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Biography

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF THE REV. JOHN WESLEY.

VOL. II

Rev. Luke Tyerman

"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord" Heb 12:14

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THE

LIFE AND TIMES

OF THE

REV. JOHN WESLEY, M.A.,

Founder of the Methodists.

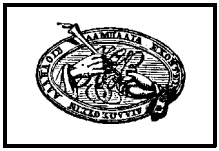
BY THE

REV. L. TYERMAN,

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(*Father of the Revds. J. and C. Wesley*).

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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THE LIFE AND TIMES OF THE REV. JOHN WESLEY, M.A.

1748.

WESLEY writes: "January 1, 1748.—We began the year at four in the morning, with joy and thanksgiving. The same spirit was in the midst of us, both at noon and in the evening."

On January 25, he set out for Bristol, and at Longbridge-Deverill, three miles from Warminster, by being thrown from his horse, had a narrow escape from an untimely death. These dangers and escapes were numerous and remarkable. Near Shepton-Mallet, while descending a steep bank, he had another accident of a similar kind to the former, his horse and himself tumbling one over the other, and imperilling the lives of both. And, a few weeks later, when in Ireland, his horse became restive and "fell head over heels." With almost literal exactness might Wesley have made the apostle's language his own: "In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness; besides those things that are without, that which cometh upon us daily, the care of all the churches."

The chapel at Bristol, though built only nine years ago, was in great danger of falling upon the people's heads; and, moreover, it was now too small to accommodate the congregation attending. Accordingly, Wesley took instant steps to repair and to enlarge the building, and obtained a subscription of £230, towards defraying the expense.

While here, he also made a visit to Shepton-Mallet, where a hired and drunken mob pelted him and his companion, Robert Swindells, with "dirt, stones, and clods in abundance"; broke the windows of the house in which they were staying, took it by storm, and threatened to make it a heap of burning ruins.

Still, the Methodist revival spread. Writing to his friend Blackwell, under the date of February 2, Wesley says:—"Both in Ireland, and in many parts of England, the work of our Lord increases daily. At Leeds only, the society, from a hundred and eighty, is increased to above five hundred persons."[1]

Charles Wesley and Charles Perronet had been in Ireland for the last six months, and, on the Moravians being ejected from the chapel in Skinner's Alley, had become the tenants of that building. They had made an excursion to Tyrrell's Pass, and, from among proverbial swearers, drunkards, thieves, and sabbath breakers, had formed a society of nearly one hundred persons. At Athlone, a gang of ruffians knocked Jonathan Healey off his horse, beat him with a club, and were about to murder him with a knife, when a poor woman, from her hut, came to his assistance, and, for her interference, was half

killed with a blow from a heavy whip. The hedges were all lined with papists; the dragoons came out, the mob fled, Healey was rescued, and was taken into the woman's cabin, where Charles Wesley found him in his blood, and attended to his wounds. A congregation of above two thousand assembled in the market; Charles Wesley preached to them from the window of a ruined house; and then the knot of brave-hearted Methodists marched to the field of battle, stained with Healey's blood, and sang a song of triumph and of praise to God.

Having completed his business at Bristol, Wesley, on the 15th of February, started for Ireland, but the weather was such, that three weeks elapsed before he was able to set sail from Holyhead. Winds were boisterous, and snow lay thick upon the ground; but, on the way, besides preaching in churches, chapels, and roadside inns, Wesley, at Builth and other places, took his stand in the open air, immense congregations making surrounding woods and mountains echo, as they sung:—

"Ye mountains and vales, In praises abound;
Ye hills and ye dales, Continue the sound;
Break forth into singing, Ye trees of the wood,
For Jesus is bringing Lost sinners to God."

Attending a service in the Welsh language, he wrote: "What a curse was the confusion of tongues! and how grievous are the effects of it! All the birds of the air, all the beasts of the field, understand the language of their own

species. Man only is a *barbarian* to man, unintelligible to his own brethren!"

At length, Wesley, accompanied by Robert Swindells and the Rev. Mr. Meriton, set sail, and, on March 8, arrived in Dublin, where they found Charles Wesley meeting the society, the members of which made so much noise in shouting, and in praising God, that, for a time, Wesley was unable to obtain a hearing.

Charles returned to England. Wesley spent the next ten weeks in Ireland. These were long absences, to which the leaders in London objected; but Wesley's almost prophetic answer was, "Have patience, and Ireland will repay you."[2]

Wesley's first business was to begin preaching at five o'clock in the morning, "an unheard of thing in Ireland"; his next, to inquire into the state of the Dublin society. He writes: "Most pompous accounts had been sent me, from time to time, of the great numbers added; so that I confidently expected to find six or seven hundred members. And how is the real fact? I left three hundred and ninety-four members; and I doubt if there are now three hundred and ninety-six." This seems to be a reflection on his brother; but was there not a cause? Ten days later, he remarks: "I finished the classes, and found them just as I expected. I left three hundred and ninety-four persons united together in August; I had now admitted between twenty and thirty, who had offered themselves since my return to Dublin; and the whole number is neither more nor less than three hundred and ninety-six."

He adds: "Let this be a warning to us all, how we give in to that hateful custom of painting things beyond the life. Let us make a conscience of magnifying or exaggerating anything. Let us rather speak under, than above, the truth. We, of all men, should be punctual in all we say, that none of our words may fall to the ground."

At Philip's Town, "a poor, dry, barren place," he found a society, of whom forty were troopers.[3] At Tullamore, he preached to most of the inhabitants of the town; and at Clara, to "a vast number of well behaved people, some of whom came in their coaches, and were of the best quality in the country." At Athlone, he writes: "Almost all the town appeared to be moved, full of good will and desires of salvation; but I found not one under any strong conviction, much less had any one attained the knowledge of salvation, in hearing above thirty sermons."

At Birr, he preached "in the street, to a dull, rude, senseless multitude." A Carmelite friar cried out, "You lie! you lie!" but the protestants present cried, "Knock the friar down"; and Wesley adds, "it was no sooner said than done."

At Aughrim, he heard "a warm sermon against enthusiasts"; and, to the same congregation, preached another as an antidote. Mr. Simpson, a magistrate, invited him to dinner; and he, and his wife and daughter, were the first at Aughrim to join the Methodists.[4]

These and other places were soon formed into a circuit, extending on the Leinster side as far as Tyrrell's Pass and Mountmellick, and on the Connaught side as far as Ballinrobe, Castlebar, and Sligo, the quarterly meetings being held at Coolylough, the residence of Mr. Handy, where hospitable entertainment was abundantly provided, and many a season of spiritual refreshing was religiously enjoyed.[5]

In Dublin, the Methodists had two meeting-houses, one in Dolphin Barn Lane, and the other in Skinner's Alley; but they were both rented, and therefore of uncertain tenure. Wesley was not satisfied with this, and used his utmost endeavours to obtain a freehold site, for the erection of a chapel of his own. On the 15th of March, he wrote to Ebenezer Blackwell as follows: "We have not found a place yet that will suit us for building. Several we have heard of, and seen some; but they are all leasehold land, and I am determined to have freehold, if it is to be had in Dublin; otherwise we must lie at the mercy of our landlord whenever the lease is to be renewed."[6]

Some time after, the freehold site was obtained, and, with Mr. Lunell's munificent assistance, the first Methodist meetinghouse in Dublin was erected in Whitefriar Street, and was opened for public worship in 1752.

Wesley returned to England at the end of the month of May, and on the 2nd of June, and three or four following days, held, in London, his annual conference. The number present was twenty-three, including about half-a-dozen

clergymen, three stewards, some local preachers, and Howel Harris.

At the opening of the conference, it was agreed that there would be no time to consider points of doctrine, and therefore that the attention of those present should be wholly confined to discipline.

The principle was reiterated, that, wherever they preached, they should form societies. They were to visit the poor members of society as much as the rich. Every alternate society-meeting in London, Bristol, Kingswood, and Newcastle, was to be kept inviolably private. At the other meetings strangers might be admitted with caution. It was thought, that they were in danger of making too long prayers, and it was agreed that, though exceptional cases must arise, yet, in general, they would do well not to pray in public above eight or ten minutes at a time. Directions were given to the assistants to guard against jealousy and envy, and against despising each other's gifts. They were to try to avoid popularity, that is, "the gaining a greater degree of esteem or love from the people than is for the glory of God." They were to examine the leaders of classes, and were to send to the Wesleys a circumstantial account of every remarkable conversion, and of every triumphant death. Assisted by the stewards, they were, every Easter, to make exact lists of all the members in each of the nine circuits into which the societies were divided, and to send the lists to the ensuing conference.[7]

In addition to these matters, there was another debated, of great interest and importance. Five years before, Wesley had published his "Thoughts on Marriage and Celibacy," in which, to say the least, he strongly commended a single life. His brother Charles was now courting Miss Sarah Gwynne, and wished to marry her. Charles writes:—"How know I, whether it be best for me to marry, or no? Certainly better now than later; and, if not now, what security that I shall not then? It should be now, or not at all." This was sound sense. Charles was now forty years old, and, like a wise man, he concluded, that he must either marry now, or never. Before he left Ireland, he communicated his intentions to his brother; and, in the month of April, he rode to Shoreham, and "told all his heart" to Vincent Perronet.[8] Difficulties existed. Among others, there was his brother's tract. The Conference of 1747 had agreed to read all the tracts which had been published, and to make a note of everything that was thought objectionable. The Conference of 1748 was about to meet, and, of course, had a perfect right to review and to revise the "Thoughts on Marriage." The question was introduced, and the result of the discussion upon Wesley's mind may be found in the following sentence from a manuscript in the British Museum, which, though not written by Wesley, was corrected by him. "In June, 1748, we had a conference in London. Several of our brethren then objected to the 'Thoughts on Marriage'; and, in a full and friendly debate, convinced me, that a believer might marry without suffering loss in his soul." This was a great point gained. Charles's courtship proceeded; and, in April, 1749, John writes: "Saturday, April 8.—I married my brother and Sarah Gwynne. It was a solemn day,

such as became the dignity of a Christian marriage." A stranger said, it looked more like a funeral than a wedding; but Charles remarks, "We were cheerful without mirth, serious without sadness; and my brother seemed the happiest person among us."[9]

A few days after the Conference was closed, Wesley and his brother proceeded to Bristol for the purpose of opening Kingswood school.

Kingswood school! a sacred spot, surrounded with unequalled Methodistic memories; once one of the homes of the Wesleys and their friends; the place of not a few remarkable revivals of religion; an academic grove, whose scenery was at first beautiful and inviting, and from which have issued many of the most distinguished ministers that Methodism has ever had, and not a few highly accomplished scholars, whose names stand honourably associated with the legal and other high professions, and with England's chief seats of learning; an upretending edifice, with associations to which no other Methodist building (except the Broadmead meetinghouse in Bristol) can make pretensions; for above half a century Methodism's only college; to the end of life one of Wesley's favourite haunts; the *alma mater* of scores still living, who will always love its memory; a homestead in which Methodism lingered perhaps as long as was expedient; and which, when Methodism left it in 1852, became a place of discipline for young thieves and vagabonds, a reformatory for youthful criminals, whose presence in public society was

a nuisance and a curse, and yet whose minds and morals were most likely to be improved, not in a prison, but in a school.

We have already seen, that Wesley built a school at Kingswood in 1740. Myles, in his Chronological History, says, that the school opened in 1748 was the old school "enlarged;"[10] and that, though the school commenced in 1740 was intended for the children of colliers, yet, for some years, several of the Methodists in other places had sent their children to be educated here.[11]

This was an encroachment upon Wesley's original design, but one which he had no disposition to resist. Besides this, he found it necessary to make some provision for the education of the children of his preachers. Their fathers were almost constantly from home. Their mothers, in many cases, were unequal to their management. Funds did not exist to send them to a boarding school. And hence Wesley found it imperative to provide a school himself.

To meet this necessity, he "enlarged" the existing school at Kingswood, an unknown lady giving him £800 towards defraying the expenses.[12] The school for the children of the colliers was not closed. It continued to exist for more than sixty years subsequent to the period of which we are writing, and was supported by the subscriptions of the Kingswood society.[13] But now, in 1748, another school, for another class of children, was attached to this, and really became *the Kingswood school*, so famed in Methodistic annals, and whose memory will last as long as Methodism lasts.

Wesley selected Kingswood for his school because "it was private, remote from all high roads, on a small hill sloping to the west, sheltered from the east and north, and affording room for large gardens." He made it capable of accommodating fifty children, besides masters and servants; reserving one room and a small study for himself.[14] On the front of the building was placed a tablet, with the inscription, "In Gloriam Dei Optimi Maximi, in Usum Ecclesiae et Reipublicae"; and under this, "Jehovah Jireh," in Hebrew characters.[15] The great defect of the situation was the want of water. Vincent Perronet, in a letter to Walter Sellon, in 1752, writes: "My dear brother John Wesley wonders at the bad taste of those, who seem not to be in raptures with Kingswood school. If there was no other objection, but the want of good water upon the spot, this would be insuperable to all wise men, except himself and his brother Charles."[16] For more than a hundred years, this was a radical defect, and was one of the chief reasons which induced the Conference to remove the school to another place in 1852.

It has been already stated, that the school was designed not only for the sons of preachers, but for the children of those Methodists who were able and wishful to give their offspring an education, superior to that imparted in the villages or towns in which they respectively resided. If it be asked, why Wesley did not advise such Methodists to send their children to the boarding schools then existing? the answer is—1. Because most of these schools were in large towns, to which he greatly objected. 2. Because all sorts of children, religious and irreligious, were admitted. 3. Because, in many instances,

the masters were regardless of the principles and practice of Christianity, and were utterly indifferent whether their scholars were papists or protestants, Turks or Christians. 4. Because, in most of the great schools, the education given was exceedingly defective, and the class books were imperfect in style and sense, and, in some cases, absolutely profane and polluting.[17]

For such reasons, Wesley opened his new school in Kingswood, on the 24th of June, 1748, by preaching on the text, "Train up a child," etc.; after which he and his brother administered the sacrament to the crowd who had come from distant places; and then drew up the scholastic rules, which were published soon after.

The object of the school was "to train up children in every branch of useful learning." None but boarders were to be admitted, and "these were to be taken in, between the years of six and twelve, in order to be taught reading, writing, arithmetic, English, French, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, history, geography, chronology, rhetoric, logic, ethics, geometry, algebra, physics, and music." They were all to "be brought up in the fear of God; and at the utmost distance, as from vice in general, so in particular from idleness and effeminacy." Wesley adds: "The children of *tender* parents, so called (who are indeed offering up their sons and their daughters unto devils), have no business here; for the rules will not be broken, in favour of any person whatsoever. Nor is any child received unless his parents agree that he shall observe all the

rules of the house; and that they will not take him from school, no, not a day, till they take him for good and all."

Wesley's design, in founding the school, was, in the highest degree, benevolent and pure; but some of his rules were as absurd as inexperienced philosophy could make them. The diet, consisting of bacon, beef, and mutton, bread and butter, greens, water gruel, and apple dumplings, was unexceptionable. Going to bed at eight, and sleeping on mattresses, were also commendable arrangements. But what can be said of the rule, that every child was to rise, the year round, at four o'clock, and spend the time till five in private, reading, singing, meditating, and praying? Who will defend the rule, that no play days were to be permitted, and no time allowed, on any day, for play, on the ground that he who plays when he is a child will play when he becomes a man? What again about the rule, that every child, if healthy, should fast every Friday till three o'clock in the afternoon? No wonder that Wesley complains of his rules being habitually broken. With such a programme, the school became to him a source of inexpressible annoyance. Children were removed by their parents, and some were dismissed as incorrigible. Enforced religion created a disgust for it, and this imperious way of making saints, in some instances, made the children hypocrites.

At five every morning, they attended public religious service, and again at seven every night. At six, they breakfasted; at seven, school began; at eleven, they walked or worked; at twelve, they dined, and then worked in the garden

or sang till one; from one till five, they were again in school; from five to six, was their hour for private prayer; and from six to seven, they again walked or worked; when they all had supper on bread and butter, and milk by turns; and at eight, marched off to bed. On Sundays, they dressed and breakfasted at six; at seven, learnt hymns or poems; at eight, attended public service; at nine, went to the parish church; at one, dined and sang; at two, attended public service; and at four, were privately instructed. Six masters were employed; one for teaching French, two for reading and writing, and three for the ancient languages. The charge for each boy's board and education, including books, pens, ink, and paper, was £14 a year.[18] Walter Sellon, John Jones, and James Roquet, all of whom obtained ordination in the Established Church, together with Richard Moss, Monsieur Grou, and William Spencer were the first batch of masters.[19]

Does history record a school parallel to Wesley's school at Kingswood? We doubt it. It will often require notice in succeeding chapters; but suffice it to add here, that, for a few months at least, the school was worked to Wesley's satisfaction. In August, several of the boys were converted;[20] and in October, the housekeeper, in a letter to Wesley, wrote:—"The spirit of this family is a resemblance of the household above. They are given up to God, and pursue but the one great end. If any is afraid this school will eclipse others, or that it will train up soldiers to proclaim open war against the god of this world, I believe it is not a groundless fear. If God continue to bless us, one of these little ones shall

chase a thousand. I doubt not but, from this obscure spot, there will arise ambassadors for the King of kings."[21]

On June 27, three days after the opening of Kingswood school, Wesley set out for the north of England. On his way, he preached at Wallbridge "to a lively congregation"; and at Stanley, "in farmer Finch's orchard." He spent two days at dear old Epworth; preached four times; heard Mr. Romley, whose "smooth, tuneful voice," so often used in blaspheming the work of God, was now nearly lost; and received the sacrament from Mr. Hay, the rector. The Methodist society, though not large, had been useful, and sabbath breaking and drunkenness, cursing and swearing, were hardly known. At Hainton, "chiefly owing to the miserable diligence of the poor rector," the congregation was small. At Coningsby, he preached to one of the largest congregations he had seen in Lincolnshire, and disputed, for an hour and a half, with a Baptist minister upon baptism. At Grimsby, the congregation not only filled the room, but the stairs and adjoining rooms, and many stood in the street below, notwithstanding Mr. Prince had bitterly cursed the poor Methodists in the name of the Lord. At Laseby, he had "a small, earnest congregation"; and, at Crowle, a wilder one than he had lately seen. Thus preaching at almost every place where he halted, he reached Newcastle on Saturday, July 9.

Here, and in all the country societies round about, he found an increase of members, and more of the life and power of religion among them, than he had ever found before. The boundaries of the Newcastle circuit were,—Allandale on the

west, Sunderland on the east, Berwick on the north, and Osmotherley on the south,[22]—an immense tract of country, situated in, at least, four different counties. This Wesley traversed, preaching, visiting classes, and founding societies.

Having spent more than five weeks among these northern Methodists, Wesley, on the 16th of August, started southwards, taking Grace Murray with him, to whom he had proposed marriage. During the first day's journey, he preached at Stockton, near the market place, "to a very large and very rude congregation;" again in the market place at Yarm; and again, in the midst of a continuous rain, in the street at Osmotherley.

Proceeding to Wakefield, he became the guest of Francis Scott, a local preacher, part of whose joiner's shop was used as a preaching room.[23] Thence he went to Halifax, where he attempted to preach at the market cross to "an immense number of people, roaring like the waves of the sea." A man threw money among the crowd, creating great disturbance. Wesley was besmeared with dirt, and had his cheek laid open by a stone. Finding it impossible to make himself heard, he adjourned to a meadow near Salterhebble, and spent an hour with those that followed him "in rejoicing and praising God."[24] He then went to Bradford, where the only person who misbehaved was the parish curate.

At Haworth, even at five o'clock in the morning, the church was nearly filled. Grimshaw read prayers, and Wesley preached. A Methodist society was already formed, as appears

from the following item in the Haworth society book:—"1748, Jan. 10: A pair of boots for William Darney, 14*s*. 0*d*."[25] Grimshaw was now as much a Methodist as Wesley was, with this difference, the former had a church, the latter not.

For six years, Grimshaw had been incumbent of Haworth. His church was crowded, and no wonder. In the surrounding hamlets, he was accustomed to preach from twelve to thirty sermons weekly. His congregations were rude and rough; but they caught the fervour of his spirit, and hundreds of his hearers were converted. He loved labour, and, for his Master's sake, cheerfully encountered hard living. One day he would be the guest of Lady Huntingdon; at another time, he would be found sleeping in his own hayloft, simply to find room for strangers in his parsonage. In all sorts of weather, upon the bleak mountains, often drenched by rain, or benumbed by frost, with no regular meals, and frequently nothing better than a crust, he never wearied in his evangelistic wanderings, but pursued his onward course with a blithesome spirit, singing praises to his Divine Redeemer. His dress was plain, and sometimes shabby. Often he had literally only one coat and one pair of shoes, not from affectation, or eccentricity, but from a benevolent desire to benefit the poor. Possessed of strong mental power, and with a Cambridge education, he was capable of rising above the rank of ordinary preachers; but, to accommodate himself to his rustic hearers, there was a homeliness in his forms of speech, which was sometimes scarcely dignified. He preached in the same style as that in which Albert Durer painted. His power in prayer was

marvellous. "He was like a man with his feet on earth and his soul in heaven." As one of Wesley's "assistants," he visited classes, gave tickets, held lovefeasts, attended quarterly meetings, entertained the "itinerants," and let them preach in the kitchen of his parsonage. He was oft eccentric, but always honest, earnest, and devout. Strong of frame, and robust in health, his study was under the wide canopy of heaven, among hills and dales; and the weariness of his wanderings was relieved by Divinely imparted thoughts, and communings with his God. He died April 7, 1763; some of his last words being, "I am as happy as I can be on earth, and as sure of heaven as if I was in it." He was a rare man; and in him was fully exemplified his favourite motto, which was inscribed upon his coffin, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

In the same neighbourhood was another man, who, though not so eminent, deserves honourable mention,—Thomas Colbeck, of Keighley, now twenty-five years of age, long a faithful and laborious local preacher, and whose memory is still precious among the west Yorkshire mountains. He was one of Grimshaw's faithful travelling companions; and, by his instrumentality, Methodism was introduced into not a few of the villages in the neighbourhood where he lived. His house was Wesley's home, and the resting place of Wesley's itinerants. While praying with a person afflicted with a fever he caught the infection, and died on November 5, 1779.[26]

On leaving Haworth, Wesley proceeded to Roughlee, a village in the vicinity of Colne, Grimshaw and Colbeck going with him. While Wesley was preaching, a drunken rabble

came, with clubs and staves, led on by a deputy constable, who said he was come for the purpose of taking Wesley to a justice of the peace at Barrowford. Wesley went with him. On the way a miscreant struck him in the face; another threw a stick at his head; and a third cursed and swore, and flourished his club about Wesley's person as if he meant to murder him. On reaching the public house, where his worship was waiting, he was required to promise not to come to Roughlee again. He answered, he would sooner cut off his head than make such a promise. For above two hours, he was detained in the magisterial presence; but, at length, he was allowed to leave. The deputy constable went with him. The mob followed with oaths, curses, and stones. Wesley was beaten to the ground, and was forced back into the house. Grimshaw and Colbeck were used with the utmost violence, and covered with all kinds of sludge. Mr. Mackford, who had come with Wesley from Newcastle, was dragged by the hair of his head, and sustained injuries from which he never fully recovered. Some of the Methodists, who were present, were beaten with clubs; others were trampled in the mire; one was forced to leap from a rock ten or twelve feet high, into the river; and others had to run for their lives, amidst all sorts of missiles thrown after them. The magistrate saw all this; and, so far from attempting to hinder it, seemed well pleased with the murderous proceedings. Next day Wesley wrote him as follows:—"All this time you were talking of justice and law! Alas, sir, suppose we were Dissenters (which I deny), suppose we were Jews. or Turks, are we not to have the benefit of the laws of our country! Proceed against us by the law, if you can or dare; but not by lawless violence; not by making a drunken,

cursing, swearing, riotous mob, both judge, jury, and executioner. This is flat rebellion against God and the king, as you may possibly find to your cost."

This horrible outrage was chiefly fomented by a popish renegado, who was now the curate of Colne. The following proclamation for raising mobs against the Methodists was issued:—

> "NOTICE is hereby given, that if any men be mindful to enlist into his majesty's service, under the command of the Rev. George White, commander-in-chief, and John Bannister, lieutenant-general of his majesty's forces, for the defence of the Church of England, and the support of the manufactory in and about Colne, both of which are now in danger, etc., etc., let them now repair to the drumhead at the cross, where each man shall have a pint of ale for advance, and other proper encouragements."[27]

Besides this, White, within the last month, had preached an inflammatory sermon which, at the end of the year, was published, with a dedicatory epistle to the Archbishop of Canterbury. The title is, "A Sermon against the Methodists, preached at Colne and Marsden, to a very numerous audience; by George White, M.A., minister of Colne and Marsden; and author of 'Mercurius Latinus.' Published at the request of the audience." Octavo, 24 pages.

This clerical railer tells the archbishop that, by means of Methodism, there was, in this remote part of the country, "a schismatical rebellion against the best of churches; a defiance of all laws, civil and ecclesiastical; a professed disrespect to learning and education; a visible ruin of trade and manufacture; a shameful progress of enthusiasm; and a confusion not to be paralleled in any other Christian dominion." He adds, that he has taken pains to "inquire into the characters of these new sectaries, and has found their teachers shamefully ignorant, and criminally arrogant, while many of them have been prevented arriving at the order of priesthood by early immoralities."

The text he professes to expound is 1 Corinthians xiv. 33, and the following are a specimen of his spicy sentences concerning the Methodists and their system:—"A weak illiterate crowd,"—"a labyrinth of wild enthusiasm,"—preachers are "bold, visionary rustics, setting up to be guides in matters of the highest importance, without any other plea but uncontrollable ignorance,"—these officious haranguers cozen a handsome subsistence out of their irregular expeditions. Mr. Wesley has in reality a better income than most of our bishops. The under lay praters, by means of a certain allowance from their schismatic general, a contribution from their very wise hearers, and the constant maintenance of themselves and horses, are in a better way of living than the generality of our vicars and curates; and doubtless find it much more agreeable to their constitution, to travel abroad at the expense of a sanctified face and a good assurance, than to sweat ignominiously at the loom, anvil, and

various other mechanic employments, which nature had so manifestly designed them for."

But enough of the oracular utterances of Mr. White. Who was he? First of all, he was educated at Douay, for orders in the Church of Rome. Renouncing popery, he was noticed by Archbishop Potter, and made a priest of the Church of England. An itch for scribbling made him the author of about half-a-dozen worthless ungrammatical publications, including "a burlesque poem on a miraculous sheep's eye at Paris." A devoted son of "the best of churches," he frequently abandoned his church for weeks together; and, on one occasion, read the funeral service more than twenty times in a single night over the dead bodies which had been interred, without ceremony, during his absence from home. He married an Italian governess in 1745; was imprisoned for debt in Chester castle; and there died on April 29, 1751.[28]

If White's sermon had not given birth to the murderous outrage at Roughlee and Barrowford, it would have been too worthless to be noticed. As it was, a brainless and ungrammatical production became of such importance, that Grimshaw thought it his duty, in 1749, to publish an answer to it. Grimshaw was not the man to be mealy mouthed. On his title page he put the following: "Why boastest thou thyself in mischief, O mighty man? The goodness of God endureth continually. Thy tongue deviseth mischief; like a sharp razor, working deceitfully. Thou lovest evil more than good; and lying words rather than to speak righteousness. Thou lovest all devouring words, O thou deceitful tongue; God shall

likewise destroy thee for ever. He shall take thee away, and pluck thee out of thy dwelling place, and root thee out of the land of the living. The righteous also shall see and fear, and laugh at him." (Psalm lii. 1-6.) This was strong language for the incumbent of Haworth to use respecting the perpetual curate of Colne. Grimshaw tells him, that his sermon is "full of palpable contradictions, absurdities, falsities, groundless suggestions, and malicious surmises, and, in some sort, vindicates the people it was intended to asperse." Grimshaw's "Answer" extends to eighty-six pages, 12mo, closely printed, and is an able and well written defence of the poor, persecuted Methodists. White was no match for Grimshaw, at least, in literary conflict. The one was a braggadocio, the other was a giant; and, with a giant's knotted club, he belabours the pompous priest with anything but the gentleness of a carpet knight. White, however, deserved all he got. The man was a popish cheat. Besides his disgraceful imprisonment in Chester castle, he had, as Grimshaw reminds him, been acting the rake, in London and elsewhere, for the last three years; and now forsooth! all at once, the cheat and rake becomes the virtuous and indignant champion of mother church. No wonder that Grimshaw wrote: *"Bombalio! Clangor! Stridor! Taratantara! Murmur!"* The terrible text on Grimshaw's title page was a graphic description of the miserable priest who raised the Roughlee mob, and its prophetic utterances were soon fearfully fulfilled. Within three years White was dead. "For some years," says Wesley, "he was a popish priest. Then he called himself a protestant. He drank himself first into a jail, and then into his grave."[29]

Leaving Barrowford, Wesley and his friends went to Heptonstall, where he preached, with unexampled power, in an oval surrounded with spreading trees, and scooped out of a hill, which rose round him and his congregation like a rural theatre. He then made his way, through Todmorden and Rossendale, to Bolton, where with the cross for his pulpit, and a vast number of "utterly wild" people for his audience, he began to preach. Once or twice they thrust him down from the steps on which he was standing, but he still continued his discourse. Then stones were thrown, which seem to have done more injury to the mob themselves than they did to Wesley. One man was bawling in his ear, when his bawling was silenced by a missile striking him on the cheek. A second was forcing his way to the preacher, when another stone hit him on his forehead, and disfigured him with blood. A third stretched out his hand to lay hold on Wesley, when a sharp flint struck him on the knuckles, and made him quiet till Wesley concluded his discourse and went away. It was either on this, or some subsequent occasion, that six papists, from Standish, near Wigan, rode right through the midst of Wesley's congregation; and tradition states, that two of the horsemen, brothers of the name of Lyon, were afterwards hanged for burglary.[30]

Wesley and his friends proceeded from Bolton to Shackerley, six miles farther, where he preached to a large congregation, including not a few Unitarians, the disciples of Dr. Taylor, the divinity tutor of the Unitarian academy founded at Warrington. Wesley, always hopeful, remarks: "O what a providence is it, which has brought us here also,

among these silver tongued antichrists!" Wesley visited Shackerley three times after this, and wrote, in 1751: "Being now in the very midst of Mr. Taylor's disciples, I enlarged much more than I am accustomed to do, on the doctrine of original sin; and determined, if God should give me a few years' life, publicly to answer his new gospel." This was done six years afterwards; and Shackerley must always have a place in Methodistic annals, inasmuch as to Wesley's visits here Methodism is indebted for the most elaborated work he ever wrote.

In his onward progress, Wesley came to Astbury, where a lawless mob, headed by "Drummer Jack," surrounded the preaching house, and endeavoured, by discordant noises, to drown his voice. Some years after, the same Drummer Jack was escorting a wedding party to Astbury church, and, on reaching the spot where he had attempted to disturb Wesley's congregation, suddenly expired.[31]

Thus preaching on his way, Wesley, on September 4, got back to London.

Meanwhile, on July 5, Whitefield, after nearly a four years' absence, returned to England from America. On the day he landed, he wrote to his friends, the two Wesleys; but an immediate interview was impracticable, for Wesley himself was on his northern journey, and his brother Charles, besides attending to his ministerial duties, was paying loving attentions to Sarah Gwynne. Three days before Wesley got back to London, Whitefield wrote to him as follows:—

"LONDON, *September* 1, 1748.

"REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,—My not meeting you in London has been a disappointment to me. What have you thought about an union? I am afraid an external one is impracticable. I find, by your sermons, that we differ in principles more than I thought; and I believe we are upon two different plans. My attachment to America will not permit me to abide very long in England; consequently, I should but weave a Penelope's web, if I formed societies; and if I should form them, I have not proper assistants to take care of them. I intend therefore to go about preaching the gospel to every creature. You, I suppose, are for settling societies everywhere; but more of this when we meet. I hope you don't forget to pray for me. You are always remembered by, reverend and dear sir, yours most affectionately in Christ Jesus,

"GEORGE WHITEFIELD."[32]

Whitefield left London for Scotland before Wesley's arrival, and the two evangelists had no opportunity of meeting until the end of November, when, it is possible, they might, in their hurried ramblings, have a brief interview in town. They were still the warmest friends; but their courses of action were separate. Whitefield was a Calvinist; Wesley was not. Whitefield thought an external union, of the Tabernacle and other congregations with the congregations raised by Wesley, was impracticable; Wesley, so far as there is evidence to show, did not desire it. Whitefield had no societies, for the societies in Wales really belonged not to him but to Howel Harris; Wesley had already societies from one end of the

kingdom to the other. Whitefield intended to spend his time chiefly in America; Wesley meant to stay in England. Whitefield, for the reasons he assigns, resolved to form no societies, but to be a mere evangelist; Wesley was resolved, for reasons stated at more than one of his annual conferences, to form societies wherever he and his preachers preached. Here the two friends parted, one in one direction, the other in another, both of them with hearts as warm as ever, and both equally animated with zeal for God and benevolence for man; but each, henceforth, cheerily pursuing his own chosen path, until both, laden with the spoils of a victorious war, were welcomed to the tranquillities and joys of their Father's house in heaven.

Hitherto Whitefield's preaching had chiefly been in fields and lanes, squares and streets, woods and wildernesses; but now, oddly enough, he was admitted into the drawing rooms of the rich and great.

The Right Honourable Selina, Countess of Huntingdon, wife of the Earl of Huntingdon, and sister of the Earl of Ferrars, was now in the forty-second year of her age. Her noble husband was a man of extensive learning, was most exemplary in his character, and treated his wife with great affection. At his death, in 1746, ninety-eight elegies were written concerning him, and were published under the title of *"Lacrymae Musarum."*

For two years past, the countess had been a widow. Hitherto, she had admirably fulfilled her duties in the higher

circles of society. At Donnington Park, she had been the "Lady Bountiful" among her neighbours and dependants; she had evinced great interest in their temporal and eternal welfare; and, besides encouraging the clergy in her own immediate neighbourhood, she had, more than once, dared to give a hearty welcome to the outcast Wesleys and their friends. Her heart was now pierced with the deepest sorrow, and was highly susceptible of religious impressions. Just at this juncture, Whitefield came back to England; his fervid eloquence attracted her attention; she made him her chaplain; and what Whitefield had resolved not to do, she did herself,—she founded societies, built chapels, appointed ministers, and formed a Methodist connexion apart from that which was formed by Wesley. She never renounced the Church of England; but she embraced views hardly compatible with its practices and well being. She was a child of emotion, carried onwards by an impulse not easily resisted or described. She had her annual conferences; the preachers whom she stationed were called "Lady Huntingdon's preachers"; and the connexion over which she presided was known by the name of "Lady Huntingdon's connexion." Perhaps her people were less efficiently organised; but she held to them the same relation that Wesley did to his. Her authority was parental and decisive. No one doubted the purity of her motives, and all trusted the general soundness of her judgment. Chapels were erected in London, Brighton, Tunbridge Wells, Bath, Bristol, Birmingham, and other places. Again and again, revivalists were sent from one end of the land to the other, preaching everywhere, and almost everywhere winning souls for Christ. A college, the first that

Methodism had, was opened at Trevecca, for the training of young ministers. The countess was the empress of the new connexion, and Whitefield was her prime minister. Wesley's connexion was Arminian; hers was Calvinist. His continues, and is more extended and powerful than ever; hers has long been broken up into Independent churches. Wesley died March 2, 1791, she on the 17th of June next ensuing.

