rendering some assistance to those who shall bear the torch of evangelical light and salvation into distant parts of our dark world..I will trust in God. I will go forth in His name and strength to this new enterprise.⁴⁵

That one who in 1834 admitted to no experience of guiding the studies of young men or of going to a college himself managed to construct a college-based training programme which survived and prospered is a measure of the commitment he had to making such a model of formal theological education for the junior Methodist preachers work.⁴⁶

Conclusion

Hannah returned to America late in his life, to the General Conference at Indianapolis where he met the 'committee and friends of general education'. He spoke then of the work of theological education which was of great interest in adding weight to the growing demands in the States for more formal training. His companion, F. J. Jobson, wrote of the increasing multiplication of Methodist schools, colleges and biblical institutes, which he believed had assisted the work of an expanding Methodism both in the States and at home.⁴⁷ Hannah did for America what Wilbur Fisk had earlier done for British Methodism, demonstrating that formal theological education had a sound base. From the reports of the success of theological colleges established with help from the Centenary Fund in 1839, the New England Conference in particular had developed a scheme for furthering the education of its

⁴⁵ Jobson, F J, *The Beloved Disciple...*, 1868, pp 76-77, quoting Hannah's *Principle* (1860) and a letter of 26 Aug 1836 to Mr Bainbridge of Lincoln

⁴⁶ See the Introduction to Hannah's *Introductory Lectures..* (1872) by W. B. Pope

⁴⁷ Jobson, F J, *America and American Methodism*, (NY 1857) pp 150, 242

preachers. It encountered considerable opposition at the 1840 General Conference. While the development of schools providing religion and theological education was to be encouraged, there was still hostility to the idea of seminaries for preachers, which lasted well into the century. Literary Institutions were permitted and some allowance made for the provision of collegiate education of preachers if local Conferences could finance such places.⁴⁸ The fundamental issue remained the call. Those who opposed schooling for ministers believed that God would grant the abilities needed to minister as part of the call to serve. Miller concludes that 'no advocate of theological education had an answer to this argument.'⁴⁹ But they had an alternative. Already a small academy had opened at Newbury and in 1847 a Methodist General Biblical Institute at Concord, later moved to Boston University, led the way for the development of schools and colleges dedicated to the preparation and training of ministers. What the advanced North East did in the 1840s, others did in the next generation, at Drew and Garrett and Vanderbilt, allowing the development of American Methodist theology independent of Wesley, Clarke and Watson. Ivan Howard has characterized this development as part of the sociological shift of Methodism, just as we have seen in British Methodism. Divisions along the lines of East and West/South, city and country, wealthy and poor, cultured and uncultured, were expressions of the desire or otherwise for theological education. Would the schools produce preachers who were 'very pretty for ladies' parlours' who would refuse difficult and remote circuits in country areas in defiance of the Bishops? Would they produce freethinking academic ministers who would display a disturbing diversity of opinion far removed from Wesleyan principles? Organs and choirs, pews and spired chapels, theological colleges and seminaries, were all symptomatic of a Methodism settling into denominational respectability in a more literate and civilized society far removed from the days of persecution and frontier revivalism in the expansionist missionary phase of its development, in both Britain and later in America.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Howard, *op.cit.*, p 168ff and Stevens, *op.cit.*, pp 391-394

⁴⁹ Miller, *op.cit.*, pp 424ff

⁵⁰ Howard, *op.cit.*, p 274

After the turmoil of the 1830s, theological education never again became a divisive issue but was gradually extended into most Methodist denominations. But at what cost? At the cost of maintaining a discipline which stifled theological development, by establishing the priority of experiential practical divinity over theological enquiry, in what Snyder sees as the continuing tension between 'community legalism and encyclopedic rigidity' in Free Church theological education. Seeking to make theology relevant and subject to biblical interpretation restricted the development of the curriculum in nineteenth-century Wesleyanism. Hannah's blueprint for theological education in 1836, conservative in its time, remained the straitjacket in which the colleges operated for the rest of the century, teaching within a fossilized curriculum which hardly changed. Priority to the formation and encouragement of 'vital piety' over against 'knowledge' contributed greatly to the shape of the educational process, moulded by the vociferous objections to theological education in the 1820s and 1830s.⁵¹

J. H. Rigg, Principal of Westminster Training College and a foremost promoter of Wesleyanism in the development of education in the late nineteenth century, singled out some priorities in the process of education in an article on 'The Christian Ministry' in 1880. He contended that 'All learning is of little value, even Biblical learning, to the Christian minister, without spiritual insight and experimental knowledge on the Divine things'. The theological educator for him was a role model of how to live rather than what to believe. The practice of ministry was to flow from the piety of those called to serve, demonstrated not in the knowledge they had acquired but in the souls they had saved. Objections to theological education then and now stem from the tension which has always existed within Methodism from the beginning, between knowledge and vital piety, the dialectic within which we operate today. Was the quest for spiritual values and practical usefulness a fatal bar to the theological education desired by Clarke and others? Were the colleges and seminaries to be places of formation or reformation? Or could there be both practical piety and lettered learning fostered in the same individuals in community with others?

TIM MACQUIBAN

(The Rev. T. Macquiban is Director of the Wesley and Methodist Studies Centre within the School of Theology at Westminster College, Oxford)

⁵¹ Johnson, *op.cit.*, p 315

3: H. B. KENDALL'S ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF THE PRIMITIVE METHODIST CHURCH

TO serious delvers into Methodist history Holliday Bickerstaffe Kendall's two-volume history of Primitive Methodism has very nearly acquired the status of a national monument. And like some other such monuments it is known (if not in this case loved) as much for its oddities as for its greatness. It is as well to acknowledge some of these oddities at the start. Here we have an enormous and erudite work with no table of contents, no list of sources, a paucity of references, a frustratingly inadequate index, and a strange distribution of material which devotes 900 pages to the period from c.1800 to 1843, and the remaining 200 pages to the following sixty years.

