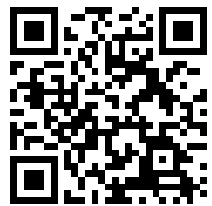


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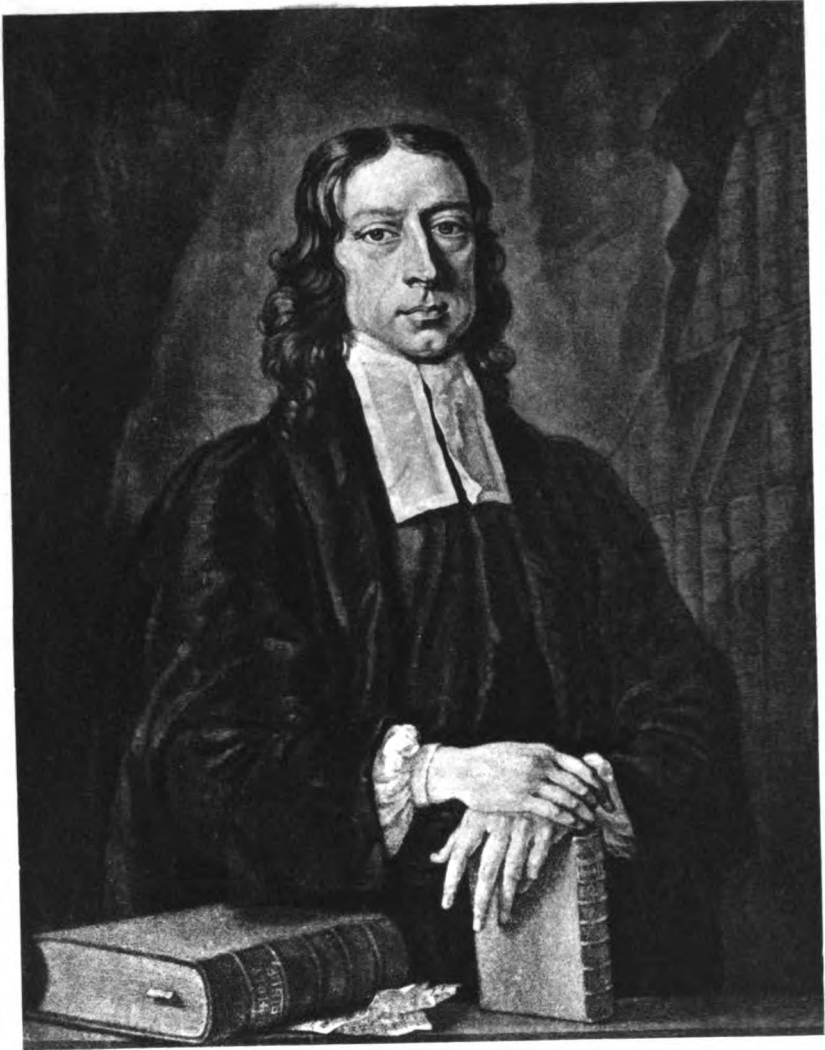












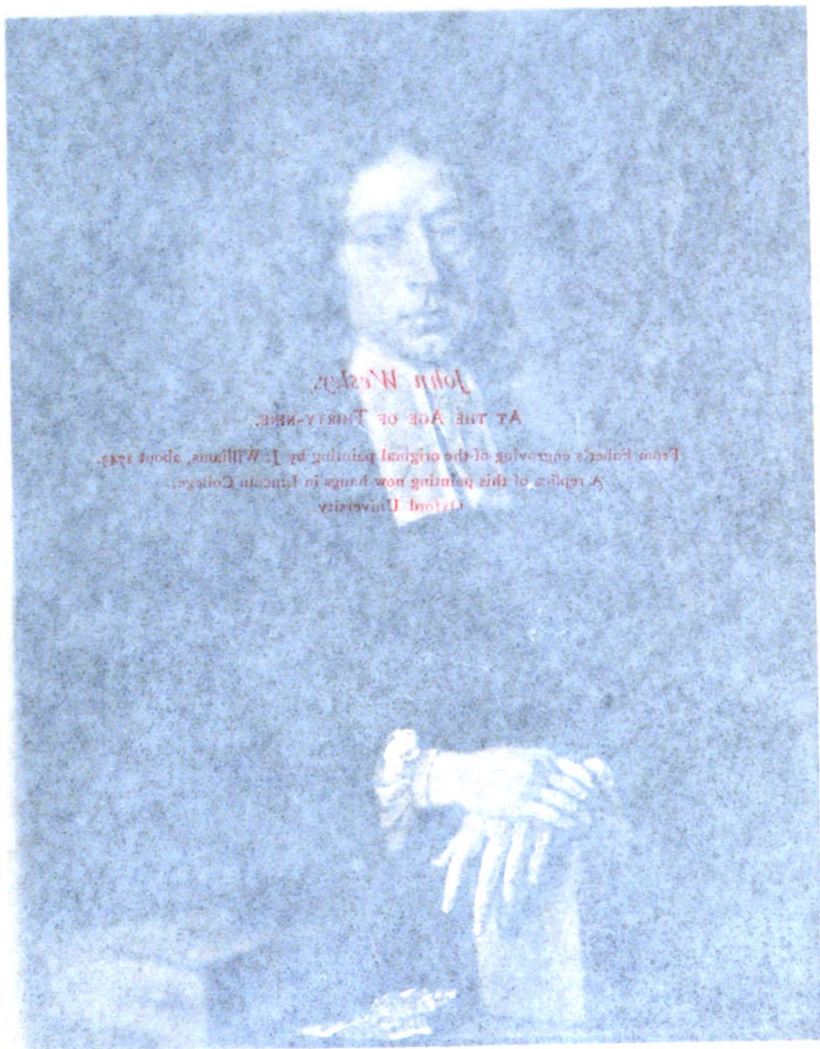
THE HISTORY OF THE  
METHODIST CHURCH

*John Wesley.*

AT THE AGE OF THIRTY-NINE.

From Faler's engraving of the original painting by J. Williams, about 1743.

A replica of this painting now hangs in Lincoln College,  
Oxford University.



John Wesley

AT THE AGE OF THIRTY-NINE.

From Fisher's engraving of the original painting by J. Williams, about 1843.  
A copy of this painting now hangs in Lincoln College,  
Oxford University.

# THE HISTORY OF METHODISM

BY

JOHN FLETCHER HURST, D.D., LL.D.

A Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church  
Chancellor of the American University  
Sometime President of the American Church History Society  
Author of "A History of the Christian Church," Etc., Etc.

BRITISH  
METHODISM



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## FOREWORD

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**M**ETHODISM is not primarily a doctrinal system or a mode of life, but a moral and spiritual force that has wrought mightily during the last sixteen decades of human history. Springing forth from the Established Church of England, it simply but strongly asserted its primitive and apostolic character as a renewal of Christianity. It has fully established its appeal to the New Testament by a growth and development which attest its ecumenical quality. To trace through all lands with accuracy and fidelity the spread of this evangelical revival of the eighteenth century is the purpose of this series of volumes.

The twofold adaptation of Methodism, both to carry the Gospel message to those who have never heard it and to infuse new warmth and zeal into the hearts and lives of those who have forsaken their first love or but partially received the true light, has given it access to nearly all the nations of the globe. To treat this world-wide religious movement with proportionate fairness, and not to be entangled among the captivating details, has required a rigid abstinence from an entrance upon the portrayal of many rich and varied scenes.

The strong and mastering currents and broad sweeps of progress have been shown in their general trend from the small beginnings until these have become the triumphs of a

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## Foreword

continent. The hope is entertained that many an alert mind will by these pages be stimulated to amplify the noble record of Methodism in given localities—towns, counties, provinces, and States—such as will bring to proper measure this ever-growing story of modern evangelism.

The plan of treatment has been to make the main divisions by countries, and under these to follow the progress of events as nearly as possible in the order of time. This geographico-chronological method, while entailing some difficulties in the adjustment of suspended portions of the narrative, affords both to the reader and the writer the great advantage of a definite field of study and of vision, and the opportunity of marking how different streams flowing from the same fountain head have, a century or more away from their common rise, again found a united life. Two strikingly beautiful instances of this blending of the British and the American currents will be found first in the romantic story of Canadian Methodism, marked by its many varieties and sharp frictions of the earlier day, but now more signally characterized by its singular solidarity, and, second, in the more recent joining of the forces of the American and English Methodists in their effective labors to kindle to a new flame in the Fatherland the fires that once blazed on German altars, and to give added glow and power to the people and work of Luther and Zwingli. The unity and grandeur of the common progress of the whole family of Methodists, rather than the diversity of the distinct branches, have been kept well to the front, with sufficient attention to the minor issues and facts which relate to the origin and development of the various and separate bodies. The broad and catholic spirit of John Wesley is finding its way to a new, or perhaps a continuous, leadership, and bids fair during the twentieth century to bring into

## Foreword

harmonious and federated activity, if indeed not into compact and organic union, the severed and therefore weakened ranks of the Methodist host.

The history of Methodism has never received the artistic illumination which it deserves. The whole chain of heroisms and sacrifices by which Wesley and his noble helpers and followers came into close and loving touch with the millions whom they have led from vice and ignorance into the joy and light of God's peace form most fitting themes for the pencil and the brush. To present in pictorial form the actors and scenes in this series of events, the keen scent of the antiquary and the taste and skill of the artist have been summoned. The results of their research and labor are confidently submitted to the eye of a discriminating public in illustrations which enrich and enliven the narrative. In their quality and profusion it is believed they furnish the most thorough representation that Methodist history has ever received.

The gathering of thousands to hear the Gospel, and the provision of an organized Church to care for and nourish these multitudes which have grown into millions, easily yield to the effort to record the successive steps by which these results have been achieved. But what eye, save the All-seeing one, shall follow the impulse given to souls in other communions on both sides of the sea by the vitalizing touch of John Wesley, by the flaming zeal of George Whitefield, or by the seraphic fire in the stanzas of Charles Wesley? Who shall trace into the texture of our national structure the elements of strength and endurance, brought to their permanent place and office in this giant Republic of the West by Francis Asbury and William McKendree? The going to and fro of these leaders and their itinerant comrades were the veritable movements of God's own loom and

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## Foreword.

shuttle as he wove the fabric of American life and civilization. What statistician shall tabulate the civic, the social, the commercial, the political results of Methodism in its rapid march across the continent, leavening each new community with industry and righteousness, and planting its strongholds of piety in every village? These subtle, but no less real, results largely elude the grasp of the historian, but form a part of the imperishable records kept by a Hand that wearies not and guarded by an Eye that never sleeps.

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The author records his grateful acknowledgment of the assistance which he has had in the execution of his undertaking: To the REV. THOMAS E. BRIGDEN, of Ramsbottom, Manchester, England, whose studies have contributed largely to the substance and form of the British section, and whose antiquarian knowledge and zeal have provided the material on which its illustration has been based, and to JAMES R. JOY, A.M., of the Methodist Book Concern in New York, for similar aid upon the American section, as well as for supervising the preparation of the illustrations for the entire work and seeing it through the press. Mention should also be made in this place of the painstaking cooperation of Rev. James Mudge, D.D., Rev. Page Milburn, Rev. Frank G. Porter, Rev. S. Reese Murray, Rev. Albert Osborn, Rev. E. L. Watson, the late Rev. J. W. Cornelius, and Mr. Richard H. Johnston, of the Library of Congress.

JOHN FLETCHER HURST.

*Washington, D. C.,*

# GENERAL VIEW

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## BRITISH METHODISM

England Before the Revival.

The Oxford Methodists.

The Wesleys and Their Helpers

Wesleyanism after Wesley.

Scions and Secessions.

The Forward Movement.

## AMERICAN METHODISM

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The Expansion of Methodism.

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# WORLD-WIDE METHODISM

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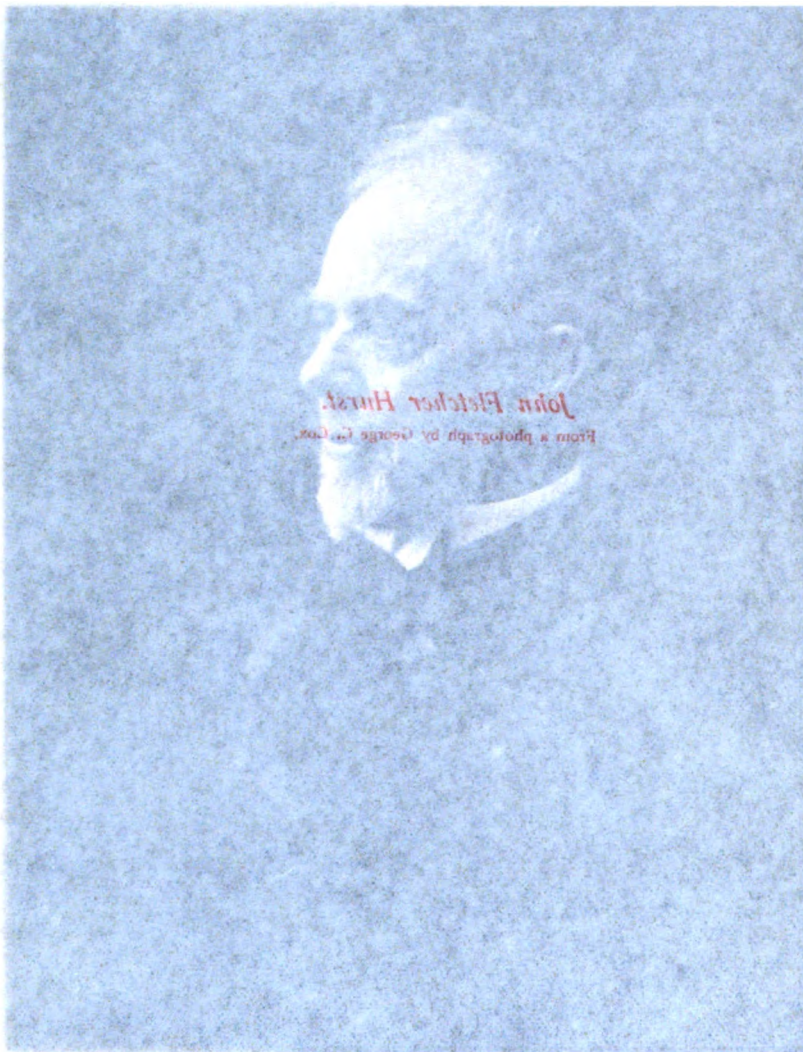


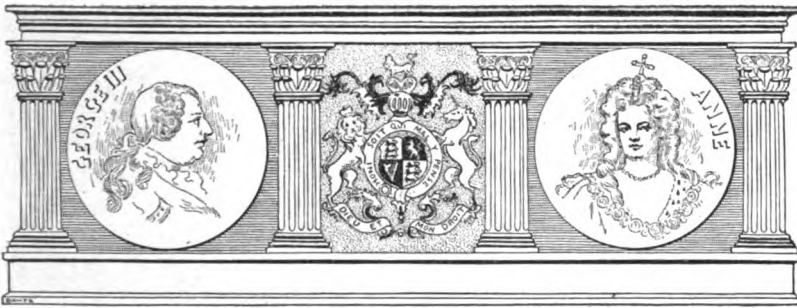
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*John Fletcher Hurst.*

From a photograph by George C. Cox.





# THE HISTORY OF METHODISM

## BRITISH METHODISM

### CHAPTER I

#### England before the Great Revival

ENGLAND IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.—IMPORTANT REDEEMING FACTS.—QUEEN ANNE'S REIGN.—PERIODICAL LITERATURE.—THE RECENT HISTORIANS.—THEIR TRIBUTE TO THE METHODIST REVIVAL.



THE England upon which the eighteenth century dawned is sometimes described, and often justly, as one vast political and moral waste; a mere hunting ground of corrupt courtiers and clerics, the haunt of an utterly dissolute aristocracy and a brutalized commonalty. One lecturer in Oxford University affirms that "there is no one, probably, now living who does not congratulate himself that his lot was not cast in the eighteenth century. It has become by general consent an object of ridicule and sarcasm. Its very dress and airs had something about them which irresistibly moves a smile. Its literature, with some noble exceptions, stands neglected upon our



shelves. Its poetry has lost all power to enkindle us; its science is exploded; its taste condemned; its ecclesiastical arrangements flung to the winds; its religious ideas outgrown and in rapid process of a complete and, perhaps, hardly deserved extinction."

This is a strong judgment, perhaps too severe if applied to all England. The triumphs of the century must not be forgotten. The ghost of the Stuart dynasty—which meant Roman Catholicism—had been laid forever and the Protestant succession established. The mid-century witnessed remarkable commercial development under the peace policy of Walpole; and in spite of the efforts of George III to increase the power of the crown parliamentary government became secure under Chatham. An age could not be utterly imbecile which retained in its literature such writers as Defoe, Samuel Wesley, Addison, Steele, Swift, Pope, and Berkeley, and produced in its later period Johnson, Goldsmith, Gray, Gibbon, Burke, Burns, and Cowper. Sir Isaac Newton represented natural philosophy until 1727.

In the days of Queen Anne, 1702–1714, there was much ecclesiastical activity, and three remarkable societies were formed for the "Reformation of Manners," for "Promoting Christian Knowledge," and for the "Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts." Many charity schools were established. The poorer class of clergy were cared for by the bigoted but "bountiful" queen; many new churches were built and old churches were restored—in hideous style, we must confess, with ponderous pulpits and lofty pews, from which elect occupants could read magniloquent inscriptions to the glory of the churchwardens.

The sturdy English parson, Samuel Wesley, and the philosophic Irishman, Bishop Berkeley, made vigorous though

unfruitful attempts to develop foreign missions, the latter persuading the House of Commons to vote him £20,000 for a college on the island of Bermuda.

The rector of Epworth, in the earlier years, and Goldsmith's ideal Vicar of Wakefield, in the later, were types of the country parson to be found here and there, who, as Goldsmith says, "united in himself a priest, husband, and a father of a family, as ready to teach and ready to obey, as simple in affluence and majestic in adversity." Gray's *Elegy*, with idyllic grace, describes the sacred charm that breathes around the village church, "far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife." William Law, the non-juror and mystic, influenced by his saintly life, as well as by his



FROM THE COPPERPLATE BY GRAINGER.

QUEEN ANNE.

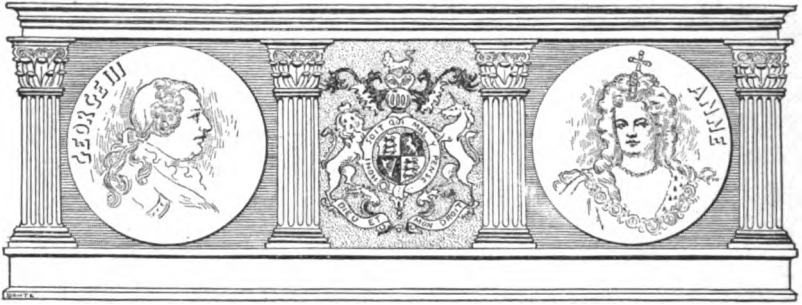
writings, not only the Wesleys, but Samuel Johnson. The names of Doddridge, Watts, Butler, and Sherlock, Horne, Horsley, Archbishop Secker, and Archdeacon Paley, stand out in vivid contrast with what may safely be called the generally dark character of the century. These very men, as Gregory has well observed, of opposite theological schools

and political parties, "who agree in scarcely anything else, agree in most emphatically affirming, most graphically describing, and, alas! most helplessly deploring the melancholy condition of religion and morals at the time when Whitefield and the Wesleys began to call sinners to repentance."

We are, happily, not dependent on the purely religious teachers of the century for a view of the manners and morals of the people. The life of the times is mirrored in the periodical literature which had been started by John Dunton in the Athenian Oracle, and took higher form in the Tatler and Spectator of Steele and Addison, and in Johnson's Rambler and Idler. The novel sprang into existence in the reign of George II, and the works of Richardson, Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne vividly reflect contemporary manners. Much of the dramatic literature was intolerably dull and coarse, but Fielding made the stage the vehicle of criticism of the politics, literature, and follies of the time. The actors Foote and Garrick did the same in their farces, and Goldsmith and Sheridan in their comedies. Swift's political writings and his Journal to Stella; Boswell's Life of Johnson; Horace Walpole's Letters and his Memoirs of George II; Gibbon's Autobiography; the powerful cartoons of William Hogarth and the caricatures of Gillray, all contribute facts to warrant the somber picture of the mid-century painted by their graver contemporaries.

Let us turn to the later historians. Hugh Price Hughes has justly observed that the time is past when it would be necessary to repeat Macaulay's withering rebuke of literary charlatans who profess to write the history of the eighteenth century without describing the Methodist movement and estimating its influence on the course of events. "That race is

extinct, as Macaulay prophesied it would be." The most important contribution of this generation to English historical literature is Lecky's History of England in the Eighteenth Century. In that great work the story of "The Religious Revival" first finds its true historical position. The fascinating History of the English People, by John Richard Green, also recognizes the importance of the great revival. Canon Overton, the present rector of Epworth, and C. J. Abbey have written a History of the English Church in the Eighteenth Century, which Dr. Rigg, the Wesleyan divine, is able to characterize as a "noble work." Stoughton, a Congregationalist of a truly "catholic spirit," has a volume on the period in his History of Religion in England. All these recent writers, of different schools, agree that irreligion and immorality had reached their climax when the Methodists began their work. In the words of Green, "Never had religion seemed at a lower ebb."



## CHAPTER II

### The Deep Causes of the Great Decline

STRIKING A BALANCE BETWEEN THE EVIL AND THE GOOD.—POLITICAL CONFUSION AND UNCERTAINTY OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.—THE DISSOLUTE STUARTS.—EVIL EXAMPLE OF THE FIRST GEORGES.—THACKERAY'S DARK PICTURE.—CORRUPT STATESMEN.—THE GAMBLING FEVER.—THE VICIES OF THE NOBILITY.—LOOSE MORALS OF THE UNIVERSITIES.—CORRUPTION IN POLITICS.

**E**VEN if we give the largest possible recognition to the better side of the England of the eighteenth century, the balance was against the good, the hopeful, and the promising. Immorality and irreligion were fearfully in the ascendant.

What were the causes? The political confusion of the seventeenth century, the bitter controversies, the religious intolerance, the return of the dissolute Stuarts, the reaction from the external restraints of a Puritanism which had not pervaded the masses with moral life, the legislative alliance of Church and State, the long uncertainty as to a Romish or Protestant succession, the immorality of the first two Georges and their favorites, the evil influence of Walpole, the sudden commercial prosperity in the years of political peace, the lack of spiritual leaders, the spread of Socinian and deistic principles, all contributed to the moral decay. "The truth

is," says Dr. Gregory, "England had never yet been thoroughly evangelized; it had been ecclesiasticized instead. The Italian missionaries sent by Gregory the Great had indeed fixed 'the Church' upon the soil, yet they and their successors but partly disheathenized the nation. The very Christianity they brought from Rome was to a sad extent a mongrel compromise with paganism, a loose *concordat* with the ancient superstitions. The various subsequent attempts to snatch up again and carry forward the arrested work by the itinerant preaching friars, Wiclif's traveling preachers, and the other Elizabethan evangelists had all been sporadic and spasmodic. . . . The moral condition of the country was such as to require a reevangelization on the largest scale."

The political uncertainty of the years preceding the evangelical revival is well expressed in the words of the Jacobite, Dr. Byrom:

God bless the king—I mean our faith's defender;  
God bless—no harm in blessing—the Pretender;  
But who Pretender is, and who is king,  
God bless us all, that's quite another thing.

The prolonged unsettledness had injuriously affected national morals. As the century advanced a growing sense of security pervaded the country, but the private vices of the first two royal Georges made the court a pesthouse. While giving these two kings credit for justice, courage, and moderation as rulers, Thackeray, in his Lectures on the Four Georges, has painted a terribly faithful picture of those days, now past in England, of that strange religion of king-worship, when priests flattered princes in the temple of God, when servility was held to be ennobling duty, when beauty and youth tried eagerly for royal favors, and woman's shame was held to be no dishonor. "I read that Lady Yarmouth,

my most religious and gracious king's favorite, sold a bishopric to a clergyman for £5,000. He had betted her £5,000 that he would not be made a bishop, and he lost, and paid her. As I peep into George II's St. James's I see . . . that godless old king yawning under his canopy in his Chapel Royal as the chaplain before him is discoursing. . . . Whilst the chaplain is preaching the king is chattering in German almost as loud as the preacher; so loud that the clergyman—it may be one Doctor Young, he who wrote *Night Thoughts*, and discoursed on the splendor of the stars, the glories of heaven, and utter vanities of this world—actually burst out crying in his pulpit because the Defender of the Faith and dispenser of bishoprics would not listen to him. . . . No wonder that skeptics multiplied and morals degenerated, so far as they depended on the influence of such a king. No wonder that Whitefield cried out in the wilderness; that Wesley quitted the insulted temple to pray on the hillside. I look with reverence on those men at that time. Which is the sublimer spectacle—the good John Wesley, surrounded by his congregation of miners at the pit's mouth, or the queen's chaplains muttering through their morning office in their anteroom, under the picture of the great Venus, with the door opened into the adjoining chamber, where the queen is dressing, talking scandal to Lord Hervey, or uttering sneers at Lady Suffolk, who is kneeling with the basin at her mistress's side? I say I am scared as I look round at this society, at this king, at these courtiers, at these politicians, these bishops, at this flaunting vice and levity. Whereabouts in this court is the honest man? Where is the pure person one may like? The air stifles one with its sickly perfumes.

“Sir Robert Walpole, who controlled English political life during nearly the first quarter of a century of the House of

Hanover—who spent £1,500,000 in bribery, and boasted that he could buy any man's conscience—in private life reveled in the lowest pleasures, passing his Sundays tippling at Richmond, and his holidays brawling over his dogs or boozing at Haughton with boors over beef and punch. We find a later prime minister, the Duke of Grafton, appearing with his mistress at the play, and Lord Chesterfield instructing his son in low vices as part of a polite education, and stating his grand conclusion on the proprieties of life as he writes, 'Your dancing master is at this time the man in all Europe of the greatest importance to you.'

The fop was enthroned by "society." The picture of Beau Nash in the famous Pump Room at Bath hung between the busts of Newton and Pope.

This picture placed these busts between  
Gives satire all its strength;  
Wisdom and Wit are little seen,  
But Folly at full length.

The follies of dress reached their height in the dandies, beaux, and macaronis; and the true lady, the "woman of quality," was distinguished by vast paddings and high head-dresses filled with wool, tow, or hemp.

The passion for gambling attained its climax under the first two Georges. It was stimulated by the South Sea mania for stock speculation and by fantastic and wild schemes for making fortunes rapidly. State lotteries were ranked among the ordinary sources of revenue, and did much to spread the fever. Westminster Bridge was built chiefly from the proceeds of these lotteries. Even Addison writes to an Irish friend, "Last week I drew £1,000 in the lottery." Private gaming reached wild extravagance. One night, in 1772, Fox lost £11,000 over the card table. The Duke of Devon-



shire lost an estate in a game of basset. Lord Sandwich gave his name to "a bit of beef between two pieces of bread," which formed his only food during twenty-four hours' spell of hazard. White's Chocolate House became a center for the



FROM THE COPPERPLATE BY ROBERTS.

STATE LOTTERY, LONDON, 1739.

vice, and Swift tells us that Lord Oxford never passed it without bestowing on it a curse as "the bane of the English nobility." One of Gillray's caricatures reflects upon the violent passion for gaming which possessed the women of the day, and two of them are represented as quarreling, one preparing to settle the dispute with the heavy candlestick.

Manners were cruel and coarse, even among the "better classes." Acts of outrage by "young gentlemen" were treated as subjects of jest, and almost of praise. The Mohocks—as one club of these "gentlefolk" called themselves—primed with drink, surrounded their victims in the street and pricked them with swords to make them caper, rolled women down Snow Hill in barrels, slit the noses and gouged out the eyes of others, and sometimes employed those bacchanalian orgies to wreak vengeance on personal enemies. Bankrupt gentlemen took to the road, and as highwaymen were regarded as the aristocracy of the "profession."



DRAWN BY GILLRAY.

FROM THE COPPERPLATE BY FAIRHOLT.

## GAMBLING WOMEN.

Gillray's caricature, "Settling the Odd Trick." The print is interesting also as showing the fashion of "high heads," which Wesley condemned.

At both universities the moral tone was shamefully low and the teaching inefficient. On this point we have the evidence of such diverse witnesses as Defoe, Swift, Johnson, Gibbon, Gray, John Wesley, Lord Eldon, and Lord Chesterfield. Dean Swift declares: "I have heard more than one or two persons of high rank declare that they could learn nothing more at Oxford or Cambridge than to drink ale or

smoke tobacco; wherein I firmly believe them, and could have added some hundred examples from my own observation." Gray writes later from Cambridge, after describing the Duke of Newcastle's installation as Chancellor of the University on August 8, 1749: "For the rest of the performances, they were just what they usually are. Everyone, while it lasted, was very gay and very busy in the morning, and very owlish and very tipsy at night; I make no exceptions from the chancellor to bluecoat." Lord Eldon states that he had seen at Oxford a Doctor of Divinity so far the worse for a convivial entertainment that he was unable to walk home without leaning for support upon the wall; but having by accident stumbled to the rotunda of the Radcliffe Library, which was not then protected by a railing, he continued to go round and round, wondering at the unwonted length of the street, but still revolving, and supposing he went straight, until some friend—perhaps the future chancellor—relieved him from his embarrassment and set him on his way.

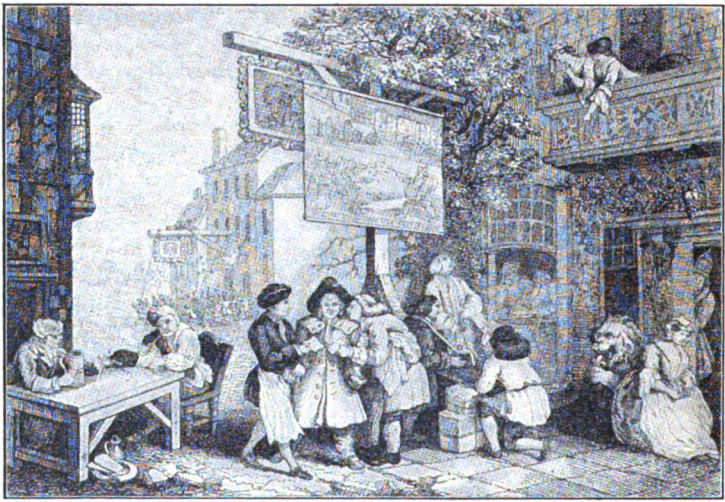
The eminence of the men who bear this testimony appears to refute the charge of educational inefficiency, but Goldwin Smith has well said: "The universities being the regular finishing schools of the gentry and the professions, the men who had passed through them became eminent in after life; but they owed little or nothing to the university. Only in this way can Oxford lay claim to the eminence of Bishop Butler, Jeremy Bentham, or Adam Smith, while Gibbon is her reproach. The figures of Lord Eldon and Lord Stowell . . . were more academical. Here and there a tutor of a better stamp, no doubt, would try to do his duty by his pupils. . . . To the eighteenth century we mainly owe the college gardens and walks as we see them," and these "may

plead to a student's heart for some mitigation of the sentence on the race of clerical idlers and winebibbers who, for a century, made the university a place not of education and learning, but of dull sybaritism and a source not of light, but of darkness to the nation. It is sad to think how different the history of England might have been had Oxford and Cambridge done their duty, like Harvard and Yale, during the last century."

At the beginning of the century literature was demoralized by political patronage. Men who could write well found the chiefs of both the great parties of the State willing to employ them, as Macaulay says, "with emulous munificence." As the century advanced this ceased. The patronage of the public was of slow growth, and the abject poverty of authors laid them open to the special temptations of a precarious livelihood. Johnson, Collins, Fielding, and Thomson were all arrested for debt. Johnson's spirited letter to Lord Chesterfield upon the completion of his Dictionary is one of the most famous in literature, and Ward's picture of the sturdy author in the nobleman's anteroom well expresses Johnson's disgust with the coxcomb for whom he had been excluded, and his impatience at his repeated waiting upon the patron to whom he dedicated his first prospectus. Notwithstanding the improvement effected by such writers as Addison and Steele literature was very impure, as kindly Sir Walter Scott testifies: "The writings even of the most esteemed poets of that period contain passages which would now be accounted to deserve the pillory. Nor was the tone of conversation more pure than that of composition, for the taint of Charles II's reign continued to infect society until the present reign (George III), when, if not more moral, we are at least more decent." The popular "chap-books," sold by the

peddlers, witness to the need for Wesley's work of providing a wholesome cheap literature for the people. Of the better type only of these chap-books are facsimiles desirable.

A volume published by the British Historical Manuscripts Commission in 1897 sufficiently reveals the unbounded intrigue and corruption that dominated politics. We read of worldly aldermen and councilors in good old English towns of whom Walpole's cynical saying, that every man had his



DRAWN BY W. HOGARTH.

FROM THE COPPERPLATE BY FAIRHOLT.

THE ELECTION. CANVASSING FOR VOTES.

price, was only too true. Harley is asked what ought to be paid, and is told that at Devizes “£500 will buy one of Mr. Diston's friends and make a majority for Mr. Childs.” A letter to Harley tells of £50 being demanded for a vote. “God be merciful to us,” says the writer; “for if a speedy stop be not put to this growing evil, England is undone.” Men bribed their way to the House, and were utterly unscrupulous as to how they voted or what they did so long as they

reached the golden haven of official life. Cowper did not exaggerate when he wrote:

The levee swarms, as if in golden pomp  
Were charactered on every statesman's door—  
“Battered and broken fortunes mended here.”

Hogarth's cartoon tells us the story of many a country election.



## CHAPTER III

### **Spiritual Paralysis of England**

INFIDELITY THE FASHION.—DEISM DOMINANT IN THEOLOGY.—BISHOP BUTLER THE CHAMPION OF THE TRUTH.—DEGRADATION OF THE MASSES.—BARBAROUS LAWS.—TORPOR OF THE CHURCHES.—THE PAROCHIAL CLERGY.—THE FREE CHURCHES ASLEEP.—THE REVIVAL AND THE NATION.

**I**T was an age of spiritual paralysis. Infidelity was a fashion among the educated classes, and any serious regard for religion was ridiculed. Montesquieu, coming from Voltaire's France, observes: "There is no religion in England; . . . if one speaks of religion, everybody begins to laugh. When a man said in my presence, 'I believe this as I believe the Creed,' everybody burst out laughing. . . . In France I am thought to have too little religion, but in England to have too much." Bishop Butler's well-known words were only too true: "It is come, I know not how, to be taken for granted by many persons that Christianity is not so much as a subject of inquiry; but that it is now at length discovered to be fictitious, and accordingly they treat it as if in the present age this were an agreed point among all people of discernment; and nothing remained but to set it up as a principal subject of mirth and ridicule, as it were, by way of reprisals for having so long interrupted the pleasures of the world."

This was written in 1736, and five years afterward he delivered his famous charge in which he laments "the general decay of religion in the nation," and the growth of professed unbelief. Of the deists of the first half of the century scarcely two thought alike. Some were sincere inquirers after truth, some the perplexed victims of an age of bitter controversy, and some were intellectual fops following a mental fashion. Generally deism banished God from the universe which it admitted he had made; it denied a revelation in the written word, or in the word incarnate, and held that all that is good in Christianity is as old as creation. The brilliant, dissolute man of fashion and politician, Lord Bolingbroke, Voltaire's friend, posed as a Churchman, and regarded religion as a convenient engine of the State. When it served his purpose he stigmatized freethinkers as the "pests of society."

But Chesterfield left his deistical works to be published by his executor, Mallet, after his death, and was not undeserving of Johnson's pungent criticism: "Sir, he was a scoundrel and a coward; a scoundrel for charging a blunderbuss against religion and morality; a coward because he had no resolution to fire it off himself, but left half a crown to a beggarly Scotchman to draw the trigger after his death." Toland, Shaftesbury, Collins, Woolston, Morgan, Tindal, Chubb and, later, Hume and Gibbon expressed various deistic theories. Some of their works were translated into German, and aided in the enthronement of rationalism in Germany and those grosser forms of infidelity in France which reached their culmination during the revolution. In writing of Johnson, Carlyle has vigorously described the moral torpor of the nation at the time when the Methodists began their work: "The eighteenth was a 'skeptical' century; in which little word there is a whole



Pandora's box of miseries. Skepticism means not intellectual doubt alone, but moral doubt; all sorts of *infidelity*, *insincerity*, spiritual paralysis. Perhaps in few centuries that one could specify since the world began was a life of heroism more difficult for a man. That was not an age of faith—an age of heroes! . . . The 'age of miracles' had been, or perhaps had not been, but it was not any longer. An effete world, wherein Wonder, Greatness, Godhood, could not now dwell; in one word, a godless world."

Among the antideistic writers Bishop Butler stands first. His immortal Analogy, published in 1736, was the result of twenty years' study—the very twenty years during which the deistical notions formed the atmosphere which educated people breathed. Next in importance to the Analogy was Bishop Warburton's colossal work on *The Divine Legation of Moses*. The battle for Christianity was well fought, but its truths required not only to be defended, but to be applied to the heart and life of the whole people. The first these intellectual giants were well able to do, the second was beyond their power, and remained for the Methodists to accomplish.

The middle classes were better than those above or below them. Their domestic life was more carefully protected, and there were homes in which the Puritan fire still smoldered and only needed the breath of the new evangelism to kindle it into a flame. But even the middle classes reveled in pastimes that were debasing. Cockfighting, bull and bear baiting, and licentious plays were counted choice amusements. Recreative reading was almost unknown. A popular literature had yet to be created. It is not surprising that the lower classes were ignorant and immoral. Lecky tells us that gin had been introduced in 1684, but it was about 1724 that gin drinking began to affect the masses, and it spread with the

rapidity and violence of an epidemic. Small as is the place which this fact occupies in English history, it was probably, if we consider its consequences, one of the most momentous of that century, because, as Dean Farrar has said, "from that time the fatal passion for drink was at once and irrevocably implanted in the nation." Signs on the ginshops offered people enough to make them "drunk for a penny, dead drunk for twopence, and straw to lie upon." Hogarth's ghastly pictures of Gin Lane and Beer Street bear witness to scenes of brutal sensuality.

The criminal law was barbarous. Blackstone calculates that for no fewer than one hundred and sixty offenses, some of them of the most frivolous description, the judge was bound to pronounce sentence of death. A dozen persons were sometimes hung at a time. Men and women competed for the best position to view the scene. On the gibbets at country cross-roads bodies were left to rot in chains. The marriage law was in a shameful state. An act of 1753 put a stop to one method by which some of the clergy earned a disgraceful livelihood. Clergymen confined for debt in the Fleet Prison had been allowed for many years to marry couples within its precincts. The *Grub Street Journal* of February 17, 1735, tells of these "ruinous marriages . . . by a sett of drunken, swearing parsons that wear black coats." Lord Mahon tells of one, Keith, who married six thousand couples in a year. This led to infamous scenes. Coaches drove up containing fashionable women who were offered the official services of the men in clerical costume. So cauterized was the conscience of some of the better minded men of the age that we find them, as Dr. Stoughton remarks, "rather laughing at the ludicrousness of the scenes than frowning on their crime."

What were the Established and Free Churches doing to

remedy these evils? We have marked the transient activity of the Anglican Church in the days of Queen Anne, and the notable cases of personal devotion which gleam in the moral



DRAWN BY WM. HOGARTH.

FROM AN OLD PRINT.

## GIN LANE.

In this plate and its companion, "Beer Street," Hogarth effectively caricatured the shocking intemperance of his time.

darkness. But the general decay of the Establishment in the mid-century was lamented by each of her few enlightened leaders. Archbishop Leighton declared "the Church is a fair carcass without a spirit." Bishop Burnet uttered the

touching lament, "I am in the seventieth year of my age, and as I cannot speak long in this world, in any sort, so I cannot hope for a more solemn occasion than this of speaking with all due freedom. . . . I cannot look on without the deepest concern when I see the imminent ruin hanging over this Church." He goes on to deplore the ignorance of the clergy, their engrossment in party politics, and their indifference to the cure of souls.

Archbishop Secker bore similar testimony in the very year the Wesleys received "the witness of the Spirit." The early missions were stagnant, the charity schools became suspected of political propagandism, and "the religious societies," says Overton, "lingered on long enough to give a sort of framework to the societies of the Methodists, and then died a natural death. The Society for the Reformation of Manners died out with them. The Church continued to be a name to conjure with, but the whole tone was perceptibly lowered, and other religious bodies shared the same plight." Ryle, the present Bishop of Liverpool (1900), states that some of the bishops were men of powerful intellect and unblamable lives; the majority "were mere men of the world." The place-hunting of the prelates is a favorite subject for the satirists of the day.

The social status of the parochial clergy had improved since the days described by Macaulay, when many of them scarcely rose above the level of domestic servants in the houses of the great. In moral tone they were superior, as a body, to the corrupt society of their day. Voltaire, who was in England in 1736, states that upon the whole the English clergy were more moral than the French, and that, compared with a Parisian abbot, "an Anglican dignitary is a Cato." But, he adds, "the Anglican clergymen frequent the taverns,

because custom sanctions it, and if they get drunk, they do it seriously and incur no disgrace." Bishop Burnet, on the other hand, wrote with regret that he had observed the clergy in all the places in which he had traveled, "Papists, Lutherans, Calvinists, and Dissenters, but of them all our clergy is much the most remiss in their labors, in private, and the least severe in their lives."

Overton is of the opinion that matters grew worse rather than better in the generation that succeeded Burnet. The best preaching of the first half of the century was modeled upon Tillotson's sermons—cool, clear, well-reasoned, latitudinarian. Wesley gladly recognized their moral teaching. They appealed on all matters of religion to reason; but they lacked all spiritual fire; they supplied no moral dynamic.

Many of the clergy, if they preached at all, preached Jacobite politics, and others delivered harangues of the type described by Bishop Blomfield of London. When this bishop was a boy the Marquis of Bristol presented the poor old women of Bury St. Edmunds with scarlet cloaks, in which they all appeared at church on the following Sunday. The clergyman, with a graceful wave of the hand toward the resplendent dames, announced, "Even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these," and proceeded to extol the charity of their noble patron. This same worthy, who had "a very corpulent frame and pompous manner," had occasion to notice the distribution of a dole of potatoes to the poor by the local authorities, and chose for his singularly appropriate text, "And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, It is manna." He then warned the recipients of the potatoes against the sin of gluttony and the wickedness of taking more than their share!

The condition of the State Church—its fierce factions, the

worldliness of many of the bishops, the corruption of its patrons and financial officials, the bitter strife and schism in the two Houses of Convocation, resulting in the closing of that council for a century—rendered the Church powerless to reform itself.

What was the condition of the Free Churches? In 1702 Defoe estimated the number of Nonconformists at about two millions. Presbyterians formed the largest body, Independents (or Congregationalists) stood second, and the Baptists last. By the close of the century the number had largely increased. The ministers of these Churches had been preserved from the moral declension of the Anglican clergy, but many of them had lost their early fervor. Those were not altogether dead Churches which numbered among them such men as Isaac Watts, the hymn writer; Nathaniel Lardner, the apologist; and Philip Doddridge, the author of the book which touched Wilberforce's heart so deeply. But Stoughton truly says that "with certain exceptions a spirit of indifference respecting the masses of the people infected the respectable congregations of the Protestant meeting-houses." Defoe, in 1712, considered Dissenters' interests to be in a declining state, and Calamy, in 1730, wrote of "a real decay of serious religion" among them.

Doddridge and others uttered the same lament. In our own day the eminent Baptist, Dr. Clifford, speaking of the general Baptists, says that at the time of Wesley's conversion they were critical, contentious, and cold. The breath of the Puritan inspiration had ceased to stir their hearts and move their wills. Even the Society of Friends did not escape the general declension. "The religious society to which we nominally belonged," writes Schimmelpenninck, "was at that period at its lowest ebb." Dale attributes the weakness of

the Free Churches during the first half of the century to their departure from the central articles of the Christian faith, and from the stricter manners and morals of their fathers.

Voltaire was in England from 1726 to 1729, when, probably unknown to him, the Holy Club was formed at Oxford. He declared at that time that all men in England had become so disgusted that a new religion, or an old religion revived, would scarcely make its fortune. But "an old religion revived" was to bring a new moral life to the nation before the century closed. When the French Revolution came fifty years of the great revival had done their work, and it was only the trailing edges of the storm which swept England's shores. Lecky sees in Methodism one of the forces which preserved England from the revolutionary spirit which wrought such havoc in France, and observes how "peculiarly fortunate" it was that the commercial development in the latter part of the century had been "preceded by a religious revival which created a mainspring of moral and religious energy among the poor, and at the same time gave a powerful impulse to the philanthropy of the rich."

This historian of the century is of the opinion that, "although the career of the elder Pitt and the splendid victories that were won during his ministry form unquestionably the most dazzling episodes in the reign of George II, they must yield in real importance to that religious revolution which shortly before had begun in England by the preaching of the Wesleys and Whitefield." Green also marks the influence of the revival on national life, and says that it "changed in a few years the whole temper of English society. . . . The Methodists themselves were the least result of the Methodist revival. . . . In the nation at large appeared a new moral

enthusiasm which, rigid and pedantic as it often seemed, was still healthy in its social tone, and whose power was seen in the disappearance of the profligacy which had disgraced the upper classes, and the foulness which had infested literature ever since the Reformation. But the noblest result of the religious revival was the steady attempt, which has never ceased from that day to this, to remedy the guilt, the ignorance, the physical suffering, the social degradation of the suffering and the poor."

We now purpose to trace the ancestry of the man who, Green considers, "embodied in himself, not this or that side of the vast movement, but the very movement itself;" to note those spiritual experiences of Wesley and his comrades which gave a special tone and trend to the movement; and to tell the story of the genesis and growth of the Church and world-wide confederacy of Churches which resulted. Methodists may well take heed to the stirring counsels of the eminent theologian, Dr. Dale, uttered in the City Road Chapel at the centenary celebration of Wesley's death:

You are the heirs of great traditions. You stand in a noble succession.  
But—

"They who on glorious ancestry enlarge,  
Produce their debt instead of their discharge."

You have done so much that you are under awful responsibilities to the nations in which your societies are already planted, and to the nations to which you have still to make known the unsearchable riches of God's grace. Keep faith with your fathers; keep faith with Christ; keep faith with your children and your children's children: transmit to coming generations the Gospel which has already won such splendid triumphs.





## CHAPTER IV

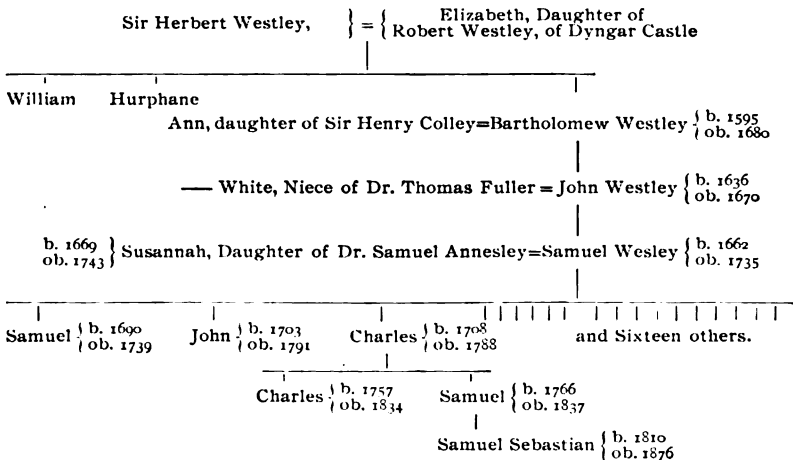
### The Ascent of the Wesley Family

FROM WESTLEY TO WESLEY.—BARTHOLOMEW WESTLEY.—JOHN WESTLEY  
"THE FIRST."—AN OXFORD PURITAN.

“SO far as I can learn, such a thing has scarce been for these thousand years before, as a son, father, grandfather, *atavus*, *tritavus*, preaching the Gospel, nay, the genuine Gospel, in a line.”

Thus wrote John Wesley to his brother Charles, thirty years after the date of organized Methodism, concerning their ancestry. He could have said with equal truth that his

#### SEVEN GENERATIONS OF THE WESLEY FAMILY.



female ancestors were as distinguished as their husbands—his mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother being renowned for their gifts of genius, for their intense interest in ecclesiastical life, and for their suffering in obedience to conscience.

The founder of Methodism was not fully acquainted with the particulars of his remarkable ancestry. But in those rare moments when even the busiest of men naturally inquire about their forefathers he was profoundly impressed that Providence had favored his own household in a singular way. The ancestral line of the Wesleys revealed the fact that the principles of intellectual, social, and religious nobility were developing and maturing into a new form of pentecostal evangelism.

On the southwestern shore line of England is the county of Dorset, a part of which was called "West-Leas," lea signifying a field or farm. In Somerset, adjoining Dorset, there was a place called Welswey, and before surnames were common we have Arthur of Welswey or Arthur Wellswesley (Wellesley), and John West-leigh, and Henry West-ley. There were landowners in Somerset named Westley in the days of Alfred the Great, in the ninth century. There was an Edward Westley in the year 925, and a Guy Wellesley in 930. The latter was constituted a thane, or member of the king's court. Arthur Wellesley married a relative named Westley in 1150. Sir William de Wellesley was a member of Parliament in 1339. His second son, Sir Richard, became the head of the Wesleys in Ireland, from whom descended the Marquis of Wellesley, Governor General of India under William Pitt, and his greater brother Arthur, Duke of Wellington, the conqueror of Napoleon at Waterloo.

We step out on firmer ground and get nearer home in

stating that a grandson of Sir William, Sir Herbert, now called Westley, was the father of Bartholomew Westley, and great-grandfather of our own John Wesley. One quaint narrator says that Sir Herbert and Lady were "persons permitted intercourse with the leading minds of the age, and themselves took an active part in molding their community in its moral, social, and religious aspects." In the opening days of the seventeenth century stands Bartholomew Westley amid the quickening forces of the Elizabethan age, and entering upon his manhood before the death of Shakespeare. He was about seven years old when James I came to the throne. He entered Oxford as the first on the list of coming students bearing the name of Wesley. After completing the classical course he graduated in "physic," which was his means of livelihood for some years to come. In 1620, at the age of twenty-five, he married the daughter of Sir Henry Colley, of Castle Carberry, Kildare, Ireland, by whom he had one son named John.

Having taken "holy orders," Bartholomew Westley became a Puritan clergyman in the Established Church. In 1640 he was appointed rector of Charmouth, on the coast line of the English Channel, a village remarkable for its romantic situation between two lofty hills. On the night of September 22, 1651, a small party of horsemen rode along the quiet valley toward Charmouth, and their flying visit linked the life of the country rector with the stirring events of the times.

The battle of Worcester had just been fought, and Charles, afterward the Second, defeated by Cromwell, sought safety in flight to France. Expecting to take boat near Charmouth, the prince, with his company disguised as a wedding party, spent the night in an inn near the church and attended early morning prayers conducted by Bartholomew

Westley. A blacksmith of the town, who had been called on to shoe a horse for one of the strangers, noticed that the other iron shoes were not those of the south of England, but of the north. The proclamation of Parliament having only two days before been read at Lyme Regis, close by, warning everybody against harboring the prince, the blacksmith communicated his suspicions that the company might be that of Charles and his disguised adherents. Westley having learned the facts, sought a magistrate to procure a warrant of arrest. An armed party started in pursuit of the prince, who meanwhile had ascertained his danger and fled.

Kings have proverbially good memories. The horseshoe incident was not forgotten when Charles came to the throne. The king violated his pledges that all should enjoy religious liberty, by persecuting Puritans, ejecting Nonconforming ministers, and branding Westley as an "intruder." Westley went forth to become one of the valiant host of Nonconformists. He retreated with some of his faithful parishioners to the "solitudes of Pinney, and there in a dell between rocks"—afterward known as White Chapel Rocks—they worshiped God. Although the Royalists stigmatized him "fanatic," and "puny parson," because of his small stature, he was kind, prudent, and beloved by the Christian people among whom he lived: In his home and before the public he was a devout and godly man. In 1680 the tidings of his son's death reached him, and then "his heart broke," and the gray-headed confessor passed to his unknown grave at Charmouth, at about the age of eighty-five.

There was a John Westley who lived about 1400, a clergyman, and another, in 1481, rector of Langton. But the John Westley who was son of Bartholomew and Ann, born 1636, is to us "the First." In his early training and in energy of

character he so closely resembled the founder of Methodism that we trace his career with special interest. In the quiet of the home between the hills of Charmouth he received such instruction from his father as placed him in advance of most boys of his age. His father consecrated him to the ministry from his infancy. "Family religion, in the household of the Westleys," says the author of *The Fathers of the Wesley Family*, "formed an essential part of their discipline. It was matter of conscience to instruct children and dependents in social, moral, and religious duties. It was also their practice to set apart particular days for prayer and humiliation in seasons of calamity and for thanksgiving on occasions of special benefit."

John was a thoughtful lad, having a serious concern for his spiritual life while yet a schoolboy. In his diary he records faithfully God's dealings with his soul and his frame of mind while in attendance on the means of grace. His more celebrated grandson, by the same plan of recording the chief experiences of his life, reveals to us his unfaltering honesty of soul, and marks the course of the stream of grace and power which flowed through his whole ministry.

Out from his happy home, before he was sixteen, the lad went as a student to New Inn Hall, Oxford University. Talented and well trained, he soon won favor with the learned vice chancellor, John Owen, who reported him one of the best students. He excelled in oriental languages, and was commended for excellence of deportment. Some of his instructors were the great spirits of the age. Among the students, and perhaps his associates, were many who became the famous men of the subsequent generation.

Marshall Claxton's historic painting of John Wesley and his friends at Oxford might well have its counterpart in an

imaginary grouping of students in the days of John Westley the First. There is John Howe, six years his senior, afterward Cromwell's domestic chaplain, and familiarly called the "Platonic Puritan." Stephen Charnock stands near him, with aspiring spirit and eloquent lips, whose Discourses on the Attributes of God is recognized as the finest work on the subject in English literature. There is the witty and sarcastic Robert South, who at this time figured among the most glowing eulogists of Cromwell, but who thirty years later denounced him "as a beggarly bankrupt fellow;" William Penn, the Quaker; Philip Henry, the saintly father of the commentator; Christopher Wren, the architect of St. Paul's; Joseph Alleine, author of *An Alarm to the Unconverted*; and Lancelot Addison, father of Joseph Addison, are in the foreground. Back of these are at least twelve young men who afterward became bishops—one of them, Sprat, from Westley's own county. Such were the associates of our earnest, bright-souled student, who graduated as Bachelor of Arts when twenty-one years old, and two years later received the degree of Master of Arts.



## CHAPTER V

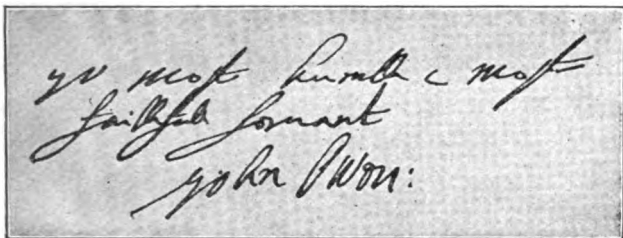
### John Westley the First

RELATIONS WITH THE PURITANS.—JOHN OWEN.—THOMAS GOODWIN.—  
 PURITAN OXFORD.—A CONTEMPORARY AT LONDON.—JOHN GOODWIN.—  
 INTERVIEW WITH IRONSIDE, BISHOP OF BRISTOL.

WE do not wonder that the elder John Westley adopted views of Church government substantially the same as those held by his friend, the great vice chancellor, John Owen, who was the leader of the liberal party among the Independents. To a rare amount of theological learning Owen united a dignified presence, a face not soon to be forgotten, eyes of penetrating brightness, lips of firm resolve, a countenance generally very grave, and which could be very stern, profuse locks curling over the shoulder, and altogether the air and bearing of a gentleman. His appearance had arrested Cromwell's notice. "Sir," said the general, laying his hand on Owen's shoulder, "you are a person I must be better acquainted with." "That," replied the divine, with the courtliness of a cavalier, "will be much more to my advantage than to yours." They became friends. Cromwell nominated him to the vice chancellorship after the Parliament had appointed him to the deanery of Christ Church.

John Westley was a prototype of his famous grandson of the next century in his sympathy with Owen's vigorous efforts

to reform the evil customs, to curb the prevailing licentiousness, and to restore the moral tone of the university. Our facsimile of Owen's handwriting is from the closing para-



AUTOGRAPH OF JOHN OWEN.

From a letter written by Owen to Henry Cromwell, in 1654, while John Westley was at Oxford.

graph of a letter to Oliver Cromwell's eldest son, Henry, which was written during the second year of Westley's residence, and refers to the much-needed reforms. In his Latin oration of 1654 Owen also speaks of the conflict out of which the university rose, not with trophies, spoils, and garlands, but with scars and torn standards dragged in dust. They had put to flight wine shops, ale sellers, mimics, farces, buffoons, the public riots, and disgraceful street scenes. Puritan Oxford, when Westley left it, and after Owen's reforms had been matured, was far superior to the Royalist Oxford of a previous or a later date, Antony à Wood, the Royalist, being an unwilling witness. "Even Clarendon admits," says Goldwin Smith, "that the Restoration found the university abounding in excellent learning. Puritanism might be narrow and bibliolatrous, but it was not obscurantist nor the enemy of science. We see this in Puritan Oxford as well as in Puritan Harvard and Yale. In Puritan Oxford the scientific circle which afterward gave birth to the Royal Society was formed."



The other of "the two Atlases and Patriarchs of Independency," as Wood calls them, was Thomas Goodwin, President of Magdalen College. There has been much fun since the days of the Spectator about this Puritan rabbi's "night-caps," but "those caps, few or many, certainly covered a larger amount of brains than some ever had who are fond of laughing at the great Puritan."

The theology of these two divines was Puritan of the purest type. In spite of their defects the veins of gold running through their works rendered them a mine of wealth a hundred years later, when people impoverished by rationalism flocked to them as to a spiritual El Dorado. Stoughton, the brilliant Congregational historian, considers that the Methodism ultimately fixed outside the Establishment by Whitefield and the two Wesleys was largely dug out of Puritan ore. But this was more true of Whitefield's theology, and of the evangelicalism in Calvinistic form which was fostered within the Establishment by Methodistic clergymen such as Romaine, Berridge, and Venn, than of Wesleyan Methodism.

John Wesley the Great in his earlier years was more influenced by the Cambridge school, represented by Ralph Cudworth, Henry More, and John Smith, of his grandfather's days, of whom the celebrated William Law was a disciple. As the second John Wesley grew older his knowledge of his grandfather's associates and their Puritan teaching increased, and with it came an increase of admiration and respect. It was, we may well imagine, a labor of love when he devoted the seventh volume of his Christian Library to "extracts from the works of the Puritans." In one significant respect the teaching of the Methodist Wesleys presented a sharp contrast to that of their grandfather's friend, John Owen. In

the great Puritan's works scarcely a spark of the missionary spirit is to be found. In his sermon on "St. Paul's Vision of the Man of Macedonia" he actually labors hard to prove that the divine will requires that to some nations and regions the Gospel should *not* be sent.

Though convinced of a call from God to the work of a Gospel preacher and evangelist, John Westley did not take orders. He preached among the seamen at Radipole, and in May, 1658, when twenty-two years of age, after examination and approval by Cromwell's thirty-eight "triers," he became minister of Whitchurch. How great was his promise is seen in the fact that the church in which he had been a private member appointed a day of fasting and prayer for "God's abundant blessing" upon him. A little later he married the niece of the quaint and famous Thomas Fuller, and a daughter of Rev. John White, known as the "Patriarch of Dorchester," and a notable figure in the Westminster Assembly of Divines. "A grave man, yet without moroseness," says Thomas Fuller, "who absolutely commanded his own passions and the purses of his parishioners, whom he could wind up to what height he pleased on important occasions."

Those were exciting times. The fire burned high in the preacher's soul. He "rode with his sword in the time of the Committee of Safety and engaged with them" in their deliberations for revolutionary plans, which he acknowledged afterward to have been, for a minister, "imprudence in civil matters." He is a grand figure as he makes his memorable defense before Dr. Ironside, the Bishop of Bristol, in courteous words maintaining his right to preach without episcopal ordination.

"I shall desire," said Westley, "those several to be laid together which I look on as justifying my preaching: 1. I was

devoted to the service of God from mine infancy; 2. I was educated in order thereto at school and in the University of Oxford."

"What is your age?" interrupted the bishop.

"Twenty-five."

"No, sure you are not!"

"3. As a son of the prophets, after I had taken my degree, I preached in the country, being approved of by judicious, able Christians, ministers and others. 4. It pleased God to seal my labors with success in the apparent conversion of many souls."

"That is," replied the bishop, "it may be, in your way."

"Yea," said the brave preacher, "to the power of godliness from ignorance and profaneness. If it please your lordship to lay down any evidences of godliness, agreeing with the Scriptures, that are not found in these persons, I am content to be discharged from the ministry. I will stand or fall on the issue thereof."

"You talk of the power of godliness, such as you fancy," said the bishop.

"Yea, to the reality of religion. . . . I shall add another ingredient of my mission: 5. When the church saw the presence of God going along with me, they did, by fasting and prayer, on a day set apart for that end, seek an abundant blessing on my endeavors."

"Have you anything more to say to me, Mr. Westley?"

"Nothing. Your lordship sent for me."

"I am glad to hear this from your mouth. You will stand by your principles, you say?"

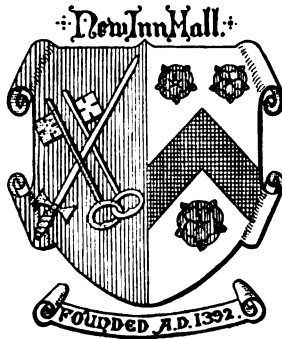
"I intend it, through the grace of God; and to be faithful to the king's majesty however you may deal with me."

"I will not meddle with you."

“Farewell to you, sir.”

“Farewell, good Mr. Westley.”

Although this dissenting hero of the seventeenth century was ecclesiastically a “lay preacher,” he was regularly in charge of a congregation, an active pastor, and entirely consecrated in time, talent, and service to the work of the ministry. But he was a shining mark for his enemies.





## CHAPTER VI

### The Persecution of John Westley

ACT OF UNIFORMITY.—THE CONVENTICLE AND FIVE-MILE ACTS.—WANDERINGS.—IMPRISONMENTS.—HOME AT PRESTON.—EARLY DEATH.

**H**IS dialogue with the bishop reveals Westley's good breeding and Christian temper, and is not discreditable to the Churchman. But, as Clarke and Rigg have pointed out, what is most remarkable is the correspondence between the principles of this Westley of the seventeenth century and those which his apostolic grandson afterward embodied in the Discipline of Methodism. Both recognized the distinction between *vocatio ad opus* and *vocatio ad munus*, and the threefold test which Westley offers to the bishop as authenticating his calling as a preacher—"preaching gifts," "graces," and "success"—is identical with that which was adopted by John Wesley—*graces, gifts, and fruit*—and which is still a main feature in the economy of Methodism. Clarke was justified in saying "that Methodism, in its grand principles of economy, and the means by which they were brought into action, has had its specific, healthy though slowly vegetating seeds in the original members of the Wesley family."

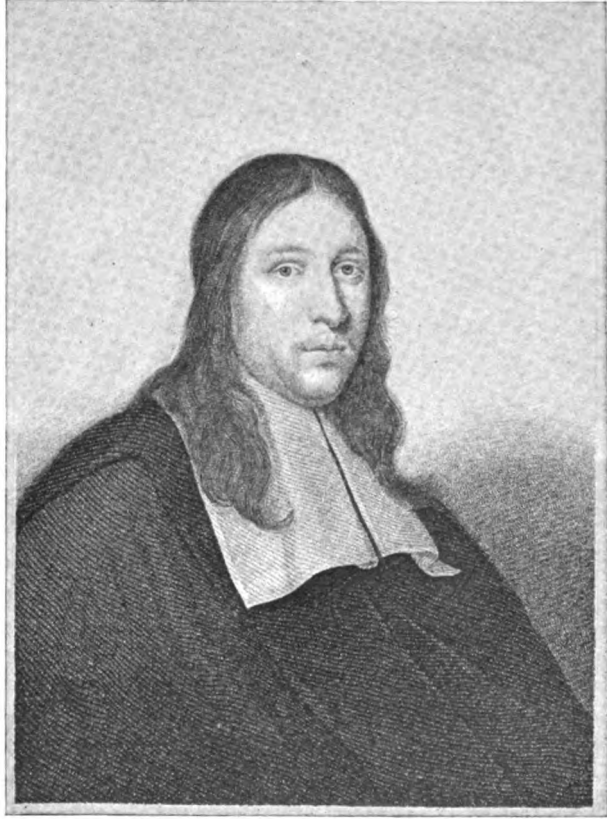
In 1662, as Westley was coming out of church one Sunday morning, he was arrested and carried to Blandford jail. He

was released, and returned to his charge for a few months, and then the Act of Uniformity coming into force, he fell before its power.

Even before the Act of Uniformity there had been indeed persecutions enough. Imprisonments and persecutions of various forms had been practiced broadly throughout the realm. John Bunyan had been cast into Bedford jail, and William Dewsbury, with scores of other Quakers and Nonconformists, had been thrown into Warwick prison. There was an ordinance for punishing blasphemy and heresy passed May 2, 1648, giving authority to justices to "commit to prison all such as should publish and maintain that the Church of England is no true Church, nor that the ministers and ordinances are true, or that a man is bound to believe no more than his reason can comprehend." An older statute required all persons to resort to church every Sunday and holy day, on fine of one shilling for each offense. A later act made the fine £20 a month, and an obstinate offender for twelve months had to be bound to good behavior by two sureties in £200 each, till he conformed. Another act declared that absentees from church for one month, or persons who frequented "conventicles or persuaded others to do so, under pretense of exercising religion, shall be committed to prison, and there remain until they conform themselves."

In 1661 came the Act of Uniformity, which gave regularity to all the persecuting statutes of the earlier period. It declared against any toleration, and that all worship must be according to the form in the Prayer Book or there would be no worship at all. It required every clergyman to be reordained if he had not before received episcopal ordination, to pledge to use the liturgy, to approve the faith and order of the Church of England, and to consent and assent to every-

thing in the Prayer Book. Many could not see the book before the time limited by the act was expired, for the Common Prayer Book, with the alterations made by the Convocation, did not appear until a few days before August 24,



FROM THE COPPERPLATE BY DEAN.

REV. JOHN WESTLEY, M. A.

This likeness of the grandfather of Rev. John Wesley is the earliest known portrait of any member of the Wesley family.

when the act came into force. St. Barnabas was added to the calendar, and the apocryphal story of "Bel and the Dragon" was inserted among the daily lessons. Of the seven

thousand ministers in England who conformed and kept their livings, few but those in or near London could have seen it until after they had declared their assent to it. Two thousand of the most learned and most active of the clergy, who refused to conform, were ejected from their livings.

“The expulsion of these men,” says Green, “was far more to the Church of England than the loss of their individual services. It was the definite expulsion of a great party which, from the time of the Reformation, had played the most active and popular part in the life of the Church. The Church of England stood from that moment isolated and alone among all the Churches of the Christian world. By its rejection of all but Episcopal orders the Act of Uniformity severed it irretrievably from the general body of Protestant Churches. And while thus cut off from all healthy religious communion with the world without, it sank into immobility within. But if the issues of St. Bartholomew’s Day have been harmful to the spiritual life of the English Church, they have been in the highest degree advantageous to the cause of religious liberty. A common persecution soon blended the Nonconformists into one. The impossibility of crushing such a body as this wrested from English statesmen the first legal recognition of freedom of worship in the Toleration Act; their rapid growth in later times has by degrees stripped the Church of almost all the exclusive privileges which it enjoyed as a religious body, and now threatens what remains of its official connection with the State.”

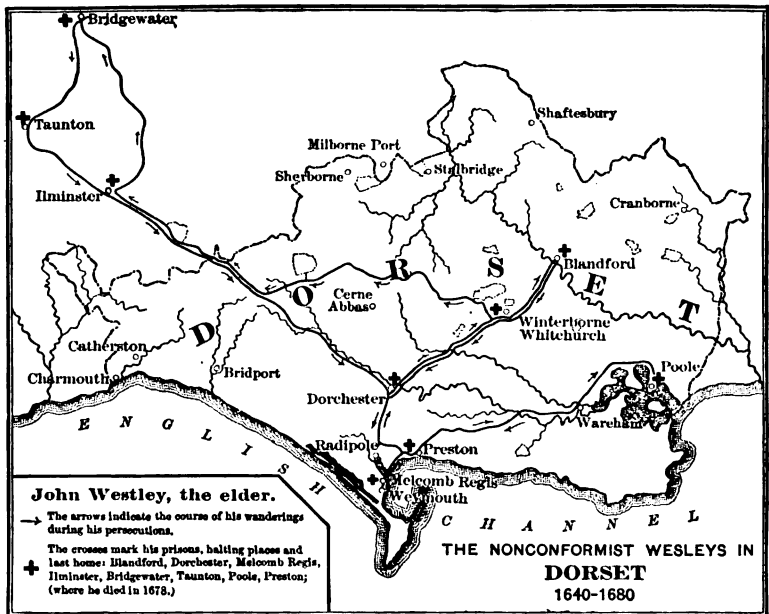
Now came the next step in the scheme of cruelty, the Conventicle Act of 1664, by which it was enacted that wherever five persons assembled for any religious worship but that of the Common Prayer every one was liable, for the first offense, to imprisonment for three months, or to pay £5; for the second, to be imprisoned six months, or to pay £10; and for the third, to be transported for seven years, or to pay £100. The Five-mile Act completed the code of persecution and imposed a penalty of £40 and six months’ imprisonment on any Nonconformist minister who came to reside within five miles of a borough or town where he had formerly preached.

These acts were applied with relentless severity from 1662 to 1688. Jeremy White collected a list of Nonconformist



sufferers containing sixty thousand names, and he states that five thousand died in prison.

In August, 1662, John Westley preached his farewell sermon to "a weeping audience." While he lingered for a few months in his old parish, his son Samuel, the future rector of Epworth, was born, and was baptized in the church from



Bartholomew Westley (great-grandfather of John the Methodist) was minister at Catherston, 1640-1662, when he was ejected. Charmouth was the scene of Charles II's attempted flight, 1651. Here Bartholomew died, 1680. John Westley, Sr., was a member of "a gathered church" at Weymouth, preached at Radipole, and in 1658 became minister at Winterborne Whitchurch.

which his father had been recently thrust out. When Samuel was a few weeks old the family fled to Melcomb. Then John Westley was hunted from town to town, as indicated on the accompanying map of Dorset. He went to Ilminster and Taunton and Bridgewater, in the adjoining county, narrowly escaping imprisonment with Joseph Alleine and thir-

teen other ministers, who with sixty-seven Quakers and Baptists were confined in one room for many months. The offer of a home at Preston, near Melcomb Regis, was gladly accepted, and he quietly commenced preaching again. Then followed visits to Weymouth, where the landlady who gave him shelter was fined £20. He was imprisoned for three months at Dorchester. He ministered to some "serious people" at Poole. Here he could see the quay where the

Mayflower used to load her cargoes of clay before she carried the Pilgrim Fathers to the land of liberty. Just off the water front may still be seen some remains of the old prison where Westley languished for six weary months. He died at Preston, at the age of forty-two, in 1678.



DRAWN BY W. B. PRICE.

FROM AN ENGRAVING.

## REMAINS OF OLD JAIL AT POOLE.

Where John Westley was imprisoned.

No stone marks the place of his burial, nor is there any known monument to record his worth; but his portrait has been preserved, and is the earliest of any known member of the Wesley family. It represents "his hair as long, dark, and parted in the middle; the forehead capacious, the nose large, the eyes soft and sweet, the face pale and clean-shaven, and the countenance full of seriousness and thought."

Rigg speaks of one feature in the character of John Westley which should be particularly noted. Although his ecclesiastical opinions were at the opposite pole from High

Churchism, he had none of the temper of the low fanatic or the ignorant sectary. Like his Oxford contemporary, John Howe, he practiced "occasional conformity" with the Established Church, the Church of those by whom he was proscribed and persecuted. As we have seen, his godly father was living when this son John died. His wife survived him about forty years, lovingly cared for by her kinsfolk, and for many years dependent upon her sons, Matthew, the surgeon, and Samuel, the rector.



## CHAPTER VII

### A Noble Nonconformist

SAMUEL ANNESLEY.—AT QUEEN'S COLLEGE, OXFORD.—DISTINGUISHED LABORS.—DEFOE'S TRIBUTES.—HOMES AND DEATH.

THE father of Susanna Wesley—the “Mother of Methodism,” as Isaac Taylor calls her—was the courtly Dr. Samuel Annesley, the “Saint Paul of the Nonconformists,” the nephew of the first Earl of Anglesea. The baptismal register of the ancient church of Haseley, ten miles from Shakespeare's town of Stratford-upon-Avon, contains the following entry: “27th March, 1620,” “Samuell the sonne of John Anslye, and Judith his wife.” He was, therefore, it is probable, born in Haseley parish. Four miles away was the castle of the Earls of Warwick, who held hereditary connection with the squire of the village. Samuel's father died when the son was four years old, and the boy owed his religious training to his faithful mother. As a child he dreamed that he was a minister summoned before the Bishop of London to be burned as a martyr. At six years of age he daily read chapters from the Bible, and Daniel Defoe, the author of *Robinson Crusoe*, who knew him well in later life and sat

under his ministry, summarized the facts of his early history in an elaborate eulogy :

His pious course with childhood he began,  
 And was his Maker's sooner than his own.  
 As if designed by instinct to be great,  
 His judgment seemed to antedate his wit :  
 His soul outgrew the natural rate of years,  
 And full-grown wit and half-grown youth appears ;  
 Early the vigorous combat he began  
 And was an older Christian than a man.  
 The sacred study all his thoughts confined—  
 A sign what secret Hand prepared his mind.  
 The Sacred Book he made his only school,  
 In Youth his study, and in Age his rule.

At fifteen years of age he entered Queen's College, Oxford, where he graduated with honors. Anthony à Wood, who much disliked him, says, " He seldom drank any beer, only water, and with much ado got to be Bachelor of Arts." It was evidently a marvel to the jovial Royalist how this could be done without copious libations of college ale, for, " nevertheless," he writes, " he was rarely sick, and his sight was so strong he could read the smallest print in his seventy-seventh year." He was ordained, probably, according to Presbyterian form. His first service was as chaplain to the Globe man-of-war, the flagship of the Lord High Admiral, the Earl of Warwick. This earl was the second son of the Lord Brooke of Milton's *Areopagitica*, and, like his father, held liberal views on the question of ecclesiastical forms. Cliffe, in Kent, was Annesley's first parochial appointment. The people of the region were notoriously wicked, and they welcomed him with pitchforks and stones; but five years later, when he left them, they protested with tears.

He was the main supporter of the well-known Cripplegate Lectures, " Cases of Conscience." He preached in various



DRAWN BY W. B. DAVIS.

FROM A COPPERPLATE.

**REV. SAMUEL ANNESLEY, D.D.**

**Father of Susanna, the mother of the Wesleys.**

churches, and became a sort of general superintendent more than a century before the office was formulated by his grandson for the American Methodists.

Annesley's home life was beautiful. His second wife was a lady of distinguished connections, the daughter of John White, a contemporary and of the same name as the father-in-law of John Westley. White was a leader among the Puritan laity, a member of the Long Parliament, chairman of its Committee on Religion, and a member of the Westminster Assembly of Divines. He died in January, 1644, and was buried with great ceremony from the Temple Church, the House of Commons in a body being present at his funeral. Over his grave, on a marble tablet, was this couplet:

Here lyeth a John, a burning, shining light,  
Whose name, life, actions, all were White.

His daughter, Mrs. Annesley, was a woman of many accomplishments and was remarkable for her piety. The youngest of her children, Susanna, who became the mother of John and Charles Wesley, was born on January 20, 1669, in Spital Yard, between Bishopsgate Street and Spital Square, London. Her home was probably in the last house, which blocks up the lower end of the yard. Two hundred years ago these now decayed houses were the abode of well-to-do citizens. Here Susanna Annesley spent her girlhood, studied Church controversies, and asserted her personal decision, and from hence she went forth to her wedding with Samuel Wesley.

Annesley was tall and dignified, and of robust constitution. He had an aquiline nose, a short upper lip, wavy brown hair, and a strong and penetrating eye. Severe persecutions did not disturb the geniality and cheerfulness of his Christian life. When John Wesley had set the Churches of England

afame with the doctrine of Assurance he asked his mother whether her father had ever preached it. She replied that he personally enjoyed it and confessed it for many years, but did not recollect hearing him preach upon it in particular. She therefore presumed he regarded it as a high privilege of a few. How well he lived and died let these words witness: "Blessed be God! I have been faithful in the work of the ministry above fifty-five years."

In 1648 he obtained the degree of Doctor of Laws; the same year, when only twenty-eight years old, he



DRAWN BY J. D. WOODWARD.

AFTER PHOTO.

BIRTHPLACE OF SUSANNA ANNESLEY.  
Spital Yard, London.

preached the Fast Day sermon before the House of Commons. Cromwell, in 1657, appointed him Lord's Day Evening Lecturer at St. Paul's, and made him vicar of St. Giles, the largest congregation in London.

The church of St. Giles, Cripplegate, was rebuilt three hundred years ago, but there is a considerable part of the old building still standing. Martin Frobisher, the voyager, is buried there, and Foxe, of the Book of Martyrs, lies in the chancel, not far from John Milton, who was laid there beside his father twelve years after Dr. Annesley ceased to be vicar. Oliver Cromwell was married in St. Giles August 22, 1620.

For five years the brilliant and popular young clergyman



preached the Gospel, but the storm came with the new king, and, like the Westleys, he was ejected for refusing to submit to the Act of Uniformity. His ample means saved him from distress and made him a blessing to many poor Dissenting ministers.

A little to the east of the Wesleyan Centenary Hall and Mission House in Bishopsgate Street is St. Helen's Place, formerly called Little St. Helen's. Here in 1672 Annesley formed a Nonconformist church, which became one of the most flourishing in London. The first public ordination on which the Dissenters had ventured was held here on a mid-summer's day in 1694, the service lasting from ten in the morning until six in the evening. Daniel Defoe's father and mother worshiped in Annesley's meetinghouse, and here the future novelist heard the good pastor of whom he wrote :

The sacred bow he so divinely drew  
That every shaft both hit and overthrew.  
His native candor and familiar style,  
Which did so oft his hearers' hours beguile,  
Charmed us with godliness; and while he spake  
We loved the doctrine for the teacher's sake.  
While he informed us what those doctrines meant  
By dint of practice more than argument.  
Strange were the charms of his sincerity,  
Which made his actions and his words agree.

Shortly before his departure from this world Dr. Annesley said: "Come, my dearest Jesus! the nearer the more precious, the more welcome!" "I cannot express the thousandth part of the praise that is due to thee. . . . I will die praising thee. . . . I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness; satisfied! Satisfied!"

He died on December 31, 1696, at the age of seventy-seven, and was buried beside his wife in old Shoreditch Church. The church was rebuilt in 1736, and only the old chancel

windows and one or two tablets remain of the older building. Dunton, the eccentric bookseller, his son-in-law, states that “the Countess of Anglesea desired on her deathbed to be

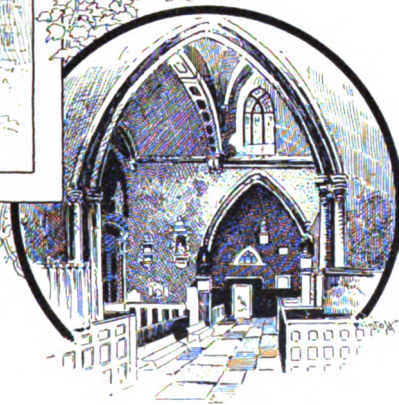
buried upon the coffin of that good man, Dr. Annesley.” Dr. Williams, who founded the library now in Gordon Square, preached his funeral sermon, and exclaims: “O,

how many places had sat in darkness, how many ministers had



DRAWN BY P. E. FLINTOFF.

Tower and ancient wall.



Interior in 1791.

FROM PRINTS.

ST. GILES'S CHURCH, CRIPPLEGATE.

been starved, if Dr. Annesley had died thirty-four years since! The Gospel he ever forced into ignorant places, and was the chief instrument in the education as well as the subsistence of several ministers.”

This survey of the ancestry of the Wesleys shows us on the father's side three successive descents of clergymen trained at Oxford, and another clergyman of great eminence

as his maternal grandfather. On the mother's side we find a peer, that peer's younger son, and a clergyman of distinguished position and character, in successive descent; and as her maternal grandfather a lawyer of eminence as a member of Parliament and statesman. Four, if not all five, of the clergymen were educated at Oxford, and all except Samuel Wesley of Epworth were noble Puritan confessors, whose principles were tested by severe sufferings. The lawyer was also a Puritan, and took a leading part in the parliamentary proceedings by which the despotism of Charles and Laud was overthrown. He died in the year of the battle of Marston Moor. "Among all the generations of the Wesleys," it has been said, "as far back as they can be traced there was not an ignorant or ill-bred person. The men were either divines with university training or gentry of liberal culture, and the ladies were ladies of gentle and generous culture," and, as Wesley himself remarks in a letter to his brother Charles, the doctrine which the divines preached was ever the "genuine Gospel."

There can be no doubt that in his mature years John Wesley became fully conscious of the near alliance, in ecclesiastical principles and in theological doctrine, between himself and the most moderate of the Puritans; that he felt great union of spirit with Bartholomew and John Westley and Samuel Annesley; and that his own views as to the Act of Uniformity and the policy that prompted it came to be in substantial harmony with those of his Nonconforming ancestry. Dr. Drysdale, in his History of Presbyterianism in England, is warranted in saying that "Methodism was the old Puritan spirit of England, 'risen from the dead' under a new and more hopeful set of conditions, and a more auspicious political environment."

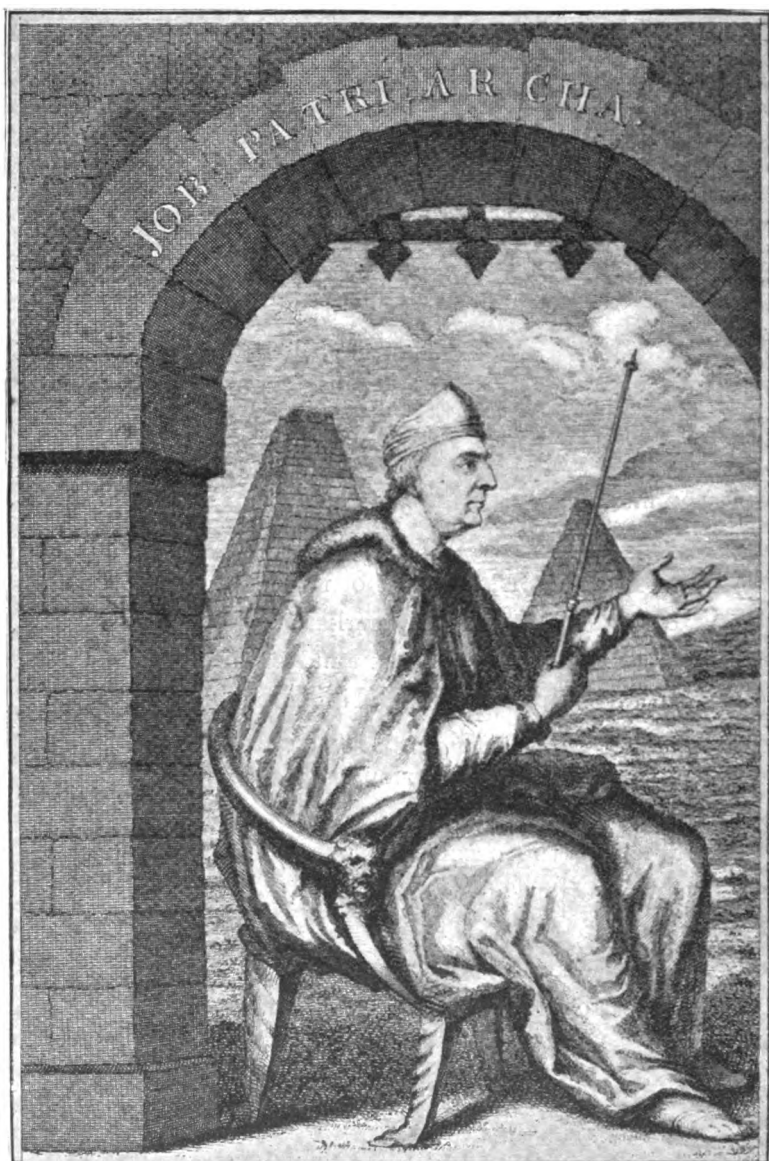


## CHAPTER VIII

### From Puritan Parsonage to Anglican Rectory

THE PARENTS OF THE WESLEYS.—SAMUEL WESLEY AT OXFORD.—BEGINNING OF HIS MINISTRY.—MARRIAGE.—THE MOTHER OF METHODISM.—SUSANNA ANNESLEY.