The Countess of Huntingdon was, in many respects, the most remarkable woman of her age and country. She was far from faultless; but she was neither the gloomy fanatic, the weak visionary, nor the abstracted devotee, which different parties have painted her. Her endowments were above the ordinary standard, and were much improved by reading, conversation, study, and observation. Though not a beauty, she was not without the charms of the female sex. Her devotion to the work of God was almost unexampled. Her house was used for Methodist meetings, which were attended by large numbers of the nobility and higher classes, including the Duchesses of Argyll, Bedford, Grafton, Hamilton; Montagu, Queensberry, Richmond, and Manchester, and Lords Burlington, Townshend, North, March, Trentham, Weymouth, Tavistock, Hertford, Trafford, Northampton, Lyttelton, and others,—even William Pitt, During the last forty years of her life, she gave, at least, £100,000 for the support and extension of her system; and actually sold her jewels to find means for the building of Brighton chapel. Her life was a beautiful course of hallowed labour. Her death was the serene setting of a brilliant sun. Almost her last words were: "My work is done; I have nothing to do but to go to my

Father." She was a mother in Israel, whose decease left a vacancy not filled up. Her person, endowments, energy, and spirit were all uncommon. Accustomed to assume great responsibilities and to be deferred to in matters of great importance, she necessarily cultivated self reliance to such an extent as sometimes made her seem obstinate, haughty, and dogmatical. Still, dignity and ease met in her; and in manners she was refined, elegant, and engaging. Honour, heroism, and magnanimity were always conspicuous in her remarkable career; and, for intrepidity in the cause of God, and success in winning souls to Christ, Selina, Countess of Huntingdon, stands unequalled among women.

Six weeks after his return from America, Whitefield commenced preaching in her ladyship's mansion. Among his earliest hearers was the celebrated Lord Chesterfield, "a wit among lords, and a lord among wits." Twice a week, Whitefield preached to these conclaves of nobility and rank, his congregations usually consisting of about thirty persons.[33]

In London, he preached at St. Bartholomew's, and helped to administer the sacrament to a thousand communicants;[34] but, in other instances, his congregations were thin. He found that antinomianism had made sad havoc; but the scattered troops began to unite again.[35] He writes November 19: "Matters were in great confusion by reason of Mr. Cennick's going over to the Moravians"; and again on December 21: "I suppose not less than four hundred, through the practices of the Moravians, have left the Tabernacle. I have also been forsaken in other ways. I have not had above a hundred to

hear me, where I had twenty thousand; and hundreds now assemble within a quarter of a mile of me, who never come to see or speak to me; though they must own, at the great day, that I was their spiritual father. All this I find but little enough to teach me to cease from man, and to wean me from that too great fondness which spiritual fathers are apt to have for their spiritual children."[36]

No doubt, this was exceedingly distressing. But there was more than this to annoy the once popular preacher. Just at the time when Wesley got back to London, Whitefield set out for Scotland, where, on former occasions, he had won some of his greatest triumphs; but now a synod of his old friends, the Seceders, met in Edinburgh, on November 16, to adopt the "new modelled scheme and covenant." Hundreds took the oath, and solemnly engaged to use all lawful means to extirpate, not only "popery, prelacy, Arminianism, Arianism, tritheism, and Sabellianism," but also "George Whitefieldism"; and similar decisions were adopted at the synods of Lothian, Ayr, and Glasgow.[37]

And added to all this, there was another trouble of a different kind, in which Wesley was involved as well as Whitefield. Dr. Lavington was bishop of Exeter, and was a fervent hater of the Methodists. He had recently delivered a charge to the clergy of his diocese, and some mischievous person had published a piece, which falsely pretended to be the same as that which the bishop had addressed to his assembled ministers. This fictitious charge contained such a declaration of doctrines as exposed Lavington to the stigma

of a Methodist, and produced several pamphlets in reply and congratulation. His lordship was enraged; and advertised, in the public papers, that the pamphlet which had been affiliated upon himself was false; that the Methodist leaders were the authors of the fraud; and that, though there might be among the Methodists a few well meaning, ignorant people, yet the sect, as a whole, were deluded enthusiasts, and their teachers something worse than that.[38] Whitefield was accused as the principal, and the Wesleys were suspected as being his accomplices, in the spurious production. This was utterly untrue, but it occasioned Whitefield considerable annoyance. It so happened that the pamphlet had been sent to him in manuscript; but he denied its genuineness, and strongly condemned the injustice of its publication.[39] Still, the bishop persisted in his accusation. Lady Huntingdon wrote to him, assuring him that Whitefield and the Wesleys were innocent, and demanded a candid and honourable retractation of the charges against them. Her letter was accompanied by an acknowledgment, on the part of the printer, that no one was to blame for the publication except himself; and, that he received the manuscript from one who had no connection with the Methodists. His lordship maintained a sullen silence. The countess wrote again, declaring that, unless Lavington complied with her request, she would make the transaction public. This extorted a recantation, and an apology "to her ladyship, and to Messrs. Whitefield and Wesley for the harsh and unjust censures which he had passed upon them, and a wish that they would accept his unfeigned regret for having unjustly wounded their feelings, and exposed them to the odium of the world."[40]

The prelate recanted and apologized; but, henceforth, he became the most bitter and implacable reviler that the Methodist leaders had; and, within two years, began to publish his ribald and infamous attack, entitled "The Enthusiasm of Methodists and Papists compared."

Some good, however, arose out of this disreputable fracas. Among other pamphlets published, the following was one: "A Letter to the Right Rev. Father in God, George, Lord Bishop of Exeter. By a Clergyman of the Church of England." The writer states, that he has no acquaintance whatever with either Wesley or Whitefield; but he had read their books, and rejoiced in their revival of the grand old doctrine of justification by faith alone. He then proceeds to defend them against three accusations—1. That they had *left* the Church. 2. That they refused to be under political government. 3. That, though their preaching was right in the main, they were immethodical in their practice.

The pamphlet is chiefly remarkable for its being a defence of the Methodists by a clergyman, who had no connection with the Wesleys. It breathes piety, but lacks power.

Having spent a week in London, Wesley set out, on September 12, for Cornwall. He preached to a "multitude" near St. Stephen's Down, who were as silent as death, while he was speaking; but the moment he concluded, "the chain fell off their tongues. Never," says he, "was such a cackling made on the banks of Cayster, or the common of Sedgmoor." The St. Just society consisted "of one hundred and fifty

persons of whom more than a hundred were walking in the light of God's countenance." At Newlyn, his congregation were "a rude, gaping, staring rabble rout; some or other of whom were throwing dirt or stones continually."

On his return, he examined the Bristol society, and "left out every careless person, and every one who wilfully and obstinately refused to meet his brethren weekly. By this means the number of members was reduced from nine hundred to about seven hundred and thirty." He got back to London on the 15th of October, and remained in town and its immediate neighbourhood till the year expired. A short excursion was made to Windsor and Wycombe, and also to Leigh. He likewise preached at Wandsworth, where a little company had begun to seek and to serve God, though the rabble had pelted them with dirt and stones, and abused both men and women in the grossest manner.

His time, however, was partly occupied in writing. He had already formed the project of publishing "The Christian Library." Hence the following letter to Mr. Ebenezer Blackwell.

"NEWCASTLE, *August* 14, 1748.

"DEAR SIR,—I have had some thoughts of printing, on a finer paper, and with a larger letter, not only all that we have published already, but it may be, all that is most valuable in the English tongue, in threescore or fourscore volumes, in order to provide a complete library for those that fear God. I should print only a

hundred copies of each. Brother Downes would give himself up to the work; so that whenever I can procure a printing press, types, and some quantity of paper, I can begin immediately. I am inclined to think several would be glad to forward such a design; and if so, the sooner the better; because my life is far spent, and I know not how soon the night cometh wherein no man can work.

"I am, dear sir,

"Your affectionate brother and servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."[41]

This was a bold design, which he began to execute in the ensuing year, and for which he was already preparing materials. Mr. Blackwell was a partner in a banking house in Lombard Street, London; and though, for his plain honesty, he was often called the "rough diamond,"[42] he was one of Wesley's kindest and most valuable friends. To his country house, at Lewisham, Wesley was accustomed to retire, when writing for the press. Here he found an asylum during his serious illness in 1754. To him, Blackwell was wont to entrust considerable sums of money, for distribution among the poor.[43] Under such circumstances, no wonder that Wesley, with his small purse and large project, should submit his scheme to the London banker, for the purpose of ascertaining his willingness to help in its execution.

Happy deaths among the Methodists were now not unfrequent. Wesley mentions several; and the sanctified muse of his brother Charles never attained to loftier poetic heights than when celebrating such events. There were, however, at

the end of 1748, a number of deaths painful as well as pleasing. John Lancaster had been a regular attendant at the Foundery's five o'clock morning service, and had been converted; but, by degrees, had left off coming; and had rejoined his old companions, and fallen into sin. One day, when playing at skittles, he became the accomplice of a thief, and soon after broke into the Foundery, and stole two of the chandeliers. In this instance, he escaped detection; but, emboldened by success, he proceeded to steal nineteen yards of velvet, the property of Mr. Powell; and, for this, was tried at the Old Bailey sessions, in the month of August, and was sentenced to be hanged.[44] The poor wretch sent for Sarah Peters and some other of his old Methodist companions, to visit him in his cell. At the time, there were nine others in the same prison awaiting execution. Six or seven of them joined Lancaster and the Methodists in prayer, reading the Scriptures, and singing hymns. A pestilential fever was raging in the prison; but the visits were oft repeated. Lancaster professed to find peace with God. Thomas Atkins, a youth, nineteen years of age, condemned for highway robbery, said: "I bless God, I have laid my soul at the feet of Jesus, and am not afraid to die." Thomas Thompson, a horse stealer, exceedingly ignorant, was brought into the same state of mind. John Roberts, a burglar, at first utterly careless and sullen, became penitent and believing. William Gardiner, convicted of rape, said on his way to execution, "I have nothing to trust to but the blood of Christ! If that won't do, I am undone for ever." Sarah Cunningham, who had stolen a purse of twenty-seven guineas, at first went raving mad, but, in her lucid intervals, earnestly implored Christ to pity her.

Samuel Chapman, a smuggler, seemed to fear neither God nor devil, but, after Sarah Peters had talked to him, he began to cry aloud for mercy, was seized with the jail distemper, and was confined to his bed till carried to the gallows. Ten poor wretches, the above included, were executed at Tyburn, on October 28.[45] Six of them spent their last night together, in continuous prayer; and, on Sarah Peters visiting them early in the morning, several of them exclaimed, with a transport not to be expressed, "O what a happy night we have had! What a blessed morning is this!" The turnkey said he had never seen such people before; and, when the bellman came at noon, to tell them, as usual, "Remember, you are to die to-day!" they cried out, "Welcome news! welcome news!" When brought out for execution, Lancaster exclaimed, "O that I could tell a thousandth part of the joys I feel!" Atkins said, "Blessed be God, I am ready"; Gardiner cried, "I am happy, and think the moments long; for I want to die, to be with Christ"; Thompson witnessed the same confession. Spectators wept; and the officers looked like men affrighted. On their way to Tyburn, the convicts sang several hymns, and especially—

"Lamb of God, whose bleeding love
We still recal to mind,
Send the answer from above,
And let us mercy find:

Think on us, who think on Thee,
And every struggling soul release;
O remember Calvary,
And let us go in peace!"

Thus died Lancaster, a condemned felon, a quondam Methodist, one of his last prayers being, that the Foundery congregation might abound more and more in the knowledge and love of God, and that God would bless and keep the Wesleys, and that neither men nor devils might ever hurt them.

And what became of Sarah Peters? Six days after the execution, she was seized with malignant fever; and, ten days after that, she died. She was, says Wesley, "a lover of souls, a mother in Israel. During a close observation of several years, I never saw her, upon the most trying occasions, in any degree ruffled or discomposed; she was always loving, always happy. It was her peculiar gift, and her continual care, to seek and to save that which was lost; and, in doing this, God endued her, above her fellows, with the love that believeth, hopeth, and endureth all things."

Before closing the present chapter, all that remains is to note Wesley's publications during the year 1748. They were the following:—

1. "Thomae à Kempis de Christo Imitando Libri Tres. Interprete Sebast. Castellione. In Usum Juventutis Christianae. Edidit Ecclesiae Anglicanae Presbyter." 12mo, 143 pages.

2. "Historiae et Precepta selecta. In Usum Juventutis Christianae. Edidit Ecclesiae Anglicanae Presbyter." 12mo, 79 pages.

3. "Marthurini Corderii Colloquia selecta. In Usum Juventutis Christianae. Edidit Ecclesiae Anglicanae Presbyter." 12mo, 51 pages.

4. "Instructiones Praelectiones Pueriles. In Usum Juventutis Christianae. Edidit Ecclesiae Presbyter." 12mo, 39 pages.

5. "A Short English Grammar." 12mo, 12 pages.

6. "Lessons for Children." Part III., 12mo, 124 pages. The lessons are fifty-seven in number, and are taken from the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, Job, the Psalms, and Proverbs.

The whole of the above were class books in Kingswood school.

7. "Sermons on several Occasions." Vol. II., 12mo, 312 pages.

8. "A Word to a Methodist." 12mo, 8 pages. This was written in Wales, and was published in the Welsh language. The following is Wesley's account of it. "1748, March 27: Holyhead. Mr. Swindells informed me, that Mr. E——, the minister, would take it a favour, if I would write some little thing, to advise the Methodists not to leave the Church, and not to rail at their ministers. I sat down immediately and wrote, 'A Word to a Methodist,' which Mr. E—— translated into Welsh, and printed." In a letter to Howel Harris, dated "Holyhead, February 28, 1748," he says:—"I presume you

know how bitter Mr. Ellis, the minister here, used to be against the Methodists. On Friday, he came to hear me preach, I believe with no friendly intention. Brother Swindells spoke a few words to him, whereupon he invited him to his house. Since then, they have spent several hours together; and, I believe, his views of things are greatly changed. He commends you much for bringing the Methodists back to the Church; and, at his request, I have wrote a little thing to the same effect. He will translate it into Welsh, and then I design to print it, both in Welsh and English."[46]

9. "A Letter to a Friend concerning Tea." 12mo, 24 pages. This tract is a strongly worded condemnation of the use of tea; but, as the substance of it has been already given, a further description is unneeded.

10. "A Letter to a Clergyman." Dublin: Printed by S. Powell, Crane Lane. 12mo, 8 pages. This was written at Tullamore, in Ireland, on the 4th of May, 1748; and was occasioned by a conversation with the clergyman to whom it is addressed. Its object is to show, that the preacher whose preaching saves souls is a true minister of Christ, though he has not had a university education, is without learning, has never been ordained, and receives no temporal reward.

11. "A Letter to a Person lately joined with the People called Quakers. In answer to a Letter wrote by him." 12mo, 20 pages. Wesley takes his account of Quakerism from the writings of Robert Barclay, and shows wherein the system differs from Christianity; namely—1. Because it teaches that

the revelations of the Spirit of God, to a Christian believer, "are not to be subjected to the examination of the Scriptures as to a touchstone." 2. Because it teaches justification by works. 3. Because it sets aside ordination to the ministry by laying on of hands. 4. Because it allows women to be preachers. 5. Because it affirms that we ought not to pray or preach except when we are moved thereto by the Spirit; and that all other worship, both praises, prayers, and preachings, are superstitious, will worship, and abominable idolatries. 6. Because it alleges that "silence is a principal part of God's worship." 7. Because it ignores the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper. 8. Because it denies that it is lawful for Christians to give or receive titles of honour. 9. Because it makes it a part of religion to say *thee* or *thou*,—a piece of egregious trifling, which naturally tends to make all religion stink in the nostrils of infidels and heathens. 10. Because it teaches that it is not lawful for Christians to kneel, or bow the body, or uncover the head to any man; nor to take an oath before a magistrate.

In his wide wanderings, Wesley met with numbers of friendly Quakers, of whom he speaks in terms of commendation; but their system was one which he abhorred, and, in his "Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion," he speaks of the inconsistencies of their community in the most withering terms. "A silent meeting," said he in a letter to a young lady, "was never heard of in the church of Christ for sixteen hundred years."[47] And, in one of his letters to Archbishop Secker, he remarks: "Between me and the Quakers there is a great gulf fixed. The sacraments of baptism

and the Lord's supper keep us at a wide distance from each other; insomuch that, according to the view of things I have now, I should as soon commence deist as Quaker."[48]

ENDNOTES

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 158.
[2] Moore's Life of Wesley, vol. ii., p. 130.
[3] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 310.
[4] *Irish Evangelist,* Aug. 1, 1860.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 158.
[7] Minutes (edit. 1862).
[8] C. Wesley's Journal.
[9] C. Wesley's Journal.
[10] Page 12.
[11] Page 66.
[12] Southey says this was Lady Maxwell, forgetting that Wesley had no acquaintance with her ladyship for many a long year after this.
[13] Myles's Chronological History, p. 464.
[14] Wesley's Works, vol. xiii., p. 277.
[15] *Methodist Magazine,* 1852, p. 51.
[16] Manuscript letter.
[17] Wesley's Works, vol. xiii., p. 276.
[18] Short Account of Kingswood School, 1749.
[19] Myles's History; and *Methodist Magazine,* 1778, p. 533.
[20] *Methodist Magazine,* 1778, p. 533.
[21] Ibid. 1779, p. 42.
[22] Minutes (edit. 1862).
[23] *Methodist Magazine,* 1838, p. 555.
[24] "Methodism in Halifax," p. 65.
[25] "Methodism in Manchester," p. 116.
[26] Manuscript.

[27] Myles's Life of Grimshaw, p. 114.
[28] Myles's Life of Grimshaw, p. 73.
[29] Wesley's Works, vol. ii., p. 253.
[30] Manuscripts.
[31] "Methodism in Congleton Circuit," p. 38.
[32] Whitefield's Works, vol. ii., p. 370.
[33] Whitefield's Works, vol. ii., p. 200.
[34] Whitefield's Works, vol. ii., p. 150.
[35] Ibid. p. 156.
[36] Ibid. pp. 204, 215.
[37] *Gentleman's Magazine,* 1748, pp. 475, 523.
[38] *Scots Magazine,* 1748, p. 456.
[39] Whitefield's Works, vol. ii., p. 190.
[40] "Life and Times of Lady Huntingdon," vol. i., p. 96.
[41] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 160.
[42] Moore's Life of Wesley, vol. ii., p. 248.
[43] *Methodist Magazine,* 1848, p. 158.
[44] *London Magazine,* 1748, p. 426.
[45] Ibid. 1748, p. 476.
[46] Wesley's Works, vol. xiii., p. 152.
[47] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 488.
[48] Ibid. vol. xii., p. 74.

1749.

IN 1749, Wesley spent four months in London and its vicinity, nearly four in Ireland, ten weeks in Bristol, Wales, and the surrounding neighbourhood, and two months in his tour to the north of England.

His brother employed the year principally in Bristol, Wales, and London, and in visiting intermediate towns and villages.

Whitefield was five months in London, more than five in Bristol and the west of England, and about two were occupied in a visit to Newcastle and the north. In London, besides preaching in the Tabernacle and other places, he acted as the chaplain of the Countess of Huntingdon, and, in her mansion, continued to publish the gospel's glad tidings to the noble and the rich. Of his seventy-eight published letters, written during 1749, nearly half are addressed to titled ladies. Horace Walpole, in a letter, dated March 23, 1749, remarks: "Methodism in the metropolis is more fashionable than anything but brag; the women play very deep at both; as deep, it is much suspected, as the matrons of Rome did at the mysteries of the *Bona Dea*. If gracious Anne were alive, she would make an admirable defendress of the new faith, and would build fifty more churches for female proselytes."[1]

In another letter, dated the 3rd of May, he writes:—"If you ever think of returning to England, you must prepare yourself with Methodism. This sect increases as fast as almost any

religious nonsense ever did. Lady Frances Shirley has chosen this way of bestowing the dregs of her beauty; and Mr. Lyttelton is very near making the same sacrifice of the dregs of all those various characters he has worn. The Methodists love your big sinners, as proper subjects to work upon; and, indeed, they have a plentiful harvest. Flagrancy was never more in fashion; drinking is at the highest wine mark; and gaming is joined with it so violently, that, at the last Newmarket meeting, a bank bill was thrown down, and nobody immediately claiming it, they agreed to give it to a man standing by."[2]

Whitefield wrote: "I am a debtor to all, and intend to be at the head of no party. I believe my particular province is, to go about and preach the gospel to all. My being obliged to keep up a large correspondence in America, and the necessity I am under of going thither myself, entirely prevent my taking care of any societies. I profess to be of a catholic spirit. I have no party to be at the head of, and, through God's grace, will have none; but, as much as in me lies, strengthen the hands of all, of every denomination, that preach Jesus Christ in sincerity."[3]

His wife arrived from America at the end of June; and, a few weeks afterwards, he set out for the north of England. In Grimshaw's church, at Haworth, he had a thousand communicants; and, in the churchyard, about six thousand hearers. In Leeds, his congregation consisted of above ten thousand. On his way to Newcastle, Charles Wesley met him, and, returning with him, introduced him to the Orphan House

pulpit. Under the date of October 8, Charles writes "The Lord is reviving His work as at the beginning. Multitudes are daily added to His church. George Whitefield, my brother, and I, are one; a threefold cord, which shall no more be broken. The week before last, I waited on our friend George at our house in Newcastle, and gave him full possession of our pulpit and people's hearts, as full as was in my power to give. The Lord united all our hearts. I attended his successful ministry for some days. He was never more blessed, or better satisfied. Whole troops of the Dissenters he mowed down. They also are so reconciled to us, as you cannot conceive. The world is confounded. The hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice. At Leeds, we met my brother, who gave honest George the right hand of fellowship, and attended him everywhere to our societies. Some at London will be alarmed at the news; but it is the Lord's doing, as they will by-and-by acknowledge."[4]

Rightly or wrongly, we thus find Whitefield disassociated from all churches and all societies,—the friend of all, the enemy of none,—an evangelist, not a pastor, making it the one business of his life to spread gospel truth, and to convert sinners from sin to holiness, and from the power of Satan unto God.

Wesley intended to visit Rotterdam at the beginning of 1749; but was prevented by a request that he would write an answer to Dr. Middleton's book against the fathers. He says: "I spent almost twenty days in that unpleasing employment."

In the middle of the month of February, he and his brother, and Charles Perronet, set out from London for Mr. Gwynne's, in Wales, for the purpose of making final arrangements for Charles's marriage. John's proposal was to give his brother security for the payment of £100 per annum out of the profits of their publications. This was accepted as satisfactory, and Mr. Gwynne and Mr. Perronet were to act as the trustees. Miss Sally Gwynne promised to let Charles continue his vegetable diet and his travelling; and, though Mrs. Gwynne wished to stipulate that he should not go again to Ireland, this, at her daughter's request, was not enforced. It is a fact, however, that, for some reason, Charles Wesley never visited Ireland after he became the son-in-law of Mrs. Gwynne.

Having completed the negotiations for his brother's marriage, Wesley hurried off to Bristol; and, at Kingswood, collected together seventeen of his preachers, whom he divided into two classes, for the purpose of reading lectures to them every day, during Lent, as he had formerly done to his pupils at Oxford. To one class, he read Bishop Pearson on the Creed; to the other, Aldrich's Logic; and to both, "Rules for Action and Utterance." About a month seems to have been spent in this ministerial training. Who were Wesley's favoured pupils? This is a question we cannot answer; but, from the books selected, we learn that Wesley's object was—(1) To teach theology; (2) the science of reasoning; (3) the art of elocution. Leisure hours were occupied in making preparations for the "Christian Library," and in preaching in the surrounding neighbourhood. Once a week, also, he spent an hour with the assembled children of the four Kingswood

schools; namely, the boys boarded in the new house, the girls boarded in the old, the boys in the day-school taught by James Harding, and the girls taught in the day-school by Sarah Dimmock.[5]

Lent terminated on the 26th of March, and, a week afterwards, he returned to Wales for the purpose of performing his brother's marriage. This took place on the 8th of April, and was, in all respects, a happy one, though there was a considerable disparity in age, Charles being forty, and his bride only twenty-three. Her father was a respected magistrate; her mother an heiress of £30,000. The change from her father's mansion to a small house in Bristol was great; but she loved her husband, and was never known to regret the comforts she had left behind her. She became the mother of eight children: five died in infancy; three survived their parents, and, by their distinguished talent, added lustre even to the name of Wesley. She died on December 28, 1822, at the age of ninety-six. Her long life was an unbroken scene of devoted piety in its loveliest forms; and her death equally calm and beautiful.

Two days after his brother's marriage, Wesley set out for Ireland, where he landed at three o'clock on Sunday morning, April 16, and, on the same day, preached thrice to the Dublin Methodists. Having spent a fortnight in the city, where the members had increased from four hundred to four hundred and forty-nine, he started off on a visit to the provincial societies. At Edinberry, he had "an exceedingly well behaved congregation," including "many Quakers," and took the

appropriate text, "They shall be all taught of God." At Athlone, his audience comprised seven or eight of the officers, and many of the soldiers of the regiment to which John Nelson had been attached. Great numbers of papists also attended, maugre the labour of their priests. Several sinners were converted, including a man, who, for many years, had been "eminent for cursing, swearing, drinking, and all kinds of fashionable wickedness." At Limerick, Wesley preached to about two thousand people, not one of whom either laughed, or looked about, or minded anything except the sermon. Here the society had taken a lease of an old abbey, and had turned it into a Methodist meeting-house. He met a class of soldiers, eight of whom were Scotch Highlanders; and was introduced to a gentlewoman of unspotted character, who, for two years, had fancied herself forsaken of God, and possessed with devils; and who blasphemed and cursed, and vehemently desired and yet was afraid to die. Of the Limerick society, he writes: "The more I converse with this people, the more I am amazed. That God hath wrought a great work among them, is manifest; and yet the main of them, believers and unbelievers, are not able to give a rational account of the plainest principles of religion. It is plain, God begins His work at the heart; then 'the inspiration of the Highest giveth understanding.'"

Having employed seventeen days in Limerick, Wesley, on the 29th of May, set out for Cork; but, on the way, Charles Skelton met him, with the tidings that, in consequence of the late riots (which will be noticed presently), it was now impossible to preach in that city. Wesley was not to be

deterred; but he had no sooner entered than "the streets, and doors, and windows were full of people." Prudently enough, instead of staying, he rode on to Bandon, a town entirely inhabited by Protestants, where he had, by far, the largest congregations he had seen in Ireland. Here he met a clergyman, who had come twelve miles purposely to talk with him. All, however, was not smooth sailing even at Bandon. Dr. B—— averred (1) That both John and Charles Wesley had been expelled the university of Oxford. (2) That there was not a Methodist left in Ireland, except in Cork and Bandon, all the rest having been rooted out, by order of the government. (3) That neither were there any Methodists left in England. And (4) that Methodism was all Jesuitism at the bottom. Wesley took the opportunity of replying to these slanderous falsehoods; and then proceeded to Blarney, where he found another rumour, that the Methodists placed all religion in wearing long whiskers. At Brough, he preached to "some stocks and stones"; and then got back to Limerick, whose society he pronounced the *liveliest* people he had found in Ireland.

Here he "spent four comfortable days," when, having appointed himself to preach at Nenagh, he was obliged to leave; and, for want of better accommodation, was glad to ride on horseback behind "an honest man," who overtook him as he trudged on foot. At Gloster, he preached "in the stately saloon" of a beautiful mansion, built by an English gentleman. At Ferbane, where he meant to dine, he stopped at two different inns, but found that "they cared not to entertain heretics." Again reaching Athlone, he preached in the new

built chapel, and, towards the close of his discourse, cried out, "Which of you will give yourself, soul and body, to God?" Mrs. Glass responded, with a cry that almost shook the house, "I will, I will." Two others followed, and the scene became most exciting. Numbers began to cry aloud for mercy, and, in four days, more found peace with God than had done in sixteen months before. At Portarlington, a town chiefly inhabited by French, he met a clergyman, who was a defender of the Methodists, and formed a society of above a hundred persons.

More than nine weeks were occupied in this excursion. On the 5th of July, Wesley got back to Dublin, and, a fortnight afterwards, returned to England; but, before leaving Ireland, we must recur to Cork.

For some time, Methodism, in Cork, met with no serious opposition; but, at length, by the secret plottings of the clergy, the town corporation was moved, and a ballad singer of the name of Butler was engaged to be the leader of a mob. This despicable fellow, dressed in a parson's gown and bands, with a Bible in one hand and a bundle of ballads in the other, sang and vended, in the streets, doggerel rhymes, stuffed with the vilest lies respecting the Methodists; and, by this means, inflamed the populace against them. On the 3rd of May, Butler and his ragged retinue assembled at the Methodist meeting-house, and pelted the congregation with dirt. On the day following, stones, as well as mire, were thrown; and both men and women were attacked with clubs and swords, and many were most seriously wounded. On the 5th of May, the

mob was greater than ever; the mayor, who saw numbers of the people covered with sludge and blood, refused to interfere; and the two sheriffs of the city, entering the chapel, drove the congregation among the rioters, and nailed up the doors. John Stockdale was beaten, bruised, and gashed; and his wife thrown to the ground, and almost murderously abused. For ten days ensuing, Butler and his rabble assembled before the house of Daniel Sullivan,[6] a baker; beat and abused his customers; then broke his windows and spoiled his goods, the mayor of the city being an indifferent spectator. Not content with this, for another fortnight, the rioters daily gathered at the front of Sullivan's shattered dwelling, and threatened to pull it down. He applied to the mayor for protection. His worship answered, "It is your own fault for entertaining those preachers." Upon this, the mob set up a loud huzza, and threw stones faster than ever. Sullivan said, "This is fine usage under a protestant government; if I had a priest saying mass in my house, it would not be touched." The mayor replied, "The priests are tolerated, but you are not;" and the crowd, thus encouraged, continued throwing stones till midnight. On May 31, the day that Wesley passed through Cork, Butler and his friends assembled at the chapel, and beat, and bruised, and cut the congregation most fearfully. The rioters burst open the chapel doors; tore up the pews, the benches, and the floor, and burnt them in the open street. Other outrages were perpetrated almost daily during the month of June. Butler and his gang of ruffians went from street to street, and from house to house, abusing, threatening, and maltreating the Methodists at their pleasure. Some of the women narrowly escaped with life. Butler, addressing

Thomas Burnet, said, "You are a heretic dog; your soul will burn in hell." Burnet meekly asked, "Why do you use me thus?" Upon which Butler struck him with a stone, and rendered him incapable of working for upwards of a week; and, at the same time, without the least provocation, hit his wife, and so hurt her that she was obliged to take to her bed. Ann Cooshea and her family were called heretic bitches; and then a huge stone was thrown at her head with such force as to render her insensible. Ann Wright was told, by the same inhuman wretches, that they would make her house hotter than hell; her goods were dashed to pieces; while she herself was pelted with all kinds of missiles, and had to quit her shop, and flee for her very life. Margaret Griffin had her clothes torn to tatters; was cut in the mouth; and beaten and abused to such a degree, that she was covered with gore, and spat blood for several days. Jacob Connor was fearfully wounded, and, had not a gentleman interposed, would probably have been killed. Ann Hughes, besides being called most abusive names, was dragged by Butler along the ground; had her clothing rent in pieces; and was stabbed and slashed in both her arms by the sword of the ferocious brute. Butler and his troop came to Mary Fuller's shop, brandishing a dagger, and swearing he would cleave her skull. He then made a stroke at her head, which must have killed her, had not Henry Dunkle diverted the felon's aim. Dunkle was seized; had his shirt and clothes torn to tatters; and narrowly escaped an untimely death, by the interference of neighbours. Mary Fuller fled for life, and had her goods hacked to pieces. Margaret Tremnell was violently struck with a club on her arm and back; stones were hurled

into her shop; and her property was partly destroyed by the swords of Butler's mob, and partly thrown into the street.

For two months, these horrible outrages were continued; and, at the end of that period, Wesley writes:—"It was not for those who had any regard, either to their persons or goods, to oppose Mr. Butler after this. So the poor people patiently suffered, till long after this, whatever he and his mob were pleased to inflict upon them."

Of these subsequent sufferings details are wanting. We only know that, on the 19th of August, twenty-eight depositions respecting Nicholas Butler and his crew were laid before the grand jury of the Cork assizes, and were all thrown out. At the same time, the same jurists made a memorable presentment, "which," says Wesley, "is worthy to be preserved in the annals of Ireland, to all succeeding generations," to wit, that Charles Wesley, and seven other Methodist preachers therein named, together with Daniel Sullivan, the honest baker, were all persons of ill fame, vagabonds, and common disturbers of his majesty's peace, and ought to be transported.

This, of course, gave Butler greater licence than ever. His fiendish persecutions had received a sort of semi-official sanction, and were carried on with the greatest gusto. Even as late as February, 1750, ten months after the outrages first commenced, we find him and his friends entering the house of William Jewell, breaking his windows, beating his wife, and swearing that they would blow out his brains if he offered

the least resistance. Mary Philips was abused in the grossest terms, was struck on the head, and narrowly escaped an untimely death. Elizabeth Gardelet, a soldier's wife, was met by Butler and his rabble; and, without any provocation, the brute struck her with both his fists, and beat her head against a wall. On escaping from him, he pursued her and struck her in the face. Running into a school-yard for shelter, he vociferated, "You whore, you stand on consecrated ground;" threw her across the lane; knocked her down backwards; and otherwise so ill treated her as to occasion her miscarriage.

Several depositions, to this effect, were laid before the grand jury of the Lent assizes; but, like those at the assizes preceding, were all rejected. A true bill, however, was found against Daniel Sullivan for discharging a pistol, without a ball, over the heads of Butler and his mob, while they were pelting him with stones. Several of the preachers, presented as vagabonds in autumn, appeared at these assizes, and were ordered into the dock of common criminals. Butler was the first witness against them. The judge, looking at him with a suspicious eye, asked what his calling was. The worthless fellow hung down his head, and sheepishly replied, "I sing ballads, my lord." The judge lifted up his hands in surprise, and said, "Here are six gentlemen," (so he was pleased to style them,) "indicted as vagabonds, and the first accuser is a vagabond by profession." A second witness, being called, was asked the same question. He impudently answered, "I am an anti-swaddler, my lord." The judge resented the insolence, and ordered the buffoon out of court. Then turning to the jury, he reprimanded the corporation and others, for suffering such

a vagrant as Butler to be the ringleader of a rabble, who had committed such atrocious outrages upon so many of the peaceable and respectable inhabitants of the city; and declared that it was an insult to the court to bring such a case before him. The abettors of this infamous persecution were put to shame, and Butler was discarded; but the riots, as we shall see in the next chapter, were still continued.

One of the rabble was, shortly afterwards, buried in a coffin made of two of the benches which he had stolen from the Methodist meeting-house; while the notorious Butler, in the first instance, went to Waterford, where, in another riot, he lost an arm;[7] and then fled to Dublin, where he dragged out the remainder of his life in well deserved misery, and was actually saved from starving by the charity of the Dublin Methodists.[8]

To these abominable outrages we are indebted for several of Wesley's tracts, published at this period; as his "Short Address to the Inhabitants of Ireland"; his "Letter to a Roman Catholic"; his "Roman Catechism"; and others, which will be noticed more fully hereafter.

We now return to England. In the month of April, a letter was published in the *Bath Journal*, alleging that many Methodists of eminence had been publicly charged with the crimes of fornication and adultery, and that one of their preachers had preached the lawfulness of polygamy. Wesley replied to this infamous accusation while in Ireland, and, of course, denied the reported slander.[9]

On August 28, he set out on a two months' journey to the north of England, during which occurred one of the most painful episodes in his eventful life. But before proceeding further, some account must be given of two of the chief actors in this humiliating scene.