No date of publication is shown in the book, but as its closing chapters contain a scattering of references to 1905 it is normal to quote it as 'c. 1906'. In fact the story is not quite so simple. An advertisement appended to the *Primitive Methodist Magazine* for December 1903 reveals that the book was already in print by that date and was about to be offered for sale in ten monthly parts at one shilling each. The P. M. Conference Address to the Societies that year had described the history as the 'most pretentious and costly work' the P. M. Book Room had ever produced.¹ 50,000 subscribers were being sought for the special offer (total P.M. membership at that date was nearly 200,000) which if successful would have brought in £25,000, in modern terms around £2.5M. The outlay on the book had obviously been vast and the monthly-parts offer was no doubt an attempt to recoup some capital before launching the standard two-volume edition. It would seem that some delay in the latter's appearance allowed the author an opportunity to update his final chapters by adding items of information up to and including 1905.

H. B. Kendall (1844-1919) was well placed both to write such a major work and to persuade the Connexion to publish it. Indeed it is hard to think of a leading Primitive Methodist of his generation whose P.M. credentials were so gilt-edged. His grandparents were north Lincolnshire working folk who had taken Primitive Methodism to their hearts, in the pioneering years, and went on to give six of their ten sons

¹ *Primitive Methodist Magazine* 1903 p.666

to the P.M. itinerancy, among them H.B. Kendall's own father Charles (1818-1882).² Charles in particular had a distinguished ministry, dying the very year in which he was serving as President of the P.M. Conference. And not only was H.B. Kendall a son of the manse, impregnated with all the influences and experiences which that implied, but his very name, Holliday, was the surname of a ministerial colleague of his father.

H.B.K. seems to have entered willingly and enthusiastically into the commitment and lifestyle in which he had been reared. 'A Primitive Methodist in the blood and to the very backbone' was John Day Thompson's description of him.³ He started to preach as a boy, and in 1864, when still 19 entered the itinerant ministry, travelling for some years in north eastern circuits in the company of remarkably able ministers such as C.C.M'Kechnie, who must have confirmed his own inclination to be not only an evangelist but a scholar. From his school days Kendall had shown a strong bookish and antiquarian strain, and in the interludes of circuit life he sought to educate himself further. When stationed in Durham circuit in 1874 (and though by then carrying the responsibility of the superintendency) he seized the opportunity to attend lectures at Durham University as an external candidate which enabled him in due course (and by a special arrangement then existing) to receive a B.A. degree awarded by the University of London since Durham at that time did not admit dissenters to degrees.

The strain of combining a life of serious scholarship with circuit ministry proved too much in the end. A breakdown in the mid-1880s led to a temporary superannuation, and in fact he never was to return to circuit work. Fresh opportunities, more congenial to his scholarly instincts, opened up however. For several years he served as principal of a private theological establishment at East Keswick (near Leeds), training men for work overseas, or for admission to one or other of the Theological Institutions of Methodism. During these years he also began to act as deputy Editor for the P.M. Connexion, and assumed the full Editorship itself in 1892, occupying that post for a decade before taking retirement while still in his fifties. (It was during his years as Editor that the *P.M. Quarterly Review* was renamed the *Holborn Review* and the *P.M. Magazine* became known as *The Aldersgate*.)

² On Charles Kendall see *PMM* 1882 pp. 491-496

³ See Day Thompson's fine tribute to Kendall in *PMM* 1900 pp. 723-4

In these later years, first at East Keswick, and then in London as Editor, Kendall was able to find opportunity to fulfil his urge to write, and in particular to produce a new Primitive Methodist history. In 1889 (though the book was undated) there appeared his first attempt - the *History of the Primitive Methodist Connexion*, a pocket-sized work of 120 pages and about 28,000 words. Day Thompson, a minister of considerable acumen, described this work as 'a marvel of literary skill and insight...there is real genius in the scheme of it... we know of no man amongst us who could have given us so live and packed a picture in so small a space'.⁴ It is still well worth reading today. A revised and enlarged edition came out in 1902, and in 1919, the year of his death, Kendall brought out a re-written version, larger by one third than the book of 1889, and with 'Church' replacing 'Connexion' in the title.

That first book of 1889 is of particular relevance here for two reasons: (i) it sets out Kendall's interpretation of the patterns of P.M. development which he was to employ again, though vastly enlarged, in his two-volume history; and (ii) it contains a brief but interesting statement by him as to how he thought P.M. history should be written: 'Surely not a catalogue of names and dates, though arranged with never so much relation to truth and chronological order' (an implicit criticism of John Petty's *History of the P.M. Connexion* (1860) which plods its conscientious way from year to year), 'but an honest attempt to convey a life-like impression of the method and surroundings, the toils and struggles of our founders and fathers'.

So in the light of all this let us turn to consider Kendall's magnum opus, the two-volume history of c.1906. For reasons of space, the comments, first appreciative then more critical, are offered in summary form.

1. Kendall's enormous strength is his detailed knowledge of Primitive Methodist sources, people and places, and his insight into how the movement took root and established itself in the pioneering days. He reveals a remarkably intimate knowledge of a vast amount of manuscript and printed material, and writes almost as though he had personally known the many people whose lives he describes. People are always at the heart of the *History* and are depicted in innumerable vivid pen-portraits.

2. His story is always set very solidly in the local environments in which it occurred. His attention to topographical detail is extraordinary,

⁴ *ibid.*

and reflects his acute concern to link decisive events to their precise locations, no matter how outwardly ordinary and even banal the photographs of some of these may appear to the uninformed eye. One principal reason why the book is so vast is because in the central main section (750 pages in length) Kendall repeats the story of Primitive Methodism's arrival and growth in area after area, rather than attempting an overall and integrated survey which would hold all together in a broad analysis.

3. The use of illustrations, of which the book has thousands, is phenomenal. The mind does literally boggle at the time, trouble and skill taken by author and publisher in gathering together such a treasure house of photographs and prints, all of them carefully set in relation to the text which they illuminate. It has to be admitted that the illustrations must have been one of the strongest selling features of the book when it was first published, readers presumably being delighted to see pictures of people and places with which they were familiar, and perhaps even of themselves!