**S**AMUEL WESLEY was born in 1662, in Dorsetshire, four months after the English St. Bartholomew's Day upon which his father and his grandfather were ejected from their livings for Nonconformity. His father dying when he was a lad, his education was cared for by his mother, and in 1678 some friends of his family sent him to a Nonconformist academy in London. Here he made the acquaintance of the eccentric bookseller and literary man, John Dunton, afterward the editor of the Athenian Gazette, a precursor of the Tatler and Spectator. Here also he obtained entry, as the son and grandson of distinguished confessors, into the best Nonconformist circles, of which one of the leading families was that of Dr. Annesley. One of his schoolfellows was Daniel Defoe. He heard Stephen Charnock and John Bunyan preach, made notes of many sermons, and wrote some verses and unwise lampoons. One of the subjects of his foolish squibs was the Rev. Thomas Doolittle, who was at the head of a rival academy and a brave Nonconformist. Among his pupils was Matthew



REV. SAMUEL WESLEY, RECTOR OF EPWORTH.

Reduced facsimile of the copperplate frontispiece of his Latin Commentary on Job, published in London, 1736.

Henry, the famous commentator, and Edmund Calamy, the writer of the Nonconformist Memorials.

Much more creditable to Wesley than his attacks upon worthy men, both Conformists and Nonconformists, was his refusal to continue the translation from Latin of the works of John Biddle, "the father of the English Unitarians," when he discovered the tendency of Biddle's teaching. He lost a considerable gratuity by his refusal. But, while he held firmly to the doctrines of his fathers, there came a change in his ecclesiastical views.

He was about twenty years of age when he was asked to answer some strictures made upon the Dissenters, and while studying the subject he decided to leave Nonconformity and go over to the Established Church. With that quick impulse which distinguished all his subsequent life, he rose early one morning and started afoot for Oxford University; entering Exeter College as a servitor, with only two pounds and five shillings in his pocket.

The young student met his expenses partly by teaching and partly by his pen. He collected his poetical pieces, which were published under the title of Maggots; or Poems on several subjects never before handled, by a Scholar, London. The claim to novelty for "several subjects" is sustained by the titles of the pieces: The Grunting of a Hog, A Cow's Tail, A Hat Broke at Cudgels, The Tobacco Pipe, The Tame Snake in a Box of Bran. This curious book is extremely scarce, and few Wesleyan students have ever seen it. It was published by that odd John Dunton, with whom, as we know, Wesley was acquainted before he went to Oxford. Dunton had married Elizabeth Annesley, the sister of Susanna, who six years afterward became Wesley's wife. In the year that he published Wesley's Maggots he

fell into pecuniary straits, and went to America to repair his fortune. On his return, a year afterward, he lived in ter-



FROM THE ORIGINAL COPPERPLATE.

THE FRONTISPIECE TO MAGGOTS.

The portrait represents the author, Samuel Wesley, afterward Rector of Epworth.

ror of arrest for debt. He ventured out one Sunday in woman's clothes, and with a shaven face, to hear Annesley preach. On his return through Bishopsgate Street he was recognized and chased by a mob, but his knowledge of the alleys and passages of the city saved him. After roaming on the continent he returned to business in 1688. He "was a strange mortal," says Tyerman, "a man half mad, and a dabbler in all sorts of books."

Wesley was at Oxford when King James the Second visited the city and, as Macaulay says, treated the fellows of Magdalen with an

insolence such as had never been shown to their predecessors by the Puritan visitors. At Oxford Wesley's character ripened. There was awakened in him a true pastoral feeling of compassion and responsibility by visiting the prisoners in the castle; as his sons did fifty years later, when he wrote to them, "Go on in God's name in the path your Saviour has directed and that track wherein your father has gone before you; for when I was an undergraduate at Oxford I visited them in the castle there, and reflect on it with great satisfaction to this day." As quaint old Fuller says, "Thus was the prison his first parish; his own charity his patron presenting him to it; and his work was all his wages."

He took his degree of B. A. in 1688, signing his name Wesley instead of Westley. He received his M. A. degree later from Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. Returning to London, he was ordained deacon by the time-serving but able Bishop of Rochester, Dr. Thomas Sprat, whom Dunton eulogized thus:

Nature rejoic'd beneath his charming power;  
His lucky hand made everything a flower.  
On earth the king of wits (they are but few),  
And, *though* a bishop, yet a preacher too!

Twelve days after the Prince and Princess of Orange were proclaimed as King William III and Mary, Samuel Wesley was ordained a priest of the Church of England by Dr. Compton, in St. Andrew's Church, Holborn. Bishop Compton, of London, was not so chameleon-like in his politics as Dr. Sprat, and he was a dull preacher, but he was a generous and catholic man, and a friend of Dissenters. It was he who crowned King William and Queen Mary. St. Andrew's Church became associated with the name of the notorious Dr. Sacheverell, of whom we shall hear again. John Wesley preached here on the second Sunday after his



return from Georgia, and afterward wrote, "Here too, it seems, I am to preach no more."

Samuel Wesley became "passing rich" on £28 a year as a London curate, then obtained a naval chaplaincy, commenced his metrical *Life of Christ*, and in 1689 married Dr. Annesley's



DRAWN BY W. B. PRICE.

AFTER PRINTS.

CHURCH OF ST. ANDREW, HOLBORN,  
LONDON.

Where Samuel Wesley was ordained priest in 1688.

accomplished daughter Susanna on another London curacy of £30 a year. The young couple commenced their married life in Holborn, in lodgings somewhere near the quaint old houses still standing opposite Gray's Inn Road.

"How many children has Dr. Annesley?" inquired a friend of Thomas Manton, who had just baptized one of the family. "I believe it is two dozen, or a quarter of a hundred," was the startling reply. Susanna was the youngest of this large family, and perhaps the most gifted of the many

beautiful and well-educated daughters. Her sister Judith was a very handsome and sturdy-minded woman, whose portrait was painted by Sir Peter Lely; Elizabeth, who married John Dunton, was lovely in person and character, and Susanna, if not quite so fair as her sisters, shared largely in the family gift of beauty. She was slim and graceful, and retained her good looks and symmetry of figure to old age, although she was the mother of nineteen children. The best authenticated portrait of her is one that was taken in her old age and engraved under the direction of her son John. It shows "delicate aquiline features, eyes still vivid and expressive under well-marked brows; a physiognomy at once benignant and expressive." Her letters reveal "a perfect mistress of English undefiled," some knowledge of French authors, and a logical mind well read in divinity. The secret of her deep spirituality is revealed in one of her letters to her son: "I will tell you what rule I observed in the same case, when I was young, and too much addicted to childish diversions, which was this—never to spend more time in any matter of mere recreation in one day than I spent in private religious duties."

Bishop McTyeire's eloquent tribute to her virtues, graces, and gifts does no more than justice to this remarkable woman:

"When I was in Milan I visited the church where Ambrose preached and where he was buried; but I thought more of his patroness, the pious Helena, than of him. I thought of Augustine, and of that mother whose prayers persevered for his salvation; and in the oldest town on the Rhine I could not help being interested in the legend of Ursula and her eleven thousand virgins. But greater than Helena, or Monica, or Ursula, there lived a woman in Eng-

land, known to all Methodists, and of whom in the presence of those I have mentioned it might be said, 'Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou hast excelled them all.' I mean the wife of the rector of Epworth, and the conscientious mother of his nineteen children; she that transmitted to her illustrious son her genius for learning, for order, for government, and I might almost say for godliness; who shaped him by her counsels, sustained him by her prayers, and, in her old age, like the spirit of love and purity, presided over his modest household; and, when she was dying, said to her children, 'Children, as soon as the spirit leaves the body, gather round my bedside and sing a hymn of praise.' "





## CHAPTER IX

### **Samuel and Susanna Wesley**

A PURITAN SPIRIT IN ANGLICAN FORM.—HOMES IN LONDON AND SOUTH ORMSBY.—LITERARY PRODUCTS.

**Y**OUNG Puritans developed early. Matthew Henry gravely examined himself when he was eleven years old, and his letters to his father, written at the age of fourteen, are wonderfully sage in their reflections and mature in their doctrinal statements. Susanna Annesley, at the age of thirteen, was interested in the ecclesiastical and doctrinal controversies of the day. With remarkable independence she made up her mind to renounce Dissent and enter the Established Church, one year after Samuel Wesley had come to the same decision. It is possible that the two ecclesiastical conversions were not unconnected. Young Wesley was seven or eight years older than his future bride, and the friendship had already begun which was to ripen into love. In one of her later private meditations she mentions it among her greatest mercies that she was “married to a religious orthodox man; by him first drawn off from the Socinian heresy.” The same feeling is expressed in the words of the epitaph from her pen inscribed on Samuel Wesley’s tomb at Epworth: “As he lived, so he died, in the true Catholic faith of the Holy Trinity in Unity; and that Jesus Christ is God Incarnate, and the only

Saviour of mankind." It was natural that the thoughtful, fervent girl should be strongly influenced by one by whom she had been settled in a belief of such vital importance. "If the Puritans," says Dr. Rigg, "could not transmit to her lover and herself their ecclesiastical principles, at least they transmitted a bold independence of judgment and of conduct."

The girl of thirteen expressed her opinions against the Church of her distinguished father, however, with such tact



DRAWN BY P. E. FLINTOFF.

AFTER PHOTO. BY REV. T. F. BRYANT.

## SOUTH ORMSBY CHURCH.

Samuel Wesley ministered in this church 1690-1694.

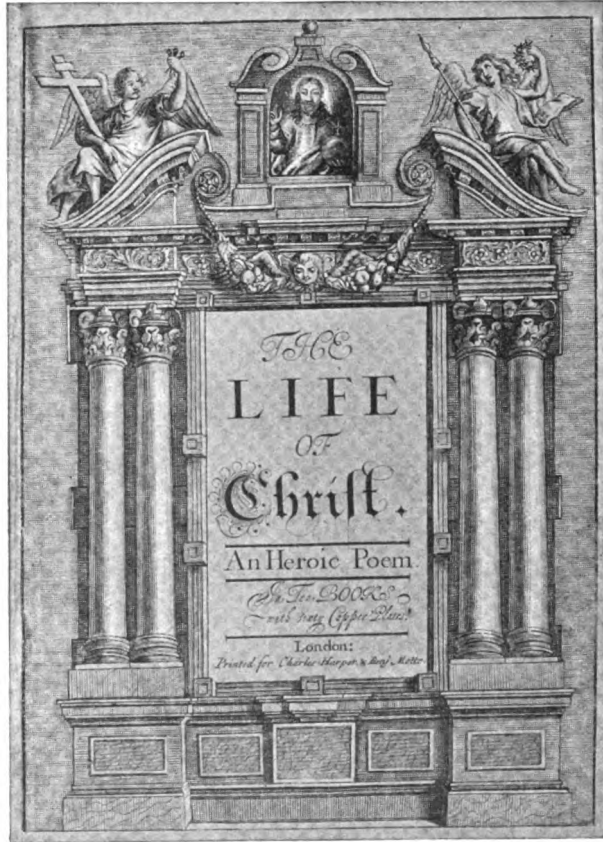
and sweetness of spirit as to win his consent to her confirmation at St. Paul's. She was at once so decided and gentle, and he so tolerant, that the love between the father and daughter never lost its strength and charm. He placed his papers relating to the ancestry of the Annesley family in the hands of this favorite daughter. These family papers were, unfortunately, destroyed in the fire that many years afterward wrecked the Epworth parsonage.

This returning to Anglicanism was not, however, a sympathetic look toward Rome. Many of the old superstitions

of popery still lingered in the Established Church, but the high convictions of the earlier Dissenters were also losing hold; some churches were leaving their moorings and drifting toward Unitarianism, and the young maiden, probably no less than her lover, had been repelled by much that she had seen of Stepney and Stoke Newington students, so different from the spirit and deportment of her parents, from the manners and carriage of her noble relatives, from the ideal which she would have pictured of Puritan godliness and spirituality. She had fallen on an unheroic age; the baldness of the meetinghouse was no longer redeemed by the heavenliness of the confessors. There was no more godliness in the Established Church—probably not by any means so much—but there was no pretense of superior godliness. And there were at this time great preachers in the London churches—such men as Barrow, Tillotson, Tenison, Stillingfleet, South, and Sherlock—with whom, for popular effect, even such a man as Charnock could hardly compare; while the solemn beauty of the services satisfied her taste and won her admiration. Nevertheless, “the Puritan movement in which she had been reared,” says Buoy, “went with her into the Church of England. She entered it essentially a Puritan, and that stern, heroic faith, softened by the grace of God, held her all her life. There was a providence leading this woman back to Anglicanism as plain as that which led the mother of Moses back to the court of Egypt, and she, like Jochebed, had her ministry—to train a child who should set the people free.” “The Wesleys’ mother,” says Isaac Taylor, “was the mother of Methodism in a religious and moral sense; for her courage, her submissiveness to authority, the high tone of her mind, its independence and its self-control, the warmth of her devotional feelings, and the practical direction given

to them, came up, and were visibly repeated in the character and conduct of her sons."

We left the young curate and his wife in their lodgings in



FROM THE ORIGINAL COPPERPLATE.

REDUCED FACSIMILE OF THE TITLE PAGE OF SAMUEL WESLEY'S LIFE OF CHRIST.

London, where they "boarded without going into debt." Here their son Samuel was born, who became the poet and satirist of Westminster School and master of Tiverton Gram-

mar School. There is an inaccurate story which Macaulay tells in his History of England, which has been repeated by Southey, Dr. Smith, Dr. Stevens, and others. It has arisen out of a confusion of persons. It is to the effect that Samuel

Wesley was asked to preach on the occasion of James II's declaration of independence, and was promised preferment if he would support the measures of the court in favor of popery; and that when he did preach, surrounded by courtiers and soldiers, he preached *against* the measures from the text, "Be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods," etc. The real hero of the story was not Samuel Wesley,



QUEEN MARY II.

FROM AN OLD PRINT.

"Our last queene of blessed memory," who "did delight much into" Samuel Wesley's poetical Life of Christ.

but the Rev. John Berry—not the father, but the father-in-law, of Samuel Wesley, *Junior*.

In the autumn of 1690 the Marquis of Normanby presented Wesley to the living of South Ormsby, in Lincolnshire, worth £50 a year. Wesley himself describes the parsonage as "a mean cot, composed of reeds and clay." This house has disappeared, and its garden now forms part of the park. "A



flourishing acacia and a profusion of snowdrops that mingle with the fresh grass of early spring are all that remain as mementoes of the parsonage and its surroundings."

His family increased "one additional child per annum." Again his pen came to the rescue and Wesley published his *Life of Christ*, dedicating it to Queen Mary. In Kemble's *State Papers* there is a letter from Thomas Burnet, of Kemney, to the Electress Sophia of Hanover, July 29, 1697:

There is a new edition of Mr. Westley's famous poem on the lyffe of Christ in 7 books in folio. It hath the best *tail-douces* into it, that were ever seen in this country, for exactness of dessein and good graveing. It is a heroic poeme composed for the use of our last queene of blessed memory; she did delight much into it, and it is indeed the best divine poem we have. The author is ane young clergymen, a beneficed persone, and chaplain to the Marquis of Normanby, who is himself one of the best poets of the age.

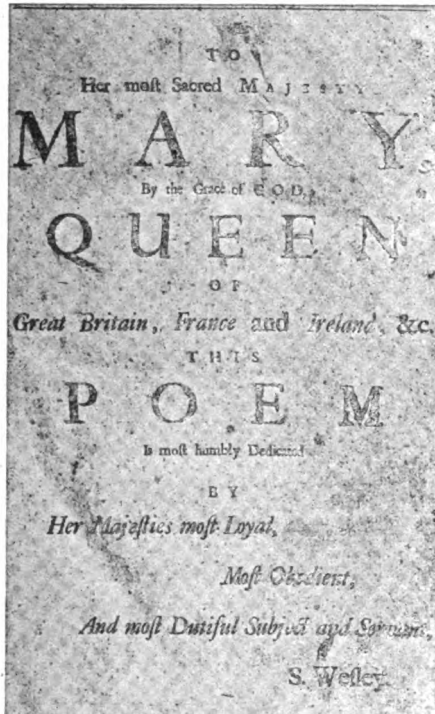
The most interesting passage in this long poem, which Dunton, and afterward Pope, pronounced "intolerably dull," is the sweet and appreciative portrait of the wife to whom Wesley and Methodism owed so much:

She graced my humble roof and blest my life,  
 Blest me by a far greater name than wife;  
 Yet still I bore an undisputed sway,  
 Nor was't her task, but pleasure to obey:  
 Scarce thought, much less could act, what I denied.  
 In our low house there was no room for pride;  
 Nor need I e'er direct what still was right,  
 She studied my convenience and delight.  
 Nor did I for her care ungrateful prove,  
 But only used my power to show her love:  
 Whate'er she asked I gave without reproach or grudge,  
 For still she reason asked, and I was judge.  
 All my commands requests at her fair hands,  
 And her requests to me were all commands.  
 To other thresholds rarely she'd incline:  
 Her house her pleasure was, and she was mine;  
 Rarely abroad, or never but with me,  
 Or when by pity called, or charity.

At South Ormsby Wesley also published his treatise on the Hebrew points. Here also he wrote much for "The Athenian Gazette; or Casuistical Mercury, resolving all the nice and curious questions proposed by the ingenious." One third of the Gazette at this time was from Wesley's pen. It was so successful as to be republished as the Athenian Oracle, and in 1892 a volume of selections from it was published in a new series of English classics.

Walter Besant has written a prefatory letter to this last reprint, in which he says: "It is a treasury, a storehouse, filled with precious things; a book invaluable to one who wishes to study the manners and ideas of the English *bour-*

*geois* at the end of the seventeenth or the beginning of the eighteenth century." The editor of this new edition of the Athenian Gazette, John Underhill, regards John Dunton as one of the "Fathers of English Journalism" and rebukes those who, like Tyerman, call him a "crazy bookseller."



DEDICATORY PAGE OF SAMUEL WESLEY'S  
HEROIC POEM ON THE  
LIFE OF CHRIST.



## CHAPTER X

### The Passing of the Puritans

GEORGE FOX.—WILLIAM PENN.—WILLIAM DEWSBURY AND ROBERT BARCLAY.—BUNYAN.—FLAVEL.—BATES.

**S**AMUEL WESLEY'S contributions to the Athenian Gazette reveal theological views substantially the same as those of his son John. He was a moderate Arminian. He was, as a rule, generous in his judgment of other religious systems, but he shared the prejudices of his time against the Quakers, whom he vigorously attacked. In the year Wesley came to South Ormsby, "holy, tender-hearted, much-enduring George Fox," as Vaughan describes him, died, with the characteristic words upon his lips, "All is well. The Seed of God reigns over all, and even over death itself."

The saintly William Dewsbury, who spent nineteen years in Warwick Jail, died in the year King William was proclaimed. For four years he had suffered in one of the most loathsome dungeons in the country. This dungeon, with its open cesspool in the center, has recently been uncovered, and remains as a memorial of the sufferings of one of the noblest of the Quakers.

Robert Barclay, the celebrated apologist of the Friends, and the writer of the first of those noble and gentle remon-

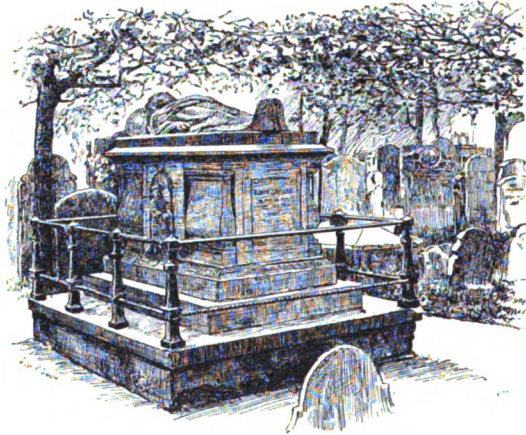
stances against the criminality of war which have distinguished them, died in the same year as George Fox. About ten years from this time the members of the Society in Great Britain numbered twenty-four thousand. It is pleasing, in after years, to find the son of the rector of South Ormsby and Epworth finding refuge from the storm at Leek, Staffordshire, in the "neat and elegant" home of an old friend, a typical Quaker, "the same man still," says Wesley; "of the same open, friendly, amiable temper."

Just before leaving South Ormsby, Mrs. Wesley, to her great grief, lost her father, Dr. Annesley, who died with ecstatic exclamations on his lips. Cherishing a firm belief in some ministry of love for the "spirits of the just made perfect," throughout the remainder of her life Mrs. Wesley loved to think that her father was still nearer to her than while he was in the flesh in Spital Yard and she in Lincolnshire.

One by one, in the reign of William III, the fathers of the old Dissent and the last of the Puritans were passing away. "They just saw the morning of religious liberty, they just touched the borderland of promise, they dwelt under its vines and fig trees for a little while, and then died in peace."

John Bunyan finished his pilgrimage in the year of King William's accession. When the end came "he felt the ground solid under his feet in passing the black river which has no bridge, and followed his pilgrim into the celestial city." His own generation did not recognize the beauty and power of his great spiritual allegory, but his tomb in Bunhill Fields to-day is one of the most famous in England. Near him are buried the mother of the Wesleys and her sister, Elizabeth Dunton, Daniel Defoe, Richard Cromwell, and Isaac Watts.

The imaginative saint, John Flavel, finished his course at Exeter a year after Annesley died. He had been driven from the scene of his zealous ministry at Dartmouth by the



DRAWN BY J. P. DAVIS.

AFTER PHOTO.

## TOMB OF JOHN BUNYAN, BUNHILL FIELDS.

Susanna Wesley, Elizabeth Dunton, Daniel Defoe, and Richard Cromwell lie in this burying ground.

rabble, headed by some aldermen, who burned his effigy—an insult he requited by praying, “Father, forgive them; they know not what they do.”

Philip Henry died in the summer of the same year as Annesley. Richard Baxter entered into the

“saints’ everlasting rest” a few years earlier, living just long enough to see the accession of a Protestant king pledged to grant toleration to Dissenters. Of the “silver-tongued Dr. William Bates,” the close friend of Archbishop Tillotson, Howe said: “God took him, even kissed away his soul, as hath been said of those great favorites of heaven; vouchsafed him that great privilege not to outlive serviceableness. To live till one be weary of the world, not till the world be weary of him—thus he prayed wisely, thus God answered graciously.” He died in 1699. John Howe survived his friend about five years. Richard Cromwell called upon him in his last illness, and Calamy says: “There was a great deal of serious discourse between them; tears were freely shed on both sides, and the parting was very solemn,

as I have been informed by one who was present on the occasion."

When the old Puritans had passed away, though their cause remained in the hands of men who had learned their lessons, the fire no longer burned with the glowing heat it had done before. "Puritanism," says Dr. Stoughton, "as a creed, as a discipline, as a form of worship, as a religious sentiment, remained; but much of its original inspiration passed away." The nation and the world needed the new fire which was already kindling in the quiet Anglican rectory where the "Mother of Methodism" was expressing her spirit of consecration in the words of her favorite poet, saintly Herbert:

Only—since God doth often vessels make,  
Of lowly matter, for high uses meet—  
    I throw me at his feet.  
There will I lie, until my Maker seek  
For some mean stuff, whereon to show his skill;  
Then is my time.

About the beginning of 1697 Samuel Wesley was presented to the living of Epworth, in Lincolnshire, "in accordance with some wish or promise of the late queen;" here he continued for thirty-eight years, and here John Wesley was born on June 17, 1703, the fifteenth of the rector's nineteen children. John Benjamin appears to have been his full name when christened, but he never used the middle name or initial.



## CHAPTER XI

### The Epworth Home

EPWORTH AND LINCOLNSHIRE.—WORTHIES OF WESLEY'S COUNTY.—THE UNIVERSITY IN THE HOME.—THE ALPHABET PARTY.

**E**PWORTH! The very name has a new charm to-day, for the old Lincolnshire village is linked with the young life of this and the coming centuries by a growing host of young people, members of the "Epworth League," who delight to call themselves "Epworthians," and who, by a happy unanimity of the sentiment of the young people of the churches, represent all the Methodisms of America.

Small as it is—the population of Epworth being only about two thousand—its place is very large in the annals of Anglo-Saxon Christianity. In fact, the whole county of Lincolnshire, like the entire eastern coast of England and Scotland, has been a region of great struggle, and a cradle of intense intellectual and moral activity and of world-wide reforms for a thousand years. This entire eastern coast has preserved throughout its history the strong evidence of the enduring quality of that Norse strain which has been such an important element, first in the fighting and then in the coalescence and development, of the many races which settled and fought on the British Isles. All along the coast of the North Sea there are to be found very many towns

which, in the names they still bear, show the traces of the Norse invaders. The towns have been the very centers where the descendants of the Norsemen fought their first battles and communicated their spirit of daring into every field of Anglo-Saxon activity. Here, as one example only, arose the Brownist sect, which became the founders of that little body of emigrants from immortal Scrooby to Holland, who, in turn, sailed out from Leyden, and came over in the Mayflower, and landed at Plymouth Rock. Out of this humble beginning arose the theocracy of New England, which has always been speaking with loud voice and lifting an heroic hand in every struggle in the history of North America.



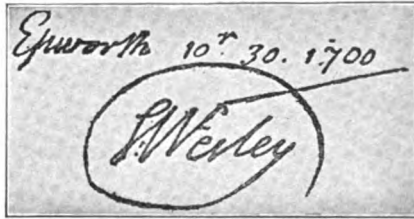
MAP OF LINCOLNSHIRE.

Showing the location of Epworth and Scrooby.

Lincolnshire has, perhaps, been the most assertive of all the seething counties of the eastern coast of the British Isles. In almost every great crisis of English history we find leaders from Lincolnshire. For at least seven hundred years it has been represented in the high places of English life by some illustrious son. The county "of fen, marsh, and wood" gave to England Stephen Langton, the first subscribing witness to Magna Charta; John Foxe, the author of the Book of Martyrs; Lord Burleigh, the great Elizabethan



statesman; Archbishop Whitgift, the brilliant prelate of the same period; Thomas Sutton, the founder of the Charterhouse School, where John Wesley was educated; Busby, the famous master of Westminster School, where Samuel Wesley,



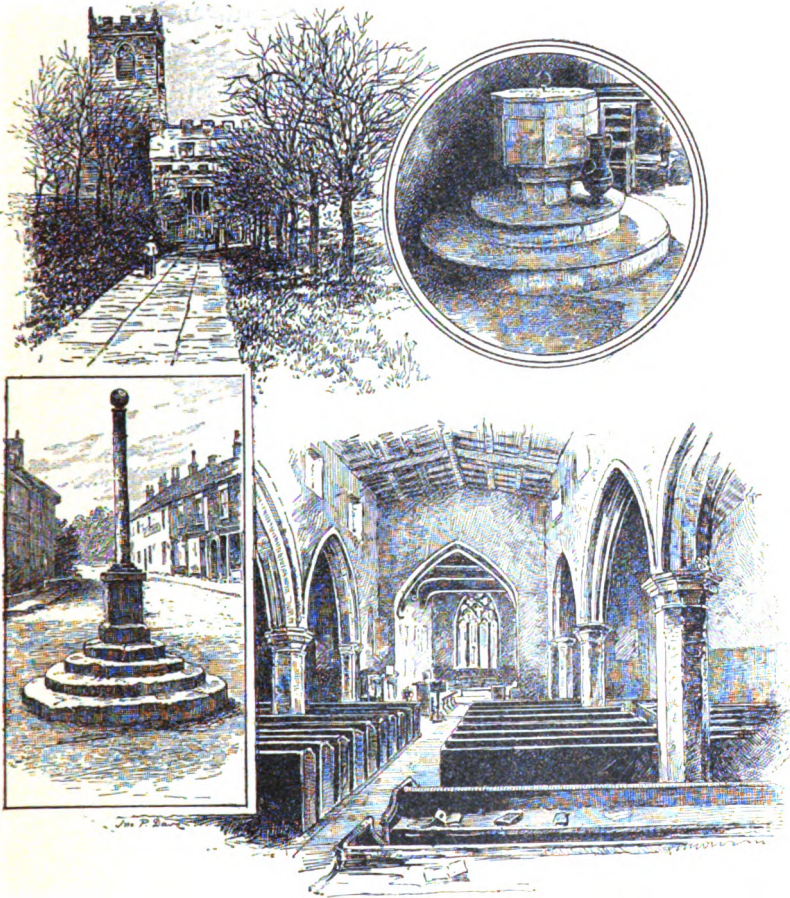
FACSIMILE OF THE SIGNATURE OF  
SAMUEL WESLEY, SR.

Jr., became master and Charles Wesley scholar; Sir Isaac Newton, the princely natural philosopher; and Alfred Tennyson, the lordly poet of the present century, who was born at Somersby, within two miles of South

Ormsby; what wonder that it was this Lincolnshire village of Epworth which should give to England and to the world John Wesley, "the first of theological statesmen," as Buckle calls him, and of whom Macaulay says he "conducted one of the most wonderful revolutions the world ever saw; his eloquence and his piercing logic would have made him an eminent literary man; and his genius for government was not inferior to Richelieu's." At Epworth also Charles Wesley was born; "who came," says Green, "to add sweetness to this sudden and startling light," and who, in his own distinctive order of sacred lyrics, stands in the first rank among the poets of Tennyson's county.

The old market town of Epworth stands on a piece of land once inclosed by five rivers, and called the Isle of Axholme. Its population remains about the same as in the days of the Wesleys, when the parishioners numbered two thousand. They live, for the most part, in the one street that stretches out for two miles. From the time of Charles I down to the first quarter of the eighteenth century the "stilt walkers" had

fiercely resisted every effort to drain the fens, and when the work was accomplished by new settlers the older Fenmen



DRAWN BY JOHN P. DAVIS.

FROM PHOTOS.

GLIMPSES OF EPWORTH.

The long walk to the church.  
The market cross.

The baptismal font and ewer.  
Interior of St. Andrew's Church.

burned the crops, killed the cattle, and flooded the lands of the intruders. The turbulent spirit of the Fenmen lingered

still among the villagers of Epworth, who were also profligate and vicious in their habits—as Samuel Wesley discovered to his cost during his first twelve years among them.

The exterior of Epworth Church remains much the same as in Wesley's day. Porches, walls, buttresses, and towers have not been altered since Adam Clarke's print was published. Within, the pews, organ, and decorations are new, the rood screen has been removed, the aisles have been re-roofed, and six bells have been hung in the tower.

The first home of the Wesleys at Epworth was a typical country parsonage of the seventeenth century, a homely frame structure, plastered within and roofed with straw. Parker's well-known painting of John Wesley's deliverance from the fire provides a partially imaginary picture of the house. An old document thus describes it: "It consists of five bays, but all of mud and plaster, the whole building being contrived into three stories, and disposed in seven chief rooms, kitchen, hall, parlour, butterie, and three large upper rooms, and some others of common use; a little garden empailed between the stone wall and the south, a barn, a dove coate, and a hemp kiln."

Let us take a look into the interior of the Epworth rectory, for in this household we have, as Stevens well says, the "real origin" of Methodism. Mrs. Wesley's education in the splendid religious environment of the twenty years' life in her father's house in London, and her diligent self-improvement during her married life, gave superior qualifications for the training of the school in the home. The method of living and the course of study have been given in a letter by the matchless teacher herself. The children were always put into a regular method of living, in such things as they were capable, from their birth; as in dressing, undressing,

and changing their linen. When turned a year old they were taught to fear the rod, and to cry softly. "I insist," she says, "in conquering the will of children betimes, because this is the only strong and rational foundation of a religious education, without which both precept and example



DRAWN BY J. D. WOODWARD.

AFTER A PRINT.

CHURCH OF ST. ANDREW, EPWORTH.

Where Rev. Samuel Wesley was rector, 1696-1735, and where John and Charles Wesley were christened.

will be ineffectual, but when this is thoroughly done then is a child capable of being governed by the reason and piety of its parents, till its own understanding comes to maturity, and the principles of religion have taken root in the mind."

As soon as the child learned to talk, its first act on rising and its last act before retiring were to say the Lord's prayer, to which, as it grew bigger, were added short prayers for parents, some collects, a short catechism, and some portion of Scripture, as memory could bear. That genius of successful management which utilizes every help and helper

was shown when, at the regularly designated hour, the oldest took the youngest that could speak, and the second the next, to whom were read the psalms for the day and a chapter in the New Testament. In the morning they were directed to read the psalms and a chapter in the Old Testament. They were taught to be still at family prayers, and to ask a blessing, which they did by signs before they could speak.

The exquisite manners of John Wesley came largely from his careful training in childhood. The children were trained to "civil behavior;" saluting one another by the proper name with the addition of "brother" or "sister," yet nearly every child had a gentle nickname. Each must "speak handsomely for what was wanted," even to the humblest servant, saying, "Pray, give me such a thing." Telling the truth brought reward; rude, ill-bred talk was unheard; and the children were forbidden freedom with the servants in conversation or association, lest something coarse or evil might be projected into their lives. But there was recreation in abundance. They thus grew up in that humble home a healthy, happy, witty band of children.

There was on the calendar of this home "The Alphabet Party." On the fifth birthday of each child, the house having been set in order the previous day for the celebration, the new pupil took the first lesson. To begin the child's education was better than a banquet, and the first effort must, if possible, be a decided success. In the school hours of the learner's first day the alphabet was acquired. The second day spelling and reading began in the Holy Scriptures, with the Book of Genesis. Much stress was laid on good reading and writing. Then came the multiplication table, elementary mathematics, grammar, history, and geography. The drill which John acquired in grammar flowered out into

his later authorship of short grammars for the study of English, French, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. Reading aloud became a specialty with the older children, from such authors as Milton and Shakespeare. John Wesley declared that his sister Emilia was the best reader of poetry that he had ever heard. The wise mother drilled the mental faculties, the "memory drill" being another specialty.

"Why do you go over the same thing with that child the twentieth time?" said the rector impatiently to his wife.

"Because," said she, "nineteen times were not sufficient. If I had stopped after telling him nineteen times, all my labor would have been lost."

There was even a successful adaptation of university study and method. Mrs. Wesley taught first by talks or lectures, then by text-books, and required essays or papers from the elder scholars. The classics were exalted, and the daughters took the same lessons as their brothers. Mehetabel, the first one trained by the systematic plan finally adopted, could read in the Greek Testament when only eight years old. The rector rendered assistance in the classics. In the school hours attention was given to the culture of the soul, and there even was a catechism drill in the primary department, and the teaching of Christian doctrines in the higher grades. Then there were Mrs. Wesley's own compositions, so highly commended by Adam Clarke, but lost when the rectory was burned. There were elaborate essays on religious and educational themes which she had prepared as text-books for her home school.



## CHAPTER XII

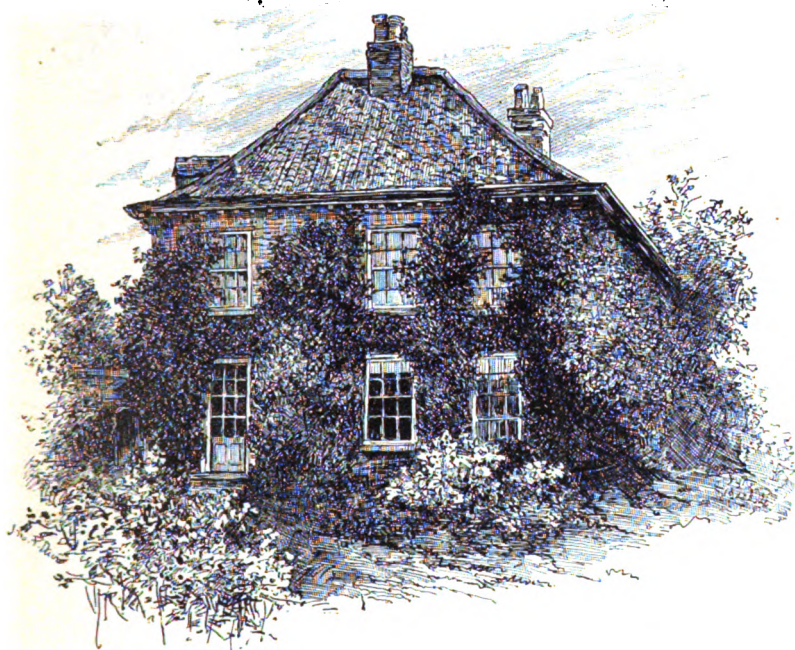
### Lights, Shadows, and Toils in Epworth

THE BATTLE FOR BREAD.—THE RECTORY IN ASHES.—JOHN'S RESCUE.  
—MRS. WESLEY'S SERMON-READING.—SAMUEL WESLEY AND THE  
"RELIGIOUS SOCIETIES."—HIS MISSIONARY SCHEME.

**H**AS there ever been a home school equal to this in Epworth rectory? The stroke of the family clock, regulates all things. But morning and evening the glad sound of youthful voices rings out in singing. Under the evening lamp sit the happy family, with sewing and witty talk, with many games, with even the sensation of a haunted house; where the ghost is often heard, but never seen, and, better still, never feared. Buoy well says: "Epworth was an ideal home; the family were the embodiment of the name of their church, St. Andrew's; for they were said to have been the most loving family in Lincolnshire."

It was not all sunshine, however, in the Epworth home. The rector grew vexed because his wife would not respond "amen" to his prayer for the king. "Sukey, if we serve two kings, we must have two beds," and, as impulsively as when he left London for Oxford, Samuel Wesley hurried away to the London Convocation, to return only at the death of the king as if nothing unpleasant had ever occurred. There were many conflicts between the rash rector and his

ungodly parishioners. They hated him, and he knew not how to win their love. Debts crowded in upon him. In 1705, when John was two years old, his father was arrested in the churchyard for a debt of £30 and hurried off to jail. His good wife sent him her rings to sell, but he returned them, believing the Lord would provide otherwise. We see



DRAWN BY J. P. DAVIS.

FROM AN ENGRAVING.

THE PRESENT EPWORTH RECTORY FROM THE GARDEN.

him at work among his "fellow-jailbirds" in Lincoln Castle reading prayers and preaching, even securing books to distribute among the prisoners. He writes: "I am now at rest. I am come to the haven where I've long expected to be." And again: "A jail is a paradise in comparison of the life I led before I came hither. No man has worked truer for



bread than I have done, and few have lived harder, or their families either."

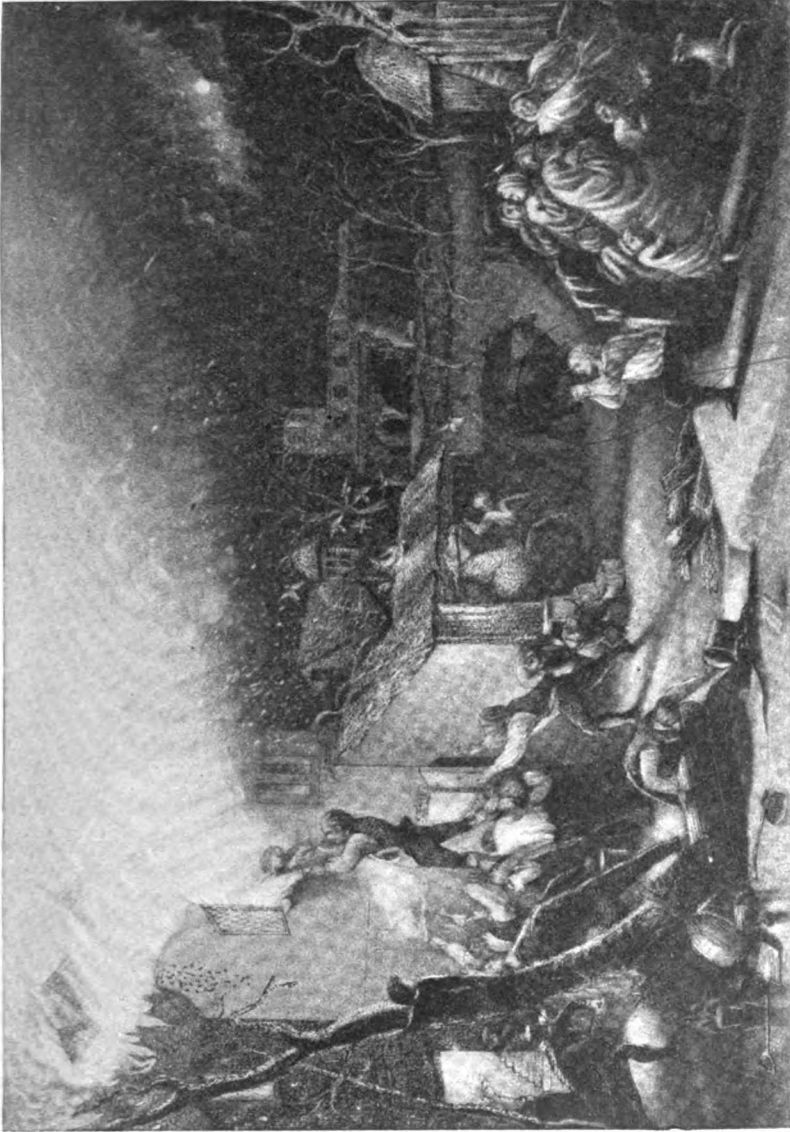
But the storm beat more fiercely upon the rectory for food was hard to find, the crop of the previous year having been a failure. The angry neighbors now burned the flax, stabbed the three cows that had given milk to the family, and wished "the little devils"—the children in the rectory—would be turned out to starve. The delicate, brave-hearted wife toiled on, and kept together the half-fed and half-clothed children.

"Tell me, Mrs. Wesley," said the Archbishop of York, "whether you have ever really wanted bread."

"I will freely own to your grace," she replied, "that, strictly speaking, I never did want bread. But then I had so much care to get it before it was eat and to pay for it afterward as have often made it unpleasant to me; and I think to have bread on such terms is the next degree of wretchedness to having none at all."

Friends came to the relief of the rector, and through the influence of the Duke of Buckingham he was presented with £125. After three months' imprisonment he returned to his parish and his books.

Then came the enemy's torch. The rectory went down in ashes, and only the good providence of God saved the lives of John and his mother. It was on Wednesday night, the 9th of February, 1709. Mrs. Wesley was ill in her room, with her two eldest daughters as companions. Bettie, the maid, and five younger children were in the nursery, while Hettie was alone in the small bedroom next to the granary, where the newly threshed wheat and corn were stored. The rector left his study at half-past ten, locked the room that contained his precious manuscripts and the records of the family and parish, and retired to rest in a room near to his wife.



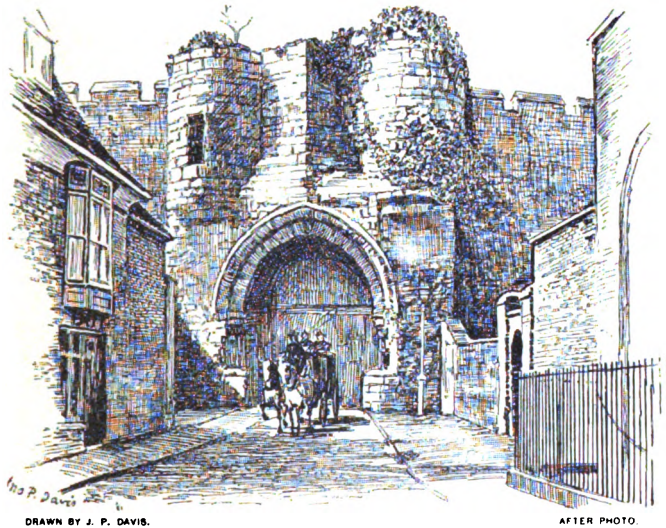
ENGRAVED FOR THE LADIES' REPOSITORY BY F. E. JONES.

THE BRAND FROM THE BURNING.

FROM THE PAINTING BY H. P. PARKER.



It was a wild night. A howling northeast storm obscured the half moon. The fire crept up the straw roof and dropped upon the bed where Hettie slept. Scorched and alarmed, she ran to her father's room, while voices on the street cried, "Fire! Fire!" The father warned his wife and daughters, helped them down stairs, and wakened those in the nursery. Bettie escaped, with Charles in her arms, while three children followed. The brave father helped them into the yard and



DRAWN BY J. P. DAVIS.

AFTER PHOTO.

THE GATEWAY OF LINCOLN CASTLE, IN WHICH SAMUEL  
WESLEY WAS IMPRISONED.

over the garden wall, and back to the house he rushed, trying in vain to find his wife. He tried to reach the study and failed. A dismal cry came out from the flames, "Help me!" "Jacky" had awakened to find the ceiling of his room on fire. The distracted father tried to force himself up the stairs, but streams of flame beat him back. He and the children committed the boy's soul to God. Within, Mrs. Wesley, lost

in the excitement, sought the opened front doors, but was forced back by the blinding sheet of fire and smoke. At a third effort she was literally blown down by the flames. Calmly she sought divine help. Wrapped in a cloak about her chest, she waded knee-deep through the flames to the door. Her limbs were scorched, and her face was black with smoke, so that when found by her frantic husband he did not know her.

John, not yet six years old, climbed on a chest to the window, and cried to be taken out. One man was helped up over the shoulders of another, and the child leaped into his arms. At the same moment the roof fell in. The boy was put into his mother's arms. The rector, in his search for his wife, found her holding the child, who by this time he had thought, was burned to ashes. He could not believe his eyes until several times he had kissed the boy. Mrs. Wesley said to him, "Are your books safe?" "Let them go," he replied, "now that you and all the children are preserved." He called on those near him to praise God, saying, "Come, neighbors, let us kneel down; let us give thanks to God. He has given me all my eight children. Let the house go; I am rich enough."

To John Wesley for more than fourscore years this event was the initial of his vivid reminiscences. There was no place found in his thought from that time onward for a doubt of a Supreme Being whose mercy interposes in moments of danger. The mother's escape was as miraculous as that of her celebrated son. In later years he caused a vignette to be engraved of a burning house, beneath his portrait, and these words underscored: "Is not this a brand plucked from the burning?"

The fire revealed anew the high nobility of the good father.

The next day, while he was walking around the ruins of the rectory, he saw two objects, the only remains of his study. The first was part of a scorched leaf of his Polyglot Bible, on which were yet legible the words: *Vade; vende omnia quæ habes, et attolle crucem, et sequere me*—"Go; sell all that thou



FROM THE STEEL PLATE BY ROTHWELL.

"THE PROVIDENTIAL ESCAPE OF THE REV. JOHN WESLEY FROM THE CONFLAGRATION OF HIS FATHER'S HOUSE, WHEN ONLY SIX YEARS OF AGE."

One of the many crude representations of this incident which made such a powerful impression upon the early Methodists.

hast, and take up thy cross, and follow me." This verse impressed him with a new meaning in his supreme trial. Another rescued paper contained one of his own poems of six stanzas, which has enriched the psalmody of all Christendom, beginning:

Behold the Saviour of mankind  
 Nailed to the shameful tree;  
 How vast the love that him inclined  
 To bleed and die for thee!

The rectory was soon rebuilt in a more substantial manner and on a more commodious plan. While the rector is attending the Convocation in London the good mother holds service with her children on Sabbath afternoons in the kitchen, reading good books and sermons. Neighbors ask the privilege of coming to hear, and there are soon as many as thirty attending regularly. The rector, though displeased with the news, is delighted with the plan on his return. The next year he has a conceited curate, who writes him words of bitter complaint against the sermon-reading wife. She tells her husband of the good work, and that as many as two hundred come to hear. The curate writes him strong words of a "conventicle"—a pestiferous gathering of Dissenters—and the rector in reply urges his wife to discontinue the meetings. The defense of the mother of Methodism is in these noble words:

It is plain, in fact, that this one thing has brought more people to church than ever anything did in so short a time. We used not to have above twenty or twenty-five at evening service, whereas we have now between two and three hundred, which are more than ever came before to hear Inman in the morning.

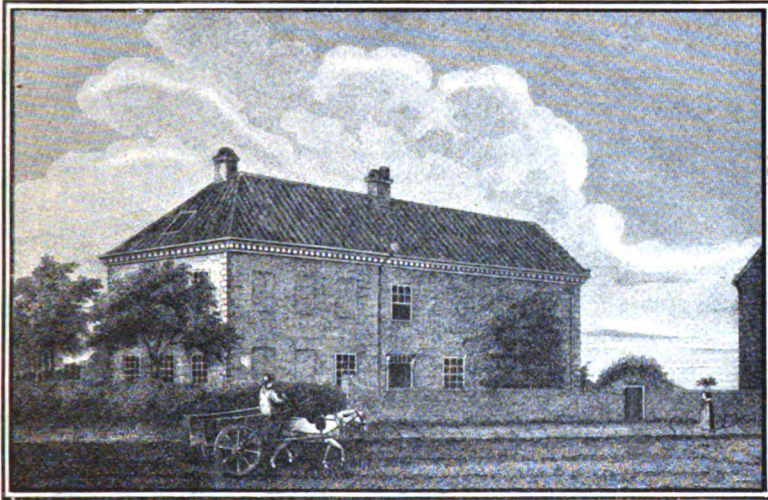
Besides the constant attendance on the public worship of God, our meeting has wonderfully conciliated the minds of this people toward us, so that now we live in the greatest amity imaginable; and, what is still better, they are very much reformed in their behavior on the Lord's day; and those who used to be playing in the streets now come to hear a good sermon read, which is surely more according to the will of Almighty God. . . .

I need not tell you the consequences if you determine to put an end to our meeting. . . . If you do, after all, think fit to dissolve this assembly, do not tell me that you desire me to do it, for that will not satisfy my conscience; but send me your positive command, in such full and express terms as may absolve me from guilt and punishment for neglecting this opportunity of doing good when you and I shall appear before the great and awful tribunal of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Noble words, thou mother of Methodism!

The marvelous service continued to shed its light abroad, for who could resist the words and work of that matchless heroine of the spacious Epworth kitchen?

The fire sadly interfered with the school in the home. The children were received into friendly families until the rectory could be rebuilt, and when they returned their mother had a difficult task to restore order and good manners. She was deeply impressed by John's escape, and two years afterward



FROM A COPPERPLATE ENGRAVING.

THE EPWORTH RECTORY IN 1823.

From the first edition of Adam Clarke's *Memoirs of the Wesley Family*.

we find her meditating in the eventide, and writing: "I do intend to be more particularly careful of the soul of this child that thou hast so mercifully provided for than I ever have been, that I may do my endeavor to instill into his mind the principles of true religion and virtue. Lord, give me grace to do it sincerely and prudently, and bless my attempts with good success."

Much as the Epworth children owed to their mother, they owed not a little also to their father, "a learned man, a comprehensive thinker, a racy writer and speaker, a brave worker, a manly soul, hasty, impetuous, hot, but loving, liberal, and



true." He gave a good example to his own children by his self-sacrificing care for his widowed Nonconformist mother. He never failed, amidst all his distress, to make up an annual £10 for her. His letters to his sons at school and college show that he was their friend and teacher. When he was not at Convocation he taught them the rudiments of classics. He imparted to his sons his own love of books, for he was a bibliomaniac of the strongest type. He encouraged his children in a wide range of reading. He criticised the "sorry Sternhold Psalms," and in the same letter expressed his love for music as "a great help to our devotion."

In the Athenian Oracle Samuel Wesley wrote: "Nothing but a stock is proof against the charms of music, and especially when good sense, good poetry, good tunes, and a good voice meet together." He laments the wretched reading of the Psalms, "all at the mercy of the clerk's nose," and thinks this may be one "reason why the Reformed Churches are yet remiss in psalmody." He urged his son to make translations of the Bible into verse, and thus gave a powerful stimulus to the scriptural character of the psalmody of the coming revival.

In two of his many enterprises in the press and the pulpit the vigorous rector notably anticipated the principles of his Methodist sons; he was the apologist of the "religious societies" of his day, and he was the advocate of "a broad and comprehensive scheme" of foreign missions. The fervent ministry of Horneck, curate at the Savoy and canon of Westminster; of Smithies, curate of Cripplegate, and William Berridge, afterward Bishop of St. Asaph, led to the conversion of some young men who met together weekly, raised funds to relieve the poor, visited prisoners, and taught neglected children. These societies for religious fellowship de-

veloped into the Society for the Reformation of Manners. Houses of ill fame, Sunday markets, and habits of debauchery and profanity were attacked, and by 1735 it was reported that 99,380 prosecutions had been instituted.

Samuel Wesley preached a sermon on behalf of this society in 1698, and wrote his defense of the gatherings for spiritual conversation in 1699. He argued that they were not "schismatic," that they

were in harmony with the spirit of primitive Christianity and conducive to the life of the Church. Although the religious societies had sunk into insignificance before John Wesley organized Methodism, "there

can be no doubt," says Rigg, "that in these societies are to be found the original of the Methodist societies, first at Oxford and afterward elsewhere." They must often have been the subject of conversation among the peculiarly wide-awake young folk in the Epworth home. Sixty-five years after Samuel Wesley preached his sermon before the Society for the Reformation of Manners, at St. James's Church, Westminster, we find his son John preaching from the same text, in West Street Chapel, Seven Dials, before the same society; and who will doubt that John Wesley had much to do with its revival?

Samuel Wesley's missionary scheme for the complete evangelization of the East—including India, China, and Abyssinia



DRAWN BY J. P. DAVIS.

AFTER PHOTO.

THE PRESENT RECTORY FROM THE REAR.

—procured the sanction of the Archbishop of York. Wesley offered his own services. “If,” he says, “£100 per annum might be allowed me—and £40 I must pay my curate in my absence—I should be ready to venture my life on this occasion, provided any way might be found to secure a subsistence for my family in case of my decease in those countries.”

In the last year of his life the large-hearted rector lamented “that he was not young enough to go with Oglethorpe as a missionary to Georgia.” He was not permitted to carry out his plans, but his children partook of his spirit, and within a century the spiritual children of this country parson’s son landed in India to do precisely as he suggested—to “learn the Hindustan language, master the Hindu notions and ways of reasoning, and bring over some of their Brahmans and common people to the Christian religion.”



## CHAPTER XIII

### Tales of the Epworth Rectory

THE RECTOR'S PRAYER.—FUN AT THE PARSONAGE.—THE "RUEFUL" CLERK.—SAMMY AND HIS CAT.—THE GHOST STORY.—A MODERN RECTOR.—EPWORTH OF TO-DAY.

IT is evident from his letters that the character of the energetic, impulsive rector of Epworth became mellowed as the years went by, and his Pious Communicant, published when he was at Epworth, reveals a growing spirit of devotion. One prayer therein reflects his own sad experiences of poverty:

I believe, O Lord! that thou who feedest the ravens and clothest the lilies wilt not neglect me and mine; that thou wilt make good thine own unfailing promises—wilt give meat to them that fear thee, and be ever mindful of thy covenant. In the meantime let me not be querulous or impatient or envious at the prosperity of the wicked; or judge uncharitably of those to whom thou hast given a larger portion of the good things of this life; or be cruel to those in the same circumstances as myself. Let me never sink or despond under my heavy pressures and continued misfortunes. Though I fall, let me rise again. Let my heart never be sunk so low that I should be afraid to own the cause of despised virtue. Give me diligence and prudence and industry, and let me neglect nothing that lies in me to provide honestly for my own house. Help me carefully to examine my past; and if, by my own carelessness or imprudence, I have reduced myself into this low condition, let me be more deeply afflicted for it; but let me still hope in thy goodness, avoiding those failures whereof I have been formerly guilty. Or, if for my sins thou hast brought this upon me, help me now, with submission and patience, to bear the punishment

of my iniquity. Or, if by thy wise providence thou art pleased thus to afflict me for trial, and for the example of others, thy will, O my God ! not mine, be done.

Many were the family stories which were told with much zest by the numerous members of the Wesley household in later years. Some of them, it is evident from later research, contained an apocryphal element, but most of them are based on facts. John Wesley used to tell how a lady of doubtful character, a friend of the loose-living Marquis of Normanby, tried to force her society upon his mother, whether she would or not. Coming in one day, and finding this intrusive visitor sitting with Mrs. Wesley, the sturdy rector "went up to her, took her by the hand, and very fairly handed her out." John Wesley says that this gave such offense to the marquis that it led to his father's removal from the living of South Ormsby. But in this he appears to have been mistaken, and "the actual *rencontre* may have been with some woman connected with Lord Castleton, who rented the hall and lived a very dissolute life there."

Adam Clarke relates a story, told him also by John Wesley, which was afterward corrected in some details by Miss Sarah Wesley. The revised version of it is as follows: Samuel Wesley had a clerk, well-meaning and honest, but weak and vain. On the return of King William from one of his martial expeditions this official stood up in the midst of a service, and with the nasal twang common to such functionaries pompously said, "Let us sing, to the praise and glory of God, a hymn of my own composing :

King William is come home, come home ;  
 King William home is come,  
 Therefore together let us sing  
 The hymn that's called Te D'um."

Charles Wesley told his daughter that this same clerk wore

the rector's cast-off clothes and wigs, though for the latter his head was far too small. One morning, without intending anything ludicrous, says Sarah Wesley, the rector gave out a psalm, reading the following line:

Like to an owl in ivy bush—

This was sung according to the custom of "a line at a time," and the clerk, peeping out of his large canonical wig, proceeded with the next line, and in the orthodox twang drawled out:

That rueful thing am I!

The congregation, struck with Clerk John's appearance, saw the odd coincidence, and, to his mortification, burst into a fit of laughter. The following is the version of the lines in Sternhold's Psalms of 1729:

And as an owl in desert is,  
Lo, I am such an one;  
I watch, and, as a sparrow on  
The housetop, am alone.

This was from the version of the Psalms so severely criticised by the rector, and banished by his sons from the song-worship of Methodism.

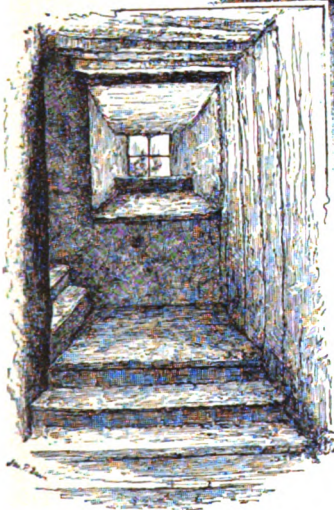
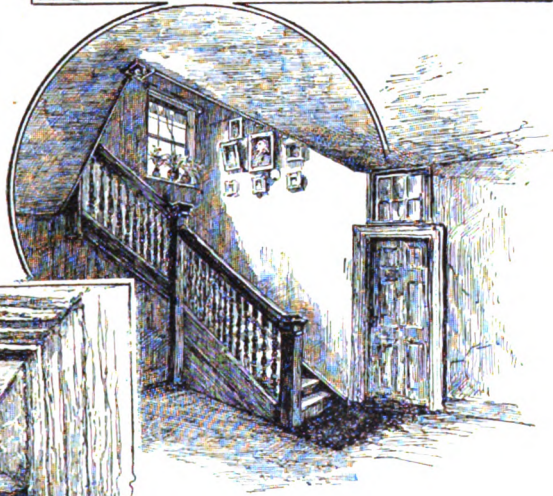
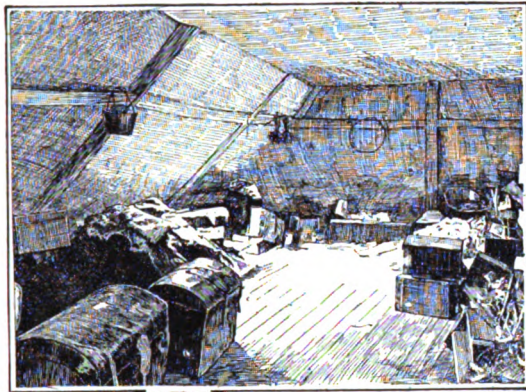
Mrs. Wesley was fond of telling how her eldest boy, Samuel, began to talk when he was four or five years old. The cat was his pet, and he was in the habit of hiding in quiet corners with it to enjoy his silent play. One day his mother grew anxious, and searched the house and garden for him, calling his name. At last she heard a voice from under the table, saying, "Here am I, mother!" and, stooping down, she saw Sammy and his cat. From that time, to his mother's delight, he spoke as well as the other children.

She gives a characteristic glimpse of her boy John in a letter to her husband in London in 1712: "Jack has bore his disease bravely, like a man, and indeed like a Christian, without any complaint, though he seemed angry at the small pox when they were sore, as we guessed by his looking sourly at them, for he never said anything." When John was a child his father once said to him: "Child, you think to carry everything by dint of argument; but you will find how very little is ever done in the world by close reason." "Very little indeed," was John's comment in after years.

Mrs. Wesley trained the children to refuse food between meals, and little John's characteristic and polite reply to all kindly offers was, "I thank you; I will think of it!" "One pictures John Wesley at Epworth," wrote the present rector, Dr. Overton, "as a grave, sedate child, always wanting to know the reason of everything, one of a group of remarkable children. of whom his sister Martha was most like him in appearance and character; each of them with a strong individuality and a very high spirit, but all well kept in hand by their admirable mother, all precise and rather formal, after the manner of their day, in their language and habits." Martha married a clergyman named Hall, who fell into gross sin and treated his wife cruelly. Upon his deathbed he repented and said, "I have injured an angel! an angel that never reproached me." This was the Mrs. Hall who discussed theological and philosophical questions with Dr. Johnson, as recorded by Boswell.

The story of "the Epworth ghost" must have at least a word. "Old Jeffrey," as the children named him, did not begin his antics until John had left Epworth for the Charterhouse School. Strange noises were heard at night and during family prayers—knocks and groans and rattling

doors and pans; trenchers danced and dogs howled. Clergymen and others urged Wesley to leave the "haunted" parsonage, but he replied, "No; let the devil flee from *me*, I will not flee from *him*." On the general question of apparitions Mrs. Wesley guardedly wrote



GLIMPSES OF THE EPWORTH RECTORY.

Staircase to the haunted chamber.—The main staircase and hallway.—"Jeffery" haunted chamber.

to "Dear Jacky" in 1719: "I do not doubt the fact, but I cannot understand why these apparitions are permitted. If they

DRAWN BY J. P. DAVIS.

FROM PHOTOS.



were allowed to speak to us, and we had strength to bear such converse—if they had commission to inform us of anything relating to their invisible world that would be of any use to us in this—if they would instruct us how to avoid danger, or put us in a way of being wiser and better, there would be sense in it; but to appear for no end that we know of, unless to frighten people almost out of their wits, seems altogether unreasonable.” There is much of Susanna Wesley’s characteristic common sense in these words. The latest biographer of Mrs. Wesley—Eliza Clarke, 1886—states that about a hundred years after the Wesleys had left Epworth strange noises were heard in the rectory, and the incumbent, not being able to trace or account for them, went away with his family and resided abroad for some time. The present rector is of the opinion that “‘Old Jeffrey’ is, to some extent, answerable for a marked feature in Wesley’s character—his love of the marvelous and his intense belief in the reality of apparitions and of witchcraft.”

We may not take leave of the Epworth rectory as it was in the youth of the Wesleys without a glance at the modern one, in its bright and cheerful dress.

This rectory had cost Samuel Wesley £400, a marvel of cheapness, which can be accounted for in no other way than that the building material of those days was very cheap, and that the bricklayers who wrought upon it were well paid at two shillings a day and the carpenters at eighteen pence. It is described by a contributor to the *Saturday Review* as “a long brick building with a high-pitched tile roof rising from a bold projecting cornice, and is an excellent specimen of the sterling unpretentious architecture of the day; a quiet, genuine Queen Anne house, very unlike the crude heaps of incongruities, devoid of repose, which now pass by that name.

The garden,\* with its smooth lawn and long straight walks bordered with old-fashioned flowers, with hedges of sweet peas, foxgloves, sweet williams, and snapdragons, beds of odoriferous pinks, and a wealth of roses, is a delicious pleasure ground, in the true old English sense of the word, the rival of which one might go far to find." When the rectory was enlarged in 1883 some charred timbers of the older building were found.

The writer of this work, in a visit to Epworth in 1885, attended the morning service in the venerable church where Samuel Wesley so long ministered. The rector, then and since, was John H. Overton, D.D. He was very courteous in showing his visitor the church records of the days of Samuel Wesley. This singular fact was observed: Samuel Wesley made his entries on the records in the Latin language, while his predecessors and successors used the English. All the marriages, for example, were recorded as *conjugati*. Dr. Overton was very kind in conducting me throughout the modern rectory. What a beautiful entrance hall, and what a spacious staircase! Of course the ghost fable had to come in for a question. To the inquiry how the noises came about, the rector answered that the story beneath the roof, which was one long, great rambling room, was floored with a kind of concrete which, on being trodden, made a short metallic sound throughout the upper part of the house. He attributed the entire fancy to the fact of the unfriendliness of the townspeople, who might throw missiles and make noises, to which by a vivid imagination could be attributed a preternatural origin. On leaving the rectory Dr. Overton was good enough to give me as a souvenir a fragment of a charred beam which had been found when the rectory was rebuilt and put in its modern and most attractive shape.

Just before we parted the doctor said, as nearly as I recall:

“You may be interested to know how I became rector of this venerable church. A vacancy having occurred, I was nominated for the position to Mr. Gladstone, then prime minister. Mr. Gladstone asked of his adviser:



DRAWN BY C. H. WARREN.

AFTER PHOTO.

WESLEYAN MEMORIAL CHURCH AND SCHOOLS, EPWORTH.

“‘Where was Mr. Overton educated?’

“‘At Oxford,’ was the reply.

“‘At which college?’

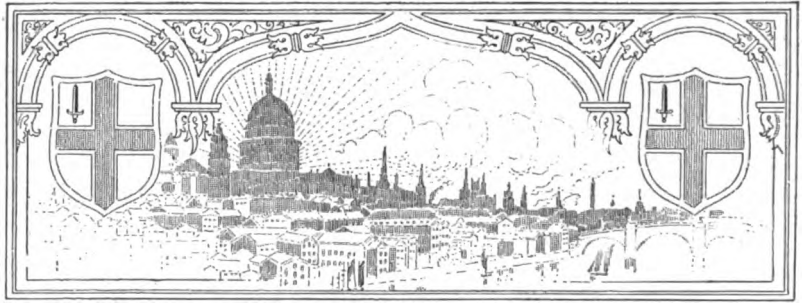
“‘At Lincoln College,’ was answered. ‘And not only that, but Mr. Overton was the occupant of the same room in which John Wesley lived when he was a fellow of Lincoln College.’

“‘Then,’ said Gladstone quickly, ‘let Mr. Overton follow on in the footsteps of John Wesley, and continue the work of Samuel Wesley in the Epworth church, and live in the old rectory.’”

In the preface to his *Life of Wesley*, in the *English Leaders of Religion* series, this present rector of Epworth and canon of Lincoln describes himself as "a native of the same county, a member of the same university, a priest of the same Church, a dweller in the same house, a worker in the same parish, a student for nearly twenty years of the Church life of the century in which John Wesley was so prominent a figure."

It is gratifying to know from recent testimony that "the Epworth of to-day is in every respect an improvement upon the Epworth of John Wesley's childhood. It has not increased its population, its market has well-nigh disappeared, its market cross—where Wesley preached when he became an itinerant evangelist—has gone to decay, its flax industry has been abandoned; but its inhabitants have, perhaps, never been more prosperous, thrifty, or religious than at this present. It is not intended to attach to the Wesleys the credit of improvements which have taken place in the material condition of the neighborhood—these are to be accounted for by a variety of causes; but in the increase of godliness, righteousness, and sobriety they being dead yet speak."

The Wesley Memorial Church, a beautiful structure reared by the English Wesleyans, can be seen from the old churchyard, and pilgrims from many lands now visit the quiet home of the Wesleys.



## CHAPTER XIV

### Leaving Home

THE SONS OF THE RECTORY.—THE BEST SCHOOLS IN THE KINGDOM.—  
A NOBLE PATRON.—THE SPECTATOR ON SCHOOLBOYS.—OFF FOR  
LONDON.

**A**S soon as the sons of the Wesleys were old enough to leave home arrangements were made for carrying on their education in the best schools that the kingdom afforded. Samuel went to Westminster School in 1704, then to Oxford University, returning to the old school as a teacher about ten years later, when his younger brother, John, was entering the Charterhouse. Charles, the youngest son, entered Westminster School in 1716. Thus for four years before John went up to Oxford the three brothers were in London together.

In a letter recently brought to light, the rector of Epworth, in attendance upon Convocation in London in May, 1711, writes of the good fortune which was in store for his two elder boys:

I believ 'twill be no unpleasing news to so good a Friend, that my Son is chosen from Westminster to Xtchurch, & the week after Whitsun-week I design to com to Oxford with him, & see him matriculated.

I've a younger son at home whom the Duke of Buckingham has this week writt down for his going into the Charterhouse as soon as he's of age: so that my time has not been all lost in London.

The younger son was John Wesley, who at the age of eight was thus assured a free scholarship in the famous school of the Charterhouse. The nobleman to whose patronage the lad was indebted was the lord chamberlain to Queen Anne.

In his time he was much flattered as a poet, though Dr. Johnson declares him to be "a writer that sometimes glimmers, but rarely shines, feebly laborious, and at the best but pretty." The literary duke had befriended the literary rector before, helping him out of his financial troubles in 1703, and receiving from him an account of the rescue of



AFTER GRAINGER'S ENGRAVING FROM THE PORTRAIT BY SIR GODFREY KNELLER.

SHEFFIELD, DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM.

The nobleman who nominated John Wesley to a scholarship at the Charterhouse.

“Jacky” from the rectory fire. A Latin memorandum in John's own hand records the dates of his admission to school and university opportunities: “*Joan. Westley ad nominat. ducis de Bucks admiss. in fundat. Carthus. 28 Jan. 1713-4. Ad Univ. 24 June 1720.*”

In the numbers of *The Spectator* which Rev. Samuel Wesley would doubtless bring with him from London after his three visits for Convocation there were articles upon the public school life of the time which would be read with lively interest by the elder members of the Epworth family. The strong and tender mother was surely touched by the description, in one day's issue of the single-sheet periodical, of the “armed pedagogues” and their doings: “Many a white

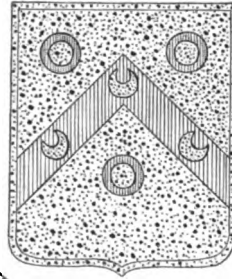
and tender hand, which the fond mother had passionately kissed a thousand times, have I seen whipped until it was covered with blood."

On the other hand, in the same number, there was a reassuring account of the "great tenderness" of other masters, such as Dr. Nicholas Brady, of psalmodic renown. And had they not heard that Richard Steele, the writer of some of these articles and the editor of others, had been a peculiarly troublesome lad at the school to which John was going? Did not Addison, another famous Charterhouse boy, often do his lessons for him? And was it to be wondered at that an idle, bound-breaking, reckless boy like Dick Steele, in spite of his cleverness, should get badly beaten? Then the rector would remember that "Isaac Barrow, strong, masculine, and noble," as he described him in his Letter to a Curate, had laid the foundation of his scholarship at this same school, and the mother of the Wesleys would recognize the good sense of Budgell's article in *The Spectator* of 1712: "A private education promises, in the first place, virtue and good breeding; a public school, manly assurance and an early knowledge of the ways of the world." Never had boys a nobler "private education" than the "plain living and high thinking" of the Epworth rectory had afforded the Wesleys. When John went to the Charterhouse he suffered less from the hardships of school life than many who had been reared in the lap of luxury. Already he was "a diligent and successful scholar and a patient and forgiving boy, who had at home been inured, not indeed to oppression, but to hard living and scanty fare." Nevertheless, from the Epworth home to the cheerless Charterhouse must have been a trying experience even for a boy like John, who was not yet eleven years old.

Of his journey to London we have no account. He may

have left Epworth in the family "waggon" of which Mrs. Wesley afterward wrote; a long, light, narrow vehicle, suited to a country without roads. Nearly a hundred years later Dr. Adam Clarke, in describing his own homeward journey from Epworth, says: "We had no road for upward of forty miles, but traveled through fields of corn, wheat, rye, potatoes, barley, and turnips, often crushing them under our wheels. In all my journeys I never saw anything like this, but the driver assured us there was

no other road." After leaving these bypaths the boy Wesley probably mounted a London coach, from which he had his



THE ARMS OF THE CHARTERHOUSE SCHOOL.



DRAWN BY J. D. WOODWARD.

FROM AN OLD PRINT.

ENTRANCE TO THE CHARTERHOUSE.

first view of the city where his grandparents had lived, and where his uncle the surgeon, Matthew Wesley, was still living, near Temple Bar. His mother's sister, Elizabeth, the wife of John

Dunton, the bookseller, had died in 1697, and her eccentric husband's shop was at the Sign of the Raven, at the Bull



Head Court, not far from the Charterhouse. Earlier it had been in The Poultry.

As the coaches entered London the Charterhouse boys of Wesley's day were accustomed to climb the Coach Tree, at the northeast corner of the Under Green, to see them pass. Did any of the climbing boys note the slight figure of the future "ecclesiastical statesman" who was to bring new honor to their old school? A part of the Under Green has been built over, but there still remains on the eastern wall of the Upper Green a visible sign of the boyish interest in coaching in a large figure of a crown painted in white. Tradition says that this was painted as a sign for the boys to stop at when they played at coaches. Amid much horn-blowing the coaches rattled into the galleried courtyards of the inns, of which two or three only remain to revive in imagination the delights of travel in the days when railroads were not.



## CHAPTER XV

### A Charity Scholar at Charterhouse

THE FOUNDATION OF CHARTERHOUSE.—DRESS AND DISCIPLINE.—THE SCHOOL DONS.—“POOR BROTHERS.”—A LAD'S RELIGION.

THE school of the Charterhouse celebrated its one hundredth anniversary the year that little John Wesley came to live within its walls, but its buildings were of great antiquity. As early as 1372 they formed a part of a monastery of the Carthusians, or Grey Friars. Their high reputation for learning and religion did not save it from the “hammer of the monks” in the hands of Henry VIII. The monastery was dissolved and the bloody arm of the martyred prior was hung up over the entrance as a warning. “In Wesley's day the ancient gloomy cloisters were still there, brick built and grimy, with traditions of monks' cells, and a ghostlike smell, with an evil fame for small boys, and even large ones; for did not the prior and his monks lie buried in the spot known and dreaded as Middle Briars?” The property next passed to the Howards, and eventually was bought for £13,000 by Thomas Sutton, one of those merchant princes of the days of Elizabeth and James. He devoted his vast wealth to its endowment as a Protestant hospital—as almshouses for the aged and poor were then called—and a

grammar school. This school was opened in 1614; and thus it came to pass that on December 12, 1714, John Wesley heard the old school song sung for the hundredth time to its old melody:

Then blessed be the memory  
Of good old Thomas Sutton,  
Who gave us lodging—learning—  
And he gave us beef and mutton.

Young Wesley, a small, delicately formed boy, became, by virtue of Buckingham's bounty, one of forty-four boys on



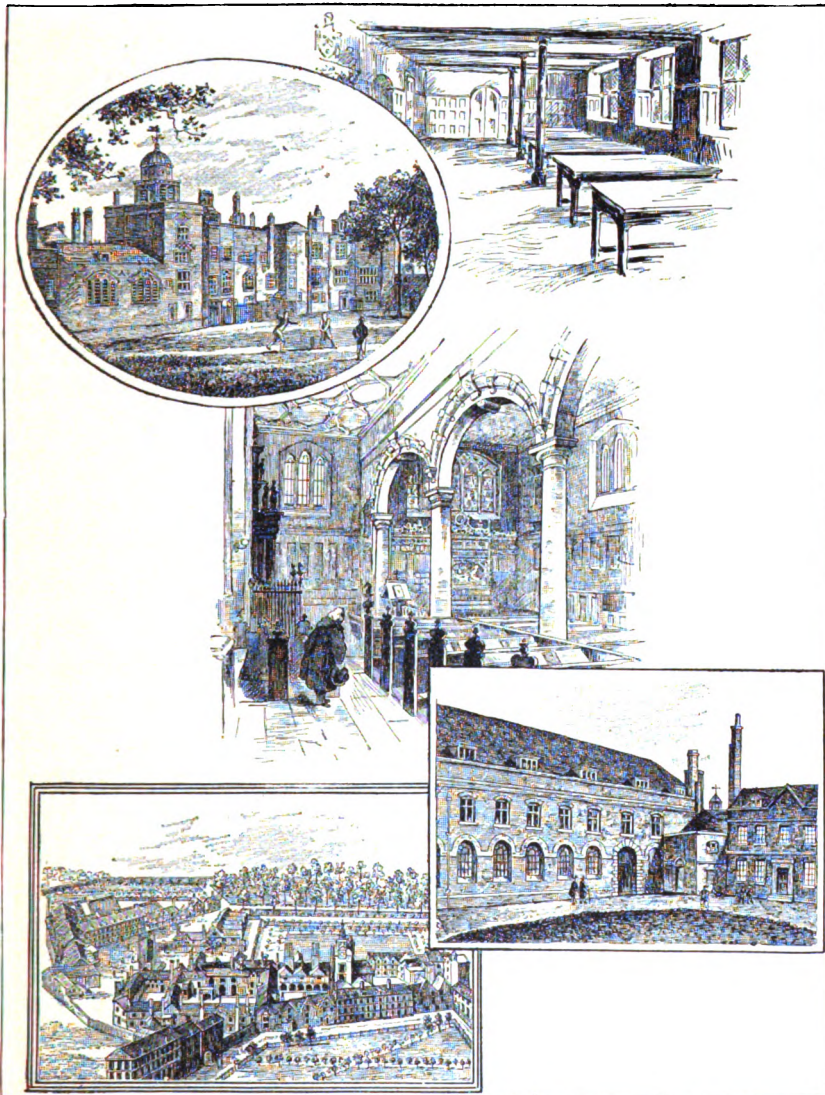
THE CLOISTERS OF THE CHARTER-HOUSE.

These were a relic of the ancient Carthusian monastery, on whose ruins the school was established.

“the foundation” who received a free education. Each of these beneficiaries was required to enter the school with “one new suit of apparel besides that he wears, two new shirts, three new pairs of stockings, three new pairs of shoes, and books for the form he is to be in, or money to buy them.” John wore a broadcloth gown lined with baize, breeches of dark blue stuff, shirt and stockings, and stout shoes known as “gowsers.” He

had his meals in the gownboys' dining hall, a low-ceiled room adorned by a carved chimney-piece with the founder's arms sculptured above. Tradition says that it was the refectory of the lay brothers of the monastery.

Here in Wesley's day discipline was so lax that the boys of the higher form were suffered to rob the small boys of



DRAWN BY JOHN P. DAVIS.

FROM PRINTS.

**THE CHARTERHOUSE.**

The Upper Green—playground.      The boys' dining room.  
 The chapel in which Wesley worshiped as a boy.  
 Old view of the Charterhouse.      Schoolroom (the gownboys' dormitory above).



their portions of animal food, and Wesley himself says, "From ten to fourteen I had little but bread to eat, and not great plenty of that. I believe this was so far from hurting me that it laid the foundation of lasting health." Isaac Taylor says: "Wesley learned as a boy to suffer wrongfully with a cheerful patience, and to conform himself to cruel despotisms without acquiring either the slave's temper or the despot's." He faithfully obeyed his father's instructions to run round the green three times every morning, "and this," declares a recent writer in the Charterhouse School Magazine, "would amount to one mile, as we know to our cost, having repeatedly done it ourselves in exceedingly bad time." But it is in chapel "that one naturally thinks of the little gownboy in his black cloth gown and knee breeches, sitting in one of the rows of seats which may still be seen just in front of the founder's tomb; and close to his left, in a sort of glorified pepper box of strange construction, sat the great head master, Thomas Walker. A little further away, in the corner near the pulpit, sat, in a similar pepper box, Andrew Tooke, usher, or second master." With the exception of an additional bay on the north side, and a few minor alterations, the chapel still remains as when little John Wesley first saw it.

Dr. Thomas Walker, the schoolmaster of Wesley's day, had been a gownboy and usher. In his portrait he wears a full wig and silk stockings. In one hand he holds a copy of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and the other is gallantly laid upon his heart. He had already been head master for thirty-five years, and Richard Steele, Joseph Addison, the Bishops of Carlisle and Gloucester, and Davis, president of Queen's College, Cambridge, had been among his pupils. A memorial tablet in the chapel records his accurate knowledge of Hebrew, Greek and Latin, and his diligent discharge of his duties. Southey

says that Wesley's quietness, regularity and application made him a special favorite with Walker.

Andrew Tooke, the usher, or second master, whose virtues are also inscribed in the chapel, had held his office for nineteen years when Wesley entered. He was a Fellow of the Royal Society. Gresham professor of geometry, and the author



FROM THE COPPERPLATE BY C. H. JEENS.

“GOOD OLD THOMAS SUTTON.”

The founder of the Charterhouse School.

of *The Pantheon*, a summary of mythology which went through twenty-two editions. He also began school life as a gownboy, and succeeded Walker in the head mastership. Sarah Wesley, the daughter of Charles Wesley, in a letter to Adam Clarke, written from Marylebone in 1809, gives the true version of an anecdote about Tooke and John Wesley which was related to her by her father:

When John Wesley was at the Charterhouse, the schoolmaster, Mr. Tooke, missing all the little boys in the playground, supposed them by their quietness to be in some mischief. Searching, he found them all assembled in the schoolroom around my uncle, who was amusing them with instructive tales, to which they listened rather than follow their accustomed sports. The master expressed much approbation toward them and John Wesley, and he wished him to repeat this entertainment as often as he could obtain auditors and so well employ his time.

Sarah Wesley wrote this letter to confute a malicious version of the story by Nightingale, which represents Wesley as haranguing his schoolfellows from the writing desk and, when rebuked for associating with the smaller boys, replying, “Better to rule in hell than serve in heaven.”

The master of the Charterhouse, superintendent of school and hospital, was Thomas Burnet. He had successfully re-

sisted an attempt of James II to thrust a Roman Catholic on the foundation, fearlessly opposing the tyrannical Jeffreys at a meeting of the governors. He was famous throughout Europe for his learning. His portrait by his friend Godfrey Kneller is the finest in the Charterhouse. He appears as a handsome man, in a black gown, with short hair. He was seventy-nine years of age when little Wesley saw him, and lived only one year longer, dying in 1715. He was succeeded by King, "who always carried in his pocket a copy of the Imitation of Christ."

Eighty "decayed gentlemen," called "poor brothers," were originally provided for, though only forty-three now find shelter in the hospital. Thackeray, one of the most famous of old Charterhouse boys, has touchingly described the impression made upon him by the sight of these venerable men in the old chapel on Founder's Day:

Yonder sit some three-score old gentlemen pensioners of the hospital, listening to the prayers and the Psalms. You hear them coughing feebly in the twilight, the old reverend black gowns. Is Codd Ajax alive? you wonder; the Cistercian lads called these old gentlemen Codd—I know not wherefore—but is old Codd Ajax alive, I wonder? or Codd Soldier, or kind old Codd Gentleman, or has the grave closed over them? A plenty of candles light up this chapel, and this scene of age and youth and early memories and pompous death. How solemn the well-remembered prayers are, here uttered again in the place where in childhood we used to hear them! How beautiful and decorous the rite; how noble the ancient words of the supplications which the priest utters, and to which generations of fresh children and troops of bygone seniors have cried Amen under those arches! The service for Founder's Day is a special one, one of the psalms selected being the 37th, and we hear—

"The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand. I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread."

What memories of his family history must have been awakened in the mind of the impressionable boy by the sight of these venerable men and the words of this pathetic psalm!



Did some echo of this service linger in his heart when in manhood he translated Paul Gerhardt's hymn of trust in God's "ceaseless love"?

Of his religious life as a schoolboy Wesley himself gives us a glimpse. At the time of his conversion, in 1738, after describing his early life at Epworth, he wrote: "The next



DRAWN BY W. B. DAVIS.

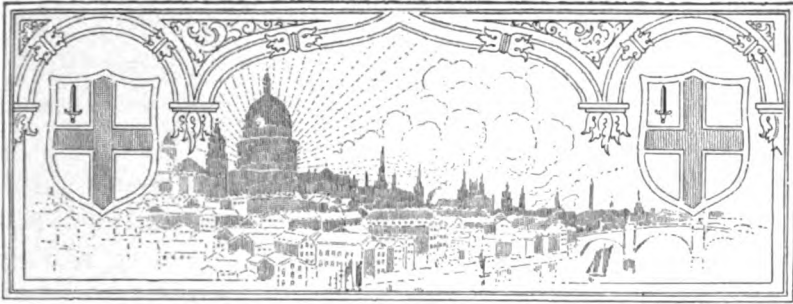
AFTER A PRINT.