John Bennet was born at Chinley, in Derbyshire; received a good education; was fond of books; and, at the age of seventeen, was placed under the care of Dr. Latham, near Derby, with a view of his studying for the office of the Christian ministry. Before long, however, he engaged himself as clerk to a magistrate; and, at twenty-two, embarked in the business of carrier between Sheffield and Macclesfield, employing a number of horses for conveying goods across mountains, over which carts and wagons had never passed.[10] In 1739, he went to Sheffield races; heard David Taylor preach; sold his racehorse; brought Taylor into Derbyshire; and was converted. He soon relinquished all secular pursuits, and began to preach himself; his "round," as it was called, extending to Macclesfield, Burslem, Chester, Whitehaven, Bolton, and Manchester.[11] In 1742, he first met with Wesley; and, a year later, became one of his itinerants, and attended the first Methodist conference in 1744.[12] On October 3, 1749, he was married to Grace Murray. Meanwhile, he had introduced Methodism into Stockport and the city of Chester; had been mobbed in Manchester; and had formed a society in Rochdale.[13] At the conference following his marriage, he was appointed to the Cheshire circuit, and was desired to furnish a plan for conducting quarterly meetings; and to pay a special visit to Wednesbury and Newcastle, for the purpose of

teaching the Methodists of these circuits "the nature and method" of such meetings.[14] Soon after, he began to grumble, and wrote to Whitefield complaining of Wesley's discipline and doctrine. Whitefield replied, on June 29, 1750, as follows:—

> "I am utterly unconcerned in the discipline of Mr. Wesley's societies. I can be no competent judge of their affairs. If you and the rest of the preachers were to meet together more frequently, and tell each other your grievances and opinions, it might be of service. This may be done in a very friendly way; and, thereby, many uneasinesses might be prevented. After all, those that will live in peace must agree to disagree in many things with their fellow labourers, and not let little things part or disunite them. I know not well what you mean about gospel privileges. If you mean lovefeasts, bands, etc., these I think are prudential means, and, therefore, prudence should be exercised in the use of them. I am of your opinion, that too much familiarity in these things is hurtful. But it is hard to keep a medium, where a multitude is concerned. As ill effects are discovered, they should be corrected and avoided. The question and answer you refer to, I do not like. I know nothing of Christ's righteousness being imputed to all mankind. It is enough to say with the Scriptures, 'that it is imputed to all believers.' Another seven years' experience will teach some to handle the word of life in a better manner. You would do well to read more; but whether it would be best for you to pursue, or re-assume, your old

studies, unless you are determined to settle, I cannot tell. Reading a *Latin* author, a little every day, could do you no hurt. It has been my judgment, that it would be best for many of the present preachers to have a tutor, and retire for a while, and be content with preaching now and then, till they were a little more improved. Otherwise, I fear many who now make a temporary figure, for want of a proper foundation, will run themselves out of breath, will grow weary of the work, and leave it. This is the plan I purpose to pursue abroad. Look to Jesus, and let not little things disappoint and move you. If this be your foible, beware, and pray that Satan may not get an advantage over you. He will be always striving to vex and unhinge you. The Lord be with you and yours, and give Mrs. Bennet faith and courage in her approaching hour!"[15]

Besides being in other respects of some importance, Whitefield's letter will help the reader to understand Bennet's subsequent career. It was not nine months since his marriage with Grace Murray; and, eighteen months after this, he stood up in the Bolton chapel, and said, "I have no longer any connection with Mr. Wesley. He denies the perseverance of the saints, and asserts sinless perfection. All of you, who are of my mind, follow me." The society did so; for, out of a hundred and twenty-seven members, only nineteen remained faithful. He then went to Stockport, where, after preaching, he met the society, told them what he had done at Bolton, and added, "You must take either me or Mr. Wesley." They all joined him, but one, Molly Williamson. He promised to

preach to them every fortnight; but, within a year, uttterly forsook them.[16]

Here we have the first Methodist agitator. Bennet pursued his divisive career. On December 30, 1751, Thomas Mitchell preached at Bolton, after which Bennet met the shattered society, spoke bitterly of Wesley, and said he was a pope, and preached nothing but popery. Spreading out his hands, he cried, "Popery! popery! popery! I have not been in connection with him these three years, neither will I be any more." Thomas Mitchell said, "The spirit in which you now speak is not of God; neither are you fit for the pulpit, while you are of such a spirit"; upon which a woman struck Mitchell in the face. The congregation was now in uproar, and Mitchell quietly retired. The day following, however, Bennet went to the quarterly meeting, and repeated to all the stewards of the circuit what he had said, on the previous evening, to the Bolton society. "His mind," says Thomas Mitchell, "was wholly set against Mr. Wesley, and against the whole Methodist doctrine and discipline; and he had so infused his own spirit into the people in many places, that I had hard work among them. But the Lord kept my soul in peace and love. Glory be unto His holy name!"[17]

Such was John Bennet, the first Methodist reformer,—a man of respectable social position, and a classical scholar; but a man not overstocked with honesty and honour, a man of energy, but somewhat conceited, a hard worker, and, we hope, devout, but also suspicious, testy, and vindictive,—a man whose early labours were greatly blessed, but who, in 1754,

settled at Warburton, a small village of four or five hundred inhabitants, situated about six miles eastward of the town of Warrington; where, in a chapel erected for his use, he continued to preach Calvinistic doctrines for the next five years, when he was seized with jaundice, and, after an illness of thirty-six weeks, finished his course on May 24, 1759, aged forty-five.[18] His wife, who had no little experience, says she never saw any saint's death to equal his. Addressing him, she said, "Thou art not afraid of dying?" "No," he answered, "I am assured, beyond a doubt, that I shall be with Christ. I long to be dissolved. Come, Lord Jesus! Loose me from the prison of this clay!" She asked again, "Canst thou now stake thy soul on the doctrines thou hast preached?" "Yes," said he, "ten thousand souls. It is the everlasting truth. Stick by it." He then prayed for his wife, his children, and the church, after which he said, "I long to be gone. I am full. My cup runneth over. Sing, sing, yea, shout for joy"; and with the words, "Sing, sing, sing," upon his lips, he died.

Grace Murray, his wife and widow, was the daughter of Robert and Grace Norman, of Newcastle upon Tyne, and was born January 28, 1716. In early childhood, she was religiously disposed, read the Bible, and gave all her pence to relieve the poor. Between eight and nine she was sent to a dancing school, lost her religious impressions, and became an admired companion of the gay and frivolous. At sixteen, she commenced sweethearting, and, at eighteen, was pressed by her attentive swain to marry; but, being averse to this, she removed to London to her sister. Here she became a servant, and, as far as her circumstances permitted, was swallowed up

in worldly pleasures and diversions. At the age of twenty, she married a sailor of the name of Alexander Murray, who, three or four days after the marriage ceremony, went to sea, and was absent for ten or eleven months. Her husband, however, though a sailor, was related to a Scottish family of some importance, who, being concerned in the rebellion of 1715, had forfeited their estate, and suffered other loss and inconvenience. Her first affliction was the death of an infant child, fourteen months of age. This made her serious, and she began to attend the ministry of Whitefield and the Wesleys. She became a penitent; and, while reading Romans v., found peace with God, through faith in Christ. Her husband, returning from a voyage, and finding she had become a Methodist, swore that she should not hear the Methodists again. Grace told him, that if she yielded to him in this, she should lose her soul. He stamped and raved and swore:" You shall leave them or me." She answered: "I love you above any one else on earth; but I will leave you and all that I have, sooner than I will leave Christ." He threatened to send her to the mad house in West Gardens. She replied: "I am ready to go not only to prison, but to death. I know in whom I have believed, and am confident He would give me strength to confess Him in the flames." Her husband said: "If you are resolved to go on thus, I will leave you; I will go as far as ships can sail." She answered: "I cannot help it; I could lay down my life for you; but I cannot destroy my soul. If you are resolved to go, you must go; I give you up to God."

In process of time, Murray softened, and he himself became a penitent, desiring nothing so much as to know Jesus

Christ and Him crucified. In August, 1741, he sailed for Virginia, and, in the same month of the year following, the ship returned with the tidings that he had been drowned at sea.

In October, Grace Murray returned to her mother's, at Newcastle, a young, fascinating widow of twenty-six. She was no sooner settled, than John Brydon fell in love with her, and, though there was no engagement, it was commonly supposed they were about to marry. Meanwhile, she was appointed leader of several classes, and made excursions to Horsley, Tanfield, and neighbouring villages, speaking to the people, and praying with the societies. Thomas Meyrick, one of the preachers, being ill, she, at Wesley's desire, removed to the Orphan House to take care of him; but a feminine squabble between her and sister Jackson soon led to her returning to her mother's.

In the spring of 1743, she came back to London; and then returned to Newcastle in the autumn following, where she devoted herself altogether to the service of the church. Her home was the Orphan House. Part of every week she spent with her classes and the sick; the rest in visiting the country societies. She and sister Jackson had renewed quarrels, which, at the end of a year, led to her again retiring from what ought to have been a holy and happy family. In the meantime, John Brydon married another woman, and soon became careless about religious matters. "This," says Grace Murray, "shocked me exceedingly. I was afraid his blood would be upon my head, because I did not marry him." She fell into deep

despondency; saw nothing but hell before her; wished she had been a beast or creeping thing; was tempted to dash out her brains. "I was got to such a pass," she says, "that no preaching did me any good; so wise, that I thought I knew all before the preacher spoke. The Holy Spirit was grieved. My state daily grew worse and worse; and I was even ready to disbelieve in the Bible itself." For about two years, she continued in this mournful and distressed condition, when she was again enabled to rejoice in God her Saviour, and again became an inmate of the Orphan House. Here, during the autumn of 1745 and the spring of 1746, besides her usual employment in town and country, she had to nurse John Haughton, William Sheppard, and Thomas Westall, all of whom were seriously attacked by fever. In 1747, she had to render the same service to John Wheatley, Edward Dunstan, and Eleazer Webster, who were all ill in the house together. John Bennet, also, was seized with fever, and for twenty-six weeks was tended by her with the greatest care. Such was the life she lived until the autumn of 1748, when she and the other Orphan House sisters again had quarrels, and, for this and another reason to be mentioned shortly, she left the family for ever.

In October, 1749, she became the wife of John Bennet, and, of course, was with him in all his disreputable railings against Wesley. To some extent, she sympathised with the action that her husband took, and also embraced his Calvinistic creed. She was left a widow with five sons, the eldest not eight years old; and, ever after, lived a life of religious retirement. She rose early, prayed much, watched the education of her children, observed great order in her

domestic matters, read largely, entertained gospel ministers, visited the sick, and had weekly meetings for prayer and Christian fellowship, chiefly conducted by herself. Having seen those of her children, who were spared, settled in life, she removed to Chapel-en-le-frith, where she again joined the Methodists, and had a class-meeting in her house. Her diary, begun in 1792 and continued for eight years afterwards, when her eyesight failed her, is rich and beautiful. She died on February 23, 1803, aged eighty-seven, after a widowhood of nearly four and forty years. Her last words were: "Glory be to Thee, my God; peace Thou givest." Dr. Bunting, at that time one of the circuit preachers, preached her funeral sermon, from a text of her own choosing: "I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living."[19]

We now reluctantly proceed to dwell on matters of extreme delicacy, and which, under ordinary circumstances, ought not to be introduced; but the case before us is exceptional. John Wesley's courtship with Grace Murray has been noticed by all his biographers; but, as Mr. Jackson observes:—"all the circumstances of the case have never been disclosed, and the affair is still involved in considerable mystery."[20] In its ultimate effects, it was one of the great events in Wesley's history. Curiosity has been excited, but never satisfied. What is the truth respecting it? Who was the faithless one? What were the tricks employed? Who were the censurable parties? Did Wesley act discreetly, or did he act dishonourably? Does the transaction stain the character of the great reformer, or is he innocent and injured? These are questions of some

importance, and must serve as an apology for the introduction of details usually omitted in the biographical memoirs of illustrious men.

It has been already stated, that Charles Wesley contemplated marriage early in the year 1748. In the month of August following, his brother was seized, at Newcastle, with what seems to have been a bilious attack, and which, to some extent, disabled him, though, during its six days' continuance, he managed to preach at Biddick, at Pelton, at Spen, at Horsley, and at Newcastle. Grace Murray attended him during his sickness. When he was somewhat recovered, he proposed to marry her. She seemed amazed, and said, "This is too great a blessing for me; I can't tell how to believe it. This is all I could have wished for under heaven!" From that time, Wesley regarded her as his affianced bride.

In a week or ten days after making his proposal of marriage, Wesley was obliged to leave Newcastle for the south. The night before he started, he told Grace Murray that he was fully convinced God intended her to be his wife; and that, though they must part at present, he hoped when they again met, they would part no more. The young widow begged they might not separate so soon, saying it was more than she could bear. Upon this, Wesley took her with him through Yorkshire and Derbyshire, where, he says, "she was unspeakably useful both to him and to the societies." Here they parted, Grace Murray being left with Bennet, and Wesley making his way to London.

Is it unfair to suspect some dishonourable collusion here? Let us see. A year before, John Bennet, for twenty-six weeks, was an invalid in the Orphan House, at Newcastle, and was nursed by widow Murray. From that time, they carried on an epistolary correspondence. Meanwhile, Wesley had proposed marriage, and his proposal had been ardently accepted. Grace Murray was so deeply smitten, that she was unable to bear the thought of Wesley leaving her. To satisfy and give her pleasure, he, perhaps indiscreetly, took her with him; but, on reaching John Bennet's circuit, he was permitted to proceed alone, and she contentedly remained with a man whom she had nursed in sickness for half a year, and with whom she had corresponded ever since. Added to all this, no sooner had Wesley left the loving couple, than they both wrote to him; Bennet desiring his consent to marry her; and she declaring that she believed it was the will of God she should. Wesley was "utterly amazed, but wrote a mild answer to both, supposing they were married already." Further correspondence followed. For six months, immediately succeeding, she coquetted between the two. When she heard from Wesley, she resolved to live and to die with him. When Bennet wrote, she replied to him in the tenderest terms. In February, 1749, she sent to Bennet the intelligence, that Wesley had requested her to accompany him to Ireland; that, if he loved her, he must meet her at Sheffield; and that, if he failed in this, she could not answer for results. Bennet determined to go to Sheffield; but, at the last moment, was prevented by the death of a relative. The widow, therefore, went on to Bristol without seeing him. Here there were mutual explanations. She related to Wesley what had passed

between Bennet and herself, and seemed to think, that the contract was binding. Wesley, on the other hand, reminded her of what had passed between himself and her; and she professed herself quite convinced, that her engagement with Bennet was not binding; and, accordingly, she and Wesley went off to Ireland.

Here they passed several months together. "She examined all the women in the smaller societies, and the believers in every place. She settled all the women bands, visited the sick, prayed with the mourners, more and more of whom received remission of sins, during her conversation or prayer." To Wesley himself "she was both a servant and a friend, as well as a fellow labourer in the gospel. She provided everything he wanted; and told him, with all faithfulness and freedom, if she thought anything amiss in his behaviour. The more they conversed together, the more he loved her; and, at Dublin, they contracted by a contract *de praesenti*. All this while she neither wrote to Bennet, nor he to her."

At the end of July, they returned to Bristol. Here she heard some idle tales concerning Wesley and Molly Francis. Jealousy took possession of her, and she addressed a loving letter to forsaken Bennet, and received an answer, that he would meet her in her journey to the north.

In August, she came with Wesley to London. Here a friend advised her to abandon the thought of marrying Wesley, on the ground, that the London Methodists would never treat her with the respect which Wesley's wife ought to have; and, that

she had not sufficient humility and meekness to bear the slights that would be cast upon her.

On August 28, they started for Newcastle; and, at Epworth, John Bennet met them. Wesley began to "speak to him freely." Bennet told him, that Grace Murray had sent to him all the letters which Wesley had sent to her. This decided Wesley. He judged it right, that she and Bennet should marry without delay, and wrote her a line accordingly. On receiving it, she ran to Wesley "in an agony of tears, and begged him not to talk so, unless he designed to kill her." Immediately after, Bennet came to Wesley, and "claimed her as his right"; and Wesley again "determined to give her up." Four or five days were spent at Epworth. Wesley had fully made up his mind to let John Bennet have her, though he felt the deepest anguish from what he calls "a piercing conviction of his irreparable loss." While thus suffering, a message was brought him, that "sister Murray was exceeding ill." He went to her. She cried, "How can you think I love any one better than I love you! I love you a thousand times better than I ever loved John Bennet in my life. But I am afraid, if I don't marry him, he'll run mad." At night, Bennet came to visit her, and, at his urgent request, she again promised to be his wife. Next morning she told Wesley what had passed; and he was more perplexed than ever.

On September 4, they proceeded to Newcastle, resting on the way at Sykehouse, and at Osmotherley. For several days, Wesley was unable to decide how to act; but on September 6, he asked her, "Which will you choose?" Again and again she

declared, "I am determined, by conscience as well as by inclination, to live and die with you." Accordingly, the day following, he wrote a long letter to Bennet, remonstrating with him on his unjust, unkind, and treacherous behaviour. This was sent by the hand of William Shent, but was not delivered. She also wrote to Bennet to the same effect.

She now urged Wesley to marry her *immediately*. To this he objected, because he wished—(1) To satisfy John Bennet; (2) to procure his brother's consent; (3) to send an account of his reasons for marrying to all his preachers and societies, and to desire their prayers. She said she would not be willing to wait longer than a year. He answered, "Perhaps less time will suffice." She seemed satisfied, and every day and almost every hour assured him of the most intense and inviolable affection; and declared God had now united them for ever.

She was not without enemies, and Wesley took the opportunity of inquiring their reasons for disliking her. Sister Lyddell's reason was, because Grace had had the impudence to ride into Newcastle with him. Mr. Williams accused her of not lending his wife her saddle; and Mrs. Williams of buying a holland shift. Nancy and Peggy Watson were angry, because she had bought a joseph before she wanted it. Ann Matteson complained of her being proud and insolent; and Betty Graham of her spending ten shillings upon an apron. Wesley regarded all this as the fruit of vexatious jealousy.

On September 20 they went, with Christopher Hopper, to Hineley Hill. Hopper was made their confidant. In his

presence, they renewed the contract they had made in Dublin; after which he was despatched to Chinley, in Derbyshire, to try to satisfy John Bennet. Wesley himself went forward to Whitehaven; his betrothed being left behind to examine the women bands in Allandale.

Meanwhile, Wesley had written to his brother Charles at Bristol. Charles was shocked at the thought of his brother marrying at all, and especially of his marrying a woman who had been a domestic servant; and believed, that it would break up all their societies, and put a stop to the work of God. Instead of replying to his brother's letter, Charles hurried down to Leeds, and thence posted to Newcastle, where Jeannie Keith informed him that, in consequence of his brother's contemplated marriage, the town was in an uproar, and all the societies ready to fall in pieces. He hastened to Whitehaven, and told his brother, that all their preachers would leave them, and all their societies disperse, if he married so mean a woman. Wesley weighed the reasons alleged against his marrying. He acknowledges that, at the age of seven and twenty, he was persuaded that "it was unlawful for a priest to marry"; and that, soon after, he was brought to think that there was some degree of taint upon the mind, necessarily attending the marriage bed. Further inquiry, however, had led him to alter his opinions. The meanness of Grace Murray's origin was no objection, for he had regarded her, not for her birth, but for her qualifications. She was remarkably neat; nicely frugal, yet not sordid; gifted with a large amount of common sense; indefatigably patient, and inexpressibly tender; quick, cleanly, and skilful; of an

engaging behaviour, and of a mild, sprightly, cheerful, and yet serious temper; while, lastly, her gifts for usefulness were such as he had not seen equalled. His conclusions were: (1) "have scriptural reason to marry. (2) I know no person so proper as this."

Next morning his brother left him, and proceeded to Hineley Hill. Meeting the intended bride, he kissed her, and said, "Grace Murray, you have broken my heart." By some means, he persuaded her to ride behind him to Newcastle, where John Bennet was awaiting their arrival. She fell at her lover's feet, acknowledged she had used him ill, and begged he would forgive her. Within a week, the two were made man and wife in St. Andrew's church.

Whitefield was at Leeds, and, by Joseph Cownley, wrote to Wesley, desiring him to come to him. Wesley went, and was told by Whitefield, that his brother refused to leave Newcastle till John Bennet and Grace Murray had been united in marriage bonds. Perceiving Wesley's trouble, Whitefield wept and prayed over him, and did all he could to comfort him. The day after, Charles and the newly married couple came. Charles, with characteristic impetuosity, accosted his brother, saying, "I renounce all intercourse with you, but what I would have with a heathen man or a publican." Whitefield and John Nelson burst into tears; prayed, cried, and entreated, till the storm passed over. The brothers, unable to speak, fell on each other's neck. John Bennet was introduced; but, instead of upbraiding, Wesley kissed him. Wesley and his brother had a private interview, and, on hearing explanations,

Charles was utterly amazed, exonerated him from blame, and declared that all the culpability was hers.

Thus the matter ended. Wesley patiently submitted; but this was, unquestionably, one of the greatest trials of his life. In a long hymn of thirty-one six lined stanzas, he poured forth the sorrows of his heart.[21] Four days after the marriage, he wrote as follows, to Mr. Thomas Bigg, of Newcastle:—

"LEEDS, *October* 7, 1749.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—Since I was six years old, I never met with such a severe trial as for some days past. For ten years, God has been preparing a fellow labourer for me, by a wonderful train of providences. Last year I was convinced of it; therefore I delayed not, but, as I thought, made all sure beyond a danger of disappointment. But we were soon after torn asunder by a whirlwind. In a few months, the storm was over; I then used more precaution than before, and fondly told myself that the day of evil would return no more. But it too soon returned. The waves rose again since I came out of London. I fasted and prayed, and strove all I could; but the sons of Zeruiah were too hard for me. The whole world fought against me; but above all, my own familiar friend. Then was the word fulfilled, 'Son of man, behold! I take from thee the desire of thine eyes at a stroke; yet shalt thou not lament, neither shall thy tears run down.'

"The fatal, irrecoverable stroke was struck on Tuesday last. Yesterday I saw my friend (that was), and him to whom she is sacrificed. I believe you never saw such a scene. But 'why should a living man complain? a man for the punishment of his sins?'

"I am, yours affectionately,

"JOHN WESLEY."[22]

Wesley was not without friends to sympathise with him. Vincent Perronet, in a letter to Charles Wesley, wrote:—

"Yours came to hand to-day. I leave you to guess how such news must affect a person whose very soul is one with yours and our friend. Let me conjure you to soothe his sorrows. Pour nothing but oil and wine into his wounds. Indulge no views, no designs, but what tend to the honour of God, the promoting the kingdom of His dear Son, and the healing of our wounded friend. How would the Philistines rejoice, could they hear that Saul and Jonathan were in danger from their own swords!"[23]

Wesley had an interview with Grace Bennet three days after her dishonourable marriage; but, for thirty-nine years afterwards, they never met again. In 1788, when her son was officiating at a chapel in Moorfields, she came to visit him, and expressed a wish to see her distinguished and too faithful lover. Wesley went; the meeting was affecting, but soon over; and he was never heard to mention even her name afterwards.[24]

This has been a painful exposure. Perhaps the writer will be blamed for giving details usually too delicate to be put in print; but it must be borne in mind, that the whole of what is here related has been already published. Besides, up to a recent period, this episode in Wesley's history has been a puzzle to all his biographers. It has never been explained. Mystery has enwrapped it. Readers have been left in doubt who were the parties to be blamed. Now there can be no great difficulty in pronouncing judgment. John Wesley was a dupe. Grace Murray was a flirt. John Bennet was a cheat. Charles Wesley was a sincere, but irritated, impetuous, and officious friend. Fancy wonders what would have been the result, if Grace Murray had become John Wesley's wife; and probability suggests that one result would have been, that Mrs. Vazeille would not have had the opportunity of tormenting him as her second husband. But would he have been happy? We doubt it. Joseph Cownley was not far wrong, when, being interrogated by John Bennet, he replied, "If Grace Murray consult her ambition, she will marry Mr. Wesley; if she consult her love, she will marry you."[25] Ambition properly controlled is not an evil; but ambition in a wife, unmixed with love, inevitably engenders discontent and misery. Besides, it is fair to ask the question, would Wesley's marrying Grace Murray have been satisfactory to his friends? Wesley was a scholar, an author, and a minister of high repute; his friends included not only thousands of the labouring classes, but a fair sprinkling of brother clergymen, and a few who were men of wealth and position. Was it likely that such friends would look with approbation upon a marriage which was a *mesalliance?* Was not such a marriage

calculated to injure Wesley's influence with the general public? Was it not likely to give an advantage to his enemies? Was it not probable, that it would create disaffection among his preachers, and among his societies? Does not lowliness like to see leadership maintain its dignity? Charles Wesley was culpable for the impetuosity of his interference, and for some of the means he used to effect his purpose; but his alarm was reasonable, and his interposition needed. The fact is, though his brother doubtless loved Grace Murray, she was not worthy of his love. It was a huge imprudence to make her his travelling companion, first in the northern counties, and then, for months, in the sister island. All must admit this. His conduct throughout was honest and honourable, though, at the same time, foolish, and unworthy of his character and position. Without doubt, she was talented, talkative, and bewitching; her services also, as a female itinerant, were popular, and, in a certain sense, successful; but Wesley's opinion of her character and piety was far higher than our own. The woman who, after a few years of high religious profession, could, for so long a period, sink into almost sceptical depression, and yet, all the while, meet her bands and go through all the other Methodistic duties prescribed for her, as though nought had happened,—the woman who was almost constantly in hot water with her neighbours, and with the other Orphan House sisters; and who so infamously coquetted with the greatest reformer of the age, and with one of his most educated and able helpers,—was not the perfect saint that Wesley pictured her. She was a woman of energy, of dauntless resolution, and of a certain sort of religious zeal; and, late in life, she seems to have been a loving, lovely

Christian; but, at the period of her dualistic courtship, she was uneducated, vain, fickle, selfish, and presuming. Her husband wanted her, and got her; and we hope, and doubt not, that their married life was happy; but even Bennet was deserving of a more worthy wife; for, though his treatment of Wesley was, in the first instance, treacherous, and afterwards abusive, he was almost the only one of Wesley's itinerants who was a man of education and of property; and, both before his marriage and after it, was an earnest, zealous, brave, and useful preacher. But now we bid adieu to Wesley's flirting sweetheart, and his rival lover; and, with deep regret, begrudge the space we have felt it right to give them.

Wesley's fortitude was one of his greatest virtues. Terrible had been his disappointment and his trial; and yet, on Friday, October 6, the day after the stormy salutation of his brother, and his painful interview with Bennet and his bride, we find him preaching once at Birstal, and twice at Leeds. He then made a brief eight days' visit to Newcastle, where, he writes, "at a meeting of the select society such a flame broke out as was never there before. We felt such a love to each other as we could not express; such a spirit of supplication, and such a glad acquiescence in all the providences of God, and confidence that He would withhold from us no good thing." This was the more remarkable, as, only ten days before, his irritated brother had so severely censured him among the Newcastle Methodists, that the Orphan House was full of anger and confusion. Sister Proctor said, she would leave the house immediately. John Whitford, in the fourth year of his itinerancy, declared that he would no longer be a helper.

Matthew Errington dreamed that the Orphan House was all in flames; another dreamer saw Wesley himself in hell; while Jeannie Keith oracularly pronounced him one of the children of Satanas.[26] The fire was fierce, but, for want of fuel, was soon extinguished.

Strangely enough, on leaving Newcastle, Wesley went, at the request of John Bennet, to Rochdale. His home was at Bankhouse, the residence of Mr. Healey, the grandfather of the Messrs. Healey, of Liverpool.[27] On entering the town, he found the streets lined with a vast multitude of people, shouting, cursing, blaspheming, and gnashing on him with their teeth; but, notwithstanding this, he preached, taking as his text, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts."

From Rochdale, he went to Bolton, and soon found that the Rochdale lions were lambs, in comparison with those at Bolton. Edward Perronet was thrown down and rolled in mud and mire. Stones were hurled, and windows broken. John Bennet was made a captive, and was hemmed in on every side; but "laid hold of the opportunity to tell them the terrors of the Lord." Wesley preached thrice, and with such effect, that, before he left, he and his party "could walk through every street of the town; and none molested or opened his mouth, unless to thank or bless them."

Leaving Bolton, Wesley proceeded to Bristol, and thence to London, which he reached on November 10. Here he received a letter from Johannes de Koker, of Rotterdam,

telling him, that he was about to translate and publish his "Plain Account," and his "Character of a Methodist"; and advising him to "avoid, more than he would a mad dog or a venomous serpent, the multiplying of dogmas, and disputations about things unnecessary"; for these had "been the two stratagems of Satan, by which he had caused the church, insensibly and by degrees, to err from evangelical simplicity and purity."

Wesley was again involved in trouble with the Moravians. In a collection of tracts, they printed all the passages they could glean from his various writings, that were calculated to prejudice the Lutherans against the Methodists. In the *London Daily Post,* they ostentatiously announced to the English public, that the Methodists and Moravians were not the same; and sent to the editor of that journal, "the declaration of Louis, late bishop and trustee of the Brethren's church." Wesley writes: "the Methodists, so called, heartily thank brother Louis for his declaration; as they count it no honour to be in any connection either with him or his brethren." He then adds: "but why is he ashamed of his name? The Count's name is Ludwig, not Louis; no more than mine is Jean or Giovanni."

It was probably this scrimmage which led to the publication, in 1749, either by Wesley or his friends, of a small 12mo pamphlet of twelve pages, with the title, "Hymns composed for the use of the Brethren. By the Right Reverend and Most Illustrious C.Z. Published for the benefit of all mankind. In the year 1749."[28] Neither printer nor compiler's name is given; but there is an address "to the reader," as

follows: "The following hymns are copied from a collection printed, some months since, for James Hutton, in Fetter Lane, London. You will easily observe, that they have no affinity at all to that old book called the Bible: the illustrious author soaring as far above this, as above the beggarly elements of reason and common sense."[29]

Zinzendorf's worst wisher could have published nothing more calculated to create disgust against him, as the Moravian hymnist, than this. The sufferings of the Lord Jesus are represented as "shining from the Moravian *handmaid."* The believer is "a little bee, resting from the hurry and flurry of earth on the breast of Jesus." The wounded side of the blessed Saviour is "God's side-hole, sparkling with an everlasting blaze," and to which prayer is offered; the poet licks it, like rock salt, and finds no relish to equal it; and, as a snail creeps into its house, so he creeps into it. To multiply such ideas would be criminal. We content ourselves with giving a single verse, intended to be a description of the Moravian church:

"The daughters reverence do,
Christess, and praise thee too
Thou happy *Kyria,* daughter of *Abijah,*
Ve-Ruach Elohah, sister of Jehovah.
Manness of the man Jeshuah,
Out of the Pleura hosannah."[30]

Is it surprising, that Wesley "counted it no honour" to be connected with a man who could write such profane

balderdash as this? or with a church, which was insane enough, in the service of sacred song, to sing it?

The conference of 1749 was held in London, on the 16th of November and following days. The chief subject discussed seems to have been, the possibility of joining all the societies in the kingdom in a general union; and the desirability of investing the stewards of the London society with power to consult together for the good of all.

The conference being ended, Wesley retired to his friend Perronet's, at Shoreham, that he might be at leisure to employ his pen. Here he spent about a fortnight; then a week at Lewisham; and about another week at Newington.

We conclude, as before, with a list of Wesley's publications during 1749.

1. "Excerpta ex Ovidio, Virgilio, Horatio, Juvenali, Persio, et Martiali. In Usum Juventutis Christianae. Edidit Ecclesiae Anglicanae Presbyter." 12mo, 242 pages.

2. "Caii Sallustii Crispi Bellum Catilinarium et Jugurthinum. In Usum Juventutis Christianae. Edidit Ecclesiae Anglicanae Presbyter." 12mo, 110 pages.

3. "Cornelii Nepotis excellentium Imperatorum Vitae. In Usum Juventutis Christianae. Edidit Ecciesiae Anglicanae Presbyter." 12mo, 100 pages.

4. "A Short Latin Grammar." 12mo, 48 pages.

5. "A Short Account of the School in Kingswood, near Bristol." 12mo, 8 pages.

6. "Directions concerning Pronunciation and Gesture." 12mo, 12 pages.

This last publication was intended, *"in usum juventutis Christianae";* but it was also meant for his helpers, and may still be profitably studied by numbers of Wesley's ministerial successors. "A good pronunciation is nothing but a natural, easy, and graceful variation of the voice, suitable to the nature and importance of the sentiments we deliver." "The first business of a speaker is so to speak, that he may be heard and understood with ease." Persons with weak voices are recommended to strengthen them, by "reading or speaking something aloud, for at least half an hour every morning." "The chief faults of speaking are—1. The speaking too loud. 2. The speaking too low, which is more disagreeable than the former. 3. The speaking in a thick cluttering manner, mumbling and swallowing words and syllables, to cure which defect, Demosthenes repeated orations every day with pebbles in his mouth. 4. The speaking too fast, a common fault, but not a little one. 5. The speaking too slow. 6. The speaking with an irregular, desultory and uneven voice. But, 7. The greatest and most common fault of all, is, the speaking with a tone—in some instances womanish and squeaking; in others singing or canting; in others high, swelling, and theatrical; in others awful and solemn; and in others, odd, whimsical, and

whining." In reference to gesture, Wesley remarks, that it is more difficult for a man to find out the faults of his own gesture than those of his pronunciation; because he may hear his own voice, but cannot see his own face. He recommends the use of a large looking glass, after the example of Demosthenes; or, what is better still, to have some excellent pattern constantly in view. Directions are given concerning the motions of the body, of the head, the face, the eyes, the mouth, the hands. The mouth must never be turned awry; neither must a speaker bite or lick his lips, shrug his shoulders, or lean upon his elbow. He must never clap his hands, nor thump the pulpit. The hands should seldom be lifted higher than the eyes; and should not be in perpetual motion, for this the ancients called "the babbling of the hands."

Wesley's tract is small and unpretending; but it would not be a waste of time if the students at Didsbury, Richmond, and Headingley would occasionally give it their serious attention.

7. "An Extract of the Rev. Mr. John Wesley's Journal, from September 3, 1741, to October 27, 1743." 12mo, 123 pages.

8. "A Letter to the Rev. Dr. Conyers Middleton, occasioned by his late 'Free Inquiry.'" 12mo, 102 pages. Middleton was born at Richmond, in Yorkshire, in 1683, and died the year after Wesley wrote his letter. He was a favourite of George I.; was hated by Dr. Bentley, the master of his college; had three wives; was Woodwardian professor, and the university librarian; a writer of great powers, but more than one of

whose productions are debased by the leaven of infidelity. Of an irritable temper, he was always creating antagonists instead of friends. But for his doubtful opinions and his quarrelsome disposition, he might have adorned as well as acquired a mitre, instead of which he held, at the time of his decease, no preferment but a small living given to him by Sir John Frederick. The work which gave birth to Wesley's letter had recently been published, and was entitled, "A Free Inquiry into the Miraculous Powers, which are supposed to have subsisted in the Christian Church, from the earliest ages, through several successive centuries." Middleton's professed object was to denounce the practice of taking the primitive fathers as exponents of the Christian faith, because this gave to papists an unassailable advantage in the defence of their superstitions and errors. He rightly contends, that "the Bible only is the religion of protestants"; but, in pushing his principle, he was, perhaps wrongly, suspected of wishing to undermine the authority of the Bible itself. The substance of Wesley's pungent answer may be guessed from the opening paragraph:—

> "In your late 'Inquiry,' you endeavour to prove, first, that there were no miracles wrought in the primitive church; secondly, that all the primitive fathers were fools or knaves, and most of them both one and the other. And it is easy to observe, the whole tenor of your argument tends to prove, thirdly, that no miracles were wrought by Christ or His apostles; and, fourthly, that these too were fools or knaves, or both. I am not agreed with you on any of these heads. My reasons I shall lay

before you, in as free a manner, though not in so smooth or laboured language, as you have laid yours before the world."

Bishop Warburton, who was no friend to Wesley, pronounced the answer to Middleton "a scholar-like thing"; though, he adds, "perhaps more temper might have been expected from this modern apostle."[31]

It may be added, that the conclusion of Wesley's letter was afterwards published, in a separate form, under the title of "A Plain Account of Genuine Christianity." 12mo, 12 pages.[32]

9. "A Plain Account of the People called Methodists. In a letter to the Rev. Mr. Perronet, vicar of Shoreham." 12mo, 34 pages. The substance of this pamphlet has been already given in previous chapters; but it may be added here, that Wesley's "Plain Account" immediately evoked the following: "An Answer to a late pamphlet, entitled, 'A Plain Account of the People called Methodists.' Addressed to the Rev. Mr. Wesley. By a Clergyman of the Church of England. London: 1749." 12mo, 31 pages. The reverend pamphleteer tells Wesley, that he has read his letter to Perronet, and considers "it to be as weak a performance as ever he met with"; and therefore, that he cannot allow "it to pass uncensured"; especially as by this "weak performance" Wesley was "sapping many of the truths and principles of Christianity, like other sectarists, under the specious pretence of greater sanctity and holiness." If Wesley's "performance" was "weak," this of his opponent was feebleness itself.