4. The obvious imbalance in the amount of space devoted to the years before and after 1843 (a pivotal year to Kendall) has been referred to above. Kendall in fact almost writes two books, one up to 1843 (much the longest) in which he relishes the simplicity and heroism of the pioneering years; the other describing and justifying the material, cultural and ecclesiastical progress of the Connexion in the mid - and later-Victorian periods, and presenting thematically the developments by which Primitive Methodism had become a 'Church'.

5. To my mind Kendall is insufficiently critical with regard to this later story. The material and ecclesiastical advances of Primitive Methodism were achieved at the cost both of serious financial crises, and of deep divisions within the Connexion as to what its true role and character were. Kendall smooths over, or belittles, such urgent and contentious issues, two examples being the chapel debt crisis, and the bitter divisions in the Sunderland Circuit leading to the Lay Church secession of 1877.⁵ No doubt he was anxious not to fan controversy or disturb the loyalty of the faithful, but his caution results in a loss of frankness on matters which were more complex than he is prepared to reveal.

⁵ I have examined these issues in some detail in 'Tensions in Primitive Methodism in the 1870s' *Proceedings*, xl, February and June 1976, and in *Unique in Methodism: 100 Years of Chapel Aid* 1990.

6. Kendall never attempts to define categorically what Primitive Methodism is, and to consider its exact place in the English ecclesiastical spectrum. In particular he has nothing to say about its relation to the other Methodist Connexions, which is strange in the light of the discussions of Methodist re-union which were current at the time he was writing.

7. Finally he makes no attempt objectively to consider Primitive Methodism in relation to society as a whole, or to make use of any of the statistical surveys of religion (from the 1851 Religious Census onwards) whose results must have been known to him and would have enabled him to make some objective judgement as to the Connexion's numerical strength in relation to population growth.

But, despite these criticisms, (and the sins of omission noted in the first paragraph) we must end on a note of gratitude for Kendall's massive achievement. The P.M. Book Room's report for 1903 sums it up. Kendall's *History* it said, 'will be read for fifty years (they might easily have said a hundred) and will remain for ever a document that writers of the religious history of the nineteenth century will be compelled to consult'⁶

GEOFFREY E. MILBURN

⁶ See reference 1 above

Dr. Homer L. Calkin

Homer Calkin, who died at his home in Arlington, Virginia on June 5th is best known among British Methodist historians for the painstaking labours which produced Part 6 of his *Catalog of Methodist Archival and Manuscript Collections* for the World Methodist Historical Society. This provides a preliminary guide to British Methodist records both in the Methodist Archives Centre at the John Rylands University Library and in county and other local record offices up and down the country. He had already produced similar guides to Methodist historical materials in Australasia and eastern Asia.

Dr. Calkin was the quintessential 'quiet American', who carried his learning and professional expertise with deceptive modesty, but who was never satisfied with less than the best that could be achieved. He had a long and distinguished career as deputy director of the research and reference division at the State Department in Washington DC and wrote a substantial history of the Foundry Methodist Church at the heart of the American capital. He will be remembered by those who knew him as a faithful friend and a gracious host.

J. A. V.

LOCAL BRANCHES REPORT 1995

WE are a body whose time has come. There has never been more interest in heritage and local history not to mention genealogy and town trails. All these things have been central to our activities for a quarter of a century so do not be afraid to publicise your activities in secular as well as ecclesiastical circles.

As usual the branch magazines have a wide range of papers and reports, including the Bristol Branch's paper (No. 67) by Robert Brown on his research into where Charles Wesley really did live. In March 1994 the North East Journal (No. 61) announced the opening of their branch library in the 'Newcastle Lit. and Phil'. The Cumbria Branch Journal (No. 34) spotted an important anniversary, the 250th anniversary of Conference in 1994. Will there be a 300th?

A sobering reminder of the futility of man's endeavours is offered in the Lincolnshire Journal (No. 8). When the Wesleyan Day School in Grantham was demolished in 1993 the carefully documented and eagerly awaited time capsule was never found. Why not have a Branch Coffee Morning and send the proceeds to the Historic Chapels Trust, 29, Thurloe Street, London. SW7 2LQ?

ROGER F. S. THORNE

1) East Anglia Branch

Secretary: Mr. David Elvidge, 14, Avon Road, South Wootton, King's Lynn, Norfolk. PE30 3LS

2) Bristol Branch

Secretary/Editor: Rev. Ernest Clarke, 81, Shakespeare Road, Dursley, Glos. GL11 4QQ

3) Cornish Methodist Historical Association

Secretary: Mr W. E. Walley, Park View, Ponsanooth, Truro, Cornwall.

4) Cumbria Branch

Secretary: Mr E. A. Leteve, 6, Beech Grove, Houghton, Carlisle. CA3 ONU

5) Irish Branch

Secretary/Treasurer: Mr J. H. Weir, 5, Aberdeighy Gardens, Lambeg, Lisburn, Co. Antrim. BT27 4QQ

6) Lancashire and Cheshire Branch

Secretary/Editor: Mr E. A. Rose, 26, Roe Cross Green, Mottram, Hyde, Cheshire. SK14 6LP

7) North Lancashire District Branch

Secretary: Miss Helen Spencer, 77, Clifton Drive, Lytham St Annes. FY8 2BZ

8) Lincolnshire Methodist History Society

Secretary: Mrs L. Crust, The Coppers, Scothern Lane, Sudbrooke, Lincoln, LN2 2QT

9) London and Home Counties Branch

Secretary/Treasurer: Mr Nigel McMurray, 89, Costons Avenue, Greenford, UB6 8RN

10) Manx Methodist Historical Society

Secretary/Editor: Mrs T. Wilson, 28, Droghadfaile Road, Port Erin, Isle of Man. IM9 6EN

11) East Midlands Branch

Secretary/Editor: Rev. S. Y. Richardson, 22, Garton Road, Loughborough. LE11 2DY

12) West Midlands Branch

Secretary: Dr. E. Dorothy Graham, 34, Spiceland Road, Northfield, Birmingham. B31 1NJ

13) North East Branch

Secretary: Mr B. Taylor, 22, Nilverton Avenue, Sunderland. SR2 7TS

14) Plymouth and Exeter Branch

Secretary/Editor: Mr Roger Thorne, 31, St Marys Park, Ottery St Mary, Devon. EX11 1JA

15) Scotland District

Secretary/Treasurer: Mr G. W Davis, 6 Gowan Street, Arbroath, DD11 2BH

16) Shropshire Branch

Secretary: Doreen E. Woodford, 7 King Street, Much Wenlock, TF13 6BL

17) Yorkshire Branch

Secretary: Mr D. C. Dews, 4, Lynwood Grove, Leeds. LS12 4AU.