## A GOWNBOY.

The costume worn by John Wesley as a boy in Charterhouse School.

six or seven years were spent at school, where, outward restraints being removed, I was much more negligent than before, even of outward duties, and almost continually guilty of outward sins, which I knew to be such, though they were not scandalous in the eye of the world. However, I still read the Scriptures and said my prayers morning and even-

ing, and what I now hoped to be saved by was, (1) not being so bad as other people; (2) having still a kindness for religion; and (3) reading the Bible, going to church, and saying my prayers." Defective as this was, Rigg justly considers Tyerman's judgment on the schoolboy, based on this confession, too severe—"John Wesley entered the Charterhouse a saint, and left it a sinner." It is clear that "Wesley never lost, even at the Charterhouse, a tender respect for religion, the fear of God, and the forms of Christian propriety. It was no slight evidence of at least the powerful restraining influence of religion that he passed through such an ordeal as his six or seven years' residence without contracting any taint of vice."



## CHAPTER XVI

### The London of Wesley's School Days

DEATH OF QUEEN ANNE.—A FUNERAL AND A RESURRECTION.—SACHEVERELL AND THE GOWNBOY.—HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS.—ADDISON'S HYMNS.—A FAMOUS CONTROVERSY.—A FATEFUL EXPLOSION.—A PRIZE SCHOLAR.—BACK TO THE OLD SCHOOL.—A MUSICAL LINK.

THE walls of the Charterhouse were not high enough to separate its community of eager boys from the life of the metropolis. News of great events in London must have reached the young John Wesley, stirring his thoughts or touching his sympathies. It was in the first year of his residence that the death of Queen Anne brought George I to the throne. The queen had granted the rector £43 after the first fire at the rectory, and to her he dedicated one edition of his *History of the Old and New Testaments*. Her death suspended the iniquitous Schism Act, which placed the control of education in the hands of the Established Church. Such a law would have rendered impracticable the great development of Methodist schools and colleges. The new king adopted the opposite policy, of toleration for the Dissenters. The ministers of the three denominations in London waited on him to express their loyalty and joy. A hundred of the brethren crowded together before the king, who stood there, as described by Horace Walpole, "rather

good than august, with a dark tiewig, a plain coat, waist-coat, and breeches of snuff-colored cloth." Williams took the lead, he and the whole party being dressed in black cloaks, "according to the fashion of the court on that occasion." "Pray, sir," said a nobleman to Bradbury, "is this a funeral?" "Yes, my lord," he retorted; "it is the funeral of the Schism Bill and the resurrection of liberty."

The irrepressible Sacheverell reappeared on the scene in Wesley's school days. "No sooner," wrote a pamphleteer,



FROM AN OLD WOODCUT.

THE THREE FALSE FRIENDS.

Caricature of Dr. Sacheverell, writing under the inspiration of Satan and the pope, 1710.

"was the queen dead, and the king likely to come in peaceably, as he did, than the distinguished trumpeters of the town began to alarm people with the fear of Church peril. Since his majesty's arrival

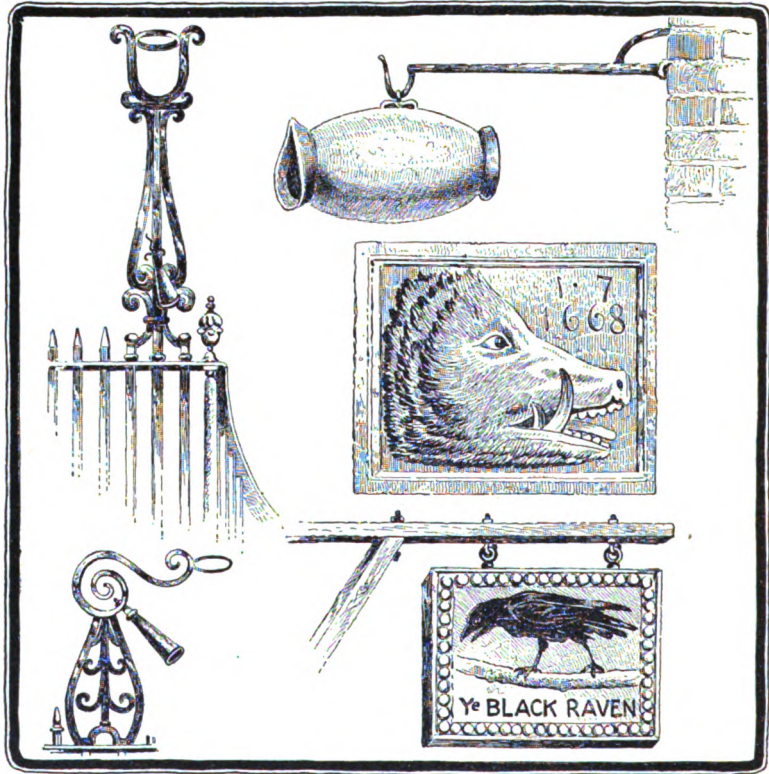
Sacheverell made an harangue that the king was not in the interests of our religion. The press is hard at work to beat a new alarm and fright the rabble into mutiny." There were riots in London and Oxford. Within the walls of the Charterhouse the boys would hear the shouts of the mob and the voices of the ballad singers droning out such stanzas as this:

See how they pull down meetings  
 To plunder, rob, and steal;  
 To raise the mob in riots,  
 And teach them to rebel.  
 O! to Tyburn let them go!

Toward the close of his school days Wesley had occasion to visit Sacheverell, who still held the living of St. Andrew's. The boy's early environment must have saturated his mind with Tory and High Church ideas, but his regard for one of their chief exponents received a rude shock when he visited the turbulent and pompous clergyman. "I remember," says Alexander Knox, "Mr. Wesley told us that his father was the person who composed the well-known speech delivered by Dr. Sacheverell at the close of his trial; and on this ground, when he, Mr. John Wesley, was about to be entered at Oxford, his father, knowing that the doctor had a strong interest in the college for which his son was intended, desired him to call on the doctor in his way to get letters of recommendation. 'When I was introduced,' said Mr. Wesley, 'I found him alone, as tall as a maypole and as fine as an archbishop. I was a little fellow.' He said, 'You are too young to go to the university; you cannot know Greek and Latin yet. Go back to school.' I looked at him as David looked at Goliath, and despised him in my heart. I thought, 'If I do not know Greek and Latin better than you, I ought to go back to school indeed.' I left him, and neither entreaties nor commands could have again brought me back to him."

As John Wesley passed through the streets to spend his holidays with his brother Samuel at Westminster he must have gazed with interest on the great Cathedral of St. Paul's, which had only recently been rebuilt. The population of London was about a sixth part of what it now is. Hackney, Newington, Marylebone, Islington, Chelsea, and Kensington were still rural villages. The old streets were very narrow, and the upper stories projected far over the shops and stalls below. The houses were not numbered, but were known by signs, such as John Dunton's "Black Raven," "The Boar's

Head," and "The Leather Bottle," which made a most picturesque confusion for the eye. There was no pavement. Cartmen fought with hackney coachmen; sedan chairmen drove the foot passengers off the railed-in way, and the foot



DRAWN BY P. E. FLINTOFF.

**BITS FROM EIGHTEENTH CENTURY LONDON.**

Link racks and extinguishers, and street signs. The "Black Raven" was John Dunton's signboard.

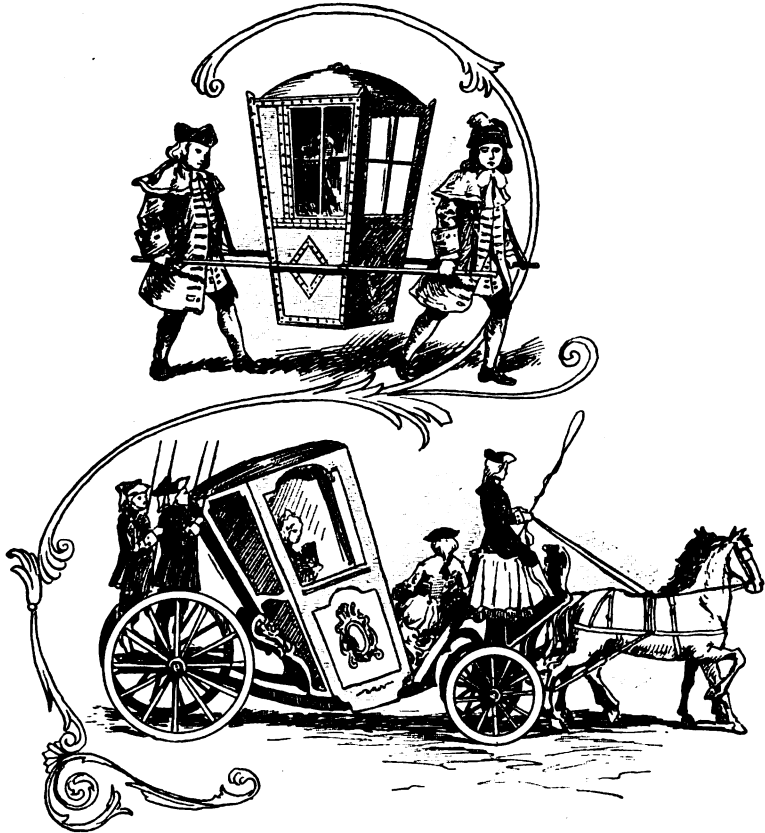
passengers themselves struggled for the honor of the wall. The extinguishers, used to put out the torches of the link boys, and the iron frames for the oil lamps still remain on some of the houses near Chesterfield Street, where Charles Wesley lived in later years.

The coffeehouses were the chief social institution. At Smith's coffeehouse, Stockmarket, Samuel Wesley and his colleagues of the Athenian Society used to meet. Dick's coffeehouse still stands, but "Button's" has been pulled down. As young Wesley passed by these he might have caught a glimpse of those famous old Charterhouse boys, Steele and Addison. Just before John was at the school Addison's hymns, "When all thy mercies, O my God" and "The spacious firmament on high," appeared in *The Spectator* and must have been read with pride by the Charterhouse masters. More than twenty years after (1737) Wesley inserted them in his first Hymn Book, and thus introduced them into the public worship of the churches. The great essayist died the year before Wesley left school. His body was laid in state in the Jerusalem Chamber, Westminster, and Samuel Wesley, Jr., who was then living in Dean's Yard, may have seen his friend Francis Atterbury pass from the deanery by torchlight to head the funeral procession at midnight.

The "Bangorian" controversy, over the divine rights of kings and priests, the apostolical succession of Conformist bishops and the limits of political and ecclesiastical authority, created tremendous excitement in Wesley's school days. It engaged the pens of at least fifty authors, and in a single month above seventy pamphlets were published. It is said that at one period even business on 'Change was interrupted by this strange agitation, and that it really caused some London tradesmen to close their shops. Whyte, in his lecture on William Law, says that Hoadley, Bishop of Bangor, "occupied, roughly speaking, some such position, theologically and ecclesiastically, as that which Bishop Hampden, Archbishop Whately, Dean Stanley, and Dr. Hatch occupied in the Church of England of their day." Among Hoadley's most

brilliant opponents was William Law, whose devotional writings so deeply influenced the Wesleys. The controversy resulted in the suspension of Convocation in 1717, which did not meet again for a hundred and thirty-five years.

Of the Jacobite rebellion of 1715; of the beginnings of



DRAWN BY W. B. DAVIS.

FROM OLD PRINTS.

SEDAN CHAIR AND CHARIOT, EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

government by party in Parliament; of the political plotting of Bishop Atterbury; of the disastrous financial "South Sea Bubble," which burst during his last year at school, young

Wesley would hear rumors and conversation in his brother's home at Westminster.

One minor incident, which is linked in a singular way with the history of Methodism, ought not to be omitted. While John and Charles Wesley were at school an explosion took place which John must have heard, for the Charterhouse was not many minutes' walk from the place where it occurred, and which Charles might have heard, as there were few buildings to break the sound, save the quiet hamlet of Charing, between the city proper and Westminster. As the building at which the explosion occurred became, twenty-three years afterward, the first Methodist chapel, the account which appeared in Newsletter of May 12, 1716, has for us a more than ordinary interest:

On Thursday night last, at a quarter past nine, as they were casting three pieces of cannon of an extraordinary size, at Mr. Bayley's, a founder on Windmill Hill, soon after the second cannon was poured into the mould, the same burst (occasioned by some small damp), whereby Mr. Hill, one of the clerks belonging to the Ordnance, was so mangled that he died yesterday morning between three and four o'clock. Mr. Whiteman, who keeps a public-house hard by, and about ten or twelve more being present at this sad accident, were so dreadfully wounded that their lives are despaired of. Several persons of distinction were expected there on this occasion, but happily they did not come.

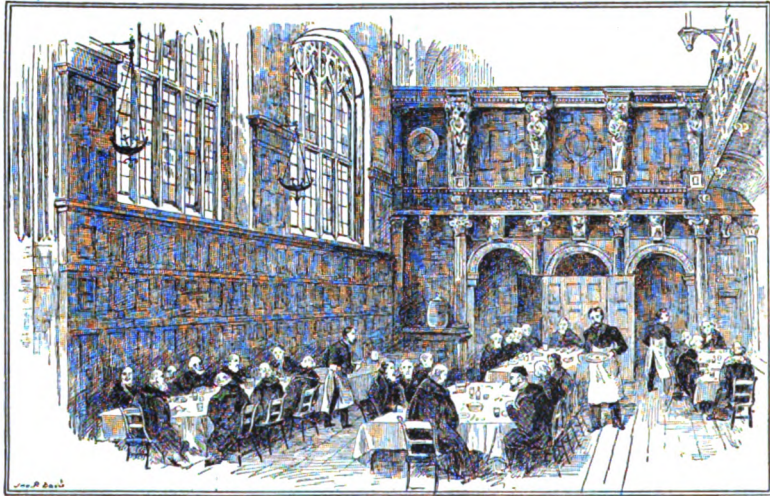
That explosion was followed by important consequences to the nation and the Church. Vulcan migrated with his molds and sledges from Windmill Hill, Moorfields, to Woolwich, and created the Royal Arsenal. The shattered foundry, after nearly a quarter of a century's abandonment to uselessness and silence, became the mother church of the whole family of Methodist churches in both hemispheres, on all continents and on many a distant island of the sea.

In 1720 John Wesley left the Charterhouse for Christ Church College, Oxford, taking with him a school "exhibi-



tion" prize of £40 a year. A letter has recently been brought to light, and published in the Charterhouse Magazine, which was written by John Wesley in 1721 to the treasurer of the Charterhouse, concerning a mistake in the payment of this annuity. It is reproduced on the next page.

Wesley looked back upon his years at school "not only without bitterness, but with pleasure." He would have



DRAWN BY J. P. DAVIS.

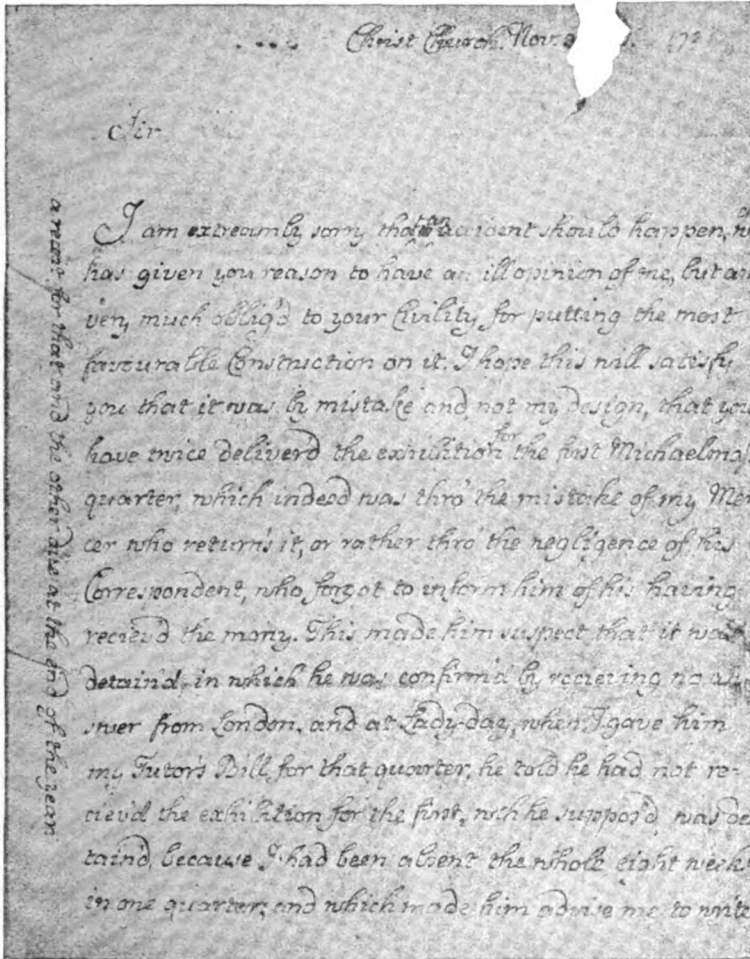
FROM A PRINT.

THE DINING HALL, CHARTERHOUSE.

Where the Founder's Day dinner was given.

agreed with the later Carthusian, Thackeray, that the pupils educated there "love to revisit it, and the oldest of us grow young again for an hour or two as we come back into those scenes of our boyhood." His brother Samuel was still usher at Westminster when John revisited the Charterhouse as one of the stewards for Founder's Day, 1727, with Dr. King, the head master, and Mr. Vincent, "who paid the bills." The bill of fare, which has been preserved, speaks well for the bounty of the stewards. The chapel was "lighted, and founder's

tomb, with its grotesque carvings, monsters and heraldries, darkled and shone with the most wonderful shadows and



I. FACSIMILE OF THE LETTER WRITTEN BY JOHN WESLEY, WHEN AN OXFORD STUDENT, TO THE TREASURER OF THE CHARTERHOUSE.

lights." We get an interesting record of one of Wesley's later visits in his Journal (1757): "Aug. 8th. I took a walk

in the Charterhouse. I wondered that all the squares and buildings, and especially the schoolboys, looked so little.

This five pounds if you please shall be deducted at Christmas, or if that does not suit with your Convenience shall be returned as soon as possible.

I am  
 Your obliged & humble servant  
 John Wesley.

For  
 Mr Esqr Treasurer of  
 The Charter-house  
 London.

II. SECOND PAGE AND COVER OF THE LETTER GIVEN ON PAGE 139.

But this is easily accounted for. I was little myself when I was at school, and measured all about me by myself. Ac-

The system of the Account after 1778  
 Paid at his banking money to the 12th 4:0:0  
 under when to him 50  
 Paid Mr West 10 shill for Mr. Dimes 54:0:0  
 Paid 100 Shill of Rent at 25 9<sup>d</sup> 24:7:6  
 Paid for 5 box 30 port to with at 12<sup>d</sup> 4:10:0  
 Paid Mr. D.M. 2:18:0  
 Paid Mr. D.M. 2 shill after show 0:5:0  
 Amount presented Mr. Cooke with Mr. Todd 0:7:5  
 Paid Mr. Murrill 10 shill for a Grand Jury 12:12:0  
 Shill 2 shill 1:8:0  
 Paid Mr. Dimes Mr. Carpenter 30<sup>d</sup> 85:4:0  
 from Henry (aged) Kid 12 shill sent him sent 1:0:0  
 to him at Mr. Todd.  
 84<sup>d</sup> 9 shill sent to Dimes.

Dec 12 1727  
 Church Dr King Master of the Charterhouse  
 Mr John Wesley  
 Mr Robt Wrenn  
 Mr Edward Dagle  
 Drucker Mr Stoney read on account of  
 Mr Stuckbald's indisposition.  
 First meeting at the Green Church  
 in Exchange Alley 27. Nov.  
 To Mrs. Taylor 20 shill 1:10:0  
 The R. R. provided by the Church for  
 present and for future such was  
 deposited in Mr Green's hand.  
 Second meeting Monday 28th Dec  
 To Mrs. Taylor 20 shill 2:10:0

I. FACSIMILE OF THE ACCOUNTS OF THE FOUNDER'S DAY DINNER.  
 Held Dec. 12, 1727, at the Charterhouse. John Wesley was a steward.



cordingly the upper boys . . . seemed to me very big and tall, quite contrary to what they appear now, when I am taller and bigger than them."

Another link with the Charterhouse is found in Wesley's friendship for Pepusch, the famous musician, "a profound student of the ancient Greek modes and systems," who also advanced English love of music by adapting old national and popular airs to modern words. After his wife's death he left his sumptuous house and took the post of organist at the Charterhouse. Wesley records several visits to him. "Mrs. Rich carried me to Dr. Pepusch, whose music entertained us much, and his conversation more." Mrs. Rich, who had been converted under Charles Wesley's preaching, was the wife of the proprietor of Covent Garden Theater. The organist's room is near the governor's room, and is a little paneled chamber with a large window at one end looking into the Master's Court. Over the fireplace to-day is a little portrait of Pepusch himself. It was here, no doubt, that the two Wesleys sat and listened to the theories of the great doctor, "who knew," said John, "more about the music of the ancients than any man in Europe." Contact with the first musicians of their day, including not only Pepusch but the greater master, Handel, must have done much to form the musical taste of the two brothers, who were the great leaders of a modern reform in the music for worship in the churches.

To appreciate the astounding energy of the Wesleys in sacred psalmody, and their numerous publications of hymns, often accompanied with music, through all their public career, one must recognize the impulse which they received from this early acquaintanceship with a master.



## CHAPTER XVII

### *Samuel Wesley, Jr., and Charles Wesley*

SAMUEL, JR., AT WESTMINSTER.—THE YOUNG SCHOOLMASTER.—HIS PHILANTHROPY.—AN EXPENSIVE ACQUAINTANCE.—IN THE LITERARY SET.—CHARLES WESLEY AT WESTMINSTER.—THE CAPTAIN OF THE SCHOOL.—“A FAIR ESCAPE” FROM A FORTUNE.

**S**AMUEL WESLEY, the eldest of the three brothers, left Epworth when he was fourteen years of age, and entered the famous Westminster School ten years before John came to the Charterhouse. His educational progress has already been noted. His mother wrote to him some of those characteristic letters which reveal her own saintly spirit and sound judgment and the principles which guided her sons in their lives of methodical and philanthropic labor. Here is one: “Begin and end the day with Him who is the Alpha and the Omega, and if you really experience what it is to love God, you will redeem all the time you can for his more immediate service. I will tell you what rule I used to observe when I was in my father’s house and had as little, if not less, liberty than I have now. I used to allow myself as much time for recreation as I spent in private devotion; not that I always spent so much, but I gave myself leave to go so far and no farther. . . . In all things endeavor to act upon principle, and do not live like the rest of mankind, who pass

through the world like straws upon a river, which are carried which way the stream or wind drives them. Often put this question to yourself, Why do I do this or that? Why do I pray, read, study, or use devotion?—by which means you



FROM THE COPPERPLATE BY RIDLEY.

THE REV. SAMUEL WESLEY, JR.

The print was published after his death; the legend is,  
"late master of the grammar school at Tiverton,  
elder brother of the Rev. John Wesley."

will come to such a steadiness and consistency in your words and actions as becomes a reasonable creature and a good Christian."

In his letters to his mother Samuel refers to his visits to his grandmother, the widow of the first John Westley and niece of the great Thomas Fuller. A letter to his father,



written in Latin when he was twenty, tells of his work for Sprat, Bishop of Rochester and prebend of Westminster Abbey, which put a strain upon his patience. Bishop Sprat had been at college with his grandfather and had ordained his father as deacon. He selected Samuel to accompany him in his carriage to his country seat, to read to him classical authors and books upon science. He was succeeded in the see of Rochester by Francis Atterbury, Dean of Westminster, who became a staunch friend of Samuel Wesley, and whose fall and banishment, consequent upon his Jacobite intrigues, probably prevented Wesley from becoming head master of Westminster. About the time John entered the Charterhouse Samuel returned from his year's residence at Oxford to become usher at Westminster. At Oxford he took part in the great doctrinal controversy concerning the Trinity, with which Samuel Clarke and William Whiston were identified. The discussion began with the publication of Clarke's Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity, in 1712. Clarke's doctrine was Arian, "approaching near to the orthodox view, but falling below it." His great opponent was Waterland. Whiston, popularly known to-day as the translator of Josephus, went further than Clarke, and, although a clergyman, had considerable influence among the Nonconformists, among whom there was at this time a lamentable tendency to free thinking. Samuel Wesley published two discourses against Whiston, which are now unknown, and wrote a letter on the subject to Robert Nelson, the author of *The Fasts and Festivals of the English Church*.

These controversies of the pre-Methodist period did some good. They sifted to the bottom some of the greatest Christian truths, and proved the strength of them. But they also did grave harm. Conformists and Nonconformists alike bear witness that religion never made less progress than during

these prolonged discussions. The battle against Arianism and infidelity was well fought by the intellectual giants of the early part of the century, but, as Overton says, "its truths required not only to be defended, but to be applied to the heart and life," and this was to be the special work of the coming leaders of the evangelical revival.

About a year after John Wesley entered the Charterhouse Samuel married the daughter of the Rev. John Berry, who, as Vicar of Whatton, was the subject of one of his son-in-law's poems, *The Parish Priest*. John appears to have spent his holidays with his brother, who wrote to his father in 1719, "My brother Jack is with me, and a brave boy, learning Hebrew as fast as he can."

In the year after John left school Samuel Wesley, Jr., became one of the leaders in a movement of vast importance to London. It was largely through his personal labor that the first hospital for the sick, in London, supported by voluntary contributions, was founded in Petty France, Westminster. In his frequent walks through Petty France, now York Street, the poetical schoolmaster must have looked with much interest upon the house in which Milton had lived after he gave up his chambers in Whitehall Palace. Samuel Wesley's ecclesiastical views, however, were far from being Miltonic, but his high ecclesiasticism did not narrow his benevolence. In this respect he was a true son of Susanna Wesley. His personal charities were innumerable, and the great hospital system of London may be regarded as in no small degree a memorial of his philanthropy. A long document, dated 1720, hangs on the wall of the secretary's room in the modern Westminster Hospital, giving a full account of "a charitable proposal published in December last (1719) to set up an infirmary in Petty France, where the poor sick . . . are attended

by physicians, surgeons, apothecaries, and nurses, . . . and daily visited by the clergy." The humanitarian work of his elder brother must have enlisted the sympathy of John, who in after years opened the famous dispensary for the sick poor at West Street Chapel.

Among Samuel Wesley's friends at this time was Harley, Earl of Oxford, the founder of the Harleian collection of books and manuscripts in the British Museum. He was spending the close of a stormy political life in retirement, the friend of scholars and men of letters. Wesley found his visits to the earl too expensive. It was the custom of the day for the liveried servants to stand in a line in the hall as the guest departed, each man expecting a gratuity. At last honest Samuel, having been often fleeced, proposed a composition one day on retiring. Addressing the flunkeys in a body, he said, "My friends, I must make an agreement with you suited to my purse, and shall distribute"—naming a sum—"once a month, and no more." The servants grumbled; the earl heard of the incident, and he ordered the servants for the future to "stand back in their ranks when a gentleman retired, and to beg no more."

Lord Oxford had in his possession what was supposed to be the finest Arab horse in existence. Samuel Wesley, Sr., inserted a drawing of this horse in his book on Job. Pope and Swift were also friends of the Westminster master, and interested themselves, as their letters prove, in the circulation of his father's book. Pope at this time was one of the literary lions of fashionable London, and from the early profits of his translation of the Iliad purchased the famous villa and grounds at Twickenham which he occupied until his death. Swift was now Dean of St. Patrick's, at Dublin; worshiped by the generous, impulsive populace as their



**THREE LITERARY FRIENDS OF SAMUEL WESLEY, JR.**

**HARLEY.**

**POPE.**

**DRYDEN.**



champion, and carrying on a vigorous correspondence with his friends.

Samuel Wesley shared the poetical tastes common to his two brothers, and in 1736 published his *Poems on Several Occasions*. An example of his satire is found on the monument to Samuel Butler, the author of *Hudibras*, which was placed in Westminster Abbey in 1721. Adam Clarke printed the lines from Samuel Wesley's own manuscript :

While Butler, needy wretch, was yet alive,  
No purse-proud printer would a dinner give:  
See him, when starved to death and turned to dust,  
Presented with a monumental bust!  
The poet's fate is here in emblem shown:  
He asked for *bread*, and he received a *stone*.

Eight of Samuel Wesley's hymns are found in the Wesleyan Hymn Book. They "are not very noteworthy," says Canon Overton, "though two or three of them contain some verses which would have been quite worthy of his brother Charles." Two of them are included in the Methodist Hymnal (New York, 1878); namely, No. 75, "Easter Sunday," which closes with these fine lines :

'Twas great to speak a world from naught,  
'Twas greater to redeem;

and number 977, beginning:

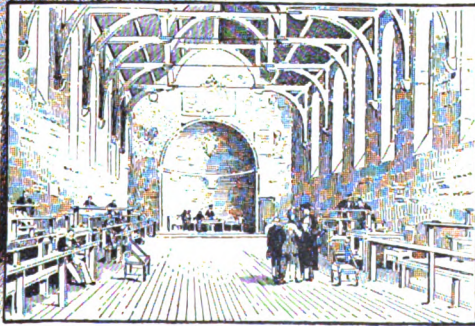
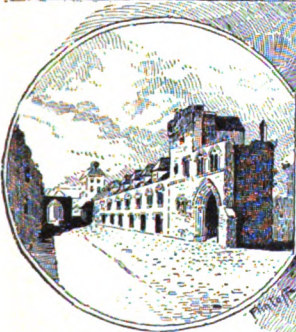
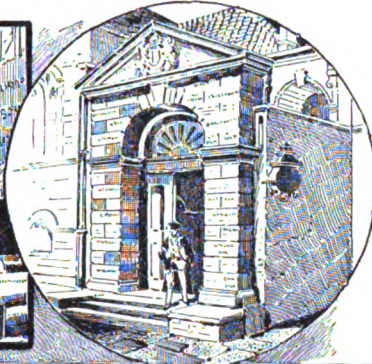
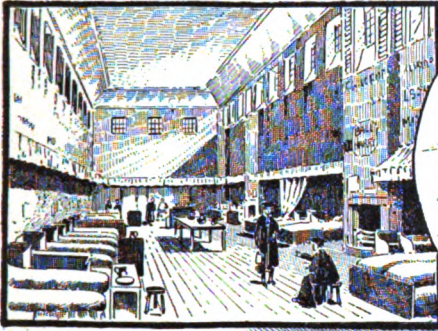
The morning flowers display their sweets.

Charles Wesley, the coming poet of the evangelical revival, went to Westminster School in 1716, two years after his brother John had entered the Charterhouse. His brother Samuel found a home for the little boy of nine, and defrayed the expenses of his education until he won a place as king's scholar, in 1721, when his board and schooling became free. A few years later we find him captain of the school, and so

becoming the link between the masters and the four hundred boys. The old dormitory, which was built in 1380 as the granary of St. Peter's Monastery, was still standing, but it was in a ruinous condition, and Charles must have watched the building of a new one with all a schoolboy's interest. The great schoolroom, formerly part of the ancient dormitory of the Benedictines, with its fine old chestnut roof of the thirteenth century, is a splendid room, and remains much the same as in Wesley's day. Some of the old benches have been preserved, and on one of them is the name of John Dryden, probably cut by the poet himself. Westminster has been particularly rich in poets, and Charles Wesley's best work as a sacred lyrical poet was to bring new honor to the school which trained Ben Jonson, Cowley, Dryden, George Herbert, Cowper, and Southey.

"He was exceedingly sprightly and active," says Thomas Jackson, "very apt to learn, but arch and unlucky, though not ill-natured." He was famous among his schoolfellows for his skill in fighting, and he used his strength chivalrously. Two years after he came to Westminster a Scotch boy, William Murray, came from the grammar school at Perth. His strange dialect and the fact that his ancestors had favored the Pretender exposed him to much bullying. Charles Wesley became his champion, and fought many battles for him on the green within the cloisters. This Scotch lad afterward became Chief Justice of England and Earl of Mansfield. He remained a staunch friend of Charles, and often visited him in after years in Marylebone.

While he was at Westminster Charles had what his brother John afterward called "a fair escape" from a great fortune and estate. Garret Wesley, a wealthy Irish gentleman, wished to adopt him as his heir on condition that he should live with



DRAWN BY P. E. FLINTOFF.

FROM PRINTS.

VIEWS OF WESTMINSTER SCHOOL.

Dormitory built while Charles Wesley was in school.

The school door.

Westminster School—Little Dean's Yard.

The old dormitory in Charles Wesley's day.

The great schoolroom.





him. Charles consulted his father, who left him free to make his choice. When he declined the offer the position of heir was offered to Mr. Richard Colley, a more distant kinsman, on condition that he should adopt the Wesley name and arms. This he did, and in 1747 was created Baron Mornington. This baron was the grandfather of Arthur, Duke of Wellington. The second Lord Mornington, the father of the great duke, was a talented musician and a warm friend of Charles Wesley's sons, the eminent organists. And so it appears that the spiritual mission of Charles Wesley and the extension of the British Empire in India under Marquis Wellesley, the new song of the great revival in England and America and the deliverance of Europe from the grasp of Napoleon Bonaparte, were mysteriously connected with the choice of the schoolboy who was left to decide whether he would remain in England, with the prospect of poverty and labor before him, or go to Ireland to enjoy the luxuries and honor of wealth. Well does Thomas Jackson suggest that the boy “decided under the secret guidance of divine mercy, exercised not only toward him, but toward the world.”

After nine years at Westminster, where he laid a foundation of sound scholarship and formed many valuable friendships, Charles Wesley went up to Christ Church College, Oxford, a few months after his brother John had become fellow of Lincoln. Six years later Samuel Wesley also left London, to become head master of Blundell's School, Tiverton. We must now follow the two brothers to the university.



## CHAPTER XVIII

### Oxford Memories, Men, and Manners

LINKS WITH THE PAST.—TORIES AND WHIGS.—A RAMBLE WITH WESLEY IN OLD OXFORD.—STUDENTS WISE AND OTHERWISE.

**J**OHAN WESLEY came up from the Charterhouse School to Christ Church College of Oxford University in 1720, and Charles Wesley followed from Westminster six years later.

George I was king—the elderly little German gentleman who could hardly speak a word of English, whose manners were shy and morose, who had kept his wife prisoner in a castle for years, and who was dressed all in brown, even to his stockings. But he was a Protestant, and, as Thackeray says, “better than a king out of St. Germain’s, with the French king’s orders in his pocket and a swarm of Jesuits in his train.” That little George, however, was most unpopular in High Tory Oxford. Tom Hearne, the antiquary, was a type of the Jacobite Oxonian, and ran his head in danger by persistently calling George I the “Duke of Brunswick,” and the Whigs, his supporters, “that fanatical crew.” Not long before “a good part of the Presbyterian meetinghouse in Oxford was pulled down. The people ran up and down the streets crying: ‘King James III! The true king! No usurper!’ In the evening they pulled a good part of the Quakers’ and Anabaptists’ meetinghouses down.”

The small party of Whigs kept King George's birthday, but the Conservative undergraduates attacked their club, sallying forth from their Jacobite stronghold in Brazenose and driving the Whigs into Oriel. An Oriel man, firing out of his window, wounded a gownsman of Brazenose. The Tories, "under terror of this dangerous and unexpected resistance, retreated from Oriel." "Yet such was the academic strength of the Jacobites and Churchmen that a Freethinker or a 'Constitutioner' could scarcely take his degree." Thus it will be evident that when the Wesleys came to Oxford they found those political High Church and Jacobite principles dominant for which their father, the rector of Epworth, had fought so vigorously a few years before, and which he gradually surrendered. Their mother was a Jacobite High Churchwoman in politics to the last.

It was a June day when John Wesley entered Oxford, and the fine old city looked its best. "The flying machine," as the stagecoach was then called, rattled over streets

paved with small stones, with a gutter in the middle. There were no foot pavements then, and the dwelling houses were of the picturesque type still to be seen in Castle Street. The famous High Street at that time "had not its equal in the whole world," but it was not so clean as it is to-day. In the Pocket Companion for Oxford, 1747, it is said that the butcher market is held in the High Street and "greatly diminishes the beauty of it;" and "another great nuisance is the dirt which people bring out of their houses and lay in the middle



THE ARMS OF CHRIST  
CHURCH COLLEGE,  
OXFORD.

Where John Wesley was educated.

of the streets in heaps every morning." Rogues abounded, as well as dirt. In a letter of 1724 Wesley tells his mother that a gentleman he knew was standing at the door of a coffee house one evening, about seven; when he turned round his cap and wig were snatched off his head, and though he followed the thief to a considerable distance, he was unable to recover them. "I am pretty safe from such gentlemen," he adds, "for unless they carry me away, carcass and all, they would have but a poor purchase."

As Wesley walked up the corn market, through the ancient city gate called "Bocardo," once the prison of Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer, he was solicited to put a dole in the hat let down by a string from the window overhead by the imprisoned debtors. As he found time to survey the city he felt the spell of its architecture and history, and when he was eighty years of age he wrote in his Journal of the surpassing beauty of its buildings, "The Parks, Magdalen Water-walks, Christ Church Meadow," and "The White Walk." In the impression which it makes upon those who first visit it Oxford, perhaps, can only be compared with Washington and Edinburgh. "The imposing streets," says Frederick Arnold, "of great breadth and noble frontage, the magnificent public buildings, the stately libraries and halls, the cathedral-like chapels, the armorial gateways, the smooth verdant lawns, the embattled walls, the time-worn towers, the wilderness of spires and pinnacles, the echoing cloisters, the embowered walks, create an impression, which familiarity only deepens, of beauty and wonder." Well did a leading speaker in a famous House of Commons debate, dwelling on the external beauty, the great history, and the glorious associations of Oxford, say that he did not envy the temper and sentiments of the man who could walk unmoved among the

memories of the illustrious dead of the university, and without emotion pass

Through the same gateways, sleep where they have slept,  
Wake where they waked, range that enclosure old—  
That garden of great intellects.

When Wesley entered Oxford it had reached the most inglorious epoch of its academic history. "As a national institution, in the true sense of the phrase, the university had practically ceased to exist." "Once open to all Christendom," says Brodrick, "it had become narrowed into an exclusively 'Church of England,' and thus sectarian, institution." "One fact, however," writes Stedman, a fellow of All Souls, "redeems the history from insignificance and reasserts the ancient importance of Oxford. That fact is the Wesleyan movement. Whitefield and the Wesleys were all Oxford men; the religious revolution of which they were the leaders had its origin in Oxford. And rightly, for the traditions of Oxford were the traditions of an academic Iona. In the fourteenth century the poor preachers of Wyclif had gone forth from Oxford to work through the country. In the sixteenth century the followers of Erasmus had from Oxford called men to the unnatural toils of unselfish reformation. And in the eighteenth it is once more from Oxford that a new Church movement makes its influence felt through the length and breadth of the land."

When Wesley came to Oxford he found undergraduate manners very rough, but neither he nor his brother joined in the more dissolute orgies of the students. Southey quotes from a diarist of 1746, who asks: "What learning can they have who are destitute of all principles of civil behavior? . . . In this wicked place the scholars are the rudest, the most giddy, and unruly rabble, and most mischievous." One night

in every year a big fire burned in the center of Balliol Hall, and it is said that all the world was welcome to a feast of ale and bread and cheese.

But this form of "barbaric hospitality," where every guest "paid his shot" by singing a song or telling a story, was not of necessity a drunken revel, and was a common enough English custom at that time. Andrew Lang has quoted from



FROM PHOTO.

THE FRONT OF CHRIST CHURCH COLLEGE, OXFORD.

The college of Samuel, Jr., John, and Charles Wesley.

an old periodical of 1726—the very year Charles Wesley entered Christ Church—in which there is a sketch of the Oxford freshman coming up from the public school in what he conceived to be gorgeous attire: "I observe that you no sooner shake off the authority of the birch, but you affect to distinguish yourselves from your dirty schoolfellows by a new drugget, a pair of prim ruffles, a new bob-wig, and a brazen-hilted sword." As soon as they arrived in Oxford these youths were hospitably received "amongst a parcel of

honest, merry fellows, who think themselves obliged, in honor and common civility, to make you *damnable drunk*, and carry you, as they call it, a CORPSE to bed." Then the freshman must declare his views and see that he is in the fashion; "and let your declarations be that you are a Churchman and that you believe as the Church believes. For instance, you have subscribed the Thirty-nine Articles, but never venture to explain the sense in which you subscribed them, because there are various senses—so many, indeed, that scarce two men understand them in the same, and no *true Churchman* in that which the words bear, and in that which they were written!"

"Terræ Filius," who writes this satire, corroborates the diarist's reports about the bad manners of the undergraduates, and "lashes the dons for covetousness, greed, dissipation, rudeness, and stupidity." That there were exceptions to this style of living among students and dons, especially at Lincoln College, is very certain; but that rough and dissipated manners and disgraceful idleness generally prevailed, and that the strong denunciations in the sermons of the Wesleys were warranted, will be increasingly evident **when** we come to the later testimonies of Johnson, Gibbon, Lord Eldon, and many others, who were at Oxford during this century.

With what interest the wide-awake young Wesley must have looked upon the colleges of his ancestors! At one of them his great-grandfather Bartholomew had studied divinity and physic. At New Inn Hall his grandfather, the first

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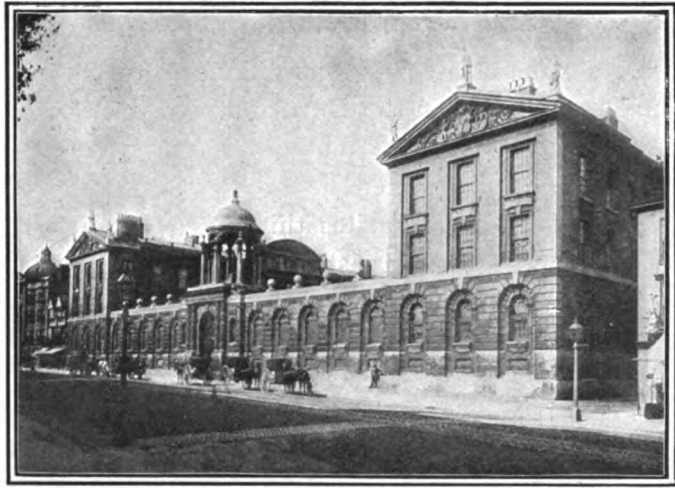


ARMS OF QUEEN'S COLLEGE, OXFORD.

The college of Samuel Annesley.



John Westley, had taken his degrees. At Queen's College, associated with John Wyclif and Addison, Wesley's maternal grandfather, Dr. Samuel Annesley, had graduated. The grand front, copied from the Luxembourg, in Paris, and the cupola, so conspicuous in our illustration, were not in existence when the Wesleys were in residence at Oxford, but



QUEEN'S COLLEGE, OXFORD.

FROM PHOTO.

Where Dr. Annesley, the Wesleys' maternal grandfather, was a student.

were added before they died. Their sturdy father, the rector of Epworth, had struggled with poverty and won a name for rare learning at Exeter College. The entrance has been rebuilt and many alterations made since then, but the old Palmer tower still stands at the east end of the beautiful Gothic chapel by Sir Gilbert Scott. But it was at Christ Church College that Samuel Wesley, Jr., had taken his degree, and hither came his brothers, whose Methodism was to arouse his fears and evoke his sarcastic criticism.

Fifty-eight years after he entered Christ Church Wesley

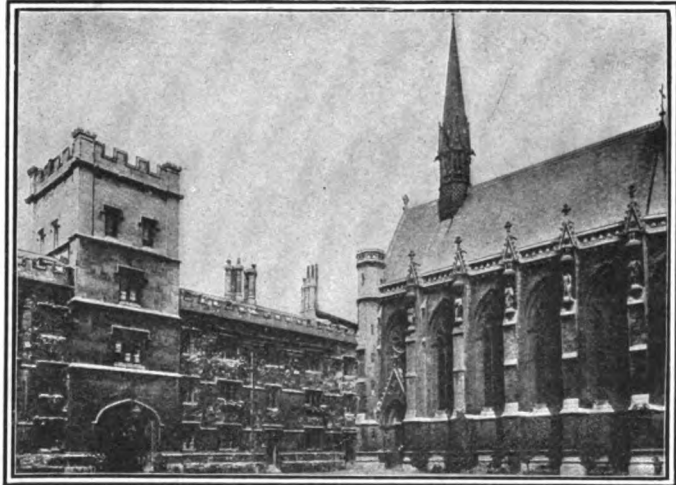
was visiting Oxford, and wrote in his Journal: "Having an hour to spare, I walked to Christ Church, for which I cannot but still retain a peculiar affection. What lovely mansions are these!" And five years later he "observed narrowly the hall," the gardens, and the walks, and declared that he had seen nothing on the Continent to compare with them. As a youth of seventeen he passed through the "Tom Gateway," which the fallen Wolsey left unfinished and which Wren completed. Milton once lived within hearing of the great bell which hung there, sounding the curfew and

Swinging slow with sullen roar.

Passing into the great quadrangle, finished forty-five years before, the coming evangelist of England faced the spot where once an ancient stone cross and rostrum stood, from which John Wyclif preached. The base of it is in the cathedral to-day. Passing up the stone staircase, with its roof of graceful fan tracery, he entered the splendid hall where Henry VIII was feasted, where the public disputations were held in the days of Edward VI, where Queen Elizabeth and her successors witnessed stage plays, and where Charles I held his Oxford Parliament. Down the staircase and beyond the old cloisters was the cathedral, more ancient than the college, linking its history with Saxon times. Its east end has been reconstructed and "improved" since Wesley's day. South of the cathedral is the thirteenth century Chapter House, and beyond the walls are the Meadow walks and avenue of elms where the young Methodists cemented many a friendship, and where Whitefield was to pass through one of his great spiritual experiences.

We have an interesting picture of Wesley as a Christ Church student from the pen of a contemporary, Badcock,

who describes him as "the very sensible and acute collegian, baffling every man by the subtleties of logic, and laughing at them for being so easily routed; a young fellow of the finest classical taste, of the most liberal and manly sentiments;" "gay and sprightly, with a turn for wit and humor." He



FROM PHOTO.  
EXETER COLLEGE CHAPEL AND QUADRANGLE, OXFORD.

Where Samuel Wesley, Sr., was a student.

wrote sparkling letters to his friends, and his brother Samuel received some stanzas after the Latin, composed as a college exercise, on "Chloe's favorite flea." In more sedate mood he sent verses on the 65th psalm to his father, who was pleased with them, and urged him not to bury his talent. His letters reveal a wealth of family affection and warm interest in all the little details of the home life at Epworth and at Wroote.

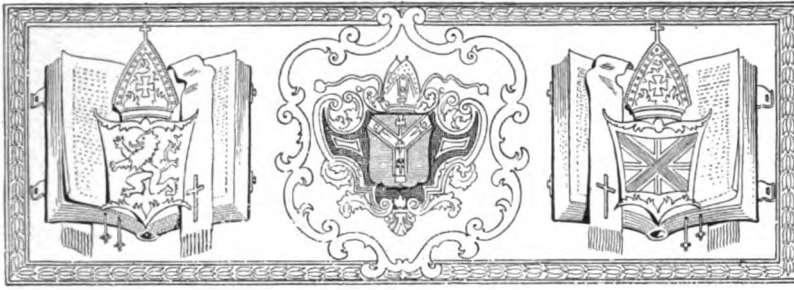
In 1724 the family removed to Wroote, the living which his father at this time held with Epworth. Begging for letters from his sisters, he says: "I should be glad to hear how

things go on at Wroote, which I now remember with more pleasure than Epworth; so true it is, at least to me, that *the persons, not the place, make home so pleasant.*" His sister Emilia was the eldest of the gifted sisters. "Her love for her mother was strong as death, and she regarded her brother John with a passionate fondness. Though so much younger than herself, she selected him as her most intimate companion, her counselor in difficulties, to whom 'her heart lay open at all times.'" Wesley was a most affectionate brother, and his letters show that he was the opposite of the "semistoical person, destitute of homely warmth and kindness," which some of his critics have supposed him to be.

For the first time Wesley became troubled about his health, and on one occasion, while walking in the country, he stopped violent bleeding of the nose by the somewhat drastic method of plunging into the river. He read Cheyne's Book of Health and Long Life, a plea for exercise and temperance. This book led Wesley to eat sparingly and drink water, a change which he considered to be one means of preserving his health. He had a constant struggle "to make ends meet," although there is no evidence to show that he was extravagant. "Dear Jack," wrote his mother, "be not discouraged; do your duty, keep close to your studies, and hope for better days. Perhaps, notwithstanding all, we shall pick up a few crumbs for you before the end of the year. Dear Jacky, I beseech Almighty God to bless thee." This letter was written just after he had taken his bachelor's degree, in 1724. Two years later he secured the Lincoln fellowship, which brought him financial relief.

We leave Wesley at Christ Church. His portrait, a replica of Romney's famous painting, hangs by the doorway of the great hall, in a line with the portraits of many other noted

students of Wolsey's College. The Wesley brothers hold no unworthy place in the list of eminent Christ Churchmen, which includes the names of Sir Philip Sydney, William Penn, John Locke, Lord Mansfield, the Duke of Wellington, the Earl of Shaftesbury, Canon Liddon, John Ruskin, and the evangelical Bishop of Liverpool, Dr. Ryle, who has written with much sympathy of The Evangelical Leaders of the Last Century.



## CHAPTER XIX

### A High Churchman's Quest for Truth and Mystic Light

FOLLOWING "WANDERING FIRES."—JOHN WESLEY CHOOSES HIS CAREER.  
—ADVICE FROM HOME.—A MOTHER'S LETTER.—BASAL BOOKS.—THE  
JOURNALS BEGUN.

TENNYSON, in *The Holy Grail*, tells how mysticism, not less than wrongdoing, broke up the Knightly Order of the Round Table. King Arthur touchingly laments the fulfillment of his own dark prophecy,

That most of them would follow wandering fires,  
Lost in the quagmire,

and,

Another,  
. . . leaving human wrongs to right themselves,  
Cares but to pass into the silent life.

The poet adds, almost with a touch of scorn, that, though such knights may be crowned "otherwise," they neither merit nor win coronation here.

The Christian knights of the eighteenth century narrowly escaped a similar ending to their holy quest. How many "human wrongs" would have remained unrighted, how different the religious history of England and America would have been, if the Wesleys had followed to the end the cold light of an ascetic high Anglicanism or the phosphorescent gleam of mysticism! Led by these wandering fires, they

might have been crowned in the spiritual city, but they could not have been, in their own age, master builders of the city of God upon earth.

When John Wesley was twenty-two years of age, in 1725, he came to a turning point in his life: he faced the question of his future work. The prospect of taking holy orders awakened his most serious thought, but he realized his spiritual unfitness for the work of the ministry. He had not fallen into flagrant sin; the aristocratic and expensive iniquity of some of the young noblemen at Christ Church was scarcely possible for him, even had he desired it. The letters of his mother carried always with them the aroma of her tender love and the purity of the Epworth life. He never lost his strong and touching love for his brothers and sisters. His love of learning, stimulated by his father's letters, was a safeguard from idleness.

But the divine fire burned low. John Wesley had become simply the gay collegian, a general favorite in society, a sparkling wit; maintaining a high repute for scholarship, but, according to his own account, comparatively indifferent to spiritual things. He writes: "I had not all this while so much as a notion of inward holiness; nay, went on habitually, and for the most part very contentedly, in some one or other known sin, though with some intermission and short struggles, especially before and after the holy communion, which I was obliged to receive thrice a year." Late one night he had a conversation with the porter of his college, which began with pleasantries, but ended with a point that deeply impressed the merry student.

"Go home and get another coat," said Wesley.

"This is the only coat I have in the world, and I thank God for it," replied the porter.

“Go home and get your supper, then,” said the young student.

“I have had nothing to-day but a drink of water, and I thank God for that,” rejoined the other.

“It is late, and you will be locked out, and then what will you have to thank God for?”

“I will thank him that I have the dry stones to lie upon.”

“John,” said Wesley, “you thank God when you have nothing to wear, nothing to eat, and no bed to lie upon; what else do you thank him for?”

“I thank him,” responded the good man, “that he has given me my life and being, a heart to love him, and a desire to serve him;” and the porter’s word and tone made Wesley feel that there was something in religion which he had not as yet found.

He wrote home on the subject of holy orders. His father’s reply was written with a trembling pen: “You see,” wrote the old man, “Time has shaken me by the hand, and Death is but a little way behind him. My eyes and heart are now almost all I have left, and I bless God for them.” He counseled delay, not liking “a callow clergyman,” and fearing, too, that his motive might be “as Eli’s son’s, to eat a piece of bread.” But his mother judged his character better, and marked the change in her son’s tone of thought. The rector came around—as he generally did—to the opinion of his wife. The latter writes: “Mr. Wesley differs from me, and would engage you, I believe, in critical learning, which, though incidentally of use, is in nowise preferable to the other (practical divinity). I earnestly pray God to avert that great evil from you of engaging in trifling studies to the neglect of such as are absolutely necessary. I dare advise nothing. God Almighty direct and bless you! . . . Now in good ear-



nest resolve to make religion the business of your life, for, after all, that is the one thing that, strictly speaking, is necessary, and all things else are comparatively little to the purposes of life." Then his mother's words become more pointed: "I heartily wish you would now enter upon a serious examination of yourself, that you may know whether you have a reasonable hope of salvation by Jesus Christ. If you have, the satisfaction of knowing it will abundantly reward your pains; if you have not, you will find a more reasonable occasion for tears than can be met with in a tragedy."

His father again cautioned him against taking up the ministry as a mere means of livelihood, adding that "the principal spring and motive . . . must certainly be the glory of God, and the service of the Church in the edification of our neighbor. And woe to him who with any meaner leading view attempts so sacred a work." The young man was in a mood to heed such noble words.

At this time, and a year later, Wesley came under the influence of some remarkable books which he never ceased to hold in high esteem, though he found deliverance from their ascetic and mystic tendencies. They were Thomas à Kempis's *Imitation of Christ* (in Stanhope's translation, *The Christian Pattern*); Taylor's *Holy Living and Dying*; and later, Law's *Serious Call*, and *Christian Perfection*.

*The Christian Pattern* profoundly moved the heart of Wesley. It had been his father's favorite book, his "great and old companion." He was fascinated by those brief quivering sentences which make us feel while we read them as though we had laid our hand on the heart, throbbing with sorrows like our own, which beat so many years ago in the old mystic's breast.

George Eliot, whose *Adam Bede*, with its powerful portrait

of Dinah Morris, best reflects the Methodist life of some of the great novelist's early associates and kinsfolk, must often have seen *The Imitation of Christ* in their hands. In *The Mill on the Floss* she writes:

Maggie turned from leaf to leaf, and read where the quiet hand pointed. . . . A strange thrill of awe passed through Maggie while she read, as if she had been wakened in the night by a strain of solemn music, telling of beings whose souls had been astir while hers was in stupor. . . . She knew nothing of doctrines and systems, of mysticism or quietism; but this voice out of the far-off Middle Ages was the direct communication of a human soul's belief and experience, and came to her as an unquestioned message. I suppose that is the reason why the small old-fashioned book, for which you need only pay sixpence at a bookstall, works miracles to this day, turning bitter waters into sweetness; while expensive sermons and treatises, newly issued, leave all things as they were before. It was written down by a hand that waited for the heart's prompting; it is the chronicle of a solitary, hidden anguish, struggle, trust, and triumph—not written on velvet cushions to teach endurance to those who are treading with bleeding feet on the stones. And so it remains to all time a lasting record of human needs and human consolations.

Wesley writes in his *Journal*: "The providence of God directing me to Kempis's *Christian Pattern*, I began to see that true religion was seated in the heart, and that God's law extended to all our thoughts as well as words and actions. I was, however, very angry at Kempis, for being too strict, though I read him only in Dean Stanhope's translation. . . . Meeting likewise with a religious friend, which I never had till now, I began to alter the whole form of my conversation, and to set in earnest upon a new life. I set apart an hour or two a day for religious retirement. I communicated every week. I watched against all sin, whether in word or deed. I began to aim at and pray for inward holiness. So that now, 'doing so much and living so good a life,' I doubted not but I was a good Christian."

Canon Overton marks the irony of the last sentence and asks if it is not right in this case to defend John Wesley

against John Wesley. While thoroughly believing in the reality and importance of the later change, he thinks it cannot be denied that Wesley from this time forward led a most devoted life. Rigg believes he sees here the doctrine of entire Christian consecration and holiness, which afterward developed into the Methodist doctrine of Christian perfection. Full of spiritual beauty are Wesley's own words: "I saw that simplicity of intention and purity of affection, one design in all we speak and do, and one desire ruling all our tempers, are indeed the wings of the soul, without which she can never ascend to God. I sought after this from that hour."

Jeremy Taylor's *Holy Living and Dying* strengthened the convictions awakened by à Kempis. "In reading several parts of this book," says Wesley, "I was exceedingly affected. . . . I resolved to dedicate all my life to God—all my thoughts and words and actions—being thoroughly conscious that there was no medium, but that every part of my life, not some only, must either be a sacrifice to God or myself; that is, in, effect, to the devil." Well does Tyerman note that here we have the turning point in Wesley's history. It was not until thirteen years after this that he received the consciousness of being saved through faith in Christ, but from this time his whole aim was to serve God and his fellow-men.

Another result of reading Taylor was the commencement of the famous Journals. They now occupy a well-recognized place in the literature of the eighteenth century, but they were the outcome of Wesley's spiritual resolve to make a more careful use of all his time, and to keep an account of its employment.



## CHAPTER XX

### The Coming Creed

PRESENT SALVATION.—WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT.—REJECTION OF PREDESTINATION.—FIRST CONVERT.—“VIRTUE CAN BEAR BEING LAUGHED AT.”—ORDAINED BY BISHOP POTTER.—FELLOW OF LINCOLN.

**A**LTHOUGH during the next few years Wesley became an ascetic, with High Church beliefs, strong ritualistic tendencies, and a mystical bias, he was repelled by à Kempis's extreme doctrine of self-mortification, and Taylor's morbid teaching as to the necessity of perpetual sorrowful uncertainty concerning personal salvation. In a letter to his mother he writes:

If we dwell in Christ and he in us (which he will not do unless we are regenerate), certainly we must be sensible of it. If we can never have any certainty of our being in a state of salvation, good reason it is that every moment should be spent not in joy, but in fear and trembling, and then undoubtedly we are in this life, of all men, most miserable. God deliver us from such a fearful doctrine as this!

Here, in 1725, we have the basis of another of the characteristic doctrines of the coming Methodism—that of a present salvation from guilt and fear through the indwelling of Christ. This was opposed to the Carolan High Churchmanship of Taylor, as well as to Calvinism. But Wesley had yet to learn by experience the power of evangelical faith which laid the foundation of his later teaching on conversion and the “witness of the Spirit.”

In the same memorable year, 1725, Wesley and his mother rejected the doctrine of Predestination, which for centuries had terrified many earnest souls, and narrowed the sympathies and work of the Christian Church. Wesley asks: "How is this consistent with either the divine justice or mercy? Is it mercy to ordain a creature to everlasting misery? Is it just



FROM A COPPERPLATE.

ST. MARY'S CHURCH, OXFORD.

In an aisle of this church John Wesley won his first convert.

to punish man for crimes which he could not but commit? That God should 'be the author of sin and injustice—which must, I think, be the consequence of maintaining this opinion—is a contradiction of the clearest idea we have of the divine nature and perfections." To this his mother replies:

The doctrine of Predestination, as maintained by rigid Calvinists, is very shocking, and ought to be abhorred, because it directly charges the most high God with being the author of sin.

I think you reason well and justly against it, for it is certainly inconsistent with the justice and goodness of God to lay any man under either a physical or moral necessity of committing sin, and then to punish him for doing it.

Hugh Price Hughes, in the *Contemporary Review* for March, 1897, declared:

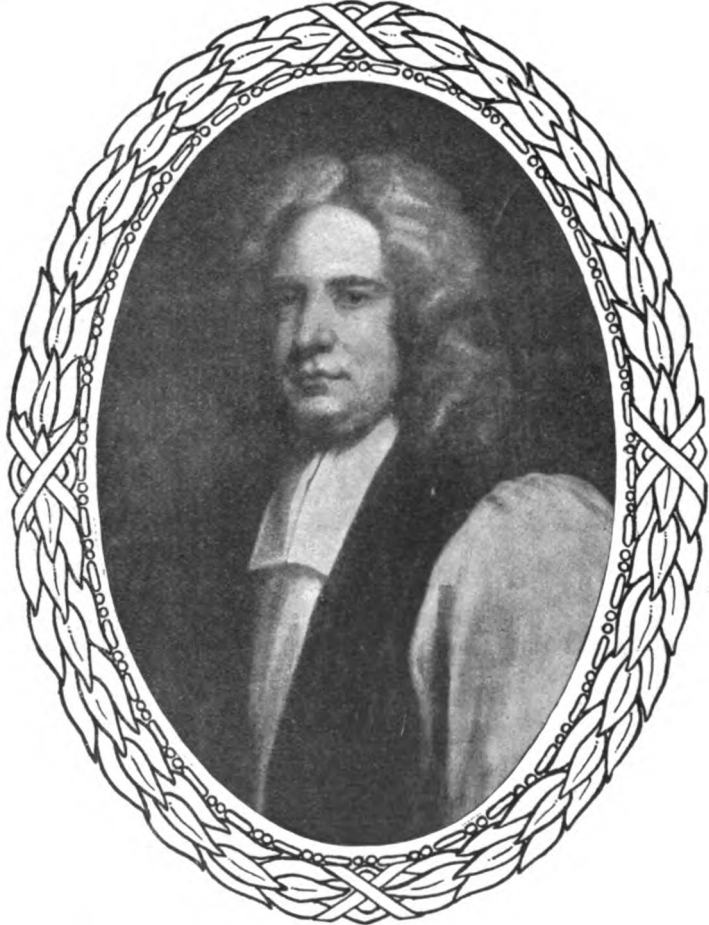
John Wesley killed Calvinism. No really instructed and responsible theologian dares to assert now that Christ died only for a portion of mankind, although: the full logical effect of asserting the redemption of the entire race has not yet

been universally realized. Little did the young Oxonian dream in 1725 that he and his mother were sowing the seed of the bitterest theological controversy of his life, over which Methodism would be rent in twain by an irreparable schism, that would unhappily leave the evangelical section of the Established Church on the wrong side of the breach, doomed to the comparative helplessness we witness to-day, although it would burst his fetters and enable him to exclaim, with prophetic truth, "The world is my parish."

In the midsummer of this same year, while preparing for ordination, Wesley won his first convert. He tells his mother: "I stole out of company at eight in the evening with a young gentleman with whom I was intimate. As we took a turn in an aisle of St. Mary's Church, in expectation of a young lady's funeral, with whom we were both acquainted, I asked him if he really thought himself my friend; and, if he did, why he would not do me all the good he could. He began to protest, in which I cut him short by desiring him to oblige me in an instance which he could not deny to be in his own power, to let me have the pleasure of making him a whole Christian, to which I knew he was at least half persuaded already; that he could not do me a greater kindness, as both of us would be fully convinced when we came to follow that young woman." The word went home. Eighteen months afterward the young man died of consumption, and Wesley preached his funeral sermon.

Wesley's earnestness soon exposed him to the raillery of the college wits, and this evoked a characteristic clarion blast from his father: "Does anyone think the devil is dead, or asleep, or that he has no agents left? Surely virtue can bear being laughed at. The Captain and Master endured something more for us before he entered into glory, and unless we track his steps, in vain do we hope to share that glory with him." As leaders of the militant host of God both of the Wesleys owed much of their moral muscle to their

father, and the old soldier's words echo in many a holy war song by Charles Wesley.



FROM THE ORIGINAL PAINTING BY VANDERBANK, 1735, IN THE POSSESSION OF REV. BISHOP JOHN HEYL VINCENT.

THE RT. REV. JOHN POTTER, BISHOP OF OXFORD.

The Church of England bishop who ordained John and Charles Wesley as deacons,  
and John Wesley as presbyter.

John Wesley was ordained deacon by Dr. Potter, Bishop of Oxford, in Christ Church Cathedral, on Sunday, September

19, 1725; and priest on September 22, 1728. When he was examined for priest's orders the chaplain put a question which was an unconscious prophecy: "Do you know what you are about? You are bidding defiance to all mankind. He that would live a Christian priest ought to know, whether his hand be against every man or no, he must expect that



FROM PHOTO.

CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL, OXFORD.

Since the renovation.

every man's hand should be against him." Wesley revered Dr. Potter to the end of his life. In a sermon written as late as 1787 he refers to "that great and good man," Dr. Potter, who, when archbishop, half a century before, gave him counsel for which he had often thanked Almighty God: "If you desire to be extensively useful, do not spend your time and strength in contending for or against such things as are of a disputable nature, but in testifying against open, notorious vice, and in promoting real, essential holiness."

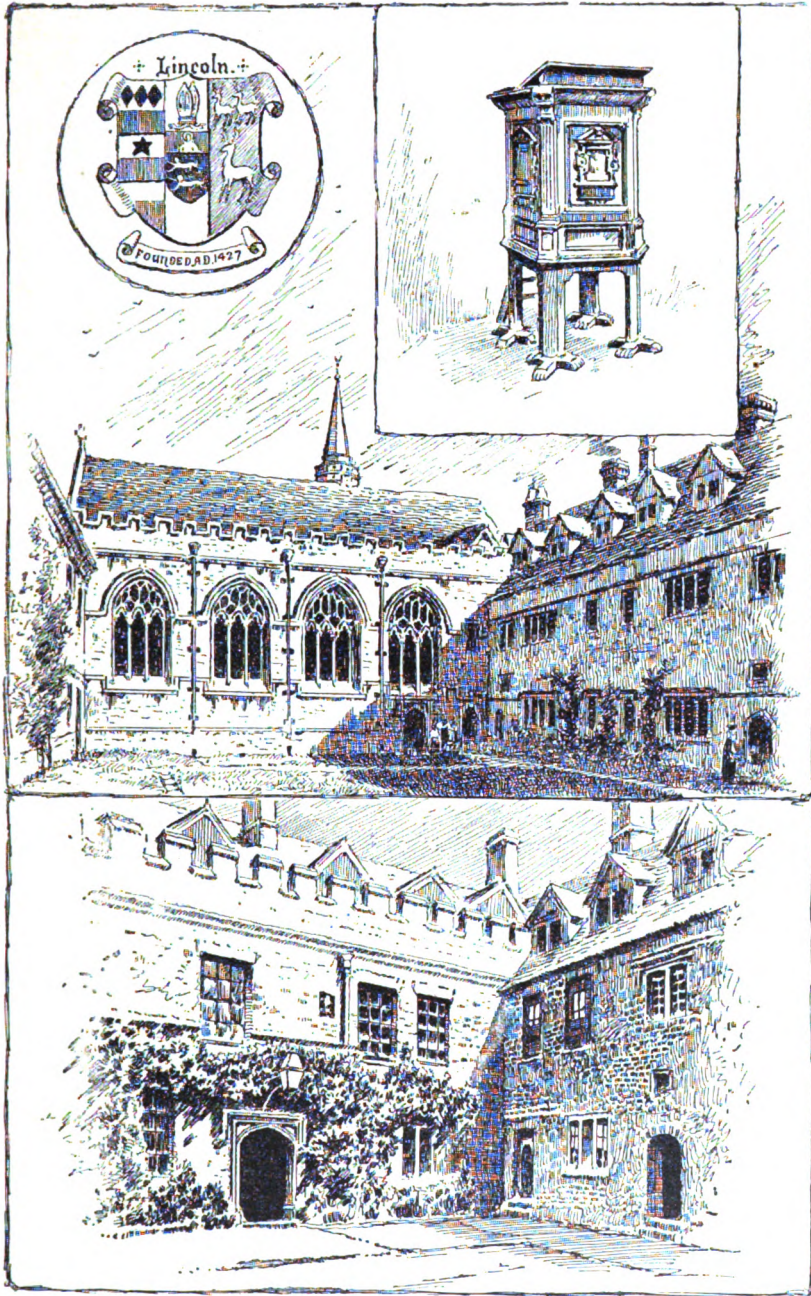
Wesley's first sermon was preached at South Leigh, a small



village three miles from Witney, in Oxfordshire. He records in his Journal for 1771: "I preached at South Lye. Here it was that I preached my first sermon forty-six years ago. One man was in my present audience who heard it. Most of the rest have gone to their long home." He tells us that his preaching was defective and fruitless, for "from 1725 to 1729 I neither laid the foundation of repentance nor of preaching the Gospel, taking it for granted that all to whom I preached were believers, and that many of them needed no repentance. From 1729 to 1734, laying a deeper foundation of repentance, I saw a little fruit. But it was only a little—and no wonder; for I did not preach faith in the blood of the covenant."

There was great rejoicing in the rectory at Wroote on March 17, 1726, when John Wesley was elected a fellow of Lincoln College. His father had only five pounds to keep his family from March until after harvest, but he wrote in high spirits: "What will be my own fate, God knows, before this summer is over—*sed passi graciora* [but we have suffered heavier troubles.] Wherever I am, my Jack is a fellow of Lincoln."

For more than a quarter of a century Wesley was connected with Lincoln College, and its name appears on the title pages of all his works. The college was founded by Richard Fleming, Bishop of Lincoln, in 1427, and the buildings were completed by Bishop Rotherham in 1475, who imposed upon it the statutes which were in force when Wesley was a fellow. Fleming, when a graduate at Oxford, had been noted for sympathy with the Wyclifites, but when he became bishop he deserted them, weakly yielded to the pope's mandate, burned the body of the great Englishman, and decided to found a theological college whose students would "defend



DRAWN BY J. D. WOODWARD.

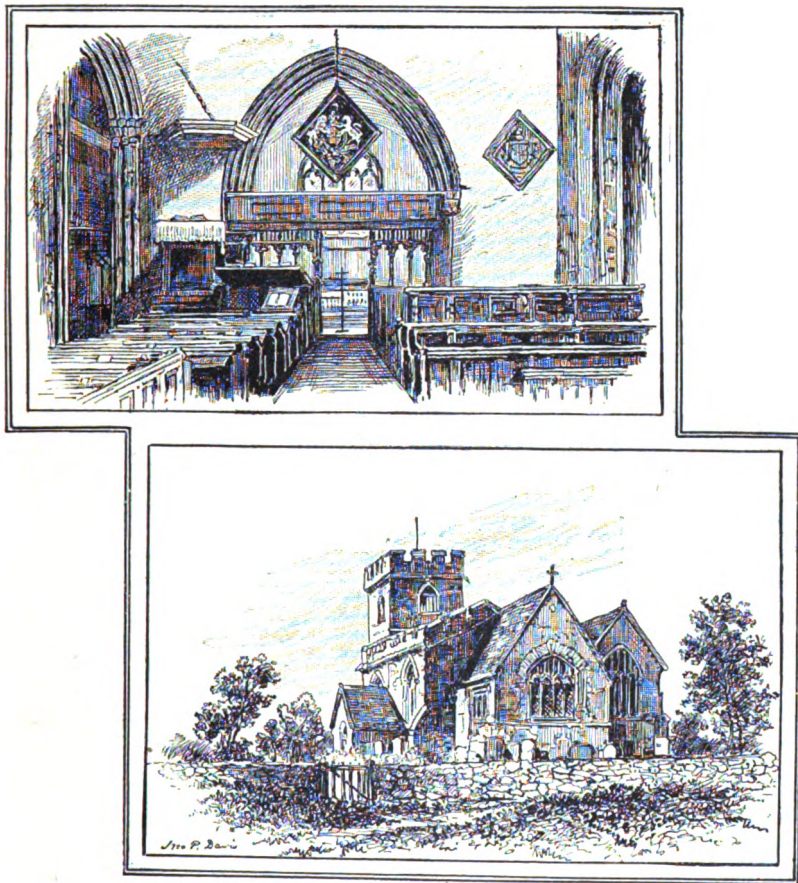
AFTER PHOTOS.

**JOHN WESLEY'S HAUNTS AT LINCOLN COLLEGE, OXFORD.**

Arms of Lincoln College.      The chapel, Lincoln College.      The pulpit in Lincoln Chapel.  
 Wesley's rooms, Lincoln College, and the "Wesley vine."



the mysteries of the sacred page against those ignorant laics, who profaned with swinish snouts its most holy pearls."



DRAWN BY J. P. DAVIS.

FROM PRINTS.

#### CHURCH AT SOUTH LEIGH.

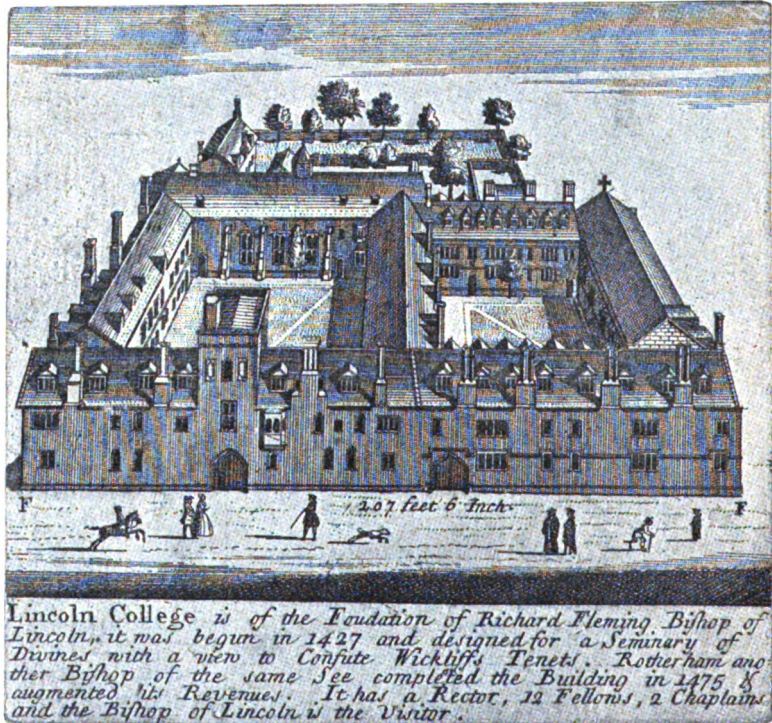
Here Rev. John Wesley preached his first sermon, in 1725.

Rotherham was of the same mind, and determined to extirpate the Wyclif heresy by compelling every fellow to take the following oath:

I will never conditionally or contumaciously favor knowingly heresies or error, nor will I appear secretly or openly to adhere to that pestiferous sect,

which, renewing ancient heresies, attacks the sacraments, estates, and possessions of the Church, but will to the utmost of my strength, by every means in my power, denounce them forever; so help me God in the day of Judgment.

It is remarkable, however, that a manuscript copy of Wyclif's Bible is one of the most precious treasures in the



FROM AN OLD PRINT.

LINCOLN COLLEGE IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

library, and Goldwin Smith well says: "The two orthodox prelates would have stood aghast if they could have foreseen that their little college of true theologians would one day number among its fellows John Wesley, and that Methodism would be cradled within its walls."

The old manuscript statutes of Bishop Rotherham tell how

he came to Oxford and heard a sermon from the rector; who exhorted him to finish the college, taking as his text, "Behold and visit this vine, and perfect it, which thy right hand hath planted;" with which words the bishop was moved to "do that which he sought." Tradition connects with these words the famous Wesley vine which grows upon the outer walls of the rooms occupied by John Wesley. They were the first-

"Epworth, Aug<sup>t</sup> 23. 1728.  
 John Wesley M. A. Fellow of  
 Lincoln College, was twenty  
 five years old the 17<sup>th</sup> of June  
 last, having bin baptiz'd  
 a few hours after his birth,  
 By mee, Sam<sup>e</sup> Wesley  
 Rector of Epworth."

Facsimile in the handwriting of Adam Clarke, who adds these words: "Transcribed  
 literatim from Mr. J. Wesley's certificate which seems to have been drawn up & sent  
 to Bp Potter, to ascertain Mr. J. Wesley's age previously to his being ordained.  
 A. Clarke."

floor rooms on the south or right-hand side of the first quadrangle, and opposite the clock tower. In these rooms the "Holy Club" met in 1729. Hundreds of visitors ramble into this quiet quadrangle to-day, many of them from the colonies and America. They pluck a leaf from the vine, look into the study of the man whose parish was the world, visit the chapel, with its windows of rich stained glass, stand in the pulpit from which Wesley preached, and gaze upon his portrait in the dining hall. This portrait has been recently purchased, and

is said to be a replica or early copy of the portrait by J. Williams, and sold by him on September 10, 1743. The Wesleyan Mission House claims to possess Williams's first painting. A reproduction of this portrait from the mezzotint by Faber forms the frontispiece of this History. The painting has been several times engraved. It shows Wesley at thirty-nine years of age, with long, flowing black hair and serious expression. It is the man in his strength; still fellow of Lincoln, but no longer the ritualist and mystic who dined with James Howey in this college hall.



## CHAPTER XXI

### The Ritualist's Graveclothes and the Mystic's Dreams

SCHOLASTIC HONORS.—PRACTICE IN LOGIC.—EARLY RISING.—HIS FATHER'S CURATE.—WROOTE.—"FIND COMPANIONS OR MAKE THEM."—AN ASCETIC RITUALIST.—LAW'S POWERFUL INFLUENCE.

WESLEY found the moral tone and discipline of Lincoln superior, on the whole, to that of other colleges, and the fellows "both well-natured and well-bred." He was soon appointed Greek lecturer and moderator of the classes. It became his duty to lecture weekly in the college hall to all the undergraduates on the Greek Testament. The Greek text was the basis of the lecture, but the main object was to teach divinity, not merely a language. As moderator of the classes he presided over the disputations, held every day except Sunday. The disputants argued on one side or the other; the moderator had to listen to the arguments, and then to decide with whom the victory lay. John Locke, at Christ Church seventy years before, lamented the "unprofitableness of these verbal niceties;" but Wesley writes, "I could not avoid acquiring thereby some degree of expertness in arguing, and especially in discovering and pointing out well-covered and plausible fallacies. I have since found abundant reason to praise God for giving me this honest art."



He became a hard and wide student, and, indeed, continued such all his life. Hebrew, Arabic, Greek, Latin, logic, ethics, metaphysics, natural philosophy, oratory, poetry, and divinity entered into his weekly plan of study. He obtained the degree of Master of Arts in 1727, acquiring much reputation in his disputation for his degree. His financial struggles were over, but he was rigid in his economy and was able to help his father and his family to the end of life. He saved about £2 a year by allowing his hair to grow long, in spite of the protest of his mother, thus escaping the expense of a wig. In a letter to his brother Samuel occurs his well-known sentence: "Leisure and I have taken leave of one another. I propose to be busy as long as I live, if my health is so long indulged me."

John's brother Charles came up from Westminster School to Christ Church soon after the former's removal to Lincoln. When John spoke to him about religion, he said, "What would you have me to be a saint all at once?" and would hear no more. But the heart of John was set upon saintship. He courteously broke off acquaintanceships which hindered him, after fruitless attempts to bring his companions to his own serious view of life. He now began the system of early rising, which he continued to the end of life. He could say, after sixty years, that he still rose at four o'clock.

His father was now sixty-five years of age, and in feeble health. He held the small living of Wroote in addition to that of Epworth, and needed a curate. A school in Yorkshire had been offered John, with a good income, and he was attracted by the seclusion it promised, but his mother saw that God had better work for him to do, and, again following her advice, he declined it. He went to Lincolnshire and acted as his father's curate for two and a quarter years,

returning at intervals to Oxford. This was his only experience of parochial work.

Wroote was surrounded by fens, and often had to be reached by boat. During one journey, in 1728, Wesley narrowly escaped drowning, the fierce current driving the boat against another craft and filling it with water. The small brick church in which he preached at Wroote was taken down a century ago and the material used for paving the streets of Epworth. One incident of this period is worth preserving, as it bears upon the organized fellowship of the Methodists. He tells us that he traveled several miles to converse with a “serious man” who said to him, “Sir, you wish to serve God and go to heaven. Remember you cannot serve him alone; you must therefore find companions or make them; the Bible knows nothing of solitary religion.” He was recalled to Oxford by the rector of his college in 1729, and found the Methodist movement commenced by his brother Charles.

Wesley was becoming an earnest ascetic ritualist. He held that water should be mixed with the wine in the daily Holy Communion. He advised something near akin to confession, as a racy letter from his sister Emilia shows:

To lay open the state of my soul to you, or any of our clergy, is what I have no inclination to do at present; and I believe I never shall. I shall not put my conscience under the direction of mortal man as frail as myself. To my own Master I stand or fall. Nay, I scruple not to say that all such desire in you or any other ecclesiastic seems to me like Church tyranny, and assuming to yourselves a dominion over your fellow-creatures which was never designed you by God.

The old Puritan spirit comes out in the letter of this sister, who had the Puritan blood in her veins. Her brother was teaching almost all that a High Anglican of to-day teaches, except that he does not appear to have held to the “conversion of the elements” in the Eucharist. A little later, under

the influence of his friend Clayton, he left the guidance of the Bible to follow that of tradition, or such pretended tradition as the Apostolical Constitutions. He says of himself that he "made antiquity a coordinate rule with Scripture."

The strict High Churchman also sought rest for his heart in mysticism. He first read William Law's *Christian Perfection and Serious Call*, in 1728 or 1729. These two powerful devotional treatises did not contain the mystical errors of



DRAWN BY P. E. FLINTOFF.

HOME OF WILLIAM LAW.

Hall Yard at King's Cliffe, Northamptonshire, where he lived and died.

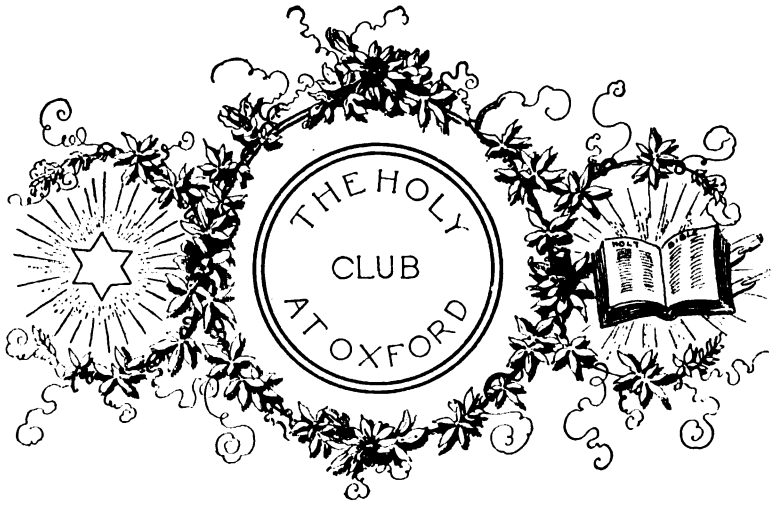
Law's later teaching. Although in later years Wesley diverged widely from Law he never lost his admiration for the *Serious Call*. A very short time before his death he spoke of it as a "treatise which will hardly

ever be excelled, if it be equaled, in the English tongue, either for beauty of expression or for justice and depth of thought." He owned that Law's two books sowed the seed of Methodism.

George Whitefield and Charles Wesley were equally impressed with the *Serious Call*. The later evangelicals, who would not accept the name of Methodists, felt its power. Henry Venn read it in 1750, and framed his life by it. Thomas Scott, the commentator, as the result of reading it, dedicated his life anew to God. Samuel Johnson, in his old age, said: "I became a sort of lax talker against religion, for I did not think much against it, and this lasted till I

went to Oxford, when I took up Law's *Call to a holy life*, expecting to find it a dull book. But I found Law an overmatch for me, and this was the first occasion of my thinking in earnest." Well might Southey say, "Few books have ever made so many religious enthusiasts." The defect of these noble books is that they do not so well proclaim the power for holiness as declare the duty of it. It was no narrow prejudice of the later evangelical teachers that there was too little of the Gospel in them. But so far as they go they are worthy of the reputation they have won, and rank, as De Quincey would say, with "the literature of power."

But later Law went astray into the fields of mysticism. Wesley visited him at Putney in 1732, and from that period began to read the German mystics. Their noble descriptions of union with God and internal religion deeply impressed him, but he never followed Law into the "unfathomable confusions" of Behmen. He never accepted the theories which deny the necessity of the means of grace. He appears to have extricated himself from the meshes of mysticism during his sojourn in Georgia, and writes to his brother Samuel: "I think the rock on which I had the nearest made shipwreck of the faith was the writings of the mystics; under which term I comprehend all and only those who slight any of the means of grace." He asks his brother to give him his thoughts upon the scheme of their doctrines which he has drawn up, and thinks they may be of consequence "not only to all this province, but to nations of Christians yet unborn." Thus this Christian knight was delivered from this "wandering fire;" he never passed "into the silent life," and we must return with him to Oxford to practice the counsel of the "serious" countryman who told him that "the Bible knows nothing of solitary religion."