10. "A Serious Answer to Dr. Trapp's Four Sermons on the Sin, Folly, and Danger of being Righteous Overmuch. Extracted from Mr. Law." 12mo, 48 pages. This production of the genius, piety, and pen of William Law was as grand a piece of writing as can be found in the English language. It is somewhat remarkable, however, that Wesley, in republishing that part of it which contains Law's account of the *ground* of the Christian religion, should have put into the hands of his Methodist readers the author's mystical views concerning the primeval kingdom of Lucifer and his angels, and the results of their rebellion and ruin. It is true, that Wesley, in a foot note, observes: "This is the theory of Jacob Behmen, but quite incapable of proof; "but then, in the same note, he says that, though the theory "is not supported by Scripture, it is, notwithstanding, probable."

Of course, by republishing the writings of other men, Wesley made their sentiments his own, except in cases to which he himself makes objection. On this ground, we give the two extracts following. The first will help to exhibit one of the guiding principles of Wesley's life; the other will show his estimate of the office and the use of human learning.

Addressing the younger clergy, he remarks: "Lay this down as an infallible principle, that an *entire, absolute renunciation* of all worldly interest, is the only possible foundation of that virtue which your station requires. Without this, all attempts after an exemplary piety are vain. Detest therefore, with the utmost abhorrence, all desires of making your fortunes, either by preferments or rich marriages, and let it be your only

ambition to stand at the top of every virtue, as visible guides and patterns, to all that aspire after the perfection of holiness."

The other extract is not of trifling importance. "Human learning is by no means to be rejected from religion; but if it is considered as a key, or the key, to the mysteries of our redemption, instead of opening to us the kingdom of God, it locks us up in our own darkness. God is an all-speaking, *all-working, all-illuminating* essence, possessing the depths of every creature according to its nature; and when we turn from all impediments, this Divine essence becomes as certainly the true light of our minds here, as it will be hereafter. This is not enthusiasm, but the words of truth and soberness; and it is the running away from this enthusiasm, that has made so many great scholars as useless to the church as tinkling cymbals, and Christendom a mere Babel of learned confusion."

11. "The Manners of the Ancient Christians, extracted from a French Author." 12mo, 24 pages. The French author, from whose works this was taken, was the renowned Claude Fleury, the associate of Bossuet and Fenelon; the preceptor of the Dukes of Burgundy, Anjou, and Berry; the friend of Louis XIV.; the author of an Ecclesiastical History, the fruit of thirty years of devoted study; a man of great learning and simplicity, of high integrity, and ardent piety; who died in 1723, at the age of 83.

12. "A Roman Catechism, faithfully drawn out of the allowed writings of the Church of Rome. With a Reply thereto." 12mo, 79 pages. This was a republication of a work

bearing the following title: "A Catechism truly representing the Doctrines and Practices of the Church of Rome, with an Answer thereunto. By a Protestant of the Church of England. London: 1686." 12mo, 104 pages. On one page is the catechism, and on the opposite page the answer, throughout. Wesley neglects to acknowledge that the pamphlet was not an original production; and it has improperly been placed in the last edition of his collected works.

13. "A Letter to a Roman Catholic." 12mo, 12 pages. Its object is to mollify the papist, by showing, that he and the protestant equally hold most of the great truths of the Christian religion; and that they therefore ought to live in peace and love. Wesley writes: "O brethren, let us not still fall out by the way! I hope to see you in heaven. And if I practise the religion above described, you dare not say I shall go to hell. You cannot think so. None can persuade you to it. Your own conscience tells you the contrary. Then, if we cannot as yet think alike in all things, at least, we may love alike. Herein we cannot possibly do amiss."

14. "Minutes of Several Conversations between the Rev. Messrs. John and Charles Wesley and others." Dublin: 1749.

15. It was also in this, or in a former year, that Wesley published his threepenny tract, entitled, "An Extract of the Life and Death of Mr. John Janeway," a young man of remarkable piety, who died at the age of twenty-three, in the year 1657.

16. "A Christian Library. Consisting of Extracts and Abridgments of the Choicest Pieces of Practical Divinity which have been published in the English Tongue. In Fifty Volumes. By John Wesley, M.A., Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford. Bristol: printed by Felix Farley."

This work was begun in 1749, and completed in 1755. A prodigious number of books were read. Folios and quartos had to be reduced to 12mo volumes. Some were abridged on horseback, and others at wayside inns and houses where Wesley tarried for a night. During the six years spent in finishing his task, he suffered a long and serious illness; had to provide his school at Kingswood with necessary books; wrote his "Explanatory Notes on the New Testament"; and was laboriously engaged in preaching Christ, and governing his societies. The work was Herculean. Such an enterprise had never before been attempted. It was a noble effort to make the masses—his own societies in particular—acquainted with a galaxy of the noblest men the Christian church has ever had. His design was to leave out whatever might be deemed objectionable or unimportant in sentiment, and superfluous in language; to divest practical theology from logical technicalities and unnecessary digressions; and to separate the rich ore of evangelical truth from the base alloy of Pelagian and Calvinian error. In some instances he failed in doing this. He writes:—"I was obliged to prepare most of these tracts for the press just as I could snatch time for it; not transcribing them; none expected it of me; but only marking the lines with my pen, and altering or adding a few words here or there, as I had mentioned in the preface. Besides, as it was not in my

power to attend the press, that care necessarily devolved on others; through whose inattention a hundred passages were left in, which I had scratched out. It is probable too, I myself might overlook some sentences which were not suitable with my own principles. It is certain, the correctors of the press did this in not a few instances."[33] This was written in 1772, as a reply to the charge, that, in his writings, he had contradicted himself. "If," says he, "there are a hundred passages in the 'Christian Library' which contradict any or all of my doctrines, these are no proofs that I contradict myself. Be it observed once for all, citations from the 'Christian Library' prove nothing but the carelessness of the correctors."[34]

This is an important fact to be borne in mind by those who are possessors of the first edition only. After the attack just mentioned, Wesley read the whole of the 'Christian Library' with careful attention, and marked with his pen the passages which he deemed objectionable in sentiment; and, from this corrected copy, the new edition, in thirty vols., octavo, issued in 1819-26, was printed.[35]

Wesley wrote not for pecuniary gain, but for the profit of his people. Three years before the work was finished, he had already been a loser to the amount of £200, no inconsiderable sum for a man like him. Still the publication went on, and, in due time, one of the grandest projects of his life was finished.

The first volume was published in 1749. Two years elapsed before the second was given to the public. In the preface, he affirms his belief, "that there is not in the world a more

complete body of divinity, than is now extant in the English tongue, in the writings of the last and present century; and that, were a man to spend fourscore years, with the most indefatigable application, he could go but a little way, toward reading what had been published within the last hundred and fifty years." His endeavour was "to extract such a collection of divinity as was all true; all agreeable to the oracles of God; all practical, unmixed with controversy; and all intelligible to plain men."

The opening volume contains—1. The Epistles of the apostolical fathers, Clement, Ignatius, and Polycarp, whom he believed to be "endued with the extraordinary assistance of the Holy Spirit," and whose writings, "though not of equal authority with the holy Scriptures," he considered to be "worthy of a much greater respect than any composures that have been made since." 2. The Martyrdoms of Ignatius and Polycarp. 3. An Extract from the Homilies of Macarius, born about the year 301. 4. An Extract of John Arndt's "True Christianity"; Arndt was an eminent protestant divine, who died in 1621.

ENDNOTES

[1] Walpole's Letters, vol. ii, p. 149.

[2] Walpole's Letters, vol. ii., p. 155.

[3] Whitefield's Works, vol. ii., pp. 220, 252, 282-284, 291.

[4] *Methodist Magazine*, 1848, p. 639.

[5] Charles Wesley, in a letter dated the 3rd of March, 1749, says: "I spent half-an-hour with my brother at Kingswood, which is now very much like a college. Twenty-one boarders are there, and a dozen students, his sons and pupils in the gospel. I believe he is now laying the foundations of many generations."—*Watchman*, Feb. 18, 1835.

[6] Sullivan's house was the preachers' home, and was also sometimes used for preaching. (Wesley's Works, vol. ii., p. 148.)

[7] Smith's "Methodism in Ireland," pp. 33, 34.

[8] *Methodist Magazine*, 1812, p. 45.

[9] Wesley's Works, vol. viii., p. 494.

[10] Everett's "Methodism in Sheffield," p. 257.

[11] Ibid. p. 261.

[12] *Methodist Magazine,* 1817, p. 683.

[13] Ibid. 1778, p. 472.

[14] Minutes (edit. 1862), p. 709.

[15] Whitefield's Works, vol. ii., p. 362.

[16] *Methodist Magazine*, 1779, p. 422.

[17] Wesley's Works, vol. ii., p. 243; and *Methodist Magazine,* 1780, p. 322.

[18] "Life and Times of Lady Huntingdon," vol. i., p. 45; and Everett's "Methodism in Sheffield," p. 41.

[19] The above facts are taken from private manuscripts; from "Memoirs of Mrs. Grace Bennet, by William Bennet"; and from an authentic manuscript, in the British Museum, which, though not in Wesley's handwriting, was read and revised by him, and has a few corrections by his own well known pen. This manuscript was published, a few years ago, by John Russel Smith, of Soho Square, London. The writer has compared the printed pamphlet with the original document; and, with a few unimportant exceptions, including one or two omissions, has found it faithfully and correctly given. It is from the same source, that we chiefly derive the following facts.

[20] Life of C. Wesley.

[21] Nineteen of these verses, with many erasures and corrections, in Wesley's own abbreviated long hand writing, are at the end of the manuscript in the British Museum, from which the foregoing statements have been taken.

[22] Wesley's Works, vol. xiii., p. 154.

[23] Watson's Works, vol. v., p. 200.

[24] Moore's Life of Wesley, vol. ii., p. 171.

[25] Manuscripts.

[26] Manuscript in British Museum.

[27] *Methodist Magazine,* 1833, p. 758.

[28] In a list of "Books published by John and Charles Wesley," in 1749, one, numbered 85, is "Moravian Hymns," price a penny; and, in a letter dated 1749, Zinzendorf remarks: "J. Wesley's extract from our hymn-book has done us no injury." ("Memoirs of James Hutton," p. 218.)

[29] What a change in eleven years! The following interesting and important letter has not before been published. It was lent to the author by Charles Reed, Esq., M.P.; but too late to be inserted in the proper place. Let the reader compare it with Wesley's Journal of the same date.

"WESTPHALIA, GERMANY, *July* 7, 1738.

"DEAR BROTHER,—I am now with the Count, at his uncle's, the Count of Solmes, five or six hours from Marienborn; and have stolen an hour to let you know that God has been very merciful to us in all things. The spirit of the Brethren is above our highest expectation. Young and old, they breathe nothing but faith and love, at all times, and in all places. I do not therefore concern myself with the smaller points that touch not the essence of Christianity, but endeavour (God being my helper) to grow up in these after the glorious example set before me. Having already seen with my own eyes more than a hundred witnesses of the everlasting truth,—'Every one that believeth hath peace with God, and is freed from sin, and is in Christ a new creature,'—see, my dear brother, that none of you receive the grace of God in vain; but be ye also living witnesses of the exceeding great and precious promises, which are made to every one of us through the blood of Jesus. Adieu.—JOHN WESLEY."

[30] The Moravian Hymn-Book, published in two volumes, in 1754, is before us; and similar quotations to the above might be given, almost *ad infinitum*, but no good end would be answered by doing so. Zinzendorf's heart was better than his head. His brain was fertile, but brought forth

weeds as well as flowers. His passions were strong, and easily excited; and he was not unwont to assume a superiority, to which he foolishly fancied that his German birth and rank entitled him. He was an enormous worker; and his energy, disinterestedness, and devotion are deserving of praise; but he was far from faultless. His policy was often suspicious, and sometimes had the appearance of dissimulation. He was too anxious to assert his authority, even when it was not called in question; and, though his eccentricities were not surprising, considering his temperament and activity, they were not to be commended.

[31] Nichols' "Illustrations of Literature," vol. ii., p. 162.

[32] This will be noticed in the year 1761.

[33] Wesley's Works, vol. x., p. 367.

[34] Ibid. vol. x., p. 403.

[35] *Methodist Magazine,* 1827, p. 314.

1750.

WHITEFIELD was now an evangelist at large,—the minister of no church in particular, but a preacher labouring for all. Early in January, he wrote: "I have offered Mr. Wesley to assist occasionally at his chapel. Oh that I may be a freedman, and ready to help all that preach and love the Lord Jesus in sincerity! I am a debtor to the greek and to the barbarian, to the wise and to the unwise; and think it my highest privilege to preach Christ and Him crucified to all."[1] Accordingly, on Friday, January 19, Wesley read prayers at West Street chapel, and Whitefield delivered "a plain, affectionate discourse." On the Sunday following, the order was reversed; Whitefield read the prayers, and Wesley preached; after which, they unitedly administered the sacrament to about twelve hundred people.[2] On Sunday, the 28th, the liturgy was read by Wesley, and Whitefield preached the sermon. The two friends were now visibly as well as really united. Wesley remarks: "By the blessing of God, one more stumbling block is removed. How wise is God in giving different talents to different preachers! Even Mr. Whitefield's little improprieties, both of language and manner, were a means of profiting many, who would not have been touched by a more correct discourse, or a more calm and regular manner of speaking."

The fraternization was not confined to Whitefield. In the same week, Howel Harris preached in the old Foundery, Wesley observing concerning him—"a powerful orator, both by nature and grace; but owing nothing to art or education."

"Thanks be to God," writes the Countess of Huntingdon, "for the unanimity and love which have been displayed on this happy occasion. May the God of peace and harmony unite us all in a bond of affection! In forbearance toward each other, and mutual kindness, may we imitate His blessed disciples, so that all those who take knowledge of us may say, 'See how these Christians love one another!'"[3]

We purposely refrain from following Whitefield in his wondrous wanderings; but it may be interjected here, that, during the year, when at Rotherham, the town crier was employed to give notice of a bear baiting, it being understood that Whitefield was the bear; and, accordingly, when he began to preach a mob surrounded him, and a row ensued. In Cumberland, his enemies injured his chaise, and cut off the tail of one of his horses. At Ulverstone, a clergyman, looking more like a butcher than a minister, charged a constable to arrest him. But none of these things checked his triumphal march. People, by thousands, flocked to hear him. At a single sacramental service, Grimshaw's church, at Haworth, was thrice filled with communicants. From his leaving London to his reaching Edinburgh, he preached ninety times, to about a hundred and forty thousand people. At Lady Huntingdon's, he seemed to think himself at the gates of paradise. He writes: "October 11.—For a day or two, her ladyship has had five clergymen under her roof. Her house is indeed a Bethel. To us in the ministry, it looks like a college. We have the sacrament every morning, heavenly conversation all day, and preach at night. This is to *live at court*, indeed."[4]

Wesley began the year by preaching, in London, to a large congregation at four o'clock in the morning. At the end of the month, he paid a visit to Canterbury, where a society had been already formed; and, during three days, preached in the butter market,[5] and other places, including an antinomian meeting-house, situated in Godly Alley.

The introduction of Methodism into the city of Canterbury was opposed not only by mobs, but by parsons. Hence the issue of the following furious effusion: "The Impostor Detected: or, the Counterfeit Saint turned inside out. Containing a full discovery of the horrid blasphemies and impieties, taught by those diabolical seducers, called Methodists, under colour of the only real Christianity. Particularly intended for the use of the city of Canterbury, where that mystery of iniquity has lately begun to work. By John Kirkby, rector of Blackmanstone, in Kent." London: 1750. 8vo, 55 pages.

Meek Mr. Kirkby tells his Canterbury friends, that the Methodists, "spiritual Ephraimites, are the true successors of the pharisees, in hypocrisy and spiritual pride, and nauseously abuse sacred things." Wesley is accused of "matchless impudence and wickedness, and of impious cant. He is a chameleon; uses blasphemous jargon; basely belies Christianity; and nonsense is the smallest of his failings. In him the angel of darkness has made his incarnate appearance; and he and his brother are murderers of sense as well as souls, and just about as fitly cut out for poets as a lame horse would

be for a rope dancer." The polite author continues: "the sacred names of God and Christ are dreadfully blasphemed by the Methodists to serve their wicked purposes. Hypocrisy is their trade, and seeming sanctity their disguise. Wesley and his abettors are not only impious blasphemers of God, but also the most wicked damners of their brethren. Among them religion is impiously mocked; and the senseless effusions of a dissembling hypocrite are interpreted to be the language of the Holy Ghost."

Quantum sufficit. It is time to bid adieu to the Christian rector of Blackmanstone.

Returning to London, Wesley spent Sunday, February 4, with the Rev. Charles Manning, vicar of Hayes, in whose church he preached. He writes: "what a change is here within a year or two! Instead of the parishioners going out of church, the people come now from many miles round. The church was filled in the afternoon likewise; and all behaved well but the singers, whom I therefore reproved before the congregation."

Mr. Manning, for some years, was one of Wesley's most faithful friends. Wesley preached in his church at least fifteen times; and through him also gained access to the churches at Uxbridge and Hillingdon. Mr. Manning attended the sittings of Wesley's conference in 1747; he was the most noted of the Methodist clergy in Middlesex, and was subjected to a large amount of petty persecution. Clergymen would turn their backs upon him while he was reading prayers or preaching.

The singers were most obstreporous. His churchyard was used for fighting cocks. On one occasion, William Blackall came into the church, while the psalm was being sung, with a pipe in his mouth and a pot of beer in his hand, and, seating himself in his pew, behaved with the greatest indecency during the whole of Manning's sermon. On the 5th of November, while he was preaching, a constable and three other fellows took possession of the belfry, rung the bells, and spat upon the heads of the people seated in their pews beneath. Such was the heathenism, in the midst of which Charles Manning laboured. No wonder that Wesley thought even decent behaviour a fact worth mentioning.

On the 8th of February, London was startled, in the midst of its noisy bustle, by the rockings and rumblings of an earthquake. The inhabitants, struck with panic, rushed into the streets, fearing to be buried beneath the ruins of their tottering houses. Exactly a month afterwards, a second shock occurred, more violent and of longer continuance. Ten days later, Gosport, Portsmouth, and the Isle of Wight were shaken. People became frantic with fear. Meanwhile, a crazy soldier took upon himself to prophesy, that, on the 4th of April, there would be another earthquake, which would destroy half of London and Westminster.[6] The prophet was sent to Bedlam for his foolhardiness; but thousands were credulous enough to believe the silly prognostication of this mad enthusiast. When the looked for night arrived, Tower Hill, Moorfields, Hyde Park, and other open places, were filled with men, women, and children, who had fled from houses which they expected to become heaps of ruins; and there, filled with

direful apprehensions, they spent long hours of darkness, beneath an inclement sky, in momentary expectation of seeing the soldier's oracular utterance fulfilled. Multitudes ran about the streets in frantic consternation, quite certain that the final judgment was about to open; and that, before the dawn of another day, all would hear the blast of the archangel's trumpet. Places of worship were packed, especially the chapels of the Methodists, where crowds came during the whole of that dreary night, knocking and begging for admittance. At midnight, amid dense darkness, and surrounded by affrighted multitudes, Whitefield stood up in Hyde Park, and, with his characteristic pathos, and in tones majestically grand, took occasion to call the attention of listening multitudes to the coming judgment, the wreck of nature, and the sealing of all men's destinies.

The scene was awful. London was in sackcloth. Women made themselves what Horace Walpole calls *"earthquake gowns,* that is, warm gowns in which to sit out of doors all night." Within three days, seven hundred and thirty coaches had been counted passing Hyde Park Corner filled with families removing to the country.[7] Sherlock, bishop of London, a fortnight before the expected shock,[8] had published a letter, addressed "to the clergy and people of London and Westminster, on occasion of the late earthquakes"; and sixty thousand copies had been already sold to eager purchasers. This 12mo tract of twelve pages was ably written, and was a faithful warning of the just judgments which the people and the nation might expect unless they repented of the enormous sins with which they were now

disgraced. "The gospel," says Sherlock, "had been not only rejected, but treated with malicious scorn. The press swarmed with books, some to dispute, and some to ridicule the great truths of religion, both natural and revealed. Blasphemy and horrid imprecations might be heard on every hand. Lewdness and debauchery so prevailed among the lowest classes, as to keep them idle, poor, and miserable. By lewd pictures, sold in the open day, the abominations of the public stews were exposed to view. Histories or romances of the vilest prostitutes were published. Friendly visits for conversation had degenerated into meetings for gambling; and men, who had lost all principles of religion, and were lost to all sense of morality, in time of sickness, when fears of futurity were revived, became an easy prey to popish priests, and greedily swallowed their absolution cordials, which, like other cordials, gave present ease, but wrought no cures."

Sherlock's letter was timely, and faithful, and did him honour; but it also helped to create the excitement which gave credence to the mad soldier's prophecy, and which led to the strange scenes witnessed during the night of April 3, and the early morn of April 4. There can be no question that, at this period, the wickedness of London and of the nation was enormous. The people were not only glutted with all the inordinate gratifications and pleasures common to the country; but they had grown delicate in vice, and had adopted all the dainties of debauchery from abroad; and it is a fact, that the very parties, who fled from London for fear of another earthquake, on returning, seemed desirous of apologizing for their cowardice by plunging into revels and

riotings more dissolute than ever. Conscious of their folly, they imputed blame to Sherlock, for raising unnecessary fears, by his pastoral, excellent, and truly seasonable charge. Grub Street pamphlets, the harangues of coffee house libertines, and the craven and calumnious whispers of drawing rooms, once more filled with fugitives returned to forsaken homes, soon made his lordship the public butt of abusive ridicule.[9]

Where was Wesley in this unparalleled commotion? For nearly three weeks after the first shock, on February 8, he remained in London, and held a "solemn fast day," and two watchnight meetings, besides other services, at all of which there were remarkable manifestations of the presence and power of God. He then, on February 27, set out for Bristol; but was succeeded by his brother, who preached, at least, on four different occasions, respecting the fearful events which were then exciting the public mind. One of these was published, and is now included in Wesley's collected sermons, with the title "The Cause and Cure of Earthquakes." He also issued a pamphlet, entitled "Hymns occasioned by the Earthquake, March 8, 1750. In two parts." The hymns were nineteen in number, some of which are published in the Methodist Hymn-book. One of these is the hymn numbered 555; and another is that commencing with the line: "How weak the thoughts and vain." Two or three of the verses may be quoted here:—

"How happy then are we,
Who build, O Lord, on Thee!
What can our foundation shock?
Though the shattered earth remove,
Stands our city on a rock,
On the rock of heavenly love.

A house we call our own,
Which cannot be o'erthrown;
In the general ruin sure,
Storms and earthquakes it defies;
Built immovably secure,
Built eternal in the skies.

High on Thy great white throne,
O King of saints, come down;
In the New Jerusalem
Now triumphantly descend;
Let the final trump proclaim
Joys begun which ne'er shall end."

Such was Charles Wesley's happy, hopeful, buoyant spirit, when all around him were well-nigh paralysed with fear.

During this earthquake commotion, the once gay and sprightly, but for long, long years, the cruelly treated and broken hearted Mehetabel Wesley was taken to the peace and purity of heaven. Of all the Wesley children, none were gifted with finer poetic genius than she. An unhappy marriage with an ignorant, drunken, brutal glazier, of the name of Wright,

clouded, with distressing darkness, a life which ought to have been full of sunshine and of happiness. At the time of her peaceful death, Wesley was in Wales; but his brother had the mournful pleasure of repeatedly seeing her in her last sickness, of following her to her quiet grave, and of improving her blissful release from the sorrows of an afflicted life, by preaching from the text: "Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended." She died on the 21st of March, in the fifty-third year of her age.

On his way from London to Bristol, besides preaching at Colnbrook, Reading, Blewbury, Oxford, and Cirencester, Wesley read Dr. Bates's *"Elenchus Motuum nuperorum in Anglia,"* and pronounces his thoughts generally just, and his Latin not much inferior to Caesar's, but says "he has no more mercy on the Puritans, than upon Cromwell."

Seventeen days were spent in Bristol and at Kingswood, during which he began writing his French Grammar; met the preachers every day at four in the afternoon; and expelled a boy from Kingswood school, who had studiously laboured to corrupt all the others. The Kingswood society was stationary; that at Bristol a great deal worse. They complained of the want of lively preachers, and had among them an almost universal deadness. He writes: "What cause have we to be humbled over this people! Last year more than a hundred members were added; this year near a hundred are lost. Such

a decay has not been in this society, since it began to meet together."

On the 19th of March, Wesley and Christopher Hopper set out for Ireland; but it was not until the 6th of April that they were able to sail from Holyhead to Dublin. In riding to Brecknock, Wesley's horse fell twice; but without hurt either to man or beast. While they were crossing the Welsh mountains, rain was incessant; and the wind blew so boisterously, that it was with the utmost difficulty they could save themselves from being blown over their horses' heads. In a cottage on the road, Wesley "sat down for three or four hours, and translated Aldrich's Logic." At Holyhead, he overtook John Jane, a preacher, in the third year of his itinerancy, who had set out from Bristol with three shillings in his pocket. For six nights out of seven he had been entertained by utter strangers; and, on his arrival, had just a penny left. Five months afterwards, this brave-hearted itinerant died, his last words being, "I have found the love of God in Christ Jesus." A friend, who was with him at the time, observes:[10] "all his clothes, linen and woollen, his stockings, hat, and wig, are not thought sufficient to pay his funeral expenses, which amount to £1. 17*s*. 3*d*. All the money he had was one shilling and fourpence. But he had enough. Food, raiment, and a good conscience were all he wanted here." "Enough," adds Wesley, "for any unmarried preacher of the gospel to leave to his executors."

Wesley and Hopper embarked at Holyhead on the 29th of March, and found on board Mr. Griffith, of Carnarvonshire,

"a clumsy, overgrown, hardfaced man, who poured out such a volley of ribaldry, obscenity, and blasphemy, every second or third word being an oath, as was scarce ever heard at Billingsgate." Wesley says: "His countenance I could only compare to that which I saw in Drury Lane thirty years ago, of one of the ruffians in 'Macbeth.' Finding there was no room for me to speak, I retired into my cabin, and left him to Mr. Hopper." Hopper adds: "God stopped his mouth, and he was confounded."[11] Jonah was on board; and, after being tossed by a tremendous storm for two and twenty hours, the Methodist itinerants were thankful to get back to the bay that they had left.

On landing, Wesley preached to "a room full of men, daubed with gold and silver," some of whom "rose up and went away railing and blaspheming." The next night, he was about to preach again, when Griffith, at the head of a drunken rabble, burst open both the outer and inner doors, struck Wesley's host, kicked the poor man's wife, and, with twenty full mouthed oaths and curses, demanded, "Where is the parson?" Wesley was locked in another room, the door of which Griffith broke. The man was far too big to be a climber; but, notwithstanding this, impelled by his bad passions, he mounted a chair to search for Wesley on the top of the bed tester; but the burly detective fell down backwards, and then with his troop departed. Wesley having descended to a lower room, and spent half an hour in prayer with a small company of poor people gathered for the purpose, Griffith and his gang again assembled. Griffith burst into the house; a young girl, standing in the passage with a pail of water,

drenched him from head to foot, and made the bully cry "Murder! murder!" Another locked the door, when, finding himself a prisoner, the poor wretch had to beg most piteously to be released, and to give his word of honour, that he and his companions would quietly decamp.

At length, after a detention which had severely taxed Wesley's patience, he and Hopper again embarked, and on April 6 arrived safe at Dublin.

To his great annoyance, he found that, during his absence, the Dublin society had been beguiled by a man of the name of Roger Ball, who had been employed to preach to the Dublin congregations, and had been domiciled as a member of Wesley's family. The man was an antinomian of the worst description, a crafty debauchee, full of deceit, and holding the most abominable errors, by means of which he had done a large amount of mischief. Some were disposed to give up the sacrament; and all were inclined to drop the Tuesday and Thursday preaching, on the ground that "the dear Lamb is the only teacher." For years, this infamous man hung upon the skirts of the Methodist societies.

Six days after his arrival in Dublin, Wesley had an unexpected interview with a woman of great, though unenviable fame. Laetitia Pilkington was the daughter of a Dublin physician, and was born in that city, in 1712. Her sprightliness and charms attracted numerous admirers, and among others, the Rev. Matthew Pilkington, author of a well known volume of miscellanies. To this gentleman she was

married. Dissension soon sprung up, which ended in separation. She then fell into a licentious life, and once was in the Marshalsea for debt. Colley Cibber obtained her release from prison, and procured her a subscription of fifteen guineas, with which she opened a book shop in St. James's Street. She was the author of a comedy, called "The Turkish Court"; a tragedy, entitled "The Roman Father", and also another piece, "The Trial of Constancy," and other poems. Her most famous production, however, was her own Life, in two volumes, written with indecent freedom, but shrewd and entertaining, and displaying extensive knowledge of the world. Dean Swift was one of her intimate friends, and had a high opinion of her intellectual faculties. Her memory was remarkable, if it be true, as stated, that she was able to repeat almost the whole of Shakspeare by heart.

These particulars will give increasing interest to the following extract from Wesley's Journal: "1750. April 12.—I breakfasted with one of the society, and found she had a lodger I little thought of. It was the famous Mrs. Pilkington, who soon made an excuse for following me upstairs. I talked with her seriously about an hour; we then sang, 'Happy Magdalene.' She appeared to be exceedingly struck: how long the impression may last, God knows."

Mrs. Pilkington was now thirty-eight years of age. Five months afterwards she died.

Having spent thirteen days in Dublin, Wesley set out, on the 19th of April, on a country excursion. At Portarlington, he

preached to almost all the gentry in the town. At Mountmellick, he found the society much increased in grace, and yet lessened in number; a case which he thought was without a parallel. At Tullamore, many of his congregation were drunk; but the bulk paid great attention. He rebuked the society for their lukewarmness and covetousness; and had the pleasure of seeing them evince signs of penitence. At Tyrrell's Pass, he found a great part of the society "walking in the light, and praising God all the day long." At Cooleylough, he preached to backsliders. In the midst of the service at Athlone, a man passed by on a fine prancing horse, which drew off a large part of the congregation. Wesley paused, and then raising his voice, said, "If there are any more of you who think it is of more concern to see a dancing horse than to hear the gospel of Christ, pray go after them." The renegades heard the rebuke; and the majority at once returned. At Aghrim, he preached "to a well meaning, sleepy people," and "strove to shake some of them out of sleep by preaching as sharply as he could." At Nenagh, he preached in the assembly room. At Limerick, he "told the society freely and plainly of their faults." At Killdorrery, a clergyman would talk with him whether he would or not; and this made him too late for preaching at Rathcormuck in the evening.

Here let us pause for a moment. The clergyman at Rathcormuck was the Rev. Richard Lloyd, who, twelve months before, had permitted Wesley to preach in his pulpit, and had shown him great attention. On this occasion, likewise, there was the same brotherly affection. It so happened, that, at the time of Wesley's visit, there was an Irish

funeral. An immense crowd of people had assembled, to do honour to the dead; Mr. Lloyd read part of the burial service in the church; after which Wesley preached; and, as soon as his discourse was ended, the customary Irish howl was given. Wesley writes: "It was not a song, but a dismal, inarticulate yell, set up at the grave by four shrill voiced women, who were hired for that purpose. But I saw not one that shed a tear; for that, it seems, was not in their bargain."

Mr. Lloyd got into trouble by his allowing Wesley to occupy his church. The neighbouring clergy complained to the bishop. The bishop directed Mr. Davies, the archdeacon, to deliver to Lloyd an episcopal order, that he must not "suffer any person to preach in his church, who was not a licensed preacher of that or the neighbouring diocese." In a long letter to the bishop, dated "July 4, 1750," and sent as an answer to his order, Mr. Lloyd remarks:—

> "I confess that Mr. Wesley has preached (though seldomer than has been wished) in my church. And I thought, that a fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford, who is admitted to preach before the university there, and has preached in many churches in London, and other parts of England, as also in Dublin, might be permitted to preach here also." He adds: "The mobs at Cork, and some other places in this kingdom, have obliged the Methodists to seek the protection of government, which undoubtedly they will have. Several of them, of good fortunes, to escape the persecution, are preparing to settle in England; and, because the clergy are supposed

to have encouraged it, numbers of others resolve to quit our church. At this rate, we may, in a short time, have only the refuse left. Religion, my lord, is now at a very low ebb in the world; and we can scarce see the outward form of it remaining. But corrupt as the world is, it is thought better that the devil should reign, than that Mr. Wesley should preach, especially in a church."

On the same day, the bishop answered as follows:—

"CLOYNE, *July* 4, 1750.

"REVEREND SIR,—I have that opinion of your prudence, that I doubt not you will be cautious whom you admit into your pulpit; and that you will avoid doing or countenancing anything that may offend your brethren of the clergy, or give occasion to mobs and riots.

"I am, reverend sir, your faithful brother and humble servant,

"G. CLOYNE."[12]

Blarney seemed to succeed when peremptoriness had failed; Wesley had preached for the last time in Rathcormuck church.

Leaving Rathcormuck on May 19, Wesley rode on to Cork; and, at eight o'clock the next morning (Sunday), had a large and deeply attentive congregation in Hammond's Marsh. Wesley declares, that he had "seldom seen a more quiet and

orderly assembly at any church in England or Ireland." He designed to preach in the marsh again at night; but, during the afternoon, received a message from the mayor, Mr. Crone, that he would have no more mobs and riots; and that, if Wesley attempted to carry out his purpose, he would be prepared for him. Wesley, not wishful to give offence, relinquished his purpose of preaching out of doors, and conducted the evening service in the chapel; but no sooner had he commenced doing so than his mightiness, the mayor, came with the town drummers, and an immense rabble, and continued drumming as long as Wesley continued preaching. On leaving the chapel, Wesley was hemmed in by the mayor's mob. Observing a serjeant standing by, Wesley desired him to keep the king's peace. The king's officer replied, "Sir, I have no orders to do that." And so, amid all sorts of missiles, the poor, harmless parson, had to make his way, through a brutish crowd, over Dant's Bridge, to the house of Mr. Jenkins. Some of the congregation were more roughly handled, particularly Mr. Jones, who was covered with filth, and escaped with his life almost by miracle.

The next day Wesley rode to Bandon; but, for four hours in the afternoon, the mob of Cork marched in grand procession, and then burnt him in effigy.

The day after, May 22, the mob and drummers met at the house of John Stockdale, the tallowchandler, whom they had nearly murdered twelve months before, and whose wife was then abused most brutally. The mayor was sent for, and came with a company of soldiers. Addressing the mob, he said:

"Lads, once, twice, thrice, I bid you go home; now I have done"; and away he went, taking the soldiers with him. Of course the "lads" knew how to interpret his worship's sham loyalty, and, accordingly, at once proceeded to smash all Stockdale's windows.

On the following day, May 23, the infuriated crowd still patrolled the streets, abused all that were called Methodists, and threatened to murder them, and to pull down their houses. On the 24th, they again assaulted Stockdale's dwelling; broke down the boards he had nailed up against his windows; destroyed the window frames and shutters; and damaged a considerable part of his stock in trade. On the 25th Roger O'Ferrall put up an advertisement, at the public Exchange, to the effect that he was ready to march at the head of any rabble, and to pull down all the houses that harboured "swaddlers."

During this week of misrule and terror, in which not Mr. Crone but king Mob was mayor of Cork, Wesley was peaceably preaching in the town of Bandon; but, on the evening of Saturday the 26th, with a congregation in the main street, twice as large as usual, he was disgracefully interrupted. When he had preached about a quarter of an hour, a drunken clergyman, with a large stick in his hand, placed himself by the side of Wesley, and began a preconcerted disturbance; but, before he had uttered a dozen words, three resolute women seized him, pulled him into a house, expostulated with him, and then dismissed him through a garden, where the poor maudlin priest, who had intended to

stop Wesley's mouth, fell in love with one of Wesley's admirers, who, in order to extricate herself from his brutal embrace, had to repel force by force and to cuff him most soundly. Thus the parson was got rid of, leaving behind, however, three young gents—his friends—all armed with pistols, more dangerous than even his reverence's shillalah; but the belligerent youths were quietly arrested, by others of Wesley's audience, and were taken away with more civility than they merited. And, then, to complete this fantastic display of Irish bravery, the last hero in the plot came on with the utmost fury; but "a butcher of the town, not a Methodist, used him as he would an ox, bestowing one or two lusty blows upon his head, and thus cooled his courage. So," says Wesley, "I quietly finished my discourse."