Annual Meeting and Lecture

Between 40 and 45 people partook of a lavish buffet tea at Brentry Methodist Church, Bristol, as the guests of the Bristol Branch of the WHS. On a very hot day the variety of cold meats and salads, trifle and other desserts, plus numerous cups of tea, was extremely welcome and much appreciated.

The Annual Meeting accepted the Minutes of the 1994 meeting, which had been prepared by the Rev. Colin Smith in the General Secretary's absence, remembered members who had died during the year and appointed the officers for the coming year with only one change - the Rev. Donald Ryan replacing Mrs. V.E. Vickers as Registrar. The President, the Rev. A Raymond George, paid a grateful tribute to Mrs. Vickers for all her work over the past years which has resulted in the Society's membership list and subscription records being accurate and constantly kept up-to-date.

Reports were presented and accepted with the following special points being made: The General Secretary proposed and it was agreed that, when necessary, where a local branch was providing the tea that branch might be asked to contribute £20 to the cost, with members paying £1 per head and then any shortfall would be made up by private donations. The Treasurer's report and budget (see p116) was accepted. Mrs. Vickers reported that the membership was now just over 800 and that as losses balanced the gains it was important to try to increase the number of members. Mrs. Banks reported on the new developments at the library including the award of a grant to several Methodist collections to facilitate electronic cataloguing. She emphasised that money raised through the Library Appeal was needed for urgent binding and necessary conservation work.

Mr. Thorne reported on the local branches, noting especially that an up-dated list of branch officials would appear in the next Proceedings. The Rev. Colin Smith gave details of the 1996 WHS/WMHS Conference (see details p124). The President thanked all the officers for their work during the past year.

The 'special resolution' proposed by Dr. J. A. Vickers that he, as a co-opted member, should be replaced by 'a member at large' was discussed and referred to the Executive for further consideration, with Dr. Vickers continuing to act in that capacity for the coming year.

The Rev. Tim Macquiban's lecture is printed elsewhere in this issue.

E.D.G.

A Dismal Notoriety by C. H. Goodwin (£2.50 from 3, Merlin Close, Cannock, Staffs., WS11 1JB)

Although Leonard Waddy's *The Bitter Sacred Cup* remains a definitive account of the Wednesbury riots, Charles Goodwin has provided a valuable supplement to it, especially by filling in the social and cultural context of the riots. Particularly welcome is his awareness that hostility towards the Methodists was explicable, and to some extent justifiable - even if the violence to which it gave vent was not.

J. A. V.

WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY — FINANCIAL STATEMENTS, 1994

Income and Expenditure Account for the Year ended 31st December 1994

INCOME.	£
Subscriptions (Note 1)	5,704
Donations	62
Irish Branch	709
Sales of <i>Proceedings</i> (back numbers)	89
" other Publications, etc.	103
Library—Tickets, Donations, Sales	68
Annual Lecture Collection	85
Advertisements	51
Bank and Building Society Interest	162
War Stock Dividend	8
	7,041
EXPENDITURE.	£
<i>Proceedings</i> and distribution	3,371
Other Printing	500
Library	971
Annual Lecture	125
World Methodist Historical Soc.	94
Administration Expenses	648
Insurances	40
Advertising	50
Subscriptions and Donations	5
Debt written off	300
	6,104
Excess of Income over Expenditure	£937

Balance Sheet as at 31st December 1994

ASSETS EMPLOYED (Note 2)		£
£200 3½% War Stock (at cost) (Note 3)		225
Current Assets—		£
Sundry Debtors		—
Income Tax recoverable	341	
Leeds & Holbeck Bld. Soc.	6,522	
T.S.B.—Registrar	1,371	
" —Conference Sec.	1,199	
Midland Bank (Current A/c)	1,470	
Cash in hand	240	
	11,143	
Current Liabilities—		
Sundry Creditors	28	
Subscribers paid in advance	6,250	
	6,278	
Net Current Assets	4,865	
	£5,090	
REPRESENTED BY		
Balance at 1st January 1994	1,928	
Add Excess Income over Expenditure	937	
	2,865	
Conference Fund Surplus	1,199	
Library Appeal Fund	1,026	
(Signed) RALPH WILKINSON, <i>Honorary Treasurer.</i>	£5,090	

Notes to the Accounts

1—SUBSCRIPTIONS	£	£
Unexpired Subscriptions at 1st January 1994—		
Ordinary Members	5,454	
Life Members (estimated)	225	
	5,679	
Received during year*	6,025	
Income Tax recoverable	250	
	11,954	
<i>Less</i> Unexpired Subscriptions at 31st December—		
Ordinary Members	6,050	
Life Members (estimated)	200	
	6,250	
	£5,704	

*No account has been taken of subscriptions in arrears at 31st December 1993, whether or not recovered since, but any previous arrears received during the year are included in the above figures.

2—ASSETS EMPLOYED
The Library and stocks of Publications have not been valued, and are not included in these financial statements.

3—WAR STOCK
Market value at Balance Sheet date .. £72

AUDITOR'S REPORT—I have audited the financial statements in accordance with approved auditing standards. The amount of subscriptions paid in advance by members includes estimates based upon a reasonable interpretation of the available data. No account has been taken of possible arrears of subscriptions. Other assets and liabilities have been independently verified.