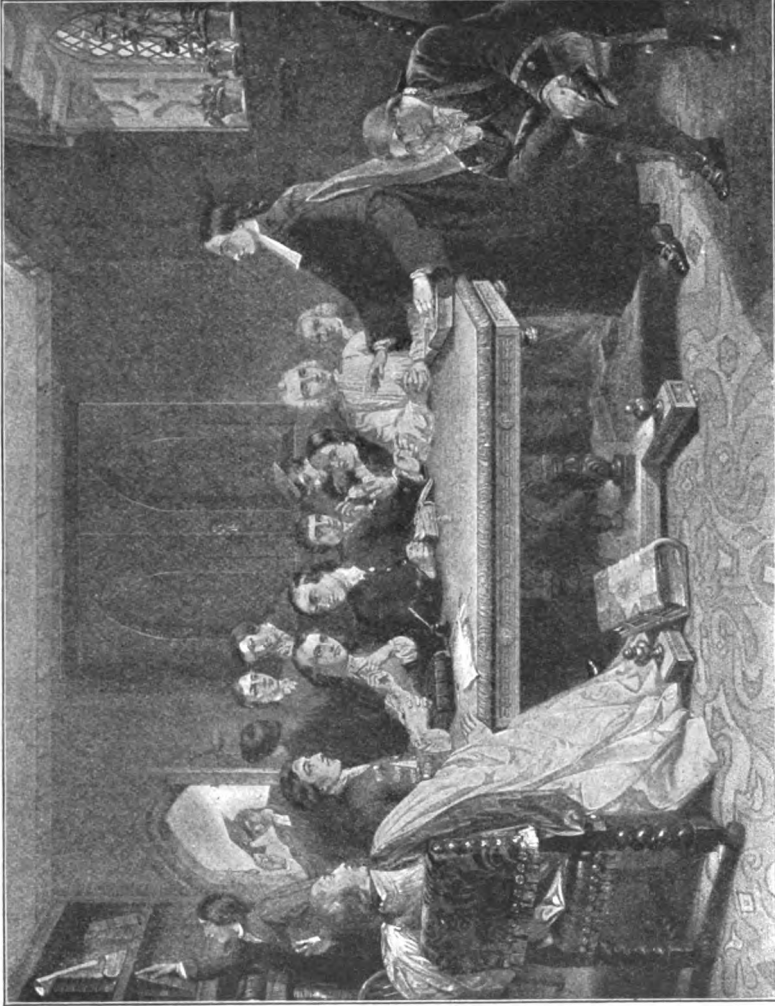


## CHAPTER XXII

### The Holy Club

A NOVEMBER PICTURE.—FURTHER SEARCH FOR TRUTH AND THE PRACTICE OF PHILANTHROPY.—CHARLES WESLEY AS THE FIRST "METHODIST."—JOHN WESLEY AS THE "FATHER OF THE HOLY CLUB."

**F**OUR young men are seated in the room opposite the clock tower in the first quadrangle of Lincoln College. They have the hopeful and radiant faces of men who have recently awakened to the higher purpose of life. The leaves have fallen from the famous vine on the wall outside, and from the venerable elms of Christ Church, from whence two of them have come. For it is November now, in the year 1729. The long summer vacation is over, the old city is astir with students beginning their winter work, and the senior of this group of four has come back, at the call of his college rector, to his duties as a fellow and tutor. His successful career as a student has already won him repute. He has learned to love Oxford, and especially his own college, but his eyes are open to the moral decay of the great university, which ought to be a center of vital force to the nation.



FROM THE ENGRAVING BY BELLIN.

PAINTED BY MARSHALL CLAXTON.

REV. JOHN WESLEY AND HIS FRIENDS AT OXFORD.



His heart is set upon reform. His gifted mother has fostered in him the conviction of some high destiny. He has heard and obeyed the divine call to holy living, and he has returned from the temporary seclusion of a country curacy to find spiritual comrades in his own brother and his brother’s friends.

This is John Wesley. He is now twenty-six years old, and to him this historic Oxford has become far more than a mere training ground for mental athletes and young ecclesiastics. The others are Charles Wesley, student of Christ Church, now twenty-two, with his degree of Bachelor of Arts; William Morgan, commoner of Christ Church, and Robert Kirkham, of Merton College. Others join them later, but this is the first time these four have met in John Wesley’s room. It is Charles Wesley, to his immortal honor, who has brought them together.

We have seen that Charles Wesley came up to Christ Church, in 1726, a bright, rollicking young fellow, “with more genius than grace.” He had objected to becoming “a saint all at once.” But the rebuff did not estrange the brothers, and soon after John went to Wroote Charles wrote to him in a very changed mood, seeking the counsel which before he had spurned. Lamenting his former state of insensibility, he declared: “There is no one person I would so willingly have to be the instrument of good to me as you. It is owing, in great measure, to somebody’s prayers (my mother’s, most likely) that I am come to think as I do; for I cannot tell myself how or why I awoke out of my lethargy, only that it was not long after you went away.” He not only gave himself with zest to his studies, but began to attend the weekly sacrament and induce others to unite with him in seeking true holiness. He and his companions adopted certain rules for right living,

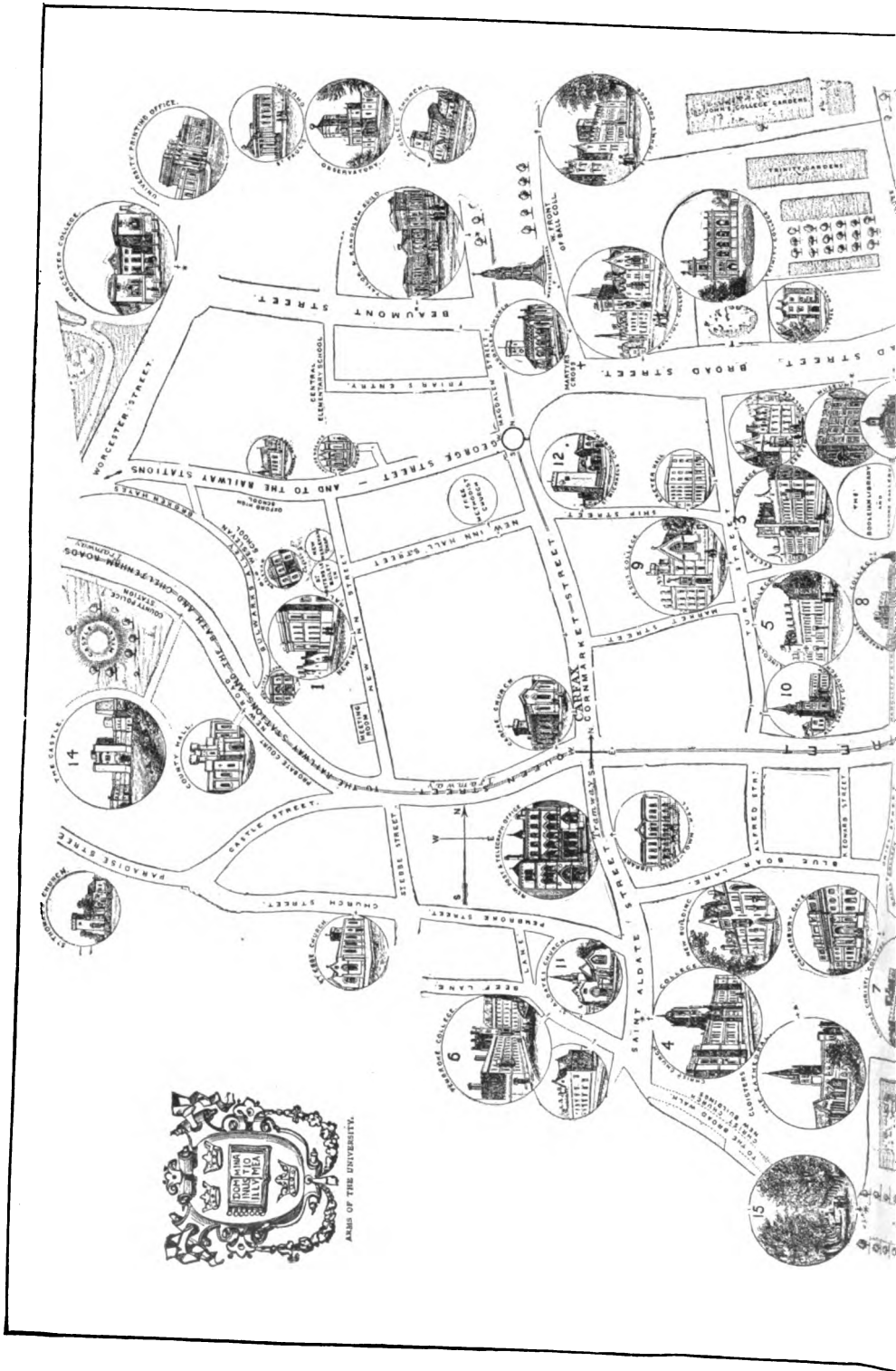


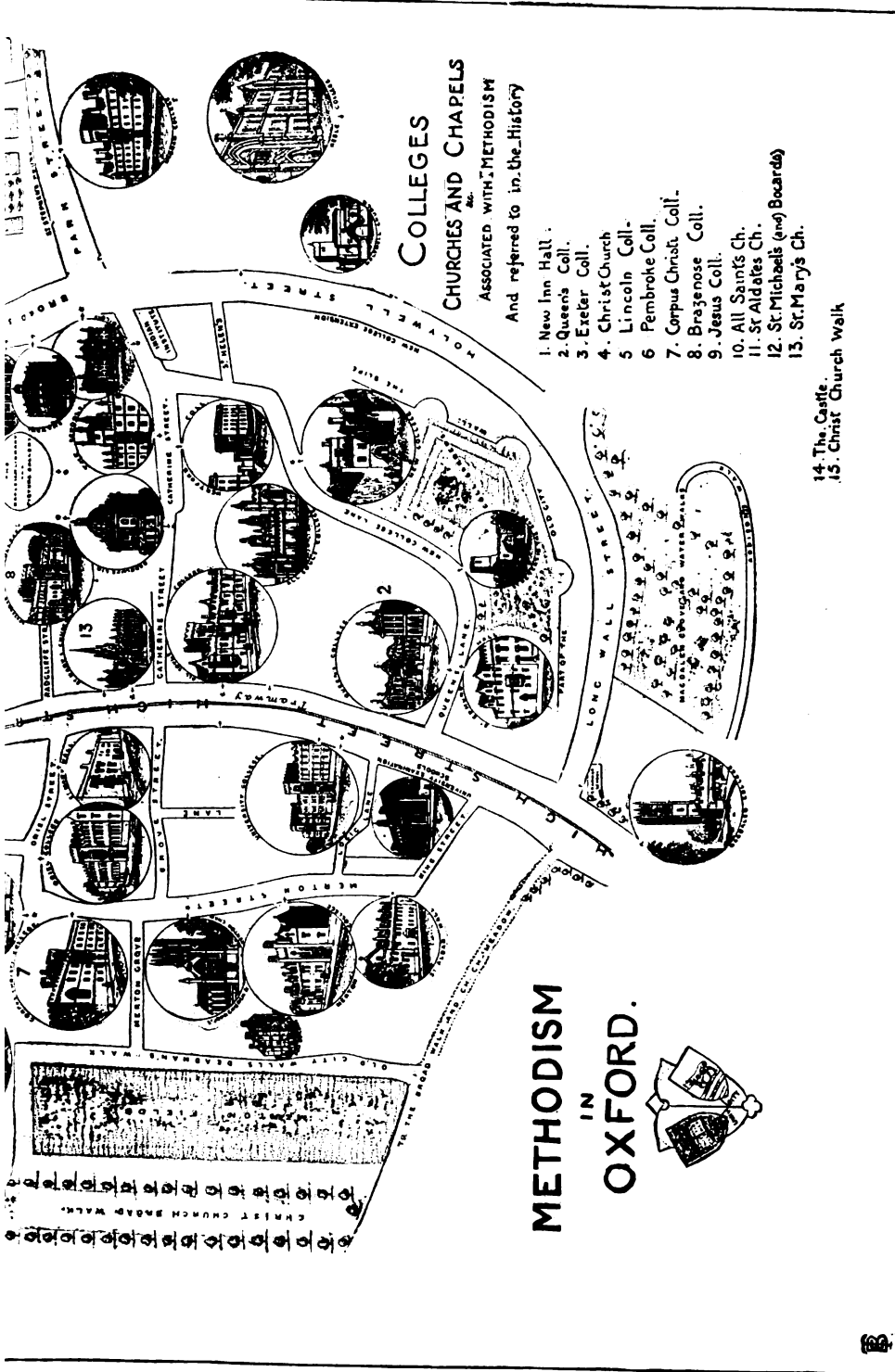
and apportioned their time exactly to study and religious duties, allotting as little as possible to sleeping and eating, and as much as possible to devotion. This exact regularity caused a young gentleman of Christ Church to say, derisively, "Here is a new set of Methodists sprung up."

Charles Wesley says that the name of Methodist "was bestowed upon himself and his friends because of their strict conformity to the method of study prescribed by the university." But the word was not new. Overton thinks that the giddy undergraduate who first flung it at the three friends was hardly likely to know that it was the name of a sect of physicians in the days of Nero who laid down strict rules for their diet and practice. Nor would he know that there is a reference in a sermon preached at Lambeth, in 1639, to "plain packstaff Methodists" who despised all rhetoric. John Wesley, in an address to George II, designates his societies "the people in derision called Methodists," and in his English Dictionary makes good use of the word. He defines a Methodist as "one that lives according to the *method* laid down in the Bible."

Overton, with an honorable regard for his own college worthy of Wesley himself, says: "A Lincoln man may be pardoned for remarking with satisfaction that Lincoln had nothing to do with the feeble jokes which were made upon these good, earnest youths. Christ Church and Merton must divide the honor between them. The Holy Club, Bible Bigots, Bible Moths, Sacramentarians, Supererogation Men, Methodists—all these titles were invented by the fertile brains of 'the wits' to cast opprobrium, as they thought, but really to confer honor upon a perfectly inoffensive band of young men who only desired to *be* what they and their opponents were alike *called*—Christians. An Oxford man may,







**COLLEGES  
CHURCHES AND CHAPELS**  
ASSOCIATED WITH METHODISM  
And referred to in the History

1. New Inn Hall.
2. Queen's Coll.
3. Exeter Coll.
4. Christ Church
5. Lincoln Coll.
6. Pembroke Coll.
7. Corpus Christi Coll.
8. Brasenose Coll.
9. Jesus Coll.
10. All Saints Ch.
11. St. Aldates Ch.
12. St. Michaels (eng. Board)
13. St. Mary's Ch.

14. The Castle.
15. Christ Church Walk

**METHODISM  
IN  
OXFORD.**



▲

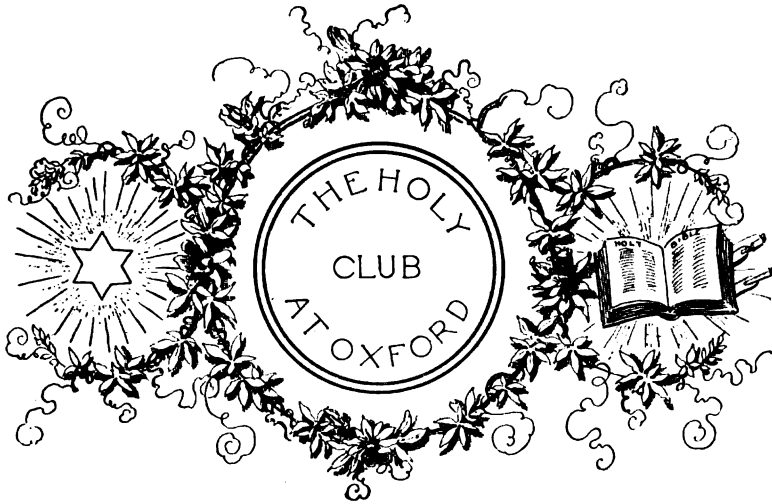
indeed, blush for his university when he reflects that these young men could not even attend the highest service of the Church without running the gauntlet of a jeering rabble, principally composed of men who were actually being prepared for the sacred ministry of that Church.”

Charles Wesley eagerly anticipated his brother's return to Oxford. “I earnestly long for and desire the blessing God is about to send me in you.” He reports cheering success. “A modest, well-disposed young fellow, who lived next door, had fallen into vile hands.” Charles persuaded him to break loose from his evil companions and helped him to keep out of their way. He dreaded their derision, but Charles went with him to communion every week. An attractive picture of Charles Wesley at this time is given by John Gambold, of whom we shall hear more: “He was a man made for friendship, who by his cheerfulness and vivacity would refresh his friend's heart; with attentive consideration would enter into and settle all his concerns; so far as he was able would do anything for him, great or small; and by a habit of openness and freedom leave no room for misunderstanding.”

When John Wesley returned to Oxford he at once became the leader of this little band formed by his brother. His age, his genius for generalship, his position in the university, his superior learning, made this a matter of course. And Charles rejoiced in this. A more perfect instance of real brotherhood it would be difficult to find in history. The elder always spoke of the work which was being done as their joint work. “My brother and I,” is the expression he constantly used in describing it. Charles was by no means the mere “man Friday” of his brother, as some have supposed. He would not have been a Wesley if he had not given proof of magnificent individuality. It must be remembered that he was the

first Methodist. He was to take his full share in the work of the great revival, not only as a poet, but as a preacher. But John Wesley was nicknamed "the Curator of the Holy Club," or, sometimes, "the Father of the Holy Club." The old rector of Epworth, hearing of John's new title, wrote: "If this be so, I am sure I am the grandfather of it; and I need not say that I had rather any of my sons should be so dignified and distinguished than to have the title of 'His Holiness.'" "

Gambold says: "Mr. John Wesley was always the chief manager, for which he was very fit; for he not only had more learning and experience than the rest, but he was blest with such activity as to be always gaining ground, and such steadiness that he lost none. What proposals he made to any were sure to charm them, because they saw him always the same. What supported this uniform vigor was the care he took to consider well of every affair before he engaged in it, making all his decisions in the fear of God, without passion, humor, or self-confidence; for though he had naturally a very clear apprehension, yet his exact prudence depended more on humanity and singleness of heart. To this I may add, that he had, I think, something of authority on his countenance, though, as he did not want address, he could soften his manner and point it as occasion required. Yet he never assumed anything to himself above his companions. Any of them might speak their mind, and their words were as strictly regarded by him as his were by them."



## CHAPTER XXIII

### **The Bible the Text-Book of the Coming Methodism**

THE MEETINGS AND WORK OF THE HOLY CLUB.—THE BIBLE THE ONE STUDY.—THE PHILANTHROPY GROWING OUT OF THE STUDY OF THE BIBLE.—OTHER MEMBERS: KIRKHAM, MORGAN, CLAYTON, INGHAM, GAMBOLD, HERVEY, KINCHIN, WHITELAMB.

THE first work of the Holy Club was the study of the Bible. The new movement was spiritual, humanitarian, but, first and strongest of all, scriptural. The searching of the Scriptures was earnest, open-minded, devout, unceasing. Wesley himself said: "From the very beginning—from the time that four young men united together—each of them was *homo unius libri*; a man of one book. . . . They had one, and only one, rule of judgment. . . . They were continually reproached for this very thing, some terming them in derision Bible Bigots; others, Bible Moths; feeding, they said, upon the Bible as moths do on cloth. . . . And, indeed, unto this day, it is their constant endeavor to think and speak as the oracles of God."



This fundamental fact in the history of Methodism must never be lost to view. At first the friends met every Sunday evening; then two evenings in every week were passed together, and at last every evening from six to nine. They began their meetings with prayer, studied the Greek Testament and the classics, reviewed the work of the past day and talked over their plans for the morrow, closing all with a frugal supper. They received the Lord's Supper weekly, fasted twice a week, and instituted a searching system of self-examination, aiming in all things to do the will of God and be zealous of good works.

Some of John Wesley's notes prepared for the Holy Club have been preserved, and the accompanying facsimile is from the notes on the third chapter of John. One striking fact can only be imperfectly conveyed by this facsimile—for following verse 5 and the comment on Baptismal Regeneration are *two blank pages* in the notebook! Was this great space left because John Wesley was waiting for further light on the doctrine of the New Birth? The notes on the fifth chapter of Matthew have faded, but the following is an extract from them:

Blessed are the humble (1) who by Mourning for their sins (2) attain Meekness (3) and a Hunger and Thirst after Righteousness (4) who therefore compassionate all the Miserable, especially The Unrighteous, (5) and by this Love to Man ascend to Love of God (6) and the Imitation of Him in doing Good to all his Fellow Creatures. (7) Blessed are They who for these Reasons are persecuted, and have all Manner of Evil said against them.

The first flower of the study of the Bible was a new philanthropy. William Morgan, of Christ Church, visited a condemned wife murderer in the castle jail; Morgan also conversed with the debtors in prison and was convinced that good might be done among them. On August 24, 1730, the brothers Wesley went with him to the castle, and from that time forward the prisoners became their special care. Mor-

C. 3

16 Lectio Grammatica  
 10 Διδάσκαλος - Teacher.  
 13 Καί Since  
 2. Οὕτως Therefore

Analytica

This Chapter contains IV parts. I Christ's conference with Nicodemus 9-21 II His removal to Judaea, and baptizing there, 22. III John's baptizing in Ephraim, occasioning a dispute between his disciples and the Jews, 23-25. IV His testimony concerning the baptism of Christ, 26-36.

Caegetica.

3 "Jesus answered"; yet, in case a man has a new principle of life given him, he cannot acknowledge that I am come from God.  
 5 "Jesus answered." The birth I speak of is that wrought by the Holy Ghost in Baptism.

## A LESSON FOR THE HOLY CLUB.

Facsimile of a page of John Wesley's notes on the third chapter of St. John's Gospel, prepared for the Holy Club. The manuscript volume is in the possession of the Rev. Charles H. Kelly, of London.

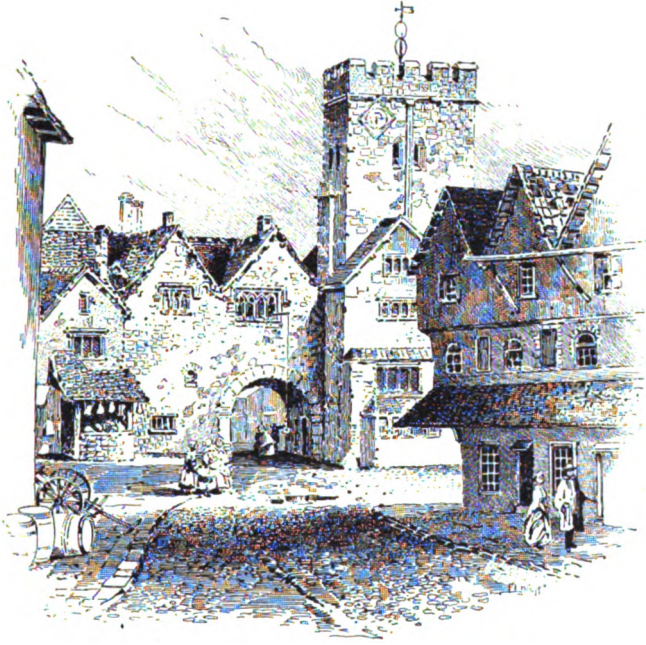
gan also began the work of visiting the sick. John Wesley wrote to his father for counsel, and received an inspiring letter: "I have the highest reason to bless God that he has given me two sons together at Oxford, to whom he has given grace and courage to turn the war against the world and the devil, which is the best way to conquer them."

The old hero was delighted with Morgan, and declared he must adopt him as his own son: "Go on, then, in God's name in the path to which the Saviour hath directed you, and that track wherein your father has gone before you! For when I was an undergraduate at Oxford I visited those in the castle there, and reflect on it with great satisfaction to this day. Walk as prudently as you can, though not fearfully, and my heart and prayers are with you." The Bishop of Oxford gave the young men his approval, and the visiting was extended to poor families in the city. Children were also taught. One of these, a poor girl, called upon Wesley in a state of great destitution. He said to her, "You seem half starved; have you nothing to cover you but that thin linen gown?" She replied, "Sir, this is all I have." Wesley put his hand into his pocket, but found it nearly empty. The walls of his chamber, however, were hung with pictures, and they seemed to accuse him. "It struck me," he says, "'Will thy Master say, 'Well done, good and faithful steward?' Thou hast adorned thy walls with the money which might have screened this poor creature from the cold! O Justice! O Mercy! Are not these pictures the blood of this poor maid?'"

It was the practice, he says, of all the Oxford Methodists to give away each year all they had after providing for their own necessities. He himself, having thirty pounds a year, lived on twenty-eight and gave away two. The next year, receiving sixty pounds, he still lived on twenty-eight and

gave away thirty-two. The third year he received ninety pounds and gave away sixty-two. The fourth year he received one hundred and twenty pounds, and still lived on twenty-eight as before, giving to the poor all the rest.

An interesting letter by John Clayton, a tutor of Brazenose College, throws much light on the doings of the Methodists,



DRAWN BY P. E. FLINTOFF.

AFTER A PRINT.

BOCARD, THE PRISON, OXFORD.

Where the Oxford Methodists did works of "mercy and help."

whom he joined in 1732. Wesley at the time was in London, visiting William Law. Clayton refers to Bocardo, a prison over the North Gate where debtors were confined, by the side of St. Michael's Church. The gateway was taken down in 1771. Clayton says: "My little flock at Brazenose are, God be praised, true to their principles. . . . Bocardo, I

fear, grows worse upon my hands. They have done nothing but quarrel ever since you left us; and they carried matters so high on Saturday that the bailiffs were sent for, who ordered Tomlyns to be fettered and put in the dungeon. . . . The castle is, I thank God, in much better condition. All the felons were acquitted, except Salmon, who is referred to be tried at Warwick, and the sheep stealer, who is burnt in the hand, and is a great penitent." He tells of progress in reading; there is only one, a horse stealer, "who cannot read at all. He knows all his letters, however." Clothing is put in pawn by a poor woman and the gown is redeemed at sixpence a week. There are some "idle beggars," and some "suffering innocents." "The children all go on pretty well, except Jervaise's boy, who . . . truants till eleven o'clock in a morning." "I have obtained leave to go to St. Thomas's workhouse twice a week."

While the number of the Methodists was only four at first, in the following year two or three other students desired the liberty of meeting with them, and these were joined by one of Charles Wesley's students. In 1732 Benjamin Ingham, of Queen's; Thomas Broughton, of Exeter; John Clayton, of Brazenose; James Hervey, and two or three others, were admitted to the club, and in 1735 George Whitefield of Pembroke became a member. The numbers fluctuated, and when the Wesleys sailed for Georgia the Holy Club had thirteen members. In 1733 there were twenty-seven Methodist communicants. During one of Wesley's absences at Epworth the number dwindled to five, but it rallied again when its leader was once more at the front. Of these early Methodists three were tutors in colleges and the rest were bachelors of arts or undergraduates. All were strictly orthodox in doctrine, or counted themselves so; and practically they had all things in

common; that is, no one was allowed to want what another was able to spare.

Let us glance at some of these Oxford Methodists. One of the first was Robert Kirkham, of Merton College. He began life at Oxford as a "frank, frivolous, jovial young fellow," who wrote to Wesley of his revelings over a dish of calf's head and bacon and a newly tapped barrel of cider. His sister Betty was probably Wesley's first sweetheart, and the brother was evidently anxious that "Dear Jack" should become his brother-in-law, and wrote a lively letter to that effect. Wesley was greatly impressed by the charms of Miss Betty, to whom he refers under her pet name of "Varanese," but why the acquaintanceship ceased no one seems to know. Her brother Robert, under the influence of Charles Wesley, decided "that he would lose no more time, and no more money," and drink no more ale in the evening; that he would give his mornings to reading, his evenings to the Greek Testament and Hugo Grotius, strike off all his drinking acquaintances, and join the Wesley brothers in their quest for holiness. In 1731 he left Oxford to become his uncle's curate, and we hear no more of him.

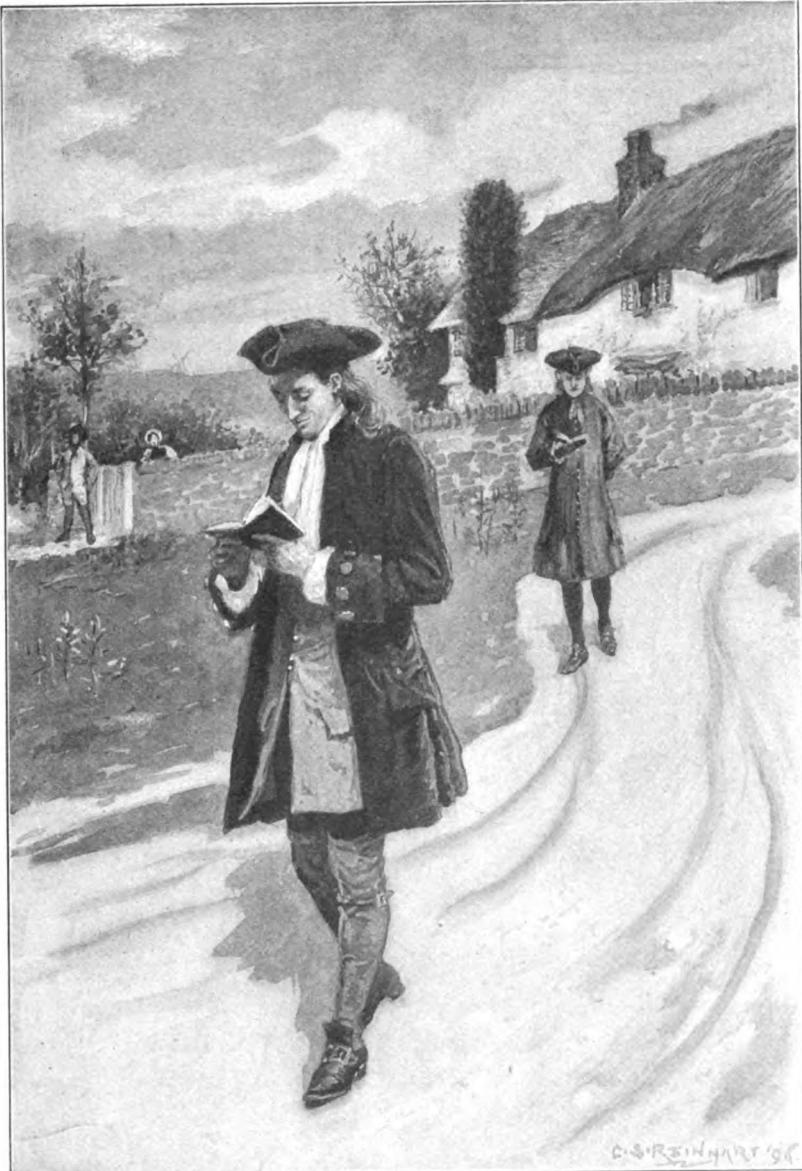
William Morgan, of Christ Church, who commenced the prison work, was the son of an Irish gentleman of Dublin. He was a warm-hearted friend of Samuel Wesley, Jr., who has left a poem descriptive of his most lovable character. He went home to die of consumption in 1732. His brother afterward came to Oxford and his father commended him to the care of the Wesleys. At first he was a troublesome charge, "choosing men more pernicious than libertines" for his companions, and acting the fashionable sportsman with his favorite greyhound. But he, too, became a Methodist.

John Clayton, from whose letter we have quoted, came to

know the Wesleys through Rivington, the bookseller of St. Paul's Churchyard, London. Tyerman describes him as "the Jacobite Churchman." He led the Wesleys to observe the fasts of the Church, the practice of many ritualistic customs, the use of the mixed chalice, the observance of the stations of the cross, and the study of the ancient liturgies. He was a man of wide reading and a powerful preacher. His friendship with the Wesleys ceased when they broke away from Church usages and preached in the open air. He became a clergyman at Manchester. When the Pretender, Charles Edward Stuart, marched through Salford in 1745 this High Churchman and Jacobite fell upon his knees before him and prayed for God's blessing on the adventurous chevalier.

He is said to have visited Prince Charles at the Palace Inn, paid him deep respect, and was regarded as a sort of royal chaplain. For this he was suspended from his ministerial duties by the bishop. When his sentence of silence expired he was required to preach before the bishop, who was startled to hear the bold Jacobite announce as his text, "I became dumb, and opened not my mouth, for thou didst it." For twenty years he was chaplain of the Collegiate Church at Manchester. The Methodist Chapel in Gravel Lane stands on what was once his garden. In his own house he conducted a classical academy, in which he prepared young men for Oxford. It is sad to read of his refusal even to recognize Wesley when, in after years, his old friend visited Manchester.

Rigg, in his *Oxford High Anglicanism*, has well said: "Clayton, the Jacobite Methodist of Oxford, who after he had become chaplain of the Manchester Collegiate Church, and when his intimate friends, the Wesleys, had entered upon their evangelistic career, disowned his friendship with



DRAWN BY C. S. REINHART.

"MEN OF ONE BOOK."





them, and utterly refused to recognize them either personally or ecclesiastically; was a true representative of the school of Churchmanship in which the Kebles were by their father, a clergyman of the old, old school, brought up." Newman, as the active leader of the Tractarian or modern High Church movement, imbibed his Church principles from his intercourse with Keble and his pupil Froude, and expressly says that Keble was the real father of the modern Oxford movement. It was Froude who brought Newman and Keble together. Routh, to whom we have referred in a previous chapter, was for three-quarters of a century the representative of the old High Church school at Oxford by whom John Clayton would be regarded as the ideal Churchman.

Benjamin Ingham, of Queen's College, joined the Methodists in the year Morgan died. He entered with zeal into the work of teaching forty-two poor children, and his evangelistic power was manifest from the first. We shall meet with him again as the companion of the Wesleys in their mission to Georgia and as the Yorkshire evangelist.

John Gambold was the son of a clergyman in Wales, and soon became noted at Christ Church for his sprightliness and his acquaintance with the English dramatists and poets. The death of his good father impressed him. He became very melancholy, and abandoned poetry and plays. One day, he tells us, an old acquaintance entertained him with an account of "the whimsical Mr. Wesley, his preciseness and pious extravagances." This led him to seek Charles Wesley's room. They became fast friends. He was introduced to John, and joined the Holy Club. He became an earnest ritualist and mystic, but found little joy in religion, neglected his person and kept his room; a close student of the classics and philosophy. Ordained by Bishop Potter in 1733, he held

a living for four years in the quiet village of Stanton-Harcourt. He and his sister there made a home for their friend, Wesley's delicate youngest sister, Keziah.

When Wesley returned from Georgia he found Gambold "recovered from his mystic delusion, and convinced that St. Paul was a better writer than either Tauler or Jacob Behmen." He met with Peter Böhler, was led out of philosophic and Pharisaic "darkness into marvelous light," and afterward became a bishop among the Moravians. He was the editor of the large Moravian Hymn Book published in 1754, to which he contributed, it is said, twenty-eight hymns and eleven translations.

James Hervey's name is perhaps the best known among the group through his once popular *Meditations and Theron and Aspasio*. He was an undergraduate at Lincoln College when John Wesley was a fellow. We shall meet with him again as a Calvinistic, evangelical, and charitable country parson, whose inflated style as a writer does injustice to his simple habits and sincere and unaffected piety.

Thomas Broughton, of Exeter College, was another Oxford Methodist. He became curate at the Tower of London, and preached to the prisoners in Ludgate Jail. Through Whitefield's influence he was presented to St. Helen's, Bishopsgate, and through faithfulness to his old friend he lost the living. The parishioners objected to Whitefield's occupying the pulpit. Broughton declared that Whitefield should preach, insisted upon it, and lost his lectureship. He did his utmost to get John Wesley appointed to Epworth parish, but failed. He was an honest-speaking, zealous preacher, more pointed than pleasant; the opposite of Hervey in style. He became secretary to the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, holding the office for thirty-four years. His



PROMINENT MEMBERS OF THE HOLY CLUB.

THOMAS BROUGHTON.

JAMES HERVEY.

BENJAMIN INGHAM.

JOHN CLAYTON.

JOHN GAMBOILD.



portrait hangs in the board room of the venerable society to-day.

Charles Kinchin became dean of Corpus Christi College, and maintained a close friendship with the Wesleys all through life. We shall find him joining in the later prison work, and opening his church to Wesley when others were closed against him. When he became dean Whitefield supplied his place in the rectory of Dummer.

John Whitelamb was a protégé of Samuel Wesley, Sr., by whom he was sent to Lincoln College. He once saved the rector's life. Crossing a ferry, the barge upset, the two horses were pitched overboard, and the rector was just preparing to swim for life—he was then 66 years of age—when, he writes, “John Whitelamb's long legs and arms swarmed up into the keel and lugged me in after him. My mare was swimming a quarter of an hour, but at last we all got safe to land.” It was grateful and generous of the rector to send his young rescuer to Lincoln College. He assisted the rector as amanuensis, became his curate, and married his daughter Mary. He was appointed rector of Wroote. Within one short year his young wife and her infant child died. He became disconsolate, oppressed with doubt and with the mystery of life. Samuel Wesley describes him as “a good scholar, a sound Christian, and a good liver,” but he seems to have spent a dreary life at Wroote for thirty-five years, and his story is a sad one.



## CHAPTER XXIV

### George Whitefield.—John Wesley's Further Work

FROM THE GLOUCESTER TAPROOM.—A BOY ORATOR.—SERVITOR AT PEMBROKE COLLEGE.—WHITEFIELD MEETS CHARLES WESLEY.—THE NEW BIRTH.—JOHN WESLEY'S MOVEMENTS 1730-1735.—READING ON HORSEBACK.—EPWORTH OR OXFORD?—DEATH OF SAMUEL WESLEY, SR.—DISPERSION OF THE HOLY CLUB.

**D**URING the last year of its active existence the Holy Club received one who became, next to the Wesleys, its most distinguished member—George Whitefield. He was born on December 16, 1714, at Gloucester, where his father, who died when he was two years old, kept the old Bell Inn. Here he was brought up, and for a while, when about fifteen, was a "common drawer" or bartender in the inn, his mother having continued the business. In other respects also his early life gave little promise of his after calling. He declared in later years, "I have broken all the commandments from my youth." He pilfered money frequently from his mother for cakes and fruits and playhouse tickets. But he had intervals of deep religious sensibility, and carried often a troubled conscience; and part of the money he gave to the poor. This stolen money he afterward restored four-fold. He bought the first religious book that impressed him, Ken's Manual for Winchester Scholars.

He was the boy orator of his school, St. Mary de Crypt. In those days dramatic performances played a part in education. As Charles Wesley at Westminster School was "put forward to act dramas," so Whitefield, on account of his "good elocution and memory," was "remarked for making speeches before the corporation at their annual visitation," and in acting in dramatic pieces composed by the master.

Hearing the story of a servitor of Pembroke College who had paid all his expenses that quarter by waiting on other students and had saved a penny, Whitefield's mother said, "George, will you go to Oxford?" "Yes," said George with characteristic promptness and pluck, "with all my heart." So he was sent back to school with those new thoughts of the future which brought new convictions. He read à Kempis, did what lay in his power to promote a reformation of manners among the boys, fasted sometimes for eighteen hours together, studied the Greek Testament, and began to dream of preaching.

At eighteen (in 1733) he was admitted to Pembroke College, Oxford (the year after Samuel Johnson left that same college), and, having learned by his practice at the inn to be a polite and ready servitor, he became in that capacity a favorite, had all the work he could attend to, and thus his wants were amply supplied. He read Law's Serious Call, which produced a great impression upon him. He had already been powerfully affected by à Kempis. He now began to attend communion at "a parish church near our

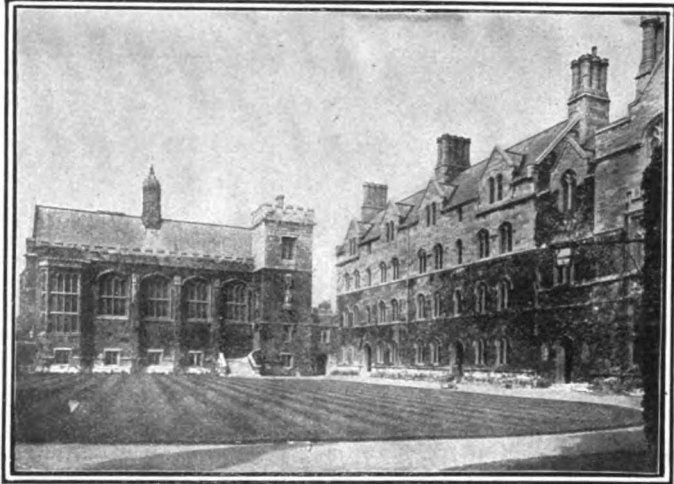


ARMS OF PEMBROKE  
COLLEGE.

Where Whitefield was educated.



college" (St. Aldate's), and greatly desired to be in the Holy Club, but his poverty, his modesty, and his youth prevented his presuming to seek acquaintance among men so far above him in the social scale. For a year he longed to meet them, but no opportunity seemed to offer, though he often gazed at



FROM PHOTO.

PEMBROKE COLLEGE, OXFORD.

Where George Whitefield was entered as a servitor.

them with deep emotion as they passed through a jeering crowd to receive the sacrament at St. Mary's.

The introduction at last came about on this wise. A woman in one of the workhouses attempted to cut her throat. Whitefield heard of it, and, knowing that both the Wesleys were most kind to the suffering, sent an apple woman attached to Pembroke College to inform Charles Wesley of the case, charging her not to tell him who sent her. But she told the name of her informant, and Charles invited him to breakfast the next morning. Whitefield says: "I thankfully embraced the opportunity; and, blessed be God, it was one of the most

profitable visits I ever made in my life. My soul was at that time athirst for some spiritual friend. He soon discovered this, and, like a wise winner of souls, made all his discourse tend that way." He was now introduced to the rest of the Methodists, and adopted all their rules. Indeed, he went further than most, perhaps than any, in the matter of austerities. Being in great distress about his soul, he spent whole nights prostrate on the ground under the great elms in Christ Church Walk, in silent or vocal prayer, until his flesh became almost black. He chose the meanest sort of food, though his place as servitor gave him a chance at the best, since the remainder of the repasts which he served to his wealthy patrons was regarded as the servitor's perquisite. He fasted until he was half starved, wore shabby clothes, and strove through the utmost self-mortification to become a saint of the highest sort.

Light and help did not come to Whitefield in this way, but at length they came. His exposures and privations brought on severe illness, which lasted seven weeks. He calls it "a glorious visitation." The Spirit made use of it for his enlightenment and purification. Charles Wesley lent him a book, *The Life of God in the Soul of Man*, and this book was the means of bringing him into the experience of saving grace. He learned that true religion did not consist in going to church, or faithfulness in any external duties, but was a union of the soul with God; and that he must be a new creature. It was an era in his history. He says: "I found and felt in myself that I was delivered from the burden that had so heavily oppressed me. The spirit of mourning was taken from me, and I knew what it was truly to rejoice in God my Saviour. The day-star arose in my heart. I know the place; it may perhaps be superstitious, but whenever I go to Oxford

I cannot help running to the spot where Jesus Christ first revealed himself to me and gave me a new birth." This was in 1735, when he was in his twenty-first year. He was the first of the Holy Club to come into this divine experience. That he did not at once communicate it to the Wesley



FROM THE ENGRAVING BY LE KEUX.

ST. ALDATE'S CHURCH, OXFORD.

"The parish church near our college," where Whitefield communed. His college (Pembroke) is on the right. The entrance to Christ Church is in the background.

brothers, who for three years still groped in the twilight of legalism, may be partly owing to the difference which, on account of their superiority in learning and social position, would keep him from presuming to teach them, but still more was it due to the fact that they became at this time separated from him by their preparations for departure to America.

And thus, unknown to his comrades in the holy quest, the poor servitor of Pembroke was the first to find the spiritual freedom which was to be the glad message and the song of the new evangel. Truth, philanthropy, and liberty were to be the watchwords of the coming revival.

Let us return to John Wesley. At the beginning of 1730 he had the offer of a curacy eight miles from Oxford for several months, at the rate of £30 a year. He accepted it, not only because of the usefulness afforded, but because it enabled him to retain his horse, when he had begun to feel he must sell it. Next year John and Charles began to converse together in Latin, a habit which they kept up to the end of their lives, and often found very useful, particularly in their intercourse with the Moravians. This spring they walked to Epworth, seventy-five miles, and after a visit of three weeks returned in the same way to Oxford. They found this pedestrian tour very beneficial to their health, and discovered, also, that they could read as they walked, for ten or twelve miles, without feeling faint or weary.

John Wesley was in London in 1731 and again in 1732, when he was chosen a member of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. During the latter visit, as we have seen, he went over to Putney to see William Law, whose books had already benefited him so much. He found his conversation equally profitable, and by his advice began to read *Theologia Germanica* and other mystic books. In 1734 he traveled more than a thousand miles, and now learned to read on horseback, a practice which he kept up nearly all his life with great advantage to his mind, and, strange to say, his eyes do not seem to have suffered from it. He went again to London to oversee the printing of his father's great treatise on the Book of Job, and two years later presented a copy of it to Queen Caroline (the consort of George II), to whom it was dedicated.

Much of this year was occupied with correspondence on the question whether John should endeavor to secure the succession to the living of Epworth. His father was fast failing,

and had a very natural desire that one of his sons should take his place, thus carrying on his work and also preserving the old home for the widow and the unmarried daughters. Samuel was first thought of, but he had only lately settled as head master at Tiverton and was unwilling to leave his school, and



FROM PHOTO.

THE BROAD WALK, CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD.

"Being in distress about his soul, he (George Whitefield) spent whole nights prostrate on the ground under the great elms in Christ Church Walk."

the two Samuels, father and son, did their utmost to persuade John to seek the post. He was not insensible to their wishes, but was by no means disposed to comply with them, for what seemed to him good and sufficient reasons. Twenty-six of these reasons were argued out in the letters, but they were all reducible to two; namely, that he thought he could be more holy and more useful at Oxford. He says: "Another can supply my place at Epworth better than at Oxford, and the good done here is of a far more diffusive nature. It is a more extensive benefit to sweeten the fountain than to do the same to particular streams."

Samuel, however, urged strongly that John's ordination vow obliged him to undertake parish work, and that he perjured himself if he refused to do so. This touched him at a very tender point, for his conscience was most sensitive. John referred the matter for settlement to the bishop, whose reply was, "It doth not seem to me that at your ordination you engaged yourself to undertake the care of any parish, if you can better serve God and his Church elsewhere." And Wesley adds, "Now that I can, as a clergyman, better serve God and his Church in my present position I have all reasonable evidence." However, in spite of all this, he seems to have yielded ultimately to the earnest pleadings of his father and brother, and, no doubt, also the united appeals of his mother and sisters, who would otherwise lose their home. He consented to accept the living if it could be procured. We have seen that John Broughton, one of his own pupils, made efforts for him with those in whose gift it lay; so did General Oglethorpe and others. But for some reason, probably the reports of his extreme strictness, the application was unsuccessful; the living of Epworth was given to a gentleman who appears never to have resided there, and the work was transferred to a curate. God had something more important for John Wesley.

The good old rector, who had had such a hard struggle all through life, finished his labors April 25, 1735, at the age of seventy-two, shortly after finishing his learned treatise on the Book of Job. His sons were by his side during his last hours. His mind was at rest. He said to John, "The inward witness, son, the inward witness—this is the proof, the strongest proof, of Christianity." But it was some years before this son knew much about that. The day before his death he told Charles, "The weaker I am in body the

stronger and more sensible support I feel from God." To the question, "Are you in much pain?" he replied: "God does chasten me with pain, yea, all my bones with strong pain. But I thank him for all, I bless him for all, I love him for all." Laying his hands upon the head of Charles, he said: "Be steady. The Christian faith will surely revive



CURIOUS MAP OF PALESTINE FROM SAMUEL WESLEY'S JOB.

Showing the author's dedicatory inscription.

in this kingdom; you shall see it, though I shall not." To his daughter Emilia he said, "Do not be concerned at my death; God will then begin to manifest himself to my family." So he peacefully passed away, just before sunset, and was buried "very frugally, yet decently, in the churchyard, according to his own desire." Little did he think to what strange uses his modest tombstone would be put in after years.

John Wesley again returned to Oxford, whence he was, within a few months, to be removed to a widely different sphere of action. The group of earnest Christians who had

composed the Holy Club was soon dispersed. "In October, 1735, John and Charles Wesley and Ingham left England, with a design to go and preach to the Indians in Georgia; but the rest of the gentlemen continued to meet till one and another were ordained and left the university. By which means, in about two years' time, scarce any of them were left."

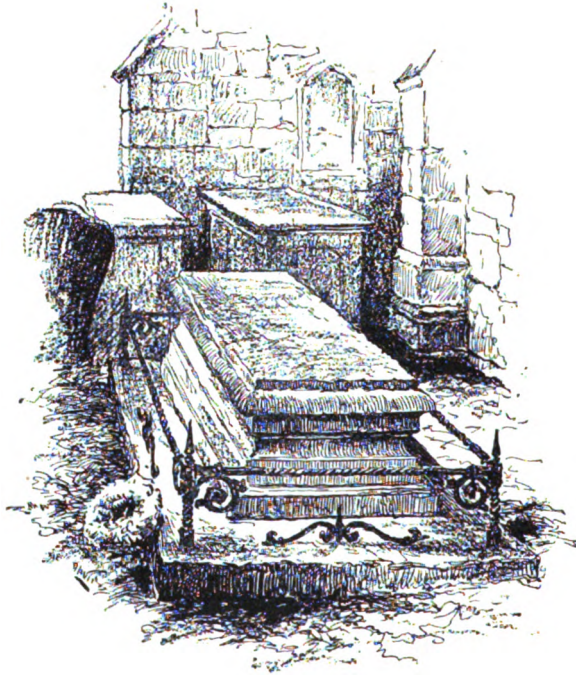
Whitefield had some oversight of them until, in February, 1738, he also embarked for Georgia. Kinchin, Hutchins, Kirkham and others were more or less at Oxford subsequently, and rendered valuable service in the outside work; but there was not continuously a sufficient number to maintain the frequent meetings, and the society was thus gradually dissolved. The influence of it remained a while as a sweet savor in Oxford, and was distributed widely by those who left. After Wesley's return from Georgia he met some of them, and wrote: "Soon after I returned to England I had a meeting with Messrs. Ingham, Stonehouse, Hall, Hutchins, Kinchin, and a few other clergymen, who all appeared to be of one heart as well as of one judgment, resolved to be Bible Christians at all events, and, wherever they were, to preach, with all their might, plain old Bible Christianity."

The main purpose of these Oxonian Methodists had been to save their own souls and the souls of others. Though the little society passed away, yet through the lives of these three sons of genius and of grace, John and Charles Wesley and George Whitefield, first a university was aroused, then a kingdom was set in a blaze, and the nations beyond the seas felt the glow of the divine fires whose new enkindlings had occurred in the Holy Club.

To the two Wesleys, however, the great doctrines of justification by faith and the witness of the Spirit were not yet



experimental verities. And they were to learn their practical force not from the voice and pen of any great teacher within



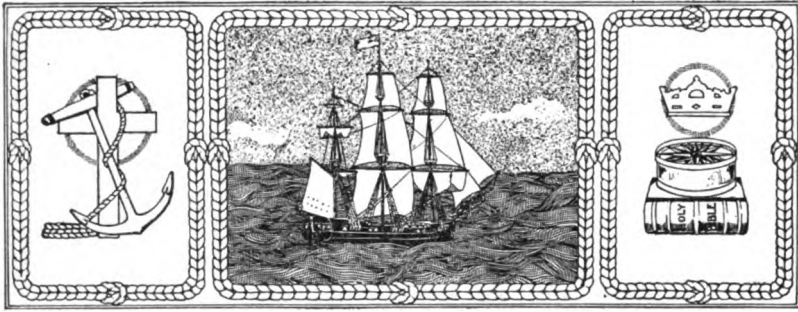
DRAWN BY W. B. DAVIS.

AFTER PHOTO.

GRAVE OF REV. SAMUEL WESLEY, SR., IN EPWORTH  
CHURCHYARD.

The tombstone has a place in Methodist history, since it served John Wesley for a pulpit when he was forbidden to preach in his father's church.

their own Church, but from the lips of a humble Moravian preacher, and from the glowing commentaries of the great German reformer.



## CHAPTER XXV

### **The Genesis of Georgia**

THE MISSIONARY INHERITANCE OF THE WESLEYS.—SAVANNAH.—OGLETHORPE.—THE INTEREST OF THE WESLEYS IN GEORGIA.—TOMOCHI-CHI.—JOHN ELIOT'S INDIAN BIBLE.

**L**ONG before the dawn of the great societies the missionary spirit was the heritage of the Wesley family. That sturdy Nonconformist, the first John Westley, had a burning desire to go to Surinam or Maryland. His son Samuel, the Epworth rector, had sympathies that overleaped all parochial boundaries. He devised a great mission for India, China, and Abyssinia, and a year before his death lamented that he was too infirm to go to Georgia. Now the imagination of his Methodist sons is fired with the idea of evangelizing the Indians, and the recently widowed "Mother of Methodism" utters her famous missionary saying.

A royal charter had been granted in 1732 for the establishment of a colony, named after the king, "in that part of Carolina which lies from the most northern part of the Savannah river all along the seacoast to the southward." Our old map, prepared before the colony had been founded, was published in a volume of 1741. This book was ready just in time to record Whitefield's new mission "into those parts," "and his great pains and success in collecting contributions

for raising and endowing an Orphan House, which we hear is near finished."

Savannah, which does not yet appear on the maps, "is now increased," says the old book, "to about 140 houses. It lies in



REDUCED FROM THE COPPERPLATE BY H. MOLL.

A "NEW MAP OF NORTH AMERICA," 1741.

This map, issued in London in 1741, shows the extent of European knowledge of the North American Continent at the time of Whitefield's first voyage.

a pleasant and fruitful country, insomuch that an acre produces near 30 bushels of Indian corn. Last year 100,000 lbs. weight of skins was brought by Indians. There are 600 whites. The town of Frederica has begun to malt and brew, and the soldiers' wives spin the cotton of the country, which

they knit into stockings. The Georgia silk is the best working silk I ever saw. Beef is 1½d per pound; pork, veal and mutton from 2d to 4½, and tea 6s." This was only three years after the Wesleys left Savannah. The British Colonies at this time were a narrow fringe on the eastern coast of the great continent. From New York to California, and from Lake Superior to New Orleans, was one vast expanse of rich but uncultivated country, the wilderness haunt of scattered tribes of Indians. Bancroft names above forty tribes, with 180,000 souls, whose wigwams and hunting grounds were east of the Mississippi.

The founder of the colony was James Edward Oglethorpe, "a very remarkable man," says Lecky, "whose long life of eighty-six years was crowded with picturesque incidents and with the most varied and active benevolence." Pope refers to him in his couplet:

One driven by strong benevolence of soul  
Shall fly like Oglethorpe from pole to pole.

He was one of Johnson's honored friends, and Boswell repeats his anecdotes. He was educated at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, and entered the army. When he was young, and serving under Prince Eugene, a prince of Wurtemberg, with whom he was at table, took up a glass of wine and flung some of it in his face. To have challenged him at once would have appeared too quarrelsome, and to take no notice, cowardly. So, restraining his naturally impetuous temper, the young soldier fixed his eye on the high-born bully and, smiling all the time as if he took the insult as a jest, said, "My prince, that's a good joke; but we do it much better in England," and dashed a glassful of wine in His Serene Highness's face. An old general who sat by said, "Il a bien fait, mon prince; vous l'avez commencé," and thus all ended in good humor.

Oglethorpe returned to England, entered Parliament in 1722, and was a member for twenty-two years. He was hot-tempered, but a man of indomitable energy and of practical organizing ability, "too honest to take high rank," says



FROM THE COPPERPLATE BY RAVENET.

GEN. JAMES EDWARD OGLETHORPE.

Philanthropist and founder of Georgia.

Lecky, "among the intriguing politicians of his time." He was England's great prison reformer before Howard. Having found an old friend dying from barbarous treatment in the Fleet prison for debtors, he called the attention of Parliament, now under Walpole's administration, to the whole question of prison management.

Oglethorpe was appointed chairman of the committee of

inquiry which supplied a subject for Hogarth's pencil. It appeared that heavy fees were extorted from prisoners, and those unable to pay them were treated with utmost brutality. They were left, manacled, in a dungeon above a common sewer where the festering bodies of the dead were placed awaiting inquests. Oglethorpe's friend and others were locked up with prisoners suffering from smallpox, and soon died. Others were reduced almost to skeletons by starvation; sick women died of neglect; men, tortured with thumb-screws, lingered in slow agony under irons. The poet Thomson refers to the prison inquiry in his lines:

And here can I forget the generous band  
Who, touch'd with human woe, redressive search'd  
Into the horrors of the gloomy jail,  
Unpitied and unheard, where Misery moans,  
Where Sickness pines, where Thirst and Hunger burn,  
And poor Misfortune feels the lash of vice?

Oglethorpe, ever practical, determined not only to reform the prison, but to provide for the future of the prisoners, and, like Berkeley, turned his thoughts westward. He conceived the idea of founding a colony in which poor debtors, obtaining freedom, might find a refuge. The charter for Georgia was secured. Parliament granted him £10,000; the Bank of England, £10,000; and £16,000 was raised by subscriptions—the whole amounting to the purchasing value of half a million dollars.

The two Samuel Wesleys, father and son, and many others became intensely interested in the scheme. It was established on antislavery principles—and here again Oglethorpe was before his age. "My friends and I," wrote he, "determined not to suffer slavery there." Thus slavery, which existed in its worst forms in the British settlement of South Carolina and to the south, in the Spanish settlement of Florida, was

kept out of Georgia until after Oglethorpe's return from America. It was intended, also, that the colony should be a missionary center as well as a philanthropic and civilizing force. A friendly alliance was made with the Indians, who



DRAWN BY W. B. DAVIS.

AFTER AN OLD GERMAN PRINT.

## TOMO-CHI-CHI.

The mico, or chief, of the Yamacraws. He was the guide and protector of the Georgia colony, and the companion and ally of Oglethorpe.

showed a desire to be instructed. Writing in 1733, Oglethorpe says, "Their king comes constantly to church, is desirous to be instructed in the Christian religion, and has given me his nephew, a boy who is his next of kin, to educate."

The chief's name was Tomo-chi-chi, and he became of great service to the colonists. "We do not," he said, "know good from evil, but desire to be instruct-

ed . . . that we may do well with, and be regarded amongst the children of the Trustees." Nor was he alone, for another chief declared that, "though they were poor and ignorant, he who had given the English breath had given them breath also; that he who had made them both had given more wisdom to the white man; that they were firmly persuaded that the Great Power which dwelt in heaven, and all around"—and then

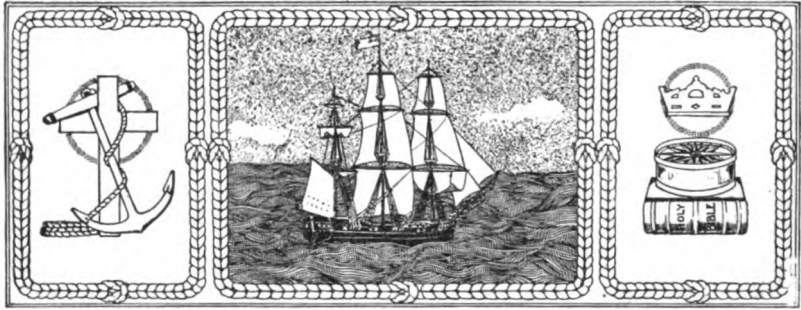
he spread forth his hands and lengthened the sound of his words—"and which had given breath to all men, had sent the English thither for the instruction of them and their wives and children."

Tomo-chi-chi went to England in 1734 with Oglethorpe, and was presented to George II at Kensington. This event aroused national interest. The chief presented the English king with eagles' feathers, and made a speech.

These were some of the Indians whom Wesley expected to find, as a race, "docile children." It was a century before this that John Eliot began his work among the Pequot tribe, and thirty years later he translated the Moheecan Bible—the first Bible printed in America. At Cambridge, the seat of Harvard College, a small Indian college had been founded. Eliot passed away at eighty-six with the words, "Welcome, joy!" upon his lips, leaving 1,100 Indians members in six churches. John Wesley was acquainted with Eliot's work, for in his Journal he quotes one of his sayings: "My memory is gone, my understanding is gone, but I think I have more love than ever."

But Wesley was not permitted to become another Eliot. With his remarkable faculty for languages and his direct style of speech, Southey considers, he might have done a noble work among the Indians. But he had yet to find Eliot's Puritan gospel of experience; and when he found it he was called to preach it to the masses of his own countrymen, whose moral need was as desperate as that of the wild children of the West, and even more difficult to touch.





## CHAPTER XXVI

### Oxford Methodism Afloat

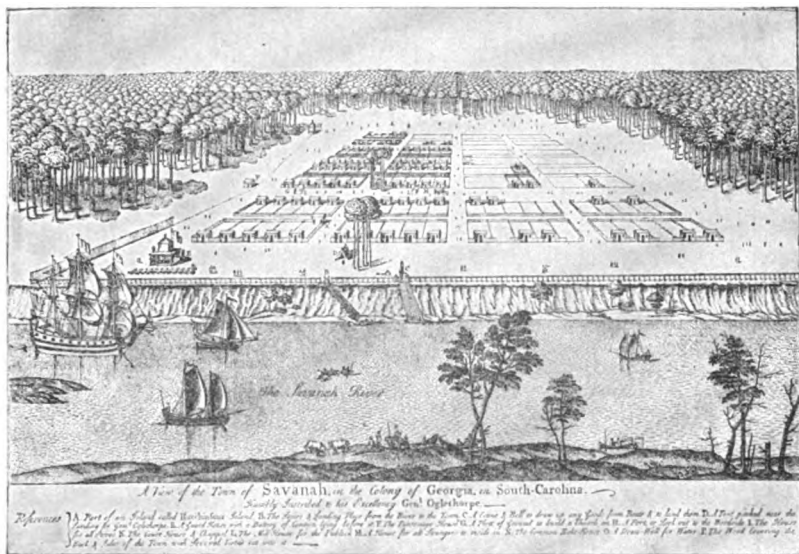
BEGINNINGS OF SAVANNAH.—WESLEY MEETS OGLETHORPE.—JOHN AND CHARLES OFFER THEMSELVES FOR THE WORK.—JOHN'S MOTIVES.—FELLOW-PASSENGERS.—THE MORAVIAN'S FAITH.

THE first emigration to Georgia was conducted by Oglethorpe in person, who in February, 1733, encamped on the site of the new town of Savannah. Four beautiful pines protected his tent, and for a year he sought no other shelter. The streets were laid out with the greatest regularity, as our old print well shows, and the houses were built on one model—"each a frame of sawed timber, 24 x 16 feet, floored with rough deals," the sides of boards and the roofs shingled. "Ere long a walk cut through the native woods led to a large garden by the river side, destined as a nursery of European fruits and of the wonderful products of America."

Thus began the commonwealth of Georgia, the place of refuge for the distressed people of Great Britain and the persecuted Protestants of Europe. For soon there came the company of persecuted Salzburgers, who had renounced Roman Catholicism and were driven from their German home in 1733-4. They were followed by Scotch Highlanders, who founded New Inverness, in Darien. Then came the

first band of Moravian sufferers “for conscience’ sake.” The Methodist Wesleys were to join the fifth company of emigrants.

After his father’s death John Wesley went to London to present the rector’s book on Job to Queen Caroline. There he met some of the Georgian trustees, who were in search of a missionary. Dr. Burton, an Oxford friend of



FROM A PRINT OF 1741.

THE BEGINNINGS OF SAVANNAH.

Wesley, introduced him to Oglethorpe as a man well fitted for the work. Would Wesley accept it? The thought of his widowed mother made him hesitate, “for” said he, “I am the staff of her age, her support, and comfort.” He consulted his brother Samuel—now head master of Blundell’s famous school at Tiverton—and William Law. He also went to Manchester for the advice of Clayton and his friend, Dr. Byrom. He finally went to Epworth and laid the case before

his mother. "Had I twenty sons," was her noble reply, "I should rejoice that they were all so employed, though I should never see them more."

Wesley consented to become missionary chaplain, with a stipend of £50 a year. His brother Charles decided to go as secretary to Oglethorpe, and was ordained that he might also officiate as a clergyman. To Benjamin Ingham, Wesley wrote in his laconic way, "Fast and pray, and then send me word whether you dare go with me to the Indians." He dared to go. Charles Delamotte, the son of a London merchant, joined them, for "he had a mind to leave the world and give himself entirely to God."

Wesley's motives are best learned from his own candid words in a letter to a friend. The apparent selfishness of his first motive must be judged in the light of his frank confession of his need of the first qualification for his mission and the higher altruism of his second motive: "My chief motive," said he, "is the hope of saving my own soul. I hope to learn the true sense of the Gospel of Christ by preaching it to the heathen. They have no comments to construe away the text; no vain philosophy to corrupt it; no luxurious, sensual, covetous, ambitious expounders to soften its unpleasing truths. . . . They have no party, no interest to serve, and are therefore fit to receive the Gospel in its simplicity. They are as little children, humble, willing to learn, and eager to do the will of God." "I then hope to know what it is to love my neighbor as myself, and to feel the powers of that second motive to visit the heathen, even the desire to impart to them what I have received—a saving knowledge of the Gospel of Christ; but this I dare not think on yet. It is not for me, who have been a grievous sinner from my youth up, . . . to expect God should work so great things by my

hands; but I am assured, if I be once converted myself, he will then employ me both to strengthen my brethren and to preach his name to the Gentiles."

It is evident that Wesley's imagination kindled at the thought that he should be chiefly, to use his own word, "a missioner" to the Indians. The good Oxford don's conception of their receptive simplicity almost raises a sad smile to-day. "Why, Mr. Wesley, if they are this already, what more can Christianity do for them?" exclaimed a lady to whom Wesley expressed his glowing anticipations.

A copy of Walker's Weekly Penny Journal for Oct. 18,

1735, has been preserved, and in it is a remarkable notice, of which we give a facsimile. That the only three attendants of Oglethorpe who are named should be members of the Holy Club, and that they accompany a man of illustrious military career, proves how far the Methodist movement was beginning to reach. And that over half a thousand copies of

James Oglethorp, Esq; Member of Parliament for Haldemere in the County of Surrey, embarks on board the Simmonds, Capt. Cornish, for Georgia, this Day.

*Tuesday Morning James Oglethorpe, Esq, set out by Land for Gravesend, and the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, Student of Lincoln College, Oxon; the Rev. Mr. Charles Wesley, Student of Christ-Church-College, and the Rev. Mr. Ingram of Queen's, in order to embark for Georgia.*

*There were sent along with these Gentlemen, as a Benefaction of several worthy Ladies and Gentlemen, 550 of the Bishop of Man's Treatises on the Sacrament, and his Lordship's Principles and Duties of Christianity, for the use of the English Families settled in Georgia.*

THE NEWSPAPER NOTICE OF THE WESLEYS'  
DEPARTURE FOR AMERICA.

Facsimile from Walker's Weekly Penny Journal, London,  
October 18, 1735.

religious books should be specified as gifts to go with them over to their new field of labor may be safely considered as brought about by John Wesley, whose sense of the importance of books for the religious life was never wanting.

On board the *Simmonds*, a vessel of two hundred and twenty tons, were twenty-six Moravians, under the care of their bishop, David Nitschman, and about eighty English passengers. Another vessel, the *London Merchant*, was also chartered for colonists. Although they started from Gravesend in October, it was December before they left England, and many weeks were spent at Cowes, on the Isle of Wight, where they had to wait for the man-of-war that was to be their convoy. This gave time for the Methodists to plan their days as carefully as at Oxford. From four to five every morning was spent in private prayer, then for two hours they read the Bible together, comparing it with the fathers'. Breakfast and public prayers filled two hours more. From nine to twelve Charles Wesley wrote sermons, John studied German, Delamotte read Greek, and Ingham taught the emigrants' children; and the remainder of the day was as carefully mapped out, all uniting with the Germans in their evening service.

The friends went ashore at Cowes, and during a walk agreed to consult each other in all important matters, to give up their own judgment when it was opposed to that of the rest, and, in case of equality, to decide the matter by lot. Charles Wesley preached in the parish church, and Samuel, who had opposed his brother's mission, hoped Charles would be convinced by the great crowds that attended the services that he had no need to go to Georgia to convert sinners. At last the warship arrived, and they started on December 10. In the afternoon they passed the Needles, "and," wrote

Wesley, “the ragged rocks, with the waves dashing and foaming at the foot of them, and the white side of the island rising to such a height, perpendicular from the beach, gave a strong idea of ‘him that spanneth the heavens, and holdeth the waters in the hollow of his hand!’”

The voyage, which lasted fifty-seven days, was not without suggestive incidents.

One day Wesley heard Oglethorpe storming away in his cabin, and opening the door, found him in a furious passion with his Italian servant, who stood trembling before him.

“You must excuse me, Mr. Wesley,” cried the angry general, “I have met with a provocation too great to bear. This villain, Grimaldi, has drunk nearly the whole of my Cyprus wine, the only wine that agrees with me. But I am determined to be revenged. I have ordered him to be tied hand and foot and to be carried to the man-of-war which sails with us. The rascal should have taken care how he used me so, for I never forgive.”

“Then,” said Wesley, looking at him with great calmness, “I hope, sir, you never sin.”

Oglethorpe was at once subdued by the gentle reproof. His vengeance was gone, and with characteristic generosity he pulled a bunch of keys from his pocket and tossed them to Grimaldi, saying, “There, villain, take my keys, and behave better for the future.”

The general, in turn, could say a word for the Wesleys. When some of the officers, not liking the gravity of the ministers, thought to have some fun at their expense, Oglethorpe indignantly said:

“What do you mean, sirs? Do you take these gentlemen for tithe-pig parsons? They are gentlemen of respectability and learning. They are my friends, and whoever offers an

affront to them insults me." There was no repetition of the offense.

One event deeply impressed Wesley. On several occasions there were storms, and he felt restless, and afraid to die. He had made friends with the Moravians and was charmed by their sweet spirit and excellent discipline. He now found that they were brave as well as gentle. One evening a storm burst just as the Germans began to sing a psalm, and the sea broke, split the mainsail in pieces, covered the ship, and poured in between the decks as if the great deep were swallowing them up. The English began to scream with terror, but the Germans calmly sang on. Wesley asked one of them afterward:

"Were you not afraid?"

"I thank God, no," was the reply.

"But were not your women and children afraid?"

"No," he replied mildly, "our women and children are not afraid to die."

At the close of the day's Journal Wesley writes, "This was the most glorious day which I have hitherto seen."



## CHAPTER XXVII

### **The Anglican Missionaries in their American Adullam**

SPANGENBERG AND WESLEY.—INTERVIEW WITH TOMO-CHI-CHI.—WESLEY THE ASCETIC.—SUNDAY'S WORK.—THE HIGH CHURCHMAN.—BOLZIUS.—INWARDLY MELTING.—CHARLES WESLEY'S DIFFICULTIES.—RETURNS TO ENGLAND.

**O**N February 5, 1736, the Simmonds sailed into the Savannah River, casting anchor near Tybee Island.

The next day John and Charles Wesley first set foot on American soil. "It was a small uninhabited island," writes John, "over against Tybee. Mr. Oglethorpe led us to a rising ground, where we all kneeled down to give thanks." Oglethorpe took boat for Savannah and the next day returned with Spangenberg, a Moravian pastor. Again Wesley caught a glimpse of the spiritual truth he needed as he sought the Moravian's advice about his work. Spangenberg said:

"My brother, I must first ask you one or two questions: Have you the witness within yourself? Does the Spirit of God witness with your spirit that you are a child of God?" Wesley knew not what to answer. The preacher, seeing his hesitation, asked:

"Do you know Jesus Christ?"

"I know," said Wesley, "he is the Saviour of the world."



“ True,” replied he, “ but do you know he has saved you?” Wesley answered, “ I hope he has died to save me.”

Spangenberg only added, “ Do you know yourself?”

“ I do,” was the reply ; but in his Journal he wrote, “ I fear

they were vain words.” Such a spiritual probing Wesley had never before received. The conversation was worth the journey across the ocean. The flash of lightning left him in darkness. He asked Spangenberg many questions about the Moravians of Herrnhuth.

A few days later Wesley was visited by some of the Indians who had been so much in his thought. To-



DRAWN BY W. S. DAVIS.

FROM A COPPERPLATE.

SPANGENBERG.

Moravian missionary in Georgia.

mo-chi-chi, the chief who was presented to George II, spoke as follows: “ I am glad you are come. When I was in England I desired that some would speak the great Word to me ; and my nation then desired to hear it ; but now we are all in confusion. Yet I am glad you are come. I will go up and speak to the wise men of our nation ; and I hope they will

hear. But we would not be made Christians as the Spaniards make Christians: we would be taught before we are baptized."

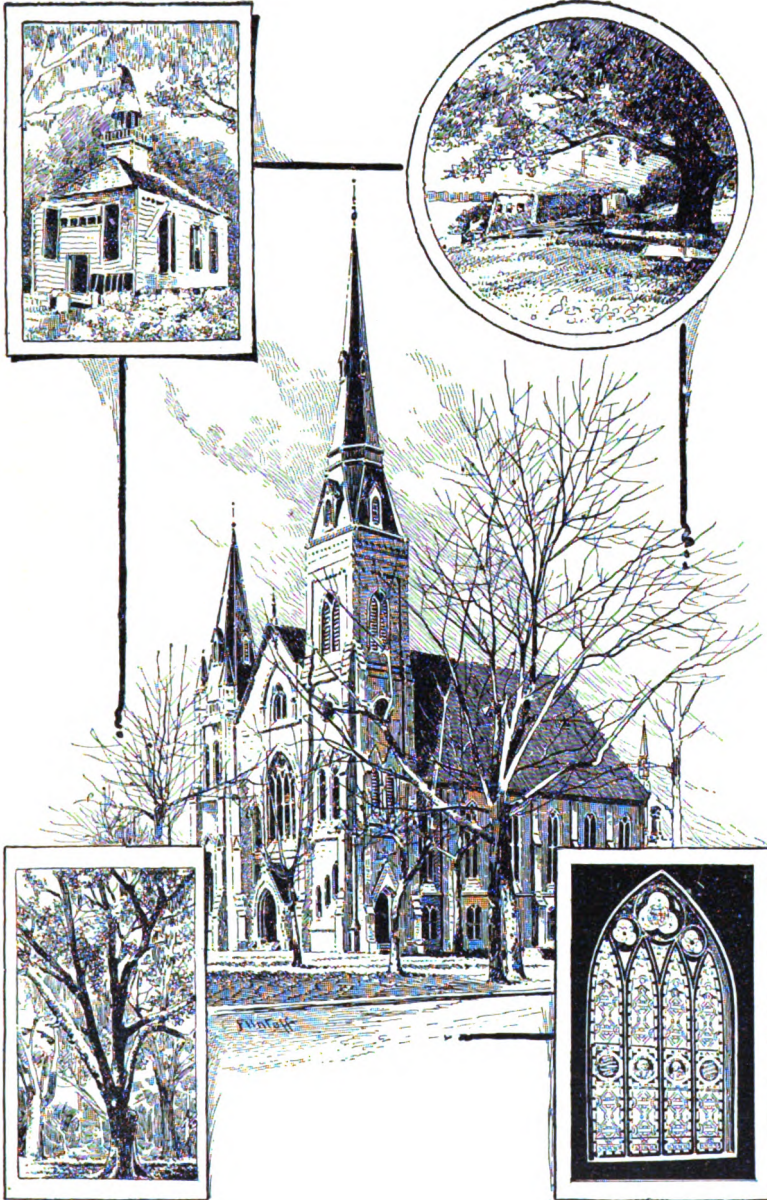
Wesley answered: "There is but One, he that sitteth in heaven, who is able to teach man wisdom. Though we are come so far, we know not whether he will please to teach you by us or no. If he teaches you, you will learn wisdom, but we can do nothing."

John Wesley found Savannah, with forty houses, built on a bluff forty or fifty feet above the bend of the river, which here was about a thousand feet across. He began his ministry with a sermon on "Charity" (1 Cor. xiii), and described the deathbed of his father at Epworth. The courthouse, which served as church, was crowded, and the mission began with great promise. Ten days later a ball had to be given up, for the church was full for prayers and the ballroom empty! A lady told him when he landed that he would see as well-dressed a congregation on Sundays as most which he had seen in London. He found that she was right, and he preached on the subject of dress with such effect that gold and costly apparel disappeared, and the ladies came to church in plain linen or woolen. He established day schools, teaching one himself and placing Delamotte in the other. Some of Delamotte's boys who wore shoes and stockings thought themselves superior to the boys who went barefoot. To cure their pride Wesley changed schools with his friend and went to teach without shoes and stockings. The boys stared, but Wesley kept them to their work, and before the end of the week he had cured the lads of their vanity.

The Sunday appointments were many. He divided the public prayers, reading the morning service at five, having the sermon and Holy Communion at eleven, and the evening

service at three. There was a meeting at his own house for reading, prayer, and praise. At six o'clock he attended the Moravian service. He catechised the children at two o'clock, and during the latter part of his stay he had service for the Italians at nine and for the French at one. In two neighboring settlements he read prayers on Saturday in German and French, and he even studied Spanish in order to converse with some Spanish Jews.

All might have gone on well if, as Southey says, he could have taken the advice of Dr. Burton, to consider his parishioners as babes in their progress, and to feed them with milk. But "he drenched them with the physic of an intolerant discipline." His High Churchmanship manifested itself in all the irritating forms common to the sectarian bigots who domineer over timid villagers in some of the rural parishes of England to-day, except that he did not resort to the modern cruelty of depriving the poor and sick Dissenters of relief from public charities. He refused the Lord's Supper to all who had not been episcopally baptized; he re-baptized the children of Dissenters, and he refused to bury all who had not received Anglican baptism. He insisted also on baptism by immersion. He refused the Lord's Supper to one of the most devoted Christian men in the colony, Bolzius, the pastor of the Salzburghers, because he had not been, as he insisted, canonically baptized. In his *unpublished Journal, 1737*, he writes, "I had occasion to make a very unusual trial of the temper of Mr. Bolzius, pastor of the Salzburghers, in which he behaved with such lowliness and meekness as became a disciple of Jesus Christ." And many years later, in commenting on a letter from this good man, he says: "What a truly Christian piety and simplicity breathe in these lines! And yet this very man, when I was at Savannah, did I refuse



DRAWN BY P. E. FLINTOFF.

FROM PHOTOS.

MEMORIALS OF THE WESLEYS IN GEORGIA.

Wesley Church, Frederica.

Ruins of Fort at Frederica.

The Wesley Monumental Church, Savannah.

"Wesley's Oak," St. Simon's Island.

Wesley Window, in Monumental Church.



to admit to the Lord's table because he was not baptized . . . by a minister who had been episcopally ordained. Can anyone carry High Church zeal higher than this? And how well have I been since beaten with mine own staff!"

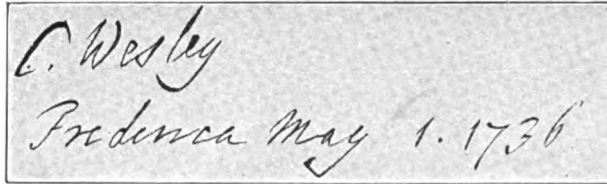
One thing only was wanting to make him a perfect representative of the modern High Churchman; there is no evidence that he believed in the "conversion of the elements" by consecration, or in their doctrine of the real presence. In a letter of 1732 he wrote to his mother, "We cannot allow Christ's human nature to be present in it without allowing either CON- or TRANS-substantiation." That he advised private confession to the priest we have already learned from his sister Emilia's spirited letter, but there is no evidence that he made this a part of his fixed discipline.

No wonder was it that a plain speaker said to Wesley at this time: "The people say they are Protestants, but as for you they cannot tell what religion you are of; they never heard of such a religion before, and they do not know what to make of it."

At the same time, as Rigg has pointed out, Wesley was "inwardly melting, and the light of spiritual liberty was dawning on his soul." He attended a Presbyterian service at Darien, and, to his great astonishment, heard the minister offer a devout *extempore* prayer. He was impressed by the simple beauty of the life of the Moravians, and they sent him to the New Testament. He read Bishop Beveridge's *Pandectæ Canonum Conciliorum*, which sent him to the Scriptures again as a higher authority than tradition or councils. He thus expresses to Wogan his opinion as to the innermost nature of religion: "I entirely agree with you that religion is love and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost; that as it is the happiest, so it is the cheerfulest thing in the world; that it

is utterly inconsistent with moroseness, sourness, and indeed with whatever is not according to the . . . gentleness of Christ Jesus."

Charles Wesley went to Frederica with Oglethorpe, and, with his friend Ingham, became busy in spiritual work as well as in laying out the town, which was a hundred miles south of Savannah. His rigorous and repellent Anglicanism crippled his good work. His preaching, sincere and faithful as it was, procured him more enemies than hearers. Two



AUTOGRAPH OF CHARLES WESLEY.

Written while he was a resident in Georgia.

women formed an infamous plot to discredit him with the governor, and the settlers made unfounded charges against him. Oglethorpe, irritated and worn down, grew suspicious and harsh.

The people took advantage of his change of feeling. Charles Wesley was fired at as he took his meditative "myrtle-walk in the woods," and as the shot whizzed by he said, "I will thank Thee, for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation." But in all this he found training for his future work. There being no church, he preached out of doors and in unconsecrated places. He endured hardship in a leaky hut compared with which the mud and plaster rectory of Epworth was a palace. He spent much time at the camp, for invasion by the Spanish warships was expected daily. But his humor never failed him. He writes: "I

begin to be abused and slighted into an opinion of my own considerableness. I could not be more trampled upon was I a fallen minister of state. I sometimes diverted myself with their odd expressions of contempt, but found the benefit of having undergone a much lower degree of contempt at Oxford." But at length his strength gave way and "a friendly fever" prostrated him. "When my fever was somewhat abated I was led out to bury the scout boatman (killed by the burst of a cannon), and envied him his quiet grave." Such was the despondency of the man who had before him more than half a century of noble and abiding service!

John Wesley came to the help of his distressed brother, and they exchanged pastorates. John came in a flat-bottomed barge, called a pettiawga, and had a narrow escape from drowning in the night. He says: "I wrapped myself up from head to foot in a large cloak, to keep off the sand-flies, and lay down on the quarter-deck. Between one and two I waked under water, being so fast asleep that I did not find where I was till my mouth was full of it. Having left my cloak, I know not how, upon deck, I swam round to the other side of the pettiawga, where a boat was tied, and climbed up by the rope without any hurt more than wetting my clothes. Thou art the God of whom cometh salvation: thou art the Lord by whom we escape death."

When Charles Wesley returned to Frederica he found the governor's old love for him restored, and during the weeks that followed they were in much anxiety from the expected invasion of the Spaniards. The soldier-statesman was depressed, and, sending for Charles Wesley, said: "I am now going to death. You will see me no more." He then gave Charles a diamond ring, as at once a token, a testimonial, and memento. To Oglethorpe's remark, "that he much desired



the conversion of the heathen, and believed my brother intended it," Charles gave this notable reply: "But I believe

On Sund. April 17. Mr. Gardner <sup>15</sup> desired  
to me to preach for him: which I did on  
those words of <sup>16</sup> 2<sup>d</sup> Timothee for 4<sup>th</sup> day, <sup>17</sup> but  
successive born of <sup>18</sup> the <sup>19</sup> world, <sup>20</sup> overcome the <sup>21</sup> world.  
And of <sup>22</sup> 2<sup>d</sup> Timothee, <sup>23</sup> which overcome the <sup>24</sup> world,  
world, <sup>25</sup> save our souls. <sup>26</sup> So of <sup>27</sup> 2<sup>d</sup> Thimothee  
of <sup>28</sup> 2<sup>d</sup> Thimothee Religion, <sup>29</sup> with these words <sup>30</sup> he  
bravely led me to give. I heard but one  
objection (which indeed was made by a  
man of Character & Education) "Why, if  
this be the <sup>31</sup> truth, <sup>32</sup> a <sup>33</sup> man <sup>34</sup> must <sup>35</sup> have <sup>36</sup> more  
courage than Alexander the Great."

Monday 18. I had a conversation of  
some hours with Mr. Gardner, whom I found  
(very different from my Representations  
had heard) to be a man not only of very  
extensive Knowledge, but also of things  
Book & Man, but (as for I can judge) of  
a very excellent spirit.