The next day, Sunday, May 27, Wesley preached thrice in Bandon, and wrote a letter to the mayor of Cork, the conclusion of which is worth quoting:—

"I fear God, and honour the king. I earnestly desire to be at peace with all men. I have not willingly given any offence, either to the magistrates, the clergy, or any of the inhabitants of the city of Cork; neither do I desire anything of them, but to be treated (I will not say as a clergyman, a gentleman, or a Christian, but) with such justice and humanity as are due to a Jew, a Turk, or a pagan."

Wesley now turned towards Dublin. One day, he was on horseback, with but an hour or two's intermission, from five o'clock in the morning till nearly eleven o'clock at night; and

yet only five hours after this, he again set out, and made the longest day's journey that he ever rode—about ninety miles. At midnight, he came to Aymo, where he wished to sleep; but the woman who kept the inn refused him admittance, and, moreover, let loose four dogs to worry him.

He spent only two days in Dublin, when he began a second visit to the provincial societies. He writes: "June 21.—I returned to Closeland, and preached in the evening to a little, earnest company. Oh who should drag me into a great city, if I did not know there is another world! How gladly could I spend the remainder of a busy life in solitude and retirement."

At Portarlington, he had the unthankful task of reconciling the differences of two termagant women, who talked for three hours, and grew warmer and warmer, till they were almost distracted. Wesley says: "I perceived there was no remedy but prayer; so a few of us wrestled with God for above two hours." The result was, after three hours of cavilling and two hours of prayer, anger gave place to love, and the quarrelsome ladies fell upon each other's neck. Here also, there being no English service, he attended the French church service, and writes: "I have sometimes thought Mr. Whitefield's action was violent; but he is a mere post to Mr. Calliard."

Wesley then proceeded to Mountmellick, Montrath, Roscrea, Birr, Tullamore, Athlone, Aghrim, Ahaskra, Longford, Kenagh, and Tyrrell's Pass. On the 14th of July he got back to Dublin, where he spent the next eight days, and

then embarked for England. The day before he sailed, he wrote as follows to his friend, Mr. Ebenezer Blackwell:—

"DUBLIN, *July* 21, 1750.

"DEAR SIR,—I have had so hurrying a time for two or three months, as I scarce ever had before; such a mixture of storms and clear sunshine, of huge applause and huge opposition. Indeed, the Irish, in general, keep no bounds. I think there is not such another nation in Europe, so

'Impetuous in their love and in their hate.'

"That any of the Methodist preachers are alive is a clear proof of an overruling Providence; for we know not where we are safe. A week or two ago, in a time of perfect peace, twenty people assaulted one of our preachers, and a few that were riding with him, near Limerick. He asked their captain what they intended to do, who calmly answered, 'To murder you!' and accordingly presented a pistol, which snapped twice or thrice. Mr. Fenwick then rode away. The other pursued, and fired after him, but could not overtake him. Three of his companions they left for dead. But some neighbouring justice of the peace did not take it well; so they procured the cutthroats to be apprehended; and it is supposed they will be in danger of transportation, though murder is a venial sin in Ireland.

"I am, dear sir,

"JOHN WESLEY."[13]

Another letter, likewise written in Dublin, though a little out of chronological order, is too important to be omitted. It was addressed to Joseph Cownley, just after Wesley's arrival in the Irish metropolis, and contains an opinion on preaching, which, in this smooth-tongued age, is well worth pondering.

"DUBLIN, *April* 12, 1750.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—I doubt you are in a great deal more danger from honour than from dishonour. So it is with me. I always find there is most hazard in sailing upon smooth water. When the winds blow, and the seas rage, even the sleepers will rise and call upon God.

"From Newcastle to London, and from London to Bristol, God is everywhere reviving His work. I find it so now in Dublin, although there has been great imprudence in some, whereby grievous wolves have lately crept in among us, not sparing the flock; by whom some souls have been utterly destroyed, and others wounded, who are not yet recovered.[14] Those who ought to have stood in the gap did not; but I trust they will be wiser for the time to come. After a season, I think it will be highly expedient for you to labour in Ireland again.

"I see a danger you are in, which perhaps you do not see yourself. Is it not most pleasing to me, as well as to you, to be always preaching of the love of God? Without doubt so it is. But yet it would be utterly wrong

and unscriptural to preach of nothing else. Let the law always prepare for the gospel. I scarce ever spoke more earnestly here of the love of God in Christ than I did last night; but it was after I had been tearing the unawakened in pieces. Go thou and do likewise. It is true, the love of God in Christ alone feeds His children; but even they are to be guided as well as fed, yea, and often physicked too; and the bulk of our hearers must be purged before they are fed, else we only feed the disease. Beware of all honey. It is the best extreme; but it is an extreme.

"I am your affectionate brother,

"JOHN WESLEY."[15]

Upon the whole, Wesley was well satisfied with the work in Ireland. He writes: "I had the satisfaction of observing how greatly God had blessed my fellow labourers, and how many sinners were saved from the error of their ways. Many of these had been eminent for all manner of sins. Many had been Roman Catholics; and I suppose the number of these would have been far greater, had not the good protestants, as well as the popish priests, taken true pains to hinder them."[16]

Wesley's "fellow labourers," however, gave him trouble as well as joy. Dr. Whitehead has inserted, in his Life of Wesley, the following extracts of letters, written to Edward and Charles Perronet, during the present year. They seem somewhat testy, and, we incline to think, were written in a querulous frame of mind, to which all men are, more or less, liable. We give them as we find them.

"I have abundance of complaints to make, as well as to hear. I have scarce any one on whom I can depend, when I am a hundred miles off. 'Tis well if I do not run away soon, and leave them to cut and shuffle for themselves. Here" [in Ireland] "is a glorious people; but oh! where are the shepherds? The society at Cork have fairly sent me word, that they will take care of themselves, and erect themselves into a Dissenting congregation. I am weary of these sons of Zeruiah: they are too hard for me. Charles and you *behave* as I want you to do; but you cannot, or will not, preach *where* I desire. Others can and will preach *where* I desire; but they do not *behave* as I want them to do. I have a fine time between the one and the other. I think both Charles and you have, in the general, a right sense of what it is to serve as sons in the gospel; and if all our helpers had had the same, the work of God would have prospered better, both in England and Ireland. I have not one preacher with me, and not six in England, whose wills are broken to serve me thus."[17]

This is a dark picture; but we still think, that, though Wesley's first helpers were far from perfect, his complaint concerning them is too strongly worded. Biliousness makes even the best men fretful, and it may be fairly supposed that Wesley himself was not free from this.

Wesley's passage from Dublin to Bristol was stormy and dangerous. There was a combination of wind, thunder, rain, and darkness. The sea ran mountains high. The ship had no

goods, and little ballast, and rolled most fearfully. He and Christopher Hopper began to pray; the wind was hushed; the sea fell; the clouds dispersed; and, on July 24, they arrived in safety.

Ten days before his arrival, a long and most scandalous letter, of nearly three folio columns, was published in *The Bristol Weekly Intelligencer;* but was far too scurrilous to be answered. Some parts of it are literally obscene, and must not be quoted. The following are among the most mildly expressed charges. The "gifted itinerants," who "had been bred up as tailors, masons, colliers, tinkers, and sow-gelders," made it their "business to talk about the other world, in order to maintain themselves in this." They were "of a gloomy temper, and rueful countenance," holding the doctrines, that "the Deity is an arbitrary being; that positive institutions are more obligatory than moral duties; and that man is not a free agent, but a mere machine." Their followers were—(1) The most ignorant and credulous, who were "apt to admire everything that was new, surprising, and mysterious"; (2) the old, melancholy, and sick, who were ready to trust any one, that could, with confidence, promise to put them in a way of safety; (3) notorious bad livers, who made a great noise about religion, hoping to be happy hereafter without being good here; and (4) the female sex, who received the preachers very kindly into their houses, and, for their sakes, neglected and left their husbands and their families. In their preaching, the itinerants "interlarded their miscellaneous thoughts with a whole effusion of Scripture texts, without regard to their just sense or proper application; they roared, raved, thundered, and

stunned their congregations, using every variation of voice, and all manner of bodily agitations, and attributed the whole to the powerful operations of the Holy Ghost. Their proper friends were the Jesuits, and they opposed peace and order, and a regular government in church and state. They bred ill opinions about the clergy, by insinuating that they had more regard for their tithes than for their flocks, their pleasures than their prayers; and that they strove more for good livings than for eternal life."

Such are meek specimens of the long letter published in the midst of the Bristol Methodists.

Wesley spent six days at Bristol, during which he preached at Point's Pool, "in the midst of the butchers, and all the rebel rout that neither fear God nor reverence man." He was greatly disheartened at finding the Kingswood family considerably lessened. "I wonder," he writes, "how I am withheld from dropping the whole design; so many difficulties have continually attended it."

On July 30, he set out for Shepton-Mallet, and, for five hours, rode through an incessant rain and a furious wind, till he was "drenched to the very soles of his feet." Next day, he came to Shaftesbury, and preached to a crowded congregation, including "the chief opposers of John Haime; but none stirred, none spoke, none smiled; many were in tears; and many others were filled with joy unspeakable."

He then proceeded, by way of Collumpton, to Tiverton, to him a sacred place as containing the ashes of his brother Samuel. He preached in the market place. One of his hearers was Miss Sampson, a young lady of five and twenty, the daughter of a Baptist minister. She became one of the first members of the Tiverton society; married James Cotty, an itinerant preacher; and died in peace on New Year's day, 1819.[18] Tiverton was a place which Wesley often visited, and sometimes (as we shall see hereafter) a place which gave him not the most courteous welcome.

Leaving Tiverton, he went to Cornwall, and found that, throughout the entire county, the societies had "suffered great loss for want of discipline." The largest society was at St. Just, and contained a "greater proportion of believers" than he had found in any other society in the kingdom. It was during this visit of three weeks' continuance, that the first watchnight was held in Cornwall. He preached at least thirty times, held a quarterly meeting at St. Ives, at which were present the stewards of all the Cornish societies; and, besides other books, read what he calls an "odd one," entitled "The General Delusion of Christians with regard to Prophecy"; and was convinced of what he had long suspected: "(1) That the Montanists, in the second and third centuries were real, scriptural Christians;[19] and (2) that the grand reason why the miraculous gifts were so soon withdrawn, was, not only that faith and holiness were well-nigh lost, but that dry, formal, orthodox men began even to ridicule whatever gifts they had not themselves; and to deny them all, as either madness or imposture."

In returning, he called again at Tiverton, where the meadow in which he preached "was full from side to side, and many stood in the gardens and orchards round." At Hillfarrance, "three or four boors would have been rude if they durst; but the odds against them was too great." At Bridgewater, he had "a well behaved company." At Shaftesbury, a constable came, and said, "Sir, the mayor discharges you from preaching in this borough any more." Wesley replied, "While King George gives me leave to preach, I shall not ask leave of the mayor of Shaftesbury." At Salisbury, he preached in the chapel which formerly was Westley Hall's, a poor woman endeavouring to interrupt by uttering an inarticulate and dismal yell. Behaviour like this was now, at Salisbury, of common occurrence; the misconduct of Hall afforded the children of darkness an occasion of triumph. The poor Methodists were loaded with infamy and insults on his account. One of them was Mrs. Barbara Hunt, who, after a membership of sixty-three years, fell asleep in Jesus, on July 22, 1813.[20] From Salisbury, Wesley proceeded to Winterburn and to Reading, and, on September 8, after a six months' absence, got back to London.

A week later, he wrote: "September 15.—I read a short 'Narrative of Count Zinzendorf's Life, written by himself.' Was there ever such a Proteus under the sun as this Lord Freydeck, Domine de Thurstain, etc., etc.? For he has almost as many names as he has faces or shapes. O when will he learn (with all his learning) simplicity and godly sincerity? When will he be an upright follower of the Lamb, so that no guile may be found in his mouth?"

To some this language may seem somewhat harsh; but was it so? Take the commencement of a letter which Zinzendorf addressed to the Archbishop of Canterbury, in 1749. "We, Lewis, by Divine providence, bishop, Liturgus, and Ordinary of the churches known by the name of the Brethren; and, under the auspices of the same, Advocate during life, with full power over the hierarchy of the Slavonic Unity; Custos Rotulorum, and Prolocutor both of the general Synod and of the Tropus of instruction; by these presents declare," etc. Or take the following from Spangenberg, who says he thus enumerates all the titles of the count, because he not unfrequently availed himself of them:—"The individual whose character I have attempted to pourtray, was Nicolas Lewis, Count and Lord of Zinzendorf and Pottendorf, lord of the baronies of Freydeck, Schöneck, Thurnstein, and the vale of Wachovia, lord of the manor of Upper, Middle, and Lower Bertholdsdorf, Hereditary Warden of the Chace to his imperial Roman majesty, in the Duchy of Austria, below the Ens, and at one time Aulic and Justicial Counsellor to the Elector of Saxony." Compare this sickening bombast with Wesley's most flattering description of himself: "John Wesley, M.A., Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford." Unfortunately we shall have to return to this high-flown German gentleman.

It seems to have been some time during the present year, that the Methodists of London began to occupy the French church, in Grey Eagle Street, Spitalfields. This chapel had been built by the French protestant refugees, and is said to have had for its minister, from 1700 to 1705, the eminent

French protestant preacher, James Saurin. It is now a part of the brewery of Truman, Buxton, and Hanbury.[21] Here, on September 21, Wesley held a watchnight, and remarks: "I often wonder at the peculiar providence of God on these occasions. I do not know that, in so many years, one person has ever been hurt, either in London, Bristol, or Dublin, in going so late in the night to and from all parts of the town."

Wesley's stay in London was of short duration. On September 24, he left for Kingswood, where he spent a month in revising and preparing for the school the works following: Parochial Antiquities, by White Kennet, bishop of Peterborough; Grecian Antiquities, by Archbishop Potter; and Hebrew Antiquities, by Mr. Lewis. He also wrote, at this time, his "Short History of England," and his "Short Roman History"; and nearly finished his abridgment of Cave's Primitive Christianity, which he had begun about two years before. On October 24, he returned to London, and here, with the exception of short journeys to Windsor, Canterbury, and Leigh, he remained till the year was ended.

His publications, during 1750, were as follows.—

1. "Desiderii Erasmi Colloquia Selecta. In Usum Juventutis Christianae. Edidit Ecclesiae Anglicanae Presbyter." 12mo, 85 pages.

2. "Phaedri Fabulae Selectae. In Usum Juventutis Christianae. Edidit Ecclesiae Anglicanae Presbyter." 12mo, 35 pages.

3. "A Compendium of Logic." 12mo, 33 pages. This was a translation of Dr. Henry Aldrich's "Artis Logicae Compendium. Oxon: 1691" [8vo]. "Logic," says Wesley, "is the art of apprehending things clearly, judging truly, and reasoning conclusively. What is it, viewed in another light, but the art of learning and teaching; whether by convincing or persuading? What is there, then, in the whole compass of science, to be desired in comparison of it? It is good for this, at least (wherever it is understood), to make people talk less; by showing them both what is, and what is not, to the point; and how extremely hard it is to prove anything."[22] It is well known, that Wesley himself was an adept in the art of logic. "For several years," says he, "I was moderator in the disputations which were held six times a week at Lincoln College, in Oxford. I could not avoid acquiring hereby some degree of expertness in arguing; and especially in discerning and pointing out well covered and plausible fallacies. I have since found abundant reason to praise God for giving me this honest art. By this, when men have hedged me in by what they called demonstrations, I have been many times able to dash them in pieces; in spite of all its covers, to touch the very point where the fallacy lay; and it flew open in a moment."[23]

All the works, already mentioned, were chiefly designed for the use of Kingswood school. Those that follow were of a different kind.

4. "Letter to the Rev. Mr. Bailey, of Cork, in answer to a letter to the Rev. John Wesley." 12mo, 36 pages. Wesley handles Bailey with deserved severity, telling him, that many

of his accusations are no more likely to be credited than that of a wise friend of his, who said "the Methodists were a people who placed all their religion in wearing long whiskers." Bailey's slanderous charges were of the coarsest kind. The Methodist preachers were "a parcel of vagabond, illiterate babblers, who amused the populace with nonsense, ribaldry, and blasphemy, and were not capable of writing orthography or good sense." Wesley is called a "hairbrained enthusiast," and is accused "of frontless assurance, and a well dissembled hypocrisy"; of "promoting the cause of arbitrary popish power"; of "robbing and plundering the poor, so as to leave them neither bread to eat, nor raiment to put on"; and of "being the cause of all that Butler had done." Such a slanderer had no claim to mercy. "Never," says Wesley, "was anything so ill judged as for you to ask, 'Does Christianity encourage its professors to make use of lies, invectives, or low, mean abuse, and scurrility, to carry on its interests?' No, sir, it does not. I disclaim and abhor every weapon of this kind. But with these have the Methodist preachers been opposed in Cork above any other place. In England, in all Ireland, have I neither heard nor read any like those gross, palpable lies, those low Billingsgate invectives, and that inexpressibly mean abuse, and base scurrility, which the opposers of Methodism have continually made use of, and which has been the strength of their cause from the beginning."

5. "A Short Address to the Inhabitants of Ireland. Occasioned by some late occurrences. Dublin: 1750." 12mo, eight pages. Wesley, in this small tract, answers three questions concerning the Methodists, or, as the Irish called

them, Swaddlers—1. What are the Methodists? 2. What do they teach? 3. What are the effects of their teaching?

6. "A Letter to the Author of the 'Enthusiasm of the Methodists and Papists compared.'" 12mo, 44 pages.

Lavington, bishop of Exeter, was the author here addressed. Early in 1749 he published the first part of his work, and it is this only which Wesley answers. In his preface, the bishop tells his readers, that the Methodists are "a set of pretended reformers,—a dangerous and presumptuous sect, animated with an enthusiastical and fanatical spirit;" and that his object is "to draw a comparison between the wild and pernicious enthusiasms of some of the most eminent saints of the popish communion, and those of the Methodists in our own country." He further alleges, that the Methodists are a people of "sanctified singularities, low fooleries, and high pretensions; they are doing the papists' work for them, and agree with them in some of their principles; their heads are filled with much the same grand projects, and they are driven on in the same wild manner,—not perhaps from compact and design, but from a similar configuration and texture of the brain, or the fumes of imagination producing similar effects." The preachers were "strolling predicants, of affected phrases, fantastical and unintelligible notions, whimsical strictnesses, and loud exclamations. The windmill indeed was in all their heads. Every flash of zeal and devotion,—every wild pretension, scheme, tenet, and overbearing dictate,—impulses, impressions, feelings, impetuous transports and raptures,—intoxicating vapours and fumes of

imagination,—phantoms of a crazy brain, and uncouth effects of a distempered mind or body,—their sleeping or waking dreams,—their actions and passions,—all were ascribed, with an amazing presumption, to the extraordinary interposition of heaven, setting its seal to their mission."

In illustration of all this, Whitefield and Wesley are treated with the grossest ridicule.

Whitefield replied to Lavington at once, and published his pamphlet in the month of May, with the title: "Some Remarks on a Pamphlet, entitled, The Enthusiasm of Methodists and Papists compared; wherein several mistakes in some parts of his past writings and conduct are acknowledged, and his present sentiments concerning the Methodists explained." 8vo, 48 pages.

In September following, another reply was published, namely, "Some Remarks on the Enthusiasm of Methodists and Papists compared. By Vincent Perronet, A.M." Price threepence.[24]

Limited space prevents any further notice of these productions; except to say, that both are ably written, and evince a Christian spirit.

Wesley's reply was finished at Canterbury on the 1st of February, 1750, and was published soon afterwards. Like most of his other writings, it is as brief as he could make it. Wesley was too busy to compose elaborate answers to the

attacks of his opponents. Besides, had it been otherwise, his passion for saying all he wished to say in as few words as possible, would, under any circumstances, have prevented him from using the verbosity of others. Lavington's pamphlet was anonymous; but there was little doubt respecting its author. Though a bishop, his composition is loose and faulty, and is characterized by the most glaring grammatical mistakes. He might be a punster and buffoon; but his performance does him no honour as a scholar. If the blunders in his pamphlet had been found in his youthful essays, they would have been more likely to have secured him a flagellation in the Winchester school, where it was his privilege to be, than to obtain the applause of his tutors and friends. His gift was not genius, nor yet grace; but a sort of merry-andrewism, more laughable than learned, and more suited for a stage than for a bishop's throne.

Wesley tells him, that it is well he hides his name; otherwise he would be obliged to hide his face; for some of his sentences are neither sense nor grammar. He writes: "I must beg you, sir, in your third part, to inform your reader, that whenever any solecism or mangled sentences appear in the quotations from my writings, they are not chargeable upon me; that if the sense be mine (which is not always), yet I lay no claim to the manner of expression; the English is all your own."

Wesley's letter was addressed to an anonymous author; but that author was a bishop, and for a bishop to be lectured about his bad English was a pill which Lavington must have found

difficult to swallow. The next quotation, however, must have been bitterer still.

> "You proceed to prove my enthusiasm from my notions of conversion. And here great allowances are to be made, because you are talking of things quite out of your sphere; you are got into an unknown world! Do you know what conversion is? 'Yes; it is to start up perfect men at once' (page 41). Indeed, sir, it is not. A man is usually converted long before he is a perfect man. It is probable most of the Ephesians to whom St. Paul directed his epistle were converted. Yet they were not 'come' (few if any), 'to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.' I do not, sir, indeed I do not, undertake to make you understand these things. I am not so vain as to think it is in my power. It is the utmost of my hope to convince you, that you understand just nothing about them."

The following is Wesley's concluding paragraph.

> "Any scribbler, with a middling share of low wit, not encumbered with good nature or modesty, may raise a laugh on those whom he cannot confute, and run them down whom he dares not look in the face. By this means, even a comparer of Methodists and papists may blaspheme the great work of God, not only without blame, but with applause; at least, from readers of his own stamp. But it is high time, sir, you should leave your skulking place. Come out, and let us look each

other in the face. I have little leisure, and less inclination, for controversy. Yet I promise, if you will set your name to your third part, I will answer all that shall concern me, in that, as well as the preceding. Till then,

"I remain, sir,
"Your friend and well wisher,
"JOHN WESLEY."

This was galling; the bishop felt it so; and, as we shall see hereafter, allowed his indignation to boil over. Southey says, that Wesley did not treat Bishop Lavington with the urbanity which he usually displayed towards his opponents. This is scarcely true; but if it were, his grace of Exeter deserved all he got. We regret, that we shall be obliged to renew acquaintance with him. Meanwhile, let us briefly say, that this buffooning bishop was born at Mildenhall in 1683. On leaving the school at Winchester, he was removed to New College, Oxford, where he graduated for the civil law, and obtained a fellowship. At the age of thirty-four, he was made rector of Hayford Warren; then prebendary of Worcester; then canon of St. Paul's; and then bishop of Exeter. He died on the 13th of September, 1762; exactly fifteen days after the following entry in Wesley's journal:—

"Sunday, August 29, 1762.—I preached, at eight, on Southernhay Green" [Exeter] "to an extremely quiet congregation. At the cathedral, we had an useful sermon, and the whole service was performed with great seriousness and decency. Such an organ I never saw or

heard before, so large, beautiful, and so finely toned; and the music of 'Glory be to God in the highest,' I think, exceeded the 'Messiah' itself. I was well pleased to partake of the Lord's supper with my old opponent, Bishop Lavington. O may we sit down together in the kingdom of our Father!"

ENDNOTES

[1] Whitefield's Works, vol. ii., p. 316-18.
[2] Ibid. p. 320.
[3] "Life and Times of Countess of Huntingdon, vol. i., p. 118.
[4] See Whitefield's Letters.
[5] *Methodist Magazine,* 1837, p. 421.
[6] *London Magazine,* 1750.
[7] Walpole's Letters.
[8] *London Magazine,* 1750, p. 139.
[9] *London Magazine,* 1750, p. 223.
[10] *Methodist Magazine,* 1779, p. 257.
[11] *Methodist Magazine,* 1781, p. 92.
[12] *Methodist Magazine,* 1779, p. 256.
[13] *Methodist Magazine,* 1848, p. 776.
[14] The reference here is doubtless to Roger Ball.
[15] *Methodist Magazine,* 1794, p. 524.
[16] Wesley's Works, vol. xiii., p. 316.
[17] Whitehead's Life of Wesley, vol. ii., p. 259.
[18] *Methodist Magazine,* 1819, p. 544.
[19] Lavington, bishop of Exeter, begins his "Enthusiasm of the Methodists and Papists compared," with a sketch of what he calls "the madness and presumption of the Montanists."
[20] *Methodist Magazine,* 1815, p. 47.
[21] It is rather remarkable, that in a second instance the Methodists took possession of a French protestant church, in Spitalfields, namely, the chapel now occupied in Church Street, and at the erection of which John Nelson worked, when he heard Wesley preach in 1739, and saw him stroke back the hair of his head. (Private manuscript.) *Apropos* of

chapels, it may be added, that in Reed's *Weekly Journal* of December 15, 1750, is the following item of intelligence: "We hear that the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, senior fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford, has purchased New Wells, near the London Spaw, Clerkenwell, and that he intends, with all convenient speed, to fit up the same for a tabernacle."

[22] Wesley's Works, vol. x., pp. 464, 472.

[23] Ibid. p. 340.

[24] *London Magazine*, 1749, p. 436.

1751.

THE year upon which we are now entering was one of vast anxiety and trouble, and, of course, like previous years, was characterized by unceasing activity on the part of the great chiefs of the Methodist movement. Charles Wesley was from four to five months in London, about the same in Bristol, and spent the rest in an important visit to the numerous societies in the midland counties and the north of England. Whitefield gave the first two months of the year to the metropolis, the next three to the west of England and to Wales, more than two to Ireland and Scotland, and then, in August, set sail for America. Wesley himself spent eight months in itinerancy, and the rest in London.

Moravianism was more than ever a *vexata quaestio*. Whitefield, in a letter dated March 30, 1751, remarks:—"I doubt not but there are many holy souls among the Moravians; but their not preaching the law, either as a *schoolmaster* to show us our need of Christ, or as a *rule of life*, after we have closed with Him, is what I can in nowise concur with. These their two grand mistakes, together with their unscriptural expressions in their hymns, and several superstitious fopperies lately intruded among them, make me think they are sadly departed from the simplicity of the gospel."[1]

A friend, writing to Wesley, at the commencement of the year, observes:—

"No doubt God had wise ends in permitting the *Unitas Fratrum* to appear, just as the people of God began to unite together; but we cannot fathom His designs. Very probably we should have been now a very different people from what we are, had we had only our own countrymen to cope with. We should then have set the plain gospel of Christ against what is palpably another gospel. But this subtle poison has more or less infected almost all among us. We would put gospel heads on bodies ready to indulge unholy tempers. Although as a society we stand as clear of joining with the Beast as any other, yet we have not purged out all his leaven; the antinomian leaven is not yet cast out. All our preaching at first was pointed at the heart; and in almost all our private conversation, 'Do you feel the love of God in your heart? Does His Spirit reign there? Do you walk in the Spirit? Is that mind in you which was in Christ?' were frequent questions among us. But while these preachers to the heart were going on gloriously in the work of Christ, the false apostles stepped in, laughed at all heart work, and laughed many of us out of our spiritual senses; for, according to them, we were neither to see, hear, feel, nor taste the powers of the world to come, but to rest contented with what was done for us seventeen hundred years ago. 'The dear Lamb,' said they, 'has done all for us; we have nothing to do, but to believe.' Here was a stroke at the whole work of God in the heart! And ever since, this German spirit has wrought among us, and caused many to rest in

a barren, notional faith, void of that inward power of God unto salvation."

One of the Moravians themselves, who had been the physician in one of their religious houses, and had also been a preacher among them both at home and abroad, and who, with his wife, still attended their services, informed Wesley of his own knowledge of sensual abominations practised by the brethren and sisters at Leeds and Bedford, which, though referred to in Wesley's Journal, we shall not pollute our pages by printing. No wonder, after Wesley had committed the man's statement to writing, and had submitted it to him for his own correction, he should exclaim in a burst of sorrowful indignation, "Was there ever so melancholy an account? and what is human nature! How low are they fallen, who were once burning and shining lights, spreading blessings wherever they came!"

Wesley has oft been blamed for speaking far too harshly of his old Moravian friends; but those who blame him are either ignorant of facts like those alluded to above, or they wickedly wink at their existence. Moravianism in England, in 1751, had become, to a great extent, a luscious morsel of antinomian poison; and it was a painful knowledge of this distressing fact, which led Wesley to adopt the course he did.

One pamphlet, published at the close of 1750, has not been mentioned, though there is little doubt that Wesley was its author. His name does not appear; but that was not unusual, for many of his tracts and pamphlets were printed without his

name, or with his initials only. The preface is dated "London, October 2, 1750," though Wesley then had retired for a month to Kingswood, for the purpose of writing books. The style is his to a nicety, and the most incredulous will find it difficult to doubt that Wesley was the writer. The pamphlet was not published in his own edition of his collected works in 1771; but that is not conclusive evidence against its authenticity, for other pamphlets were similarly omitted, as, for instance, his "Extract of Zinzendorf's Discourses," seventy-eight pages, and his Zinzendorf's Hymns, twelve pages. Its title is as follows: "The Contents of a Folio History of the Moravians, or United Brethren, printed in 1749, and privately printed and sold under the title of *'Acta Fratrum Unitatis in Anglia,'* with suitable remarks. Humbly addressed to the Pious of every Protestant Denomination in Europe and America. By a Lover of the Light. London: 1750." 12mo, 60 pages. On the title page there is the following text:—"While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption."

Rightly to understand the merits of this peculiar and now extremely scarce publication, it is necessary to look back upon the Moravian history of the previous five years.

As early as 1746, Zinzendorf was anxious to have the Moravians legally acknowledged by the British parliament, and to secure for them a legal standing. To accomplish this, he, with effrontery worthy of a better cause, made friends with Potter, the archbishop of Canterbury; with Sherlock, bishop of London; with Thomas Penn, the proprietor of Pennsylvania; and with General Oglethorpe, governor of

Georgia. He succeeded in bringing the cause of the Brethren before the king's privy council, and, in 1747, contrived to get an act through parliament, exempting the Moravians, in British North America, from taking oaths. But even this was not enough to satisfy Zinzendorf's ambition. In this act there was only a *tacit* and *indefinite* acknowledgment of his church. He wished for more, and, in order to get it, agreed with his friends to petition that the Moravians in England might have the same exemption, as those in the American colonies; and that they should have the further privilege of not bearing arms. The petition stated, that the Brethren were descended from the ancient Bohemian and Moravian church; that, in their doctrinal views, they followed the Augsburg Confession of 1530, and the synod of Berne in 1532; that they consisted of the *threefold* union of Moravians, Lutherans, and Reformed, or, in other words, the three principal sections of the protestant church; that their proper ecclesiastical title was *"Unitas Fratrum";* and that, in support of these pretensions, they could adduce, before a parliamentary committee, not fewer than one hundred and thirty-five different documents.

Strangely enough, a committee of the House of Commons was appointed, with Oglethorpe for its chairman. The report of the committee was read and ordered to be printed; and Oglethorpe was commissioned to draw up a bill, founded upon the report presented, and to bring it before the house. The bill passed the House of Commons on the 18th of April, 1749. On being introduced into the House of Lords, the lord chancellor objected to almost every line of it; and especially against the power vested in Zinzendorf, as the *Advocatus*

Fratrum, in ecclesiastical matters,—a power authorising him, though a foreigner, to enjoin upon the bishops and ministers of the Church of England to give certificates, that the parties holding them were members of the *Unitas Fratrum,* which certificates the British authorities were to accept as legal. Zinzendorf, in a conversation with Lord Halifax, had said: "Against the will of the king, I would not like to press the matter; but a *limitation of the act* I will not accept. Everything or nothing! No modifications!" This was German swagger. Finding the lord chancellor earnest in his objection, he was fain, rather than lose his bill, to leave out the words which put the bishops and clergy of the Church of England beneath his power, and proposed the following as a substitute: "that the *verbal declaration* of the individual, together with the certificate of a bishop or minister of the Brethren, shall be sufficient proof of membership." With this alteration, the bill became law, on the 12th of May, 1749. By this act of parliament, Zinzendorf gained the following points:—

1. The *Unitas Fratrum* were acknowledged as an ancient protestant episcopal church.

2. Those of its members, who scrupled to take an oath, were exempted from doing so on making a declaration in the presence of Almighty God, as witness of the truth.

3. They were exempted from acting as jurymen.

4. They were exempted from military service, in the American colonies, under reasonable conditions.[2]

This was a singular episode in Moravian history. Zinzendorf was proud of it; and well he might. It was scarcely fifteen years since the Moravians first set foot in England. They had been torn by faction, and persecuted by furious mobs. Their tenets, in many instances, were far from orthodox. Many of their practices were silly and objectionable. Their hymns and literature were loathsomely luscious, and familiarly irreverent. Their leader, though a German noble, and, upon the whole, benevolent and devout, was ambitious and overbearing, if not insane; and yet, the British parliament had already given them not only a legal standing, but an ecclesiastical cognomen of their own selecting, and had granted them exemptions, which they had no right to claim. How was this? We can hardly tell; but a German sat on the British throne, and his court, to a great extent, was a German court.

A few months after the Moravian bill was passed by parliament, Zinzendorf had put to the press, in his own private printing office, a folio volume, entitled *"Acta Fratrum in Anglia,"* containing (1) all the past public negotiations in England; (2) an exposition of the doctrine, liturgy, and constitutions of the Brethren's congregations. This was the "folio history," of which the pamphlet, that we have attributed to Wesley, professes to give the "contents." The following are a few of the writer's running observations.

> "The absurdities of this history are fairly confuted by only repeating them." Referring to the expression, "blood and wounds theology," he asks,—"Is this

honouring the name and sacrifice of the glorious Son of God? O count! art thou wiser, or more inspired, than Paul or Peter? If thou art not, surely thou art lost in thine own greatness, and swallowed up in the delusions of the devil." (Page 38.)

"Here follows a dark apology for their enigmatical jargon, in which they say, 'The people who pick up and pervert our practical phrases incur a terrible guilt thereby.' 1. The much greater part of their phrases are altogether unintelligible to any but themselves, and therefore none but some of themselves can pervert them. 2. Those phrases that have a little common sense in them are so encumbered with nonsense and error, that it is hardly possible not to reprove them, which I suppose is called perverting them." (Page 43.)

"As to ordinances, the *Unitas Fratrum* have 'baptism, with a covenant water certainly impregnated with the blood of Christ'; and the Lord's supper, which they call 'a partaking of the corpse of our Saviour, at receiving which, they prostrate themselves in awe of His tremendous majesty.' I cannot once imagine, they have any design to promote popery; but, O count! don't you see, that these expressions might have been used by Ignatius Loyola, in honour of holy water and his wafer god?" (Page 44.)

"Their thoughts on marriage are dark and mysterious. They call it, 'an holy mystery, a *sacramentum magnum.'*

And by their own account, their hymns on this subject are not fit to be read by any that attach bad ideas to bad expressions; but say they, 'We hold forth chaste matter under usual and express words.' O ye dreamers! When will ye hold forth nothing but what is taught by God and the holy Scriptures? Why do you choose to express yourselves as if taught in the school of Ignatius Loyola?" (page 45.)

"Will you receive advice, ye *Unitas Fratrum?* Then, for the glory of the gospel of Jesus Christ, appear to the world clothed in the robes of innocency and truth. Lay aside your darkness, and bring all your words to light. If you have any meaning, reveal it for the good of souls; if you have no meaning, call yourselves anything but Christians." (Page 50.)