Subject to the matters mentioned above, in my opinion the financial statements give a true and fair view on an historical cost basis of the state of affairs of the Society as at 31st December 1994, and of its overall surplus for the year then ended.

(Signed) J. R. L. HUDSON,
Chartered Accountant

York, 15th June 1995

BOOK REVIEWS

Spiritual Pilgrim. A Reassessment of the Life of the Countess of Huntingdon by Edwin Welch (University of Wales Press, Cardiff, 1995, pp. 233, £30. ISBN: 0 7083 1280 2).

Lady Huntingdon was one of the most striking leaders of the eighteenth-century Evangelical Revival but hitherto she has not received an adequate biography. The substantial *Life and Times* by A.C.H. Seymour appeared as long ago as 1839 but is notoriously inaccurate, and a devastating appendix to this new biography shows that nothing in Seymour's book can be trusted. Although two Oxford theses help to correct the record, popular biographies of the Countess have done little more than repeat misleading and unverified traditions about her. Dr Welch points out, for example, that far from being reared in affluence her family was dogged by lawsuits and shortage of money and that her evangelism was curtailed for years by the cares of family and estates. Her contribution to the Revival was therefore relatively insignificant until the 1760s. Her famous attempts to convert the aristocracy were confined to a brief period in the 1750s and not very successful; while only a very few of her chapels were in fashionable watering-places. In reality, most of her concerns and activities were directed at the same kinds of places and people as the Wesleys and Whitefield.

It is only by patient ransacking of many scattered archives, hindered by the Countess's execrable handwriting, spelling and punctuation, that Dr Welch has been able to dispel so many misunderstandings. By his earlier work on Whitefieldian, Huntingdonian and Moravian records, along with the present biography, Dr Welch has probably done more than any other single person towards doing justice to the neglected non-Wesleyan, especially the English Calvinist side of the Revival, too often overshadowed by the mass of Wesleyan material.

Dr Welch gives a sober account of the Lady's family background, financial intricacies, early life and marriage, with a fairly precise dating (July 1739) for her conversion. The circumstances of the conversion remain obscure though one may suspect the influence of Benjamin Ingham. Her marriage seems to have been a love-match and the Earl (contrary to the usual opinion) may have shared the Lady's new faith. There is no evidence that (as is often asserted) she accompanied Wesley to the Foundery on his break with the Moravians, but she does seem to have prodded him into his momentous journey to the Newcastle colliers. Through Dr Cheyne, John Byrom and others she seems to have acquired a taste for French Quietism and Jakob Boehme like a number of other evangelicals (and one would like to know more about this). The important shift from Wesley's Arminianism to Whitefield's Calvinism by the Countess seems to have taken place in 1747 or 1748, but she tried to maintain contacts with all sections of the Revival and showed a taste for Moravian community-building. Valuable details are given on the Bethesda Orphanage in Georgia; missionary projects; Trefecca

College and the circumstances of the Huntingdonian secession from the Church of England. The famous break with Wesley in the 1770s is covered fairly cursorily, presumably because the Countess took little personal part in the controversy. (John Wesley, incidentally, unlike Charles, does not show up too well in his dealings with the Countess over Trefecca or the Conference of 1770.) Finally, there is some account of the Huntingdon Connexion and the failure to establish a formal organisation capable of consolidating the Countess's legacy, though she exercised as tight a personal control as Wesley during her lifetime.

This is a most welcome job of accurate and precise documentation. With so much accomplished and so well, one may regret that the treatment was not rounded off with a concluding estimate of the Countess's character and of the significance of her contribution to the Revival. There are scattered observations on both topics but they could usefully have been focused and collated at the end. One would also welcome some comment on portraits, especially the one reminiscent of a baroque Virgin Mary, apparently trampling her coronet under foot! Or the very different one (not reproduced here) of the formidable matriarch in the National Portrait Gallery. As regards the Countess's contribution to the Revival, it should be noted that Dr Welch follows the very broad eighteenth-century use of 'Methodism' to refer to almost all types of evangelicals. This reflects the Countess's own comprehensive and cooperative sympathies despite her persistent attempts to be loyal to the Established Church (if, like John Wesley, on her own terms). Yet in the end she seceded and despite (or perhaps because of) her authoritarian stance she failed to leave a really substantial permanent denomination. It would have been useful to have had more information about what happened to her chapels and societies - the impression usually given is that, as with Whitefield's societies, the main beneficiary was revived Independency (Congregationalism) though Dr Welch indicates that some became Baptists. But it would be greedy to ask for more than Dr Welch has given us already which is, at the very least, a biography that decisively replaces all previous ones, dispels many legends, and provides a formidable and precisely-documented foundation for any future attempt to study the Countess and her work for years to come.

HENRY D. RACK

Methodists and Papists: John Wesley and the Catholic Church in the Eighteenth Century by David Butler (Darton Longman and Todd, 1995, pp.xvi, 240, £12.95) ISBN: 0 232 52110 7)

John Wesley's writings on Roman Catholicism, edited by Oliver A. Beckerlegge (Protestant Truth Society, n.d., pp.148, £3.25)

This book complements earlier Catholic studies of Wesley (by Piette, Todd *et al.*) by examining Wesley's understanding of, and attitude to, features of Roman Catholicism as seen through eighteenth-century Anglican eyes. David Butler generously acknowledges in his Introduction that some

comments of mine on the booklet he wrote for the Catholic Truth Society were a catalyst for the present book. I am duly gratified.

That there were elements in Wesley's teaching (notably his insistence on sanctification or 'perfection' as part of the process of salvation) and in his practice (e.g. frequent communion and fasting) in which he was nearer to Rome than most of his Anglican contemporaries (and so anticipated the Oxford Movement) has long been recognised.

Wesley had very few first-hand contacts with individual Catholics (even in Ireland). That he and Richard Challoner never met, despite being often in London at the same time, is a sad commentary on the ghetto-mentality of English Christianity. Even though he read more widely than most, his Anglican blinkers restricted his understanding of Catholicism. The England of his day had a deep-seated Protestant fear and suspicion (derived from Locke) that Catholics were not to be trusted because they were exonerated by the Pope from 'keeping faith with heretics'. This Wesley not only shared, but repeatedly placarded as an argument for retaining the penal laws. Nevertheless, he had an unusually catholic appreciation of Roman spirituality.