Tuesday 19. I went on board again. That  
evening we did not get out of the Harbour.  
The next morning we sailed a few leagues  
but of wind changing & contrary, <sup>37</sup> in which  
of evening we were forced to drift all  
night. The next night, Thursday 21. we with  
much difficulty got back to Char. Town.  
I was now resolved to use more free-  
dom of speech than before, & to be a  
shamed of <sup>38</sup> 2<sup>d</sup> Timothee of it. And this, by

it will never be under your patronage, for then men would account for it without God." The wind turned against the Spaniards, and their ships never came.

Charles Wesley was sent to England with dispatches in July, 1736, in a wretched craft, with a more wretched captain. He was again prostrated with dysentery and fever. At Boston, where they were obliged to run in for repairs, he nearly died, but revived, to perform re-

markable labors for many years. After a trying and tempestuous voyage of two months he landed at Deal in

FACSIMILE OF A PAGE OF JOHN WESLEY'S  
MS. JOURNAL IN GEORGIA.

December. His thoughts during the stormy months at sea appear in the following noble verses, which have the rhythmic roll of the ocean-wave :

A HYMN TO BE SUNG AT SEA.

Throughout the deep thy footsteps shine,  
We own thy way is in the sea,  
O'erawed by majesty divine,  
And lost in thy immensity.

Infinite God, thy greatness spanned  
These heavens, and meted out the skies;  
Lo, in the hollow of thy hand  
The measured waters sink and rise.

Yet in thy Son, divinely great,  
We claim thy providential care;  
Boldly we stand before thy seat,  
Our Advocate hath placed us there.

With him we are gone up on high;  
Since he is ours, and we are his;  
With him we reign above the sky,  
Yet walk upon our subject seas.

We boast of our recovered powers;  
Lords are we of the lands and floods;  
And earth, and heaven, and all, is ours;  
And we are Christ's, and Christ is God's.

He poured forth his gratitude for his many remarkable deliverances in the following hymn of praise :

God of my life, whose gracious power  
Through varied deaths my soul hath led,  
Or turned aside the fatal hour,  
Or lifted up my sinking head :

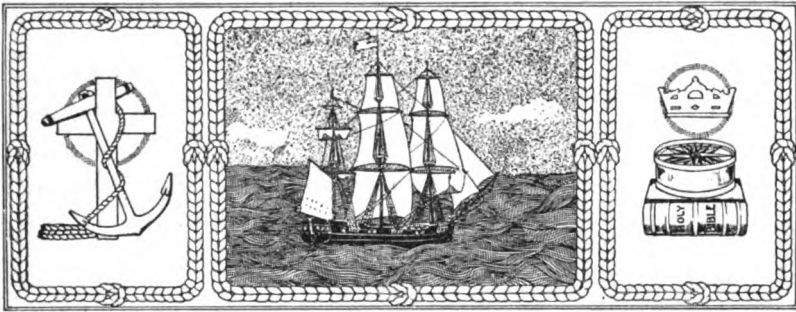
In all my ways thy hand I own,  
Thy ruling providence I see;  
O ! help me still my course to run,  
And still direct my paths to thee.

## British Methodism

Oft hath the sea confessed thy power  
And given me back to thy command;  
It could not, Lord, my life devour,  
Safe in the hollow of thy hand.

Oft from the margin of the grave  
Thou, Lord, hast lifted up my head;  
Sudden I found thee near to save;  
The fever owned thy touch, and fled.

When he was strong enough he gladly hastened to Oxford to visit his Methodist friends, and did not forget the prisoners.



## CHAPTER XXVIII

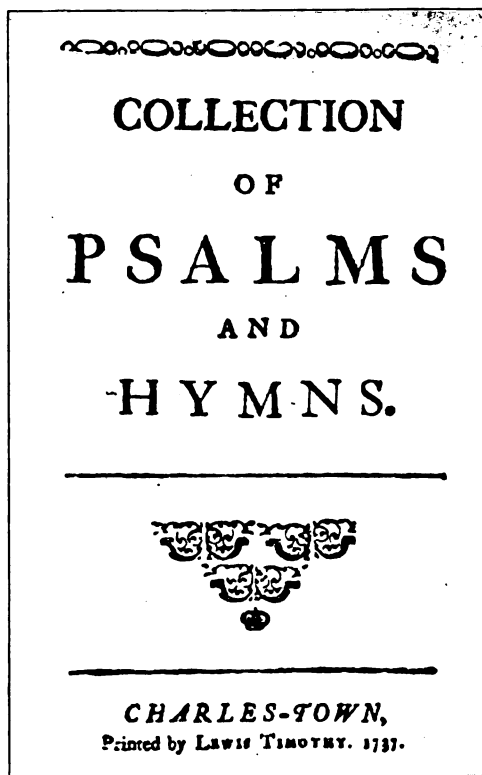
### The Romance of Savannah, and the Return to England

WESLEY'S FIRST HYMN BOOK.—SOPHIA HOPKEY.—THE MORAVIANS SAY "NO."—THE SEQUEL.—HOME AGAIN.—WHAT GEORGIA DID FOR JOHN WESLEY.

WE left John Wesley in Georgia. These sea-born hymns by Charles Wesley remind us of one American enterprise by his brother which is related to the psalmody of the coming Revival. While he was in Georgia John Wesley published his first Collection of Psalms and Hymns. It was printed "at Charles-Town" (Charleston, S. C.), and the title-page is dated 1737. In a preface to a reprint of this volume Osborne says: "It has been supposed that this Collection of Psalms and Hymns was the first published in our language, so that in this provision for the improvement of public worship . . . Wesley led the way." The arrangement of the hymns shows a strict regard "to the usages of a remote antiquity, to which he then attached a very exaggerated importance. It is pleasant, however, to note that the foolish bigotry which led him to refuse the Lord's Supper to a Lutheran minister did not prevent him from availing himself of the Psalms and Hymns of Dr. Watts." His father's hymn rescued from the Epworth fire, Addison's

hymns, and some of his own noble translations from the German are included in the collection.

There came to John Wesley at this time a romantic but painful experience. On his arrival in Georgia he had been



FACSIMILE OF TITLE-PAGE OF JOHN WESLEY'S  
FIRST HYMNAL.

Published at Charleston, S. C., 1737.

introduced to Miss Sophia Hopkey, niece of Mr. Causton, the chief magistrate of Savannah. She was an attractive young lady, with elegant manners, and by degrees she won the heart of the young chaplain. She attended all the services, sought his counsel before Holy Communion, and took to light suppers and early hours at his suggestion. She nursed him through a serious illness from fever, and, consulting Oglethorpe as to what dress pleased the severe "missioner," wore

neat and simple white. Delamotte warned him against the lady, who, he thought, was not likely to promote his usefulness. That Wesley was deeply in love is evident, although he does not appear to have "engaged himself formally."

With "a guileless simplicity," says Overton, "which one hardly knows whether to be provoked at or to admire," John consulted the Moravians as to whether he should marry her. Their answer was unfavorable, and Wesley meekly replied, "The will of the Lord be done." From that time he avoided all close intimacy with the lady, and very soon afterward she married a Mr. Williamson. We reproduce (on p. 257) the entry in Wesley's Journal recording her engagement, and her husband's refusal to allow her to speak again to her chaplain. When he was eighty-two years old Wesley still remembered the trouble and disappointment of that time, and wrote: "I remember formerly, when I read these words in the church at Savannah, 'Son of man, behold, I take from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke,' I was pierced through as with a sword, and could not utter a word more. But one comfort is, He that made the heart can heal the heart."



PSALMS and HYMNS  
*For Sunday.*

I.

Pfalm XXXIII.

- 1 **Y**E holy Souls, in God rejoice,  
Your Maker's Praise becomes your Voice:  
Great is your Theme, your Songs be new  
Sing of his Name, his Word, his Ways,  
His Works of Nature and of Grace,  
How wise and holy, just and true!
- 2 Justice and Truth he ever loves,  
And the whole Earth his Goodness proves;  
His Word the heavenly Arches spread:  
How wide they shine from North to South!  
And by the Spirit of his Mouth  
Were all the Starry Armies made.
- 3 Thou gatherest the wide-flowing Seas;  
Those watry Treasures know their Place  
In the vast Store-house of the Deep:  
He spake, and gave all Nature Birth,  
And Fires and Seas and Heaven and Earth  
His everlasting Orders keep.
- 4 Let Mortals tremble and adore  
A GOD of such relentless Power,  
Nor dare indulge their feeble Rage:  
Vain are your Thoughts and weak your Hands,  
But his eternal Council stands,  
And rules the World from Age to Age.

A 2 IL

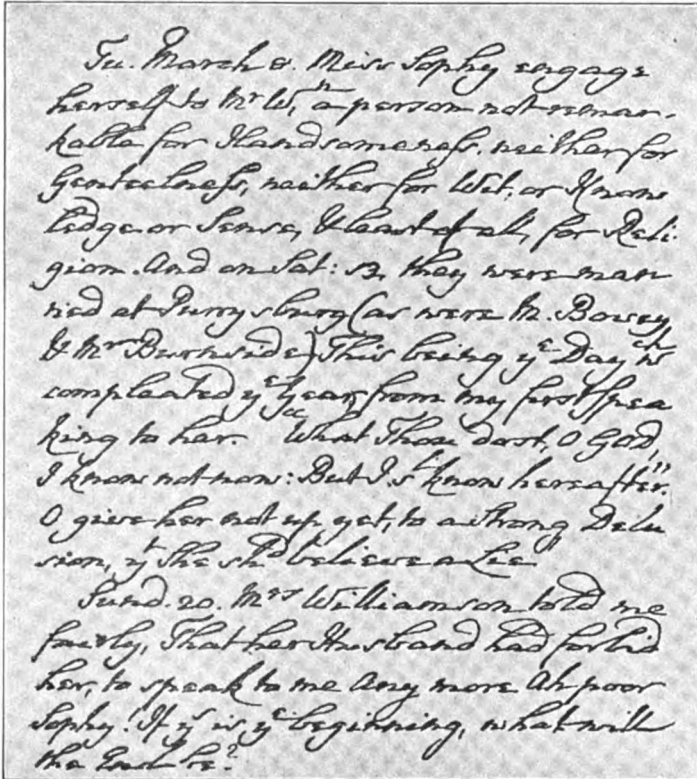
PSALM FROM THE FIRST METHODIST HYMNAL.  
Facsimile from Collection of Psalms and Hymns, 1737.

But the matter did not end here. Later, Wesley felt it his duty to rebuke Mrs. Williamson for inconsistency and to refuse her the Communion. He was prosecuted by her husband for so doing, but, as a High Churchman, refused to recognize the authority of a civil court. Then the storm burst. The colonists found many grievances against their rigid clergyman, and to end the matter, on the advice of his friends, he decided to leave Georgia.

So with a heavy heart, on December 2, 1737, Wesley took boat with three friends for Carolina, on his way to England. After a trying journey of ten days they reached Charleston, and went on board the *Samuel*. After a stormy voyage Wesley rejoiced to see "English land once more; which, about noon, appeared to be the Lizard Point," and the next day they landed at Deal, only a day after Whitefield had sailed out. Whitefield afterward declared: "The good Mr. John Wesley has done in America is inexpressible. His name is very precious among the people; and he has laid a foundation that I hope neither men nor devils will ever be able to shake. O, that I may follow him as he has followed Christ!"

On his voyage home, and just after he landed, Wesley poured out his soul in language which in after years he modified in some of its expressions. He wrote in his Journal: "I went to America to convert the Indians, but, O! who shall convert me? who, what is he that will deliver me from this evil heart of unbelief? I have a fair summer religion; I can talk well, nay, and believe myself, while no danger is near; but let death look me in the face, and my spirit is troubled. Nor can I say, to die is gain . . . 'I show my faith by my works,' by staking my all upon it. I would do so again and again a thousand times, if the choice

were still to make. Whoever sees me sees I would be a Christian. . . . But in a storm I think, What if the Gospel



Tu. March 8. Miss Sophy engages herself to Mr W, a person not remarkable for Handsomeness, neither for Gentleness, neither for Wit, or Knowledge or Sense, & least of all, for Religion. And on Sat: 13, they were married at Dury Church (as were Mr. Bowyer & Mr. Burdett) this being y<sup>e</sup> Day so compleated y<sup>e</sup> year from my first speaking to her. What Thou dost, O God, I know not now: But I know hereafter, O give her not up yet, to a strong Delusion, y<sup>e</sup> she sh<sup>d</sup> believe a Lie.

Sund. 20. Mrs Williamson told me faintly, That her Husband had forbid her, to speak to me any more. Ah poor Sophy! If y<sup>e</sup> is y<sup>e</sup> beginning, what will the End be?

## A FRAGMENT OF ROMANCE.

Facsimile of a passage in Wesley's MS. Journal, in Georgia, relating to the engagement and marriage of Miss Sophia Hopkey.

be not true? . . . O! who will deliver me from this fear of death? . . . Where shall I fly from it?"

The day that he landed in England, February 1, 1738, there was another gloomy entry in his Journal, but he ends it with his face toward the light: "This, then, have I learned in

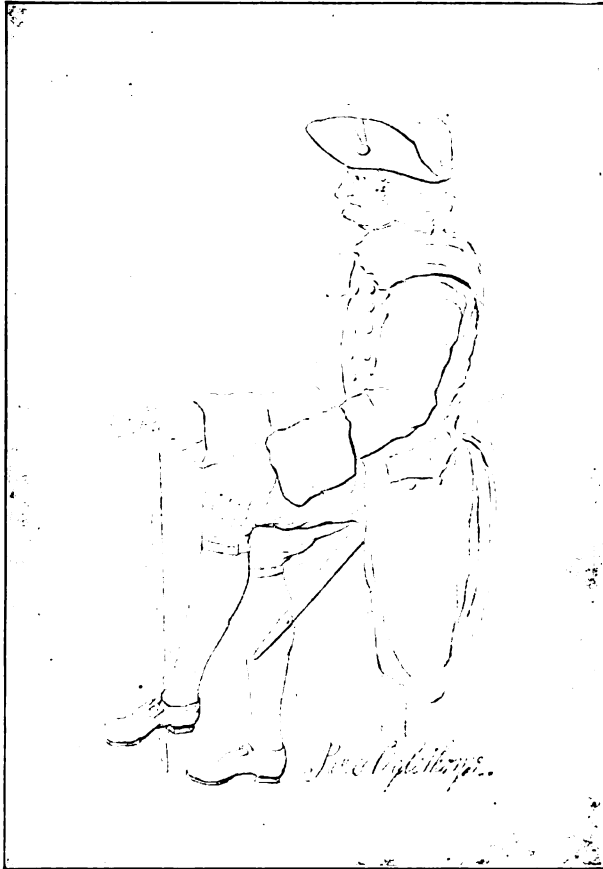


the ends of the earth, that I 'am fallen short of the glory of God;' that my whole heart is 'altogether corrupt and abominable;' . . . that my own works, my own sufferings, my own righteousness, are so far from reconciling me to an offended God, . . . that the most specious of them need an atonement themselves; . . . that, 'having the sentence of death' in my heart, . . . I have no hope . . . but that if I seek, I shall find Christ, and 'be found in him, not having my own righteousness, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.'" "I want . . . that faith which enables everyone that hath it to cry out, 'I live not; . . . but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.' I want that faith which none can have without knowing he hath it; [when] 'the Spirit itself beareth witness with his spirit, that he is a child of God.'"

Many years later when republishing his Journals he added four short notes: "I, who went to America to convert others, was never myself converted," was one statement, and on this he remarks, "I am not sure of this." "I am a child of wrath," was his early record; "I believe not," was his later note. And in another note he says: "I had even then the faith of a servant, though not that of a son"—a distinction upon which he dwells in one of his sermons. In a touching passage in a letter to Bishop Lavington, written in 1752, he says that the passages in the Journal were written "in the anguish of my heart, to which I gave vent between God and my own soul." But the anguish was soon to pass away, and he was to know the full joy of sonship in the family of God.

The mission to Georgia never fulfilled the ideal of the ardent young ritualists and mystics who were its apostles. It

was diverted from its noble and romantic purpose of founding a primitive and perfect Church in a new world and among unsophisticated Indians. But it was not an utter failure. It

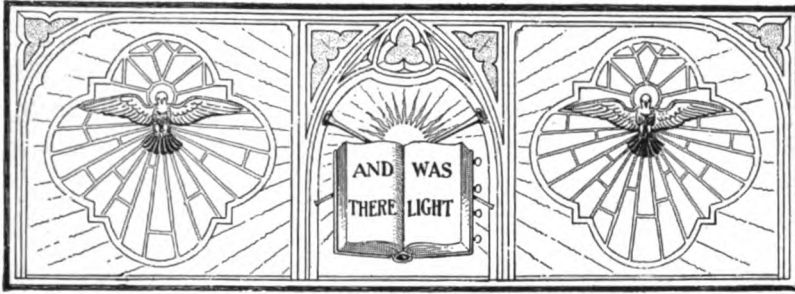


FROM A CONTEMPORARY PRINT.

OGLETHORPE IN OLD AGE.

brought the missionaries themselves priceless lessons, which they had the grace and manliness to learn. It developed the Moses-like meekness which was blended with strength in the

character of the coming leader. It drew Whitefield across the Atlantic to preach a Gospel greater than his later Calvinistic creed. It did much to mold the men who were to be the founders of a catholic missionary Church. It gave to the hymnology of the great Revival "the wafture of a world-wide wing." It prepared the way for a theology radiant with the light of a new spiritual experience, and broad as the charity of God.



## CHAPTER XXIX

### **The Herald of the Coming Revival**

THE PEMBROKE "SETS."—WESLEY AND WHITEFIELD CONTRASTED.—  
"THE BOY PARSON" AND HIS FIRST SERMON.—HIS READING.—DE-  
CISIVE LETTER FROM JOHN WESLEY.—TITLED LADIES ATTRACTED  
TO HIM.

**W**E left George Whitefield at Pembroke College, Oxford, in May, 1735, writing of "joys like a spring-tide." Like the apostolic Ambrose, he could say, "The voice flowed into my ears; the truth distilled into my heart; I overflowed with devout affections, and was happy." Wells, the latest historian of the Oxford Colleges, contrasts Whitefield with another servitor of a later date, John Moore, who rose to be Archbishop of Canterbury through the patronage of the Duke of Marlborough, and who won the good opinion of the duke by declining the hand of the dowager duchess when she offered it to him!

A contemporary of Whitefield and a friend of the great jurist, Blackstone, also of Pembroke, tells us of the "sets" in his college days. There was a reading set, who met to study the less known Greek authors; and a hard-drinking set, who consumed ale and tobacco; and a set of "bucks of the first head," who only drank wine and punch, and so despised the other set "as very low." And there were the plain "matter-

of-fact" men, who associated with all and were interested in politics. Shenstone, who was considered a poet in his time, was at Pembroke with Whitefield, and, as we have noted, Samuel Johnson was there the year before. When Johnson, in 1782, took Hannah More to see his room above the gateway, and referred to the poets who had been of his college, he exclaimed, "In short, we were a nest of singing-birds." Whitefield, in 1735, became a singing-bird in another and a higher sense; psalms of praise, he tells us, burst from his lips, and, although another was to be "the poet," he was the coming orator and herald of the great revival.

In Whitefield the experimental outran the doctrinal; in the Wesleys the doctrinal and experimental kept equal pace. As yet Whitefield spoke of salvation as the new birth, but he did not speak of it as justification obtained by faith. His experience was clear as a sunbeam. He had exercised the faith that saves, but he knew not how great the salvation was, nor how simple the means by which he had attained it. He had, in fact, experienced the mighty operation of a faith he did not intellectually comprehend. The result is seen in his early printed sermons, and he himself afterward recognizes the fact. James Hutton's biographer tells us that he "said little of justification through the Saviour, but forcibly insisted on the need of being born again." His first hearers "fasted, they wept and they strove, but how salvation was to be effected they knew not;" and Whitefield tells us, "I was not so clear in it as afterward." Thus the great doctrine of Luther and the Reformation had yet to be learned and taught. But the glorious experience gave a burning glow to Whitefield's defective doctrinal teaching.

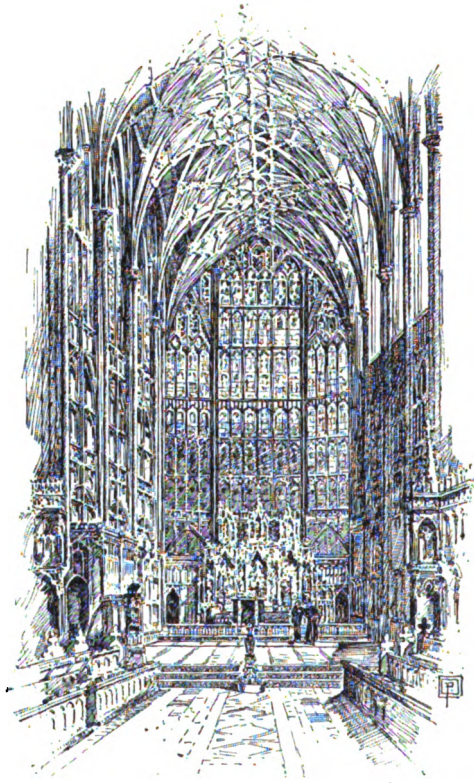
It would be difficult, in the entire range of ecclesiastical history, to find two men whose personality and training were

more different than those of Wesley and Whitefield. Wesley was an acute logician, with a mind clear and calm; Whitefield was the child of impulse. Wesley was endowed by nature with indomitable courage; Whitefield was naturally timid. Wesley had the advantage of a home in which there was an atmosphere of piety and culture; Whitefield was brought up amid the vulgar bustle of a public inn. Wesley had a father who was a man of letters and a leading clergyman; Whitefield was practically fatherless. Wesley's mother was strong-minded, refined, and pious; Whitefield's mother, although she was affectionate and was treated with love and respect by her son, was far inferior to Susanna Wesley. The Wesleys enjoyed prolonged training at the great endowed historic schools and in the society of the leaders of their colleges; Whitefield's school days were few, though not unfruitful, nor was his school a poor one, but he exchanged the tapster's blue apron for the scarcely less menial badge of a servitor at Pembroke College, and, as Overton has said, was at once launched into the sea of life, at the age of twenty-one, with comparatively little intellectual or moral discipline, and suddenly elevated to a degree of notoriety which few have attained. "Scarcely one man in a thousand," he says, "could have passed through such a transformation without being spoiled. But Whitefield's was too noble a nature to be easily spoiled. Nature had given him a loving, generous, unselfish disposition, and divine grace had sanctified and elevated his naturally amiable qualities and given him others which nature can never bestow. He went forth into the world filled with one burning desire—the desire of doing good to his fellow-men and of extending the kingdom of his divine Master."

Whitefield left Oxford for much-needed rest and change of

air in May, 1735, and did not return until March, 1736. At Gloucester he gave himself to reading Alleine, Baxter, Burkitt, and especially Matthew Henry, upon whose commentary he spent £7 out of a present of £10 from "Dear Squire

Thorold." Henry proved a gold mine to the young preacher. He renewed his prison-visiting in his own city, and labored for the conversion of his relatives. The Bishop of Gloucester, Benson, was attracted by his earnestness, and by an account which Lady Selwyn gave of his work, and sent for him. At the top of the old palace stairs the bishop took him by the hand, and offered to make him an exception to his rule of ordaining no one under twenty-three. Whitefield was not yet twenty-two.



DRAWN BY W. B. PRICE.

AFTER A PRINT.

NAVE OF GLOUCESTER CATHEDRAL.

Where Whitefield was ordained.

Whitefield was eager for the great work of preaching, but he trembled at the responsibility. In one of his last sermons he told the great crowd in his London tabernacle: "I remember once in Gloucester—I know the room—I look up at the window

when I am there and walk along the street—I know the bedside and the floor upon which I prostrated myself, and cried, ‘Lord, I cannot go. I shall be puffed up with pride and fall into the condemnation of the devil. I am unfit to preach in thy great name. Send me not, Lord, send me not yet.’”

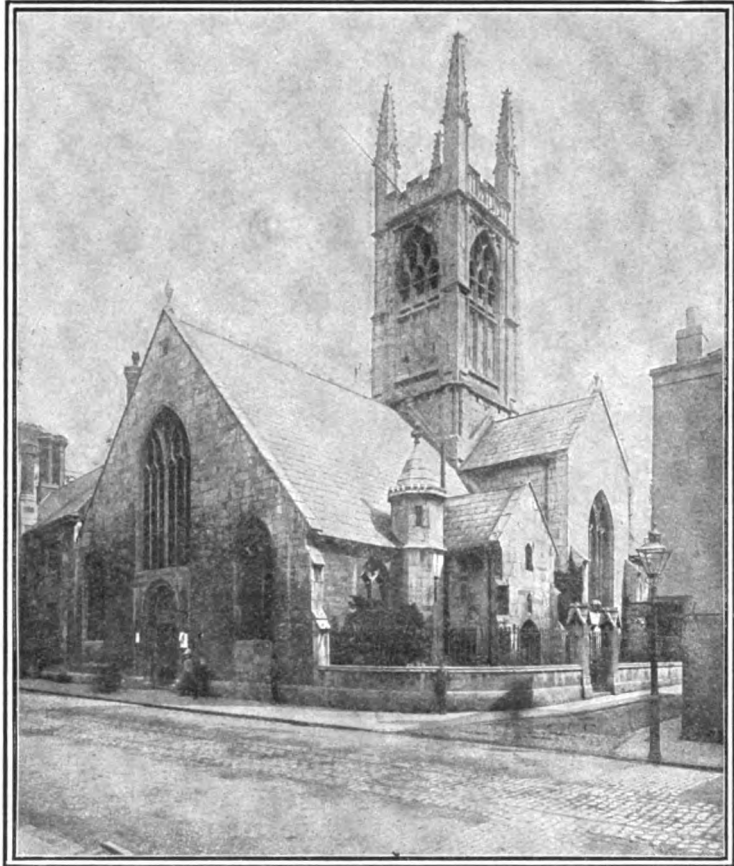
In such a spirit Whitefield was ordained in Gloucester Cathedral, where the martyr John Hooper had been the city’s first Protestant prelate. He afterward said: “I trust I answered to every question from the bottom of my heart, and heartily prayed that God might say, Amen, And when the bishop laid his hands upon my head, if my vile heart doth not deceive me, I offered up my whole spirit, soul, and body to the service of God’s sanctuary.”

Whitefield preached his first sermon in the Church of St. Mary de Crypt, where he had been baptized and had received his first Communion. His theme was “The Necessity and Benefits of Religious Society,” with the suggestive text, “Two are better than one.” Curiosity drew a large congregation together; for had not “the boy parson” been the orator of the local school and tapster at the Bell Inn?

“He preached like a lion,” said one. The truth swept over the audience like a mighty tempest, and word went to the bishop that the preacher had driven fifteen of his hearers mad. The good bishop hoped the madness would not pass away before next Sunday. Whitefield, speaking of his first effort, said: “Never a poor creature set up with so small a stock. . . . My intention was to make at least a hundred sermons with which to begin the ministry. But this is so far from being the case that I have not a single one by me except that which I made for a small Christian society, and which I sent to a neighboring clergyman to convince him how unfit I was to take upon me the important work of preaching.” This



sermon the clergyman retained a fortnight, and then returned it with a guinea for the loan, "telling me he had divided it into two and had preached it morning and evening to his



FROM PHOTO.

CHURCH OF ST. MARY DE CRYPT, GLOUCESTER.

Here George Whitefield was baptized, and here he preached his first sermon.

congregation." The second sermon was more wonderful than the first, from the text, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature."

Ten days after his ordination, on June 30, he went to Oxford and received the degree of Bachelor of Arts. At Mr. Broughton's request he preached for a short time in the historic Chapel of St. Peter ad Vincula, at the Tower, London, and visited the barracks. He hastened to Oxford and thence to Dummer, Hampshire, the parish of the Oxford Methodist Kinchin, where he spent eight hours a day reading prayers, catechising children, visiting the poor. He was offered a profitable London curacy, which he declined.

While he was in the country Charles Wesley returned from Georgia, and later Whitefield received a letter from John Wesley that made his heart leap within him. “What if thou art the man, Mr. Whitefield? Do you ask me what you shall have? Food to eat, and raiment to put on; a house to lay your head in, such as your Lord had not; and a crown of glory that fadeth not away.” Whitefield offered himself to the authorities of the Georgian Mission, was accepted, and spent the preparatory month ranging the country, preaching in London, Bristol, Gloucester, and Bath. Tyerman regards this in some respects as the most important period of his life.

In London he was in great request for charity sermons, and in less than three months he preached a hundred sermons and raised for charity schools more than £1,000. In Bristol the whole city was aroused and the churches were crowded even on week days, while on Sunday mornings the streets were thronged with people before dawn, lighting the way by lanterns, to hear him. He seemed never to tire, often preaching four times a day. Out into the streets the weeping people followed him, while the sick and poor sent messages that kept him from morning until midnight comforting and consoling them. When he assisted at the Eucharist the con-

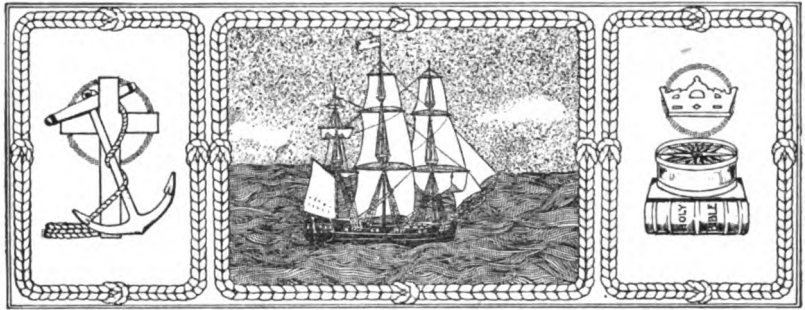
secration of the elements had to be repeated two or three times. "I was constrained," wrote Whitefield, "to go from place to place in a coach to avoid the hosannas of the multitude. They grew quite extravagant in the applause, and had it not been for my compassionate High Priest, popularity would have destroyed me. I used to plead with him to take me by the hand and lead me through this fiery furnace. He heard my request, and gave me to see the vanity of all commendations but his own."

Whitefield's first printed sermon was issued in July, 1737. It had been preached in the fine old Church of St. Mary Redcliffe, Bristol, and was on "The Nature and Necessity of Our New Birth in Christ Jesus in Order to Salvation." The sermon, as printed, is not remarkable for eloquence or thought; it is plain, earnest, practical. The first sermon which John Wesley preached after his evangelical conversion was on "Justification by Faith." The two great doctrines combined were the master truths of the Methodist revival. At St. Stephen's Church, Bristol, Whitefield says, "The doctrine of the new birth and justification by faith in Jesus Christ (though I was not so clear in it as afterward) made its way like lightning into the hearers' consciences."

At Bath, where he preached many times in the Abbey Church, "some elect ladies were stirred to give £160 for the poor of Georgia." Bath was now the most fashionable resort in England, and the notorious "Beau Nash" was at the head of its brilliant society. The elect ladies probably included the witty and eccentric Lady Townsend, the first titled lady who extolled Whitefield's preaching, and in a few years he was to number among his hearers the Countess of Huntingdon, Lady Cobham, the Duchesses of Ancaster, Buckingham, Queensberry, and many others. All classes, for the first

time, now heard from a tongue of fire the Gospel of Christ. The mighty doctrines of justification and regeneration leaped forth in living power. Heaven and hell were realities in awful contrast. Of course the people were moved. They felt that Whitefield was one of them. His illustrations, drawn from common life and spiced with humor, deepened the popular interest. "Even the little improprieties," remarked Wesley, "both of his language and manner, were the means of profiting many who would not have been touched by a more correct discourse or a more calm and regular manner of preaching."

To all must be added the power arising out of the divine transformation of the man and the eloquence of the Spirit. The God before whom he stood was to him so glorious in majesty that Whitefield would throw himself prostrate on the ground and offer his soul as a blank for the divine hand to write on it what he pleased. Mabie says that when Corot in his peasant blouse went out into the fields at four o'clock with his easel before him, and studied the daybreak, "the day broke for him as if it had never come out of the sky before; as if he were the first man seeing the first day." So to Whitefield every day seemed the first day on which God had sent the Gospel to men and commissioned him to put the vital truth on the tablets of the heart.



## CHAPTER XXX

### **Whitefield's First Visit to America**

WHITEFIELD CROWDS THE CHURCHES.—AND IS HIMSELF CROWDED OUT.—VOYAGE TO SAVANNAH.—TOMO-CHI-CHI.—THE ORPHANAGE.—HIS EARLY PREACHING.

**A**T first many of the clergy were Whitefield's hearers and admirers, but some soon grew angry, and complaints were made that the parishioners of the churches were crowded out and the pews were spoiled! A report was spread that the Bishop of London intended to silence him, but Whitefield waited on the bishop and found the report untrue. But the clergy were most irritated because of his friendship with the Dissenters, for which one irate parson called him a "pragmatical rascal." A caricaturist mischievously represented him leaning on a cushion with a bishop looking enviously over his shoulder. At the bottom were six lines in which the bishops were styled "mitered drones."

The papers stated that Whitefield had sat for this portrait; but he indignantly repudiated all knowledge of the matter, and denied that he had ever so denominated the bishops. His friends urged him to sit for his picture in his own defense, and to this his aged mother added her entreaty that, if he would not let her have the substance, he would at least leave her the shadow.

Our portrait represents him two years later. He was a little above middle stature, well proportioned, and at that time slender, his eyes "small and lively, of a dark blue color;" a slight squint in one of them, greatly exaggerated in the caricatures, did not affect his general facial expression. His



AFTER AN ENGRAVING BY COCHRAN.

REV. GEORGE WHITEFIELD.

At the age of twenty-four.

voice excelled in melody and compass, and its fine modulations were accompanied by remarkable grace of action. "During the months of his first popularity," says the philosophic Isaac Taylor, "the church walls rocked wherever he had been announced, and the crowd that gathered round him, instead of spending their feelings in terms of heartless admiration, wept, each for himself, as the preacher passed from

their sight. This popularity, of which there had been no example in the Church (or out of it), occurred in good time to allow him to reconsider his purpose of going to Georgia as a missionary. . . . But to his missionary purpose he did adhere . . . he went whither he was carried by the one motive that ruled his life. So far as this sovereign motive mingled with any other, that other was a pure and warm benevolence. The Orphan House, with the racking anxieties that attached to it and the perplexities it involved him in, gave evidence of the simplicity and unworldliness of his mind. This scheme, whether prudently devised or not, was the scheme of a youth—let it not be forgotten—who had already discovered the secret of his possessing unmatched powers of oratory.”

On the day before he left London for Savannah Whitefield preached to a vast crowd in the Church of St. Helen's, Bishopsgate, on the text, “Brethren, pray for us.” Oglethorpe had returned from Georgia, and had applied for troops for the defense of the colony from the Spaniards. Whitefield embarked in December, with the soldiers, but five weeks passed before they left the English coast. He preached at Gravesend, from whence the ship set sail, and again at Deal, where three weeks more were spent in visiting the transport ships. On shore “all Deal,” said Whitefield, “seems to be in a holy flame.” At the church the people stood on the adjoining roofs to listen, and looked in at the top windows, and as he left next day they were “running in droves” to the shore. “The sea was boisterous and the waves rose mountains high,” but in the boat the fervent preacher and his friends “went on singing psalms and praising God, the water dashing in their faces all the way.” The ship was a gambling house when he went on board, but be-

came as orderly as a church, so that the very soldiers stood out before him to say their catechism like children.

At Gibraltar he began the work of Methodism in the army. The Protestant ministers and the governor received him with great kindness. At one of the many services a hearer was



DRAWN BY J. D. WOODWARD.

AFTER A WOOD ENGRAVING.

ST. HELEN'S, BISHOPSGATE.

In this church Whitefield preached his last sermon before sailing for America.

so affected that he wished himself “a despised Methodist.” Great congregations assembled in the fortress, and he found some devout soldiers gathered for prayer, “with whom,” says Whitefield, “my soul was knit immediately.” He was told that the pious soldiers used to meet in dens and caves in the rocks, and were now in derision called “the New Lights.” “A glorious light they are indeed,” he writes; “and they made me quite ashamed of my little proficiency in the school



of Christ." When he left Gibraltar nearly two hundred soldiers, women, and officers accompanied him to the shore, sorrowing at his departure, and wishing him "good luck" in the name of the Lord.

The Whitaker cast anchor at the mouth of the Savannah on May 7, 1738, and after a manly address to the soldiers and crew Whitefield landed for the first time on the American continent. He found Charles Delamotte still at work in the day and Sunday schools established by John Wesley. The Indian chief, Tomo-chi-chi, had not yet declared himself a Christian. He had significantly said to Wesley: "Why, there are Christians at Savannah! There are Christians at Frederica! Christians get drunk! Christians beat men! Christians tell lies! Me no Christian!" Whitefield visited him and found him dangerously ill, "on a blanket, thin and meager—little else but skin and bones." His wife, Senauki, sat by him, fanning him with eagle feathers. The old chief told Whitefield that he expected to go to heaven. But he partially recovered and went to meet Oglethorpe a few months afterward, declaring that the coming of "the great man," as he called the governor, quite restored him and made him "moult like the eagle." He died next year, nearly a hundred years old, and was buried with military honors, the general and others bearing the pall.

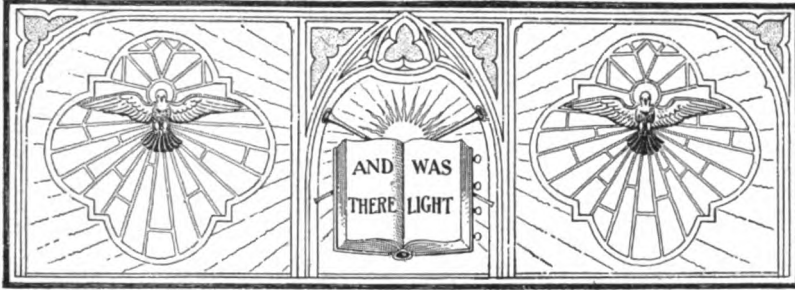
Whitefield tells us that "America is not so horrid a place as it is represented to be; the heat of the weather, lying on the ground, and the like, are mere painted lions in the way;" and in the same letter he writes, "What I have most at heart is the building of an orphan house." This had been suggested to him by Charles Wesley, who had prepared a plan. He established little schools in the surrounding hamlets, and often visited Bolzius, the Lutheran minister whom Wesley

had repelled from the Lord's table. Wherever Whitefield preached he was listened to as if he had been an angel from heaven.

He found some of the colonists dissatisfied with Oglethorpe's prohibition of ardent spirits and slavery. "Slavery," said Oglethorpe, "is against the Gospel as well as against the fundamental law of England; the colony is an asylum for the distressed, and it is necessary, therefore, not to permit slaves in such a country, for slaves starve the poor laborer." It seems curious, to-day, to find Whitefield sympathizing with the malcontent colonists, and writing, "The scheme was well meant at home, but was utterly impracticable in so hot a country abroad."

After four months at Savannah Whitefield returned to England to secure funds for his orphanage and to be ordained priest. After a nine weeks' voyage, during which provisions ran short, and the ship's company were in a pitiable plight, they reached Ireland in November, 1738, with "only half a pint of water left." On reaching London Whitefield found most of the churches closed against him, but he preached again in St. Helen's, where Broughton, the Oxford Methodist, was lecturer. He found that many who had been awakened by his preaching twelve months before were now "grown strong men in Christ by the ministry of his dear friends John and Charles Wesley," and in his Journal he significantly adds: "I found the old doctrine of justification by faith, only much revived. Many letters had been sent to me concerning it, all of which I providentially missed receiving, for now I came unprejudiced, and can the more easily see who is right. And who dare assert that we are not justified in the sight of God merely by an act of faith in Jesus Christ without regard to works, past, present, or to come?"

This was a doctrine which he had as yet preached very indistinctly. His letter to the people of Savannah, written on shipboard, shows how defective his teaching had been. While he admits that "the author of this blessed change is the Holy Ghost," he specifies as the means to attain this Holy Spirit—1. Self-denial; 2. Public worship; 3. Reading the Scriptures; 4. Secret prayer; 5. Self-examination; 6. Receiving the sacrament. Not a word said about faith! In this the Wesleys take the lead, and Whitefield follows. It was the doctrine that was to create the Methodism of 1739. It was to transform the tearful sympathy of convicted audiences into the glad triumph of the sons of God. On his return to England he found, to his surprise, the Wesleys preaching it, and he soon did the same.



## CHAPTER XXXI

### Light from the Land of Hus and Luther

THE HUSSITE HEROES.—THE MORAVIAN PILGRIMS.—A CARPENTER  
AND A COUNT.—THE LORD'S WATCH.

**I**N an old Hussite hymn book in the university library of Prague there are three most suggestive illuminations. In one John Wyclif is striking sparks from a stone; in the second John Hus is kindling coals with the sparks; in the third Martin Luther is brandishing a flaming torch. Thus does the old scribe picture the true relation of the English, Bohemian, and German reformations. It is true that Hus found his fire in Wyclif's teaching. Between Hus and Luther the connection was not so direct, but when Luther read Hus's treatise on the Church he exclaimed, "We have all been Hussites without knowing it."

Let us now trace the connection between these three great reformers and Wesley. We shall see that the leaders of the great religious movement of the eighteenth century in England owed much to the spiritual descendants of Hus and the commentaries of Luther.

More than three hundred years had passed since John Hus and Jerome of Prague had been treacherously martyred at the Council of Constance—the sapient council which wreaked

its puny vengeance upon Wyclif's bones. The Bohemian peasantry drew their swords to avenge their heroes' death and win religious freedom. The blind Count Ziska led his men to battle to the sound of psalms, won victory after victory, and with his dying breath ordered that a drum should be made of his skin that the sound of it might put the foe to flight.

But disasters followed, prisons were filled with Hussites, and the Bohemian people bent once more beneath the yoke of Rome. Then Peter of Chelcic took up the pen, and having studied the writings of Wyclif and Hus, proclaimed the Sermon on the Mount to be the true law of life, and bade his comrades sheath the sword forever. The scattered Waldenses gathered round him, and gradually and quietly, in some way that no records tell, were laid the foundations of what became the Church of the Unitas Fratrum, or the United Brethren. In 1467 the last chains that bound them to Rome were snapped: Bishop Stephen, a Waldensian, consecrated one of their number, Michael, a bishop.

From that day to this, says Hutton, the latest of their historians, the Brethren have valued the Episcopal ordination as thus obtained, although they do not regard it as essential to the existence or validity of their Church. Under Luke of Prague their doctrines were finally purged from Romanism, and in 1495 the Brethren's Church became the first free evangelical Church in Europe.

The persecuting fires were rekindled by the pope, but twenty years later reports were wafted southward across the Riesengebirge, or the Giant Mountains, of Martin Luther's protest at Wittenberg. The Brethren hailed him as a champion sent by God. Through all the horrors of the Thirty Years' War "a hidden seed" was preserved. The ancient



**THE FATHERS OF THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION.**

**MARTIN LUTHER.**

**JEROME OF PRAGUE.**

**JOHN HUS.**



Church was scattered, but it gave to Europe its greatest educator, John Amos Comenius. Early in the eighteenth century Christian David, a carpenter, became known as "the Bush Preacher" of Moravia, the old Brethren's hymns were sung again by shepherds on the mountains—and again the old iron foot of the persecutor came stamping down. Some were loaded with chains, some were imprisoned, some were yoked to the plow and made to work like horses, and some were made to stand in wells of water until nearly chilled to death.

Late one night in 1722 Christian David led a little band northward across the mountains, and after a long and weary march they found a resting place about a mile from Bertholdsdorf, in Lusatia, on the estate of the young Count Zinzendorf. At the top of a gentle slope, up which a long avenue now leads, was a wild, uncultivated spot called the Watch Hill, and here, by permission of the good count's steward, the pilgrims encamped. "It shall be the Watch of the Lord," they said, and Lord's Watch, or Herrnhut, it has remained to this day. Christian David seized his ax and struck it into a tree, exclaiming, "The sparrow here hath found a house, and the swallow a nest for herself, even thine altars, O Lord of hosts." Boggy and bramble-grown, as the place was, they accepted it as the gift of the Lord, and made it the site of their settlement.

Others came—descendants of the ancient Church—and romantic were the tales they told. David Nitschmann had found his prison door open at dead of night. David Heickel slipped out of his cell while the faces of his guards were turned. Hans Nitschmann, lying concealed in a ditch, heard his pursuers say, only a foot away, "This is the place where he must be," and yet he remained undiscovered. They left



all their goods behind them, and came singing the "Moravian Emigrant's Song:"

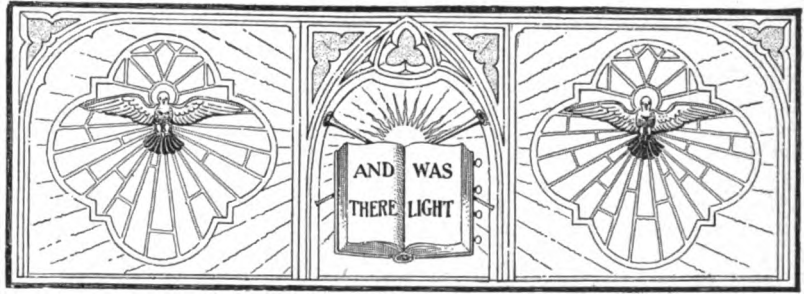
Blessed be the day when I must roam  
 Far from my country, friends, and home,  
 An exile poor and mean ;  
 My father's God will be my guide,  
 Will angel guards for me provide,  
 My soul in dangers screen.  
 Himself will lead me to a spot  
 Where, all my cares and grief forgot,  
 I shall enjoy sweet rest.  
 As pants for cooling streams the hart,  
 I languish for my heavenly part—  
 For God, my refuge blest.

Count Zinzendorf's ruined castle may be seen to-day in Upper Lusatia, where he was born in 1700. As a child of four years he loved and trusted Christ. The window is shown from which he threw letters addressed to Jesus Christ, nothing doubting that he would receive them. When the rude soldiers of Charles XII of Sweden suddenly burst into his room and heard the child engaged in prayer they were so awestruck that they left the place in haste. As a boy he came under the influence of Pietism—the great religious movement inaugurated by Spener. At Professor Francke's table at Halle his eyes sparkled at the stories of weather-beaten missionaries. As Spener had founded churches within the Church—*ecclesiolæ in ecclesia*—for men and women, so Zinzendorf now founded a Church within the Church for boys. He called his little society "the Order of the Grain of Mustard Seed." The boys were bound to comradeship by a threefold promise: (1) To be kind to all men; (2) to be true to Christ; (3) to send the Gospel to the heathen.

In later years such notable men as Archbishop Potter, Bishop Wilson of Sodor and Man, and General Oglethorpe

were enrolled as members. When Zinzendorf left school for the University of Wittenberg Francke well said, "This youth will some day be a great light in the world." He became the renewer of the Brethren's Church, the leader of the new Moravian mission to mankind.

We have seen how deeply the Wesleys were impressed by the tranquil courage of the Moravians who sang in the Atlantic tempest. We have recorded the conversation with Spangenberg, whom John Wesley met when he landed in America. Charles Wesley, on his return from Georgia, met Count Zinzendorf, conversed with him, and attended one of the Moravian meetings, "where," he says, "I thought myself in a choir of angels." A year later the Wesley brothers formed their memorable friendship with Peter Böhler.



## CHAPTER XXXII

### **Peter Böhler and the Wesleys**

A GERMAN BISHOP.—LEARNING ENGLISH AND TEACHING FAITH.—A LESSON ON A SICK-BED.—SALVATION BY FAITH.—FORMAL AND FREE PRAYER.—WESLEY'S PENITENTIAL HYMN.

PETER BÖHLER had found peace with God when he was at the University of Jena. He had passed through much mental anguish when his attention was arrested by a sentence of Professor Spangenberg's expressive of the Saviour's power to free from sin. "I have tried everything in the world except this," he exclaimed, "but this I will try;" and within a few days rest came to him in private prayer. He was ordained a bishop; not bishop of a diocese, but, as Coke used to say, "bishop in the Church of God;" and Hook has pointed out, "Such as are the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church to this day." He was twenty-five years old when he came to England; ten years younger than John Wesley, who found him lodgings at Westminster. The Wesley brothers traveled with him to Oxford. John, conversing earnestly on the way, was sorely puzzled when Böhler said, "My brother, my brother, that philosophy of yours must be purged away." Böhler wrote to Zinzendorf:

I traveled with the two brothers, John and Charles Wesley, from London to Oxford. The elder, John, is a good-natured man; he knew he did not properly

believe on the Saviour, and was willing to be taught. His brother, with whom you often conversed a year ago, is at present very much distressed in his mind, but does not know how he shall begin to be acquainted with the Saviour. Our mode of believing in the Saviour is so easy to Englishmen that they cannot reconcile themselves to it; if it were a little more artful, they would much



PORTRAIT BY KRUGESTEIN.

AFTER LITHOGRAPH BY HANFSTAENGL.

PETER BÖHLER.

Born December 31, 1712, died April 27, 1775.

sooner find their way into it. Of faith in Jesus they have no other idea than the generality of people have. They justify themselves; and therefore they always take it for granted that they believe already, and try to prove their faith by their works, and thus so plague and torment themselves that they are at heart very miserable.

At Oxford Castle we find John Wesley again preaching. Then he returned to London, and gave great offense by his faithful sermons at St. Lawrence's and elsewhere. Then he visited his mother at Salisbury, and was preparing to visit his brother Samuel at Tiverton Grammar School when he heard that his brother Charles was dying at Oxford. He hastened thither, and to his relief found his brother better, and by his bedside he again found the devout Moravian.

Böhler had put himself under Charles Wesley's care to learn English. The pupil taught his teacher a yet nobler lesson. When he seemed on the point of death Böhler asked him, "Do you hope to be saved?" Charles answered, "Yes." "For what reason do you hope it?" "Because I have used my best endeavors to serve God." Böhler shook his head and said no more. "I thought him very uncharitable," wrote Charles at a later day, "saying in my heart, Would he rob me of my endeavors? I have nothing else to trust to." The sad, silent, significant shake of Peter Böhler's head shattered all Charles Wesley's false foundation of salvation by endeavors.

On Sunday, March 5, 1738, John Wesley wrote: "I was, in the hand of the great God, clearly convinced of unbelief, of the want of that faith whereby alone we are saved." In later years he adds, in parenthesis, "(With the full Christian salvation.)" To the question whether he should cease preaching his friend replied, "By no means." "But what can I preach?" asked Wesley. "Preach faith till you have it, and then because you have it you will preach faith." And so on Monday morning he offered salvation by faith to a man under sentence of death in Oxford Castle. He went with the Methodist, Dean Kinchin of Corpus Christi College, to Manchester, exhorting wayside travelers and inn servants,



FROM OLD PRINTS.

COUNT ZINZENDORF AND HIS SECOND WIFE.

DRAWN BY W. B. DAVIS



and praying with a good Quaker. Back they came to Oxford, where Wesley read the Greek Testament again with critical care to test Böhler's teaching on living faith. He was deeply moved when the condemned man he again visited rose from prayer exclaiming eagerly, "I am now ready to die. I know Christ has taken away my sins, and there is no more condemnation for me." So he died in peace.

On the Saturday after this affecting scene Wesley took a step of no little importance in the history of Methodist worship. He writes in his Journal of April 1: "Being in Mr. Fox's society, my heart was so full that I could not confine myself to the forms of prayer which we were accustomed to use there. Neither do I purpose to be confined to them any more, but to pray indifferently, with a form or without, as I may find suitable to particular occasions."

Rigg has well observed how strikingly this illustrates the main principle of Wesley's ecclesiastical course, of using whatever methods clearly promised to do the most good. He enters into no abstract controversy as to praying with or without forms. Probably his experiences in America, where he heard the Presbyterian minister pray, and yet more his intercourse with the Moravians, had helped to loosen the bonds of servile ecclesiasticism in this respect. He never condemned forms of prayer, which would have precluded not only the liturgy but the Lord's Prayer and many hymns, but he found free prayer rich in blessing, and henceforth he held himself at liberty, according to occasion, to pray without forms. "The ritualist was already greatly changed. Already the manacles had dissolved from the hands of devotion; soon the fetters would be broken which bound his feet from running in the evangelical way."

On the following Easter Sunday morning, after thus com-



mencing the use of extempore prayer in social worship, he preached "in our college chapel" of Lincoln, and closed the day with the entry, "I see the promise; but it is far off."

Again Böhler came to his help by bringing together some friends to relate their experience in his hearing. As they



FROM THE COPPERPLATE BY GREIG.

ST. LAWRENCE'S CHURCH, KING STREET, LONDON.

"May 7, 1738.—I preached at St. Lawrence's. . . . I was enabled to speak strong words, and was therefore the less surprised at being informed that I was to preach no more here."—Wesley's Journal.

testified with clearness and fervor to the joy of faith, John Wesley and his companions were "as if thunderstruck." Then an old Moravian hymn was sung which has not yet found a place in the biographies of Wesley. In 1868 Hoole wrote that it was not to be found in any Moravian hymn book later than 1754. It was sung by Wesley with penitential feeling and with tears. We give it in the (English) Moravian version :

*Second German Tune.* Vol. 1 Page 94.

My Soul be--fore thee prostrate lies,  
To thee her Source my Spi--rit flies,  
My Wants I mourn, my Chains I fee:  
O let thy Pre--fence set me free!

REPRODUCED FROM WESLEY'S TUNE BOOK. 1742.

THE TUNE SUNG BY JOHN WESLEY AT THE  
MORAVIAN MEETING DESCRIBED  
BY PETER BÖHLER.

HIER LEGT MEIN SINN SICH VOR DIR NIEDER.

[“My Soul Before Thee Prostrate Lies.”]

- 1 My soul before thee prostrate lies,  
To thee, her Source, my spirit flies ;  
O let thy cheering countenance shine  
On this poor mournful heart of mine.
- 2 From feeling misery's depth I cry,  
In thy death, Saviour, let me die.  
May self in thy excessive pain  
Be swallowed up, nor rise again.
- 3 Jesu! vouchsafe my heart and will  
With thy meek lowliness to fill,  
Break nature's bonds, and let me see  
That whom thou free'st indeed is free.

- 4 My heart in thee, and in thy ways,  
Delights, yet from thy presence strays;  
My mind must deeper sink in thee;  
My foot stand firm, from wandering free.
- 5 I know that nought we have avails,  
Here all our strength and wisdom fails:  
Who bids a sinful heart be clean?  
Thou only, thou, supreme of men!
- 6 Lord, well I know thy tender love,  
Thou never didst unfaithful prove;  
I surely know thou stand'st by me,  
Pleased from myself to set me free.
- 7 Still will I long and wait for thee  
Till in thy light the light I see;  
Till thou in thy good time appear,  
And sav'st my soul from every snare.
- 8 All my own schemes and self-design  
I to thy better will resign;  
Impress this deeply on my breast,  
That I'm in thee already blest.
- 9 When my desires I fix on thee,  
And plunge me in thy mercy's sea,  
Thy smiling face my heart perceives,  
Sweetly refresh'd, in safety lives;
- 10 So even in storms I thee shall know,  
My sure support, my boldness grow;  
And I (what endless age shall prove)  
Shall seal this truth that God is love.

Dr. Hoole says: "Into how many languages this penitential hymn has been rendered it may not be easy to ascertain. I find it among the hymns translated by the Tranquebar Missionaries into the Tamil language, published in India in 1774. It is hymn 218 in the edition of 1863, and begins in Tamil:

*Ing umm andei panindu serum.*

This translation contains two verses, the ninth and tenth of

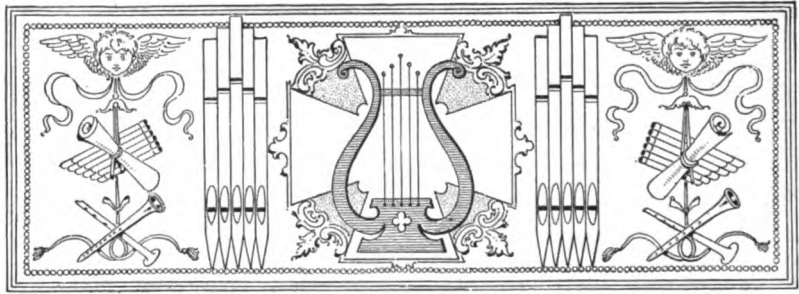
the original German, which are omitted in the English Moravian version, as sung by Mr. Wesley and Böhler.

Mr. Wesley has paraphrased the last two verses of the original as follows:

9 Already springing hope I feel;  
God will destroy the power of hell;  
God from the land of wars and pain  
Leads me where peace and safety reign.

10 One only care my soul shall know:  
Father, all thy commands to do;  
Ah! deep engrave it on my breast,  
That I in thee even now am blest.

John Wesley thus sums up the result of his conversations with Böhler, the testimony of the Moravians, and the singing of this old hymn: “ I was now thoroughly convinced; and, by the grace of God, I resolved to seek it unto the end: (1) By absolutely renouncing all dependence, in whole or in part, upon my own works or righteousness; on which I had really grounded my hope of salvation, though I knew it not, from my youth up. (2) By adding to the constant use of all the other means of grace continual prayer for this very thing, justifying, saving faith, a full reliance on the blood of Christ shed for me; a trust in him as my Christ, as my sole justification, sanctification, and redemption.”



## CHAPTER XXXIII

### The Pentecostal Poet

AT THE SIGN OF "THE BIBLE AND THE SUN."—THE MECHANIC AND HIS MESSAGE.—CHARLES WESLEY'S PENTECOST.—THE SONGS OF SALVATION.—THE SINGER'S FIRST CONVERT.

CHARLES WESLEY was the first of the Wesley brothers to receive the name of Methodist, and he was also the first to experience joy and peace through believing. "While John was entering this Bethesda Charles stepped in before him." Yet, at the house of the Delamottes at Blendon, Charles had been indignant when his brother expressed his belief in the possibility of conscious and instantaneous conversion, and wrote, "I was much offended at his worse than unedifying discourse." Broughton, another of the Oxford Methodists, was as scandalized as Charles, and Mrs. Delamotte abruptly left the room. But John's long struggle with doubt had taught him patience with others who had not reached his standpoint, and he writes, "Indeed, it did please God then to kindle a fire which I trust will never be extinguished."

A little to the west of old Temple Bar stood the shop of James Hutton, a dealer in secondhand books, whose sign was "the Bible and the Sun." He was the son of the Wesleys'



**THE REV. CHARLES WESLEY.**



friend, the Rev. Mr. Hutton, of Westminster. His shop became in the early days of the evangelical revival what Rivington's in St. Paul's Churchyard had been to the Oxford Methodists—a house of call and a center of literary interest. We find Dr. Byrom dropping in to breakfast after his arrival by the Manchester coach, and “the so-much-talked-of” Mr. Whitefield comes in to wait for the Cirencester coach. Hither also came good Squire Thorold, the ancestor of the present Bishop of Winchester, who would pray and expound, and here the little “society” first met which was afterward transferred to a house in Fetter Lane.

Here, shortly before his conversion, we find Charles Wesley, ill of pleurisy, visited by Piers, the Vicar of Bexley, whom the sick man exhorts “to labor after that faith which he thinks I have and I know I have not.” Böhler comes to pay a farewell visit, and points out more clearly than ever the nature of “that one true living faith whereby through grace we are saved.” Charles receives a letter from a friend which quickens his desires, and is seeking Christ as in an agony. His brother John reads to him an affectionate letter in Latin from Böhler, praying that “you may taste and then see how exceedingly the Son of God has loved you, and loves you still.” The news is brought to him that John is forbidden to preach any more at St. Lawrence's, St. Catherine Cree's, and Great St. Helen's Churches, for he speaks “strong words”—too strong for the indifferent clergy of the day, although his doctrines are in harmony with the homilies of his Church. The Savoy Chapel and St. Ann's are also closed against him, for he dares preach “free salvation by faith in the blood of Christ.”

And now, just as Charles Wesley is making arrangements to remove to the home of James Hutton's father, the clergy-



man at Westminster, he receives a visit from "a poor, ignorant mechanic, who knows nothing but Christ, yet by knowing him knows and discerns all things." It is Bray, a brazier of Little Britain, whose house is at the west corner near Christ's Hospital. As they pray together the clergyman is quite overpowered and melted into tears. He decides to remove to the mechanic's house instead of to Westminster, as

he intended, and he is carried to his new lodgings in a sedan chair.

A letter of Dr. Byrom, written a few weeks later, gives us an interesting glimpse of Wesley's humble friend: "I dined yesterday and today with Mr. Charles Wesley at



DRAWN BY J. D. WOODWARD.

FROM PHOTO.

#### LITTLE BRITAIN.

Where "Mr. Bray, the brazier," lived, and where Charles Wesley was converted.

a very honest man's house, a brazier, with whom he lodges, with whose behavior and conversation I have been very much pleased." But Mrs. Hutton, of Westminster, is *not* pleased, and writes to Samuel Wesley at Tiverton: "Mr. Charles went from my son's, where he lay ill for some time, and would not come to our house when I offered him the choice of two of my best rooms, but chose to go to a poor brazier's in Little Britain, that that brazier might help him forward in his conversion!"

The preaching of his elder brother and of Whitefield and the labors of Böhler have already stirred up a spirit of reli-

gious inquiry, and the invalid has many visitors. Among them is the venerable Ainsworth, the Latin scholar, "a man of great learning, above seventy, who, like old Simeon, was waiting to see the Lord's salvation that he might depart in peace." "His tears," continues Wesley, "and vehemence, and childlike simplicity show him upon the entrance of the kingdom of heaven."

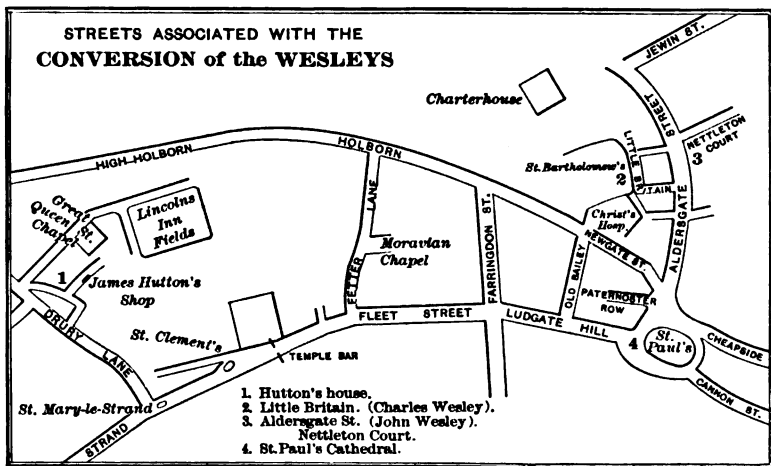
Now again we find the work of Martin Luther a living force in England. On May 17 Charles Wesley first saw Luther's Commentary on the Galatians, and found it "nobly full of faith." The evening hours are spent in quiet with the reformer's commentary, and the close of the second chapter brings the sick man a "comfortable assurance that He would come, and would not tarry." "I labored, waited, and prayed to feel, 'who loved *me*, and gave himself for *me*.'"

The "Day of Pentecost had fully come." At nine o'clock on Whitsunday morning, 1738, his brother John and some friends came and sang a hymn to the Holy Spirit, which greatly comforted him. Half an hour later the friends left, and Charles betook himself to prayer: "O Jesus, thou hast said, I will come unto you; thou hast said, I will send the Comforter unto you; thou hast said, My Father and I will come unto you and make our abode with you. Thou art God, who canst not lie. I fully rely upon thy most true promise; accomplish it in thy time and manner."

He is composing himself to rest when he hears some one come in and say: "In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, arise, and believe, and thou shalt be healed of all thy infirmities." These words were uttered by Bray's sister, who had only recently found peace and joy through believing, and was convinced that it was her duty to utter some words of sympathy

to the distressed clergyman. She had been overwhelmed by the thought that she, "a poor, weak, sinful creature," should speak to a minister, but her brother had encouraged her: "Fear not your own weakness. Speak you the words, Christ will do the work; out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hath he ordained strength."

The good brazier's words proved true. Charles Wesley was roused by the words of the trembling woman, who fled



down stairs after she had spoken. Wesley sent for her, and she said, "It was I, a weak, sinful creature, that spoke, but the words were Christ's; he commanded me to say them, and so constrained me that I could not forbear."

Then Bray reads, "Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered;" and Wesley, laying hold on the atonement by simple faith, finds himself at peace with God. He opens his Bible, and the first words he reads are these: "And now, Lord, what is my hope? Truly, my hope is even in thee. He hath put a new song in my mouth,

even a thanksgiving unto our God; many shall see it, and fear, and shall put their trust in the Lord." Thus Charles Wesley learned the new song of the great Revival, and found his lifelong inspiration.

On the following Tuesday he began the hymn which was to link his own conversion with that of his brother. For fear of pride he broke it off, but acting on Bray's wise advice, he fought the temptation on his knees and finished the hymn. It echoes, in the third verse especially, the words in his Journal in which he records his resolve after his struggles: "In his name, therefore, and through his strength, I will perform my vows unto the Lord, of not hiding his righteousness within my heart, if it should ever please him to plant it there." A day later the brothers sang the hymn together. It deserves insertion here as one of the historic documents of the great Revival:

Where shall my wondering soul begin ?  
 How shall I all to heaven aspire ?  
 A slave redeemed from death and sin,  
 A brand plucked from eternal fire,  
 How shall I equal triumphs raise,  
 Or sing my great Deliverer's praise ?

O how shall I the goodness tell,  
 Father, which thou to me hast showed ?  
 That I, a child of wrath and hell,  
 I should be called a child of God !  
 Should know, should feel my sins forgiven,  
 Blessed with this antepast of heaven !

And shall I slight my Father's love  
 Or basely fear his gifts to own ?  
 Unmindful of his favors prove ?  
 Shall I, the hallowed cross to shun,  
 Refuse his righteousness to impart,  
 By hiding it within my heart ?

No : though the ancient dragon rage,  
 And call forth all his hosts to war ;  
 Though earth's self-righteous sons engage  
 Them and their god alike I dare ;  
 Jesus, the sinner's Friend, proclaim ;  
 Jesus, to sinners still the same.

Outcasts of men, to you I call,  
 Harlots, and publicans, and thieves !  
 He spreads his arms to embrace you all ;  
 Sinners alone his grace receives :  
 No need of him the righteous have,  
 He came the lost to seek and save.

Come, O my guilty brethren, come,  
 Groaning beneath your load of sin ;  
 His bleeding heart shall make you room ;  
 His open side shall take you in :  
 He calls you now, invites you home ;  
 Come, O my guilty brethren, come !

The passage in Luther's Commentary on Galatians which brought Charles so much comfort on the Wednesday before he found rest inspired another triumphant song, which a few weeks later brought joy to the first convert won by the hymns of the minstrel of Methodism. Luther alludes to his childhood, when he was taught only to think of Christ as a severe judge: "At the very hearing of Christ's name my heart hath trembled and quaked for fear." He tenderly urges all such troubled hearts to "read these most sweet and comfortable words, 'Who loved *me* and gave himself for *me*,' and so inwardly practice with thyself that thou with a sure faith mayst conceive and print this *me* upon thy heart, and apply it unto thyself, not doubting that thou art of the number of those to whom this 'me' belongeth; also that Christ hath not only loved Peter and Paul, and given himself for them, but that the same grace also which is comprehended in this *me* cometh unto us as unto

them." Charles Wesley's own experience and personal faith now illuminated Luther's words, and he wrote :

O filial Deity,  
 Accept my newborn cry ;  
 See the travail of thy soul,  
 Saviour, and be satisfied ;  
 Take me now, possess me whole,  
 Who for me, for me, hast died.

\*   \*   \*   \*   \*

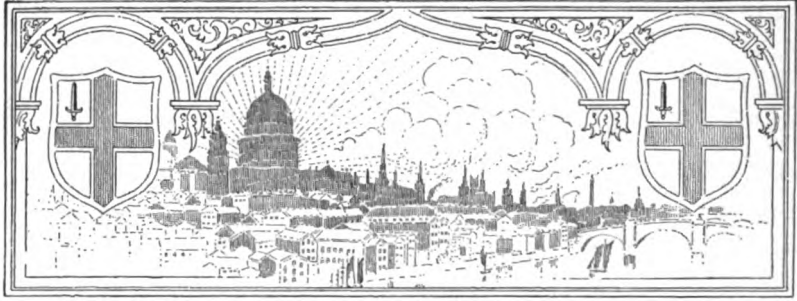
Jesus, thou art my King,  
 From thee my strength I bring :  
 Shadow'd by thy mighty hand,  
 Saviour, who shall pluck me thence ?  
 Faith supports ; by faith I stand  
 Strong as thy omnipotence.

On June 16 he makes this entry in his Journal: "Jack Delamotte came for me. We took coach, and by the way he told me that when we were last together at Blendon, in singing

Who for me, for me, hast died,

he found the words sink into his soul ; could have sung them forever, being full of delight and joy."

Thus the Lutheran Reformation was linked with the Methodist Revival, and through Germany there came to England and America the first notes of the songs of freedom sung to-day not only by millions of Methodists, but by worshippers in every church in every land.



## CHAPTER XXXIV

### The Birthday of Living Methodism

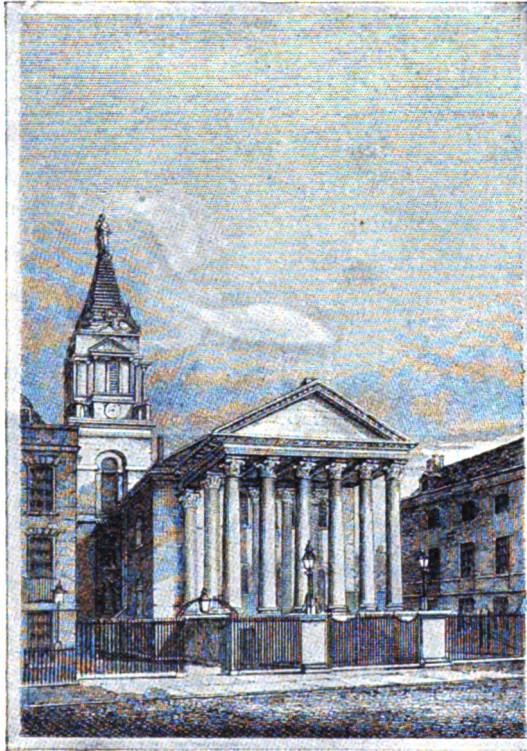
THE MEMORABLE 24TH OF MAY.—WESLEY'S HEART "STRANGELY WARMED."—THE REJOICING BROTHERS.—DYING SACERDOTALISM.—LIVING METHODISM.—AN EPOCH IN ENGLISH HISTORY.

THREE days after Charles Wesley's "Day of Pentecost," in 1738, came the ever memorable 24th of May, the day of John Wesley's evangelical conversion. A writer in the *Contemporary Review*, 1891, well said: "That day in ecclesiastical annals is like the day on which Saul of Tarsus saw Christ, the day upon which Augustine heard a voice exclaim, 'Tolle lege, tolle lege,' and the day on which Martin Luther realized the forgiving love of God in the convent of Erfurth. On that day Methodism as history knows it was born."

John Wesley, characteristically, had accepted and preached the *doctrine* of conscious salvation before his brother Charles. He was the first to be convinced that Böhler's teaching on the nature and fruits of faith was scriptural, and that Christian faith was not merely intellectual assent to orthodox opinions, but a vital act, and afterward a habit of the soul, by which man, under the influence of the Spirit of God, trusts in the personal Christ, enters into living union with him.

and then abides in him. It was Peter Böhler who, under God, turned the Oxford Methodist, whose career was cut short in Georgia, “into the London Methodist whose work now fills the world.”

On May 4 Böhler embarked for Carolina, and John Wesley’s deep conviction of his own momentous vocation is expressed in his Journal: “O what a work hath God begun since his coming into England! such a one as shall never come to an end till heaven and earth shall pass away.” The work of Böhler was consummated by the influence of Luther, who being dead yet spake through his glowing commentaries on the epistles of faith.



FROM THE COPPERPLATE BY WALLIS.

**ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH, BLOOMSBURY, LONDON.**

On Sunday, May 28, 1738, John Wesley preached in this church on “This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.” It was his first sermon after his conversion.

We left John Wesley with some friends at the door of Mr. Bray’s house in Little Britain on Whitsunday morning. They had been singing a pentecostal hymn in Charles Wes-



ley's sick-room. Afterward John went to the Church of St. Mary-le-Strand, where Dr. Heylyn was rector. Wesley had arranged to assist the doctor in preparing an edition of à Kempis, and his friend William Law had been the rector's curate in the days when, says Byrom, he was "such a gay parson that Dr. Heylyn said his book, *The Serious Call*, would have been better if he had traveled that way himself." On this memorable Whitsunday John Wesley records that he heard the rector preach a truly Christian sermon on "They were all filled with the Holy Ghost," "and so," said the preacher, "may all you be, if it is not your own fault." The curate was taken ill during the service, so Wesley assisted the rector with the Communion. Soon after the service he heard the joyful news that his brother had found rest to his soul.

John Wesley continued in sorrow. In a letter to a friend he said: "O let no one deceive us by vain words, as if we had already attained this faith! (Note: That is, the proper Christian faith). By its fruits we shall know. Do we already feel peace with God and joy in the Holy Ghost? Does his Spirit bear witness with our spirit that we are the children of God? Alas! with mine he does not. O thou Saviour of men, save us from trusting in anything but thee! Draw us after thee! Let us be emptied of ourselves, and then fill us with all peace and joy in believing, and let nothing separate us from thy love in time or eternity."

His prayer was heard. On Wednesday, May 24, at five in the morning, he opened his Testament at these words: "There are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature." As he was about to leave the house he came upon the words, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of

God.” In the afternoon he was asked to go to St. Paul’s Cathedral, when the anthem was sung :

Out of the deep have I called unto thee, O Lord. Lord, hear my voice.  
 O let thine ears consider well the voice of my complaint,  
 If thou, Lord, wilt be extreme to mark what is done amiss, O Lord,  
     who may abide it ?  
 But there is mercy with thee, therefore thou shalt be feared.  
 O Israel, trust in the Lord ; for with the Lord there is mercy, and with  
     him is plenteous redemption :  
 And he shall redeem Israel from all his sins.

Within a few minutes’ walk of Little Britain was Nettleton

Court, on the east side of Aldersgate Street, where one of the few remaining religious “ societies ” connected with the Church of England met for prayer and Bible study. In the evening, very unwillingly, Wesley went to this society, where some



DRAWN BY J. D. WOODWARD.

AFTER PHOTO.

NETTLETON COURT.

one was reading Luther’s preface to the Epistle to the Romans, descriptive of saving faith. The decisive hour is best described in his own words :

About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation ; and an assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death. I began to pray with all my might for those who had in a more especial manner despitely used me and persecuted me. I then testified openly to all there what I now first felt in my heart.

Charles Wesley was not present at this meeting, for he was confined to his room in Little Britain, but he gives a delightful description of the hour following: "Toward ten my brother was brought in triumph by a troop of friends, and declared, 'I believe.' We sang the hymn with great joy, and parted with prayer." "The hymn" was doubtless the one already quoted, written by Charles two days before, on his own conversion—"Where shall my wondering soul begin?" During the next year some verses were published which express his joy in his brother's new experience on what he calls "the memorable day."

Bless'd be the name that sets thee free,  
 The name that sure salvation brings!  
 The Sun of Righteousness on thee  
 Hath rose with healing in his wings.  
 Away let grief and sighing flee;  
 Jesus hath died for thee—for thee!

The preface to Luther's Commentary on Romans, which kindled Wesley's faith, was published in English during the latter part of Queen Elizabeth's reign, and it is probable that it was a reprint of this translation which was read in the little room in Aldersgate Street. One of the passages which, as Wesley says, describe "the change which God works in the heart by faith," is as follows: "Faith is an energy in the heart; at once so efficacious, lively, breathing, and powerful, as to be incapable of remaining inactive, but bursts forth into operation. . . . Faith is a constant trust in the mercy of God toward us . . . by which we cast ourselves entirely on God and commit ourselves to him, by which, having an assured reliance, we feel no hesitation about enduring death a thousand times. And this firm trust in the mercy of God is so animating as to cheer, elevate, and excite the heart, and

to transport it with certain most sweet affections toward God. It animates the believer in such a manner that, firmly relying upon God, he feels no dread in opposing himself as a single champion against all creatures. This high and heroic feeling, this noble enlargement of spirit, is injected and effected in the heart by the Spirit of God, who is imparted to the believer through faith."

Wesley's conversion not only marks an epoch in his personal experience, but is a great landmark in the history of the Methodist movement. Well does the Congregational theologian, Dr. Dale, say: "That wonderful experience, that revelation of Christ, had a direct and vital relation to all that has given the name of John Wesley an enduring place in the history of Christendom." Miss Wedgwood, as an Anglican writer, has admirably expressed the master-truth which explains the whole sequel of Wesley's life and which furnishes the key to the whole development of Wesleyan Methodism. She notes the change from the depression of this High Church period, when his earnest nature was feeling the incompleteness of a traditional religion, and remarks that it is evident that he passed now into a new spiritual region: "The birthday of a Christian was already shifted from his baptism to his conversion, and in that change the partition line in two great systems is crossed."

The most careful and authoritative student of Wesley in the Anglican Church, Canon Overton, also recognizes the great change which his evangelical conversion wrought in Wesley: "I cannot at all agree with those who would regard all this as mere enthusiasm. One man is touched in one way, another in another, and it appears to me that soon after this, but not quite immediately, Wesley became a different man, so far as his inward feelings were concerned. He had

no more doubts or misgivings to the end of his long life, which henceforth, in spite of the opposition of foes—and, still worse, of friends—was a singularly sunny life to the very end.”

His conversion revolutionized the whole character and method of his ministry. The great evangelical doctrines had been obscured by his sacerdotalism. His moral teaching, lofty as it was, had lacked the inspiration of the mightiest motive—the personal consciousness of God’s love to man and the burning love to God created by the witness of the Spirit. The faith of a servant was transformed into the faith of a son, and from this hour, as Dr. Rigg observes, “this ritualistic priest and ecclesiastical martinet was to be transformed into a flaming preacher of the great evangelical salvation and life in all its branches, and its rich and varied experiences. Hence arose Wesleyan Methodism and all the Methodist Churches.” The younger Methodist, Rev. Hugh Price Hughes, expresses the same conviction as to the historical importance of this event: “The Rubicon was crossed. The sweeping aside of ecclesiastical traditions, the rejection of the apostolical succession, the ordination with his own hands of presbyters and bishops, the final organization of a separate and fully equipped Church, were all logically involved in what took place that night.”

Oxford Methodism, as the latest biographer of Fletcher, F. W. Macdonald, has observed, “with its almost monastic rigors, its living by rule, its canonical hours of prayer, is a fair and noble phase of the many-sided life of the Church of England, and with all its defects and limitations claims our deep respect. But it was not the instrument by which the Church and nation were to be revived; it had no message for the world, no secret of power with which to move and quicken

the masses. To do this it must become other than it was. It must die in order to bring forth much fruit. And this death and rising were accomplished in the spiritual change wrought in John Wesley, the leader of the earlier and the later Methodism." The place of this spiritual event in the history of the English nation has been well stated by the historian Lecky: "It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that the scene which took place at that humble meeting in Aldersgate Street forms an epoch in English history. The conviction which then flashed upon one of the most powerful and most active intellects in England is the true source of English Methodism."



## CHAPTER XXXV

### **Casting off the Graveclothes**

WILLIAM LAW'S "NOTIONAL FAITH."—METHODISM NOT MYSTICISM.—  
WITHERING SACERDOTALISM.—WESLEY'S VISIT TO HERRNHUT.—  
LIVING PROOFS.—METHODISM TO MORAVIANISM, DR.

**W**ESLEY, in a letter to William Law, describes his faith up to the time of his meeting with Peter Böhler as "a speculative notional shadow, which lives in the head, not in the heart." He upbraids his former teacher for withholding from him the true doctrine of faith, and beseeches him to consider whether the true reason for this defective teaching was that he did not possess this faith himself. A correspondence of great interest followed. Canon Overton well says that there is little temptation to quote the correspondence fully, for it led to an estrangement, which cannot be too deeply deplored, between two of the holiest and ablest men of the day, who were both intensely in earnest about promoting one great object. Although he is an admiring biographer of Law, Canon Overton entirely disagrees with Mr. Tyerman's condemnation of Wesley's letters as "petulant and harsh," and vindicates his plain speaking. It is more pleasant to dwell on the fact that Wesley always honored the character of his old friend, and only eighteen months before his own

death described Law's Serious Call as “a treatise which will hardly be excelled, if it be equaled, in the English tongue either for beauty of expression or justness and depth of thought.” Charles Wesley well called Law “Our John the Baptist.” But both brothers would have failed as England's evangelists if they had not found freedom from Law's defective teaching on faith and the atoning sacrifice of Christ.

Two years before, when Wesley was in Georgia, he had been convinced of the errors of mysticism into which Law drifted. He told his brother Samuel that the rock on which he had “nearly made shipwreck of the faith was the writings of the mystics” which Law had recommended to him. Law himself was fascinated with the writings of Jacob Behmen—the “illuminated Behmen,” as his admirers called him. Between the years 1612 and 1624 Behmen's writings had been rapidly circulated throughout Europe and gave an impulse to mysticism of every kind, good and bad. His works reveal a man of intense convictions, and appeal powerfully to religious feeling. “Pearls there are, if patiently sought for, and sometimes of rare beauty, but it is like diving for pearls in a deep and turbid sea.” “His language,” wrote Wesley, “is barbarous; unscriptural and unintelligible.” Of his great work, *Mysterium Magnum*, he says: “It is most sublime nonsense, inimitable bombast, fustian not to be paralleled! All of a piece with his inspired interpretation of the word *Tetragrammaton*, on which (mistaking it for the unutterable name itself, whereas it means only a word consisting of four letters) he comments with such exquisite gravity and solemnity, telling you the meaning of every syllable of it.” Wesley writes of some who had been studying Behmen, that he had “filled them so full of sublime speculations that they had left Scripture and common sense far behind.”



He objected to many of the mystic writers, he tells us, because they appear to have no conception of Church communion, depreciate the means of grace, are wise above what is written, and, indulging in unscriptural speculations, are



JACOB BEHMEN.

AFTER THE ENGRAVING BY COOPER.

apt to despise all who differ from them as carnal, unenlightened men. Their whole phraseology was both unscriptural and affectedly mysterious. "I say affectedly, for this does not necessarily result from the nature of the thing

spoken of. St. John speaks as high and as deep things as Jacob Behmen. Why, then, does not Jacob speak as plain as he?" While Wesley appreciated some great spiritual truths emphasized by the mystics, he rejected the speculative and sentimental errors which afterward marred the work of the Moravians. If Methodism had become mysticism, it would have lacked the force for the moral revolution which England needed.

From the year of his conversion Wesley's sacerdotalism withered away. He did not, as an Anglican has observed, abate his attachment to the ordinances of the Established Church, and he did not at once reach that degree of independence of her hierarchy and some of her rules which marks his farthest point of divergence. Dr. Rigg has forcibly said, "Habits of thought and feeling which had become a second nature still clave to him for a while; but these dropped off one by one until scarcely a vestige of them was left." The graveclothes of ritualistic superstition hung about him even after he had come forth from the sepulcher and had in his heart and soul been set loose and free, and he only cast them off gradually, but the new principle that he had embraced led before long to his complete emancipation from the principles and prejudices of High Church ecclesiasticism. The ultimate separation of the Methodist societies from the Anglican Church, Dr. Rigg says, was also involved in this change: "Newman renounced justification by faith, and clung to apostolical succession, therefore he went to Rome; Wesley embraced justification by faith, and renounced apostolical succession, therefore his people are a separate people from the Church of England."

The change which the revelation of the living Christ wrought in John Wesley was unmistakable, and marked a

new epoch in his history, but he was not free from temptation and he was still subject to perplexity from the conflicting counsels of friends. In the month of June, 1738, he set forth from Gravesend, accompanied by his friend Ingham and others, to visit the Moravian settlement of Herrnhut, on the borders of Bohemia. "I hoped," he records, "the con-



VIEW OF HERRNHUT.

versing with those holy men who were themselves living witnesses of the full power of faith, and yet able to bear with those that are weak, would be a means, under God, of so establishing my soul that I might go from faith to faith and from strength to strength."