Attached to the pamphlet is a postscript addressed to those of the *Unitas Fratrum,* who once were Methodists. The following is an extract:—

"Is not your doctrine dull, flat, and insipid? Does it not come from a floating imagination? Is not its chief aim to fill the mind with ideas of the Lamb's heart? of soaking and melting in blood? of playing near, and creeping into the side-hole? of pretty, happy sinnership? of beating the little sinner on the bill when he has been naughty? and of a thousand such strange, unheard of absurdities? Your doctors, by playing with words, and jingling soft sounds, may delight the fancy; but whoever

they are that look for sense, must miss of edification." (Page 57.)

Such are fair specimens of the short critiques of the curious "contents" of Zinzendorf's folio history of the *"Acta Fratrum in Aglia."* It is painful to have to record quarrels among old friends and brethren; but facts are too serious to be blinked for an author's private pleasure. As a sort of counterpoise to this unpleasantness, we subjoin an extract from a letter, addressed to Wesley, by Cennick, at this time the most laborious and successful Moravian preacher in the sister island.

"DUBLIN, *June* 25, 1751.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—Yesterday I received yours, and assure you, I am sincere in my desires and proposals of speaking and writing freely to each other; and wish heartily, that Christians conferring together had hindered the making that wide space between us and you. Perhaps He that maketh men to be of one mind in a house, may nevertheless, in our days, begin the gathering together in one the people of God that are scattered abroad. I think, if I could see the dawn of that gracious day, I would wish no more, but be content to labour myself to death, and finish my pilgrimage with a cheerfulness inexpressible. Till then, as long as people in many things think differently, all must be allowed their Christian liberty; and though some may remove from you to us, or from us to you, without becoming bitter, and with upright views to please our Saviour, I can see no harm in it. I really love the servants and

witnesses of Jesus in all the world. I wish all to prosper. I salute Mrs. Wesley; and assure you, I am your affectionate loving brother,

"JOHN CENNICK."[3]

This is very beautiful, especially remembering the past and present days. Wesley entitles the letter, "Sincere professions of Christian love." They do Cennick credit, and were grateful to the heart and mind of Wesley.

Cennick's letter concludes with a salutation to Mrs. Wesley; and we must now refer to another painful subject—Wesley's marriage.[4] This took place in the month of February. The exact day is doubtful. Wesley says it was *a few days* after February 2. The *Gentleman's Magazine* has the following in its list of marriages: "February 18.—Rev. Mr. John Wesley, Methodist preacher, to a merchant's widow in Threadneedle Street, with a jointure of £300 per annum"; and the *London Magazine:* "February 19.—Rev. Mr. John Wesley, to Mrs. Vazel, of Threadneedle Street, a widow lady of large fortune." The large fortune consisted of £10,000, invested in three per cent. consols, and was wholly secured to herself and her four children.[5]

Charles Wesley seems to have been introduced to her in July, 1749, at Edward Perronet's, and describes her then as "a woman of sorrowful spirit." Mr. Moore remarks, that Mrs. Vazeille (her proper name), from all that he had heard of her from Wesley, and from others, seemed at the time to be well qualified for her new position. "She appeared to be truly

pious, and was very agreeable in her person and manners. She conformed to every company, whether of the rich or of the poor; and had a remarkable facility and propriety in addressing them concerning their true interests."[6] Mr. Watson observes, that "she was a woman of cultivated understanding, as her remaining letters testify; and that she appeared to Mr. Wesley to possess every other qualification, which promised to increase both his usefulness and happiness, we may conclude from his having made choice of her as his companion." Mr. Jackson says: "Neither in understanding nor in education was she worthy of the eminent man to whom she was united; and her temper was intolerably bad. During the lifetime of her first husband, she appears to have enjoyed every indulgence; and, judging from some of his letters to her, which have been preserved, he paid an entire deference to her will. Her habits and spirit were ill adapted to the privations and inconveniences which were incident to her new mode of life, as the travelling companion of Mr. John Wesley."[7] Hampson remarks: "The connection was unfortunate. There never was a more preposterous union. It is pretty certain that no loves lighted their torches on this occasion; and it is as much to be presumed, that neither did Plutus preside at the solemnity. Mrs. Wesley's property was too inconsiderable, to warrant the supposition that it was a match of interest. Besides, had she been ever so rich, it was nothing to him; for every shilling of her fortune remained at her own disposal; and neither the years, nor the temper of the parties, could give any reason to suppose them violently enamoured. That this lady accepted his proposals, seems much less surprising than that he should have made them. It

is probable, his situation at the head of a sect, and the authority it conferred, was not without its charms in the eyes of an ambitious female. But we much wonder, that Mr. Wesley should have appeared so little acquainted with himself and with human nature. He certainly did not possess the conjugal virtues. He had no taste for the tranquillity of domestic retirement: while his situation, as an itinerant, left him little leisure for those attentions which are absolutely necessary to the comfort of married life."[8] Dr. Whitehead writes: "Mr. Wesley's constant habit of travelling, the number of persons who came to visit him wherever he was, and his extensive correspondence, were circumstances unfavourable to that social intercourse, mutual openness and confidence, which form the basis of happiness in the married state. These circumstances, indeed, would not have been so very unfavourable, had he married a woman who could have entered into his views, and have accommodated herself to his situation. But this was not the case. Had he searched the whole kingdom, he would hardly have found a woman more unsuitable in these respects, than she whom he married."[9]

From the first, Charles Wesley felt the strongest aversion to his brother's marriage. Why? Mr. Jackson suggests, that this could not proceed from any feeling of personal or family dislike to Mrs. Vazeille (which we somewhat doubt); nor from any repugnance to the marriage state, for he himself was eminently happy in that relation; but because he believed that, by this means, Wesley's labours would be confined within the same comparatively narrow circle as his own, and, as a consequence, many of the Methodist societies, for want of

oversight, would become Independent churches; a wide separation from the national establishment would ensue, and the kingdom be deprived of that extensive reformation which the brothers had hoped by God's blessing to effect.

Probably there is some truth in this; but we still incline to the opinion, that Charles Wesley's dislike to the marriage was, at least, partly owing to a disapprobation of his brother's choice. In 1750, Charles took her on a fortnight's visit to his wife's relations at Ludlow; and, on her return to London, he and his Sally, for eight or nine days, were guests of Mrs. Vazeille herself. Charles was a keen discerner of personal character,—perhaps much more than his brother was,—and must have seen some of the faults which afterwards became more apparent, and to which, at subsequent periods, he so frequently refers.

At all events, on February 2, a fortnight before the marriage, he writes as follows: "My brother told me he was *resolved to marry*. I was thunderstruck, and could only answer, he had given me the first blow, and his marriage would come like the *coup de grace*. Trusty Ned Perronet followed, and told me, the person was Mrs. Vazeille! one of whom I had never had the least suspicion. I refused his company to the chapel, and retired to mourn with my faithful Sally. I groaned all the day, and several following ones, under my own and the people's burdens. I could eat no pleasant food, nor preach, nor rest, either by night or by day."

On the same day, Wesley himself wrote: "Having received a full answer from Mr. Perronet, I was clearly convinced, that I ought to marry. For many years, I remained single, because I believed I could be more useful in a single than in a married state. And I praise God, who enabled me so to do. I now as fully believed that, in my present circumstances, I might be more useful in a married state."

This is a curious entry. Can it be true that, up to this day, Wesley had not proposed marriage to Mrs. Vazeille? that Vincent Perronet's letter brought him to a decision? that he acquainted his brother as soon as he had made up his mind? and that all the courtship preceding his marriage was really of not more than fifteen or sixteen days' continuance? If so, no wonder that this, like most hasty marriages, was so unfortunate.

This brief period was a curious episode in Wesley's history. Four days after he told his brother that he *"was resolved to marry,"* he strangely enough "met the single men" of the London society, "and showed them on how many accounts it was good for those who had received that gift from God, to remain 'single for the kingdom of heaven's sake;' unless where a particular case might be an exception to the general rule." His intention was to set out five days after this, on his journey to the north; but, on the day before he purposed starting, his feet slipped on the ice, in crossing London Bridge, and he fell with great force, the bone of his ankle lighting on a stone, and one of his legs being severely sprained. A surgeon bound up the leg; and, with great difficulty, he proceeded to Seven

Dials, where he preached. He attempted to preach again, at the Foundery, at night; but his sprain became so painful, that he was obliged to relinquish his intention; and, at once, removed to Threadneedle Street, where Mrs. Vazeille resided; and here he spent the seven days next ensuing, "partly," he says, "in prayer, reading, and *conversation*, and partly in writing a Hebrew grammar, and Lessons for Children." During this brief period of enforced retirement, when he had purposed to be far on his way to the north of England, the *tete-a-tete* unexpectedly issued in a marriage. The accident occurred on Sunday, February 10; on the Sunday following, he was "carried to the Foundery, and preached kneeling," not being yet able to stand; and, on the next day, or, at most, the day after that, cripple though he was, he succeeded in leading Mrs. Vazeille, a widow, seven years younger than himself, to the hymeneal altar, and was married. On the Monday (February 18) he was still unable to set his foot to the ground. On the Tuesday evening, and on the Wednesday morning, he preached kneeling. This was an odd beginning,—the bridegroom crippled, and, instead of making a wedding tour, preaching on his knees in London chapels. A fortnight after his marriage, being, as he says, "tolerably able to ride, though not to walk," he set out for Bristol, leaving his newly married wife behind him. Here he held a five days' conference with his preachers, who had assembled from various parts, and says: "My spirit was much bowed down among them, fearing some of them were perverted from the simplicity of the gospel; but the more we conversed, the more brotherly love increased. I expected to have heard many objections to our first doctrines; but none appeared to have any: we seemed to be all of one

mind, as well as one heart. I mentioned whatever I thought was amiss, or wanting, in any of our brethren. It was received in a right spirit, with much love, and serious earnest attention; and, I trust, not one went from the conference discontented, but rather, blessing God for the consolation."

The conference being ended, he returned to London on March the 21st, and, six days afterwards, set out for Scotland, and inserted in his journal what, perhaps, was a sly hit at his brother Charles: "I cannot understand how a Methodist preacher can answer it to God, to preach one sermon, or travel one day less, in a married than in a single state. In this respect surely, 'it remaineth, that they who have wives be as though they had done.'"

Was there ever a marriage like John Wesley's? It was one of the greatest blunders he ever made. A man who attains to the age of forty-eight, without marrying, ought to remain a bachelor for life, inasmuch as he has, almost of necessity, formed habits, and has acquired angularities and excrescences, which will never harmonize with the relationships and duties of the married state. Besides, if there ever was a man whose mission was so great and so peculiar as to render it inexpedient for him to become a benedict, Wesley was such a man. His marriage was ill advised as well as ill assorted. On both sides, it was, to a culpable extent, hasty, and was contracted without proper and sufficient thought. Young people entering into hurried marriages deserve and incur censure; and if so, what shall be said of Wesley and his wife? They married in haste, and had leisure

to repent. Their act was, in a high degree, an act of folly; and, properly enough, to the end of life, both of them were made to suffer a serious penalty. It is far from pleasant to pursue the subject; but perhaps it is needful. In a world of danger like this, we must look at beacons as well as beauties. Let us then, as far as is possible, see the results of this hasty and ill judged marriage, and then have done with it.

One necessary consequence was the resignation of Wesley's fellowship, which he sent, on the 1st of June, to the following effect:—"I, John Wesley, fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford, do hereby spontaneously and freely resign whatever rights I possess in the aforesaid society, to the rector and fellows of the same: wishing to all and each of them perpetual peace and every species of felicity in Christ."

Another result was a painful quarrel with his brother. It is true, this was not of long continuance; for, on March 22, they met together, and had free and full explanations, and were reconciled to each other.[10] So they said, and yet it is a fact, that, for years afterwards, there seemed to be a shyness and a want of perfect confidence between them. Charles pitied the misfortune of his brother; but never attempted to excuse his folly. Towards his brother's wife, he found it difficult to maintain, at all times, the semblance of courteous conduct. Nine days after the marriage, he kissed her, and assured her he was reconciled to her and his brother. In the month of May following he says: "I met my sister in Bristol, and behaved to her *as such*. I showed her, both at my own house, and the houses of my friends, all the civility in my power." A month

later, he found her in tears, heard her complaints against her husband, and professed love, pity, and a desire to help her. Serious quarrels, however, ensued after this, between her and Charles, and when Wesley thought himself dying, in December 1753, he made it his request to his wife and to his brother, to forget the past; which, says the latter, "I readily agreed to, and once more offered her my service in great sincerity." A year or two later, the following significant sentences occur in Charles's letters to his wife: "I called, two minutes before preaching, on Mrs. Wesley, at the Foundery; and, in all that time, had not one quarrel."[11] Again: "I hope Mrs. Wesley keeps her distance. If malice is stronger in her than pride, she will pay you a mischievous visit. Poor Mr. Lefevre laments that he cannot love her. Blessed be God, I can, and desire to love her more."[12] In 1766, he describes her as "quite placid and tame," and desires his Sally to be courteous to her without trusting her.[13] Charles's friendship for his sister-in-law was down to freezing point, and his wife's seems to have been lower still.

What concerning Wesley himself? His wife's money soon became a trouble; and at no time was a benefit. Within two months after his unhappy marriage, we find him writing to his friend Blackwell, asking him to render his assistance in settling her affairs; and adding: "She has many trials, but not one more than God knows to be profitable to her. I believe you have been, and will be, a means of removing some. If these outward incumbrances were removed, it might be a means of her spending more time with me; which would probably be useful as well as agreeable to her."[14]

Mrs. Wesley seems to have accompanied her husband in his long northern journey, undertaken a few weeks after they were married. She, also, went with him into Cornwall, in the month of August following. Again, in March 1752, she, and one of her daughters, shared all the adventures, privations, and roughnesses of another three months' journey to the north of England.[15] On the way, while at Epworth, Wesley wrote as follows to Mr. Blackwell: "April 16, 1752.—My wife is, at least, as well as when we left London: the more she travels, the better she bears it. It gives us yet another proof, that, whatever God calls us to, He will fit us for. I was, at first, a little afraid, she would not so well understand the behaviour of a Yorkshire mob; but there has been no trial; even the Methodists are now at peace throughout the kingdom."[16] Before the month was ended, Wesley and his wife had mobbing to their hearts' content.

Hitherto, their married life, if not ecstatic, had not been absolutely miserable. Things, however, were soon altered. On November 3, 1752, Vincent Perronet wrote as follows to Charles Wesley: "I am truly concerned that matters are in so melancholy a situation. I think the unhappy lady is most to be pitied, though the gentleman's case is mournful enough. Their sufferings proceed from widely different causes. His are the visible chastisements of a loving Father; hers, the immediate effects of an angry, bitter spirit; and, indeed, it is a sad consideration, that, after so many months have elapsed, the same warmth and bitterness should remain."[17]

This was within a year and three quarters of the time when the marriage ceremony was performed. Four months later, she again went with Wesley to the north and to Scotland. Indeed, up to the year 1755, she seems, generally speaking, to have been his travelling companion; but, in the autumn of that year, there was a change. Wesley then went to Cornwall without her, and, while there, sent a packet of letters to Charles Perronet. The packet came into the hands of his jealous wife; most unwarrantably she opened it, and, finding a few lines addressed to Mrs. Lefevre, fell into a furious passion.[18] Ever after, there was little else than a succession of connubial storms. In February, 1756, Wesley wrote to Sarah Ryan: "Your last letter was seasonable indeed. I was growing faint in my mind. The being continually watched over for evil; the having every word I spoke, every action I did, small and great, watched with no friendly eye; the hearing a thousand little, tart, unkind reflections, in return for the kindest words I could devise—

'Like drops of eating water on the marble,
At length have worn my sinking spirits down.'

Yet I could not say, 'Take Thy plague away from me;' but only, 'Let me be purified, not consumed.'"[19]

We have here a painful discovery of the consuming sorrows of Wesley's domestic life. No doubt, there were faults on his side as well as on the side of his twitting wife. No one, for instance, will for a moment attempt to justify his writing, in the terms just quoted, to Sarah Ryan, his Bristol

housekeeper, who, however pious after her conversion, lived a most disreputable life before it. This was, to say the least, supremely foolish; but still it was not sufficient to justify his wife's subsequent cruel and almost insane behaviour. In another letter to Sarah Ryan he writes as follows:—

"*January* 27, 1758.

"MY DEAR SISTER,—Last Friday, after many severe words, my wife left me, vowing she would see me no more. As I had wrote to you the same morning, I began to reason with myself, till I almost doubted whether I had done well in writing, or whether I ought to write to you at all. After prayer, that doubt was taken away. Yet I was almost sorry I had written that morning. In the evening, while I was preaching at the chapel, she came into the chamber where I had left my clothes, searched my pockets, and found the letter there, which I had finished, but had not sealed. While she read it, God broke her heart; and I afterwards found her in such a temper as I have not seen her in for several years. She has continued in the same ever since. So I think God has given a sufficient answer, with regard to our writing to each other."[20]

We think nothing of the kind; and again regret his writing such a letter, on such a subject, to such a woman. His motives and his end were unquestionably pure; but the act itself cannot be defended. His wife was jealous, cruelly jealous, and he ought to have avoided what was likely to feed and increase her passion.

Wesley and his wife, however, were again united, but were far from being happy. So things proceeded till 1771. "On one occasion, she seized his letters and other papers, and put them into the hands of such as she knew to be his enemies, that they might be printed, as presumptive proofs of illicit connections." She even interpolated letters which she had intercepted, so as to make them bear a bad construction, and then read them to different persons in private, for the purpose of defaming him. In one or two instances, she published interpolated or forged letters in the public prints.[21] She accused Charles Wesley of idleness, and declared that, for years, his dearest Sally had been John Wesley's mistress. Charles danced with rage at this imputation cast upon his wife; but his Sally calmly smiled, and said, "Who will believe my sister now?"[22] Frequently she would drive a hundred miles to observe who was in the carriage with her husband on his entering a town. Sometimes her passions hurried her into outrage and indecency. More than once, she laid violent hands upon his person, and tore his hair.[23] "Jack," said John Hampson, senior, to his son, "I was once on the point of committing murder. Once, when I was in the north of Ireland, I went into a room, and found Mrs. Wesley foaming with fury. Her husband was on the floor, where she had been trailing him by the hair of his head; and she herself was still holding in her hand venerable locks which she had plucked up by the roots. I felt," continued the gigantic Hampson, who was not one of Wesley's warmest friends, "I felt as though I could have knocked the soul out of her."[24]

Other statements of the same character might be multiplied; but we are aweary of this painful subject. "Fain," writes Southey, "would she have made him, like Marc Antony, give up all for love; and, being disappointed in that hope, she tormented him in such a manner, by her outrageous jealousy and abominable temper, that she deserves to be classed in a triad with Xantippe and the wife of Job, as one of the three bad wives."

In the midst of all this, Wesley, on one occasion, wrote her as follows:—

> "I cannot but add a few words: not by way of reproach, but of advice. God has used many means to curb your stubborn will, and break the impetuosity of your temper. He has given you a dutiful but sickly daughter; He has taken away one of your sons; another has been a grievous cross, as the third probably will be. He has suffered you to be defrauded of much money; He has chastened you with strong pain. And still He may say, 'How long liftest thou up thyself against Me?' Are you more humble, more gentle, more patient, more placable than you were? I fear, quite the reverse; I fear, your natural tempers are rather increased than diminished. O beware, lest God give you up to your own heart's lusts, and let you follow your own imaginations!
>
> "Under all these conflicts, it might be an unspeakable blessing, that you have a husband who knows your

temper and can bear with it; who, after you have tried him numberless ways, laid to his charge things that he knew not, robbed him, betrayed his confidence, revealed his secrets, given him a thousand treacherous wounds, purposely aspersed and murdered his character, and made it your *business* so to do, under the poor pretence of vindicating your own character—who, I say, after all these provocations, is still willing to forgive you all, to overlook what is past, as if it had not been, and to receive you with open arms; only not while you have a sword in your hand, with which you are continually striking at me, though you cannot hurt me. If, notwithstanding, you continue striking, what can I, what can all reasonable men think, but that either you are utterly out of your senses, or your eye is not single; that you married me only for my money; that, being disappointed, you were almost always out of humour; and that this laid you open to a thousand suspicions, which, once awakened, could sleep no more?

"My dear Molly, let the time past suffice. As yet, the breach may be repaired. You have wronged me much, but not beyond forgiveness. I love you still, and am as clear from all other women as the day I was born. At length, know me, and know yourself. Your enemy I cannot be; but let me be your friend. Suspect me no more, asperse me no more, provoke me no more. Do not any longer contend for mastery, for power, money, or praise. Be content to be a private insignificant person, known and loved by God and me. Attempt no more to

abridge me of my liberty, which I claim by the laws of God and man. Leave me to be governed by God and my own conscience. Then shall I govern you with gentle sway, and show that I do indeed love you, even as Christ the church."[25]

This is a manly, noble, loving letter, and ought to have produced a good effect; but on January 23, 1771, he wrote: "For what cause I know not, my wife set out for Newcastle, purposing 'never to return.' *Non eam reliqui: non dimisi: non revocabo."*

Her reason for repairing to Newcastle may be found in the fact that, two years previously, her daughter, Miss Vazeille, had been united in marriage to Mr. William Smith, a distinguished and highly influential member of the Orphan House society.[26] Wesley's next visit to the northern metropolis did not take place till the month of May, 1772, when differences were once again made up; and, on his return to Bristol, his wife came back with him.[27] This, however, was but a patched up peace. One of Wesley's letters to his wife has just been given; and now is added one from his wife to him.

"LONDON, *May* 31, 1774.

"MY DEAR,—Your laconic letter from Edinburgh, May 18, would have seemed strange if I had not known you. Honest John Pawson makes it his business to slander me wherever he goes, saying: 'Mrs. Wesley has several hundred pounds in her hands belonging to Mr.

Wesley, but how he will ever get it from her, I know not, except he puts her to trouble for it, for I do not believe there is a more covetous minded woman in the world than she is.' In this way, he, and J. Allen, and your old quondam friend, Mary Madan, did all they could to render my life bitter while at Bristol. Mary Madan, the very day you set off from Bristol, said, 'I hope Mrs. Wesley is not to stay here till Mr. Wesley returns, for, if she does, this society will be quite ruined.' There were many high words between her and some of the stewards, the night I and Mr. Lewis came from setting you out of town. It was true, I had a horse, but in this I soon was made to *see* and *feel* her power, for whenever I wanted to ride, she would contrive to send the man out on some trifling thing or other, so that I have been fourteen days together without riding at all; and when I did, I was sure to be lectured by your man telling me he had enough to do for Mr. Charles Wesley and Mrs. Madan. As I could not use my horse there, and Mr. Lewis telling me Mr. Charles Wesley wanted him to hire one for the man to ride by the side of their carriage, and that it would save the society a guinea if I would lend my horse instead of their hiring one, I said, 'with all my heart.' But I was soon informed by your brother, that the London stewards would not like my horse to go; that he must have three there himself; and that a subscription was proposed to buy the third. It was no hard matter to find how I was circumstanced. As I could get no one to ride with me, I did not care to put you to the expense of keeping my horse; so I sold it. So

that evil is removed. The next must be myself. Then the Methodists *must be a pure people*, when the troubler of their happiness and peace is removed. My dear friend, let me beg of you for God's sake, for your own sake, put a stop to this torrent of evil that is poured out against me. It is cruel to make me an offender for defending myself. If you or any others have anything to lay to my charge, let it be proved. I desire to be open to conviction; but, surely, I have a right to do justice to myself, when I have it in my power. The trials and persecutions I have met with lately, were they accompanied with any degree of guilt, would make me of all creatures most miserable; but, bless God, He has hitherto kept me from a prey to my enemies; though I am often tempted to fear I shall not hold out any longer, as I am a poor, weak woman, alone against a formidable body.

"I am your affectionate wife,

"M. WESLEY."[28]

The letter, from which the above is copied, refutes Mr. Watson's assertion, that "Mrs. Vazeille was a woman of cultivated understanding", and confirms Mr. Jackson's statement, that "neither in understanding nor education was she worthy of the eminent man to whom she was united." Without altering the sense, we have been obliged to revise both the orthography and syntax of the letter, in order to make it at all fit to appear in print. Mrs. Wesley was evidently a woman of no education, beyond the ability to read and write. Perhaps no better description of her character, as a woman

and a wife, can be furnished than what is patent in the peevish, petulant, murmuring, miserable letter just given. Here we leave her, simply adding that, after being Wesley's wife for a little more than thirty years, she died at the age of seventy-one, on October 8, 1781.[29] Wesley, at the time, was in the west of England; but writes, on October 12, as follows: "I came to London, and was informed that my wife died on Monday. This evening she was buried, though I was not informed of it till a day or two after." Her fortune, which, by losses and by fraud, had been reduced from ten to five thousand pounds, she bequeathed to her son; and left her husband nothing but a ring.[30] The epitaph on her tombstone describes her as "a woman of exemplary piety, a tender parent, and a sincere friend"; but is wisely silent concerning her conduct as a wife.

Perhaps more than enough has been already said. It must be remembered, however, that John Wesley's marriage afected and tinged thirty years of his public life. It was one of the gravest events in his chequered history; and, on this ground, it deserves attention. Wesley was not faultless. He married too hurriedly to know the character of the woman whom he made his wife; and he would have acted more wisely if he had refrained from writing religious letters to female members of his society, of whom his wife was jealous. This is all that can be fairly alleged against him. No one will venture to affirm, that he was wanting in affection; and no one can successfully accuse him of treating his wife with coldness and reserve. Charles, a keen judge of character, declared that nothing could surpass his brother's patience in bearing with his

perverse and peevish spouse. Several of his letters to her, written after their marriage, have been preserved; and display the tenderest affection, and justify the opinion that, had it been his happiness to be married to a woman that was worthy of him, he would have been one of the most loving husbands that ever lived. The truth is, John Wesley's wife was scarcely sane. Mr. Jackson writes: "Scores of documents in her handwriting attest the violence of her temper, and warrant the conclusion, that there was in her a certain degree of mental unsoundness." This is the most merciful view that it is possible to take of her strange behaviour. In no respect was she a helpmeet for him. As a rule, she was a bitter, unmitigated curse. At home, she was suspicious, jealous, fretful, taunting, twitting, and often violent. Abroad, when itinerating with him, it too generally happened, that nought could please her. "The weather was either intolerably cold, or insufferably hot. The roads were bad, and the means of conveyance unbearable. The people, by whom they were accommodated, were unpolite and rude; the provisions were scanty, or ill prepared; and the beds were hard, and the covering not sufficient."[31] Such were the whinings of a woman who began life as a domestic servant. Her husband was a gentleman and a scholar, but was almost an utter stranger to the comforts of wedded life. In lieu of them, he had annoyances, which, to most men, would have been intolerable; and it is no mean proof of the genuine greatness of his character, that during this protracted domestic wretchedness of thirty years' continuance, his public career never wavered, nor appeared to lose one jot of its amazing energy. "He repeatedly told me," writes Henry Moore, "that he

believed the Lord overruled this painful business for his good; and that, if Mrs. Wesley had been a better wife, he might have been unfaithful in the great work to which God had called him, and might have too much sought to please her according to her own views."[32]

We must now return to the year 1751. Five weeks after his marriage, Wesley set out for the north of England. He spent Sunday, March 31, at Birmingham, where he warned the society against idle disputes and vain janglings; and was "obliged to preach abroad, the room not being able to contain half the congregation." He writes: "O how is the scene changed here! The last time I preached at Birmingham, the stones flew on every side. If any disturbance were made now, the disturber would be in more danger than the preacher."

At Dudley, Wesley was welcomed by a "dismal screaming." At Wednesbury, the work had been injured by "doubtful disputations." The predestinarians had not come near the place while persecution lasted; but, "when all was calm, they poured in on every side, and bereaved us of our children." The society was reduced from three hundred members to seventy, all of whom were weak and lifeless.[33] Throughout the whole neighbourhood, "the classes were miserably shattered by the sowers of strange doctrines,"—baptists and others included.

Arriving at Bolton on the 10th of April, Wesley went to a barber to be shaved. "Sir," said the man of lather, "I praise God on your behalf. When you were at Bolton last, I was one

of the greatest drunkards in the town; but I came to listen at the window, God struck me to the heart, and twelve months ago I was converted."

Here Wesley was also introduced to a clergyman, who deserves a passing notice. The vicar of Chipping, a village about ten miles north of Preston, was the Rev. J. Milner. Up to the present, Wesley and Milner had never met, though a warm friendship existed between them. Milner had written to Wesley in the most loving terms, and had become a subscriber to his "Christian Library." He had embraced Wesley's doctrines; and, as a consequence, most of the neighbouring clergy had cast him off; and all manner of evil was spoken concerning him. Writing to Wesley, in 1750, Milner says: "Twice I have had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Ingham. There is a great deal of amiable sweetness in his whole behaviour. I have often wished, that he was disentangled from the Moravians, and cordially *one* with you in promoting the interests of the gospel. The last time I saw him, he was employed in reconciling two of the Brethren. He allows you incomparably the preference for prudence; but says you have not done Count Zinzendorf justice. At first, I looked upon the difference as that betwixt Paul and Barnabas, which was a furtherance to the gospel of Christ; but since I knew more of the doctrine of the *still Brethren,* I have not had the same favourable opinion of them. Yet, I cannot help thinking Mr. Ingham happy; but may some good providence bring you speedily together; for surely, such souls must glow at meeting, and all unkindness fly at first sight."[34]

Wesley accompanied Milner to his vicarage at Chipping, which, henceforth, became one of his favourite haunts. In 1752, Milner allowed him to occupy his church; and, for this, was brought before the bishop. Milner told his lordship the story of the Bolton barber, and then descanted on the grand society of Christian worshippers at Newcastle. The bishop talked about order; but Milner replied he had nowhere seen so little order as in the bishop's own cathedral, where the children took no notice of the preacher, and the choristers rudely talked, and thrust one another with their elbows. He added, that there certainly was need of some one to call them back to the doctrines of the Reformation; for he knew not a single clergyman, in the whole of Lancashire, "that would give the Church's definition of faith; and stand to it."[35]

Having spent the night with Milner, Wesley and he proceeded, "over more than Welsh mountains," to Whitehaven, which they reached On Saturday, April 13. At the pressing request of Joseph Cownley, Wesley had preached here in September, 1749, and had formed a society. He now found two hundred and forty persons meeting in class; and, among the whole, there was only one who ever missed the class without absolute necessity. On Saturday, April 20, he and his clerical friend Milner arrived at the Orphan House, at Newcastle, where they found the society "loving, simple, and zealous of good works."

On Monday morning following, Wesley, for the first time, set out for Scotland. This was in compliance with the wish of Captain (afterwards Colonel) Gallatin, who was then

quartered at Musselburgh; and who, together with his Christian lady, showed the Wesleys the sincerest friendship to the end of life. Twenty-seven years after this, Wesley wrote: 1778, December 18.—I called upon Colonel Gallatin. But what a change is here! The fine gentleman, the so1dier, is clean gone; sunk into a feeble, decrepit old man; not able to rise from his seat, and hardly able to speak." He died soon after, and Charles Wesley evinced his respect for his memory, by composing a beautiful hymn on the occasion, in which he speaks of him as his "bosom friend," and as "gentle, generous, and sincere."

Wesley, accompanied by Christopher Hopper, arrived at Musselburgh on April 24. He says, he had no intention to preach in Scotland; nor did he imagine, that there were any that desired he should. A crowd, however, collected in the evening, and "remained as statues from the beginning of the sermon to the end." Next day, he rode to Edinburgh, which he describes as "one of the dirtiest cities he had ever seen," Cologne itself not excepted. He returned to dinner, and preached again at six; and "used great plainness of speech," which was "received in love." After preaching, one of the bailies of the town, with one of the elders of the kirk, begged he would stay with them awhile, and promised they would fit him up a preaching place. His other arrangements prevented him complying with this courteous request; but, in lieu of this, he offered them the services of Hopper. For a fortnight, Hopper preached night and morning, to large congregations, who heard with great attention; many were cut to the heart; several were joined together in a small society; and thus

Methodism gained a footing across the border.[36] Other preachers followed; but the results were small. In the month of August next ensuing, Charles Wesley, who was then at Newcastle, wrote: "I had much discourse with a brother from Scotland, who has preached there many weeks, and not converted one soul. 'You may just as well preach to the stones,' he added, 'as to the Scots.' Yet, to keep my brother's word, I sent William Shent to Musselburgh."

It is clear, that Charles Wesley was not flushed with hope of Methodist success among the Scots. Whitefield, also, said to Wesley himself: "You have no business in Scotland; for your principles are so well known, that, if you spoke like an angel, none would hear you; and, if they did, you would have nothing to do but to dispute with one and another from morning to night." To this Wesley subsequently answered: "If God sends me, people will hear. And I will give them no provocation to dispute; for I will studiously avoid all controverted points, and keep to the fundamental truths of Christianity. And if any still begin to dispute, they may; but I will not dispute with them."[37] Whitefield, however, was not satisfied. In a letter to the Countess of Huntingdon, dated Edinburgh, July 30, 1751, he adds: "I have been to Musselburgh to see Captain Gallatin and his lady. They hold on. Mr. Wesley has been there, and intends setting up societies, which I think imprudent."[38]

From the first, men have doubted whether Methodism had a mission to the Scots. Even as late as the year 1826, Dr. Adam Clarke, not the least sanguine of men, wrote: "I

consider Methodism as having no hold of Scotland, but in Glasgow and Edinburgh. If all the other chapels were disposed of, it would be little loss to Methodism; and a great saving of money, which might be much better employed."[39] Wesley, however, as we shall find hereafter, was successful; and, had his preachers and successors adhered to the principle adopted by himself, the results would probably have been far greater than what they are. Perhaps he never had the popularity in Scotland that Whitefield reached; but his work has proved to be more lasting. The one formed a denomination of his own; the other wrought with churches already in existence, and the fruit of his labours was lost in theirs. Though Methodism across the Tweed has never had the same success as it has had in England, yet it would be untrue to say, that its efforts have been a failure. Besides, there have been causes for the difference. In England, Wesley and his assistants found the masses ignorant; in Scotland they had to battle with a partially enlightened prejudice. In England, the great body of the people were without a creed; in Scotland, the people were creed-ridden. In England, the itinerant plan was not objected to; in Scotland, it has always been a bugbear. Still, one cannot but lament, that the success has not been greater; and we strongly incline to think, that the reasons just assigned are not sufficient to account for the sad defect. Wesley went, not to oppose and to abuse Calvinism, but to preach fundamental truths. If others would dispute, he would not. Truth, not controversy, is the means of converting men. Besides, is it not a fact, that Methodism has sometimes been tampered with, in order to adapt it, forsooth, to Scotch taste and prejudice? This was not Wesley's way. "What can be

done to increase the work of God in Scotland?" he asked. "Answer:—1. Preach abroad as much as possible. 2. Try every town and village. 3. Visit every member of the society at home."[40] "The way to do them good in Scotland," he wrote nine years before his death, "is to observe all our rules at Inverness, just as you would at Sheffield; yea, and to preach the whole Methodist doctrine, as plainly and simply as you would in Yorkshire."[41]

On returning from Musselburgh to Newcastle, Wesley preached at Berwick, to a large congregation, in the midst of a piercing wind; also at Alnwick cross; and at Alemouth, where he found the largest congregation he had seen in all Northumberland.

Having spent a week at Newcastle and among the neighbouring societies, he set out, on the 6th of May, for the south of England. At Stockton, a few angry people "set up a dismal scream" as he was entering the town; but he found that, "by means of a plain, rough exhorter, the society had been more than doubled since he was there before."[42]

On May 7, he came to York, where was a small society of about half-a-dozen members, with Thomas Staton as their leader, and a room in Pump Yard for their meeting place. From York, Wesley rode to Epworth, where he found "a poor, dead, senseless people; at which," says he, "I did not wonder, when I was informed (1) That some of our preachers there had diligently gleaned up and retailed all the evil they could hear of me; (2) that some of them had quite laid aside our hymns,

as well as the doctrine they formerly preached; (3) that one of them had frequently spoke against our rules, and the others quite neglected them."