There was, then, another side to the Wesley who so eloquently and wholeheartedly pleaded for the 'catholic spirit' of 'live and let live' long before ecumenicity had been invented. David Butler concedes that 'in controversy against Catholics the polemical Wesley wins over the eirenical Wesley' if only 'in terms of the volume of work that he produced' (p.76). This facet was certainly uppermost at the time of the Gordon Riots. To his credit, Charles Wesley stood aloof from the mass hysteria generated by the Catholic Relief Act of 1778 and refused to sign the Protestant Association's petition, and for his pains he was branded (yet again) as a papist. But his brother did sign (a point overlooked by others before Mr. Butler and one which I owe to Dr. John C. English), and probably encouraged other London Methodists to do so. So, though he was not directly implicated in the rioting, his *Popery Calmly Considered* of 1779 was, at the very least, ill-timed.

Mr. Butler's book offers a useful survey and reappraisal of this aspect of Wesley's ministry from a late twentieth century ecumenical perspective. One of its valuable aspects is that it explores some of the misconceptions and misrepresentations which recent ecumenical dialogue has begun to expose. What is chiefly missing, from the historian's point of view, however, is any clear indication of how far, and in what ways, Wesley's attitude to Roman Catholicism developed over the years. This is difficult for the reader to establish because Mr. Butler's approach is a mixture of chronological and thematic. The arrangement of his material involves a certain amount of avoidable repetition, taking up space I would like to have seen devoted to more detailed analysis and evaluation. What, for example, are the significant differences between Wesley's and Challoner's translations of à Kempis, and how far would Wesley's version have been unacceptable to Catholics (p.203)? On what principle(s) did Wesley select his Catholic authors (and specific extracts) for his *Christian Library* (p.74)?

Turning to detail: A sentence on p.6 seems to be saying that the oath required by the 1778 Act acknowledged (rather than repudiated) the Pope's jurisdiction in England. There were ten children, not eight, in the family at Epworth (p.20). The reference to Thomas Coke at South Petherton (p.198) is a mangled (and wrongly documented) version of an incident recorded in my book (not Leslie Church's). Both title and date of Bishop Lavington's book are incorrectly given on p.202.

I am not convinced that Pascal's 'wager' can be dismissed as 'cynical' (p.150), still less that Wesley's *Short Method of Converting all the Roman Catholics in... Ireland* demonstrates his naivety, unless we take it at face value, ignoring the fact that its purpose was to galvanise a complacent Irish clergy (as he had already attempted to do in Oxford and elsewhere) and overlooking Wesley's irony. His interpretation on p.33 of the phrase 'selling Geneva' (a charge brought against Wesley by his detractors) is more ingenious than plausible, since 'Geneva' here refers not to Calvinism, but to a kind of spirits flavoured with juniper berries!

Misprints are few. But '1711' on p.185 should presumably be '1771'; and did Fénelon really write (or mean) 'all profitable reflections' (p.148)? On p.182 Charles Wesley is misquoted and saddled with an uncharacteristic metrical infelicity - 'redeeming' for 'pardoning'.

If anyone doubts the need for David Butler's book, then Dr. Beckerlegge's anthology seems to demonstrate it very clearly. In the absence of any explicit editorial statement, one is left guessing the motivation behind its publication. The inclusion of Wesley's eirenical 'Letter to a Roman Catholic' and other passages in the same vein is to be welcomed. Otherwise the book could well be seen as an expression of ultra-Protestant alarm at the degree to which mutual understanding (of genuine differences as well as of unsuspected common ground) has progressed in our time - comparable, in fact, to attempts to sabotage the peace process in Israel or Ulster. Wesley's words are extracted and presented without the commentary needed to evaluate any continuing significance they may have. His dismissal of Catholic 'idolatry', for instance, is reproduced with no reference to the distinction between *proskunesis* and *latreia*. The underlying assumption seems to be: 'God said, "Let Wesley be," and all was light.' By his editorial decision to let the texts speak for themselves (and thereby mislead the uninformed) Dr. Beckerlegge, in the guise of a latter-day G.G. Coulton, has missed an opportunity he is fully qualified to have seized.

JOHN A VICKERS

Not dear to themselves ... by Barbara Wolstenholme (Teamprint) 1995, pp. 120, £9.95 ISBN: 1 871431 04 2. Obtainable from 10 Myrtle Drive, Kirkham, Preston, Lancs, PR4 2ZJ)

The Methodist Church in Kenya, autonomous for just over twenty years, now has 'a mission area' in every circuit, an exciting sequel to this story of the costly pioneer work of Thomas and Rebecca Wakefield told by their great-grand-daughter.

Although the work of Charles New (a Methodist missionary), and Dr Ludwig Krapf and the Rev J Rebmann (CMS missionaries from Germany) drew the attention of church historians, the life of Thomas Wakefield (1836-1901) was no less significant in laying the foundations of the Methodist Church in Kenya. Called by God to overseas service through a speech by Krapf in Manchester in 1860, he began work in Ribe, where he was joined by Charles New in 1863.

From Ribe to the Duruma and the Galla, Thomas Wakefield proclaimed the gospel, bringing both communities and individuals to Christ, establishing missions and building churches. For 27 years, with remarkable resilience, he survived ill-health, countless dangers, and attacks by Masai warriors and Galla tribesmen whose difficult demands he met with infinite patience and quiet courage. He taught Kenyans the importance of reading the Bible. 'This is your hoe', he said. 'Never leave it. Teach it to your people and do as it tells you.'

The personal price he paid was enormous. Rebecca, his first wife, served with him with great enthusiasm and commitment. Her first baby Nellie was born towards the end of their long voyage in Zanzibar - the first white baby seen in East Africa! She arrived in Ribe full of anticipation for their future, but frequently fell victim to tropical illnesses and died at the age of 28 years, shortly after the death of their second baby Bertie. His second wife Esther, equally committed, was forced by ill-health to return to Britain.