The travelers landed at Rotterdam, and after leaving its well-paved road, with walnut trees on either side, they began to experience the troubles of continental traveling in those days. At Goudart several innkeepers refused to entertain them, and with difficulty they found one who "did us the favor to take our money for some meat and drink and the use of two or three bad beds." At Ysselstein they found a few German brethren and sisters, and some English friends to

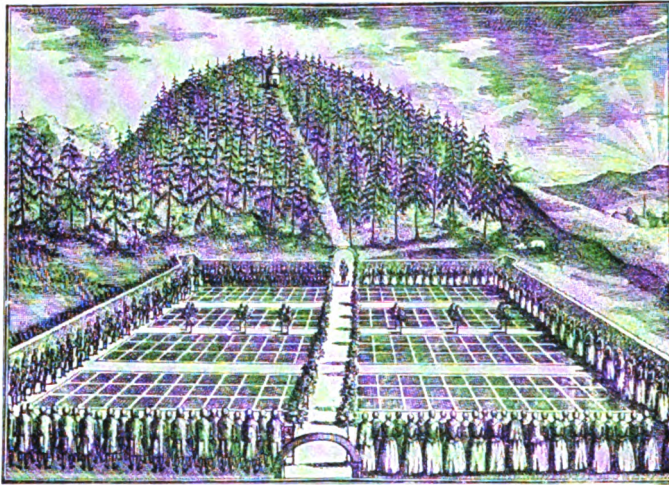
whom Wesley administered the Lord's Supper, and some time was spent in hearing of "the wonderful work which God is beginning to work over all the earth." They journeyed by boat to Amsterdam, admiring the beautiful gardens by the river, the neat buildings, and clean streets. Wesley went to one of the "societies" and heard singing in Low Dutch and expounding in High Dutch. At Frankfort he found Peter Böhler's father, who obtained for the party entrance to the city and entertained them generously.

At Marienborn they found Count Zinzendorf presiding over a Moravian community of ninety persons. Here Wesley spent a fortnight, and met with what he sought for: "living proofs of the power of faith: persons saved from inward as well as outward sin by the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, and from all doubt and fear by the abiding witness of the Holy Spirit." He heard Zinzendorf preach in the old castle at Runneberg, and attended a conference where the count spoke on justification and its fruits.

At Weimar, after long detention at the gates, Wesley was brought before the duke, who asked him why he was going to Herrnhut. "To see the place where the Christians live," was the reply. The duke "looked hard" and let them go. The students of Jena greatly interested the Oxford fellow. At Halle, where the "King of Prussia's tall men" again detained the travelers, Wesley inspected Francke's Orphan House, in which six hundred and fifty children were maintained and three thousand taught. "Surely," he wrote, "such a thing neither we nor our fathers have known as this great thing which God hath done!"

At last they reached Herrnhut, "the Jerusalem of the United Brethren." Wesley heard Christian David preach on the topics in which he was most of all interested. He con-

versed with the exiles, and listened entranced to the stories of their lives. "He heard the secrets of the heart laid bare, the agonies of soul, the fights with sin, the victory through Christ, the peace unutterable with God. He saw the simple Herrnhut life, admired the order and quiet, and was present at love feasts and band meetings." He watched the burial of a little child in "God's Acre." August 12 was Intercession



FROM AN OLD PRINT.

**EASTER COMMEMORATION IN HERRNHUT CEMETERY.**

"Tuesday, 8.—A child was buried. The burying ground (called by them *Gottes Acker*, that is, "God's ground") lies a few hundred yards out of the town, under the side of a little wood. There are distinct squares in it for married men and unmarried; for married and unmarried women; for male and female children; and for widows."

—Wesley's Journal, 1738.

Day, when many strangers came thirty or forty miles. Wesley wrote: "I would gladly have spent my life here, but my Master calling me to labor in another part of his vineyard, on Monday, 14, I was constrained to take my leave of this happy place. O when shall this Christianity cover the earth as the waters cover the sea!"

Wesley did not approve of everything in Moravian teaching and Church order, and he was soon to have painful experience of the dangers which the quietism of some German brethren was to bring to the London societies, but the deep obligation of Methodism to Moravianism is well stated by Dr. Stevens:

First, it introduced Wesley into that regenerated spiritual life, the supremacy of which over all ecclesiasticism and dogmatism it was the appointed mission of Methodism to reassert and promote in the Protestant world. Second, Wesley derived from it some of his clearest conceptions of the theological ideas which he was to propagate as essentially related to this spiritual life; and he now returned from Herrnhut not only confirmed in his new religious experience, but in these most important doctrinal views. Third, Zinzendorf's communities were based upon Spener's plan of reforming the Established Churches, by forming "little Churches within them," in despair of maintaining spiritual life among them otherwise; Wesley thus organized Methodism within the Anglican Church. And, fourth, not only in this general analogy, but in many details of his discipline can we trace the influence of Moravianism.



## CHAPTER XXXVI

### Beacon Fires of Revival in America and Europe

JONATHAN EDWARDS.—“THE GREAT AWAKENING.”—WESLEY READS “THE TRULY SURPRISING NARRATIVE.”—THE EUROPEAN CONTINENT.—HOWELL HARRIS, THE APOSTLE OF WALES.—RUGGED SCOTLAND.

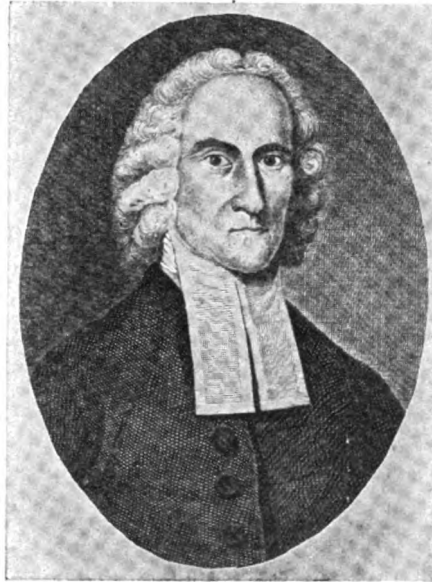
**J**UST before the dawn of the Methodist revival the heavenly watchers, whose vision is not limited by national boundaries and separating seas, must have marked the outbursts of holy fire which relieved the darkness on both sides of the Atlantic.

In the year in which the Holy Club was formed Jonathan Edwards began his work at Northampton, Mass., and when the Wesleys sailed for America the people of New England were in the midst of a “Great Awakening.” Jonathan Edwards, the massive divine, and John Wesley, the Oxford fellow, were not the type of men whom the popular imagination selects as fitted to be great revivalists. Yet each in his own land was a prophet of fire.

Some have said of Edwards that he was dominated by intellect; that he had little or no emotion, no touch of tenderness, no Christlike compassion; nothing but an “awful goodness.” To this Grosart replies: “Never was there a more egregious mistake. Like the ancient seers, he preached his messages as ever in the shadow of God. But it has been

my privilege to hold in my hands the little many-paged manuscript of the most tremendous of sermons ever preached — ‘Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God’ — and I bear witness that every page, almost, remains blurred with the preacher’s tears.”

Edwards’s Narrative of Late Surprising Conversions in New England was published in 1737, and he observes: “There was scarcely a single person in the town of Northampton, either old or young, that was left unconcerned about the things of the eternal world. Those who were wont to be the vainest and loosest were now generally subjected to great awakenings. The town seemed to be full of the presence of God.” Three hundred were converted in Northampton, and the fire spread to many other towns in New England and colonies farther south.



FROM THE ENGRAVING BY TROTTER.

REV. JONATHAN EDWARDS.

Wesley heard of this great work in America, and in October, 1738, wrote in his Journal: “In walking I read the truly surprising narrative of the conversions lately wrought in and about the town of Northampton, in New England. Surely this is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes.” Five years later we shall find Whitefield visiting the scene of this revival.



In Europe it was as if a subtle, unseen train had been laid by many men simultaneously in many countries, and that the spark was struck and the whole was suddenly wrapped in a divine flame. Among the Huguenots who flocked to England at the close of the seventeenth century, when the Edict of Nantes was revoked, there were many men and women of the noblest Christian type. Persecution did not quench the fire of holy love. The Wesleys found some of them ready to aid them by their character and work, and the names of these sons of exile shine out like stars in the coming history of the Methodist movement.

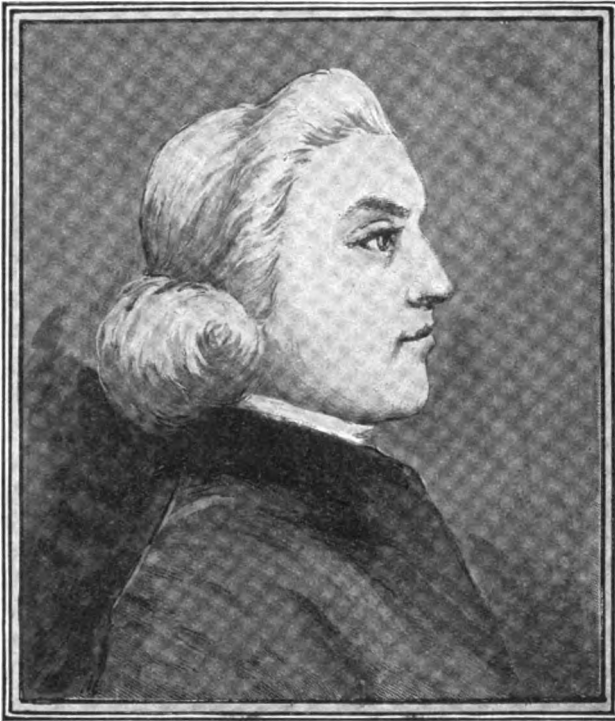
We have already seen how the Moravian revival, of which Christian David was the apostle, sent the pilgrim bands across wide seas to witness in storm-tossed ships and distant colonies to the triumphant joy of living faith. Their testimony, their songs, their fellowship, and their missionary fervors have left their mark on Methodism.

Now also "wild Wales" supplied an evangelist whose torch lighted many a beacon fire upon his native hills. Howell Harris, of Trevecca, was unknown to the Wesleys when, a few months before they went to Georgia, he found the same kind of spiritual joy which they were seeking.

He was born on the spot where the Calvinistic Methodist College now stands at Trevecca, in the parish of Talgarth, Brecknockshire, South Wales, in 1714. The old church of Talgarth, where he "found salvation," still stands, and a tablet on the wall informs us that "here, where his body lies, he was convinced of sin, had his pardon sealed, and felt the power of Christ's blood at the Holy Communion."

Like Charles Wesley, Harris received the witness of the Spirit on a Whitsunday, and could not help telling on his way home from church that he knew his sins were forgiven.

“However,” he writes, “I knew not whether I should continue in that state, having never conversed with any that had his face toward Zion, and who could instruct me in the ways of the Lord.” Soon after: “Being in secret prayer, I felt



DRAWN BY W. B. DAVIS.

FROM AN OLD PRINT.

HOWELL HARRIS.

“The apostle of Wales.”

suddenly my heart melting within me, like wax before the fire, with love to God my Saviour, and also felt not only love and peace, but a longing to be dissolved and to be with Christ, and there was a cry in my soul which I was totally unacquainted with before, Abba, Father! Abba, Father! I could not *help* calling God my Father; I *knew* that I was

his child, and that he loved me and heard me. My soul being filled and satiated, cried: 'It is enough; I am satisfied. Give me strength and I will follow thee through fire and water.'"

Harris entered Oxford University after the Wesleys had left and the little band of Methodists were dispersed. He was a student at St. Mary's Hall, made famous by the name of Sir Thomas More and in these later days by that of the brave Bishop Hannington. The irregularities of Oxford life at that time disgusted him. He was warned by his brother "to beware of enthusiasm," of which the "Methodist distemper" was considered a symptom; and collegiate manners certainly tended to cure this! His notes in the old Latin volumes in the library of Trevecca College show that he was not a dullard, but he learned little at St. Mary's Hall, and he writes: "When I saw the immoralities which surrounded me there I became soon weary of the place, and cried to God to deliver me from thence; and thus after keeping that term I was again brought to my dear friends in Wales." At the time the Wesleys and Ingham commenced their work in Georgia Howell Harris was preaching in Wales with marvelous power. "The people began to assemble by vast numbers, so that the homes wherein we met could not contain them. The word was attended with such power that many cried out to God for the pardon of their sins; and such as lived in malice confessed their sins, making peace with each other. Family worship was set up in many houses, and the churches were crowded."

A storm of persecution arose. Magistrates fumed, and threatened the penalties of the Conventicle Act, and the clergy were indignant at the presumption of this layman—for he was the first lay preacher of this whole Methodist movement.

He was refused holy orders, and opened a school at Trevecca. There he met with the Rev. Griffith Jones, who established a system of movable free schools in Wales, and Harris found in him a friend. Several of Griffith Jones's teachers afterward became Methodist preachers. Persecuting malice ejected Howell Harris from his own school in 1737, but this only sent him forth as an evangelist on a larger scale.

He formed little societies on Dr. Horneck's plan. He successfully attacked immorality and the vanities of wakes and fairs. When Whitefield met him



DRAWN BY P. E. FLINTOFF.

AFTER PHOTO.

TALGARTH CHURCH.

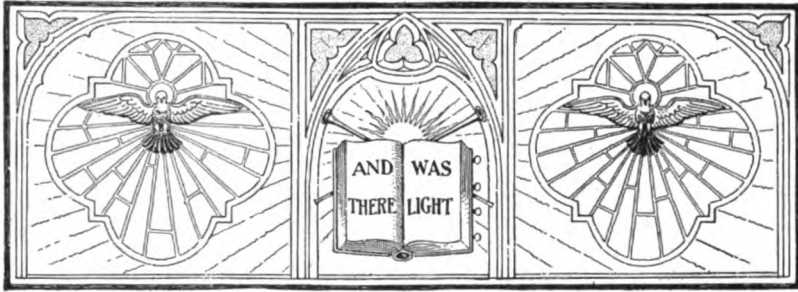
in Cardiff, in 1739, he says he found him "a burning and shining light; a barrier against profanity and immorality, and an indefatigable promoter of the Gospel of Jesus Christ." During three years he had preached almost twice every day, for three or four hours together; and in his evangelistic tours had visited seven counties, and had established nearly thirty societies, and still his sphere of action was enlarging daily.

The letters of this apostle of Wales appear in his Life by Hugh P. Hughes, and the late Dr. James Hamilton placed them on a parallel with those of the dignified and saintly Rutherford. It is worthy of note that the great Welsh revival which Harris conducted was quite independent in its

origin of that which resulted from the preaching of Wesley and Whitefield, though a few years afterward the warmest sympathy and close fraternity existed between Howell Harris and the English revivalists.

In rugged Scotland, also, a remarkable revival occurred a little later. James Robe, a minister at Kilsyth, preached "Regeneration." At Kirkintilloch sixteen children began a prayer meeting. The power of God descended upon preacher and children. Thirty persons were awakened under one sermon, and in a short time many hundreds were found weeping and praying. Drunkenness and swearing were abandoned, family prayer was held, and multitudes gathered for worship. The same physical signs of intense emotion appeared in Scotland as in America, where many fell prostrate, were convulsed, or trembled violently, or shrieked aloud. The Presbytery at Dunfermline pronounced the movement a "delusion, and the work of the great deceiver." The Wesleys were perplexed by the same mysterious influences. But the moral results of the revival in Scotland were real and decisive, and sprang out of the preaching of the same doctrine of regeneration which was the burden of the message of the Wesleys and Whitefield.

Thus we find the same mighty Spirit working on both sides of the Atlantic, and firing the souls of men of widely differing racial character. We must now return to Charles Wesley, and mark how his labors in London prepared the way for the great work of the coming year.



## CHAPTER XXXVII

### England's Awakening

FOUR STAGES IN THE RISE OF METHODISM.—CHARLES WESLEY IN THE HOME, THE PRISON, AND THE CHURCH.—THE RETURN OF JOHN WESLEY AND WHITEFIELD.—FETTER LANE AND THE BAPTISM OF FIRE.

**J**OHAN WESLEY himself has dated the successive stages in the rise of Methodism.

The first is biblical. It is the beginning of the Holy Club at Oxford: "In 1729 two young men reading the Bible saw they could not be saved without holiness followed after it, and incited others so to do." Thus Methodism had its life-root in Bible study.

The second is brotherly. In his *Short History of the People Called Methodists*, Wesley further notes a stage "at Savannah, in April, 1736, when twenty or thirty persons met at my house." Here we find the idea of *fellowship* bearing fruit.

The third is doctrinal. In the spring of 1738, when his conversation with Böhler and careful reading of the Greek New Testament had convinced him of the vital importance of the doctrine of justification by faith, Wesley wrote: "Then it pleased God to kindle a fire which I trust shall

never be extinguished." He appears to regard this as the first spark of the Great Revival.

The fourth is organic. The beginning of the Methodist Church organization is thus recorded by Wesley: "On Monday, May 1, 1739, our little society began in London." He also states: "Just at this time (1738-9), when we [the nation] wanted little of filling up the measure of our iniquities, two or three clergymen of the Church of England began vehemently to call sinners to repentance. In two or three years they had sounded the alarm to the utmost borders of the land. Many thousands gathered together to hear them, and in every place where they came many began to show such a concern for religion as they had never done before." This passage marks earnest evangelistic and reformatory enterprise as a characteristic element of Methodism.

On the 11th of June, 1738, eighteen days after his conversion, John Wesley preached his famous sermon before the University of Oxford, on "By grace are ye saved through faith"—the keynote of his entire ministry. That sermon is the first of those which form the standard of Methodist belief. That great doctrine he now began to preach with experimental fervor. His conviction of its importance was deepened by his visit to Herrnhut. Charles Wesley also, after his conversion, commenced to witness everywhere to the marvelous change in his spiritual life. In the family, the prison, and the churches he spoke with the new "tongue of fire." During the week that followed his pentecost he testified to his dear friends the Delamottes of the love of God. During his visit with them at Blendon two sons, two maids, and the gardener found peace.

Mrs. Delamotte was greatly opposed to the "new doc-

trines.” She left the house and refused to return while Charles Wesley remained in it, but was persuaded by the loving appeals of her daughters. When Charles Wesley left the two maids at the door caught his hand. “Don’t be discouraged, sir,” said one; “I hope we shall all continue steadfast.” He was unable to keep back his tears.

A week later Mrs. Delamotte was “melted into a humble, contrite, longing frame of spirit,” and not long after found the joy of faith. What he was to this family Charles Wesley was to many others, and servants, parents, and children were everywhere won by his loving arguments and prayers.

The Vicar of Bexley, Mr. Piers, with his wife and serving man shared the same blessing. At Bexley with his friend the vicar Charles Wesley sang:

Shall I, for fear of feeble man,  
The Spirit’s course in me restrain?  
Or, undismayed in deed and word,  
Be a true witness of my Lord?

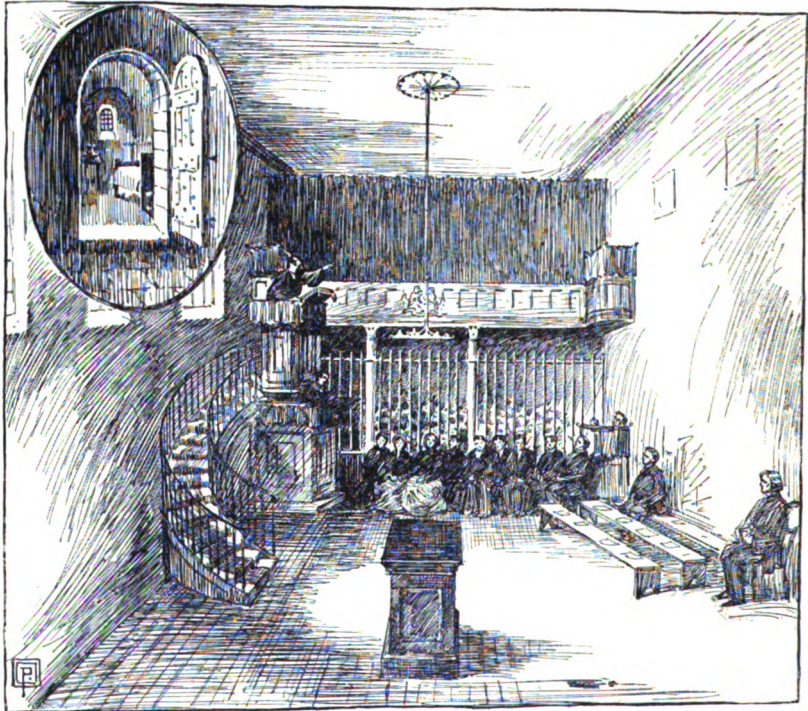
What a different sphere of labor he found in the old Newgate Jail! Here he preached to the malefactors under sentence of death, and visited the prisoners every day. One poor negro, who had robbed his master, lay ill of a fever. The story of the sufferings of the Saviour on his behalf melted his heart, and to the preacher’s joy the swarthy penitent found peace. Charles Wesley and the Rev. Thomas Bray spent a whole night in the cell with condemned criminals. Joy was visible in their faces as they sang Samuel Wesley’s hymn, preserved so strangely on a charred piece of paper when the rectory was burned:

Behold the Saviour of mankind,  
Nailed to the shameful tree!  
How vast the love that him inclined,  
To bleed and die for thee!



“It was one of the most triumphant hours I have ever known,” said Charles Wesley. The hymn was sung again next day at Tyburn, Oxford Street, the place of public execution. Ten doomed men were full of comfort and triumph.

We have an interesting facsimile of the handwriting of



DRAWN BY W. B. PRICE.

FROM WOODCUTS.

**THE OLD CHAPEL, NEWGATE PRISON.**

The male prisoners are behind the bars, the females behind the curtain in the gallery. The vignette in the upper left-hand corner shows the condemned cell, where Charles Wesley ministered to felons, 1738.

Sarah Gwynne, afterward the wife of Charles Wesley, who, during her maidenhood, made a copy of this famous hymn, written by the father of the Wesleys and sung by his own son at this hour.

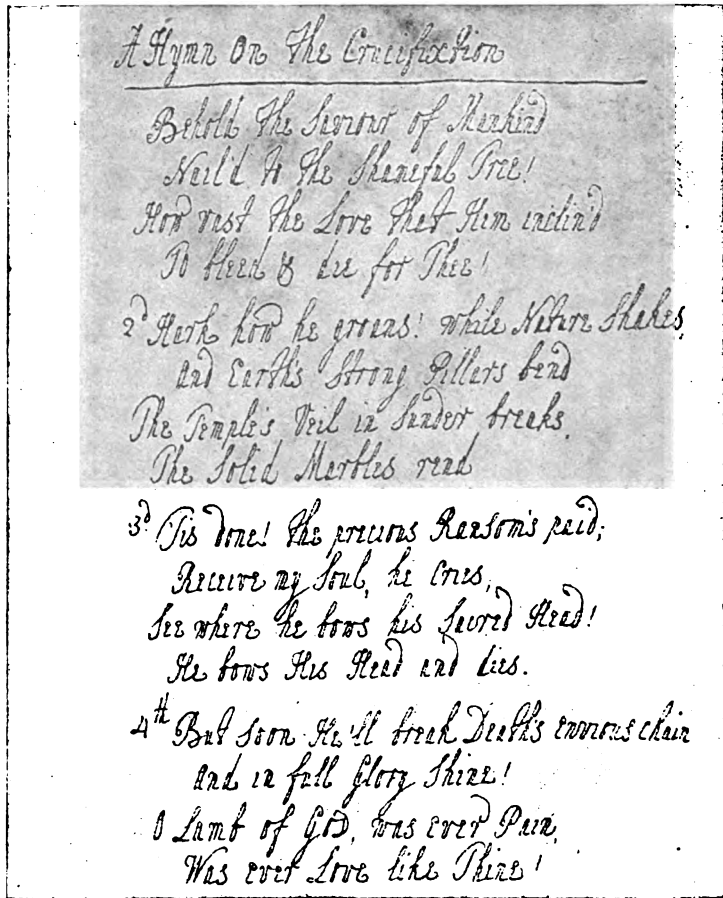
Another hymn sung, and written for this pathetic occasion, by Charles Wesley himself, was entitled "Faith in Christ," and concludes:

A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,  
Into thy hands I fall;  
Be thou my life, my righteousness,  
My Jesus, and my all.

From Newgate Jail and Tyburn gallows to the pulpit of Westminster Abbey was another remarkable change of scene. In the magnificent minster, so rich in historical association, we find Charles Wesley preaching present salvation from sin by faith in Christ, and assisting in the Communion. Other London churches, soon to be closed against him, rang with the great proclamation. He became curate to his friend Mr. Stonehouse, the Vicar of Islington, whom Byrom describes as "a very agreeable young gentleman." "Regular work," says Telford, "began to restore his physical strength." He preached with great boldness, and opposition was awakened. On September 24, 1738, "there was a vast audience, and better disposed than usual. None went out, as they had threatened and frequently done heretofore, especially the well-dressed hearers, when'er I mentioned 'hell to ears polite,' and urged that rude question, 'Do you deserve to be damned?'" It was characteristic of the Wesleys that they preached the severe doctrines of the Gospel to "well-dressed hearers," and its more comforting truths to the poor and the outcast!

John Wesley returned from Germany to London on Saturday, September 16, 1738. His brother met him, and "we took sweet counsel together," says Charles, "comparing our experiences." On Sunday John at once commenced work: "I began to declare in my own country the glad tidings of

salvation, preaching three times, and afterward expounding the Scripture to a large company in the Minories." The



SAMUEL WESLEY'S HYMN, SUNG IN NEWGATE PRISON BY  
 CHARLES WESLEY.

In the youthful handwriting of Sarah Gwynne, afterward Charles Wesley's wife. The MS. volume containing this and other hymns has recently been found in the cellars of the Wesleyan Book Room, London.

Minories was a street between Aldgate and the Tower of London, where, "in the house of Mr. Sims," Charles Wesley

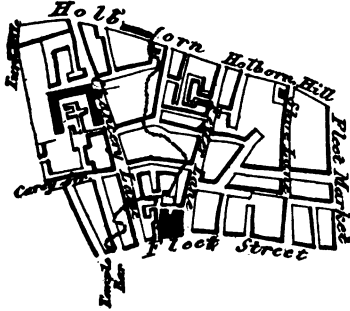
had preached on the two previous Sunday evenings. This room was to witness the first of the strange scenes of conviction which, a little later, created so much sensation in Bristol. A well-dressed middle-aged woman cried out as in the agonies of death. When she called on Wesley next day the light of forgiveness was beginning to steal over her troubled spirit.

Charles Wesley's work as curate to Mr. Stonehouse at Islington was brought to an end by the violent opposition of the churchwardens, who employed two men to prevent him from ascending the pulpit stairs. The Bishop of London appears to have supported the churchwardens' actions, on technical grounds, and Mr. Stonehouse was weak enough to consent that his old friend should preach in his church no more. The only parochial appointment which Charles Wesley ever held in the Church of England thus came to an end.

George Whitefield returned from America to England in December, 1738, and learned that many who had been awakened by his preaching, twelve months before, were now "grown strong men in Christ, by the ministry of his dear friends and fellow-laborers." Finding the doctrine of justification by faith "much revived," and working great results, he began to preach it as he had not preached it before. The publication of his Journals had raised strong prejudice against him, and he found himself excluded from most of the London pulpits. An incident not devoid of humor occurred at Islington Church, where the churchwardens stood at the bottom of the stairs to guard the pulpit when he attempted to ascend, as in the case of Charles Wesley. Whitefield did not try to force his way, but quietly turned and walked into the churchyard, inviting the congregation to follow him. The pews were soon empty, the people thronged the churchyard, and the disconcerted churchwardens

were left standing alone at the foot of the pulpit stairs. Whitefield preached from a tombstone, and his hearers were deeply affected by his sermon.

The memorable year 1739 was ushered in by a remarkable love feast. It was held in the room in Fetter Lane, to



FROM A PRINT OF 1817.

PLAN OF HOLBORN.

Fetter Lane, connecting Holborn and Fleet Street, is entered close by the old Staple's Inn, still standing, as in Wesley's day. Here was the room in which the memorable love feast was held on New Year's Day, 1739, and here also was the old chapel which the Moravians secured in 1740.

which the little religious "society," organized in the house of James Hutton the bookseller, had been transferred. This room must not be confounded with the Moravian chapel, which was not taken by James Hutton until 1740, nor must the society which met in the room be regarded as a Moravian society. The members mostly professed to belong to the Church of England, and as such they went in a body to St. Paul's Cathedral, headed

by Charles Wesley and George Whitefield, to receive the Lord's Supper. A section of this society, however, eventually became a Moravian society, and later a church. When Wesley returned from Herrnhut he found that the society had increased from ten to thirty-two members. The *agape*, or love feast, of the primitive Church, which had been pushed out by the encroachments of the ritualistic and sacerdotal elements in ecclesiastical life, had been revived by the Moravians, and was used by this "society" in Fetter Lane.

It was here, on New Year's Day, that seven of the Oxford Methodists met, with sixty others. John and Charles Wesley, Whitefield, Westley Hall, Benjamin Ingham, Charles

Kinchin, and Richard Hutchins were all ordained clergymen of the Church of England. Wesley writes: "About three in the morning, as we were continuing instant in prayer, the power of God came mightily upon us, insomuch that many cried out for exceeding joy, and many fell to the ground. As soon as we were

recovered a little from that awe and amazement at the presence of his majesty we broke out with one voice, 'We praise thee, O God, we acknowledge thee to be the Lord.'"

Whitefield pronounced this to be "the happiest

New Year's Day he had ever seen." Tyerman well regards it as a glorious preparation for the herculean work on which Whitefield and the Wesleys were entering: "No wonder that the year thus begun should be the most remarkable in Methodist history."

Only four hours after this remarkable scene in Fetter Lane Whitefield was engaged in gathering in the first fruits of the year. He wrote on January 2: "From seven in the morning till three in the afternoon people came, some telling me what God had done for their souls, and others crying out, 'What must we do to be saved?'" Three days afterward the seven Oxford Methodists just named "held a conference at Islington concerning several things of great importance." White-



DRAWN BY P. E. FLINTOFF.

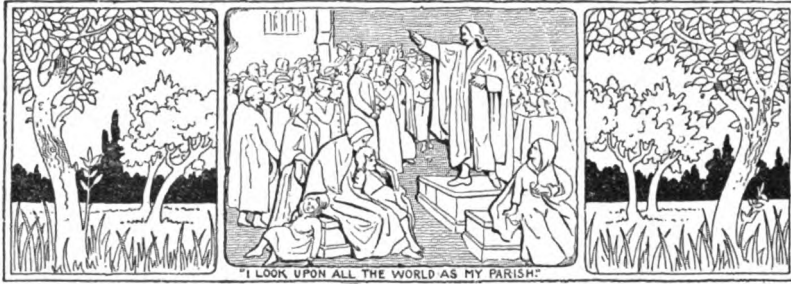
CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD.

As it appeared when Whitefield was ordained priest, 1739.

field says: "What we were in doubt about, after prayer, we determined by lot, and everything else was carried on with great love, meekness, and devotion. We continued in fasting and prayer till three o'clock, and then parted, with a full conviction that God was going to do great things among us."

In the same month Whitefield went to Oxford to be ordained "priest" at Christ Church. He afterward preached at the Castle and at St. Alban's Church to a crowded congregation, gownsmen of all degrees thronging the windows. He writes: "God enabled me to preach with the demonstration of the Spirit and with power, and quite took away my hoarseness so that I could lift up my voice like a trumpet."

It was at this time that "good" Bishop Benson of Gloucester commended Whitefield to the Earl of Huntingdon: "Though mistaken on some points, I think Mr. Whitefield a very pious young man, with great abilities and zeal. I find His Grace of Canterbury [Dr. Potter] thinks highly of him. I pray to God to grant him success in his undertakings for the good of mankind and the revival of true religion among us in these degenerate days; in which prayer I am sure your lordship and my kind good Lady Huntingdon will most heartily join." Here we first find the name of the countess who was to occupy a prominent place in Whitefield's subsequent history.



## CHAPTER XXXVIII

### The First Fruits of Field-Preaching

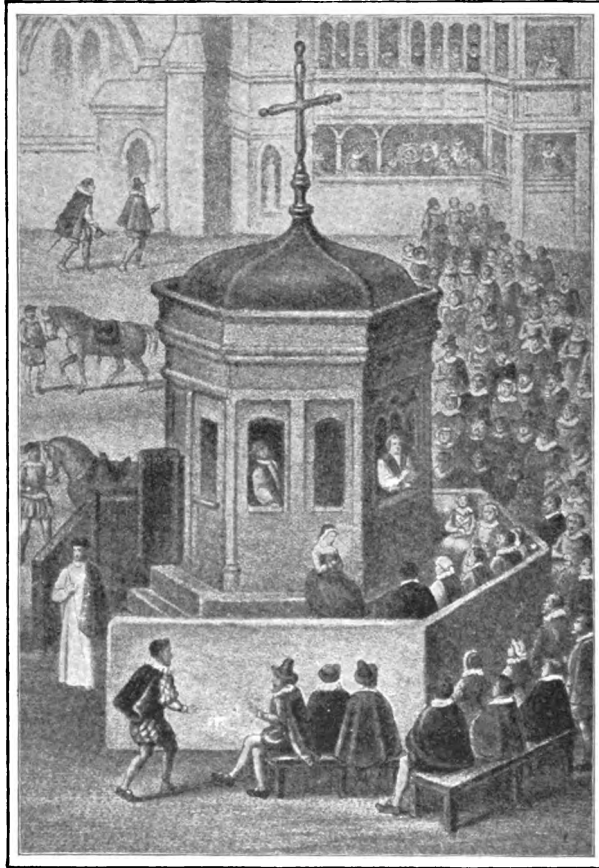
WHITEFIELD LEADS THE WAY.—A MOUNTAIN FOR A PULPIT, THE HEAVENS FOR A SOUNDING BOARD.—BRISTOL PRISONERS AND KINGSWOOD COLLIERIES.—THE WESLEYS DEFY FASHION.—AWAKENING LONDON.

“**B**UNYAN and Baxter had gathered immense congregations. The reformers at St. Paul's Cross had seen London citizens swarming like bees round the stone pulpit. Luther had filled the churches of Wittenberg and other cities in Saxony; Tauler at Strasburg, Bernard in many a cathedral, had attracted multitudes. The preachers of Greek Christendom had produced wonderful effects in Antioch and Constantinople; but Wesley and Whitefield were the first great preachers in both hemispheres of this terrestrial globe.” To these words of the late Dr. Stoughton may be added that Whitefield and Wesley were the first great open-air preachers of modern Christendom. They took up the work that had been done among a sparse population by Wyclif's preaching friars, and restored field-preaching to its true place in the evangelization of the growing population of both hemispheres.

Southey has wisely observed that if they had not been driven to field-preaching, by exclusion from church pulpits, they



would have taken to that course from necessity of a different nature. One Sunday, when Whitefield was preaching in Bermonds Church, as he tells us, "with great freedom in his



OUTDOOR PREACHING IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

From a picture painted in 1616, showing a preacher delivering a sermon to a concourse of citizens at St. Paul's Cross. In the background the king and lord mayor occupy a gallery built against the wall of the cathedral.

heart and clearness in his voice," to a crowded congregation, near a thousand people stood in the churchyard during the

service, hundreds went away who could not find room, and he had a strong inclination to go out and preach to them from one of the tombstones. "This," he says, "put me first upon thinking of preaching without doors. I mentioned it to some friends, who looked upon it as a mad notion. However, we knelt down and prayed that nothing may be done rashly. Hear and answer, O Lord! for thy name's sake!"

On the last Sunday before Whitefield left London to become the pioneer of field-preaching he preached in St. Margaret's Church, Westminster. Here many other famous preachers had witnessed for the truth, and the churchwardens' account for 1549 contains the following entry: "Paid to William Curlawe for mending of divers pews that were broken when Dr. Latymer did preach." There was some danger of broken pews when, on February 4, 1739, Whitefield "did preach" in the same pulpit, and a furious newspaper controversy was the result.

Three days after he preached at St. Margaret's Whitefield set out for Bristol to preach and collect funds for his orphanage. Rumors of the attitude of the London clergy had preceded him, and when he applied for the use of St. Mary Redcliffe Church he met with a repulse, first from the vicar, then from the chancellor of the diocese, and lastly from the dean. Whitefield then applied for permission to preach in Bristol prison. The keeper of the jail was the Mr. Dagge, "the tender gaoler," whom Johnson has immortalized in his *Life of the Poet Savage*. It was he who defrayed the expense of burying the poor poet in St. Peter's churchyard. Dagge had been one of the first fruits of Whitefield's ministry in Bristol prison in 1737. He welcomed the preacher with joy, and Whitefield preached to the prisoners daily until the mayor and sheriffs closed this door against him, alleging as

the reason that "he insisted upon the necessity of our being born again!"

It was on a bleak Saturday, February 17, 1739, that Whitefield first defied ecclesiastical fashion by preaching out of doors. Kingswood, formerly a royal forest, near Bristol, had become a region of coal mines, "inhabited," says Southey, "by a race of people as lawless as the foresters, their forefathers, but far more brutal, and differing as much from the people of the surrounding country in dialect as in appearance." Two years before Whitefield's friends had said to him, "What need of going abroad for this?" (to convert the savages). "If you have a mind to convert Indians, there are colliers enough in Kingswood." A hill, in a place called Rose Green, became his first "field-pulpit," and here he preached to his first open-air congregation of two hundred people. "I thought," says he, "it might be doing the service of my Creator, who had a mountain for his pulpit and the heavens for a sounding board; and who, when his Gospel was refused by the Jews, sent his servants into the highways and hedges."

Whitefield said that his heart had long yearned toward the poor colliers, who were as sheep without a shepherd. "Blessed be God," he exclaims, "that I have now broken the ice. Some may censure me, but if I thus pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ." The news of the preaching swept through the mines, and the people numbered two thousand at the second service, and increased to fourteen and twenty thousand. Sir James Stephen, in his *Essays in Ecclesiastical Biography*, has well described the scene: Taking his stand on some rising knoll, his tall and graceful figure dressed with elaborate propriety and composed into an easy and commanding attitude, White-

field's "clear blue eye" ranged over thousands and tens of thousands, drawn up in close files on the plains below, or clustering into masses on every adjacent eminence. A "rabble rout" hung on the skirts of the mighty host; and the feelings of the devout were disturbed by the scurrile jests of the rude, and the colder sarcasms of the more polished spectators of their worship. But the rich and varied tones of a voice of unequaled depth and compass quickly silenced every ruder sound, as in rapid succession its ever-changing melodies passed from the calm of simple narrative to the measured distinctness of argument, to the vehemence of reproof, and the pathos of heavenly consolation.

Sometimes the preacher wept exceedingly, stamped loudly and passionately, and was frequently so overcome

that for a few seconds one would suspect he could never recover, and when he did nature required some little time to compose him. The agitated assembly caught the passion of the speaker, and exulted, wept, or trembled at his bidding. He stood before them, in popular belief, a persecuted man, spurned and rejected by lordly prelates, yet still a presbyter of the Church and clothed with her authority; "his meek and



DRAWN BY W. B. PRICE.

FROM A WOODCUT.

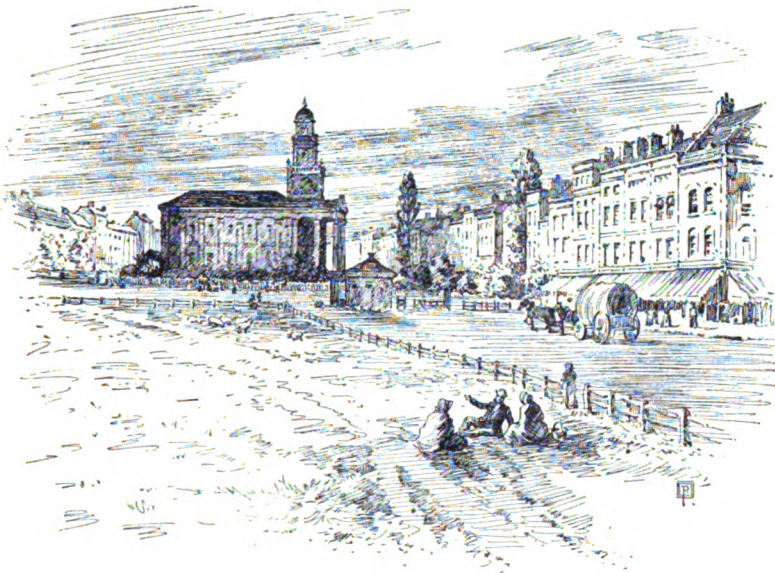
HANNAM MOUNT, KINGSWOOD.  
A favorite field-pulpit of Wesley and Whitefield.

lowly demeanor chastened and elevated by the conscious grandeur of the apostolic succession." The thoughtful gazed earnestly on a scene of solemn interest, pregnant with some strange and enduring influence on the future condition of mankind. But the wise and the simple alike yielded to the enchantment, and the thronging multitude gave utterance to their emotions in every form in which nature seeks relief from feelings too strong for mastery.

Whitefield himself was profoundly impressed by these scenes. "The sun shone very bright," he says, "and the people standing in such an awful manner around the mount, in the profoundest silence, filled me with a holy admiration." At another service he says, "To hear the echo of their singing run from one end of them to the other was very solemn and striking. How infinitely more solemn and striking will the general assembly of just men made perfect be, when they join in singing the song of Moses and the Lamb in heaven." He saw the tears shaping "white gutters down the black faces of the colliers—black as they came out of the coal pits," but these tears were not shed under any overwhelming sense of the picturesque; they were the signs of the Spirit's operation, and of broken and contrite hearts. "The open firmament above me," says the preacher, "the prospect of the adjacent fields, with the sight of thousands and thousands, some in coaches, some on horseback, and some in the trees, and at times all affected and drenched in tears together, to which sometimes was added the solemnity of the approaching evening, was almost too much for me and quite overcame me."

"Blessed be God," said Whitefield, "the fire is kindled in the country." The cry came up from many regions for his services. Now he stands on Hannam Mount, now on Rose Green, again at Fishponds, while even in the heart of Bristol

a bowling-green was offered him, where he preached to seven thousand people. He was overwhelmed with work, and sent for Wesley to take his place at Bristol. Wesley heard him preach on April 1, and this is his record: "I could scarce reconcile myself at first to this strange way of preaching in the fields, of which he set me an example on Sunday; having



DRAWN BY W. B. PRICE

KENNINGTON COMMON.

FROM A WOODCUT.

The scene of the early field-preaching of Whitefield and the Wesleys in London.

been all my life (till very lately) so tenacious of every point relating to decency and order that I should have thought the saving of souls almost a sin if it had not been done in a church." That evening Wesley expounded to the society in Nicholas Street the Sermon on the Mount, "one pretty remarkable precedent of field-preaching, though I suppose there were churches in that time also." The next day, at four in the afternoon, he "submitted to be more vile," and pro-

claimed the Gospel from a hillock near the city to about four thousand people, from the words "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor."

Whitefield visited Howell Harris, the lay evangelist, and Griffith Jones, in Wales, and returned to London, preaching on the way in bowling-greens and at market crosses. Finding no open churches in the metropolis, he took to Moorfields and Kennington Common, greeted by audiences of fifty and sixty thousand. The singing could be heard for two miles and the speaker's voice for one mile. Collections for the Georgian mission were taken at every service, Whitefield acting as one of the collectors, and declaring his arms were made lame by the weight of the copper. On one occasion the collection was £47, of which £16 was in halfpence, which would mean nearly eight thousand pieces of that coin alone.

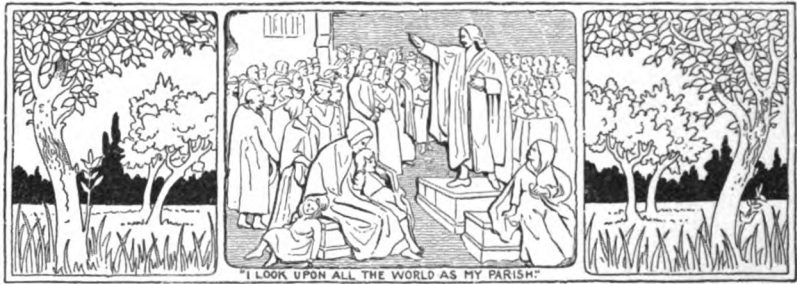
Charles Wesley was in Whitefield's congregation in the churchyard at Islington, in April, 1739, and was impressed with the solemnity of the open-air service. "The numerous congregation," he admits, "could not have been more affected within the walls of the church." He went with his friend to Blackheath, where there was a vast congregation, and heard the cries of the mourners on every side. "What," he asks, "has Satan gained by turning him out of the churches?"

Charles Wesley himself became a powerful field-preacher, although his dislike to "irregularities" was even stronger. His first open-air service was held, at the invitation of a farmer, in a field at Broadoaks, Essex, where he preached "to four hundred listening souls," and "returned to the house rejoicing." His second service was suggested by a good Quaker at Thaxted. "I scrupled," he says, "preaching in another's parish till I was refused the church." The

church was closed against him, so he preached to many Quakers and seven hundred besides. He returned to London, and we soon find him preaching at Moorfields and Kennington. Thus all three evangelists were committed to a work which did more than anything else to arouse the slumbering people and churches of England.

The philosophic critic of Methodism, Isaac Taylor, has truly said: "The men who commenced and achieved this arduous service, and they were scholars and gentlemen, displayed a courage far surpassing that which carries the soldier through the hailstorm of the battlefield. Ten thousand might more easily be found who would confront a battery than two who, with the sensitiveness of education about them, could mount a table by the roadside, give out a psalm, and gather a mob."





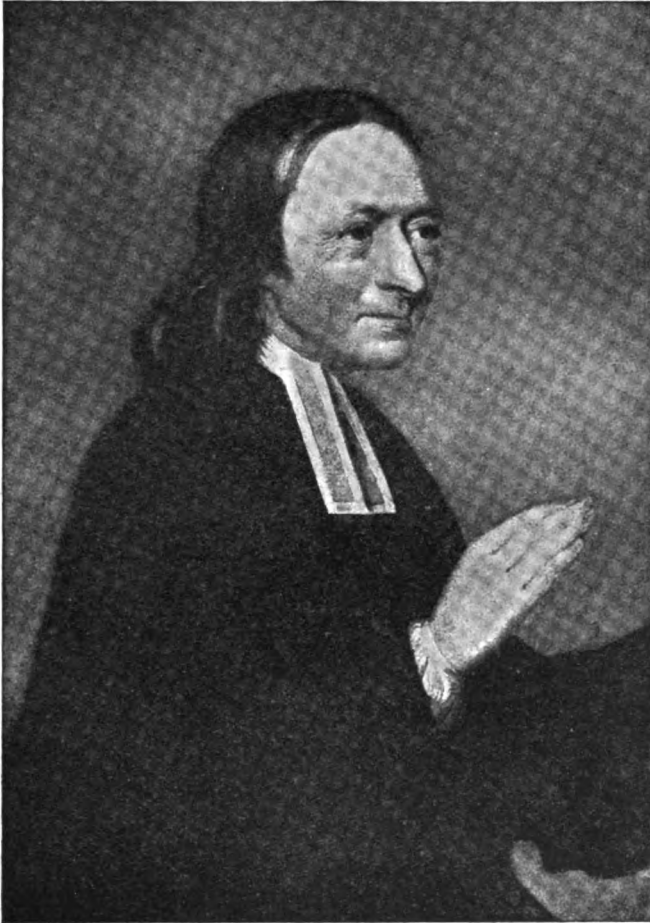
## CHAPTER XXXIX

### Strange Scenes of Conversion and Conflict

A SCHOOL FOR COLLIERS.—KINGSWOOD.—STARTLING CONVERSIONS.—  
FRENCH PROPHETS.—AT THE WELLS.—A BAFFLED BEAU.

WHEN Whitefield left Bristol on April 2, 1739, “floods of tears flowed plentifully,” and when at last he forced himself away twenty friends escorted him on horseback through the city streets. Arrived at Kingswood, the grateful colliers surprised him with “an hospitable entertainment,” and afterward urged him, then and there, to lay the foundation of a school. Very few subscriptions were in hand, and no site had been secured, but a person standing by promised a piece of land, and amid much excitement Whitefield knelt upon a stone which was provided and “prayed God that the gates of hell might not prevail” against the design. After songs of praise he proceeded on his way. It was left to John Wesley to face untold difficulties in raising the money, and eventually the burden fell upon the income from his own fellowship. At the end of June we catch sight of Wesley taking shelter from a violent storm under a sycamore tree “in the middle of Kingswood.” The tree stands near a schoolhouse which has begun to rise from the earth. Above the noise of the pelting storm and

the murmur of the crowd we hear the clear voice of the preacher declaring that "As the rain cometh down . . .



JOHN WESLEY, THE FOUNDER OF KINGSWOOD.

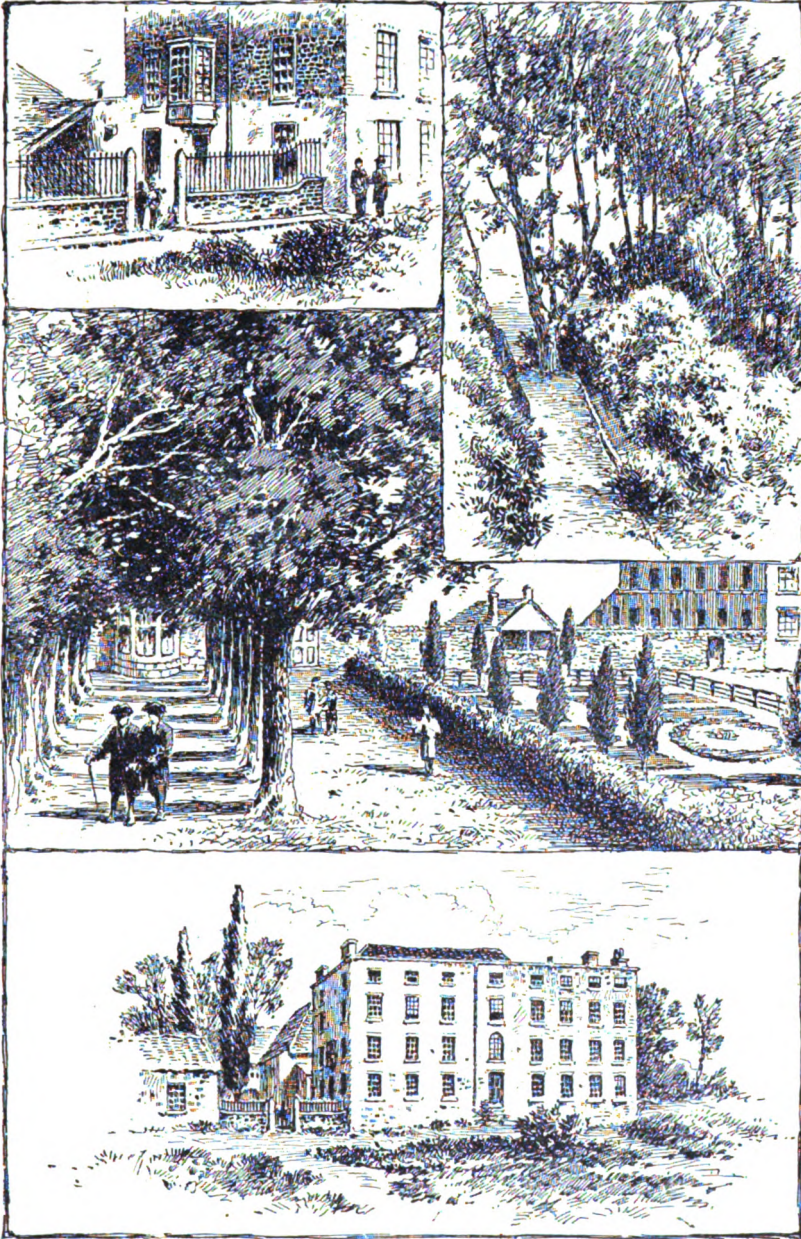
The original is preserved in the dining hall of the new Kingswood School.

from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth and maketh it bring forth and bud . . . so shall my word be." Hagenbach has well said: "Nature herself

seemed to be in alliance with these holy men, and often her phenomena were converted by the earnest speaker into spiritual symbols. An approaching storm, the setting sun, the singing of the birds, and the wind and the clouds were made to explain the text; and sometimes just such a natural figure seemed providentially designed for this purpose."

The Kingswood School was finished in 1740, and the colliers' children were gathered into it. John Cennick, one of the first lay preachers employed by Wesley, was appointed to superintend the society and school, and he continued to do so until he joined the Moravians, in 1741. Five years later Wesley laid the first stone of the preachinghouse which still exists, in a dilapidated condition, in the group of old buildings at Kingswood. The colliers' children were afterward transferred to the room at the end of this chapel, and the school was enlarged that it might become a training place for children of another type—"the children of Methodists and for the sons of itinerant preachers." Wesley reserved one room and a small study for himself. The first school was in existence in 1803. The second school, of 1748, became the foundation of the famous Kingswood School now located nearer Bath, the old premises becoming a reformatory in the hands of the philanthropic Mary Carpenter. Wesley's study was fitted up as a resting place for this lady, and there, in many an hour of anxious thought by day and night, she realized the force of the words which Wesley had written on a window pane in his room, "God is here."

Strange things occurred at Bristol under Wesley's ministry. Bristol became the scene of phenomena similar to the startling physical convulsions which perplexed thoughtful onlookers during the revival in New England, and even in Scotland; and, strange to say, these more often accompanied



DRAWN BY J. D. WOODWARD.

FROM CONTEMPORARY PRINTS.

SCENES ABOUT OLD KINGSWOOD.

Wesley's oriel window.

The gardens behind the school.

Old Kingswood, main building.

Wesley's walk.



the calm, logical utterances of John Wesley than the vehement exhortations of Whitefield and the impassioned appeals of Charles Wesley. Cries of the sharpest anguish were heard. Hardened sinners were stricken down as in the throes of death. A Quaker who was angry at what he thought to be the affected groans and cries in Baldwin Street room was knitting his brows and biting his lips in displeasure when he was struck down in a moment, as by an unseen hand, and recovering after prayer, cried out, "Now I know thou art a prophet of the Lord!"

John Haydon, the weaver, was a stout Churchman of regular habits, who on the same night the Quaker was present came to see for himself what the strange tidings meant. He went home to his friends declaring that it was all a delusion of Satan, but as he was reading a sermon which he had borrowed, on Salvation by Faith, he changed color and fell to the ground. Wesley was sent for, and with a company of friends prayed earnestly until body and soul were set at liberty, and by the evening the man, weak as a child, was full of peace and joy.

Bold blasphemers cried aloud for mercy; passing travelers, pausing to hear, were smitten to the earth in deep conviction for sin. An irritated mother, vexed by the weeping of her daughter, became herself convulsed with sorrow and went home in joy. A physician, who thought that mere excitement or even fraud had most to do with these scenes, was present at one meeting and watched with keen eyes one woman whom he had known for years. She broke out into "strong cries and tears." Great drops of perspiration ran down her face and her body shook. He was convinced that in this case at least there was no imposition nor mere natural disorder, and when, in a

moment, both body and soul were healed he acknowledged "the finger of God."

Canon Overton considers these phenomena "easily accounted for. The heat of the crowded church, the electric spark of sympathy running through the excited masses, the wild terror and the ecstatic joy arising from the treatment of the most awful subjects with the most vivid realism, will appear quite enough to throw sensitive minds off their balance, and then react upon their bodily frames. But such explanations would never satisfy one who had so intense a belief in the supernatural as John Wesley had."

But it will be observed that these scenes occurred more frequently in the open air than in "the heat of crowded churches." During his nine months at Bristol Wesley preached five hundred discourses and only eight of them in churches. His preaching was singularly devoid of "vivid realism," whatever might be said of Whitefield's. Southey takes it for granted that these manifestations were impositions.

Samuel Wesley, "evidently a most well-meaning, sober-minded man," says Mrs. Oliphant, "but with no special call or mission to the world, vexed the soul of the reformer at this period with long-winded letters upon these phenomena, full of an anxious, and not unkindly or unthoughtful, endeavor to make him believe that his work is foolishness and his followers impostors or madmen." "We cannot but feel," says the novelist, "that John Wesley has the best of the controversy, however impressed we may be by the good sense and moderation of his brother. He says, with natural warmth, that these effects were not outward only, or he would not believe in them, but that they were followed by entire and undeniable reformation of life; the strongest argument that could be adduced in their favor."

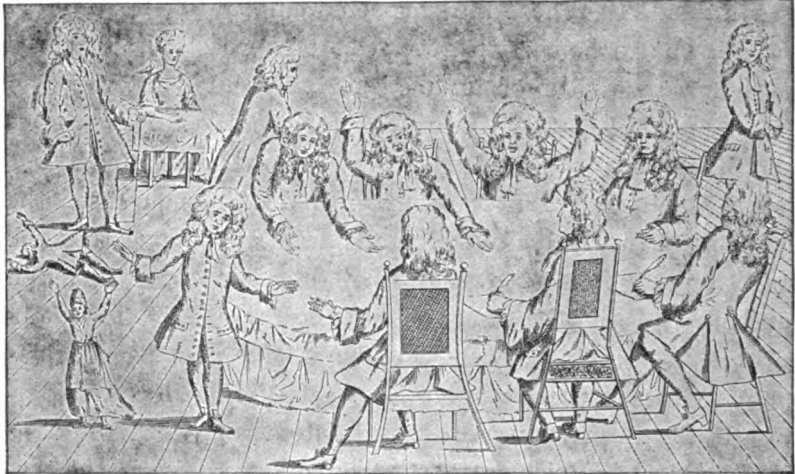
It must, in justice to Wesley, be said that such phenomena were never encouraged by him, but every effort was made to control them. There is no doubt that there were some cases of imposture. Charles Wesley said: “Many, no doubt, were at our first preaching struck down, both body and soul, into the depth of distress. Their outward affections were easy to be imitated.” Where he suspected affectation he ordered the persons to be carried away. At Newcastle he declared he thought no better of anyone for crying out or interrupting his work, and successfully secured quietness. He sometimes regarded “the fits” as a device of Satan to stop the work.

But when every allowance was made for such cases the evangelists themselves had good reason to believe that the large majority were the result of real and intense conviction for sin. “From the days of John the Baptist till now,” observes Mrs. Oliphant, “such incidents have made themselves visible wherever a new voice like that of him in the wilderness has come, rousing the world into a revival of religious life.” One of Wesley’s most recent biographers in the Anglican Church, Miss Wedgwood, is convinced “that there was something in the personal influence of Wesley (for it certainly does not remain in his sermons) which had the power of impressing on a dull and lethargic world such a horror of evil, its mysterious closeness to the human soul, and the need of a miracle for the separation of the two, as no one perhaps could suddenly receive without some violent physical effect.”

As soon as this remarkable work began to attract notice, a fanatical sect, called the French Prophets, sought to make converts among the people whom they supposed to be prepared for their message. The chief “prophets” were Camisards from the Cevennes, who had found refuge in London



and the provincial towns. They professed inspiration, fell into trances and convulsions, and gained converts among the higher classes, and even among members of the bar. The French churches in London passed a severe censure upon them and their fraudulent or foolish fanaticism.



FROM AN OLD PRINT.

THE FRENCH PROPHETS.

Charles Wesley became acquainted with one of them, to whom he was introduced on his way to Oxford, and with whom he was compelled not only to lodge, but sleep. This gentleman insisted that the French Prophets were quite equal to the prophets of the Old Testament. Charles, however, was not aware that his host was a gifted personage until they retired to bed, when, as they were undressing, he fell into violent agitations and gobbled like a turkey cock. "I was frightened," he says, "and began exorcising him with, 'Thou deaf and dumb devil!'" He soon recovered out of his fit of inspiration. I prayed, and went to

bed, not half liking my bedfellow. I did not sleep very sound with Satan so near me."

These "prophets" gave Wesley great trouble in London and Bristol. He pronounced them "properly enthusiasts. For, first, they think to attain the end without the means; which is enthusiasm, properly so called. Again, they think themselves inspired by God and are not. . . . That theirs is only imaginary inspiration appears hence—it contradicts the law and the testimony." At Bristol, he says, he endeavored to point them out, and earnestly exhorted all that followed after holiness to avoid, as fire, all who do not speak according to the Scriptures. Many years later (1786) he discouraged extravagances among the Methodists who leaped and shouted at Chapel-en-le-Frith, crying, "Glory! glory!" twenty times together. "Just so," said he, "do the French Prophets, and very lately the Jumpers in Wales, bring the real work into contempt. Yet whenever we reprove them it should be in the most mild and gentle manner possible."

From Bristol Wesley visited Bath, at that time the most fashionable watering place in England. "As for Bath," says Thackeray, "all history went and bathed and drank there. George II and his queen, Prince Frederick and his court, scarce a character one can mention of the early part of the last century but was seen in that famous Pump Room where Beau Nash presided. Chesterfield came there many a time and gambled for hundreds and grinned through his gout. Mary Wortley was there, young and beautiful; and Mary Wortley, old, hideous, and snuffy. Miss Chudleigh came there, slipping away from one husband and on the lookout for another. Walpole passed many a day there—sickly supercilious, absurdly dandified and affected—with a brilliant wit,

a delightful sensibility; and for his friends a most tender, generous, and faithful heart. And if you and I had been alive then and strolling down Milsom Street—Hush! we should have taken our hats off, as an awful, long, lean, gaunt figure, swathed in flannels, passed by in its chair, and a



DRAWN BY W. B. DAVIS.

AFTER AN OLD PRINT.

BEAU NASH.

livid face looked out from a window—great fierce eyes staring from under a bushy powdered wig, a terrible frown, a terrible Roman nose. We whisper to one another, ‘There he is! There’s the Great Commoner! There is Mr. Pitt.’”

Into the midst of this Vanity Fair came the apostle of the century creating no small stir—for it was rumored that “the king of Bath,” Beau Nash,

had decided to interrupt his service. The crowd was larger than usual, expecting to witness the discomfiture of Wesley. He was “concluding them all under sin,” and they “were sinking apace into seriousness,” when Nash appeared, and marching up to Wesley, demanded by what authority he did

these things. Wesley replied, “By the authority of Jesus Christ, conveyed to me by the (now) Archbishop of Canterbury, when he laid his hands upon me, and said, ‘Take thou authority to preach the Gospel.’”

“This,” said Nash, “is contrary to act of Parliament. This is a conventicle.”

“Sir,” answered Wesley, “conventicles are seditious meetings; but here is no shadow of sedition.”

“I say it is,” cried the dandy; “and besides, your preaching frightens people out of their wits.”

“Sir,” said Wesley, “did you ever hear me preach?”

“No.”

“How, then, can you judge of what you never heard?”

“Sir, by common report.”

“Common report,” replied the preacher, “is not enough. Give me leave to ask, sir, is not your name Nash?”

“My name is Nash.”

“Sir,” said Wesley, “I dare not judge of you by common report.”

Disconcerted, Nash paused, and to gain time asked what the people thought. One from the crowd said to Mr. Wesley: “Sir, leave him to me; let an old woman answer him. You, Mr. Nash, take care of your body; we take care of our souls; and for the food of our souls we come here.”

The woman’s happy sally turned the tables on him, and the fashionable gamester slunk away without another word.



## CHAPTER XL

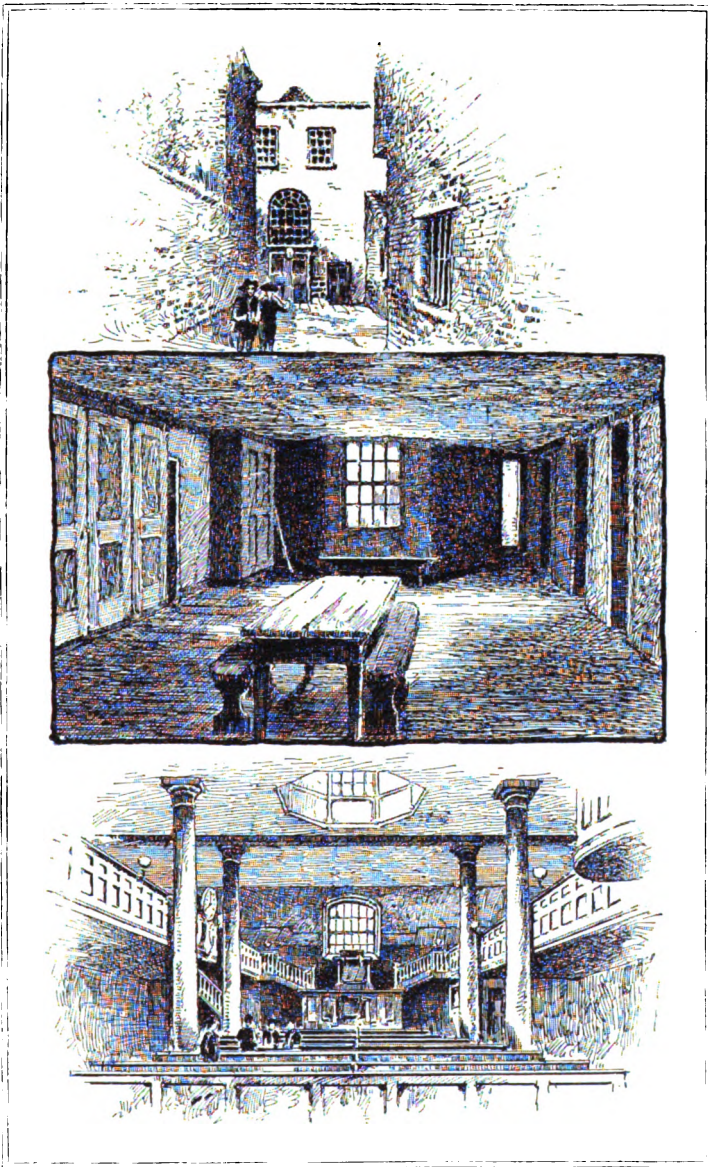
### The First Two Methodist Chapels in the World

THE OLD ROOM IN THE HORSEFAIR, BRISTOL.—FROM THE FIELDS TO THE FOUNDRY.—A FIVE O'CLOCK MORNING SERVICE.—A NEW PHILANTHROPY.

**A**MERICANS honor Bristol as the birthplace of John Cabot, who crossed the Atlantic in 1497-8 and was the first man of the Old World to set foot upon the northern mainland of the New World. The men of Bristol had a good part in the colonization of America.

But Methodists on both sides of the sea find a common interest in the fine old city as the first place in the world where a Methodist chapel was built, and where Methodism began to crystallize into its distinctive ecclesiastical institutions for free worship and fellowship. No "storied windows richly dight, casting a dim religious light," are to be found in the "old room in the Horsefair"—for Wesley did not call it a "chapel"—and it stands to-day in "Puritan simplicity." Pope, anti-Puritan as he was, who died five years after it was opened, might have found in it an illustration of his lines, used in a very different connection :

No silver saints, by dying misers given,  
 Here bribed the rage of ill-requited heav'n;  
 But such plain roofs as piety could raise,  
 And only vocal with the Maker's praise.



DRAWN BY J. D. WOODWARD.

FROM PRINTS.

THE "OLD ROOM IN THE HORSEFAIR," BRISTOL, THE FIRST HOUSE BUILT FOR METHODIST PREACHING.

Entrance to the "old room."

Interior of the preaching room.

The room above the chapel.



When the room in the Horsefair was opened the English Dissenters had probably about six thousand places of worship. Many of these had been destroyed during the Sacheverell riots, and had been recently rebuilt. Under the Act of Toleration of 1689 they were placed under the protection of the king's courts by registration, and property given for religious purposes could be secured by trust deeds which were recognized by the legal authorities. It will be seen that when Wesley began to register his "rooms" and "meetinghouses" he took a step which placed his societies on a level with the existing Free Churches of the country, and made them new and distinct centers for the worship of the coming cosmopolitan Methodist Church.

The foundation stone of this first preaching room was laid on May 12, 1739, with "the voice of praise and thanksgiving." The eleven trustees whom Wesley appointed did very little to raise the necessary funds, and Wesley took upon himself the payment of the builder. Whitefield urged Wesley to get rid of the trustees, on the ground that they would have power under the deed to turn him out if he displeased them by his preaching. Wesley took this advice, canceled the deed, and became the sole proprietor. This, though insignificant at the time, was a matter of great importance, for in this manner nearly all the chapels built in the early years of his career were vested in himself. This involved serious responsibility, which, however, was honorably fulfilled; for trusts were afterward created, and by his "Deed of Declaration" all his interests in his chapels were transferred to his Legal Conference.

Three weeks after the first stone was laid Wesley wrote: "Not being permitted to meet in Baldwin Street, we met in the shell of our new society room. The Scripture which



came in course to be explained was, 'Marvel not if the world hate you.' We sung:

Arm of the Lord, awake, awake!  
Thine own immortal strength put on!

and God, even our own God, gave us his blessing." Here the first class meeting was held. Here, in Wesley's lifetime, eighteen Conferences assembled. From the old pulpit, moved from its former place, but otherwise unchanged, John Wesley in 1739 expounded the Acts of the Apostles, the "inalienable charter" of the Churches of God. It was also Charles Wesley's pulpit, in which he preached for many years, coming to it from the small house in Stokes Croft—the pulpit in which occurred the curious incident told by Adam Clarke:

"I sat behind him. He gave out a hymn, and prayed; but was completely in the trammels, where he had often been before. He took a text, spoke a little, but soon found that he could not go on. He tried to relieve himself by praying—he took another text—which also was fruitless. He took up the hymn book—beckoned to me—left the pulpit, and retired to the rooms over the chapel."

Eventually the poet preacher returned, told a story, and exclaimed with a strong voice, yet a little drawling, "Believe—love—obey!" You can picture him fixing his eye close to the page of his little pocket field Bible—being short-sighted and able to see with one eye better than the other—reading his text, laying his Bible on the pulpit beside him, inclining forward, lying in a lounging position, his arm resting upon the pulpit Bible and cushion, and preaching sometimes with power and sometimes in trammels. And many others, men of renown, who turned the old godless world of those days upside down, preached in that pulpit, and

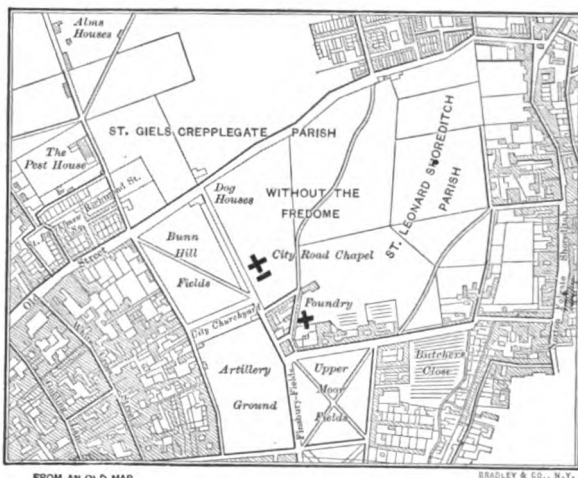
lodged in the little rooms above, like ships' cabins, the doors of which may be seen in our illustration of the “ room above the chapel.” Whitefield complained to Wesley that the room was too richly ornamented. Wesley replied: “ The society room at Bristol, you say, is adorned. How? Why, with a piece of green cloth nailed to the desk, and two sconces, for eight candles each, in the middle. I know no more. Now, which of these can be spared? I know not; nor would I desire more adornment, or less. But ‘ lodgings are made for me and my brother.’ This is, in plain English, there is a little room by the school where I speak to the persons who come to me, and a garret in which a bed is placed for me. And do you grudge me this? Is this the voice of my brother—my son—Whitefield? ”

As Methodism developed larger chapels were built, and in 1808 the “ old room ” with its “ lodgings ” was sold to the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists, who still worship in it.

Wesley was recalled to London in June, 1739, by letters which reported that the society in Fetter Lane was in great confusion. A “ French Prophetess ” had given great trouble, roaring when Charles Wesley prayed, and professing to be inspired. John Wesley persuaded the society to disown her, and thus he restored peace. Two members who had renounced connection with the Church of England were struck off the roll—for this was not a Moravian society, and the Methodist society had not yet been formed.

During his five days in London Wesley took his place as a field-preacher. Whitefield surprised him by asking him to preach at Blackheath to more than twelve thousand people. “ Which I did,” he says, “ though nature recoiled, on my favorite subject, ‘ Jesus Christ, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.’ I

was greatly moved with compassion for the rich that were there, to whom I made a particular application. Some of them seemed to attend, while others drove away their coaches from so uncouth a preacher." He preached on a Sunday morning at seven, in Upper Moorfields, to more than seven thousand people. Close by Moorfields Methodism found, first in the Foundry and then in City Road (now Wesley) Chapel,



VICINITY OF CITY ROAD AND FOUNDRY IN EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

a local habitation, and on the Foundry premises was organized "the mother church of Methodism."

Our old map shows where "the Foundry" stood. All traces of it have now disappeared. Moorfields ceased to be "fields" before the death of Wesley. They were separated from the city by London Wall—then really a wall, and not a mere street, and Moorgate was then really a gate. Beyond Moorfields was the waste ground of Windmill Hill, where were deposited, in the reign of Edward VI, one thousand

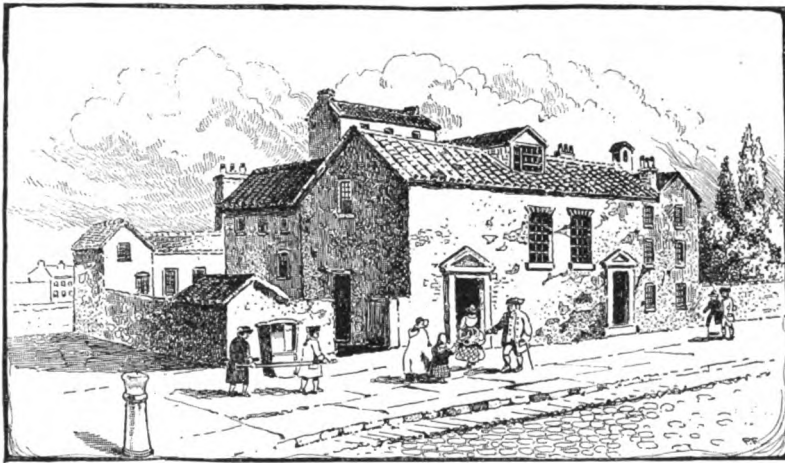


the church from which her father was ejected, and of the meetinghouse where he exercised his late ministry, the mother of the Wesleys died.

Wesley's first service was held at the Foundry on Sunday, November 11, 1739. He wrote: "I preached at eight o'clock to five or six thousand, on the Spirit of Bondage and the Spirit of Adoption, and at five in the evening in the place which had been the king's foundry for cannon. O hasten Thou the time when nation shall not rise up against nation, neither shall they learn war any more!"

Silas Told, who became famous as Wesley's first teacher of the "Foundry School," and as a prison philanthropist, attended Wesley's five o'clock service one morning in June, 1740. He found it a ruinous place with an old pantile covering, decayed timbers, and a pulpit made of a few rough boards. "Exactly at five o'clock," says Told, "a whisper was conveyed through the congregation, 'Here he comes! here he comes!' I was filled with curiosity to see his person, which, when I beheld, I much despised. The enemy of souls suggested that he was some farmer's son, who, not being able to support himself, was making a penny in this manner. He passed through the congregation into the pulpit, and, having his robes on, I expected he would have begun with the Church service; but, to my astonishment, he began with singing a hymn, with which I was almost enraptured; but his extemporary prayer was quite unpleasant, as I thought it savored too much of a Dissenter. His text was, 'I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you.' The enemy now suggested that he was a Papist, as he dwelt so much on the forgiveness of sins. Although I had read this Scripture many times before, yet I never understood that we were to know our sins forgiven on

earth, supposing that it referred only to those to whom the apostle was then writing; especially as I had never heard this doctrine preached in the Church. However, my prejudice quickly abated, and I plainly saw I could never be saved without knowing my sins forgiven. Under this sermon God sealed the truth on my heart. At the close of which, however strange it may appear, a small still voice entered my



DRAWN BY P. E. FLINTOFF.

FROM AN ENGRAVING.

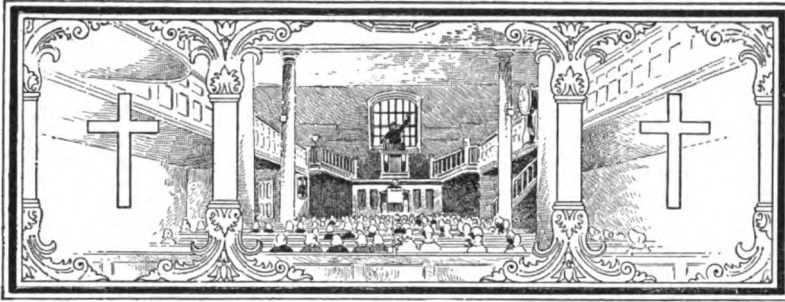
#### THE FOUNDRY CHAPEL, MOORFIELDS.

The old artillery foundry, as remodeled for use as a Wesleyan chapel.

heart with these words, 'This is the truth!' and instantly I felt it in my soul. My friend, observing my attention, asked me how I liked Mr. Wesley. I replied, 'As long as I live I will never part from him.'"

Five months after the Foundry was opened Charles Wesley began preaching in the Foundry chapel, and in May, 1740, he was indicted at Hicks's Hall with Howell Harris, the Welsh apostle, and others, for preaching sedition. Hicks's Hall was the Middlesex Session House. Wesley's friend, Sir John Gunson, "quashed the whole." For thirty-eight years

the Foundry was the headquarters of Methodism, and the center of many philanthropic agencies, including the Charity School, a dispensary, almshouse for nine poor widows, and a loan society. "On dark winter nights, over roads without pavements, and unlighted by gas or lamps of any kind save the flickering lantern of the serious and earnest worshipers, might be seen those devout men and women, almost groping their way to the daily services at the first Methodist chapel, led by the tinkling of the Foundry bell." The Foundry was superseded by City Road Chapel in 1778. The old pulpit is preserved in Richmond College, Surrey.



## CHAPTER XLI

### The Foundation of a World-Wide Fellowship

WESLEY'S MASTER MOTIVE.—THE RISE OF THE UNITED SOCIETIES.—FROM FETTER LANE TO FOUNDRY.—THE GENESIS OF THE CLASS MEETING.—THE GENERAL RULES.—A DESIRE TO FLEE FROM THE WRATH TO COME.

“ONE of the features of Wesley's great reformation was that it was done without a previously devised plan.” Thus spoke the Rev. Richard Green in his Fernley Lecture of 1890. Wesley's “one great object,” says Canon Overton, “was to promote the love of God and the love of man for God's sake.” With this one object he went forward step by step, confronting “new occasions,” and ever finding in them “new duties.” To his master purpose everything must yield—personal tastes, church order, and even cherished friendships. Whitefield was possessed with a purpose as noble, but he lacked the genius for organization which characterized the many-sided Wesley.

The hour had come to fold the gathered sheep lest they should faint and be scattered on the hills again. “The clergy,” says Gregory, “so far from being spiritual fathers, were not even the cheap and efficient police which the Eras-



tianism of the day esteemed them." The open-air work had awakened multitudes, and here and there, under the smoke of large towns and in the seclusion of rural parishes, were quiet souls waiting for the kingdom of God, but, as the Wesleys sang:

Scattered o'er all the land they lie  
Till thou collect them with thine eye,  
Draw by the music of thy name,  
And charm into a beauteous frame.

Wesley never forgot the words of the "serious man" who told him that if he would serve God and reach heaven, he must find companions or make them, saying, "The Bible knows nothing of solitary religion." He had seen how useful the "societies" identified with the names of Dr. Woodward and Dr. Horneck had been, although they had so woefully decayed. He had profited by the fellowship meetings of the Moravians, and the peculiarities of a few of them could not blind him to the worth and beauty of their principles of communion. "All these were guiding lines," says Green, "leading him toward the formation of his society, to the idea of which, when once entertained, he adhered with great tenacity."

As early as April, 1739, Wesley records the beginning of a little fellowship meeting at Bristol, and refers to a similar gathering in London. We have details in a letter dated April 9, 1739, published in the *Moravian Messenger* for 1877, under the heading of "Extracts from Unpublished Letters of John and Charles Wesley in the Provincial Archives." There Wesley took the names of the three women at Bristol who "agreed to meet together weekly," and also the names of the four men who agreed to do the same. "If this work be not of God, let it come to naught. If it be, who can hinder it?" In his record of the occurrence in his *Journal* for April 4

he asks, "How dare any man deny this to be (as to the substance of it) a means of grace ordained by God?"

But these early meetings at Bristol were very small and were not formally organized by Wesley himself, although he so heartily approved of them. He dates the veritable commencement of organized Wesleyan Methodism a few months later in the same year. His account was first published in 1743 as preface to that most important of early Methodist documents, *The Nature, Design, and General Rules of the United Societies*, in London, Bristol, Kingswood, and Newcastle-upon-Tyne:

"In the latter end of the year 1739 eight or ten persons, who appeared to be deeply convinced of sin and earnestly groaning for redemption, came to Mr. Wesley in London. They desired, as did two or three more the next day, that he would spend some time with them in prayer and advise them how to flee from the wrath to come, which they saw continually hanging over their heads. That he might have more time for this great work he appointed a day when they might all come together; which from thenceforward they did every week, namely, on Thursday, in the evening. To these and as many more as desired to join with them (for their number increased daily) he gave those advices from time to time which he judged most needful for them; and they always concluded their meeting with prayer suited to their several necessities. This was the rise of the United Society, first in London and then in other places."

Wesley took down their names and places of abode in order to call upon them at their homes. He was moving in the same path as the apostles. "In the earliest times," says he, "those whom God had sent forth preached the Gospel to every creature. And the body of hearers were mostly Jews

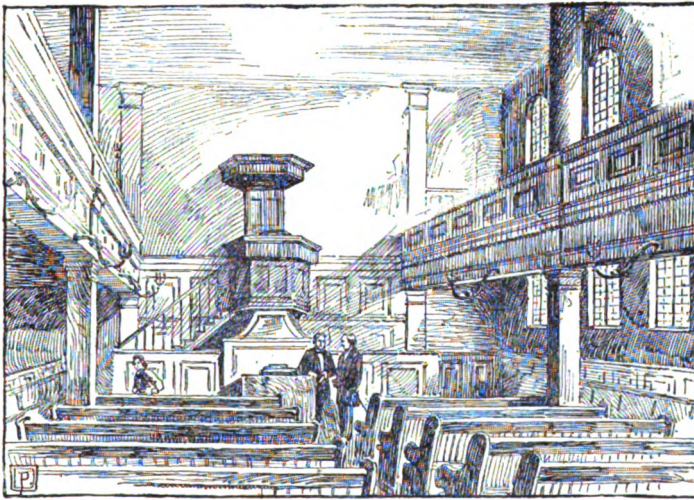
or heathens. But as soon as any of these were so convinced of the truth as to forsake sin and seek the Gospel salvation they immediately joined them together, took an account of their names, advised them to watch over each other, and met these catechumens (as they were then called) apart from the great congregation, that they might instruct, rebuke, exhort, and pray with them, and for them, according to their several necessities."

"Thus arose, without any previous design on either side, what was afterward called a society; a very innocent name, and very common in London for any number of people associating themselves together."

When this society at the Foundry was begun—the first society under the direct control of Wesley—the society in Fetter Lane was still attended by the Methodist converts. Although a section of it afterward became a Moravian society, it was not so while Wesley belonged to it, as he himself has stated. Strangely enough, even Tyerman fell into the error of calling this a Moravian society. The members avowed themselves adherents of the Church of England, and two of them were excluded because they "disowned" themselves as such.

Toward the close of 1739 sad trouble arose at Fetter Lane through the introduction of strange mystic opinions by a Moravian minister named Molther, the private tutor of Count Zinzendorf's son. He disparaged the means of grace, introduced novel ideas of faith, and inculcated a form of quietism called "stillness." The Wesleys made strenuous efforts to "still" the strife which arose, but not succeeding, they seceded from the Fetter Lane society on July 20, 1740. About seventy-two of the members adhered to them, joining the new society at the Foundry.

Fetter Lane Chapel was taken by James Hutton "for the Germans" in 1740, and the residuum of the Fetter Lane society, which had hitherto met in a "room," was organized as a Moravian church by Spangenberg in 1742. Although Wesley appears never to have preached in the chapel, it has a history of great interest. Baxter lectured in it for ten years. It escaped the great fire of London and was used for worship while the churches were rebuilding. Stephen



DRAWN BY W. S. PRICE.

FROM A PRINT.

THE MORAVIAN CHAPEL IN FETTER LANE. THE INTERIOR.

Lobb, whom Macaulay pillories, was its minister at the time of the Revolution. Bold "Bradbury" was its pastor when it was attacked by Sacheverell's High Church mob. And here good Peter Böhler preached his last sermon, on the morning of the day he died.

It was at this time that Charles Wesley wrote his hymn on "The Means of Grace," which, in its complete form, guards

against the extremes on either side. It contains the well-known verse:

Still for thy loving-kindness, Lord,  
I in thy temple wait:  
I look to find thee in thy word,  
Or at thy table meet.