From Epworth, Wesley rode back to Leeds, where he preached "in the walls" of a new chapel; and then held a conference with about thirty of his preachers, particularly inquiring about "their grace, and gifts, and fruit; and found reason to doubt of one only." Two days after, on the 17th of May he "preached in the new house at Birstal, already too small for even a week day's congregation." And then, "after a few days more spent among the neighbouring societies, he returned, by easy journeys, to the metropolis."

To add to his anxieties, Kingswood school was now in trouble. Three years before, it had been begun with twenty-eight scholars, six masters, and six servants. Wesley had written grammars of the English, French, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin languages, and had printed many other books for the use of the pupils. Soon, however, the maid servants began to quarrel. The masters, also, failed to answer Wesley's expectations. One of them was rough and disobliging; another was honest and diligent, but his person and his manner made him contemptible; a third was grave and weighty in his behaviour, but the children were set against him; and a fourth, instead of restraining the boys from play, played with them. Four or five of the larger boys grew wicked, and the others became "wilder and wilder, till all their religious impressions were worn off." The result of the whole was,—the establishment on Kingswood Hill was now, at the end of three

years, reduced to two masters, two servants, and eleven children; but Wesley writes: "I believe all in the house are, at length, of one mind; and trust God will bless us in the latter end, more than in the beginning."

Another trouble, awaiting Wesley, on his return from the north of England, was the scandal occasioned by the sin of James Wheatley. This unhappy man had been a Methodist itinerant preacher since the year 1742. At the beginning of his public labours, he was diligent and useful; but, while in Ireland, he unfortunately became acquainted with certain Moravians of the antinomian creed, and practically, at least, embraced their principles. Wesley says, that Wheatley was never *"clear* in the faith, and perhaps not sound. According to his understanding was his preaching,—an unconnected rhapsody of unmeaning words, like Sir John Suckling's

'Verses, smooth and soft as cream,
In which was neither depth nor stream.'"

Wesley asserts, that it was a reproach to the Methodist congregations, that Wheatley became a most popular preacher. Yet so he did; and, though several of the itinerants in Ireland complained both of his doctrine and manner of preaching, it is a fact that, in the space of a few months, he brought almost all the preachers in that kingdom to think and to speak like himself.[43] Robert Swindells and others were exalted above measure, and imagined that they, and they only, preached Christ, and Christ's gospel. Their brethren, who differed from them, were despised, and were ignominiously

branded with the cognomen of "legal preachers," and "legal wretches." In this way, James Wheatley's preaching had been disastrous. Then again, as early as 1749, he had become headstrong and troublesome. Charles Wesley writes: "1749, June 14.—I threw away some advice on an obstinate preacher, James Wheatley; for I could make no impression on him, or in any degree bow his stiff neck." "He is gone to the north expressly contrary to my advice. Whither will his wilfulness lead him at last?" Two years after this, Wesley calls him "that wonderful self-deceiver and hypocrite." Why? In June, 1751, Richard Pearce, and Mrs. Silby, of Bradford, in Wiltshire, gave Charles Wesley to understand, that Wheatley had been guilty of indecent behaviour. Charles at once went to Bradford, and took down, from the lips of seven females, their charges against Wheatley. This document was read to Wheatley at Bristol; and, on June 25, the two Wesleys brought him to Bearfield, face to face with two of his principal accusers. He cavilled at a few circumstances, but allowed that the substance of what was said was true. He was taken to Farley, where five other women gave to Wesley's wife the same statements which they had made to Charles. Wesley persuaded Wheatley to retire for a season from the itinerant work; but it was labour lost. He professed to be penitent; but he extenuated what he was not able to deny, and as constantly accused others as excused himself; saying, many had been guilty of *"little imprudences"* as well as he. He pleaded guilty to the charges brought against him; but justified himself, and basely tried to implicate his brethren. To screen himself, he traduced all the preachers; and, in doing this, told palpable untruths. Ten of the preachers in the west

of England were brought before him; and each, in succession, demanded to know the sin with which Wheatley could charge him. "The accuser," says Charles Wesley, "was silent, which convinced us of his wilful lying." The result of the whole was his suspension, which ended in expulsion,—the first act of the kind since Methodism had been founded. The following paper was put into his hands.

"*June* 25, 1751.

"BECAUSE you have wrought folly in Israel, grieved the Holy Spirit of God, betrayed your own soul into temptation and sin, and the souls of many others, whom you ought, even at the peril of your own life, to have guarded against all sin; because you have given occasion to the enemies of God, whenever they shall know these things, to blaspheme the ways and truth of God:

"We can in nowise receive you as a fellow labourer, till we see clear proofs of your real and deep repentance. Of this you have given us no proof yet. You have not so much as named one single person, in all England or Ireland, with whom you have behaved ill, except those we knew before.

"The least and lowest proof of such repentance which we can receive is this: that, till our next conference (which we hope will be in October), you abstain both from preaching and from practising physic. If you do

not, we are clear; we cannot answer for the consequences.

"JOHN WESLEY,
CHARLES WESLEY."

This was the first judicial sentence pronounced upon a culprit Methodist preacher. For some weeks, Wheatley went from house to house, justifying himself, and condemning Wesley and his brother for the action they had taken. He then proceeded to Norwich, where he was unknown. Reaching the gates, he gave the bridle to his horse, and was taken to one of the public inns. Before the door he observed a soldier, and, by the soldier, was introduced to a small company of serious people, who were known in Norwich by the name of puritans. He began to preach out of doors. Thousands, who had been notorious for all kinds of profaneness and irreligion, ran to hear him. Nearly two thousand of them were united together in Christian fellowship. The change in the city was most marvellous. A temporary building was erected on Timber Hill, in imitation of the one erected for Whitefield in Moorfields, and was called the Tabernacle. Meanwhile, however, a Jacobite party, commonly called the "Hell Fire Club," a lawless fraternity who met at the Blue Bell on Orford Hill,[44] in conjunction with the papists and protestants of the city, began to oppose the growing reformation. The windows of Wheatley's Tabernacle were smashed in pieces, and the chapel itself unroofed. Wheatley was stripped, and dragged to one of the bridges for the purpose of being drowned, but was mercifully rescued by the mayor. Horns were blown; and fireworks, dirt and stones were hurled in all directions at his

followers. Some were scorched with fire; others wounded; and others had arms and legs violently broken. A plan was laid to convey the preacher to a mud pit, ten or twelve feet deep, and there to suffocate him. One day, the mob went in procession through most of the streets of Norwich, with a mock burial of the preacher, having upon his coffin the inscription—"Antichrist, Enthusiasm, Imposture, Blasphemy, and Schismatic." They paraded twice through the Bell Yard, where the Hell Fire Club was kept; then walked three times round a fire in the castle ditch; and then, with mock solemnity, committed the coffin to the flames, and the preacher to the devil. Mrs. Overton and her daughter were beaten, had their eyes plastered up with clay, and their house filled with filthy water. Mr. Standen was left speechless; and numbers more had to be put under the surgeon's care. On one occasion, the mob stuck a lamb upon a pole, and carried it through the streets, blasphemously crying, "Behold the Lamb of God!" They crowned a man with thorns, and scourged him, calling him by the holy name of Jesus. They carried about a picture, alleging it was the Holy Ghost, and cursed it as they went. Men, women, and children were maimed without mercy. One poor creature, big with child, died of the kicks and bruises she received; another young woman was dragged into the street, and was treated by brute after brute in a manner too shocking to relate, until she was carried home insensible, and with little hopes of living.[45] Two letters, published in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1752, and dated respectively, Norwich, February 19, and March 22, state that, for several months, the city had been disturbed and alarmed by the violent proceedings of an enraged populace, on account

of their taking offence "at some encouragement given by the magistrates to Mr. Wheatley, a Welsh cobbler, lately turned Methodist preacher." "On the 12th of January he had three constables to guard him; but the mob beat both him and them, and so covered them with mud that they could hardly be recognised. They went to his Tabernacle, broke the pulpit and windows, pulled down the seats, and untiled and destroyed a great part of the edifice. The mayor and swordbearer read the proclamation, to which the rioters responded, 'Church and king! down with the meetings!'" It was alleged that Wheatley, by the number of his religious services, was the occasion of great numbers of both men and women neglecting their occupations; and that, as a consequence, the workhouse was filled, and the parishes burdened with helpless children. Wheatley, it is said, came to the town without a groat in his pocket, but was now receiving from ten to twelve guineas every week. He had been a noted bad liver; but now was well dressed, in a grey coat and black under habit, like a clergyman. His *dear hearers*, who regarded him as a *holy inspired* preacher, were roughly treated; for the populace, when meeting them, called out, "Bah! bah!" in reference to their being his own *dear lambs;* and, at a recent election of a coroner, had trundled some of them down the Castle Hill, and afterwards pumped on one, and wounded several others.

This was rough treatment; but Wheatley had been well schooled, and, in the midst of all, continued firm. His courage and his success ultimately turned the tide in his favour; and, in April, 1752, steps were taken to erect for him one of the largest chapels in the city. For a time, this was supplied by

him, and Cudworth, and Robinson, afterwards the noted Socinian minister at Cambridge.

Space forbids our following the history of James Wheatley further; except to say, that, in 1754, he again disgraced himself; and the judge of the ecclesiastical court at Norwich, before whom his case was tried, on February 4, 1756, declared him to be "a lewd, debauched, incontinent, and adulterous person; and stated, he had committed the crimes of adultery, fornication, and incontinence, to the great scandal of good men, and the pernicious example of others; and, that he (the judge) decreed, that the said Wheatley be enjoined a public penance, to be performed in a linen cloth, with a paper pinned to his breast, denoting his crime; and, that he further pay the costs of his prosecution."[46]

For a time, poor Wheatley was obliged to leave the kingdom. He then returned to Norwich, and preached to his "dear lambs" for several years, after which he lost his voice, and went to Bristol, where he was suddenly seized, in a barber's shop, with a violent fit of coughing, and expired. John Pawson, who knew him, and from whose manuscript letters this is taken, adds: "He was one of the greatest mysteries that ever bore human shape. Such a degree of hypocrisy hardly ever lodged in a human heart before."

The detected immorality of James Wheatley, and his accusation of other preachers, led Wesley and his brother to determine upon instituting a more strict inquiry into the life and behaviour of the preachers in connection with them.

It was now twelve years since Methodism was fairly founded. During that period, eighty-five itinerants had, more or less, preached and acted under Wesley's guidance. Of these, one (Wheatley) had been expelled; six, Thomas Beard, Enoch Williams, Samuel Hitchens, Thomas Hitchens, John Jane, and Henry Millard, had died in their Master's work; ten, for various reasons, had retired; and sixty-eight were still employed, namely:—

Cornlieus Bastable
William Biggs
John Bennet
Benjamin Beanland
William Crouch
Jonathan Catlow
Alexander Coates
Joseph Cownley
William Darney
John Downes
Edward Dunstan
John Edwards
John Fisher
William Fugill
Nicholas Gilbert
Paul Greenwood
John Haughton
Thomas Hardwick
John Haime
William Hitchens
William Holmes
Christopher Hopper
Herbert Jenkins
Joseph Jones
Samuel Jones
John Jones
Thomas Kead
Samuel Larwood
Henry Lloyd
Thomas Lee
Thomas Maxfield
John Maddern
Richard Moss
James Morris
Jonathan Maskew
John Morley
Samuel Megget
Thomas Mitchell
James Morgan
James Massiott
John Nelson
James Oddie

William Prior
John Pearce
Edward Perronet
Charles Perronet
Jacob Rowell
Thomas Richards
Jonathan Reeves
William Roberts
William Shent
Charles Skelton
Robert Swindells
Thomas Seacombe
John Trembath
David Tratham
Joseph Tucker
William Tucker
John Turner
Thomas Tobias
Thomas Westall
Thomas Walsh
Francis Walker
Eleazer Webster
John Whitford
Thomas Williams
Richd. Williamson
James Wild

Of this number, two were expelled, viz. Thomas Williams in 1755, and William Fugill in 1768; and forty-one left the itinerancy; thus leaving only twenty-five of the sixty-eight preachers employed in 1751, who died in the itinerant work. Several of those who left became clergymen of the Church of England, some Dissenting ministers, and some, on account of failing health or for domestic reasons, entered into business, but lived and died as local preachers. There is, however, another fact too notable to be omitted, namely, that, of the forty-one preachers who relinquished the itinerancy, six resigned in 1751, six in 1752, and twelve within four years after that.[47] This was a serious sifting; but the searching examinations of 1751, and the sacramental disturbances of the next five years, account for it.

As already stated, the case of James Wheatley led the Wesleys to resolve upon a thorough inquiry into the character and creed of all their preachers. The office fell upon Charles; and, for that purpose, he started for Leeds on June 28. He preached and visited all the societies on the way. At Worcester, the mob, with faces blacked, some without shirts, and all in rags, began to curse and swear, and sing lewd songs, and throw dust and dirt over both the preacher and his congregation, till they were covered from head to foot, and almost blinded.

The conference, for inquiry, was opened at Leeds, on September 11. It consisted of about a dozen preachers and three clergymen, and was begun by singing a hymn, which Charles Wesley seems to have composed for the occasion, and a few stanzas of which are here subjoined.

"Arise, Thou jealous God, arise,
Thy sifting power exert,
Look through us with Thy flaming eyes,
And search out every heart.

Our inmost souls Thy Spirit knows,
And let Him now display
Whom Thou hast for Thy glory chose,
And purge the rest away.

The' apostles false far off remove,
Thy faithful labourers own,
And give us each himself to prove,
And know as he is known.

Do *I* presume to preach Thy word
By Thee uncalled, unsent?
Am *I* the servant of the Lord,
Or Satan's instrument?

I once *unfeignedly believed*
Myself sent forth by Thee;
But have I *kept* the grace received,
In simple poverty?"

Twelve verses of this searching hymn were sung; its author, the president, prayed; and then stated his views, freely and fully, concerning the qualifications, work, and trials of Methodist preachers. No immediate action was taken, except that poor William Darney, who had just published his "Collection of Hymns, in four parts," was refused admittance, and was told, that unless he abstained, in future, "from railing, begging, and printing nonsense," he should be expelled. The conference lasted but a day, and seems to have passed but one resolution. "We agreed," writes Charles Wesley, "to postpone opinions till the next general conference, and parted friends."[48]

Charles Wesley, however, accomplished the work assigned him by his brother, more by private inquiry than by public

conference. Robert Swindells he found inclined to Calvinism, but teachable; David Tratham was a confirmed predestinarian;[49] and John Bennet's theological principles were doubted.

Wesley's suspicions and anxieties were, at this period, quite equal to his brother's. He had heard that Charles Skelton, and J.C. (?Joseph Cownley) "frequently and bitterly railed against the Church"; he declared, that "idleness had eaten out the heart of half their preachers, particularly those in Ireland"; and he requested his brother to give them their choice, "Either follow your trade, or resolve, before God, to spend the same hours in reading, etc., which you used to spend in working." He counselled, that the young preachers should not be checked without strong necessity; and said, that, in the process of sifting, he should prefer grace before gifts. They must deal, not only with disorderly walkers, but with triflers, the effeminate, and busybodies. In a letter to a friend, dated August 21, he wrote: "I see plainly the spirit of Ham, if not of Corah, has fully possessed several of our preachers. So much the more freely and firmly do I acquiesce in the determination of my brother, 'that it is far better for us to have ten, or six preachers, who are alive to God, sound in the faith, and of one heart with us and with one another, than fifty of whom we have no such assurance.'"

Towards the end of the year, Wesley and his brother conferred with their confidential adviser, the Rev. Vincent Perronet, and then drew up and signed the following agreement.

"WITH regard to the preachers, we agree—

"1. That none shall be permitted to preach in any of our societies, till he be examined, both as to grace and gifts; at least, by the assistant, who, sending word to us, may, by our answer, admit him a *local* preacher.

"2. That such preacher be not immediately taken from his trade, but be exhorted to follow it with all diligence.

"3. That no person shall be received as a travelling preacher, or be taken from his trade, by either of us alone, but by both of us conjointly, giving him a note under both our hands.

"4. That neither of us will re-admit a travelling preacher laid aside, without the consent of the other.

"5. That, if we should ever disagree in our judgment, we will refer the matter to Mr. Perronet.

"6. That we will entirely be patterns of all we expect from every preacher; particularly of zeal, diligence, and punctuality in the work; by constantly preaching and meeting the society; by visiting yearly Ireland, Cornwall, and the north; and, in general, by superintending the whole work, and every branch of it, with all the strength that God shall give us. We agree to

the above written, till this day next year, in the presence of Mr. Perronet.

"JOHN WESLEY,
CHARLES WESLEY."[50]

This was a momentous epoch in Methodist history. The Wesleys were well aware, that pulpits mould pews. "Like priest, like people," is a proverb not older than it is true. Perhaps, we cannot do better than conclude the matter with an extract from a long letter, which Wesley wrote to a friend, just before the year was ended.

"LONDON, *December* 20, 1751.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—I think the right method of preaching is this. At our first beginning to preach at any place, after a general declaration of the love of God to sinners, and His willingness that they should be saved, to preach the law, in the strongest, the closest, the most searching manner possible.

"After more and more persons are convinced of sin, we may mix more and more of the gospel, in order to beget faith, to raise into spiritual life those whom the law hath slain. I would not advise to preach the law without the gospel, any more than the gospel without the law. Undoubtedly, both should be preached in their turns; yea, both at once, or both in one. All the conditional promises are instances of this. They are law and gospel mixed together.

"In this manner, not only my brother and I, but Mr. Maxfield, Nelson, James Jones, Westall, and Reeves, all preached at the beginning. By this preaching, it pleased God to work those mighty effects in London, Bristol, Kingswood, Yorkshire, and Newcastle. By means of this, twenty-nine persons received remission of sins, in one day, at Bristol only; most of them, while I was opening and enforcing our Lord's sermon on the mount. In this manner, John Downes, John Bennet, John Haughton, and all the other Methodists, preached, till James Wheatley came among them. The change he has introduced has done great harm to David Tratham, Thomas Webb, Robert Swindells, and John Maddern; all of whom are but shadows of what they were. It has likewise done great harm to hearers as well as preachers, diffusing among them a prejudice against the scriptural, Methodist manner of preaching Christ, so that they can no longer hear the plain old truth, with profit or pleasure, nay hardly with patience. The 'gospel preachers,' so called, corrupt their hearers, and they vitiate their taste. They feed them with sweetmeats, till the genuine wine of the kingdom seems quite insipid to them. They give them cordial upon cordial, which make them all life and spirit for the present; but, meantime, their appetite is destroyed, so that they can neither retain nor digest the pure milk of the word.

"According to the constant observations I have made, in all parts both of England and Ireland, preachers of this kind spread death, not life, among their hearers.

This was the case when I went last into the north. For some time before my coming, John Downes had scarce been able to preach at all; the three others, in the round, were such as style themselves 'gospel preachers.' When I came to review the societies, with great expectation of finding a vast increase, I found most of them lessened by one third. One was entirely broken up. That of Newcastle was less by a hundred members than when I visited it before; and, of those that remained, the far greater number, in every place, were cold, weary, heartless, and dead. Such were the blessed effects of *this gospel-preaching!* of this new method of *preaching Christ.*

"On the other hand, when, in my return, I took an account of the societies in Yorkshire, chiefly under the care of John Nelson, one of the *old* way, I found them all alive, strong, and vigorous of soul, believing, loving, and praising God their Saviour; and increased in number from eighteen or nineteen hundred, to upwards of three thousand. These had been continually fed with wholesome food. From the beginning they had been taught both the law and the gospel. 'God loves *you;* therefore love and obey *Him*. Christ died for *you;* therefore die to sin. Christ is risen; therefore rise in the image of God. Christ liveth evermore; therefore live to God, till you live with Him in glory.'

"So *we* preached;and so *you* believed. This is the scriptural way, the *Methodist* way, the true way. God

grant we may never turn therefrom, to the right hand or to the left.

"I am, my dear friend, your ever affectionate brother,

"JOHN WESLEY."[51]

It has been already stated, that Whitefield embarked for America in the month of August. Before sailing, he penned a letter, an extract from which will be read with some surprise.

"BRISTOL, *March* 22, 1751.

"REVEREND AND VERY DEAR SIR,—Thanks be to God, that the time for favouring the colony of Georgia seems to be come. Now is the season for us to exert our utmost for the good of the poor Ethiopians. We are told, that even they are soon to stretch out their hands to God; and who knows but their being settled in Georgia may be overruled for this great end? As for the lawfulness of keeping slaves, I have no doubt, since I hear of some that were bought with Abraham's money, and some that were born in his house. I also cannot help thinking, that some of those servants mentioned by the apostles in their epistles were, or had been, slaves. It is plain, that the Gibeonites were doomed to perpetual slavery; and, though liberty is a sweet thing to such as are born free, yet to those who never knew the sweets of it, slavery perhaps may not be so irksome. However this be, it is plain, to a demonstration, that hot countries cannot be cultivated without negroes. What a flourishing country might Georgia have been, had the use of them been permitted years ago! How many white

people have been destroyed for want of them, and how many thousands of pounds spent to no purpose at all? Though it is true, that they are brought in a wrong way, from their own country, and it is a trade not to be approved of, yet as it will be carried on whether we will or not, I should think myself highly favoured if I could purchase a good number of them, in order to make their lives comfortable, and lay a foundation for breeding up their posterity in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. I had no hand in bringing them into Georgia, though my judgment was for it, and I was strongly importuned thereto; yet, I would not have a negro upon my plantation, till the use of them was publicly allowed by the colony. Now this is done, let us diligently improve the present opportunity for their instruction. It rejoiced my soul, to hear that one of my poor negroes in Carolina was made a brother in Christ. How know we but we may have many such instances in Georgia? I trust many of them will be brought to Jesus, and this consideration, as to us, swallows up all temporal inconveniences whatsoever.

"I am, etc.,

"GEORGE WHITEFIELD."[52]

This is a strange production, especially when read in the present day; but it was not unmeaning talk. Whitefield acted upon the principle propounded, and, at the time of his decease, twenty years afterwards, was the possessor of seventy-five slaves, in connection with his Orphan House plantations in the Georgian settlements.[53] His intention was

good; but his warmest admirer will find it difficult to defend his action. We shall, hereafter, become acquainted with Wesley's views, when the time arrives for noticing his "Thoughts upon Slavery"; suffice it to remark here, that they were in perfect accordance with his well known designation of the slave trade, in 1772,—"an execrable sum of all villanies."

On August 19, Wesley and his wife set out for Cornwall. At Tiverton, he went to hear a sermon preached at the old church, before the trustees of the school; but "such insufferable noise and confusion he never saw before in a place of worship; no, not even in a Jewish synagogue. The clergy set the example, laughing and talking during great part both of the prayers and sermon." The next day, he himself preached, when a mob, from Blundell's school, came with horns, drums, and fifes, and created all the disturbance in their power. They seized a poor chimney sweeper (though no Maccabee, as the Methodists in Tiverton were called), carried him away in triumph, and half murdered him before he could escape from their cruel clutches. A short time after this, the mayor of Tiverton asked a gentleman whether it was not right, that the Methodists should be banished from the town. The gentleman recommended his worship to follow the counsel of Gamaliel to the Jews; upon which the furious functionary observed, that there was no need of any new religion in Tiverton. "There is," said he, "the old church and the new church; that is one religion. Then there is parson K——'s at the Pitt meeting, and parson W——'s in Peter Street, and old parson T——'s at the meeting in Newport Street,—four ways

of going to heaven already; enough in conscience; and if the people won't go to heaven by one or other of these ways, by——they shan't go to heaven at all herefrom, while I am mayor of Tiverton."[54]

Leaving the religious town of Tiverton, Wesley and his wife went to Taunton, where a mob of "boys and gentlemen" made so much noise, that he was obliged to desist from preaching in the street, and to finish his discourse in the meeting room; on issuing from which his congregation were furiously pelted with all sorts of missiles.

After spending a happy month in Cornwall, and preaching all the way to and fro, he got back to London on October 21, where, with the exception of a short excursion to Canterbury, he continued until the year was ended.

During this brief breathing time, Wesley began his second letter to Lavington, bishop of Exeter. "Heavy work," says he, "such as I should never choose; but sometimes it must be done. Well might the ancient say, 'God made practical divinity necessary, the devil controversial.' But it is necessary: we must resist the devil, or he will not flee from us."

He likewise entered into correspondence with his disabled itinerant, John Downes, whose health was failing, and who found it necessary to seek temporary retirement. He writes:—

> "Some of the preachers do not adorn the gospel; therefore, we have been constrained to lay some of them

aside; and some others have departed of themselves. Let us that remain be doubly in earnest. I entreat you, tell me without reserve, what you think of Charles Skelton. Is his heart with us, or is it not? How are you employed? from five in the morning till nine at night? For I suppose you want eight hours' sleep. What becomes of logic and Latin? Is your soul alive and more athirst for God? You must carefully guard against any irregularity, either as to food, sleep, or labour. Your water should be neither quite warm, for fear of relaxing the tone of your stomach, nor quite cold. Of all flesh, mutton is the best for you; of all vegetables, turnips, potatoes, and apples, if you can bear them. I think it is ill husbandry for you to work with your hands, in order to get money; because you may be better employed. But, if you will work, come and superintend my printing. I will give you £40 for the first year; afterwards, if need be, I will increase your salary; and still you may preach as often as you can preach. However, come, whether you print, or preach, or not."[55]

John Downes was a remarkable man. Wesley, in his Journal, gives several instances of his mathematical and mechanical talent, and considered him "by nature full as great a genius as Sir Isaac Newton." He accepted Wesley's proposal, and, at the age of fifty-two, after a long conflict with sickness, pain, and poverty, died a triumphant death in 1774.

During the year 1751, Wesley was more than usually occupied. First of all, there was his hasty and unhappy

marriage. This was followed by the case of Wheatley. Then, there was the not unneeded sifting of his preachers, both itinerant and local. And added to all this, there was the preparation for his "Christian Library"; eleven volumes of which were published in 1751. But, according to our wont, we conclude the chapter with a complete list of the year's publications.

1. "Thoughts upon Infant Baptism. Extracted from a late writer." 12mo, 21 pages. This is a summary of the arguments commonly used to vindicate the practice of baptizing children. Those who have doubts on the subject would do well to read Wesley's tract. We know of no publication, that, in so small a compass, states the arguments so clearly and so conclusively.

2. "A Short Hebrew Grammar." 12mo, 11 pages.

3. "A Short Greek Grammar." 12mo, 80 pages.

4. "A Short French Grammar." 12mo, 35 pages.

Of course these were designed for the use of Kingswood school. On the subject of languages, Wesley writes: "The Greek excels the Hebrew as much in beauty and strength as it does in copiousness. I suppose no one from the beginning of the world wrote better Hebrew than Moses. But does not the language of St. Paul excel the language of Moses, as much as the knowledge of St. Paul excelled his? I speak this, even on supposition, that you read the Hebrew, as I believe, Ezra, if

not Moses, did, with points; for if we read it in the modern way, without points, I appeal to every competent judge, whether it be not the most equivocal."[56] It is a curious fact, that Wesley advised no one above twenty years of age to think of learning Greek or Latin, on the ground that he could then employ his time abundantly better.[57] French he considered to be "the poorest, meanest language in Europe," and "no more comparable to the German or Spanish, than a bagpipe is to an organ."[58]

5. "Serious Thoughts upon the Perseverance of the Saints." 12mo, 24 pages. This was a timely production, and, though concise, is written with much calmness and ability. Wesley admits, that both sides of the question are attended with great difficulties,—difficulties such as unassisted reason is unable to remove; and, therefore, says he, "let the living oracles decide. If these speak for us, we neither seek nor want further witness." He clearly shows, that Calvinists constantly avail themselves of two fallacies. "1. They perpetually beg the question by applying, to particular persons, texts which relate only to the church in general; and some of them only to the Jewish church and nation, as distinguished from all other people. 2. They take for granted, as an indisputable truth, that whatever our Lord speaks to, or of His apostles, is to be applied to all believers."

6. Eleven volumes of the "Christian Library," from Vol. II. to Vol. XII. inclusive, and making altogether three thousand two hundred and fifty 12mo printed pages.

Vol. II. contains a continuation of John Arndt's "True Christianity." Vols. III. to VI., inclusive, are occupied with an abridgment of Fox's Book of Martyrs; and Vols. VII. to XII. with extracts from the works of Bishop Hall, Robert Bolton, Dr. Preston, Dr. Sibbes, Dr. Goodwin, William Dell, and Dr. Manton.

ENDNOTES

[1] Whitefield's Works, vol. ii., p. 407.

[2] See Hutton's Memoirs, and Spangenberg's Life of Zinzendorf.

[3] *Methodist Magazine*, 1779, p. 260.

[4] The Rev. Charles Manning is said to have performed the marriage ceremony.

[5] *Methodist Magazine*, 1847, p. 868; and Southey's Life of Wesley.

[6] Life of Wesley, vol. ii., p. 172.

[7] C. Wesley's Life, vol. i., p. 568.

[8] Hampson's Life of Wesley, vol. ii., p. 124.

[9] Whitehead's Life of Wesley, vol. ii., p. 263.

[10] C. Wesley's private journal.

[11] C. Wesley's Journal, vol. ii., p. 213.

[12] Ibid. vol. ii., p. 217.

[13] Ibid. p. 247.

[14] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., pp. 163, 164.

[15] In Osmotherley old society book, still in existence, we find the following item of expenditure: "1752: April 27 and 28.—Laid out for Mr. John Wesley's wife's daughter, William Shent, and John Haine, 5*s*. 2*d*."

[16] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 165.

[17] Ibid. vol. v., p. 205.

[18] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 171.

[19] Ibid. p. 206.

[20] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 206.

[21] Watson's Life of Wesley.

[22] Manuscript.

[23] Hampson's Life of Wesley, vol. ii., p. 127.
[24] Private manuscripts.
[25] Moore's Life of Wesley, vol. ii., p. 175.
[26] Stamp's Orphan House, p. 119.
[27] Wesley's Works, vol. iii., p. 449.
[28] Manuscript letter.
[29] *Gentleman's Magazine,* 1781.
[30] Hampson's Life of Wesley, vol. ii., p. 128.
[31] Jackson's Life of C. Wesley, vol. ii., p. 569.
[32] Moore's Life of Wesley, vol. ii., p. 175.
[33] C. Wesley's Journal, vol. ii., p. 85.
[34] *Methodist Magazine,* 1797, p. 514.
[35] Whitehead's Life of Wesley, vol. ii., p. 271.
[36] Wesley's Works, vol. xiii., p. 316; and *Methodist Magazine,* 1781, p. 137.
[37] Wesley's Works, vol. x., p. 341.
[38] Whitefield's Works, vol. ii., p. 420.
[39] Clarke's Works, vol. xiii., p. 242.
[40] Wesley's Works, vol. viii., p. 316.
[41] Ibid. vol. xii., p. 471.
[42] Probably George Atchinson. See Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 182.
[43] *Methodist Magazine,* 1779, p. 315.
[44] Larkin's History of Methodism in Norwich.
[45] "Summary View of the Doctrines of Methodism." By Charles Perronet. Second edition. 1753.
[46] "A Hundred Years Ago." By James Hutton; and *Gentleman's Magazine,* 1756, p. 89.
[47] Myles's History.
[48] Jackson's Life of C. Wesley, vol. i., p. 585.

[49] Jackson's Life of C. Wesley, vol. i., p. 583.
[50] Whitehead's Life of Wesley, vol. ii., 15. 270.
[51] *Methodist Magazine*, 1779, p. 317.
[52] Whitefield's Works, vol. ii., p. 404.
[53] Ibid. vol. iii., p. 496.
[54] *Methodist Magazine*, 1819, p. 544.
[55] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 181-183.
[56] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 435.
[57] Ibid., p. 406.
[58] Ibid. vol. ii., p. 368.

1752.

THE year 1752 is skipped by the whole of Wesley's biographers; and yet it was not devoid of incident. Charles Wesley was now on terms of intimate friendship with the Countess of Huntingdon, and frequently preached and administered the sacrament in her ladyship's house, to personages of great distinction.[1]

Whitefield arrived from America in the month of May; in June set out on a tour to Wales and the west of England; and in August to the north and to Scotland. The last six weeks of the year he spent in London, and began to take steps towards the erection of the Tabernacle in Moorfields.

He was considerably annoyed at the publication of Wesley's tract on final perseverance, and, on February 5, wrote as follows: "Poor Mr. Wesley is striving against the stream. Strong assertions will not go for proofs with those who are sealed by the Holy Spirit even unto the day of redemption."[2]

Several of Wesley's itinerants began to be disloyal to their chiefs; and this led to the following document being signed with the names appended.

> "January 29, 1752. It is agreed by us whose names are underwritten,—

"1. That we will not listen, or willingly inquire after any ill concerning each other.

"2. That, if we do hear any ill of each other, we will not be forward to believe it.

"3. That, as soon as possible, we will communicate what we hear, by speaking or writing to the person concerned.

"4. That, till we have done this, we will not write or speak a syllable of it, to any other person whatever.

"5. That neither will we mention it, after we have done this, to any other person.

"6. That we will not make any exception to any of these rules, unless we think ourselves absolutely obliged in conscience so to do.

"JOHN WESLEY, JOSEPH COWNLEY,
CHARLES WESLEY, C. PERRONET,
JOHN TREMBATH, THOMAS MAXFIELD,
E. PERRONET, JOHN JONES,
J. DOWNES, JOHN NELSON,
JONATHAN REEVES, WILLIAM SHENT,
JOHN HAIME."[3]

Seven weeks later, another document, dated March 16, 1752, was drawn up and signed, chiefly through the influence of Charles Wesley.[4]

"WE whose names are underwritten, being clearly and fully convinced, (1) That the success of the present work of God does in great measure depend on the entire union of all the labourers employed therein; (2) that our present call is chiefly to the members of that Church wherein we have been brought up;—are absolutely determined, by the grace of God, (1) To abide in the closest union with each other, and never knowingly or willingly to hear, speak, do, or suffer anything which tends to weaken that union; (2) never to leave the communion of the Church of England without the consent of all whose names are subjoined.

"CHARLES WESLEY, WILLIAM SHENT,
JOHN WESLEY, JOHN JONES,
JOHN DOWNES, JOHN NELSON."[5]

These are curious and important papers, showing that, to a great extent, suspicion had taken the place of confidence, and that Methodism was in danger from "false brethren."

On Sunday, March 15, Wesley set out from London, on his long northern journey, which, with his tour to Ireland, occupied his time for seven months. All the way to Manchester, which he reached on March 26, he encountered a continued succession of storms of wind and snow, but was not deterred from preaching, even in the open air.

At Manchester, he went, on Good Friday, to the cathedral, where his old friend, Mr. Clayton, read the prayers "more distinctly, solemnly, and gracefully" than he had ever heard

them read. He spent three days in a searching examination of the members of the Manchester society, and found reason to believe, "that there was not one disorderly walker therein."

At Birstal, he preached out of doors, and was surprised to find, that those of the congregation who were a hundred and forty yards distant, distinctly heard him. At Leeds, he preached in the new chapel. At Wakefield, in the church, and writes: "Who would have expected to see me preaching in Wakefield church, to so attentive a congregation, a few years ago, when all the people were as roaring lions; and the honest man did not dare to let me preach in his yard, lest the mob should pull down his houses?"

At Sheffield, he preached "in the shell of the new house"; and says, "All is peace here now, since the trial at York, at which the magistrates were sentenced to rebuild the house which the mob had pulled down."

At Epworth, he found his coarse, ignorant, wicked brother-in-law, Richard Ellison, who had farmed his own estate, reduced to poverty. All his cows were dead, and all his horses, excepting one. For two years past, all his meadow land had been flooded; his money and means were gone; and Wesley recommended him to Ebenezer Blackwell, as a fitting object to be relieved out of the funds disposed of by Mr. Butterfield.[6] Nine years afterwards, Charles Wesley buried him.