It is a moving account, researched and written with deep family interest, full of fascinating detail, delightfully illustrated by the author's husband, Eric Wolstenholme. It brings to life the human story behind the graves of Rebecca and Bertie, Charles New and other young missionaries of the nineteenth century in Ribe. It resonates with the African sense of the presence of God. 'God has been with us, in the calm and in the storm,' wrote Thomas. And it brings us up-to-date with the Methodist Church in Kenya today which has so much to share with us from its African insights and vitality.

MAUREEN EDWARDS

Methodism In Its Cultural Milieu ed. by T. Macquiban (Applied Theology Press 1994; pp. 191, £12.00, ISBN 1 874677 02 6.

This book contains a collection of thirteen papers delivered at the Centenary Conference of the WHS in conjunction with the World Methodist Historical Society at Cambridge in July 1993. The papers are grouped under four headings. John English on 'John Wesley and some liberal strands in the Anglican tradition' and Robert Glen on 'The fate of John Wesley in English Satirical Prints' are found under *Wesley and His Time* and reflect the current concern of American historians with Wesley's concept of the Primitive church and with the value of iconographical studies for promoting historical understanding of a period.

The next section, *Methodism in Europe*, looked at first to be strangely unbalanced with three papers on Methodism in Italy and one by Helgo Ritsbek on 'Methodism in Estonia under Communism' but it turned out to be a good read. The papers by Georgio Spini on 'Protestant Reaction to Italian Reunification' (backed up by Tim Macquiban on 'Attitudes in the British Press to the Italian Risorgimento up to 1861') and Febe Rossi on 'Italian Methodism in its Cultural Milieu' were well written and, in the case of Rossi's paper, quite affecting. It was surprising to learn from Ritsbek's paper that a small church which had absorbed other evangelical bodies into itself and was facing severe persecution by the state could still find the energy to be fractious over the issue of infant baptism versus adult baptism. The third section on *Methodism's response to Women's and Racial Issues* contains Dennis Dickerson's claim in his paper on 'African Methodism and the Revival of the Wesleyan Tradition' that the Black Methodist schismatic bodies remained true to the Wesleyan mission to the unprivileged members of American society when the White Methodists became increasingly respectable; Dorothy Graham's excellent reprise of her work on 'The female travelling preachers of early Primitive Methodism in England', and Alice Knott's spirited account of 'The Methodist Women's Campaign for Southern Civil Rights in the U.S. 1940-1954' which moved me to doff a metaphorical hat to some very brave women. The four scholars to whom I would have turned first were all grouped together under the final heading *Methodism In Its Regional and Social Context*. Russell Richey demonstrates how the three states of Maryland, Delaware and Virginia gave a definitive imprint to the character of American Methodism in his paper 'The Chesapeake Coloration of American Methodism'; Randy Maddox provides a typically thorough and perceptive analysis of 'Social Grace: the eclipse of the Church as a Means of Grace in American Methodism'; and John Vickers and Clive Field contribute respectively papers on 'Circuit Life in 1825' and 'Methodism in the 1851 Religious Census of England and Wales: a Methodological Survey'. Dr. Vickers' sobering conclusion is that by 1825 'the initiative for pioneering new places and establishing new societies had largely passed... to the local laity while the circuit ministers gave themselves to the task of consolidating existing

causes.' Dr. Field's conclusion is that the 1851, Religious Census 'remains in every sense the premier statistical source in the ecclesiastical historiography of modern Britain.'

There is something for everyone in the pages of this commemorative volume. It is a good, stimulating, informative read and cheap at the price. One disturbing issue that arose out of reading the papers was that amalgamation of religious bodies does create serious problems of identity. In Estonia it led to theological confusion where supposedly Methodist pastors know 'something about John Wesley, but his thinking has had little influence on their ministry.' In view of our renewed conversations with the Church of England and our constant preoccupation with our connexional administration it might be salutary to heed Randy Maddox's observation that for American Methodism 'the main issue of concern is not polity but the role of the church as the means of grace - i.e. as an important channel through which God is graciously at work, nurturing Christian life and spreading redemptive influence in the world.'

C. H. GOODWIN

Leonard Smith, *Religion and the Rise of Labour: Nonconformity and the Independent Labour Movement in Lancashire and the West Riding 1880-1914*, (Keele University Press, 1993, 190 pp, £15.95 ISBN: 1 85331 043 3)

In the 1970s a daughter of a stalwart of the ILP told me how one evening her father had returned from a meeting absolutely fed up. He had spent the entire evening discussing a door lock on the ILP headquarters in Farnworth. I found this story reassuring in that these early pioneers of Christian socialism also had feet of clay! Nevertheless their courage and zeal still serve as an inspiration. Leonard Smith's book, which throws new light on the personalities and dynamic involved, is to be welcomed.

The book provides good biographical material on many individuals including C. F. Aked, Samuel Keeble, T. Rhondda Williams, and Phillip Wicksteed. There is also a useful appendix offering 28 short biographical sketches. There is good general discussion of the sweep of late-Victorian and Edwardian Christian socialism, and useful coverage of the discussion of the 'Social Question' at Free Church Conferences. Overall Smith considers the response of middle-class Liberal congregations to clergy and lay people sympathetic to the Labour movement.

The title would suggest that here is a work of provincial church history to put alongside David Clark's admirable political history *Colne Valley: Radicalism to Socialism*. This is not quite the case. You are constantly expecting the discussion of the region to take centre stage, and the national context to fade into an unobtrusive backdrop, but this does not really happen until the penultimate chapter which is comprised of case studies of four chapels: Salem Independent Methodist Chapel, Nelson; Free Christian

Church (Unitarian) Beech Street, Crewe; Pembroke Baptist Chapel, Liverpool and Greenfield Congregational Church, Bradford.