Wesley describes the next step in the organization of Methodism with characteristic simplicity: "The people were scattered so wide, in all parts of the town from Wapping to Westminster, that I could not easily see what the behavior of each person in his own neighborhood was; so that several disorderly walkers did much hurt before I was apprised of it. At length, while we were thinking of quite another thing, we struck upon a method for which we have cause to bless God ever since." This was the method of the class meeting, which was first adopted at Bristol in 1742.

There still remained a large debt on the meetinghouse built in the "Horsefair" three years before, and Wesley called together the principal men for consultation. How should the debts be paid? Captain Foy said, "Let every member of the society give a penny a week till all are paid."

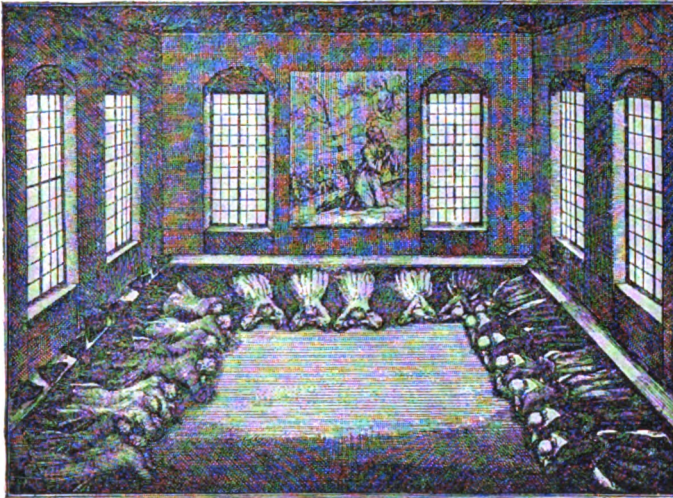
Another answered, "But many of them are poor, and cannot afford to do it."

"Then," said Foy, "put eleven of the poorest with me, and if they can give anything, well; I will call on them weekly, and if they can give nothing, I will give for them as well as for myself. And each of you call on eleven of your neighbors weekly, receive what they give, and make up what is wanting."

"It was done," says Wesley. "In a while, some of these informed me, they found such and such an one did not live

as he ought. It struck me immediately, 'This is the thing; the very thing we have wanted so long.'

The layman conceived the idea that solved the financial problem and that quickened in the preacher's mind the plan by which the spiritual welfare of every member might be secured. Wesley called together all the leaders of the classes—as they were now termed—and desired each to make par-



FROM AN OLD PRINT.

MORAVIAN CEREMONIAL OF PROSTRATION BEFORE THE LORD.

ticular inquiry into the behavior of those he visited. This was done and "many disorderly walkers were detected." Some turned from the evil of their ways, others were put out of the society. Thus was found a plan by which discipline might be maintained, the unworthy admonished or dismissed, and the consistent encouraged.

On Thursday, April 25, Wesley called together in London several earnest and sensible men, told them of the difficulty of knowing the people who desired to be under his care, and

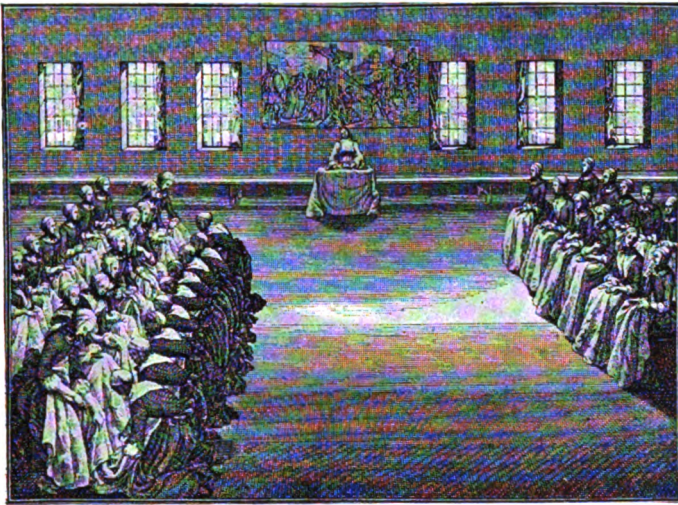
after a long conversation they adopted the new plan of classes. "This was the origin of our classes at London," writes Wesley, "for which I can never sufficiently praise God; the unspeakable usefulness of the institution having ever since been more and more manifest."

It was soon found impracticable for the leader to visit each member at his own house, and so it was agreed that the members of each class should come together at some suitable place once a week. Wesley writes: "It can scarce be conceived what advantages have been reaped by this little prudential regulation. Many experienced that Christian fellowship of which they had not so much as an idea before. They began to bear one another's burdens, and naturally to care for each other's welfare. And as they had daily a more intimate acquaintance, so they had a more endeared affection for each other."

After the division of the society into classes there came the institution of weekly leaders' meetings. The leaders were untrained men, and the objection was raised that they had neither gifts nor graces for such a divine employment. Wesley, however, quietly remarked, "It may be hoped they will all be better than they are, both by experience and by observation, and by the advices given them by the minister every Tuesday night, and the prayers (then in particular) offered up for them."

On February 23, 1743, John Wesley sent forth the General Rules in his own name, and on May 1 Charles Wesley's name was signed to the important pamphlet. The society was defined as "a company of men, having the form and seeking the power of godliness, united in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love, that they may help each other to

work out their salvation." There was only one condition required for admission into these societies—"a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins." But wherever this is really fixed in the soul it will be shown by its fruits. It was therefore expected of all who desired to continue therein that they should continue "to evidence their desire of salvation, first, by doing no harm, by avoiding evil in every kind, especially that which is most generally



FROM AN OLD PRINT.

## MORAVIAN CEREMONIAL OF FOOT-WASHING.

practiced." One special test was in the "avoiding such diversions as cannot be used in the name of the Lord Jesus." A further evidence of sincerity was to be shown by "doing good of every possible sort, and as far as is possible, to all men." The third evidence of desire for salvation was by "attending on all the ordinances of God," such as public worship, the ministry of the word, the Lord's Supper, family and private prayer, searching the Scriptures, and fasting or abstinence.



Thus in well-built sections was laid the broad platform of Methodism. The late Dr. George Osborn, in an address before the Ecumenical Methodist Conference in London, in 1881, spoke these memorable words: "Methodism is built for the world, and is strong enough for all years. . . . There is one before me whose great-great-grandmother is said to have been the thirteenth person that joined John Wesley's society in 1739, and I trace the succession of saints in that particular case for generations from that thirteenth woman down to the millions that we speak of to-day."



## CHAPTER XLII

### The Old Customs and the New Converts

CURIOUS CLASS TICKETS.—BANDS, LOVE FEASTS, WATCH NIGHTS.—SACRAMENTS.—SUSANNA WESLEY'S SYMPATHY.—SAMUEL WESLEY ON SCHISM.—HIS DEATH IN 1739.—A MOTHER BEREFT.

THE Congregational theologian, Dr. Dale, regarded the class meeting as "perhaps the most striking and original of the fruits of the revival. It was not invented, it was the creation of the circumstances in which the revival was carried on; it was the natural product of the soil. . . . It renders possible a far more effective fulfillment of the idea of the pastorate and a far more perfect realization of the communion of saints than are common in any other Protestant community."

The late Professor Tholuck, spending some time at Oxford for the purpose of consulting its libraries, attended a Methodist class meeting there and afterward spoke of it as the nearest reproduction of fellowship in the primitive Church that he had ever enjoyed. It was Wesley's aim to secure such fellowship and to link it with the Christian pastorate.

The quarterly visitation of the classes by Wesley or his preachers and the use of a ticket of membership appear to have begun in 1742. It is probable that similar tokens were

given in some of Dr. Woodward's societies, as Dr. Smith gives a facsimile of one dated 1739. We reproduce this,

*John George  
1739*



*John George*

together with later forms. It will be seen that since 1891 the term "Church" has been substituted for "Society," for, as Professor Findlay says: "We call ourselves now, and without bated breath, the Wesleyan Methodist Church. . . . Our societies have all along constituted a true fellowship with Christ in the Spirit, as John Wes-

ley very plainly said. They have possessed a Church life as real as any that existed upon earth. . . . We quietly but

*Jan 9 1754*



*Mary Hart*

firmly claim, as Methodist people, to constitute a *Church* of Jesus Christ, a sisterhood and confederacy of Churches throughout the world. We make that claim as justly as

does the Anglican Episcopal Church, or the Presbyterian, or Baptist, or Congregational Churches."

Besides the class meeting there was soon an inner circle—a wheel within a wheel—the band meeting. This smaller

<i>Luke the 17. v. 5.</i>	
<i>Lord, increafe our Faith.</i>	
<i>Jan 1</i>	<i>1755. Mary Wright</i>
<i>Apr. 2.</i>	<i>155 Mary Wright</i>
<i>July 2.</i>	
<i>Octo. 1.</i>	<i>Wright</i>

company was not obligatory, but voluntary, with closer rules and higher tests of faithfulness; a unique society of brotherly love. It was felt by some that they needed counsel and



*Henry Cabot*

help that could not be given among a company of men, women, and children many of whom were young in Christian experience, and there were bands for married men



*John George*

and bands for married women, while the single men and single women had bands of their own.

Closely connected with band meeting was the love feast,

a revival in a simple form of the *agape* of the early Church. We have seen Wesley attending a Moravian love feast in

Georgia in 1737, and the remarkable meeting at Fetter Lane at the dawn of 1739. Under Wesley's arrangements the love feasts were held every three months, after the visitation of the classes, and at first were confined to members of the bands, but after 1759 the whole society was admitted on



*Mary Hewitt*

the presentation of the class ticket. "A little plain cake and water" were partaken of as a sign of

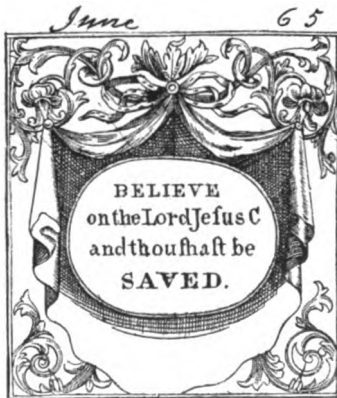
fellowship, and the service consisted of a joyous testimony of

*July 1763*



*Jno Genge*

Christian experience.



*Jone Wright*

Another institution peculiar to Methodism was the watch night. The colliers at Kingswood had heretofore given many a night, and especially the last night of the year, to drunken revels and song. When they became Christians their social customs underwent a transformation, and they met as often as possible and spent the greater part of the

night in prayer and praise. Objectors arose and Wesley was urged to stop the meetings. He remembered that the early Christians spent whole nights in prayer, giving to them the name *Vigiliae*, and he saw in them an agency for good. So he sent the members word that on Friday night nearest full moon (that there might be light) he would watch with them and preach. He began the meeting be-

*June 1789.*

Wo unto them, for they have fled from me.  
Hofea vii. 13.

**C**

*Geo. Osborn*

tween eight and nine, and continued it until after twelve, "a little beyond the noon of night," as Wesley remarked. The first meeting at the end of the year was held at Kingswood, on Wednesday, December 31, 1740. The first watch night in London was held on Friday, April 9, 1742. The custom extended to other places. Charles Wesley wrote some triumphant hymns for use on these occasions, including the song with which every English watch night service concludes to-day, "Come, let us anew our journey pursue." It contains the striking lines:

Our life is a dream; our time as a stream  
Glides swiftly away,  
And the fugitive moment refuses to stay.

*March 1789.*

If we deny him, he will deny us.  
2 Tim ii. 12.

**B**

*George Osborn*

31, 1740. The first watch night in London was held on Friday, April 9, 1742. The custom extended to other places. Charles Wesley wrote some triumphant hymns for use on these occasions, including the song with which every English watch night service concludes to-day, "Come, let us anew our journey pursue." It contains the striking lines:

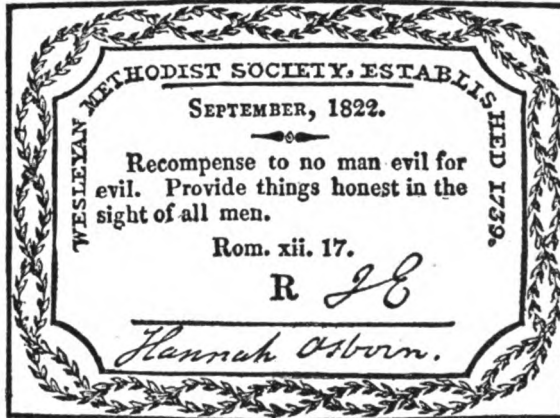
*March, 1805.*

Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.

1 Peter iii. 18.

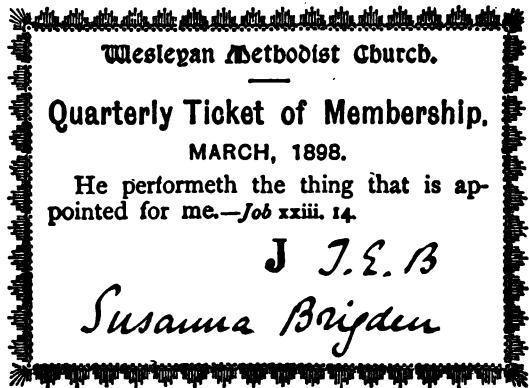
*J. T. A.  
Hans. Osborn*

The meetings ceased in time to be monthly and were held quarterly, but in recent years they have been confined to New Year's Eve.



Always on the outlook for means of deepening religious life, Wesley introduced the service for "renewing the covenant," and on Monday,

August 11, 1755, the society met at six in the evening at the French church in Spitalfields. Here is his account: "After I had recited the tenor of the covenant proposed, in the words of that blessed man, Richard Alleine, all the people stood up, in token of assent, to the number of about eighteen hundred. Such a night I scarce ever knew before. Surely the fruit of it shall remain forever."



THE TICKET NOW IN USE.  
The term "Church" is used instead of "Society," according to the decision of Conference, 1891.

Very soon Wesley was driven, "sorely against his own will," says Dr. Rigg, to make a distinct separation of his societies

in London and Bristol from the Church of England. The clergy not only excluded the Wesleys from their pulpits, but in 1740 repelled them and their converts from the Lord's table. At Bristol especially, in that year, this was done with much harshness. The brothers, therefore, administered the sacrament in their own preaching rooms. The practice having been established at Bristol, the London society at the Foundry claimed the same privilege. Thus full provision was made for the spiritual wants of the societies quite apart from the services of the Church of England, although for many years many of the Methodist members attended the communion service of the Anglican Church. "It cannot be doubted," affirms Professor Richard Green, "except on certain High Church principles, that the society was a Church, although it was not called one."

Susanna Wesley was providentially at hand to counsel and encourage her son when he was laying the foundation of organized Methodism. She stood by his side when he preached at Kennington Common to twenty thousand people. She was present when the question of separation from the Fetter Lane society was discussed, and approved of the withdrawal of the members to the Foundry. About this time she was brought into fuller sympathy than ever with her son's views of the possibility of conscious forgiveness. John Wesley records a conversation in which she said that until recently she never dared ask this blessing for herself. "But two or three weeks ago, while my son Hall was pronouncing these words in delivering the cup to me, 'The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ which was given for thee,' the words struck through my heart, and I knew God for Christ's sake had forgiven me all my sins." "I asked her," says Wesley, "whether her father (Dr. Annesley) had not the same faith, and whether

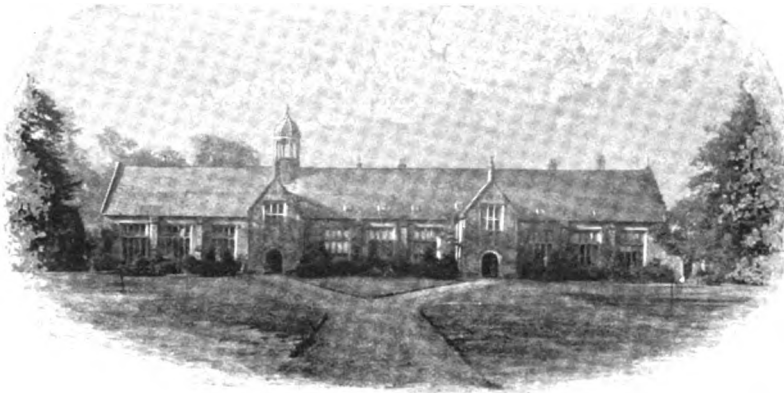


she had not heard him preach it to others. She answered: 'He had it himself, and declared a little before his death that for more than forty years he had no darkness, no fear, no doubt at all of his being accepted in the Beloved.' But that, nevertheless, she did not remember to have heard him preach, no, not once, especially upon it; whence she supposed he looked upon it as the peculiar blessing of a few; not as promised to all the people of God." At the Foundry Mrs. Wesley enjoyed the society of her sons and several of her daughters, and attended all the meetings of the infant Methodist Church.

But Samuel Wesley, at Tiverton, was greatly distressed by the doctrine and the ecclesiastical irregularities of his younger brothers. He declared in a letter to his mother that he would "much rather have them picking straws within the walls than preaching in the area of Moorfields"—alluding to the lunatic asylum. "It was with exceeding concern and grief I heard you had countenanced a spreading delusion so far as to be one of Jack's congregation. Is it not enough that I am bereft of both my brothers, but must my mother follow too? I earnestly beseech the Almighty to preserve you from joining a schism at the close of your life, as you were unfortunately engaged in one at the beginning of it. . . . As I told Jack, I am not afraid the Church should excommunicate him, discipline is at too low an ebb, but that he should excommunicate the Church. . . . He only who ruleth the madness of the people can stop them from being a formed sect in a very little time." This letter faithfully presents the views of many a clergyman of the time besides Wesley, the master of Blundell's School.

This letter must have been one of the last Samuel Wesley ever wrote; it is dated only seventeen days before his death,

on November 6, 1739. In spite of his stiff Churchmanship he was an amiable and benevolent man, almost idolized by the people of Tiverton. He shared his income with his needy relatives, but prohibited the mention of the fact while he lived. His portrait, given on page 145, published about the time of his death, shows a thorough Wesleyan face. Eight of his hymns are found in the Wesleyan Hymn



FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.

## BLUNDELL'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL AT TIVERTON.

Where Samuel Wesley, Jr., was master at the time of his death, November 6, 1739.

Book and two (hymns 75 and 977) in the Hymnal of the Methodist Episcopal Church. His brothers hastened to Tiverton on the news of his somewhat sudden death. "My poor sister," writes John, "is sorrowing almost as one without hope; yet we could not but rejoice at hearing, from one who had attended my brother, . . . that before he went hence God had given him a calm and full assurance of his interest in Christ. O may everyone who opposes it be thus convinced that this doctrine is of God!"

A letter of Susanna Wesley to her son Charles has recently

come to light in which there is a touching account of her sorrow at her son's death, and a note in the margin in

Dear Charles. Nov: 29 739

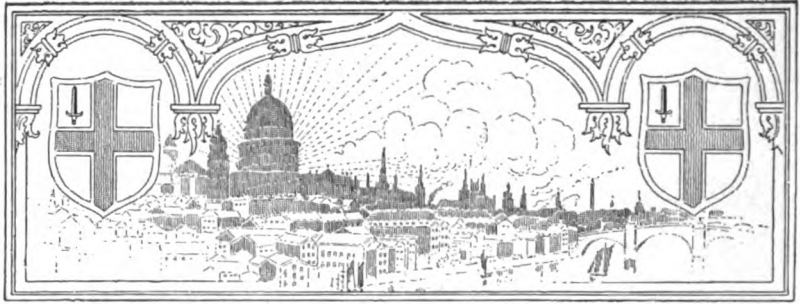
Upon the first hearing of y<sup>r</sup> Brothers  
 Death I did immediately acquiesce in the Will of God,  
 without the least reluctance. Only I somewhat marvel  
 that Jacky did not inform me of it before he left  
 me, since he knew thereof; but he was unacquainted  
 with the manner of God's dealing with me in ex-  
 traordinary Cases, w<sup>ch</sup> indeed is no wonder, for tho'  
 I have so often experienc'd His infinite Power, &  
 mercy in my support, & inward Calmness of Spirit  
 when the Trial w<sup>d</sup> otherwise <sup>have</sup> been too strong for me  
 yet His ways of working are to my self incompre-  
 hensible, & ineffable!

y<sup>r</sup> Brother was exceeding dear to me  
 in his life, & perhaps I've erred in loving him  
 too well. I once thought it impossible for me  
 to bear his Loss, but know none know  
 what they can bear till they are Grieved. My  
 Good old Grandfather often us'd to say "That's  
 an Affliction, that God makes an Affliction-  
 for surely the manifestation of His Presence  
 and Shadow, is more than an adequate Support  
 under any suffering whatever. But if He with-  
 hold His Consolation, & hide His Face from us,  
 the least suffering is intollerable - But Blessed,  
 and Ador'd be His Holy Name, it hath not been  
 so with me, tho' I am infinitely unworthy of the  
 least of all His mercys! I rejoice in having

MRS. WESLEY'S LETTER ON THE DEATH OF HER ELDEST SON, REV. SAMUEL WESLEY, JR.

Charles's writing. It is very likely that as she was ill in





## CHAPTER XLIII

### Facing the Prelates

THE CAUSES OF THE GATHERING STORM.—THE ALARM OF THE BISHOP OF LONDON.—TWO FAMOUS LITERARY BISHOPS—WARBURTON AND BUTLER.—THE TWO GREATEST RELIGIOUS MEN OF THEIR CENTURY.

WHEN we recall the deplorable condition of the churches and of English society in the eighteenth century we cannot wonder that the Methodists met with bitter opposition. Their opponents were a motley army, with weapons strangely various. The censures of the prelate, the curses of the priest, the lampoons of the press, the caricatures of the artist, the slanders of the pamphleteer, the burlesques of the stage, and the bludgeons of the mob were all turned against the men whose sole quarrel was with sin and Satan.

The causes of this gathering storm were equally various. The "offense of the cross;" ignorance and hatred of the so-called "new doctrines;" horror of "enthusiasm," as the term was then understood, were at the root of much opposition. Drowsy shepherds resented the disturbance of their slumbers:

The moping owl doth to the moon complain  
Of such as, wandering near her sacred bower,  
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

At the same time it would be unjust to attribute these feelings to all the prelates and clergy who opposed early Methodism. We must remember that they looked at the movement from their peculiar standpoint of the eighteenth century.

There was a widespread fear of any recurrence of the religious and political turbulence of the two preceding centuries. The movement among the masses who thronged to the field-preaching alarmed the lovers of "quiet," and of "our happy establishment in Church and State"—as a favorite phrase of the day expressed it.

Then the reaction against Puritanism had not spent its force, and at a later stage we shall find fashionable letter writers and pamphleteers alarmed at a possible revival of the hated "reign of the saints."

On the other hand, absurd as it appears to us to-day, the Methodist leaders were suspected of popery: they were Jesuits; their goal was Rome!

Further, false reports were spread that the Wesleys were Jacobites, and friends of the Pretender. This probably arose from the fact that Jacobitism prevailed among the High Church Methodists of Oxford, and that the friend of several of them, William Law, was a nonjuror.

We find, also, the current literature of the day slandering the Methodists, and in many places prejudices were raised against them before they appeared on the scene to refute by their lives many false and foul charges.

To account for the fury of the mob is not an easy task. As Canon Overton suggests, probably "the most part of them knew not wherefore they had come together." "All the more shame," says the Anglican historian, "to those who took advantage of the people's ignorance to instigate them to

deeds of violence! Sometimes—one blushes to relate it—these riots were instituted by the clergy; they were rarely stopped, as they ought to have been, by the magistrates.”

Although some Anglican and Methodist writers have stated that Wesley did nothing that was inconsistent with the laws of the Established Church, it must be granted that his “irregularities” were calculated to alarm the “orderly” prelates of his day. When he organized his societies, built and registered meetinghouses for worship, and, later, ordained ministers not only to preach, but to administer the sacraments, he practically separated from the State Church in the eyes of orderly clergy. His brother Samuel, as we have seen, very early called his action “schismatic.” A recent Methodist newspaper observes that there could be no more curious illustration of the way in which our wishes can destroy our logic than the fact that Wesley persuaded himself to the end that he had not separated from the Church of England. Abel Stevens, breathing the free air of the New World, has said that English writers have deemed it desirable, and have not found it a difficult task, to defend Wesley against imputations of disregard for the authority and “order” of the State Church, “but it may hereafter be more difficult to defend him before the rest of the Christian world for having been so deferential to a hierarchy whose moral condition at the time he so much denounced, and whose studied policy throughout the rest of his life was to disown if not to defeat him.”

Within five weeks of John Wesley’s return from Germany he and his brother Charles were summoned before the Bishop of London, Dr. Edmund Gibson. The bishop was a vigorous administrator, and Sir Robert Walpole was reproached for allowing him the authority of a pope: “And a very good pope



PAINTED BY JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

PHOTOGRAPHED FROM THE ORIGINAL.

THE "REYNOLDS PORTRAIT" OF JOHN WESLEY.

A reputed early portrait of John Wesley by Sir Joshua Reynolds, painted in the West of England. From the original, now in the possession of the Rev. James H. Pawlyn, Mattock, England, formerly owned by a relative of Rev. Henry Moore, one of Wesley's executors. Copyright.





he is," replied the premier. He was a pious and fearless man. By preaching against masquerades, of which George II was very fond, he offended the court. He was in favor of the "toleration" of the Dissenters, but opposed to their relief from political disabilities.

When the Wesley brothers appeared before him, charged with preaching an absolute assurance of salvation, he heard them fairly, and said: "If by assurance you mean an inward persuasion whereby a man is conscious in himself, after examining his life by the law of God and weighing his own sincerity, that he is in a state of salvation and acceptable to God, I don't see how any good Christian can be without such an assurance." To the charge of preaching justification by faith only, the Wesleys replied, "Can anyone preach otherwise who agrees to our Church and the Scriptures?" John Wesley inquired if his reading in a religious society made it a conventicle. The bishop warily replied: "No, I think not. However, you can read the acts and laws as well as I. I determine nothing." But in 1739 the bishop issued a pastoral letter in which he charges the Methodists with "enthusiasm," or "a strong persuasion in their mind that they are guided in an extraordinary manner by immediate impulses and impressions of the Spirit of God." They were guilty of "boasting of sudden and surprising effects, wrought by the Holy Ghost, in consequence of their preaching." As we have seen, he supported the churchwardens of Islington against their vicar and excluded Charles Wesley from the pulpit.

We find John Wesley again facing the bishop in 1740. What did he mean by perfection? was the question. When Wesley had replied the bishop said, "Mr. Wesley, if this be all you mean, publish it to the world." And Wesley gladly obeyed by publishing his sermon on Christian Per-

fection. But a little later the rise of the societies and the field-preaching, with its sensational accompaniments, again alarmed the bishop. He wrote a pamphlet against this "sect," in which he charged them with "having had the boldness to preach in the fields and other open places, and inviting the rabble to be their hearers," in defiance of a statute of Charles II. Wesley replied in his *Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion*. He declares that the clergy, who will not suffer him to preach in the churches, are accountable for his preaching in the fields. Besides, "one plain reason why these sinners are never reclaimed is this, they never come into a church. Will you say, as some tender-hearted Christians I have heard, 'Then it is their own fault; let them die and be damned!' I grant it may be their own fault, but the Saviour of souls came after us, and so we ought to seek to save that which is lost." The able and sincere Bishop Gibson could not shake himself free from the prejudices and Church "order" which stood in the way of the salvation of the despised "rabble," and in another of his pastorals he classes the Methodists with "deists, papists, and other disturbers of the kingdom of God."

William Warburton, who was not yet a bishop, was a man of a very different type from Bishop Gibson. Sir James Fitzjames Stephen, in the *Saturday Review*, has said of his books: "They do not give the impression that their author was a good man, or that he had any strong personal feeling of religion. But they show in every page a genuine intellectual contempt and dislike for his opponents. . . . He worked all his opinions, all his reading, and all his crotchets into one enormous mass, which he called a demonstration of the Divine Legation of Moses."

In the preface to the second volume of his famous book

there is this remarkable passage: "Commend me to those honester zealots, the Methodists, who spend all their fire against vice. It will be said, perhaps, they are mad. I believe they are. But what of that? They are honest. Zeal for the fancies and opinions of our superiors is the known road to preferment, but who was ever yet so mad as to think of rising by virtue?"

In his letters, however, this trenchant writer refers to "our new set of fanatics, called the Methodists," and repeats with much zest some of the scurrilous reports about "our overheated bigots." He afterward became one of the most virulent of the religious opponents of Wesley in his *Doctrine of Grace*, of which the *Saturday Review* says: "It is certainly entitled



JOHN WESLEY.

From a portrait engraved from life by Thomas Holloway, 1776.

to the praise of being in its way as trenchant and savage an attack on the Methodists as it was possible to make. It is very like Sydney Smith's well-known article in the *Edinburgh Review* long afterward. . . . It is inconceivable that any single person should ever have been converted to Warburton's or Sydney Smith's way of thinking by such performances." But these performances did much at the time to ferment the bitter feeling against the Methodists.

A more eminent prelate was Bishop Butler, the author of the famous *Analogy*, of which Wesley wrote: "A strong and well-wrote treatise, but, I am afraid, far too deep for their understanding to whom it is primarily addressed."

A "fine book;" but "Freethinkers, so called, are seldom close thinkers. They will not be at the pains of reading such a book as this."

Bishop Butler was at first favorable to the Methodist clergy, but Whitefield's Journal and many strange reports reached him. He summoned Wesley, and after a conversation on the doctrine of justifying faith, for which Wesley claimed the support of the Homilies, the bishop referred to some expressions in Whitefield's Journal, and said:

"Sir, the pretending to extraordinary revelations, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, is a horrid thing; a very horrid thing!"

"My Lord," replied Wesley, "for what Mr. Whitefield says, Mr. Whitefield, and not I, is accountable. I pretend to no extraordinary revelations, or gifts of the Holy Ghost; none but what every Christian may receive, and ought to expect and pray for."

"You have no business here," said the bishop; "you are not commissioned to preach in this diocese. Therefore I advise you to go hence."

"My Lord, my business on earth is to do what good I can," replied Wesley. "Wherever, therefore, I think I can do most good, there must I stay, so long as I think so. At present I think I can do most good here; therefore here I stay. . . . Being ordained a priest, by the commission I then received I am a priest of the Church universal; and being ordained as fellow of a college, I was not limited to any particular cure, but have an indeterminate commission to preach the word of God in any part of the Church of England. I do not, therefore, conceive that in preaching here by this commission I break any human law. When I am convinced I do then it will be time to ask, 'Shall I obey God or man?' But if I should be convinced in the meanwhile that I could advance

the glory of God and the salvation of souls in any other place more than in Bristol, in that hour, by God's help, I will go hence; which till then I may not do."

Wesley took his own time and did not leave Bristol until persuaded that it was his duty to labor elsewhere. And we must credit the famous bishop with a sincere desire to fulfill what he thought to be his duty, much as we regret his treatment of Wesley. They were the two greatest religious men of their century. "The one left behind him," says Professor F. W. Macdonald, "the greatest philosophical treatise ever written in defense of Christianity; the other revived the Church and roused the nation, and left behind him an ever-expanding organization for spreading the Gospel to the ends of the earth. There are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit."

It is pleasing to turn from the glimpse of Butler as a prelate to the description of Butler as minister given in Surtees's History of Durham: "During the performance of the sacred office a divine animation seemed to pervade his whole manner and lighted up his pale, wan countenance like a torch glimmering in its socket."



## CHAPTER XLIV

### **The Anger of the Primate and the Adventures of the Presbyters**

THE FROWNS OF THE ARCHBISHOP.—“A MOST DARK AND SATURNINE CREATURE.”—THE FEARS OF THE DISSENTERS.—“THE WORLD IS MY PARISH.”—THE WESLEYS AT WORK.

SOON after Charles Wesley's expulsion from Islington he and the Vicar of Bexley were summoned to Lambeth Palace to appear before the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Potter, to answer for the preaching of Charles in Bexley parish. The primate of all England angrily told Charles Wesley that he would not “proceed to excommunication YET,” and dismissed him “with all the marks of his displeasure.”

“Your Grace has taught me, in your book on Church government, that a man unjustly excommunicated is not thereby cut off from communion with Christ.”

“Of that I am the judge,” said the primate.

Charles Wesley says, “I retired and prayed for particular direction; offering up my friends, my liberty, my life, for Christ's sake and the Gospel's.” On the next Sunday he preached at the memorable open-air service at Moorfields, and thus, as he says, “broke down the bridge,” as he preached “to near ten thousand helpless sinners waiting for the word.”

The Archbishop of York (afterward of Canterbury), Thomas

Herring, a few years later instructed his clergy to repel Charles Wesley from the Lord's table, issued a circular against "enthusiastic ardor," and in a letter said that John Wesley, "with good parts and more learning, is a most dark and saturnine creature."

The leading Dissenters of the day were at first alarmed by Methodism, though some of them lived to give it their blessing. Bradbury lampooned Whitefield, Barker sneered at him, and the aged Dr. Watts roundly rebuked Dr. Doddridge for permitting him to preach in his pulpit at Northampton, where Doddridge was at the head of a theological seminary. Doddridge felt obliged to assure his friends that he saw no danger that any of his pupils would turn Methodist!

There was a deluge of pamphlets and articles against the Methodists, in which Wesley was branded as "a restless deceiver of the people," "a newfangled teacher setting up his own fanatical conceits in opposition to the authority of God," "a Jesuit in disguise," and, worst of all, "a Dissenter." Whitefield was called a "raw novice," "propagating blasphemies and enthusiastic notions which strike at the root of all religion and make it the jest of those who sit in the seat of the scornful." The Methodists were denounced as "young quacks in divinity," "buffoons in religion," "bold movers of sedition, and ringleaders of the rabble." The magazines and newspapers conducted a hot crusade against them, "stirring up the people," writes Wesley, "to knock these mad dogs on the head at once;" and we shall find that mob violence soon followed these appeals of the press and censures of the prelates.

In answer to a clergyman who forbade his preaching in his parish Wesley gave utterance to the famous saying which appears on the Wesley tablet in Westminster Abbey. He



wrote: "God in Scripture commands me, according to my power, to instruct the ignorant, reform the wicked, confirm the virtuous. Man forbids me to do this in another's parish; that is, in effect, not to do it at all, seeing I have now no parish of my own, nor probably ever shall. Whom, then, shall I hear, God or man? . . . *I look upon all the world as my parish*; thus far I mean that, in whatever part of it I am, I judge it meet, right, and my bounden duty to declare unto all that are willing to hear the glad tidings of salvation. This is the work which I know God has called me to, and sure I am that his blessing attends it."

A report was current in Bristol in 1739 that Wesley was a papist, if not a Jesuit. Some added that he had been born and bred at Rome. Many believed this. "O ye fools," exclaims Wesley, "when will ye understand that the preaching of justification by faith alone is overturning popery from the foundation!"

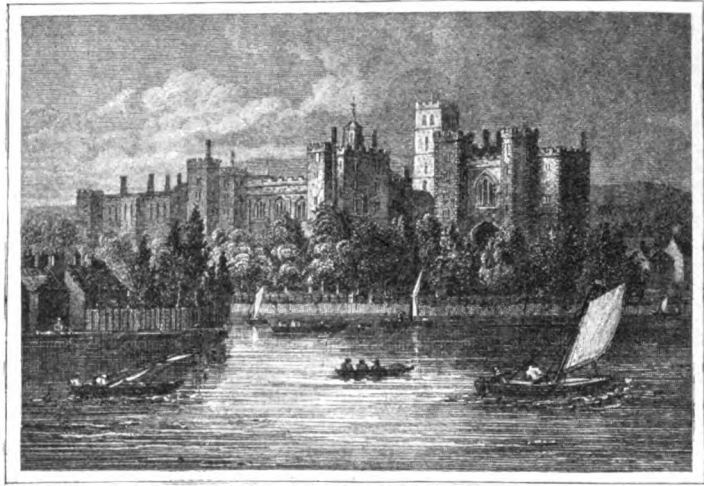
Many were Wesley's adventures, tersely recorded in the Journal during the years of the planting of Methodism. At Bath, as he was preaching to three thousand persons, a sensation was created by the sudden appearance of the pressgang, who seized on one of the hearers. Wesley protested against this in the name of English liberty—"a mere sound while such a thing as a pressgang is suffered in the land." At Turner's Hall, Deptford, the floor gave way, but the vault below being filled with hogsheads of tobacco, the congregation sank only a foot or two, and Wesley calmly proceeded with his sermon. At Cardiff he preached in the shire hall; almost the whole town came together. His heart was greatly enlarged, and the people heard him with rapt attention as for three hours he explained the Beatitudes. At Kingswood, before 1739 had closed, Wesley could write:

“The scene is already changed. Kingswood does not now, as a year ago, resound with cursing and blasphemy. It is no more filled with drunkenness and uncleanness, and the idle diversions that naturally lead thereto. It is no longer full of wars and fightings. . . . Peace and love are there. Great numbers of the people are mild, gentle, and easy to be entreated. They ‘do not cry, neither strive,’ and hardly is their ‘voice heard in the streets,’ . . . unless when they are at their usual evening diversion—singing praise unto God their Saviour.”

At the Bristol bridewell we find him visiting a condemned soldier. The next day the officer gives orders that neither Wesley nor his people should be admitted, for they are all atheists! A few days later, as he was expounding part of Acts xxiii, “the floods began to lift up their voice. Some or other of the children of Belial had labored to disturb us several nights before; but now it seemed as if all the host of the aliens were come together with one consent. Not only the court and the alleys, but all the street, upward and downward, were filled with people, shouting, cursing, and swearing, and ready to swallow the ground with fierceness and rage. The mayor sent orders that they should disperse. But they set him at naught. The chief constable came next in person, who was, till then, sufficiently prejudiced against us. But they insulted him also in so gross a manner as, I believe, fully opened his eyes. At length the mayor sent several of his officers, who took the ringleaders into custody, and did not go till all the rest were dispersed.” On the day following “the rioters were brought up to the court, the quarter-sessions being held that day. They began to excuse themselves by saying many things of me. But the mayor cut them all short, saying: ‘What Mr. Wesley is, is

nothing to you. I will keep the peace; I will have no rioting in this city.'

"Calling at Newgate in the afternoon, I was informed that the poor wretches under sentence of death were earnestly desirous to speak with me, but that it could not be; Alderman Beecher having just then sent an express order



DRAWN BY I. JONES.

LAMBETH PALACE.

AFTER THE ENGRAVING BY HIGHAM.

Where Charles Wesley was cited before Archbishop Potter.

that they should not. I cite Alderman Beecher to answer for these souls at the judgment seat of Christ."

The deadly "spotted fever" was prevalent in Bristol, and reckless of himself, Wesley went from house to house ministering to body and soul. A protracted frost threw hundreds out of work, and while it lasted he fed from a hundred to a hundred and fifty every day. Later in the year he took into his chapel twelve of the poorest people and employed them for four months in carding and spinning wool.

Charles Wesley's life was almost as full of incident. On

the way to Gloucester he says, "We lost our way as often as we could." At the society "some without attempted to make a disturbance by setting on the dogs; but in vain. The dumb dogs rebuked the rioters." Before he went into the streets he tried to borrow the church. "The minister (one of the better disposed) sent back a civil message, that he would be glad to drink a glass of wine with me, but durst not lend me his pulpit for fifty guineas. Mr. Whitefield durst lend me his field, which did just as well. For near an hour and a half God gave me voice and strength to exhort about two thousand sinners to repent and believe the Gospel." At Painswick he expounded the Good Samaritan "at a public house, which was full above stairs and below." At Gloucester, again, a lady acquaintance, Mrs. Kirkham, challenged him: "What, Mr. Wesley, is it you I see! Is it possible that you, who can preach at Christ Church and St. Mary's, should come hither after a mob?" Wesley says: "I cut her short with 'The work which my Master giveth me, must I not do it?' and went to my mob. . . . Thousands heard me gladly."

Two accounts of Charles Wesley's services give us some idea of his power. The first is from his Journal. The scene was Kennington. "The church was as full as it could crowd. Thousands stood in the churchyard. It was the most beautiful sight I ever beheld. The people filled the gradually rising area, which was shut up on three sides by a vast perpendicular hill. On the top and bottom of this hill was a circular row of trees. In this amphitheater they stood, deeply attentive, while I called upon them in Christ's words, 'Come unto me, all ye that are weary.' The tears of many testified that they were ready to enter into that rest. God enabled me to lift up my voice like a trumpet, so that all

distinctly heard me. I concluded with singing an invitation to sinners." This is how he describes the conversion of one penitent prodigal: "We prayed and sang alternately till faith came. God blew with his wind, and the waters flowed. . . . The poor sinner, with joy and astonishment, believed the Son of God loved him, and gave himself for him. 'Sing, ye heavens, for the Lord hath done it! Shout, ye lower parts of the earth!' In the morning I had told his mother the story of St. Augustine's conversion. Now I carried her the joyful news, 'This thy son was dead and is alive again.'"

The other account of Charles Wesley's work at this time is given in a letter written by Joseph Williams, of Kidderminster, for the Gentleman's Magazine. When he showed the letter Charles Wesley modestly objected to its publication, but it was found after his death. Mr. Williams writes from Bristol: "I found him standing on a table, with his hands lifted in prayer. . . . He preached about an hour, from 2 Cor. v, 17-21, in such manner as I have seldom, if ever, heard, with evident signs of vehement desire to convince his hearers. He supported his points with many texts of Scripture, and then freely invited all, even the chief of sinners, and used a great variety of the most moving arguments and expostulations, in order to persuade, allure, compel, all to come to Christ."

Of another meeting Williams writes: "Never did I hear such praying or such singing; never did I see and hear such evident marks of fervency of spirit in the service of God as in that society. At the close of every single petition a serious Amen, like a rushing sound of waters, ran through the whole society, and their singing was not only the most harmonious and delightful I ever heard, but, as Mr. Whitefield writes in his Journals, they 'sang lustily and with a good courage.'"

Indeed, they seemed to sing with melody in their heart. . . . If there be such a thing as heavenly music on earth, I heard it there. If there be such an enjoyment, such an attainment, as that of a heaven upon earth, members in that society seemed to possess it."

Charles Wesley averted from Bristol what might have proved a destructive and murderous riot. The high price of



FROM GILROY'S CARICATURE.

"THE LIBERTY OF THE SUBJECT."

The pressgang.

corn maddened the colliers, and they marched as an armed mob toward the city. Charles Wesley riding over Lawrence Hill met about a thousand of them face to face. Among them were some Methodists who had been forced by fierce threats to join them. These, seeing Wesley, saluted him affectionately, and resolved to return with him to Kingswood. Charles Wesley's account of this is very graphic:

"Many seemed inclined to go back with me to school;

but the devil stirred up his oldest servants, who violently rushed upon the others, beating and tearing and driving them away from me. I rode up to a ruffian, who was striking one of our colliers, and prayed him rather to strike me. He would not, he said, for all the world; and was quite overcome. I turned upon one who struck my horse and he also sunk into a lamb. Wherever I turned Satan lost ground, so that he was obliged to make one general assault, and by the few violent colliers forced on the quiet ones into the town.

“I seized on one of the tallest and earnestly besought him to follow me. That he would, he said, all the world over. About six more I pressed into Christ's service. We met several parties, stopped, and exhorted them to join us. We gleaned a few from every company, and grew as we marched along, singing, to the school. From one till three we spent in prayer, that evil might be prevented, and the lion chained. Then news was brought us that the colliers were returned in peace. They had quietly walked into the city, without sticks, or the least violence. A few of the better sort went to the mayor and told their grievance. Then they all returned as they came, without noise or disturbance. All who saw were amazed, for the leopards were laid down. Nothing could have more shown the change wrought in them than this rising.”



## CHAPTER XLV

### Wesley's Soul-saving Laymen

DYING PRIESTLISS.—A STURDY STUDENT.—THE APOSTLE OF WILTSHIRE.—A RESOLUTE MOTHER.—A SPRIGHTLY BROTHER.—IN DEFENSE OF LAY PREACHING.

WESLEY had already become a radical anti-High Churchman. Four departures from conventional church "order" evidence this. He had organized a system of religious societies altogether independent of the parochial clergy and of episcopal control, and the "rules" of his societies contained no requirement of allegiance to the State Church. This was a distinct step toward a separate communion. A year later he had built meetinghouses, licensed and settled on trustees for his own use.

The next year he began, with his brother, to administer the sacraments in these houses. Now he took another step in the same direction by calling out lay preachers, wholly devoted to the work of preaching and visitation. When this last step was challenged he met it in a style which showed how resolutely he was "casting off the graveclothes" of sacerdotalism. "I do assure you this at present is my embarrassment. That I have not gone too far yet I know, but whether I have gone far enough I am extremely doubtful. . . .

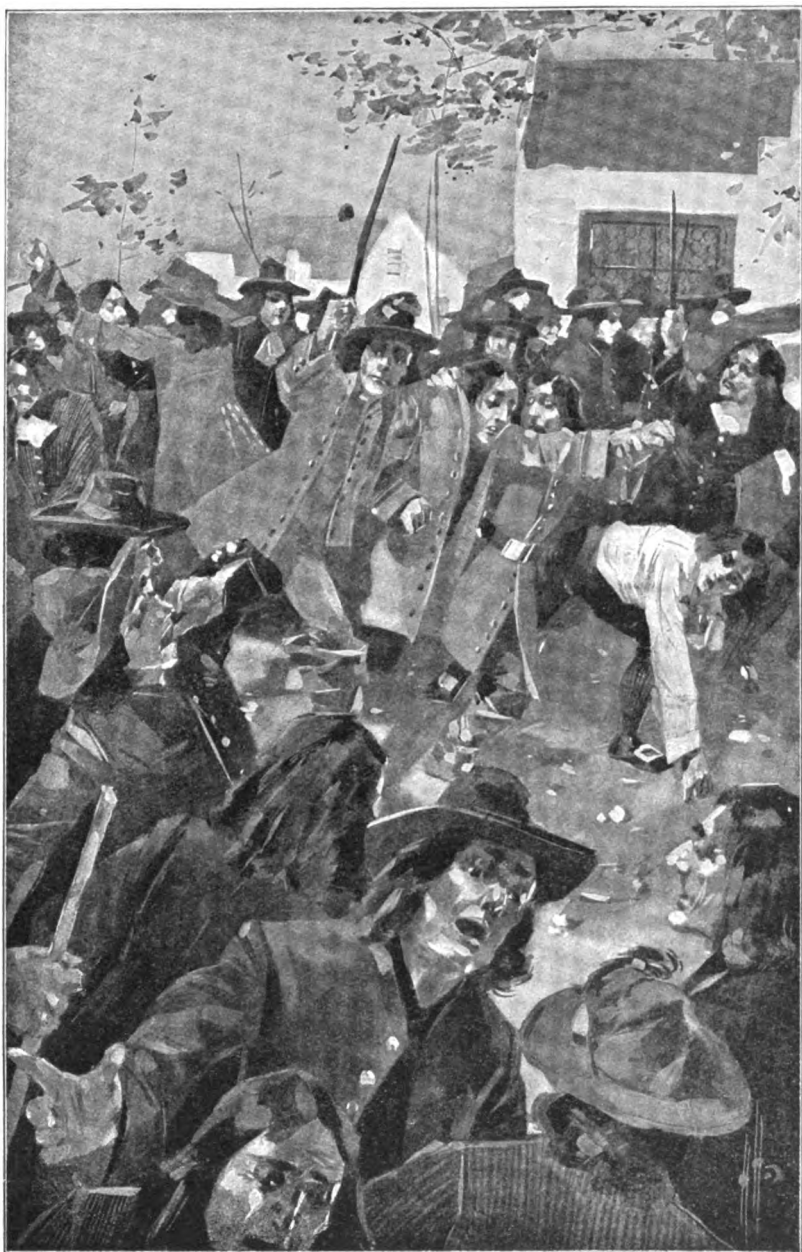


Soul-damning clergymen lay me under more difficulties than soul-saving laymen."

The step cost him a severe struggle. "To touch this point," he says, "was to touch the apple of mine eye." But in his First Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion he triumphantly justifies lay preaching by Scripture, Church history, and Christian common sense. "God immediately gave a blessing thereto. In several places, by means of these plain men, not only those who had begun to run well were hindered from drawing back unto perdition, but other sinners also, from time to time, were converted from the error of their ways. . . . I know no Scripture which forbids making use of such help in a case of such necessity. And I praise God who has given even this help to these poor sheep when their own shepherd pitied them not."

The "plain men" who head the host of Wesley's lay preachers are John Cennick, Joseph Humphreys, Thomas Maxfield, and John Nelson. When Wesley was in his eighty-eighth year he said, "Joseph Humphreys was the first lay preacher that assisted me in England, in the year 1738." But the memory of the venerable man appears to have been at fault as to the date. According to Humphreys' own account of his experience, published in 1742, he began to assist Wesley at the Foundry in 1740. This would be soon after John Cennick had begun to exhort at Bristol. It is remarkable that this Joseph Humphreys, one of Wesley's first lay preachers, was an avowed Dissenter, who had been trained in a Dissenting academy for the Dissenting ministry. This strange appointment shows how far Wesley had drifted away from the High Church moorings which held him in Georgia only two or three years before.

Joseph Humphreys heard Whitefield preach on Kennington



DRAWN BY CHARLES H. JOHNSON.

MOBBING THE PREACHER.



Common in May, 1739, and says, "I felt the power of the Lord to be with him, and was much affected to see the seriousness and tears of many of the congregation." He afterward supped with Whitefield and Howell Harris, of Wales, at the inn upon Blackheath; "the inn seemed to be turned into a church, and to me it was like heaven upon earth." He founded a society at Deptford which Wesley afterward visited. A large dancing-room was hired. "At first," says Humphreys, "I only read Mr. Whitefield's sermons to the people, but afterward I could not help giving short exhortations when the reading was ended." One hundred and forty men and women joined the society. Humphreys proclaimed justification through the Redeemer's merits. "For this I was soon violently opposed. I was singular in the school; threatened by my tutor; dropped by most of my old friends; deemed beside myself by some, and at last, on December 25th, 1739, was expelled from the academy for no other crime, I thank God, but this." He was admitted to another academy, in Moorfields, where he was at liberty to pursue his studies and attend the Methodist societies. Persecution waxed hot. He was "preached and printed against by the clergy, and violently opposed by the rude mob." "They hauled us about, threw us upon the ground, beat us, and pelted us with stones, brickbats, rotten eggs, apples, dung, and fireworks. My faith was hereby often exercised, for I was frequently in danger of having my brains beat out by the large flints that were flung upon the roof of the barn where I preached. The flints used to fall upon the tiles, and both fell in together among the congregation, so that the place was often untiled." The tumult was partly quelled by the magistrate, Sir John Ganson, who befriended Charles Wesley when he was presented at Hicks's Hall for a seditious assembly.

Humphreys preached at the Foundry when Wesley visited Bristol. He afterward became Calvinistic, and joined Whitefield. He parted from Wesley with great affection, and wrote to him: "I think I love you better than ever. I would not grieve you by any means, if I could possibly help it." Wesley spent a pleasant hour with him five years later, and found him "open and friendly, but vigorously tenacious of the unconditional decrees." He afterward left Whitefield, became a Presbyterian minister, and finally received episcopal ordination. He attempted hymn writing, and the following doggerel lines from his pen, worthless as a hymn, show, nevertheless, how widely Methodism and Moravianism had spread as early as 1743:

Many, in these latter days,  
 Have experienc'd Jesu's grace ;  
 Souls in *Europe*, not a few,  
 Find the Gospel tidings true.  
*Britain's* Isle has catch'd the flame;  
 Many know and love the Lamb ;  
 Both in *England* and in *Wales*,  
 And in *Scotland* grace prevails.

*London, Wilts, and Gloustershire*,  
 Feel our Saviour very dear ;  
*Bristol* sinners seek the Lord,  
 And in *Kingswood* he's ador'd.  
 And a few sheep, here and there,  
 Are beloved in *Oxfordshire* ;  
 At *Newcastle* and near *York*,  
 We are told, God is at work.

And our Shepherd's arm infolds  
*Edinburg* and *Glasgow* souls ;  
*Muthel, Kilsyth, Cambuslang*  
 Late of Jesu's love have sang.  
 Many *Germans* walk with God,  
 Through the virtue of Christ's blood ;  
 Likewise in *America*,  
 Shines the glorious Gospel day.

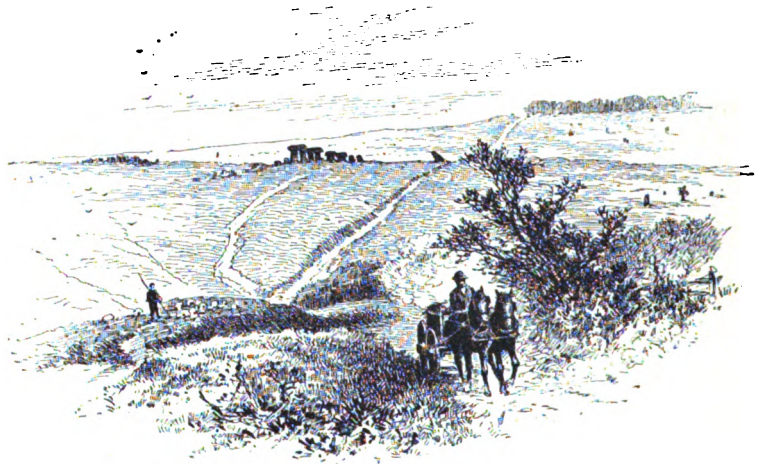
*Pennsylvania* has been blest  
 With an evangelic feast :  
 On *South Carolina* too  
 Christ distils his heavenly dew.  
 Lord, be praised for thy work  
 In the *Jerseys* and *New York*.  
 O, defend the Orphan House !  
 Lo, it stands amidst its foes.

Hear our cries, the children bless,  
 Father of the fatherless.  
 Thousand *Negroes* praise Thy name ;  
 And *New England's* in a flame :  
 And, we hear, the *Hottentot*  
 By our Lord is not forgot ;  
 And that *Greenland's* frozen soil  
 Now becomes his Cross's spoil.

John Cennick, who afterward became known as the Moravian apostle of Wiltshire and the Whitefield of North Ireland, was another of Wesley's early lay preachers. His autobiography is found in the Gospel Magazine for 1777. His grandparents were wealthy traders, "but when George Fox and William Penn began preaching they became Quakers and suffered the loss of all things, and were imprisoned in Reading jail." Their grandson found inspiration in their memory when he also suffered. His youth was spent in revelry, but there came to him times of serious thought.

We find him at midnight on Salisbury Plain, fasting and praying, overwhelmed with a sense of the eternal, and longing to be eased of his burden. For days together he would feed on nothing but stale bread, leaves, acorns, crab apples, and grass. He felt himself tottering on the brink of hell, and "the shining of the sun, the beauty of the spring, the voice of singing, the melody of birds, the shade of trees, and the murmur of waters," all gave him naught but pain. But

at last he burst his bonds and trusted in Christ, a flood of heavenly joy streamed over his soul, and John Cennick came out from the terrible struggle a happy and earnest Christian. He read Whitefield's Journal, and visited the Methodist



DRAWN BY J. D. WOODWARD.

FROM A WOODCUT.

## SALISBURY PLAIN.

The scene of John Cennick's spiritual struggle.

Dean Kinchin, at Oxford, who received him very kindly. He met Whitefield at Mr. Hutton's, near Temple Bar, heard of the proposed school at Kingswood, and became one of its masters. We find him under the "sycamore tree near the intended school," waiting with four or five hundred colliers for a young man who was expected to read a sermon. The young man did not appear in time, and Cennick was persuaded to take his place. Again and again we find him "expounding," under the famous tree, with Wesley's approval.

Cennick left Wesley during the Calvinistic controversy, and afterward breaking away from Whitefield, set out on his own career as a preacher in Wiltshire, where he united with

the Moravians, rejecting the more repellent doctrines of Calvinism. He was a brave and lovable man and an eloquent preacher. When he went with his friend, Howell Harris, to preach in Swindon, a great mob came with an "exceeding noise," fired muskets over the heads of the hearers, blackened their faces, gathered dust from the highways and flung it in their eyes, brought a fire engine and drenched them with ditch-water, threw buckets of mud at them, and burnt effigies of the preachers in the market place. "It did not matter," says Cennick. "When they played the engine on me Harris preached, and when they played it on Harris I preached." But worse followed.

At Stratton the people persuaded a butcher to save up all the blood he could, that they might play blood upon him with the fire engine. Stones followed, and Cennick's body was black and blue for three weeks afterward. The sanguinary shower was a brutal jest upon Cennick's text, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

In Dublin Cennick preached to vast crowds who thronged Skinner's Alley, and covered even the tops of the houses, leaning over parapets to catch his words. Ten thousand people gathered to hear him at Ballymena, and as he preached his first sermon a gentleman rode up and struck him across the face with a riding whip. Magistrates and clergymen headed a mob and drummed him out of town. But Cennick had a ready wit and a kindly manner which won him many friends. His hair was light, his eyes were pleasant, his face most youthful, almost boyish. For five years he traversed North Ireland, mostly on horseback, and became known as "the preacher." The people lined the roads to give him welcome, and implored him to come into their houses to pray. They stood for hours in pelting rain to hear him. In the vil-

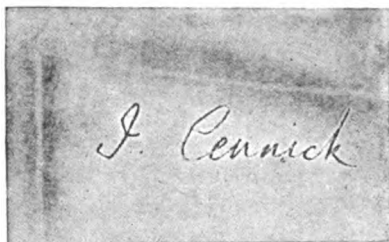


lage cockpits, where the people held their cockfights, he preached with the water streaming from his clothes. The Moravians regard him as the greatest of the English brethren of that day, and Count Zinzendorf called him "Paul revived."

He was worn out by his apostolic labors while yet a young man. From the peat bogs of Ireland, says Hutton, the Moravian historian, he retired to the dusty streets of London, and wrote in his pocketbook:

Now, Lord, in peace with thee and all below,  
Let me depart and to thy kingdom go.

On a summer afternoon in 1755 he lay upon his deathbed in a small, plain room in a London street, and passed away



with the words, "Dear Saviour, give me patience," on his lips. The lines of weariness faded from his brow, and the peace on the face of "the preacher" was of one who rested from his labors.

Cennick's hymns are in many hymnals, and are not lacking in genuine lyric fire. They owe something to Charles Wesley, who revised them at Cennick's request. Among the best known are "Children of the heavenly King;" "Lo, he comes with clouds descending;" "Thou dear Redeemer, dying Lamb!"

Thomas Maxfield's name is associated with the incident which led Wesley, once for all, to give lay preachers a recognized place in his organized society. Maxfield was one of the first converts at Bristol. After traveling with Charles Wesley as a companion and servant he came to London. He was

left at the Foundry to meet and pray with the members during John Wesley's absence. From prayer and exhortation he was insensibly led into preaching, and his sermons were followed by many conversions.

Wesley considered this preaching of sermons, as distinguished from the informal exhortations of a leader, an irregularity, and hastened back to London to check it. He arrived with an anxious look upon his face. His mother inquired the reason of his concern and displeasure.

"Thomas Maxfield has turned preacher," was his abrupt reply.

"John," said Mrs. Wesley, "you know what my sentiments have been. You cannot suspect me of favoring readily anything of this kind. But take care what you do with respect to that young man; for he is as surely called of God to preach as you are. Examine what have been the points of his preaching, and hear him yourself."

Wesley heard Maxfield preach, and was satisfied. "It is the Lord!" he exclaimed, "let him do what seemeth him good. What am I that I should withstand God?" His last scruples about employing unordained preachers yielded to his mother's argument, and the woman apostle of the old rectory kitchen, who had alarmed her good husband by the "irregularity" of her fireside services, gave an impetus to the work of the lay preachers which is felt to-day over the whole earth. The way was now prepared for the extension of Methodism throughout the country, and for the growth of the "circuit" system.

But Wesley's enlistment of laymen roused afresh the fears of the English prelates. When Robinson, the Archbishop of Armagh, met Charles Wesley at the Hot-wells, Bristol, he said:

“I knew your brother well; I could never credit all I heard respecting him and you; but one thing in your conduct I could never account for—your employing laymen.”

“My Lord,” said Charles, “the fault is yours and your brethren.”

“How so?” asked the primate.

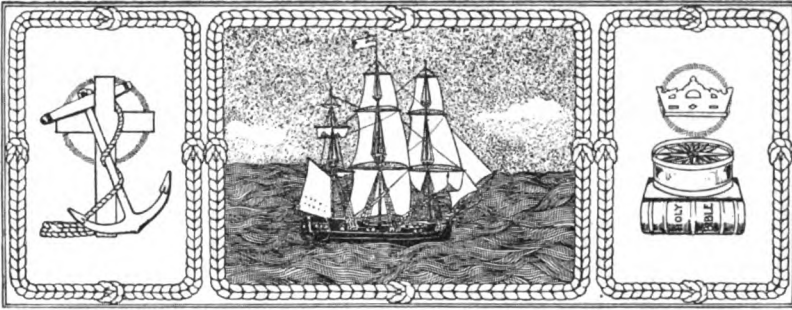
“Because you hold your peace and the stones cry out.”

“But I am told,” said the archbishop, “that they are unlearned men.”

“Some are,” said the sprightly poet; “so the dumb ass rebukes the prophet.”

John Wesley's defense of these “unlettered” men was, perhaps, more to the point. He wrote:

“I am bold to affirm that these unlettered men have help from God for that great work—the saving of souls from death. . . . Indeed, in the one thing which they profess to know, they are not ignorant men. I trust there is not one of them who is not able to go through such an examination in substantial, practical, experimental divinity as few of our candidates for holy orders, even in the university, are able to do.”



## CHAPTER XLVI

### **The Meeting of Whitefield, Franklin, and Edwards**

THE VIVIFIER OF THE CHURCHES.—INFANT UNIVERSITIES.—FRIENDSHIP OF FRANKLIN AND WHITEFIELD.—THE ORPHAN HOUSE.—OLD FIRES REKINDLED IN NEW ENGLAND.

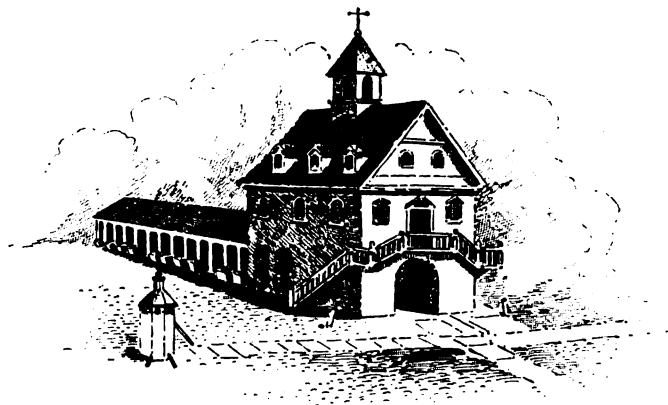
**G**EORGE WHITEFIELD was called to play an important part in the history of two nations. His work was not so much the organization of any one church as the vivifying of them all. In this respect his work in America was even greater than in England. He crossed the Atlantic thirteen times, when the voyage was more tedious than now, and lived to see the foundation of the Methodist Episcopal Church laid by Boardman and Pilmoor, for whom his apostolic labors paved the way. After his nine months' work in England, resulting in the inauguration of field-preaching and a substantial collection for his orphanage, he paid his second visit to America, reaching Philadelphia in November, 1739, and sending forward his "family" to Savannah while he himself went "ranging."

Just before and during the voyage he wrote many letters. One of them shows that Wesley's memorable declaration, "I look upon all the world as my parish," had become a proverb with the Methodists: "The whole world is now my parish.

Wheresoever my Master calls me I am ready to go and preach his everlasting Gospel." Another letter, addressed to Howell Harris, shows that he was now a Calvinist: "Since I saw you God has been pleased to enlighten me more in that comfortable doctrine of election, etc. At my return I hope to be more explicit than I have been." Another reveals his purpose in regard to the parish of Savannah, of which he had accepted the living: "I intend resigning the parsonage of Savannah. The Orphan House I can take care of, supposing I should be kept at a distance. When I have resigned the parish I shall be more at liberty to make a tour round America, if God should ever call me to such a work."

Moll's map of 1741, elsewhere reproduced (page 228), depicts the America of Whitefield's day, and the "History" it illustrates "reckons the number of people in Philadelphia to be 12,240, which computation makes it to be near as big and populous as the city of Exeter." It is "one of the best laid-out Cities in the World, and was it full of Houses and Inhabitants, according to the Proprietary's Plan, it would be a Capital fit for a Great Empire." From the steps of the old courthouse, on a clear November evening, Whitefield preached to a mass meeting of the inhabitants. He was impressed, as in England, with the profound silence of the vast congregation. A great awakening followed Whitefield's preaching and twenty-six societies for social prayer and religious conference were established in the city. He met the famous Presbyterian ministers, William and Gilbert Tennent, and describes the latter as "a son of thunder who does not fear the faces of men." He wore his hair undressed and a large greatcoat girt with a leathern girdle. This famous evangelist and Calvinist became Whitefield's successor in Boston and New England generally.

Whitefield visited New York. He was excluded from the Anglican pulpits, and therefore began to preach in Dissenting chapels. Professedly he was a Church of England clergyman, practically he thus became a Free Churchman. But this "irregularity" caused him no uneasiness. To one cler-

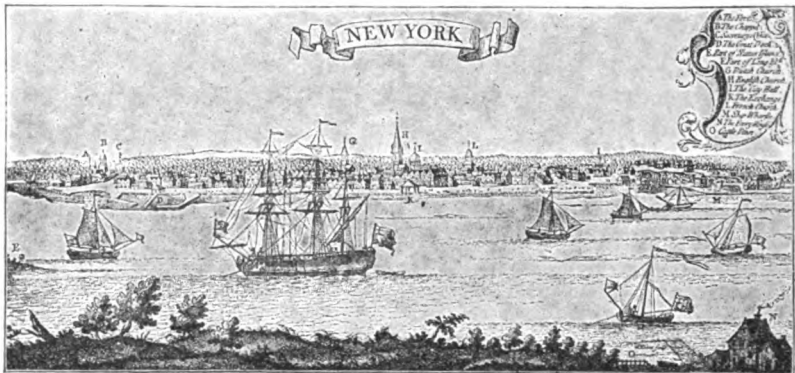


THE OLD COURTHOUSE, PHILADELPHIA.

gyman who denied him the use of his church he wished "good luck in the name of the Lord, as long as he preached the Gospel," and then went forth to preach in the field to upward of two thousand people.

One who was present at the meetinghouse services wrote as follows in Prince's Christian History: "All he said was demonstration, life, and power. The people's eyes and ears hung upon his lips. . . . He preached during four days twice every day. He is a man of middle stature, of a slender body, of a fair complexion, and of a comely appearance. He is of a sprightly, cheerful temper, and acts and moves with great agility and life. The endowments of his mind are uncommon; his wit is quick and piercing; his imagination lively and florid, and, as far as I can discover, both are under

the direction of a solid judgment. He has a most ready memory, and speaks, I think, entirely without notes. He has a clear and musical voice and a wonderful command of it. He uses much gesture, but with great propriety. Every accent of his voice, every motion of his body, *speaks*. If his delivery be the product of art, it is certainly the perfection of it, for it is entirely concealed. He has a great mastery of words, but studies great plainness of speech. He spends not his zeal in trifles. He breathes a most catholic spirit, and



NEW YORK IN 1730.

FROM AN OLD PRINT.

proposes that his whole design is to bring men to Christ; and that if he can attain this end, his converts may go to what church and worship God in what form they like best." Such was the beginning of Whitefield's ministry in New York.

Princeton College was not then in existence, and of its forerunner, the celebrated "log college," he makes this note in his Journal: "The place wherein the young men study now is, in contempt, called *The College*. It is a log house about twenty feet long and nearly as many broad; and to me it seemed to resemble the school of the old prophets. From this despised place seven or eight worthy ministers of Jesus

have been sent forth; more are almost ready to be sent, and a foundation is being laid for the instruction of many others."

America's great printer, electrician, statesman, and diplomatist, Benjamin Franklin, met Whitefield at Philadelphia in 1739, and again the next year. He was attracted by Whitefield's oratory and transparent honesty, and printed his Journals and sermons. At first he refused to contribute to the orphanage, because it was built in Georgia at a much greater cost for materials and workmen than if it had been in Philadelphia. He was a little vexed, too, because Whitefield rejected his counsel. But Franklin himself must tell the story of his surrender to Whitefield's eloquence:

"I happened soon after to attend one of his sermons, in the course of which I perceived he intended to finish with a collection; and I silently resolved he should get nothing from me. I had in my pocket a handful of copper money, three or four silver dollars, and five pistoles in gold. As he proceeded I began to soften, and concluded to give the copper. Another stroke of his oratory determined me to give the silver; and he finished so admirably that I emptied my pocket wholly into the collector's dish, gold and all." One of Franklin's club friends had taken the precaution of emptying his pockets before leaving home. Toward the close of the sermon he applied to a neighbor to lend him money for the collection! His neighbor happened to be, probably, the only man not affected by the preacher. His answer was, "At any other time, friend Hopkinson, I would lend thee freely, but not now; for thee seems to me to be out of thy right senses!"

Franklin vigorously expressed his opinion that Whitefield was "in all his conduct a perfectly *honest man*. Our friendship was sincere on both sides and lasted to his death." And Franklin's characteristic and outspoken honesty is illustrated



in his candid utterances to his friend, however much we may regret their religious import. He says that Whitefield used



PAINTED BY SCHWEDIAUER.

ENGRAVED BY ANGUS.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

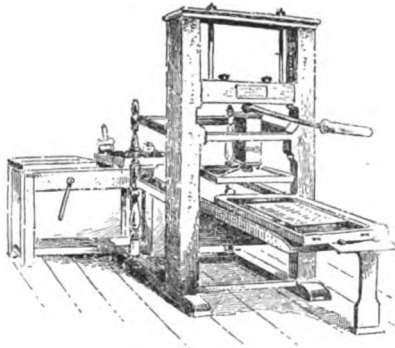
to pray for his conversion, but "never had the satisfaction of believing that his prayers were heard." On one occasion Franklin said to him, when he needed lodgings, "You know my house. If you can make shift with its scanty accommodation, you will be most heartily welcome." Whitefield replied that if he

made that offer for *Christ's* sake, he should not miss of a reward. With utmost candor Franklin replied, "Don't let me be mistaken; it is not for *Christ's* sake, but for *your* sake."

Franklin describes Whitefield as preaching from the courthouse steps, but we must reserve his graphic account of the service for a future chapter on Whitefield's preaching. He also records the building of the Presbyterian Church, which was the result of the evangelist's visit. This building afterward became the seat of the University of Pennsylvania. Franklin was thirty-three years of age when Whitefield met him. About nineteen years before, he had entered Philadelphia, dirty, hungry, and weary, his pockets filled with shirts and stockings, and the whole of his capital consisting of one Dutch dollar. He was now a busy printer, famous as the publisher of Poor Richard's Almanack, a newspaper editor, an alderman and magistrate; had filled the office of clerk to

the General Assembly, and had recently been appointed post-master.

Through Maryland, Virginia, and Carolina Whitefield sped like a blazing comet. At Williamsburg he was courteously entertained by the governor and Commissary Blair, and at the college met two masters who had been his contemporaries at Oxford. On the way to Bath-Town the travelers heard wolves howling like a kennel of hounds. In North Carolina they had to swim their horses through the creeks. Parties of negroes and dancers celebrating New Year's Day were met; and, overawed by the preacher's message, begged his prayers. As he approached Charleston he was astonished to find people dressed almost like Londoners in gayety, and as he preached in the French church many were melted into tears, and with difficulty he tore himself away from importunate pleaders for another sermon.



FRANKLIN'S PRINTING PRESS.  
The press used by him in London in 1725.

He arrived at Savannah in January, 1740, and on March 25 laid the first brick of his Orphan House, about ten miles from the town, calling his new house of mercy "Bethesda." About forty children were now under his care and were sheltered in a hired house. The workmen increased his "family," as he called them, to a hundred persons who had to be daily fed. He had only about £150 in cash, but proceeded with his work in faith, building the house two stories high with twenty rooms. Two smaller houses were also

built as an infirmary and a workshop. Whitefield visited Frederica, preaching once more before General Oglethorpe, who treated him very courteously. Then we find him at the Scots' settlement at Darien, and needing further funds, he



THE NORTHERN COLONIES IN WHITEFIELD'S DAY.

again went northward, preaching and collecting at Charleston and Philadelphia. At New York, again, in feeble health, he would take no rest, preaching on the common from a platform raised for the purpose. Back again he came to Savannah in great joy, with £500, to a "family" increased to

a hundred and fifty. Once more he went Gospel-ranging until he reached Boston, the capital of New England.

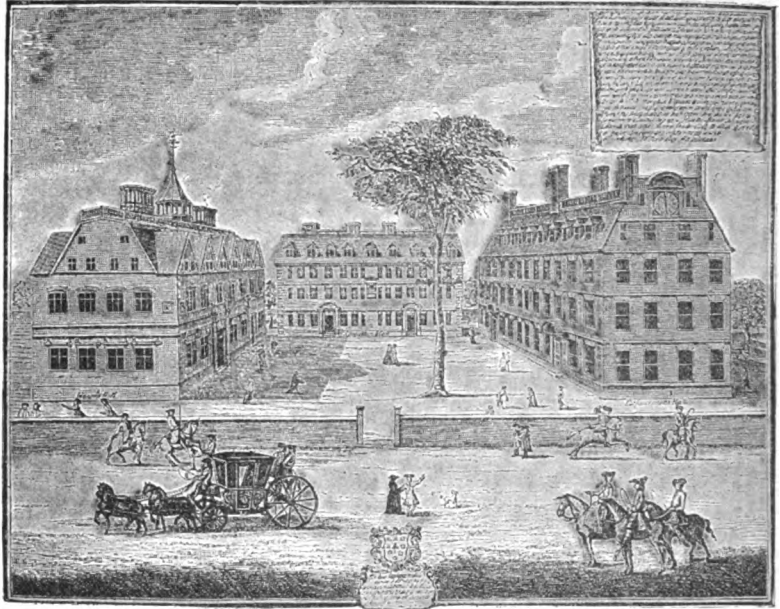
He was invited to Boston by the Rev. Dr. Coleman, and was received as an angel of God, except by one doctor of divinity—who met him in the streets and said, “I am sorry to see *you* here;” and to whom Whitefield quietly remarked, “So is the devil.” When he preached his farewell sermon it was computed that twenty thousand people were present. Multitudes were converted and a marvelous work of grace continued for a year and a half after his departure. “The very face of the town seemed to be strangely altered. Even the negroes and boys in the streets left their usual rudeness, and taverns were found empty of all but lodgers.”

He preached under an elm at Cambridge, “the chief college of New England for training the sons of the prophets.”

At Northampton Whitefield rejoiced to meet the great divine and revivalist, Jonathan Edwards, now in feeble health. He was mourning the declension of many of the converts of the great awakening of five years before. “When I came to remind them,” says Whitefield, “of their former experiences and how zealous and lively they were at that time, both minister and people wept much.” Edwards was soon to rejoice again, and records the rekindling of the holy fire among lapsed professors and young people. The wife of Jonathan Edwards wrote to a friend: “Mr. Whitefield makes less of the doctrines than our American preachers generally do, and aims more at affecting the heart. He is a born orator. You have already heard of his deep-toned yet clear and melodious voice. It is perfect music. It is wonderful to see what a spell he casts over an audience by proclaiming the simplest truths of the Bible. . . . Our mechanics shut up their shops and the day laborers throw down their tools to

go and hear him preach, and few return unaffected. He speaks from a heart all aglow with love."

After an absence from England of a year and a half Whitefield returned in March, 1741. While he was in America Wesley had organized the Methodist societies in England and

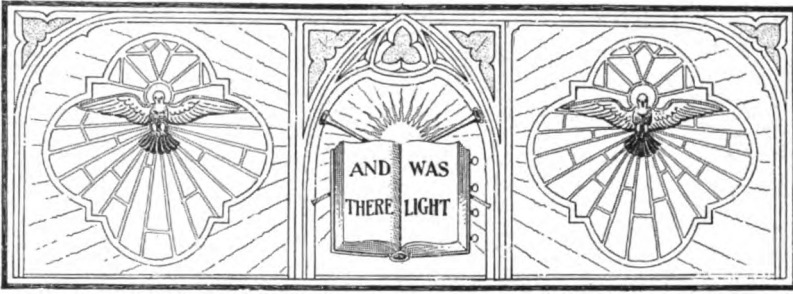


FROM A PRINT OF 1739.

"A PROSPECT OF THE COLLEGES AT CAMBRIDGE, IN NEW ENGLAND."

"1740. Wednesday, Sep. 24. Preached at Cambridge, the chief college of New England for training the sons of the prophets. It has one president, four tutors, and about a hundred students. . . . The president of the college and minister of the parish treated me very civilly. In the afternoon I preached again in the court."—*Whitefield's Journal*.

laid the foundations of a great evangelical Church. He had separated from the Moravians and rejected the doctrine of "stillness," which threatened for a time the usefulness of a noble missionary community. Whitefield planted no new Church in America, but his success in reviving old ones was perhaps unparalleled in the history of the Church of Christ.



## CHAPTER XLVII

### The Parting Currents of Methodism

A CONTROVERSIAL CALVINIST.—CENICK'S SECESSION.—A FAMOUS SERMON.—TWO SORTS OF METHODISTS.—THE RECONCILED EVANGELISTS.—WHITEFIELD'S FIRST TABERNACLES.

FROM the days of St. Augustine the subject of human free will and divine sovereignty has formed a great theological battle ground. In the time of Luther and Calvin it rent Protestantism in twain. Now we see it separating the leaders of the great Evangelical Revival and dividing Methodism into two camps.

We found Whitefield, during his second voyage to America, expressing his intention to give prominence to the doctrine of election. His association with the New England divines confirmed his Calvinism. He returned to England as a militant opponent of the doctrine of universal redemption as held by the Wesleys. He did not at first, as Thomas Jackson well says, receive the creed of Calvin as it has been softened by modern metaphysicians. He avowed the doctrine of limited redemption, and contended for an absolute decree of reprobation as well as for a decree of election. Yet in doing this his compassionate heart conflicted with his opinions. It

is easy to see that when traversing the regions of Calvinian reprobation he walked with

Uneasy steps  
Over the burning marle.

But the first division in the English societies did not arise directly from Whitefield's action. In June, 1740, Wesley



found predestination fiercely disputed in the society at Deptford. The account of his conversation with one hot disputant illustrates, as Canon Overton has observed, his wonderful forbearance, which was one of the secrets of his success, and the kind of material he had to deal with:

“ Mr. Acourt said, ‘What! do you refuse admitting a person into your society only because he differs from you in opinion?’

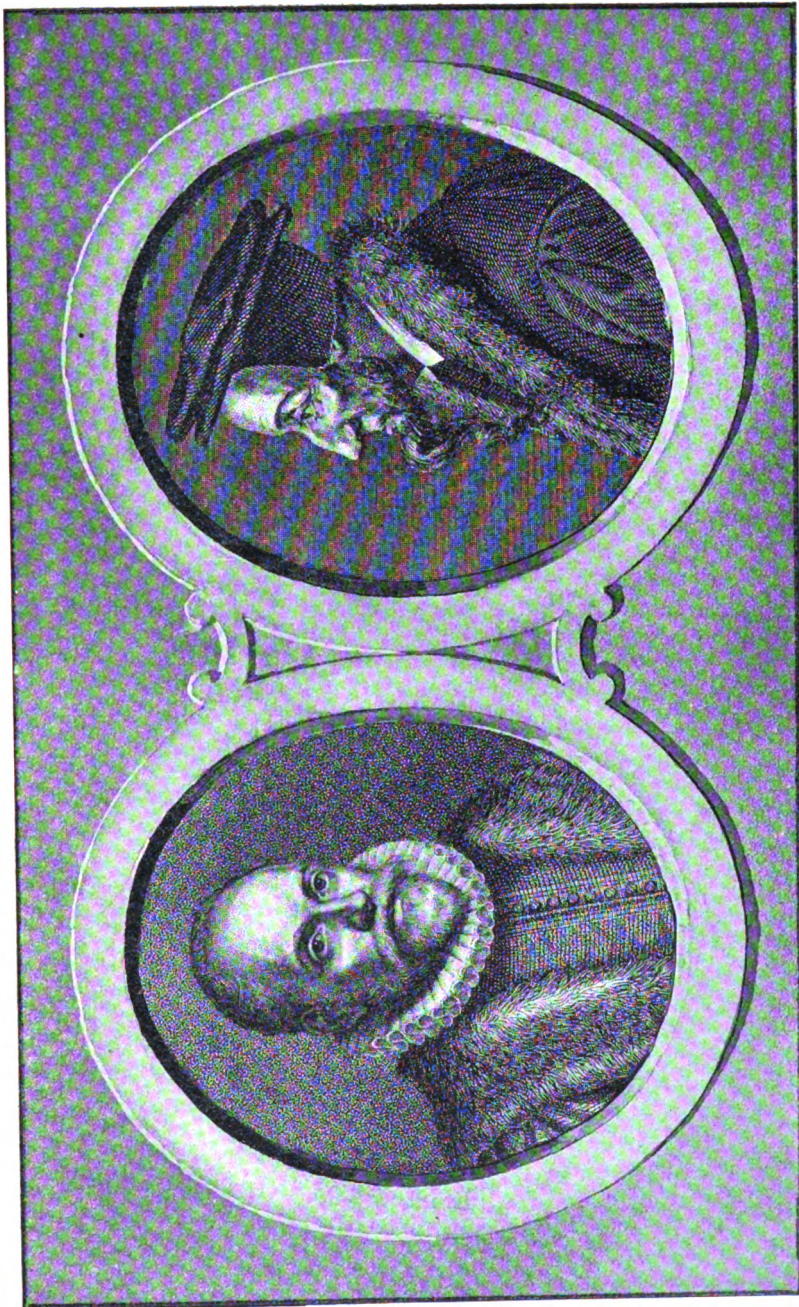
“ I answered, ‘No, but what opinion do you mean?’ He said, ‘That of election. I hold a certain number is elected from eternity, and those must and shall be saved, and the rest of mankind must and shall be damned. Many of your society hold the same.’

“ I replied, ‘I never asked whether they held it or no, only let them not trouble others by disputing about it.’

“ He said, ‘Nay, but I will dispute about it!’

“ ‘What! Wherever you come?’

“ ‘Yes, wherever I come.’



FROM COPPERPLATES.

ARMINIUS AND CALVIN.





“ ‘Why, then, would you come among us, who you know are of another mind?’

“ ‘Because you are all wrong, and I am resolved to set you all right.’

“ ‘I fear your coming with this view would neither profit you nor us.’

“ He concluded, ‘Then I will go and tell all the world that you and your brothers are false prophets, and I tell you, in one fortnight you will be all in confusion.’”

Soon after John Cennick, Wesley's schoolmaster at Kingswood and the leader of the society at Bristol, became a decided Calvinist, preached against the Wesleys in their own pulpit, and caused painful strife. Charles Wesley implored him to preserve entire silence on the controverted points, promising to do the same if he would consent. But Cennick would not accede to this. His opposition to the Wesleys became increasingly violent, and he wrote a letter to Whitefield in America urging him to return, and concluding: “Fly, dear brother. I am alone; I am in the midst of the plague. If God give thee leave, make haste.” Finally Cennick withdrew with fifty-two of the members, upward of ninety remaining with the Wesleys. From this time the Wesleyan and Calvinistic Methodists became two distinct bodies.

To Wesley's intensely practical mind the main reason for opposing the Calvinistic theories was what he considered to be their tendency to antinomianism. To check the progress of what he felt to be dangerous error he preached and published his famous sermon on Free Grace—the third sermon that he had published. His first published sermon was his parting address in Georgia on the Trouble and Rest of Good Men; the second was on Salvation by Faith, written soon

after he found the joy of faith. His sermon on Free Grace was the most trenchant and impassioned he ever published. Charles Wesley wrote a hymn of thirty-six verses, which was printed at the end. It expresses the poet's conviction as to human free will thus:

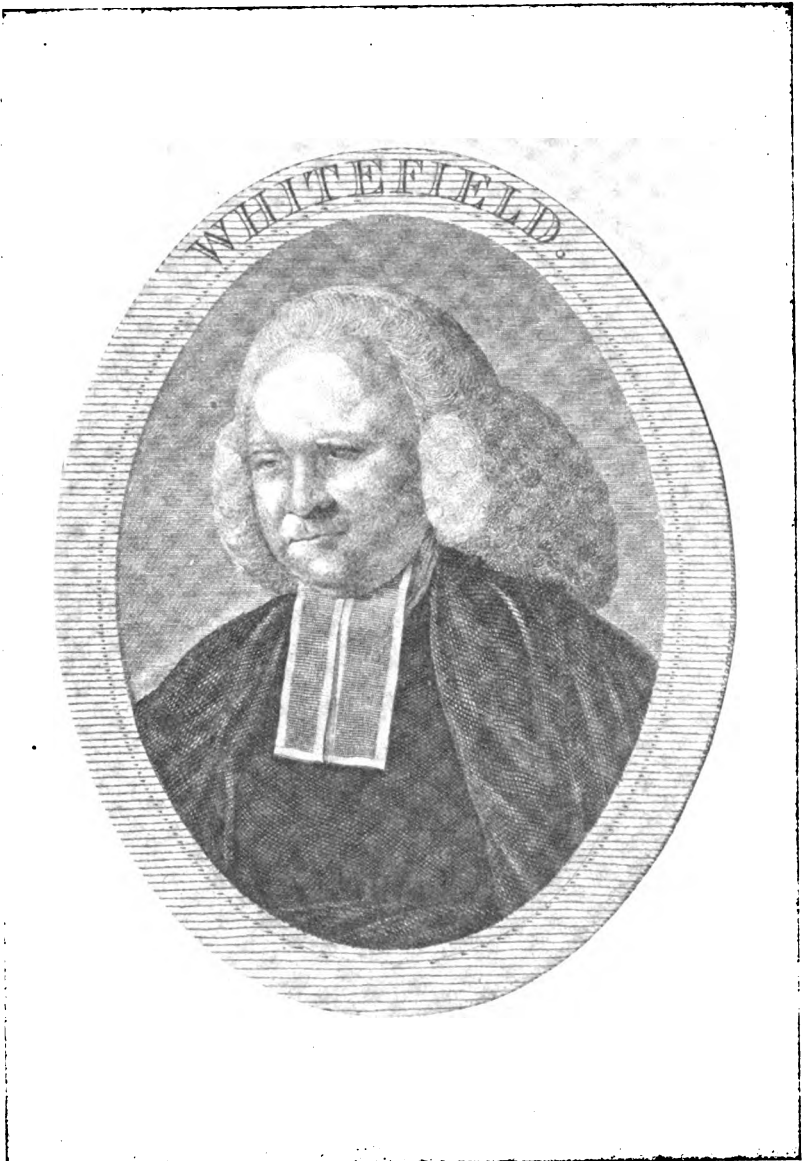
A power to choose, a will to obey,  
 Freely his grace restores;  
 We all may find the living way,  
 And call the Saviour ours.

Thou canst not mock the sons of men—  
 Invite us to draw nigh,  
 Offer thy grace to all, and then  
 Thy grace to most deny.

Copies of Wesley's sermon and the hymn reached America, and Whitefield, greatly disturbed, published a reply under the title of *A Letter to the Rev. John Wesley*. It contained extracts from private letters which had nothing to do with the point at issue, and revealed the unrivaled orator's lack of logical force. He identifies the doctrine of general redemption, as held by Wesley, with the tenets of those who deny redemption altogether. "Infidels of all kinds are on your side of the question; deists, Arians, Socinians, arraign God's sovereignty and stand up for universal redemption."

Overton condones Whitefield's personalities and lack of self-control on the ground that he felt himself overmatched. His opponent was too strong for him in ability and learning, no less than in self-control, and this very feeling furnishes a strong excuse for the unseemly language and conduct of Whitefield.

About six weeks before his arrival in England some one obtained a copy of an abusive private letter he had sent to Wesley in 1740 and circulated it at the doors of the Foundry.



FROM THE PAINTING BY RUSSELL.

AFTER THE COPPERPLATE BY TROTTER.

REV. GEORGE WHITEFIELD.



Wesley heard of this, and having procured a copy, tore it in pieces before the assembled congregation, declaring that he believed Whitefield would have done the same. In two minutes the whole congregation had followed his example and all the copies were torn to tatters.

When Whitefield reached England, in March, 1741, and preached at Kennington Common, he was greatly distressed to find that his letters to Wesley had alienated many of his friends. He writes sadly that he “had used some too strong expressions about absolute reprobation.” “Instead of having thousands to attend me scarce one of my spiritual children came to see me. At Kennington Common I had not above a hundred to hear me.” He did not refrain, however, from preaching against the Wesleys, by name, at Moorfields. His old friends, nevertheless, invited him to preach at the Foundry, but with Charles Wesley by his side he there proclaimed the absolute decrees in the most offensive manner, and it was evident, as Wesley says, that “there were now two sorts of Methodists—those for particular and those for general redemption.”

It is not necessary to enter into all the details of the painful but important controversy. It is far pleasanter to record that in course of time the personal breach between the evangelists was entirely healed, although both held fast their own opinions and the living stream of Methodism was divided into two currents. “One branch,” says Bishop McTyeire, “after refreshing and enriching a dry and thirsty land, is absorbed and lost; the other, with well-defined and widening banks and deepening current, flows on.”

Howell Harris, the warm-hearted Welshman, and Lady Huntingdon found Wesley ready to forgive Whitefield's impetuous personal abuse, and one of the noblest character-

istics of Whitefield was revealed in his willingness to confess his faults. He wrote to Wesley in October, 1741: "May God remove all obstacles that now prevent our union; may all disputings cease, and each of us talk of nothing but Jesus and him crucified. This is my resolution. I am without dissimulation. I find I love you as much as ever, and pray God, if it be his blessed will, that we may all be united together."

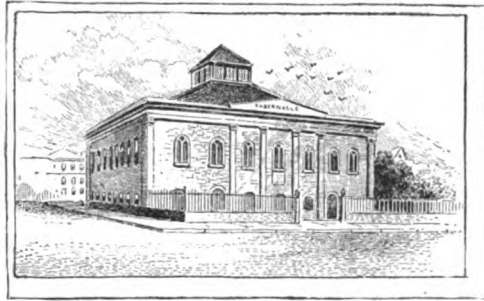
Later Wesley's pardon was asked for the unnecessary and offensive taunts of the widely circulated letter. In a pamphlet of some years later Whitefield made the following frank confession: "It was wrong in me to publish a private transaction to the world, and very ill-judged to think the glory of God could be promoted by unnecessarily exposing my friend. For this I have asked both God and him pardon years ago, and though I believe both have forgiven me, yet I believe I shall never be able to forgive myself; my mistakes have been too many and my blunders too frequent to make me set up for infallibility. But many and frequent as my mistakes have been, or may be, as I have no part to act—if I know anything of my heart—but to promote God's glory and the good of souls, as soon as I am made aware of them they shall be publicly acknowledged and retracted."

Whitefield soon regained his popularity. Evangelical Calvinists, mostly Dissenters, rallied round him and built his first tabernacle in Moorfields not far from the Foundry. It was only a large, rough wooden shed, but for twelve years it was Whitefield's metropolitan cathedral and was the scene of great spiritual victories. In 1753 it was superseded by the brick building, of which we have a print, and for more than a hundred years was used by Whitefield's successors. No traces of it now remain.

A few months later Whitefield sent Cennick a contribution

of £20, from a lady, toward a chapel at Kingswood, which still stands. Like Wesley, he began to employ lay evangelists. Howell Harris was soon preaching in the Moorfields tabernacle.

The first Methodist newspaper was published a month after Whitefield's arrival from America. The group of Calvinistic Methodists were the principal contributors. Its title was: *The Weekly History, or an account of the most remarkable particulars relating to the present progress of the Gospel.* London: Printed by I. Lewis. One penny.



DRAWN BY P. E. FLINTOFF.

WHITEFIELD'S TABERNACLE, MOORFIELDS.

The Wesleyan Methodists now became distinguished

from the followers of Whitefield as Arminians. The Arminian or, rather, Remonstrant Confession arose in Holland about the beginning of the seventeenth century as a protest against Calvinism. The principle of the Arminian type of doctrine was the universality of the benefit of the atonement and the restored freedom of the human will. The Wesleyan Methodists, however, rejected the teaching of the immediate successors of Arminius, who were tinged with Socinianism and rationalism, and Wesleyans, as Pope says, were Arminians as opposed to Calvinists, but in no other sense.





## CHAPTER XLVIII

### Whitefield's Great Field Days

"A PRESBYTER AT LARGE."—A LEVEE OF WOUNDED SOULS.—THE CHILDREN'S PREACHER.—A CHAGRINED HIGHWAYMAN.—MARVELS AT MOORFIELDS.—THE SPANISH INVASION OF GEORGIA.

"MY business seems to be to evangelize—to be a Presbyter at large." So wrote Whitefield to the Scotch reformer, Ebenezer Erskine, in 1741, when he was asked to join the Associate Presbytery. To Ralph Erskine he also said: "If I am neuter as to the particular reformation of Church government till I have further light, it will be enough. I come simply to preach the Gospel." This apathy expresses Whitefield's relation to the Scotch churches, among which we find him moving like a meteor. Ralph Erskine said of him, "He declares he can refuse no call to preach Christ, whoever gives it; were it a Jesuit priest or a Mohammedan, he would embrace it."

So, at the invitation of the Erskines, Whitefield evangelized Scotland, his truly catholic spirit bursting again and again the bonds of his Calvinistic creed. At Dunfermline "a portly, well-looking Quaker" took him by the hand, saying: "Friend George, I am as thou art. I am for bringing all to the life and power of the ever-living God; and therefore if thou wilt not quarrel with me about my hat, I will not quarrel with

thee about thy gown." Whitefield comments, "I wish all, of every denomination, were thus minded."

His characteristic and amusing indifference to ecclesiastical polity is illustrated by his account of his appearance before the Associate Presbytery. The grave and venerable men, with great solemnity, proposed to discourse and set him right about Church government and the Solemn League and Covenant. "I replied, they might save themselves that trouble, for I had no scruples about it, and that settling Church government and preaching about the League and Covenant was not my plan." Breaking away from the formal business, the fervent Methodist told them somewhat of his personal "experience." Some were deeply affected, others were impatient. Mr. Erskine desired they would "have patience with him, for that having been born and bred in England, and having never studied the point, he could not be supposed to be so perfectly acquainted with the nature of the Covenant."

One, much warmer than the rest, replied that no indulgence was to be shown to this erratic Englishman, in that England had revolted most with respect to Church government with which he ought to be acquainted. Whitefield assured them that he had been too busy about other matters, which he judged of more importance, to study the question. This was too much for the grave Presbytery, and several replied "that every pin of the tabernacle was precious!"

Finally they desired him to preach for them until he had "more light." He asked, "Why only for them?" Mr. Erskine said they were the Lord's people. Whitefield asked "if there were no other Lord's people but themselves, and supposing all others were the devil's people, they certainly had more need to be preached to, and therefore I was more and more determined to go out into the highways and hedges; and that if

the pope himself would lend me his pulpit, I would gladly proclaim the righteousness of Jesus Christ therein."

Declining to take sides with either of the Scotch parties, Whitefield preached in the kirks of some thirty towns and cities as well as in the open air. Great power clothed the word. In a letter from Edinburgh he mentioned "three hundred in the city seeking after Jesus," and wrote: "Every morning I have a levee of wounded souls. At seven in the morning we have a lecture in the fields, attended not only by the common people, but by persons of rank. I have reason to think several of the latter are coming to Jesus. Little children also are much wrought upon;" and later a friend wrote to him, "The little children of this city cannot forget you; their very hearts leap within them upon hearing your name." He tells James Habersham, his Orphan House superintendent in Georgia, that he has collected £200 and bought five hundred yards of cloth for "the dear orphans' winter wear." His establishment in Georgia was now flourishing. He secured the help of several Scotch noblemen and ladies, including Lord Rae and the Earl of Leven and Melville, who was his host and gave him a horse for his long journeys to London by way of Wales.

Two anecdotes of this tour in Scotland illustrate Whitefield's power to rivet attention and his impulsive generosity. A gentleman who had been to hear him in the Orphan House Park, Edinburgh, was met by his own pastor, a learned minister, as he returned. The indignant divine expressed his surprise that so intelligent a member of his flock should have gone to hear such a rambling preacher as Whitefield. "Sir," replied the admonished hearer, "When I hear you I am planting trees all the time, but during the whole of Mr. Whitefield's sermon I had no time to plant even one."

During one of his journeys Whitefield was told of a widow with a large family whose landlord was about to sell her furniture for rent. Whitefield immediately gave the five guineas, which the widow needed, from his own shallow purse. The friend who was riding with him remonstrated that the sum was more than he could afford. The two travelers before long encountered a highwayman, who with threats demanded their money, which they gave. Whitefield, of course, now suggested to his friend how much better it was for the poor widow to have the guineas than for the thief to have them. They had not long resumed their journey before the man returned and demanded Whitefield's coat, which was better than his own. This request was reluctantly granted, under protest. Presently they again saw the marauder galloping toward them most furiously, and now, fearing for their lives, they also spurred their horses and reached some houses before the highwayman could stop them. The thief was no doubt greatly chagrined, for when Whitefield took off the ragged coat he found in one of its pockets a carefully wrapped parcel containing one hundred guineas.

On his second visit to Scotland, in 1742, multitudes met him on the landing at Leith and followed his coach to Edinburgh. The churches would not contain the people, so the managers of Heriot's Hospital erected a shelter, with two thousand seats, in the hospital park. Remarkable scenes were witnessed at Cambuslang, where on one sacramental occasion more than twenty thousand persons were present at services lasting from early dawn to nightfall. The revival which had commenced at Kilsyth before Whitefield's arrival had prepared the way for a more marvelous work of grace. Methodism has never made great progress in Scotland as a Church organization, but as a

spiritual force it pervaded the old Churches and the whole public mind.

The story of Whitefield's "great field day" in London Moorfields, in 1742, records a triumph of the Gospel as remarkable as any in the annals of Christianity. He determined to invade Moorfields during the revels of the Whitsun holidays. Hogarth's contemporary picture of Southwark Fair



FROM THE CARTOON BY WM. HOGARTH.

#### SOUTHWARK FAIR.

Hogarth's contemporary picture of Southwark Fair.

gives a good idea of a similar scene. With a heart full of compassion for the multitude, and resolving "to get the start of the devil," Whitefield mounted his field-pulpit at six o'clock in the morning. Around him were booths for mountebanks, players, and puppet shows. Before him were ten thousand people, the rudest rabble of the city. But as he preached on

the text, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness," they gazed, they listened, they wept, and many were stung with conviction for sin. At noon he ventured out again. "The fields, the whole fields, seemed, in a bad sense of the word, all white, not for the Redeemer's but Beelzebub's harvest. All his agents were in full motion, drummers, trumpeters, merry-andrews," entertaining their auditories—not less than twenty or thirty thousand people.

The appearance of Whitefield in his black gown drew crowds away from the shows. Expecting that, like Paul, he should be "called to fight with beasts at Ephesus," he preached from the words, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." The craftsmen were aroused, and assailed him with stones, dirt, rotten eggs, and dead cats. "My soul was indeed among lions, but far the greater part of my congregation seemed to be turned into lambs," wrote the preacher.

At six o'clock he preached again. A trumpeter tried in vain to drown his clarion voice. A merry-andrew got upon a man's shoulders and, declaring that he had lost many pounds that day on account of the preaching, attempted many times to strike him with a long whip, but fell down in the attempt. Whitefield's tact in managing the crowd and ready humor stood him in good stead, for a recruiting sergeant with his drum attempted to pass through. "Make way for the king's officer," was Whitefield's word of command. The ranks opened while all marched quietly through, and then closed again. A large body on the opposite side of the field attempted an organized attack with a long pole for a standard. "I saw, gave warning, and prayed to the Captain of our salvation for deliverance. He heard and answered; for just as they approached us . . . they quarreled among themselves, threw down their staff and went their way," leaving many of their

company behind them. After three hours of praying, preaching, and singing, he says: "We retired to the tabernacle. My pocket was full of notes from persons under concern. I read them among the praises and spiritual acclamations of thousands, who joined with the holy angels in rejoicing that so many sinners were snatched, in such an unlikely place and manner, out of the very jaws of the devil."



PAINTED BY EYRE CHAMBERLAIN, A.R.A.

WHITEFIELD PREACHING IN MOORFIELDS.

This was the beginning of the Tabernacle Society. Three hundred and fifty awakened souls were received in one day. The number of notes exceeded a thousand.

The next day he preached in Marylebone Fields, a place almost as much frequented by boxers, gamesters, and such like as Moorfields. There he preached in great jeopardy, as the mob tried to overturn the pulpit. "But the Redeemer stayed my soul on himself, therefore I was not much moved, except with compassion for those to whom I was delivering

my Master's message." As he passed from his pulpit to the coach he felt his hat and wig almost off, and turning about, found a sword just touching his temples. A young man had attempted to stab him, but a gentleman had struck up the sword with his cane. But this caused a reaction in Whitefield's favor; the mob seized the man, and Whitefield's friends had to intervene to save the assailant from their violence.

Again we have evidence of Whitefield's power to charm children. "Several little boys and girls were fond of sitting round me on the pulpit, while I preached, and handing to me the people's notes. Though they were often struck with the eggs, dirt, etc., thrown at me, they never once gave way; but, on the contrary, every time I was struck turned up their weeping eyes and seemed to wish they could receive the blows for me." One of these children went home to sicken with fever, and was heard to cry, as death approached, "Let me go, let me go to Mr. Whitefield's God."

Whitefield records in his Journal his appearance in the House of Commons in 1741 on business connected with Georgia. The next year his Orphan House was in danger from Spanish invasion. The Spaniards, with forty sail of small galleys, had come into Cumberland Sound. With another fleet of thirty-six ships they entered Jekyl Sound. They landed four thousand five hundred men and marched through the woods to Frederica. Twenty-eight ships attacked Fort William. General Oglethorpe's military force was small, but proved victorious, and July 25, 1742, was appointed by the general "as a day of public thanksgiving to Almighty God for his great deliverance in having put an end to the Spanish invasion." Mr. Habersham had removed the eighty-five inmates of the Orphan House to South Carolina, but within six weeks they were safely back again at Bethesda.





## CHAPTER XLIX

### Among Colliers and Country Folk

THE METROPOLIS OF THE NORTH.—PREACHING FROM HIS FATHER'S TOMB.—"SINNER ENOUGH."—DENIED THE SACRAMENT.—RESULTS OF THE SERMON ON THE TOMB.

**M**ETHODISM was now taking root in England. Wesley had organized societies at Kingswood, Bristol, and the Foundry, in London. The "germ of Methodism"—the class meeting—was fully developed. Lay preaching was instituted. The greatest of the lay preachers, John Nelson, was at work at Birstall. Eleven hundred members formed the London society, and the time had come for the extension of Methodism among the growing industrial population of the North of England. In 1742 Wesley's itinerary took a wider sweep. During the year he spent about twenty-four weeks in London, fourteen in Bristol and its neighborhood, one in Wales, and thirteen in making two tours to Newcastle-on-Tyne; taking on his way Donnington Park (the residence of Lady Huntingdon), Birstall, Halifax, Dewsbury, Mirfield, Epworth, Sheffield, and other towns and villages adjoining these.

From the standpoint of national history Wesley's tour to the north was of vast moral importance. The spiritual force

of Methodism was brought to bear upon the masses in the manufacturing districts and upon the villagers of the typical rural county of Lincolnshire.

Newcastle-on-Tyne was the metropolis of the north. Standing on the boundary line of England and Scotland, it occupies a prominent place in the history of both countries. Its old castle links it with feudal times. On the banks of its



JOHN WESLEY AT THE SAND HILLS, NEWCASTLE.

river The Venerable Bede translated St. John's gospel into Saxon; the martyr-bishop Ridley passed from its grammar school to Cambridge; and John Knox thundered against priestcraft from the pulpit of its Cathedral of St. Nicholas. It is, in these later days, the birthplace of railways and locomotives and the very center of the coal trade, which even in Wesley's day was advancing by leaps and bounds. Between 1700 and 1750 the output of coal in England rose from 2,612,000 tons to 4,773,828 tons, and to 6,424,000 in the year of Charles Wesley's death.

To this busy town of shipyards, with its vessels laden for every land, John Wesley came with his evangel in 1742, and here, the year following, he built his famous orphanage. John Nelson had been preaching with great success in Yorkshire and had urged Wesley to visit the north. The Countess of Huntingdon had also urged upon him the needs of the neglected colliers on the Tyne, and a pressing letter from her, saying that Miss Fanny Cooper, his friend, who resided with her, was dangerously ill, hastened his journey. After spending three days in the Earl's mansion in Leicestershire he went to the mason's cottage at Birstall, equally at home in both dwellings. He found Nelson troubled by the teaching of Ingham, who had founded a number of flourishing Moravian brotherhoods, but had adopted the mystical errors which at that time were weakening the moral power of Moravianism. Wesley preached on the top of Birstall hill, conversed with Nelson's converts, and then proceeded with John Taylor to Newcastle. His own account of his visit is very graphic. He had never seen and heard before in so short a time so much drunkenness, cursing, and swearing—even from the mouths of little children. He writes:

At seven I walked down to Sandgate, the poorest and most contemptible part of the town, and, standing at the end of the street with John Taylor, began to sing the 100th psalm. Three or four people came out to see what was the matter; who soon increased to four or five hundred. I suppose there might be twelve or fifteen hundred before I had done preaching, to whom I applied those solemn words, "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and by his stripes we are healed."

Observing the people, when I had done, to stand gaping and staring upon me with the most profound astonishment, I told them: "If you desire to know who I am, my name is John Wesley. At five in the evening, with God's help, I design to preach here again."

At five the hill on which I designed to preach was covered from the top to the bottom. I never saw so large a number of people together, either in Moorfields or at Kennington Common. I knew it was not possible for the one half

to hear, although my voice was then strong and clear; and I stood so as to have them all in view, as they were ranged on the side of the hill. The word of God which I set before them was, "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely." After preaching, the poor people were ready to tread me under foot, out of pure love and kindness. It was some time before I could possibly get out of the press. I then went back another way than I came; but several were got to our inn before me, by whom I was vehemently importuned to stay with them, at least a few days, or, however, one day more. But I could not consent, having given my word to be at Birstall, with God's leave, on Tuesday night.

About two months later Charles Wesley took his brother's place, and Christopher Hopper, afterward a preacher, tells how he ran with the multitude to hear this man preaching at a public cross to the large crowd, "some gaping, some laughing, some weeping." When he had concluded some said, "He is a good man sent to reform our land;" others said, "Nay, he is come to pervert and deceive us, and we ought to stone him out of our coasts." This was in May; in November we find John Wesley there again.

It was during this tour, four months before his mother's death, that Wesley revisited his birthplace. He had not been at Epworth since he had consulted his mother about his voyage to Georgia, seven years before. He took lodgings at an inn in the middle of the town, wondering if there were any people left who would not be ashamed of his acquaintance; but an old servant of his father's and two or three other poor women found him out. When he asked if she knew any in the place who were in earnest to be saved, she answered, "I am, by the grace of God; and I know I am saved through faith." Many others, she told him, could rejoice with her. The curate was now Mr. Romley, who had been schoolmaster at Wroote, had been assisted by Wesley's father in preparing for Oxford, and had been his amanuensis and curate. On Sunday morning Wesley offered to assist Mr. Romley either

by preaching or reading the prayers, but the curate would have none of his help. In the afternoon Wesley took his seat in the church, which was crowded in consequence of a rumor that he would preach. Romley preached a florid and rhetorical sermon against "enthusiasm," with evident reference to Methodism.

But the people were not to be disappointed. As they came out John Taylor announced that Mr. Wesley, not being permitted to preach in the church, would preach in the churchyard at six o'clock. At that hour he stood on his father's tombstone and preached to the largest congregation ever seen in Epworth. "The scene was unique and inspiring: a living son preaching on a dead father's grave because the parish priest would not allow him to officiate in a dead father's church." "I am well assured," writes Wesley, "that I did far more good to my Lincolnshire parishioners by preaching three days on my father's tomb than I did by preaching three years in his pulpit."

He could not resist the appeal to remain a few days longer, and on eight evenings he preached from the tomb-pulpit. In the daytime he visited the surrounding villages. He waited on a justice of the peace, and writes of him as "a man of candor and understanding; before whom (I was informed) their angry neighbors had carried a whole wagonload of these heretics. But when he asked what they had done, there was a deep silence; for that was a point their conductors had forgot. At length one said, 'Why, they pretended to be better than other people; and, besides, they prayed from morning to night.' Mr. S. asked, 'But have they done nothing besides?' 'Yes, sir,' said an old man: 'an't please your worship, they have *converted* my wife. Till she went among them she had such a tongue! And now she is as quiet as a



DRAWN BY F. S. JONES.

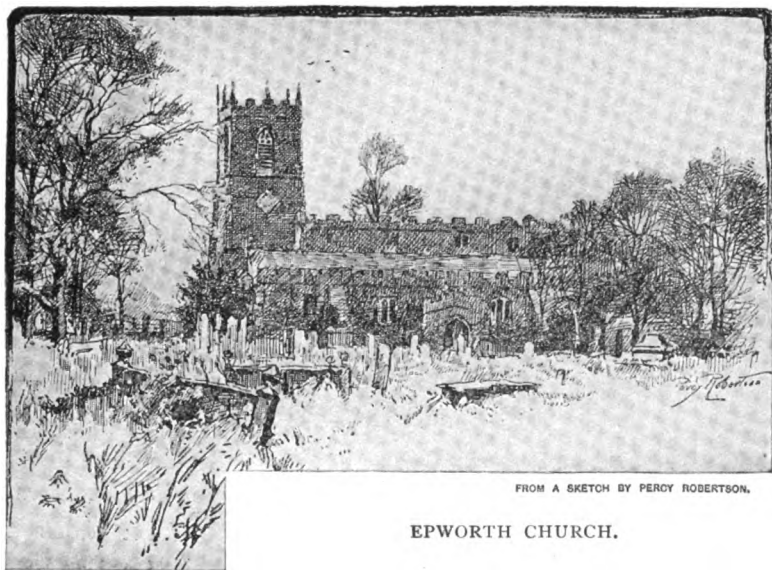
WESLEY PREACHING ON HIS FATHER'S TOMB.

FROM THE ENGRAVING IN THE LADIES' REPOSITORY.



lamb.' 'Carry them back, carry them back!' replied the justice, 'and let them convert all the scolds in the town.'

The churchyard services were attended with amazing power. On the Saturday evening Wesley's voice was drowned by the cries of penitents, and many then and there found rest for their souls. One gentleman who had not been at public worship for more than thirty years stood there as motionless as a statue. His chaise was outside the churchyard; his wife



FROM A SKETCH BY PERCY ROBERTSON.

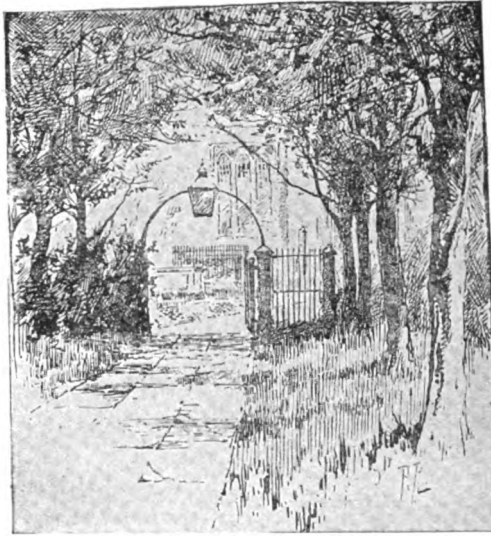
EPWORTH CHURCH.

and servants were with him. Wesley, seeing him stand thus, asked compassionately, "Sir, are you a sinner?" With a deep and broken voice he answered, "Sinner enough." He continued staring upward till his wife and servants, all in tears, put him in his carriage and carried him home. Ten years later Wesley says: "I called on the gentleman who told me he was 'sinner enough' when I preached first at Epworth on my father's tomb, and was agreeably surprised to



find him strong in faith, though exceeding weak in body. For some years, he told me, he had been rejoicing in God without either doubt or fear, and was now waiting for the welcome hour when he should 'depart and be with Christ.' "

Wesley visited Wroote, where John Whitelamb, his brother-in-law, was clergyman. The little church would not hold the people who flocked to hear their old friend who for two years



FROM A SKETCH BY PERCY ROBERTSON.

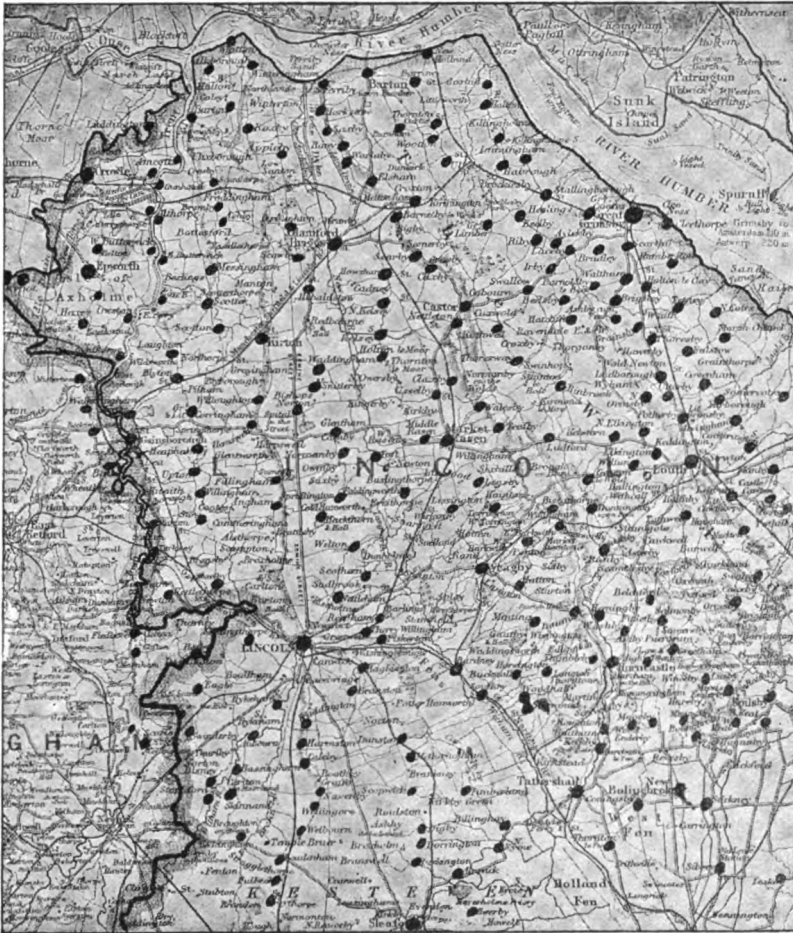
THE CHURCH WALK, EPWORTH.

had been their minister. Whitelamb wrote to Wesley, "Your presence creates an awe, as if you were an inhabitant of another world." His last service at Epworth lasted three hours, and "yet," says Wesley, "we scarce knew how to part. O let none think his labor of love is lost because the fruit does not immediately appear!

Near forty years did my father labor here; but he saw little fruit of all his labor. I took some pains among this people, too, and my strength almost seemed spent in vain; but now the fruit appeared. There were scarce any in the town on whom either my father or I had taken any pains formerly, but the seed sown long since now sprung up, bringing forth repentance and remission of sins."

The next year Wesley again visited Epworth, and, it being

the sacramental Sunday, some of the people went to Romley to ask his permission to communicate. The proud priest re-



METHODISM IN WESLEY'S COUNTY, A. D. 1900.

The heavy black dots represent the location of Wesleyan chapels at the present day.

plied, "Tell Mr. Wesley I shall not give *him* the sacrament; for he is not *fit*." Wesley's comment on this is written in pain mingled with irony: "There could not have been so fit

a place under heaven where this should befall me first as my father's house, the place of my nativity, and the very place where 'according to the straitest sect of our religion' I had so long 'lived a Pharisee.' It was also fit, in the highest degree, that he who repelled me from that very table where I had myself so often distributed the bread of life should be one who owed his all in this world to the tender love which my father had shown to his as well as personally to himself."

Methodism in Lincolnshire owes its organized churches to the service of Wesley in his father's churchyard. During the forty-eight years that followed Wesley made many visits to his native county, preaching in nearly all its towns and many of its villages. In 1761 he writes, "I find the work of God increases on every side, but particularly in Lincolnshire, where there has been no work like this since the time I preached on my father's tomb." His last visit to Epworth was paid just eight months before his death, when he preached in the market place to a large crowd on "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" At the centenary of his death, in 1891, the Wesleyan Methodist societies of his native county reported a membership of twenty thousand, or one twentieth of the entire membership of the societies in England and Wales; and this in a county the entire population of which is considerably under half a million. Our map of the neighborhood of Epworth shows how that portion of England is dotted with the churches which honor the name of one of Lincolnshire's greatest sons.



## CHAPTER L

### The Last Days of the Mother of Methodism

THE "RELEASE" OF SUSANNA WESLEY.—A QUEEN UNCROWNED AND SAINTLY.—SOME INTERESTING FAMILY LETTERS.—THE SORROWS OF THE WESLEY SISTERS.—A FRIEND OF DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

**S**USANNA WESLEY, "the mother of the Wesleys" and the "mother of Methodism," lived to see England awakening at the call of her devoted sons, and in the metropolis, the west, and the North of England she heard of multitudes quickened by the new life and enrolled in the new fellowship. The records of her closing days are brief. In the last letter she is known to have written she is rejoicing in the clear assurance which came to her so late in life: "He did by his Spirit apply the merits of the great atonement to my soul, by telling me that Christ died for me. . . . If I do want anything without which I cannot be saved (of which I am not at present sensible), then I believe I shall not die before that want is supplied."

Her son John was at Bristol when he heard that she was failing fast, and after preaching to a large congregation on Sunday evening, July 18, 1742, he rode off hurriedly to London. He reached the Foundry on the 20th, and wrote in his Journal, "I found my mother on the borders of eternity; but

she has no doubt or fear, nor any desire but, as soon as God should call her, to depart and be with Christ." Fifteen years before, she had told John that she did not wish her children to weep at her parting from them, but if they "were likely to reap any spiritual advantage" by being present at her departure, she would be glad to have them with her. Charles was absent from London, but her five daughters were present, as well as John.

On the following Friday they saw that her end was near. John read the solemn commendatory prayer, as he had done seven years before for his father. It was four o'clock when he left her side for a moment to "drink a dish of tea," being faint and weary with watching and emotion. "One called me again to her bedside," he says. "She opened her eyes wide and fixed them upward for a moment. Then the lids dropped and the soul was set at liberty without one struggle or groan or sigh. We stood around the bed and fulfilled her last request, uttered a little before she lost her speech, 'Children, as soon as I am released sing a psalm of praise to God!'"

She was buried in "the great Puritan necropolis," Bunhill Fields. A witness records: "At the grave there was much grief when Mr. Wesley said, 'I commit the body of my mother to the earth!'" Then a hymn was sung, and standing by the open grave Wesley preached to a vast congregation which he describes as "one of the most solemn assemblies I ever saw, or expect to see on this side eternity." His subject was "the great white throne" of the Book of the Revelation.

Pilgrims to Bunhill Fields to-day find Susanna Wesley's grave where the numbers 17 and 42 intersect on the outer wall, a few yards from the tomb of John Bunyan, who was



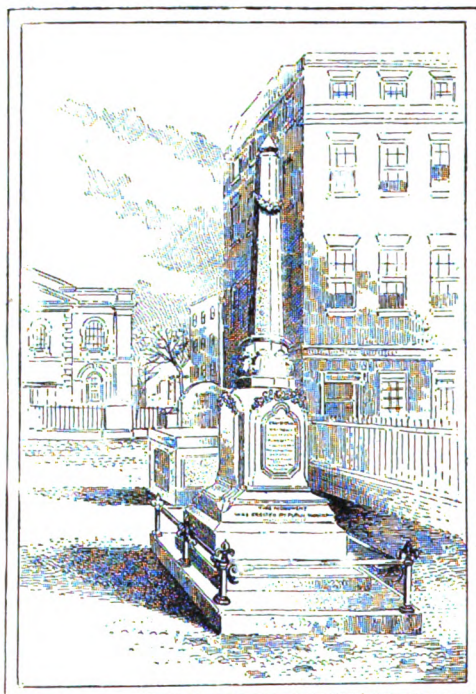
**SUSANNA ANNESLEY, BEFORE HER MARRIAGE TO REV. SAMUEL WESLEY.**

**Drawn by Warren B. Davis from a photograph of the original painting in the Wesleyan Book Room, London.**







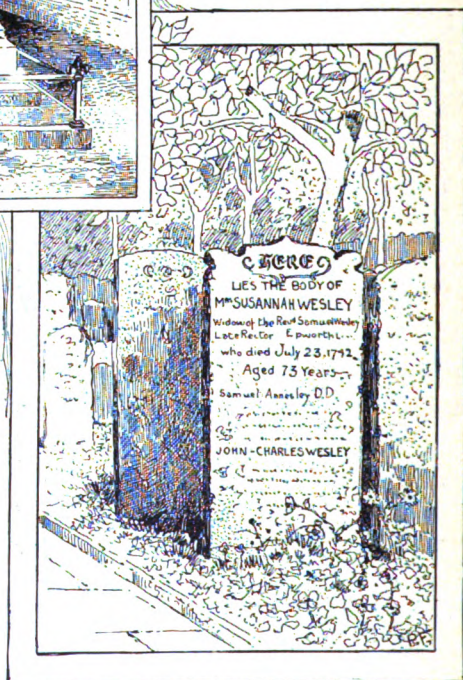


DRAWN BY P. E. FLINTOFF.

MONUMENT TO SUSANNA  
WESLEY, CITY ROAD,  
LONDON.

rate and unconsecrated 'conventicle.' The two ends of her earthly life separated by so wide an interval, in a certain sense embrace and kiss each other. Rocked in a Nonconformist cradle, she now sleeps in a Noncon-

and maintaining for many years a devout discipleship in the Established Church, which in theory she never renounces; in the last two years of her life she becomes a practical Nonconformist in attending the ministry and services of her sons in a sepa-



FROM PHOTOGRAPHS.

GRAVE OF SUSANNA WESLEY, BUNHILL  
FIELDS, LONDON.

formist grave. There—in close contiguity to the dust of Bunyan, the immortal dreamer; of Watts, one of the Church's sweetest psalmists; of her sister Dunton, and many of her father's associates; and directly opposite the spot where some of her children quietly rest in the sister cemetery round City Road Chapel—her mortal remains await the 'times of the restitution of all things.' ”

“We set up a plain stone at the head of her grave,” says her son John. The stone, defaced by time, was replaced by another in 1828, which records her age as seventy-three, and describes her as “the youngest daughter of the Rev. Samuel Annesley, D.D., ejected by the Act of Uniformity from the rectory of St. Giles,” and “the mother of nineteen children, of whom the most eminent were the Rev. John and Charles Wesley, the former of whom was, under God, the founder of the societies of the people called Methodists.” These lines are appended:

In sure and steadfast hope to rise,  
And claim her mansion in the skies,  
A Christian here her flesh laid down,  
The cross exchanging for a crown.

Three tributes to the memory of Susanna Wesley are worth recording here—one by the philosophic critic of Methodism, Isaac Taylor; another by the Methodist scholar, Adam Clarke; the last by the Methodist orator, Morley Punshon. The first, himself the son of a mother who, with her husband's assistance, educated successfully the whole of her very large family, writes: “The Wesleys' mother was the mother of Methodism in a religious and moral sense; for her courage, her submissiveness to authority, the high tone of her mind, its independence and its self-control, the warmth of her devotional feelings and the practical direction given to them, came up

and were visibly repeated in the character and conduct of her sons." Dr. Adam Clarke wrote: "I have been acquainted with many pious females; I have read the lives of others;



FROM A STEEL ENGRAVING.

SUSANNA WESLEY.

but such a woman, take her for all in all, I have not heard of, I have not read of, nor with her equal have I been acquainted. Such an one Solomon has described at the end of his Proverbs, and adapting his words, I can say, 'Many daughters have done

virtuously, but Susanna Wesley has excelled them all.’ ” And Dr. Punshon in one of his lectures was wont to say of her: “Of rare classic beauty, dignified and graceful, as became her noble blood, one of those firm but gentle natures which, like sunbeams, shine without an effort, and leave us genial like themselves; with a far-seeing sagacity and with excellent common sense—a pattern of all womanly virtues, a lightener of all manly cares; ruling her household with a quiet power, yet alive to the accomplishments of society and ready to pass her verdict upon books and men; faithful in the common things of life, withal an heiress of the heavenly and holding daily converse with the place where she had hid her treasure, she moved on in her course—a queen uncrowned and saintly.”

She was a close student and admirer of George Herbert, whose lines she often quoted:

Not—thankful, when it pleaseth me;  
 As if Thy blessings had spare days:  
 But such a heart whose pulse may be  
 Thy praise.

A choice devotional manual might be compiled from her written meditations, of which the following is a fragment: “If to esteem and have the highest reverence for Thee; if constantly and sincerely to acknowledge thee the supreme, the only desirable good, be to love thee—I do love thee! If to rejoice in thy essential majesty and glory; if to feel a vital joy overspread and cheer the heart at each perception of thy blessedness, at every thought that thou art God, and that all things are in thy power; that there is none superior or equal to thee, be to love thee—I do love thee! If comparatively to despise and undervalue all the world contains which is esteemed great, fair, and good; if earnestly

and constantly to desire thee, thy favor, thy acceptance, thyself, rather than any or all things thou hast created, be to love thee—I do love thee!”

We have already given one of Susanna Wesley's letters in facsimile, and two of her early portraits. One engraving,



MRS. SUSANNA WESLEY.

The authentic portrait of Susanna Wesley in advanced age; engraved under John Wesley's direction and distributed to the members of the band at the Foundry after her death.

often given as that of Mrs. Wesley, is really that of Lady Rodd, who married a relative of Mrs. Charles Wesley, of the Gwynne family. The portrait here reproduced of her in old age was the one which John Wesley had engraved and presented to the members of the band at the Foundry after the death of his mother.

We have referred to the warm affection of the Wesley brothers

for their sisters, five of whom, all married, were present when their mother died. Of these, Emilia (Mrs. Harper) was the eldest. Her love for her mother was strong as death, and she was devoted to John. Though much younger than herself, she made him her most intimate companion, her

counselor in difficulties, to whom her heart lay open at all times. But when, as we have seen, in his High Church days, he assumed the province of a father confessor, she wrote him a startling reply, which must have stung the young ecclesiastic to the quick. After some unhappy love affair she married an apothecary of Epworth, a poor, shiftless man, whom she had, at times, to keep, as well as herself, by teaching. Her life was very troubled. She became a Methodist, and

I can but smile at Mr Halls affairs, who left England with his Lady to avoid his Lawfull Wife, & now are very likely to fall into the hands of the French, truly they have needed the matter finely, but they cannot escape the Hands of God whatever they may think. I shall say nothing to your Friends marriage if you come to town other people will, there never comes here me now, but I shall bear it with patience, farewell dear Sister & Friend I hope to see you at London shortly  
I am your affectionate Sister Emilia Harper

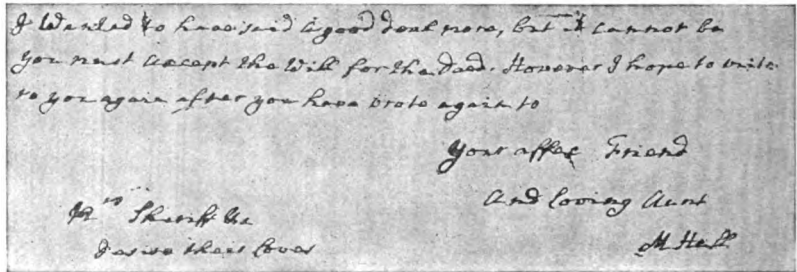
FACSIMILE OF A PORTION OF A LETTER OF EMILIA WESLEY  
(MRS. HARPER).

helped her brother in his work in the London societies. She was a widow for many years, and lived in the house next West Street Chapel. By opening the window of her room behind the pulpit she could hear the service. Here she died, in her eightieth year. She was a thorough Wesley; sharp-witted, refined, independent, with a good taste for music and poetry. Her brother John pronounced her the best reader of Milton he had ever heard.

Susanna (Sukey), like her sister Emilia, was born at South Ormsby, and her lot was even more troubled. "Beautiful, vivacious, accomplished," she had married a wretched profligate

gate, Ellison. Her husband, however, in his later years associated with the Methodists at the Foundry, became thoroughly reformed, and ended his days in peace. Her sister Mehetabel (Hetty), Mrs. Wright, had also married a husband altogether unworthy of her—an ignorant, illiterate, and degraded plumber. After a living martyrdom of some twenty years she died, in 1750, leaving not a few beautiful verses behind her, for she shared in no ordinary degree the family poetic faculty. Anne (Mrs. Lambert) was forty years of age when her mother died, and was present with her husband, a land surveyor, at the funeral. Her lot was happier than that of her elder sisters. She wrote to Charles Wesley an account of her mother's death.

Martha (Mrs. Hall) is best known as a friend of Dr. Samuel Johnson. Dr. Adam Clarke says that she so closely resembled her brother John in appearance that no one would have known which was which if they had only been dressed alike. Her handwriting, as will be seen from the facsimile



FACSIMILE OF A PORTION OF A LETTER OF MARTHA WESLEY  
(MRS. HALL).

letter, was much like his. She married a weak and, as it proved, immoral clergyman named Hall. "He possessed," says Eliza Clarke, "all the qualifications necessary for a

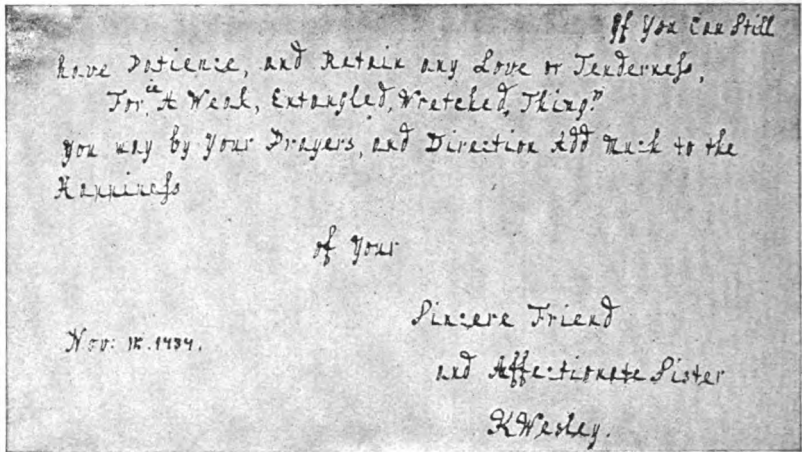
Mormon elder, and had he lived in these days, would probably have joined that body." Mrs. Hall does not appear to have told her relatives of her husband's infidelities until she had been outraged by them for many years. When he returned in broken health from the West Indies she nursed him till his death, in 1776. During his last hours he exclaimed, "I have injured an angel, an angel that never reproached me."

Boswell gives interesting glimpses of Mrs. Hall as the friend of Dr. Johnson, who enjoyed her lively conversation. She introduced her brother John to the famous literary man in 1784. It was Mrs. Hall who drew from Johnson his dictum on the "resurrection body:" "Nay, madam, we see that it is not to be the same body, for the Scripture uses the illustration of grain sown. You cannot suppose that we shall rise with a diseased body; it is enough if there be such a sameness as to distinguish identity of person." The doctor told the story of hearing his mother's voice calling him when at Oxford. She seemed desirous of knowing more, but he left the question in obscurity. Mrs. Hall survived her brother John about four months and was buried in his grave at City Road. On her tomb her leading characteristic is aptly expressed, "She opened her mouth with wisdom, and in her tongue was the law of kindness."

Kezia Wesley died sixteen months before her mother. We reproduce a fragment in her neat handwriting. It is supposed that she never survived the shock of finding that Hall, who afterward married her sister Martha, had played with her affections. "Hearts count for something in women's lives, and an unhappy attachment often produces a want of physical rallying power, especially in one who has no very strong ties to life."



She was the youngest child of the Epworth rectory; the next in order of birth to Charles Wesley, who records her death in his diary: "March 10th, 1741.—Yesterday morning



AUTOGRAPH OF KEZIA WESLEY.

Facsimile of concluding sentences of a letter from Kezia to her brother John Wesley.

Sister Kezzy died in the Lord Jesus. He finished his work and cut it short in mercy. Full of thankfulness, resignation, and love, without pain or trouble, she commended her spirit into the hands of Jesus and fell asleep."



## CHAPTER LI

### A Stalwart Evangelist

JOHN NELSON, THE MASON.—A RIDDLE TO HIMSELF.—WESLEY'S POINTED PREACHING.—STURDY METHODIST MORALITY.—THE KING'S WORK AND SPEAKER'S CONFESSION.

A RECENT writer in the *Contemporary Review*, who proclaims himself a “Churchman to the finger tips,” in the course of a bitter attack on modern Methodism says: “To those, however, to whom the passion and the fire of unselfish love will always be precious, under whatever circumstances they may happen to be exhibited, these old Methodist saints and martyrs are heroes of the highest type. Nearer than any Englishman had ever done before, they fulfilled the idea that the New Testament conveys of the Petrine and Pauline Church.” Robert Southey, although he had scanty appreciation for the more spiritual aspects of Methodism, was also compelled to admire one of the greatest of these early Methodist confessors, and said that John Nelson, the mason, “had as high a spirit and as brave a heart as ever Englishman was blessed with.” It ought to be remembered that this was said by the biographer of another English Nelson, a hero of a very different type.

John Nelson's *Journal* is worthy to rank with John Bunyan's *Grace Abounding* as an artless record of spiritual ex-

perience, written in clear, strong, Saxon style, ringing with truth and sincerity. It probably mirrors his preaching: plain, straightforward, glowing; strong in Scripture, pungent in expression, full of common sense and ready wit. It



FROM THE ARMINIAN MAGAZINE, 1792.

JOHN NELSON.

reflects a more joyous type of faith than Bunyan's; it lacks the instinctive literary skill which shaped his allegories; but Nelson also was a dreamer of dreams well worth telling.

We have a sketch of the thatched cottage with latticed windows, in the Yorkshire village of Birstall, where Nelson was born, in 1707. He tells us that one Sunday night, when he was about nine years old, he sat on the floor by the side

of his father's chair when he was reading of "the great white throne." The boy fell on the floor and wept. His eyes were shut, but he saw the dead, small and great, stand before God. "I thought neither the Lord nor the apostles said anything, but every soul as he came up to the bar compared his conscience with the book, and went away to his own place." He never forgot this vision, and the excitements of the bull ring and the cockpit did not banish "the hell from his own mind" when he was alone. He made many resolutions, but when temptations came they "were as a thread of tow that had touched the fire." He became powerful in build and famous as a boxer. He followed one prize fighter, who had mocked him, for three miles, to Morley, and thrashed him soundly. This is worth noting, for in after years he held an heroic doctrine of nonresistance, and as an evangelist refrained from using his sinews of steel in self-defense, except on very rare occasions. His father died in peace, and his last words haunted John, who longed for a rest he knew not how to find. He married a village maiden, fair-faced and true-hearted, who consented to his wandering in search of work. In London his fellow-workmen cursed him because he would not drink, but when they began to take his tools from him he knocked them down one after the other; "then," says he, "they left me alone!"

"Surely God never made man to be such a riddle to himself, and to leave him so," he writes. In all his troubles he had none to open his mind to, so he wandered up and down the fields. "What ails me?" said he. "Have I not good health, a loving wife, clothes, silver and gold as much as I need? Yet here have I lived thirty years, and I would rather be hanged than live thirty more like them!" He went to churches and the meetinghouses of Romanists, Quakers,

Dissenters of all sorts, and had tried all but the Jews—a type of many sad souls in his day.

In the spring Whitefield came to Moorfields, and Nelson heard him. “He was to me as a man who could play well upon an instrument, for his preaching was pleasant to me, and I loved the man; so that if any offered to disturb him, I was ready to fight for him.” But he did not understand him,



DRAWN BY P. E. FLINTOFF.

JOHN NELSON'S BIRTHPLACE

At Birstall, Yorkshire.

though his message brought a dim hope of mercy. “I was like a wandering bird cast out of the nest, till Mr. John Wesley came to preach his first sermon in Moorfields. O that was a blessed morning to my soul! As soon as he got upon the stand he stroked back his hair and

turned his face toward where I stood, and, I thought, fixed his eyes upon me. His countenance struck such an awful dread upon me, before I heard him speak, that it made my heart beat like the pendulum of a clock, and when he did speak I thought his whole discourse was aimed at me. When he had done I said, ‘This man can tell the secrets of my heart; he hath not left me there, for he hath showed the remedy, even the blood of Jesus.’”

Southey has observed this as a peculiar characteristic of Wesley's preaching—that in driving home his exhortations he spoke as if he were addressing himself to an individual;

the hearers felt singled out, and the preacher's words were then like the eyes of a portrait, which seem to look at every beholder. “ Who art thou,” said Wesley, “ that now seest and feelest both thine inward and outward ungodliness? Thou art the man! I want thee for my Lord; I challenge thee for a child of God by faith. The Lord hath need of thee. Thou, who feelest thou art just fit for hell, art just fit to advance his glory—the glory of his free grace justifying the ungodly and him that worketh not. O come quickly! Believe in the Lord Jesus; and thou, even thou, art reconciled to God! ”

By such an appeal the after course of Nelson's life was determined. A string vibrated now that Whitefield had failed to touch. Nelson saw the “ remedy, even the blood of Jesus.” But it was three months before he felt his heart, “ hard as a rock,” melted by the clear vision of God's love. One day at noon, refusing food, he betook himself to his room, shut the door, and fell upon his knees, crying, “ Lord, save, or I perish!” And as he knelt, feeling himself a criminal before the Judge, and cried, “ Lord, thy will be done; damn or save ”—“ that moment,” he says, “ Jesus Christ was as evidently set before the eye of my mind, as crucified for my sins, as if I had seen him with my bodily eyes; and in that instant my heart was set at liberty from guilty and tormenting fear, and filled with a calm and serene peace.”

And then there followed the awakened charity which was the very life of the new philanthropy of Methodism. We see it in the conversion of the Wesleys, we see it again in the experience of this stalwart mason: “ My heart was filled with love to God and every soul of man; to my wife and children, my mother, brethren, and my sisters; my greatest

enemies had an interest in my prayers, and I cried, 'Let them experience thy redeeming love!'

The good people with whom he lodged were alarmed by the "praying and fuss" he made about religion, and gave him notice to quit, but when the hour came the man said to his wife, "Suppose John should be right and we wrong, it will be a sad thing to turn him out of doors." So he remained, and soon after the man and his wife heard Wesley and became partakers of the same grace.

Nelson at this time was working at repairs in the Courts of Exchequer, Westminster, and his master told him one Saturday that it would be necessary to work on Sunday to complete the king's work in haste. When Nelson refused he was told, "Religion has made you a rebel against the king." "No, sir," he replied, "it has made me a better subject than ever I was. The greatest enemies the king has are the Sabbath-breakers, swearers, drunkards, and whoremongers, for these pull down God's judgments both upon king and country." He was told he would lose his work if he would not obey orders. "I will not willfully offend God," said he, "for I had much rather want bread. It were better to beg bread barefoot to heaven than ride in a coach to hell." The foreman swore that if he went on, he would soon be as mad as Whitefield. "What hast thou done that thou needest make so much ado about salvation? I always took thee to be as honest a man as any I have in the work, and could have trusted thee with £500. Wesley has made a fool of thee, and thou wilt beggar thy family."

After a "glorious Sabbath" the mason went to remove his tools, not expecting to work there any more. But the foreman now gave him good words and bade him set the men to work. No more was said about Sabbath work, and

Nelson writes, "I see it is good to obey God, and cast our care upon him who will order all things well." He found the dragon ready to devour his newborn soul, and was convinced that the Lord "never undertook to save one more like the devil in nature" than he was, but it was also impressed upon his mind that if he held out to the end, he should have reason "to sing louder in the Redeemer's praise than any other soul in heaven."

While Nelson was working at Guildford the controversies with the Moravians and Calvinists began to disturb the societies, and the mason returned to find himself attacked in turn by both parties. His knowledge of Scripture and sturdy common sense stood him in good stead against mysticism and fatalism. He told the disputants who troubled him: "You have been gadding about seeking for new opinions; you are gone out of the highway of holiness and have got into the devil's pincfold, you are . . . resting in opinions that give you liberty to live after the flesh, and if you continue so to live, you are safe in his hold, out of which you will be brought to the slaughter." They told him he "was as stupid as Mr. Wesley," and left him in his "blind estate." He worked zealously among his comrades, and even hired one man to hear Wesley preach! The man afterward assured Nelson that it was the best thing both for him and his wife that ever man did for them.

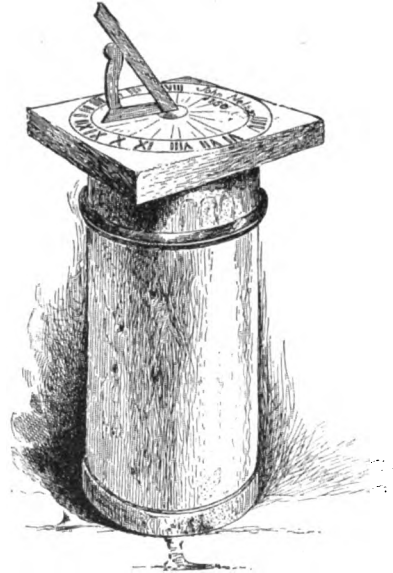
One winter day Nelson seized a long-desired opportunity to speak with Wesley. He found him at communion at St. Paul's Cathedral, and contrived to walk with him after sacrament. And so we see the slight figure of the great evangelist and the stalwart form of the mason as they walk together all the way to Upper Moorfields in earnest converse. When they parted Wesley took Nelson's hand, and, looking him full in



the face with his penetrating glance, bade him take care he did not quench the Holy Spirit.

Ten days before Christmas he kneels again at the same communion table, and it is impressed upon his mind that he must return to Birstall.

“But I had no more thought of preaching than I had of eating fire.”



SUNDIAL IN THE BIRSTALL CHURCH-  
YARD, NELSON'S HANDIWORK.

At Birstall many came to his cottage to dispute with him, but none were allowed to leave without prayer. Soon eight persons, including his wife, were witnessing to God's mercy, and enemies began to report that John Nelson “had forgiven such and such an one their sins.” This strange talk brought many more to his house. He was greatly troubled by Moravian disputants, including

Ingham, but he found that good Peter Böhler, who paid him a visit, had not fallen into the mystical follies of the London brethren.

One day he stole off to the fields, fell on his face in the meadow grass, and prayed to be taught the will of God. When he returned home he found many people waiting for him. The question of preaching was settled forever. “If it be my Master's will, I am ready to go to hell and preach to the devils!” was his decision. Of some of his adventures as a preacher our next chapter must tell.



## CHAPTER LII

### Out of the Dungeon and the Jaws of Death

WESLEY AND NELSON IN CORNWALL.—“NOW, NELSON, WHERE IS THY GOD?”—THREE MONTHS IN THE ARMY.—NARROW ESCAPES FROM MARTYRDOM.

**G**REAT was the joy of Nelson when John Wesley came to Birstall after his visit to Lady Huntingdon. He sat in the very place and spoke the very words of which the mason had dreamed some months before. Wesley preached on Birstall hill, and talked to the converts won by Nelson, speaking with power on the need of maintaining good works and of avoiding “stillness.” He then went on to Newcastle, as we have seen, and, under Nelson, Birstall became a great center of missionary zeal, from which Cheshire, Derbyshire, Lancashire, Lincolnshire, as well as Yorkshire, were visited. Charles Wesley also came to Nelson’s help, and “the Lord was with him in such a manner that the pillars of hell seemed to tremble,” and scores joined the society.

Nelson’s most bitter and violent opponents were the clergy. At Monyash, in Derbyshire, the clergyman, with many miners, “all being in liquor,” came in when the hymn was given out. The clergyman began to halloo and shout as if he were hunting with a pack of hounds, and when Nelson began to

pray tried to overturn the chair on which he stood, and, failing to dislodge the stalwart preacher, kicked and broke the chair. He then seized Nelson by the collar, tore his coat cuffs, and took him by the throat. "Sir," said the mason, "you and I must shortly appear at the bar of God to give an account of this night's work."

At Grimsby, Nelson says: "The congregation was so large that I was obliged to stand upon a table at Brother Blow's back door, for several days together. As I was preaching the minister and three men came to play at quoits as near the people as they could get, but with all their playing and shouting they could not draw anyone from hearing." Then the parson called the people together with a drum and gave them drink to fight against the Methodists. At Epworth the drunken curate and clerk tried in vain to carry Nelson to an alehouse and have him punished for field-preaching. But Nelson's bitterest clerical persecutor was the Vicar of Birstall, who sought a chance of fastening on his parishioner a charge of "vagrancy."

Wesley called him to London. His wife told him that he had no clothes fit to go in. "I have worn them out in the Lord's service," said he, "and he will not let me want long." Two days after a tradesman, who was not a Methodist, brought him a piece of blue cloth for a coat, and black cloth for waistcoat and breeches. A neighbor who was going to London allowed him to ride his horse sometimes, while he walked himself, and in this way he reached the city. He then went on to join Wesley, who was at Bristol on his way to Cornwall. Passing through Oxford he heard collegians swearing worse than he ever heard soldier or sailor do, and when he spoke to them one cursed him, and another said, "These chaps belong to poor Wesley." He preached at



DRAWN BY P. E. FLINTOFF.

AFTER PRINTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS.

**MEMORIALS OF JOHN NELSON.**

Entrance to his jail, Bradford, Yorks.  
 His preaching-chair, made by himself.  
 Bust in Birstall chapel.

Nelson's study, Birstall.  
 Old Wesleyan Chapel, Birstall, which Nelson  
 helped to build.  
 Nelson's grave.



Oxford; collegians stormed, "but the Lord put his hook in their jaws and kept them from doing harm to the people."

John Downes was now his companion, and as they had only one horse, they rode by turns. At Bodmin they were joined by Wesley. At St. Ives Nelson worked at his trade for several days and preached as often as he could. Poor Downes was ill of fever at St. Ives, and could not preach at all. It was a rough life; but Nelson was a strong man and Wesley was tough. For three weeks he and Wesley slept on the floor every night. Wesley had "my greatcoat for his pillow, and I," says Nelson, "had Burkitt's Notes on the New Testament for mine. One morning, about three o'clock, Mr. Wesley turned over and, finding me awake, clapped me on the side, saying, 'Brother Nelson, let us be of good cheer; I have one whole side yet, for the skin is off but one side.'" After one service Wesley stopped his horse to pick blackberries, saying to his comrade: "Brother Nelson, we ought to be thankful that there are plenty of blackberries; for this is the best country I ever saw for getting a stomach, but the worst I ever saw for getting food. Do the people think we can live by preaching?" Nelson replied that at St. Just some one gave him barley bread and honey. Wesley told him he was well off, for he had intended to ask for a crust of bread at Morva, but forgot it till he was too far from the house.

He returned home to support his family by hewing stone, preaching after his work. He was told that the clergyman and alehouse keepers were resolved to get him pressed for a soldier, and he felt that trouble was at hand, but he comforted himself with the mighty promises of Isaiah. The vicar was now a commissioner, with authority to seize on disorderly persons and make them serve in the army; for this

was 1744, and Britain was threatened with invasion by Charles Edward Stuart—who actually came the next year. One alehouse keeper swore, “I will press John Nelson for a soldier if my arm rots from my shoulder.’

So it came to pass that at Adwalton, when he was preaching, the constable and publican arrested him, at the order, they told him, “of some people in the town who don’t like so much preaching.” Brought before the commissioners, he found “there was neither law nor justice for a man that was called a Methodist.” Bail for £500 was refused, written testimonials from many who respected the honest mason were rejected. The magistrate laughed at him, and swore at him for preaching. “Sir,” said he, “I have surely as much right to preach as you have to swear!”

On the way to Bradford jail many prayed for him, and wept to see him “in the hands of unrighteous and cruel men,” but he said: “Fear not; God hath his way in the whirlwind, and he will plead my cause. Only pray for me that my faith fail not.”

He was thrust, by special order, into the dungeon in Ivegate, a loathsome cellar, into which the blood and filth ran from the shambles down to the foul straw upon the floor. One man who came to see him, though he was an enemy to the Methodists, when he smelt the ill savor of the place, said, “Humanity moves me.” He went away to offer bail, or even take his place, but all in vain. The prisoner must have starved had not friends brought him food. One poor wretch who was with him said: “Pray you, sir, are all these your kinsfolk, that they love you so well? I think they are the most loving people that ever I saw in my life.”

He was taken to Leeds. His ready wit was manifest when “a jolly, well-dressed woman” put her face close to his and

said: "Now, Nelson, where is thy God? Thou saidst at Shent's door, as thou wast preaching, thou wast no more afraid of his promise failing than thou wast of dropping through the heart of the earth." Nelson replied: "Look in the seventh chapter of Micah, and the eighth and tenth verses." ("Rejoice not against me, O my enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me." "Then she that is mine enemy shall see it, and shame shall cover her that said unto me, Where is the Lord thy God?")

His noble wife came to strengthen him with words of hope, "Be not concerned about me and the children, for he that feeds the young ravens will be mindful of us."

At York he rebuked the officers for their blasphemous language, and reasoned with them about a future state. He refused to take the enlistment money, and was sent handcuffed to prison again. After twenty-four hours of his fearless rebukes, when he looked swearers full in the face they were silenced, and oaths ceased in his presence. He refused to bear arms, on the same ground as the Quakers did, but when he was girded by force said, "As you put them on me, I will bear them as a cross." He persisted in preaching, in spite of threats of a flogging, wherever he marched and wherever he was billeted. He was sorely tempted to resent the insults of one ribald officer, knowing that he "was able to tie his head and heels together. I found an old man's bone in me; but the Lord lifted up a standard, when anger was coming in like a flood, else I should have wrung his neck to the ground and set my foot upon him; which would have brought a reproach upon the Gospel and wounded my own soul. But God is good to me and showed me the danger. Then I



could look upon him with pity and pray for him from the ground of my heart."

Many soldiers and officers began to admire his pluck and consistency. On the march over twenty men offered to carry his gun or knapsack for him. A sense of the injustice of his arrest and forced service was awakened in many minds. His friends in London used their influence, and after three months of soldier life Lord Stair procured his release. When he left the regiment the lieutenant said: "Indeed he has done much good since he came among us," and thanked him for his private exhortations; and the major said: "I wish I had a regiment of such men as he is, in all respects save one: his refusing to fight. I would not care what enemy I had, or where my lot was cast." Nelson told him, "If all men lived by faith in the Son of God, wars would be at an end." "That is true," said the major; "if it were so, we should learn war no more. I wish you well wherever you go, for I believe you Methodists are a well-meaning people." John Nelson was, assuredly, the George Fox of the eighteenth century!

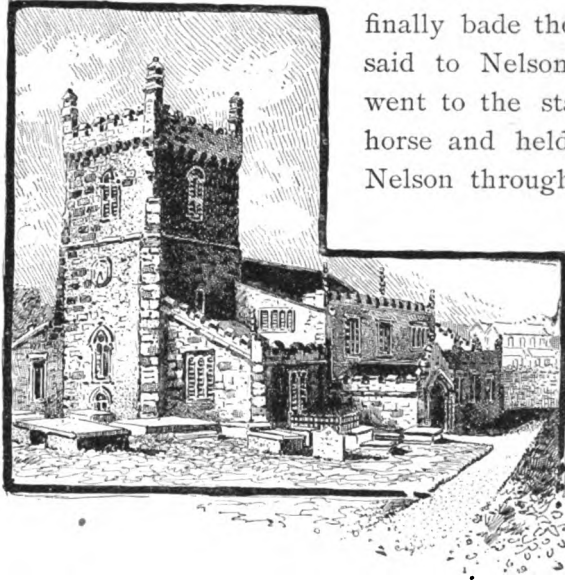
In 1745, the year of the invasion by the Young Pretender, when England was hysterical with alternate fits of fear of his success and joy at the defeat of his ragged regiments, we find Nelson and his comrades vigorously itinerating, and suffering from the madness of the excited mobs.

At Nottingham the squibs intended for his face burnt only the rioters who threw them. The next time he went they nearly choked him by filling his mouth with mud from the kennel, but their leader was so impressed by Nelson's patience and pluck that he threatened to knock anyone down who touched him further. On his third visit he was seized by a constable, as he sat by the fire after the service, and was hus-

bled through the streets by a howling mob. But he kept all his wits about him, saying to the constable, “Take up that man who is swearing; if you don’t, I can make you pay forty shillings for not doing your duty.” The unfriendly alderman before whom he was taken said, roughly, “You might be convinced by this time that the mob of Nottingham won’t let you preach here;” and “reddened” when the ready mason retorted, “I did not know this town was governed by the mob; most such towns are governed by the magistrate!” The alderman, to his credit, after further talk with Nelson, sent him back under the constable’s guard to “Mary White’s, where he came from.”

Horbury was the scene of an exciting incident which shows that, as with George Fox and Wesley, something in the look of this servant of God sometimes awed his enemies. “His look is not like that of other men,” said one of the soldiers who had served with him. The Horbury men formed a plot that when Nelson came they would all leave work, put a halter round his neck, drag him to the river and drown him. They surrounded the house where he breakfasted, and howled fiercely for “the Methodist dog” to be brought out that the town might be quit of him forever. The parson’s son, as captain of the mob, had six large hand bells brought from the clerk’s house, and these were rung violently that his voice might not be heard. A half-crazed man, six feet high, was to put the halter round his neck, and a butcher held the rope. Nelson only pushed the halter from his neck and the man fell as if he had been knocked down with an axe; the butcher stood trembling and touched him not. A shout was raised as the constable approached to arrest him, and the bells were silenced. Without hesitating a moment Nelson said, “I am glad you are come, and I charge you in

the king's name to do your office." He asked, "What is my office?" Nelson answered, firmly: "It is to quell this mob, and deliver me out of their hands. If I have broken the law, take me to a magistrate, to be punished by the law."



DRAWN BY P. E. FLINTOFF.

BIRSTALL CHURCH.

The constable turned pale, and finally bade the mob be silent; said to Nelson, "Follow me," went to the stable, led out the horse and held the stirrup, led Nelson through the crowd and bade him go, in the name of the Lord!

But Nelson did not always find his calmness and wit proof against violence, as one more adventure shows.

It was Easter Sunday at Hepworth Moor, near York, when a mob drove away Nelson's large congregation with showers of stones, and then flung brickbats at the preacher till the blood streamed down from his head into his shoes. Then they followed him through the streets of York, still stoning him, until a gentleman, full of pity, took him by the hand, drew him into his house, and sent for a surgeon to dress his wounds. In the afternoon he rode to Ackham, where "ten young gentlemen" pelted the women of the congregation with rotten eggs. As he walked in the fields before the

evening service a powerful man struck at him savagely, swearing he would kill him. At the third blow Nelson fell, and his assailant leaped upon him several times, till he was breathless, and the renewed bleeding from his morning wounds left him unconscious. The bully then seized one of the Methodists who was near and flung him against a wall, breaking two of his ribs. He then went to the gentleman who had hired him and boasted, “I have killed the preacher; he lies dead in the croft.”

As Nelson lay bleeding on the ground “the parson’s brother” and about twenty others came to see if he were really dead. They cursed him soundly, dragged him into the street as consciousness returned, and one after another struck him till he was down again. Eight times he struggled to his knees, and eight times they knocked him down. Then taking him by his long hair, they dragged him over the stones, kicking him fiercely. Six of them got on his body and thighs, “to tread the Holy Spirit out of him,” they said. One exclaimed, “I have heard that a cat has nine lives; but I think he has nine score.” Another said, “If he has, he shall die this day.” The “gentlemen” then dragged him to the village well and attempted to put him in, but a woman intervened and resisted them, and at last some “gentlewomen from the city called the gentlemen by their names,” who looked as men confounded at being discovered in this dastardly work. Some friends helped him into a house, and the next day he met Wesley and “found his word come with power” to his soul, and was constrained to cry out: “O Lord, I will praise thee. . . . Thou hast brought me out of the jaws of death.”

Nelson was still in his native town, “hewing stone and preaching,” when he helped to build the first chapel, of

which we give a sketch. In the same year, 1750, he was called away to act as a "traveling preacher." He died at Leeds, in 1774, and was buried at Birstall, where Methodists cherish mementos of their heroic townsman. His ivy-grown "study" in the chapel yard contains his homemade preaching-chair, a sundial in the churchyard witnesses to his work as a mason, and a bust in the chapel wall presents his open, animated face, of which a portrait (reproduced on page 476) was given in the *Arminian Magazine*.



## CHAPTER LIII

### **Black Country Brickbats and Bludgeons**

BARBAROUS SPORTS. — BAITING THE METHODISTS. — WEDNESBURY RIOTS. — THE POET'S COURAGE. — CAUSE OF THE OUTBREAKS. — HONEST MUNCHIN AND "THE MON OF GOD."

**T**HE Wesleys had been censured by bishops, cursed by High Church clergy, and slandered by a host of pamphleteers. But this stormy chorus of violent words was only the prelude to the ferocious attacks of the mobs which came, like wild beasts, howling on their track in the moral wilderness of England.

The "Black Country," in the northern part of Staffordshire, was the scene of one of the earliest and most violent persecutions. The towns of Wednesbury, Walsall, and Darlaston had won for themselves an unenviable notoriety for lawlessness. The brutal sports of these towns reflected the moral condition of the people. Bull baiting and cockfighting provided scenes of riotous delight. Charles Knight says that the Wednesbury cockfights were almost as famous as the races of the Derby day at the present time.

Charles Wesley was the first Methodist who preached at Wednesbury, in November, 1742. John soon followed, and a society of one hundred members, increased to more than

three hundred by the following May, was speedily formed. The storm soon broke. Charles preached in May at Walsall from the steps of the market house, the mob roaring, shout-



FROM HOGARTH'S PICTURE.

#### THE COCKPIT.

The Wednesbury cockfights were almost as famous as the Derby races of to-day.

ing, and throwing stones incessantly, many of which struck him, but none hurt him.

Soon after this the rioters of the three towns turned out in force and smashed windows, furniture, and houses. People were promiscuously struck and bruised. The magistrates, on being appealed to by the Methodists for protection, told them they were themselves to blame for the outrages, and refused all assistance. Mr. Taylor, the curate of Walsall, encouraged the rioters in their violence. One of them struck

Francis Ward, a leading Methodist, on the eye and cut it so that his sight was imperiled. He went into a shop to have it dressed, when the ruffians again pursued him and beat him unmercifully. He escaped into the public house, and was again brought out and dragged along the street and through the gutters until he lost his strength and was hardly able to stand erect. Others, including some women, were knocked down and beaten and dragged along the ground. There were in and about Wednesbury more than eighty houses, all of which had their windows damaged, and in many of which not three panes of glass were left unbroken. Wesley, in London, received a full account of this terrible six-days' riot, and thus writes: "I was not surprised at all; neither should I have wondered if, after the advices they had so often received from the pulpit as well as from the episcopal chair, the zealous High Churchmen had risen and cut all that were Methodists in pieces!"

Wesley proceeded at once to the scene to render what assistance he could. But no redress could be obtained. In October he went again to this den of wild beasts. While he was writing at Francis Ward's the mob beset the house and cried, "Bring out the minister; we will have the minister!" Wesley asked some one to take their captain by the hand and lead him in. After a few words the lion became a lamb. Wesley now asked him to bring two of the bitterest opponents inside. He soon returned with a couple who "were ready to swallow the ground with rage; but in two minutes they were as calm as he." Then, mounting a chair in the midst of the mob, he demanded, "What do any of you want with me?"

Some said, "We want you to go with us to the justice."

"That I will," said Wesley, "with all my heart."

The few words he added had such an effect that the mob



shouted, "The gentleman is an honest gentleman, and we will spill our blood in his defense."

Some dispersed to their homes, but Wesley and the rest, some two or three hundred, set out for the magistrate's house. Darkness and heavy rain came on in about half an hour, or by the time they had walked a mile, but they pushed forward another mile, to the justice's house at Bentley Hall. Some of the advance guard told that officer, Mr. Lane, that they were bringing Wesley.

"What have I to do with Mr. Wesley?" quoth the magistrate. "Take him back again."

When the crowd came up and knocked for admission the magistrate declined to see them, sending word that he was in bed. His son came out and asked their business. A spokesman answered, "To be plain, sir, if I must speak the truth, all the fault I find with him is that he preaches better than our parsons."

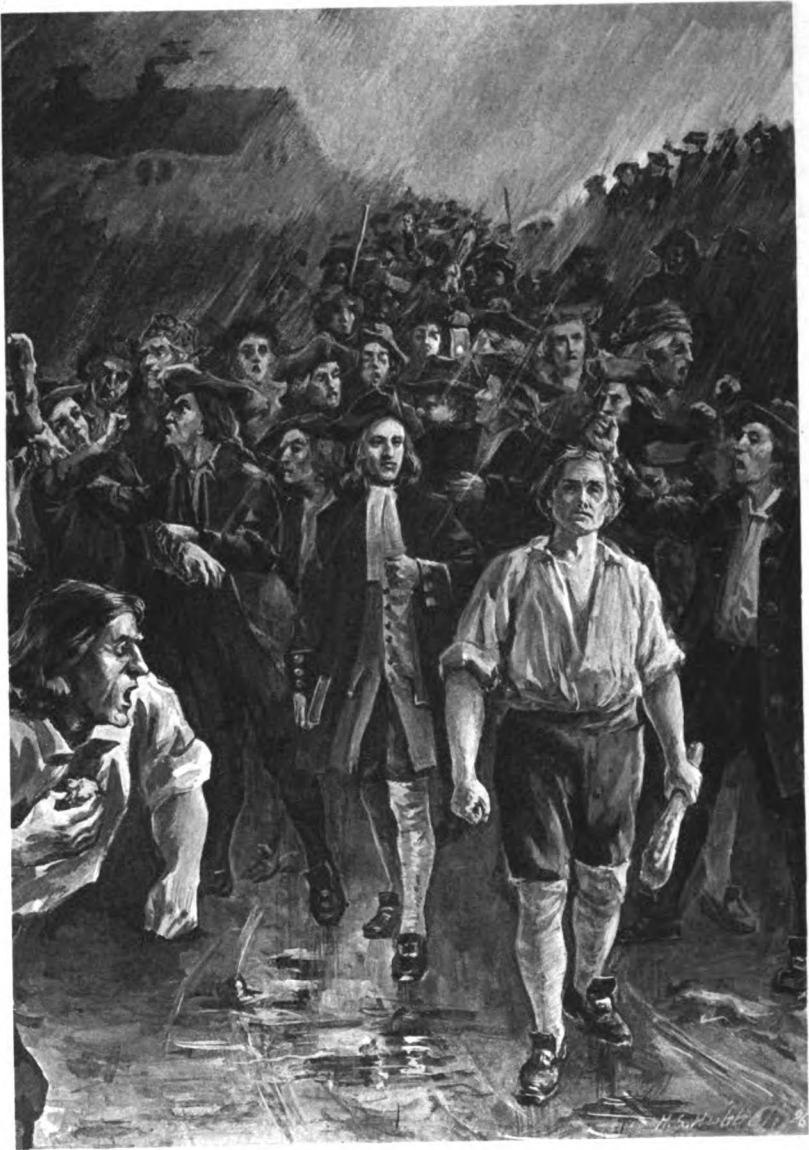
Another said: "Sir, it is a downright shame; he makes people rise at five in the morning to sing psalms. What advice would your worship give us?"

"To go home," said young Lane, "and be quiet."

Not getting much satisfaction there, they now hurried Wesley to Walsall, to Justice Persehouse. Although it was only about seven o'clock, he also sent word that he had gone to bed, and refused to see them. Yet these very magistrates had recently issued an order calling on all officers of justice to search for and bring before them any Methodist preacher found in the district.

At last they all thought it wise to make their way home, and some fifty of the crowd undertook to convey Wesley back to Wednesbury. But they had not gone a hundred yards when the mob of Walsall burst upon them. They





*The Preacher's Champion.*

Drawn by H. S. Hubbell.



showed fight, but, being wearied and greatly outnumbered, were soon overpowered, and Wesley was left in the hands of his new enemies. Some tried to seize him by the collar and pull him down. A big, lusty fellow just behind him struck at him several times with an oaken club. If one of these blows had taken effect, as Wesley says, "it would have saved all further trouble. But every time the blow was turned aside, I know not how, for I could not move to the right hand or left." Another, rushing through the crowd, lifted his arm to strike, but on a sudden let it drop and only stroked Wesley's head, saying, "What soft hair he has!" One man struck him on the breast, and another on the mouth with such force that the blood gushed out; but he felt no more pain, he affirms, from either than if they had touched him with a straw; not, certainly, because he was over excited or alarmed, for he assures us that from the beginning to the end he was enabled to maintain as much presence of mind as if he had been sitting in his study, but his thoughts were entirely absorbed in watching the movements of the rioters.

When he had been pulled to the west end of the town, seeing a door half open—which proved, strangely enough, to be the mayor's, though he did not know it—he made toward it to go in; but the owner, who was inside, would not suffer it, saying the mob would pull the house down to the ground. However, Wesley stood at the door, and raising his voice to the maddened throng, asked, "Are you willing to hear me speak?" Many cried out: "No! No! Knock his brains out! Down with him! Kill him at once!" Others said, "Nay, but we will hear him first!" Then he spoke a while, until his voice suddenly failed. Now the cry was: "Bring him away! Bring him away!" Recovering his strength,

he began to pray aloud. Then the ruffian who had headed the rabble, a prize fighter at the bear garden, struck with awe, turned and said: "Sir, I will spend my life for you! Follow me and not one soul here shall touch a hair of your head!" Others of his companions joined with him in this new departure. An honest butcher also interposed and thrust away four or five of the most violent assailants. The people fell back to the right and left, and in the charge of his new-found protectors Wesley was borne through the infuriated crowd and escorted to his lodgings at Wednesbury, having lost only one flap of his waistcoat and a little skin from one of his hands. He says concerning it: "I took no thought for one moment before another; only once it came into my mind that, if they should throw me into the river, it would spoil the papers that were in my pocket. For myself, I did not doubt but I should swim across, having but a thin coat and a light pair of boots." "I never saw such a chain of providences before; so many convincing proofs that the hand of God is on every person and thing, overruling all as it seemeth him good."

In the midst of all these perils four brave Methodists—William Sitch, Edward Slater, John Griffith, and Joan Parks—clung fast to Wesley's side, resolved to live or die with him. None received a blow save William, who was knocked down, but soon got up again. When Wesley asked William Sitch what he expected when the mob seized them he answered with a martyr's spirit, "To die for him who died for us." And when Joan Parks was asked if she was not afraid she said: "No, no more than I am now. I could trust God for you as well as for myself."

When Wesley reached Wednesbury the friends were praying for him in the house from which he had started. His

sufferings awoke general sympathy. Next morning, as he rode through the town, he says, "Everyone I met expressed such a cordial affection that I could scarce believe what I saw and heard." Charles Wesley met him at Nottingham. He says that his brother "looked like a soldier of Christ. His clothes were torn to tatters." Charles went straight from Nottingham to the scenes of the rioting, boldly bearding the lions in their den. He was constitutionally a timid man, as he often confesses, but there was nothing he feared so much as to offend his own conscience. Under the inspiration of duty this poet of the finest sensibilities became a lion, wholly insensible to fear. Just a little before this, in Sheffield, the house in which he was preaching being in danger of destruction by the mob, he announced that he would preach out of doors. The crowd followed him, but he finished his sermon under a shower of stones. The mob raged all night around the house where he slept, and by morning had pulled down one end of it. But no personal injury was received. He preached again at five o'clock in the morning, and later in the day held another outdoor service in the very heart of the town, on returning from which he passed the ruins of the little Methodist chapel, whereof hardly one stone remained upon another. Again the mob surrounded his lodging place at night. But he tells us that he was much fatigued, and dropped to sleep with that word, "Scatter thou the people that delight in war." He ascribes the disgraceful tumult to the sermons which were preached against the Methodists by the clergy of the Sheffield churches.

He arrived at Wednesbury five days after the miraculous escape of his brother, and found the Methodists "standing fast in one mind and spirit, in nothing terrified by their adversaries." He writes: "We assembled before day to sing



hymns to Christ as God. As soon as it was light I walked down the town and preached. . . . It was a most glorious time." The clergyman at Darlaston was so struck with the meek behavior of the Methodists in the midst of suffering that he offered to join the Wesleys in punishing the rioters. As for "honest Munchin," the nickname for George Clifton, the captain of the rabble, who had rescued Wesley, he was so impressed with Wesley's spirit that he immediately forsook his godless, profligate gang, and was received on trial into the Methodist society by Charles. The latter asked him, "What think you of my brother?" "Think of him!" was the answer. "That he is a mon of God; and God was on his side, when so mony of us could not kill one mon." Clifton lived a good life after this, and died in Birmingham, aged eighty-five, in 1789, two years before Wesley. He was never weary of telling the story of that night when he might have taken life, had not God stayed his hand.









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