As a solid work of modern church history this book helps to orientate our convictions. Leonard Smith not only brings into focus people from the past, but helps us focus on what is required in the future. The political right would wish us to believe that the quest for the New Jerusalem was misplaced sentimentality. If what we have now is realism, give me sentimentality every time. A book like this helps to put fresh breath over the embers of idealism, so we've got some heat in our desire to have another go at the New Jerusalem. Even if we argue about door locks from time to time!

C. S. FORD

Calendar

September 13 - December 2 1995. Charles Wesley Exhibition at John Rylands Library, Deansgate, Manchester. (Reading Room).

November 27 1995. To accompany the above, a public lecture: Charles Wesley: Singer for Today? by the Rev Dr Gordon S Wakefield, at 7 pm. Please book places in advance with Gareth Lloyd, John Rylands University Library of Manchester, Deansgate, Manchester, M3 3EH

April 9 - 12 1996. WMHS/WHS 1996 Regional Conference at Hartley Hall, Manchester. Theme: 'God's Extraordinary Messengers - Preachers and Preaching'. Estimated cost £85. Further details from the Rev Colin A Smith, 38 Raphael Road, Hove, East Sussex BN3 5QQ.

SHORTER NOTICES

Methodist Union Catalog, Pre-1976 Imprints Vol vii: J-Le. ed. Kenneth E. Rowe (Scarecrow Press, Metuchen NJ, 1994, pp xviii, 400. £49.50 ISBN: 08108 2669 0. Obtainable from Shelwing Ltd, 4 Pleydell Gardens, Folkestone, Kent, CT20 2DN)

We are glad to see another volume of this unique reference work which aims to list all books on Methodist subjects or by Methodist authors world-wide, with locations on both sides of the Atlantic. Its wide scope makes these volumes indispensable to all Methodist librarians and booksellers, quite apart from their value to research workers. There are even some of us who can read these lists for pleasure! Eight years have elapsed since the publication of the previous volume; it is much to be hoped that subsequent volumes will appear more quickly.

E. A. ROSE

A Particular Glory: Some Chronicles of the Perronet Family in Eighteenth-Century Shoreham by Katharine Moore (The Darenth Press, Shoreham, 1994, pp.103, £5.99 ISBN: 0 9524452 0 4)

This book does not so much inhabit the hazardous no-man's-land between history and historical fiction as bestraddle it, keeping one foot in each camp. Though using manuscript sources from archives in both Shoreham and Manchester, and with only minor inaccuracies, the author has chosen to present her narrative in a fictional form which will leave historians wishing for the serious study of the Perronet family that has still to be written. Her book is nevertheless a pleasant 'read' and helps us to see why Wesley's followers were sometimes despised and derided.

JOHN A. VICKERS

NOTES AND QUERIES

1484 JOHN LEWIS' SHETLAND JOURNALS

The Rev John Lewis was stationed in Newfoundland, in a sparsely populated area west of St John's. His MS Journal for 1814-19 describes the harsh conditions he endured, his temptations and self-doubt. Covering 550 pages, the original eight volumes are now in the Queen Elizabeth II Library at St John's. Two later volumes belong to Brian and Sylvia Chilton of Lerwick. In these Lewis gives day-to-day detail of his pioneering work in Shetland, from May 1823 to November 1825. As a first step towards possibly publishing the full text, the Chiltons have produced a transcript of these 200 octavo pages, which it has been my privilege to see at an early stage. Lewis gives much significant detail about the early years of Shetland Methodism, and frank and unsavoury details of the privations he and his colleagues endured. He also confirms that there was plenty of friction between himself and the young Samuel Dunn.

I would be very glad to hear of other volumes by Lewis, and similar Journals kept by Shetland colleagues - John Raby, William Wears, John Bolam, John Knowles, William Langridge, Richard Tabraham and many others, and those of Lay Agents from the 1870s, which would further flesh out the fascinating story of Methodism's planting and development in Shetland.

HAROLD R. BOWES

1485 A SERMON BY SAMUEL WESLEY SENIOR

On February 13, 1698 Samuel Wesley senior preached a sermon to the Societies for the Reformation of Manners, taking as his text, Psalm 94.16. John Wesley preached his own sermon to the Societies in 1763 from the same text. Samuel's sermon was later published in the *Methodist Magazine* (1814), pp.648-65, 727-36. I have looked in the British Library, Dr. Williams's Library, the Methodist Archives at the John Rylands Library; I have consulted Gareth Lloyd and Frank Baker on the matter, and no one seems to know of this sermon's existence prior to its publication in the *Methodist Magazine*. Can anyone tell me where a printed copy of this sermon might exist, or where the manuscript is held?

BARRY E. BRYANT

222 West Seventh Street, Columbia, TN 38401, USA.

1486 SOURCE OF A WESLEY DOXOLOGY

In Elizabeth Ritchie's account of the death of John Wesley, Wesley is quoted as singing the following doxology:

To Father, Son and Holy Ghost,
Who sweetly all agree
To save a world of sinners lost,
Eternal praises be.

Various sources have credited this doxology to Charles Wesley, Isaac Watts or Tate and Brady. Who *really* wrote it and in what publication did it first appear?

CHARLES A. GREEN

Box 6095, Philadelphia, PA 19114-0695 USA

1487 SOURCE OF A JOHN WESLEY QUOTATION

On January 24, 1789, John Wesley wrote to Freeborn Garrettson in New York commending, though with some cautionary words, his evangelism. Unfortunately John Telford *Standard Letters* (8:112) misquoted Wesley, giving currency to the phrase, 'holy disordered order'. Wesley wrote; "You followed the Order of His Providence, whenever it appeared. And sometimes it appeared (as an holy man strongly expresses it) in a kind of "holily disordered order".' Who was this holy man? Thomas a Kempis? William Law? Richard Baxter? Perhaps some reader has spotted it in a computer data base, or could do so. It is a highly unusual phrase, and unrecorded in the massive *Oxford English Dictionary*. It would be good to discover Wesley's indebtedness. I would be very grateful!

FRANK BAKER

17 Governors Place, Durham, NC 27705 USA