On landing at Hull, the quay was covered with people, inquiring, "Which is he? Which is he?" But, for the present, they only stared, inquired, and laughed. At night he preached, "a huge multitude, rich and poor, horse and foot, with several coaches," being gathered together at Mighton-Car. Thousands gave serious attention; "but many behaved as if possessed by Moloch. Clods and stones flew on every side." A gentlewoman invited Wesley and his wife into her carriage, in which were six persons, besides herself, already. Wesley writes: "There were nine of us in the coach, three on each side, and three in the middle. The mob closely attended us, throwing in at the windows whatever came next to hand; but a large gentlewoman, who sat in my lap, screened me, so that nothing came near me." On arriving at his lodgings, the windows were smashed, and, till midnight, he and his host were, more or less, saluted with oaths, curses, stones, and brickbats. This was a rough reception, and Wesley did not repeat his visit for seven years.

From Hull, Wesley and his wife proceeded to Pocklington, where he had been announced to preach, though there was no society, and scarcely at converted person in the town. The room, which had been provided for the preaching, was five yards square, which Wesley reasonably enough thought too small. A yard was looked at, but it was plentifully furnished with stones, and Wesley's experience taught him that these might be dangerous artillery in the hands of the "devil's drunken companions." At last, a gentleman offered a large commodious barn, in which Wesley had the most blessed season of refreshing that he had had since his leaving London.

At York, a magistrate had stuck up in public places, and distributed in private houses, part of Lavington's Papists and Methodists Compared; and hence, as soon as Wesley and his spouse passed through the city gates, they were saluted with bitter curses.

At Osmotherley, he visited a scoffer at all religion, who was either raving mad, or possessed of the devil. The woman told him, that the devil had appeared and talked to her for some time, the day before, and had leaped upon, and grievously tormented her ever since. Wesley says: "We prayed with her. Her agonies ceased. She fell asleep, and awoke in the morning calm and easy." Osmotherley tradition says, that the name of this maniac was Elizabeth Whitfield.

Wesley reached Newcastle, the centre of his northern peregrinations, on April 30. At Sunderland, he "found one of the liveliest societies in the north of England. This," says he, "is the effect of their being so much under the law, as to scruple, one and all, the buying even milk on a Sunday." He preached at Alemouth, and made this remarkable entry in his Journal: "How plain an evidence have we here, that even our outward work, even the societies, are not of man's building! With all our labour and skill, we cannot, in nine years' time, form a society in this place; even though there is none that opposes, poor or rich; nay, though the two richest men in the town, and the only gentlemen there, have done all which was in their power to further it."

At Wickham, he met with a remarkable case. Mrs. Armstrong, before whose house he preached, was an old lady of more than fourscore years of age. From childhood, the Bible had been her companion; but recently, on mounting her spectacles, she was not able to see a word. She took them off; looked again; and could read as well as her daughter could. "From that hour, she could not only read without spectacles, but sew, or thread the finest needle, with the same ease as when she was thirty."

At Barnard Castle, the mob was numerous and loud. The rabble fetched out the fire engine to play upon the congregation; but John Monkhouse, great grandfather of the late Rev. Thomas Monkhouse, seized the pipe, and diverted the stream from Wesley, so that, as he remarks, "not a drop fell on him."[7]

From Barnard Castle, Wesley made his way to Whitehaven, intending to embark for Ireland; but the master of the ship set sail without him. Upon this, he made an excursion into Lancashire and the west of Yorkshire. He spent two days with his clerical friend, the Rev. Mr. Milner, at Chipping, and preached in the parish church to "such a congregation as was never seen there before."

At Heptonstall, "an attorney endeavoured to interrupt, by relating low and threadbare stories; but the people cut him short" in his harangue, "by carrying him quietly away."

At Todmorden, Wesley found the clergyman "slowly recovering from a violent fit of the palsy, with which he was struck immediately after he had been preaching a violent sermon against the Methodists." The following items appear in the Todmorden circuit book. "1752, June 9.—Received of Mr. Grimshaw towards the maintenance of Mr. Wesley and others, in all, six shillings." As further curiosities of Methodism we give other extracts from the same book for 1752. "April 20.—For William Darney, *foreside* of his *waistcoat*, 7*s*." "For trimming for his coat, 9*s*. 11½*d*." "To him for his wife, 20*s*." "May 5.—For friends at quarterly meeting, 1*s*. 3*d*." "June 9.—Paid to James Heanworth for Mr. Wesley and others, in all, 12*s*. 2*d*." "August 14.—Paid to William Marshall when in a strait, 5*s*." "December 14.—For writing paper, ½*d*."

At Mellar Barn, Wesley's bedroom served "both for a bedchamber and a cellar. The closeness was more troublesome at first than the coolness; but he let in a little fresh air, by breaking a pane of paper in the window; and then slept sound till morning."

As a specimen of Wesley's itinerant troubles, we give the following extract from his Journal.

> "1752, June 15.—I had many little trials in this journey, of a kind I had not known before. I had borrowed a young, strong mare when I set out from Manchester; but she fell lame before I got to Grimsby. I procured another, but was dismounted again between

Newcastle and Berwick. At my return to Manchester I took my own; but she had lamed herself in the pasture. I thought, nevertheless, to ride her four or five miles to-day; but she was gone out of the ground, and we could hear nothing of her. However, I comforted myself that I had another at Manchester, which I had lately bought; but when I came thither, I found one had borrowed her, and rode her away to Chester."

By some means, he rode to Chester on June 20, where "a poor alehouse keeper seemed disgusted, spoke a harmless word, and run away with speed." While preaching "in the square," "a man screamed and hallooed as loud as he could, but none regarded him. A few of the rabble, most of them drunk, laboured much to make a disturbance; but the far greater part of the congregation, the gentry in particular, were seriously and deeply attentive." A few days afterwards, however, the mob made the Methodist meeting-house a heap of ruins. On July 10, Wesley and his wife got back to Whitehaven.

In the midst of these labours and journeyings, Wesley wrote as follows, to his friend, Mr. Ebenezer Blackwell.

"NEWCASTLE, *May* 23, 1752.

"DEAR SIR,—I want your advice. T. Butts sends me word that, after our printers' bills are paid, the money remaining, received by the sale of the books, does not amount to £100 a year. It seems, therefore, absolutely necessary to determine one of these three

things:—either to lessen the expense of printing, which I see no way of doing, unless by printing myself; or to increase the income from the books, and how this can be done I know not; or to give up those eighty-six copies, which are specified in my brother's deed, to himself, to manage them as he pleases.

"The people in all these parts are much alive to God, being generally plain, and simple of heart. Here I should spend the greatest part of my life, if I were to follow my own inclinations. But I am not to do my own will, but the will of Him that sent me.

"I am, dear sir, your ever affectionate servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."[8]

Wesley set sail, from Whitehaven, for Dublin, on July 13, and, after a passage of four days, arrived in safety. The new chapel was ready, and he describes it as "nearly of the same size and form" as that at Newcastle, with the exception, that on three sides it had deep galleries. The society consisted of about four hundred and twenty members, many of whom "were much shaken, chiefly by various opinions, which some even of his own preachers had propagated."

The following extract from a letter, written three days after his arrival in Dublin, may be acceptable:—

"DUBLIN, *July* 20, 1752.

"DEAR SIR,—Finding no ship ready to sail, either at Bristol or Chester, we at length came back to

Whitehaven, and embarked on Monday last. It is generally a passage of four-and-twenty hours; but the wind continuing contrary all the way, we did not reach this place till Friday evening. My wife and Jenny were extremely sick, particularly when we had a rolling sea. They are already much better than when they landed.

"Last month, a large mob assaulted the new house here, and did considerable damage. Several of the rioters were committed to Newgate. The bills were found against them all, and they were tried ten days since; but, in spite of the clearest evidence, a packed jury brought them in, Not guilty. I believe, however, the very apprehension and trial of them has struck a terror into their companions. We now enjoy great quietness, and can even walk unmolested through the principal streets in Dublin."[9]

Shortly after, he wrote as follows to his brother Charles.

"ATHLONE, *August* 8, 1752.

"DEAR BROTHER,—Some of our preachers here have peremptorily affirmed, that you are not so strict as me; that you neither practise, nor enforce, nor approve of, the rules of the bands. I suppose, they mean those which condemn needless self indulgence, and recommend the means of grace, fasting in particular; which is well-nigh forgotten throughout this nation. I think it would be of use, if you wrote without delay, and explain yourself at large.

"They have, likewise, openly affirmed, that you agree with Mr. Whitefield touching perseverance, at least, if not predestination too. Is it not highly expedient, that you should write explicitly and strongly on this head likewise?

"Perhaps the occasion of this latter affirmation was, that both you and I have often granted an absolute, unconditional election of some, together with a conditional election of all men. I did incline to this scheme for many years; but of late I have doubted it more and more: First, because all the texts which I used to think supported it, I now think, prove either more or less: either absolute reprobation and election, or neither. Secondly, because I find this opinion serves all the ill purposes of absolute predestination; particularly that of supporting infallible perseverance. Talk with any that holds it, and so you will find.

"On Friday and Saturday next is our little conference at Limerick. We join in love."[10]

No one reading Charles Wesley's hymns will, for a moment, entertain the accusation, that he sympathised with the Calvinian tenets of his friend Whitefield; and yet, remembering, that he and the Countess of Huntingdon were now living in terms of the most intimate friendship; and, that he was frequently preaching and administering the sacrament in her ladyship's house, it is not surprising, that such a report should have become current. As to the other point, that

Charles Wesley did not approve of and enforce some of the rules of the society, we incline to think, that this was true; and that there was already an amount of shyness between the brothers, which soon afterwards threatened to become something serious.

The Limerick conference (the first in Ireland) was held on the 14th and 15th days of August. Oddly enough, there are in existence two manuscripts, written by preachers present at the conference, and containing its minutes and appointments. One of them, in my own possession, was given by an aunt of Philip Guier, to the Rev. Samuel Wood, who published a copy of it in the *Irish Methodist Magazine* for 1807. The other manuscript is in the handwriting of Jacob Rowell, and is now possessed by Mr. John Steele, of Chester. It is from Rowell's manuscript that the editor of the new edition of the minutes, published in 1862, printed the minutes of the Limerick conference contained in that volume.

From these important documents we learn, that there was a general decay of the societies in Ireland, partly occasioned by the teaching of antinomian and Calvinian doctrines; partly by the want of discipline; and partly by the misbehaviour of preachers. All the itinerants present (ten in number) declared, that they did not believe in the doctrine of absolute predestination; but three of them added: "We believe there are some persons absolutely elected; but we believe, likewise, that Christ died for all; that God willeth not the death of any man; and that thousands are saved that are not absolutely elected. We believe, further, that those who are thus elected

cannot finally fall; but we believe other believers may fall, and that those who were once justified may perish everlastingly."

Let Wesley's letter to his brother be read in the light of this extract from the Limerick minutes, and the one will help to explain the other. We have here an instance of Wesley tolerating a difference in doctrine among his preachers, so long as fundamental truths were not impugned. This might be wise or it might not; but the fact itself is a fact worth noticing.

It was resolved, however, that, in future, no man should be received as a fellow labourer unless he thoroughly agreed to both Methodist doctrine and discipline; and that, if any preacher revolted from this agreement, letters should be sent to all the societies, disowning him.

It was, also, decided, that if a man was not able to preach twice a day, he should be only a local preacher; that, of the two, it was better to give up the evening preaching in a place than the morning; that the congregations must constantly kneel in prayer, and stand both in singing and while the text was read, and be serious and silent while the service lasted, and when coming and going away. Persons not having band tickets were not to be permitted to be present at the public meeting of the bands, for this would make the tickets cheap, and would discourage those who had them. Preachers were to be allowed £8, at least, and if possible £10 a year for clothing; and £10 a year were to be allowed for the support of each preacher's wife. The preachers were to preach frequently and

strongly on fasting; and were to practise it every Friday, health permitting. Next to luxury, they were to avoid idleness, and were to spend one hour every day in private prayer.

Six preachers were admitted, one of whom was Philip Guier, concerning whom we must say a word.

It is well known, that a number of Palatines, driven from Germany, had settled in the neighbourhood of Ballingran; and that, though they were in the first instance a sober, well conducted, and moral people, they had, through having no minister of their own, and no German worship, degenerated into an irreligious, drunken, swearing community. Amidst this general degeneracy, Philip Guier breasted the wave, and, like Milton's Abdiel, proved faithful among the faithless. He was the master of the German school at Ballingran; and it was in his school, that Philip Embury (subsequently the founder of Methodism in the United States, now a young man thirty-two years of age), had been taught to read and write. By means of Guier, also, the devoted Thomas Walsh, of the same age as Embury, had been enlightened, and prepared to receive the truth as it is in Jesus. Philip Guier was made the leader of the infant society at Limerick, and now, in 1752, was appointed to act as a local preacher among the Palatines. He still kept his school, but devoted his spare hours to preaching. The people loved the man, and sent him, if not money, yet flour, oatmeal, bacon, and potatoes, so that Philip, if not rich, was not in want. It is a remarkable fact, that, after the lapse of a hundred years, the name of Philip Guier is as fresh in Ballingran as it ever was; for there, even papists as well as protestants are

accustomed to salute the Methodist minister as he jogs along on his circuit horse, and to say, "There goes Philip Guier, who drove the devil out of Ballingran!"[11] Under the date of May 7, 1778, Wesley writes: "Two months ago, good Philip Guier fell asleep, one of the Palatines that came over and settled in Ireland, between sixty and seventy years ago. He was a father both to this" [Newmarket] "and the other German societies, loving and cherishing them as his own children. He retained all his faculties to the last, and after two days' illness went to God."

After the conference at Limerick, Wesley proceeded to Cork, where he examined the society, and found about three hundred, who were striving to have a conscience void of offence toward God and man. At Kinsale, he preached in a large, deep hollow, capable of containing two or three thousand people, the soldiers of the fort, with their swords, cutting him a place to stand upon. At Waterford, Thomas Walsh preached in Irish, and Wesley in English, the rabble cursing, shouting, and hallooing most furiously.

At length, after spending twelve weeks in Ireland, during which there were not two dry days together, Wesley set sail for England; and, on October 14, arrived safe at Bristol. Three weeks later, he came to London, and here he continued the remainder of the year, preparing books for the "Christian Library," on which he had already lost more than £200.

During this interval, Whitefield wrote as follows to Charles Wesley, showing that distrust was creeping in among them:—

"LONDON, *December* 22, 1752.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—I have read and pondered your kind letter. The connection between you and your brother has been so close and continued, and your attachment to him so necessary to keep up his interest, that I would not willingly, for the world, do or say anything that may separate such friends. I cannot help thinking, that he is still jealous of me and my proceedings; but, I thank God, I am quite easy about it. I have seen an end of all perfection. God knows how I love and honour you, and your brother, and how often I have preferred your interest to my own. This I shall continue to do. More might be said, were we face to face.

"Yours, etc.,

"GEORGE WHITEFIELD."[12]

It is far from pleasant to end the year with a note of discord; but we shall unfortunately have to hear more of this in future years.

In concluding the chapter with the usual list of Wesley's publications during the current year, there must be noticed:—

1. The continuation of his "Christian Library." Twelve volumes had been given to the public already; seven more were issued in 1752, containing extracts from the writings of Thomas Manton, Isaac Ambrose, Jeremy Taylor, Ralph Cudworth, Nathaniel Culverwell, John Owen, and others.

2. "Some Account of the Life and Death of Matthew Lee." 12mo, 24 pages.

3. "Serious Thoughts concerning Godfathers and Godmothers." 12mo, four pages. The tract was written at Athlone in Ireland, but was hardly worth publishing. Of course, Wesley approves of godfathers and godmothers; but acknowledges that baptism is valid without them.

4. "Predestination calmly Considered." 12mo, 83 pages. We have already seen, that three of the preachers, present at the Irish conference, expressed their belief, that some persons are absolutely elected, but that thousands are saved who are not elected. It was also rumoured, that Charles Wesley inclined to Whitefield's predestinarian views. Under such circumstances, Wesley's "Predestination calmly Considered" was a needed and opportune production. He writes (page 6): "There are some who assert the decree of election, and not the decree of reprobation. They assert, that God hath, by a positive, unconditional decree, chosen some to life and salvation; but not that He hath, by any such decree, devoted the rest of mankind to destruction. These are they to whom I would address myself first." This is one of Wesley's most cogent and exhaustive pamphlets, written in a most loving spirit, and yet utterly demolishing the Calvinistic theory. He shows conclusively, that no man can consistently hold the doctrine of election without holding the cognate doctrine of reprobation,—a doctrine wholly opposed to the plainest teachings of holy Scripture, dishonouring to God, overthrowing the scriptural doctrines of a future judgment,

and of rewards and punishments, and "naturally leading to the chambers of death." It is difficult to conceive how any one can read Wesley's treatise, and still remain a Calvinist. None of his Methodistic friends tried to answer it; but Dr. John Gill, the pastor of a Baptist church in Southwark, published, in the same year, the two following pamphlets:—"The Doctrine of the Saints' Final Perseverance, asserted and vindicated. In answer to a late pamphlet, called Serious Thoughts on that subject." 8vo, 59 pages. And, "The Doctrine of Predestination stated and set in the Scripture light; in opposition to Mr. Wesley's Predestination Calmly Considered. With a reply to the exceptions of the said writer to the Doctrine of the Perseverance of the Saints." 8vo, 52 pages. In the latter production, Dr. Gill says, that Wesley, in noticing his former one, had "contented himself with low, mean, and impertinent exceptions, not attempting to answer one argument, and yet having the assurance, in the public papers, to call this miserable piece of his, chiefly written on another subject, 'A full answer to Dr. Gill's pamphlet on Final Perseverance.'" This, on the part of Dr. Gill, was the wincing whine of a defeated man. It was not worthy of him. Dr. Gill was now fifty-five years of age, and a man of vast learning and research. Before his twentieth year, he had read all the Greek and Latin authors that had fallen in his way, and had so studied Hebrew as to be able to read the Old Testament in the original with pleasure. Besides other works, he was the author of "A Body of Divinity," in three quarto volumes; and of "An Exposition of the Old and New Testament," in nine volumes, folio. The university of Aberdeen had conferred upon him the degree of a doctor of divinity, "on account of his great

knowledge of the Scriptures, of the oriental languages, and of Jewish antiquities, of his learned defence of the Scriptures against deists and infidels, and the reputation gained by his other works"; but, in terse, powerful, conclusive argument, John Gill was not a match for John Wesley. He was a man of excellent moral character; but he was an ultra Calvinist. He was a man of unwearied diligence, of laborious research, of vast learning; but his immense mass of valuable materials were comparatively useless, for he had neither talent to digest, nor skill to arrange them. We think it was Robert Hall who not inaptly described his voluminous productions as "a continent of mud." He died in 1771.

5. Another of Wesley's publications in 1752 was, "A Second Letter to the Author of 'The Enthusiasm of Methodists and Papists compared.'" This was published in the month of January; and, at the same time, was issued, "A Third Letter to the Author of the Enthusiasm of Methodists," etc. By Vincent Perronet, A.M.; price sixpence."[13]

Lavington published the second part of his lampooning work in 1749;[14] and part third in 1751. Of Part II., Whitefield wrote, in a letter to Lady Huntingdon, dated August 24, 1749:—"I have seen the bishop's second pamphlet, in which he serves the Methodists, as the Bishop of Constance served John Huss, when he ordered painted devils to be put round his head, before they burnt him. His preface to me is most virulent. Everything I wrote, in my answer, is turned into the vilest ridicule. I cannot see that it calls for any further answer

from me. Mr. Wesley, I think, had best attack him now, as he is largely concerned in this second part."[15]

Whitefield was not a match for an episcopal buffoon like Lavington; and hence he hands him over to his trenchant friend Wesley. The preface, of more than thirty pages, addressed to Whitefield, was full of banter; and in Part II., following it, he is treated with the same coarse rudeness. He and Wesley and the Methodist preachers in general are accused of assuming "the ostentation of sanctified looks," "fantastical oddities," "affectation of godly and Scripture phrases," "and high pretensions to inspiration." "Their great swelling words of vanity, and proud boastings, had been carried to a most immoderate and insufferable degree." "They were either innocent madmen, or infamous cheats." As for Whitefield, "no man ever so bedaubed himself with his own spittle. His first Account of God's Dealings with him was such a boyish, ludicrous, filthy, nasty, and shameless relation of himself, as quite defiles paper, and is shocking to decency and modesty. It is a perfect jakes of uncleanness." Wesley had "so fanaticised his own followers, and given them so many strong doses of the enthusiastic tincture, as to turn their brains and deprive them of their senses." "The mountebank's infallible prescriptions must be swallowed, whatever be the consequence, though they die for it." The Methodists are charged with "the black art of calumny; with excessive pride and vanity, with scepticisms and disbeliefs of God and Christ, with disorderly practices, and inveterate broils among themselves, and with a coolness for good works, and an uncommon warmth for some that are very bad." "In their

several Answers and Defences, a strain of jesuitical sophistry, artifice and craft, evasion, reserve, equivocation, and prevarication, is of constant use."

Lavington's Part III., a volume in itself, is addressed "to the Reverend Mr. Wesley"; who is made the almost exclusive object of its virulent attack. He is told, that he is "an arrant joker, a perfect droll." "Go on, says the ribald bishop, "and build chapels. One may be dedicated to the god Proteus, famous for being a juggling wonder-monger, and turning himself into all shapes; another to the god called Catius, because he made men sly and cunning as cats. The people with whom you have to do, you know, will adore you; for the same reason that the Egyptians did their bull Apis; because renowned for miracles, and every hour changing its colour." He adds: "your Letter to the author of Enthusiasm is a medley of chicanery, sophistry, prevarication, evasion, pertness, conceitedness, scurrility, sauciness, and effrontery. Paper and time should not be wasted on such stuff." And this was all the answer his lordship furnished.

We are afraid to make our pages, what Lavington has made his book, "a perfect jakes of uncleanness," by further quotations. Suffice it to say, that the whole of this scurrility was anonymous.

No wonder that Wesley, in his answer, speaks of his calumniator as "one that turns the most serious, the most awful, the most venerable things into mere farce, and matter of low buffoonery"; one who treats sacred topics with the

"spirit of a merry-andrew." He convicts him of the most flagrant falsehood, and says, "I charge you with gross, wilful prevarication, from the beginning of your book to the end"; and firmly, but respectfully, sustains the charge. He writes:—

> "I have now considered all the arguments you have brought to prove, that the Methodists are carrying on the work of popery. And I am persuaded, every candid man, who rightly weighs what has been said, with any degree of attention, will clearly see, not only, that no one of those arguments is of any real force at all, but that you do not believe them yourself; you do not believe the conclusion which you pretend to prove; only you keep close to your laudable resolution of throwing as much dirt as possible."

> "These things being so, what must all unprejudiced men think of you and your performance? You have advanced a charge, not against one or two persons only, but indiscriminately against a whole body of people of his majesty's subjects, Englishmen, Protestants, members, I suppose, of your own church; a charge containing abundance of articles, and most of them of the highest and blackest nature. You have prosecuted this with unparalleled bitterness of spirit, and acrimony of language; using sometimes the most coarse, rude, scurrilous terms; sometimes the keenest sarcasms you could devise. The point you have steadily pursued, in thus prosecuting this charge, is, first, to expose the whole people to the hatred and scorn of all mankind;

and next, to stir up the civil powers against them. And when this charge comes to be fairly weighed, there is not a single article of it true! Most of the passages you have cited, you have palpably maimed, corrupted, and strained to a sense never thought of by the writer; they prove nothing less than the points in question; and many of them are flat against you, and overthrow the very point they are brought to support. Is not this the most shocking violation of the Christian rule, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself'; the most open affront to all justice, and even common humanity; the most glaring insult upon the common sense and reason of mankind, which has lately appeared in the world?"

"You regard neither mercy, justice, nor truth. To vilify and blacken is your one point. I pray God it may not be laid to your charge! May He show you mercy, though you show none!

"I am, sir,

"Your friend and well wisher,

"JOHN WESLEY."

What was the result? In the month of March, or April,[16] Lavington published a tract, with the title," The Bishop of Exeter's Answer to Mr. Wesley's late Letter to his Lordship." 8vo, 15 pages; in which he feebly struggles to get out of a flagrant falsehood, of which Wesley had convicted him; and, true to his old vituperative style of writing, concludes thus:—

"The remainder of your epistle, mere rant and declamation, shall give me no trouble. Having cleared up a matter of fact, which may be thought necessary for my own justification, I find myself under no obligation or disposition, to enter into matters of dispute, wherein our opinions would widely differ. I am too sensible of your way of answering, your temper, and of what spirit you are of, to think of any further correspondence: and if you expect, that I should let myself down to a level with you, you will find yourself mistaken. I pray God to give you a good will, and a right judgment in all things;

"And am, sir,

"Your obedient, humble servant,

"G. EXON."

This was pitiful poltroonery, in perfect character with a cowardly calumniator, who had poured forth the most unfounded scandals, without daring to show his face or to sign his name. Wesley briefly replied, in a letter dated "Newcastle upon Tyne, May 8, 1752"; and so the matter ended.

Amid such hurricanes was Methodism cradled; and in the face of such opponents Wesley had to pursue his great, gospel mission. Who, after the specimens of Lavington's scandalizing pen, is prepared to expect that the tablet, erected to his memory in Exeter cathedral, should represent him as one who "never ceased to improve his talents, nor to employ them to the noblest purposes"? The conclusion of this marvellous epitaph is as follows:—

"Unaffected sanctity dignified his instructions,
And indulgent candour sweetened his government.
At length, having eminently discharged his duties,
Of a Man, a Christian, and a Prelate,
Prepared, by habitual meditation,
To resign life without regret,
To meet death without terror,
He expired with the praises of God upon his lips,
In his 79th year, September 13, 1762."[17]

ENDNOTES

[1] "Life and Times of Countess of Huntingdon," vol. ii., p. 380.
[2] Whitefield's Works, vol. ii., p. 428.
[3] Jackson's Life of C. Wesley, vol. ii., p. 576.
[4] Life of Rev. S. Walker, p. 201.
[5] *Methodist Magazine*, 1847, p. 869.
[6] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 165.
[7] "Memoir of Rev. T. Monkhouse," p. 4.
[8] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 165.
[9] Ibid. vol. xii., p. 166.
[10] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 106.
[11] *Irish Evangelist*, October 1, 1860.
[12] Whitefield's Works, vol. ii., p. 464.
[13] *London Magazine*, 1752, p. 48.
[14] *London Magazine*, 1749, p. 388.
[15] Whitefield's Works, vol. ii., p. 275.
[16] *London Magazine*, 1752, p. 193.
[17] Polwhele's edition of "Enthusiasm," etc.

1753.

AS usual, Wesley began the new year by preaching, in the Foundery, at four o'clock in the morning, when a large congregation met to praise the God of providence and grace with "joyful hearts and lips." On the same day, his old friend Howel Harris wrote him a long letter, from which the following is an extract:—

"*January* 1, 1753.

"DEAR BROTHER JOHN WESLEY,—. . . Shall I speak freely to you, as I am going to that dear Man, who has indeed honoured you, and whom I believe you wish to honour, for you live on His bloody sweat and passion? I wish your ministry and that of the Moravians were united. It would be for the public good. I have fought a good fight, and have, through millions of infirmities, kept the faith. You and your brother Charles have ever been dear to me; but I have often feared, that your wisdom and popularity would be injurious to you, and turn you from the true simplicity of the gospel. I send this, as my dying and loving request, for the Lord's sake, for your own sake, and for the sake of thousands that attend your ministry, that you would direct their eye to the Saviour, and suffer them not to idolize you. Let nothing fall from your lip or pen, but what turns the soul from self to the Saviour. To deny ourselves is a difficult lesson, and there are but few that learn it. I have written some things, in the time of my confinement, which I have ordered the bearer to show you, and which you

will perhaps correct and publish, if you have time, and think they would be of service to the cause of Christ. Hearty salutation to your brother Charles, and all who love Jesus Christ in sincerity. I have been laid aside from public service for some months. I am weary of nothing here but the body of sin in my flesh. I rejoice in you, and the large field that is before you. Though I know not how to give over, I must conclude.

"HOWEL HARRIS."[1]

Whitefield spent the year in a glorious itinerancy throughout the kingdom. On the 1st of March, the first brick of his new Tabernacle was laid, on the site of his old wooden one, he having collected £1100 towards defraying the expense of its erection. He published several sermons, and also a small collection of hymns for public worship. "I and the Messrs. Wesley," he writes, "are very friendly." The Wesleys, during the erection of his Tabernacle, allowed him the use of their London chapels,—an act of courteous kindness which he gratefully acknowledges. In a three months' summer tour, he travelled about twelve hundred miles, and preached a hundred and eighty times. In Grimshaw's church, at Haworth, thirty-five bottles of wine were used at a single sacrament. The year throughout was a year of triumph and of joy,—with one exception, which we are bound in honesty to mention.

Moravianism was increasingly a bone of contention. Two years before, Zinzendorf had purchased, of Sir Hans Sloane, an old family mansion with adjoining grounds, situated on the banks of the Thames at Chelsea. The mansion was turned into

a congregation house; a chapel was fitted up; a burial ground was laid out; and gardens, and a terrace, facing the Thames, were formed. The money expended was more than £11,000. In April, 1753, the whole establishment of the *Unitas Fratrum* removed into the newly acquired premises; and Lindsey House, Chelsea, was henceforth "the disciple house,"—the head quarters of the English Moravians. All bishops and elders were subordinate to Zinzendorf, who, under the name of "papa," was exclusively the ruler of the church.

Meantime, an enormous debt had been incurred. Parliamentary negotiations, sending brethren and sisters to the American colonies, maintaining the preachers of country congregations, sustaining boarding schools, and meeting the large expenses of Lindsey House,—created pecuniary liabilities which the *Unitas Fratrum* found it difficult to meet. During the year 1749, and the first half of the year 1750, the managers of the "diaconies" had advanced £13,000, and clamoured for repayment. Zinzendorf tried to raise a loan of £30,000 for the English Moravians, from the nobility of Upper Lusatia; but his effort failed. A few of the London Brethren lent, from their own resources, nearly £15,000, which merely met present wants. Zinzendorf and others were in danger of arrest for debt. A crop of lawsuits sprung up. Thomas Hankey was a creditor to the amount of nearly £19,000; and the Moravian liabilities, ecclesiastical and trading, were altogether more than £130,000. Affairs appeared to be involved in inextricable confusion. Bankruptcy was imminent; disgrace was great. Peter Bohler, at the time, was

the minister in London, and did his utmost to calm the troubled waters. Scandals of all kinds were rife; and even Bohler himself was not exempt from the general censure,—a fact which led him, in March, 1753, to refuse to join with the Brethren in the holy communion, and which probably had something to do with his leaving London for America in the month of June ensuing.[2]

In the midst of all this, a terrible onslaught was made upon the Moravians, and upon Zinzendorf in particular, by Henry Rimius, "Aulic Counsellor to his late majesty the King of Prussia," in an octavo pamphlet of 177 pages, dedicated to the Archbishop of Canterbury, and entitled, "A Candid Narrative of the Rise and Progress of the Herrnhuthers, commonly called Moravians, or *Unitas Fratrum."* In one place, he charges Zinzendorf with flagrant falsehood. He states, that in his book, "Natural Reflections," the count asserts that "he had been examined by the Theological Faculty at Copenhagen." Upon inquiry, this was found to be an absolute untruth, and had been positively contradicted by a public act of the said faculty, signed with their corporate seal.

Wesley read Rimius's narrative as soon as it was published, and wrote: "It informed me of nothing new. I still think several of the inconsiderable members of that community are upright; but I fear their governors wax worse and worse, having their conscience seared as with a hot iron."

Whitefield, in a letter dated March 21, 1753, observed:—"What is happening to the Moravians is no more than I have

long expected, and spoken of to many friends. Their scheme is so antichristian in almost every respect, that I am amazed the eyes of the English Brethren have not long since been opened."

Whitefield tried to open them. He published a pamphlet, entitled, "An Expostulatory Letter, addressed to Nicholas Lewis, Count Zinzendorf, and Lord Advocate of the *Unitas Fratrum."* The letter, dated April 24, 1753, in whole or in part, was reprinted in the magazines and newspapers of that period, and produced a great sensation.

Zinzendorf and his friends are charged with "misguiding many honest hearted Christians; with distressing, if not ruining, numerous families; and with introducing a whole farrago of superstitions, not to say idolatrous fopperies, into the English nation." The *Unitas Fratrum* are accused of "walking round the graves of their deceased friends on Easter day, attended with hautboys, trumpets, french horns, and violins." Zinzendorf had suffered incense to be "burnt for him, in order to perfume the room before he made his entrance among the brethren"; and had allowed a picture to be exhibited in a lovefeast, "representing him handing a gentleman and lady up to the side of Jesus Christ." It was alleged, that the married women were "ordered to wear blue knots; the single women, pink; those that were just marriageable, pink and white; widows that were past childbearing, white; and those that were not so, blue and white." Hannah Nitschmann, the general eldress of the Fetter Lane congregation, wore "the episcopal knot," and might be

seen sitting at the head of a table, surrounded with eldresses and deaconesses, covered with artificial flowers, and bearing a small altar on which stood a cross composed of glittering stones, and environed with wax tapers. On Hannah's birthday, the floor of one of the rooms in the house of the single brethren was covered with sand and moss, amid which a star was made of coloured pebbles. Upon the star was placed a gilded dove, spouting water from its mouth. The room was curiously decked with moss and shells; and here Zinzendorf, Hannah Nitschmann, Peter Bohler, and other labourers sat, in high dignity, beneath an alcove made of pasteboard. Upon a table was an altar covered with shells, and, on each side of the altar, a bloody heart emitting flames. The place was illuminated with wax candles; and musicians were fixed in an adjacent room, while Zinzendorf and his company performed their devotions, and regaled themselves with sweetmeats, coffee, tea, and wine.

Zinzendorf is said to be over head and ears in debt; and many of the English Brethren, by signing bonds for more than they had means to pay, had exposed themselves to bankruptcy and prison. Peter Bohler, to comfort one of the creditors, William Bell, had sent for him to his house in Neville's Alley, Fetter Lane; where an artificial mountain had been erected in the hall, which, upon the singing of a particular verse, was made to fall flat down, and then behind it appeared a representation of Mr. Bell and the blessed Saviour embracing each other, while the clouds above were raining money most gloriously. Mr. Freeman and Mr. Grace had found bills drawn in their names, unknown to them, to the amount of £48,000;

and Mr. Rhodes had been prevailed upon to sell his estate, of above £400 per annum, to meet the necessities of the *Unitas Fratrum;* and, to avoid further payments, for which he had made himself responsible by signing bonds, had fled to France, leaving behind him a destitute mother, who since had died.[3]

Such is the substance of Whitefield's letter. What were its effects? Wesley writes:—

> "July, 1753.—I found the town much alarmed with Mr. Rimius's narrative, and Mr. Whitefield's letter to Count Zinzendorf. It seems, indeed, that God is hastening to bring to light those hidden works of darkness. Mr. Whitefield showed me the letters he had lately received from the count, P. Bohler, and James Hutton. I was amazed. Either furious anger or settled contempt breathed in every one of them. Were they ashamed after all the abominations they had committed? No; they were not ashamed: they turned the tables upon Mr. Whitefield. The count blustered, like himself, and roundly averred, he could say something if he would. James Hutton said flat, 'You have more than diabolical impudence; I believe the devil himself has not so much.'"

Wesley has not recorded the sentiments of his old friend Peter Bohler; but Whitefield states, that Bohler availed himself of the pulpit to declare, that his letter "was all a lie."[4] It so happens, however, that, since then, the letters of the

count, of Bohler, and of Hutton have been published. Zinzendorf says: *"As yet*, I owe not a farthing of the £40,000 you are pleased to tell me of;" and concludes thus: "As your heart is not prepared to love me, nor your understanding to listen to my reasons" (which he declines to give) "I wish you well. sir, and am your loving friend, LOUIS."

Peter Bohler, in his letter of May 4, begins: "Sir, I pity you very much, that you suffer yourself to be so much imposed upon, and to print your impositions so inconsiderately. You have now attempted a second time to ruin my character." He then denies, that he was the *inventor* of the *artificial mount*, but does not affirm that it was not employed. He concludes as follows: "Dear Mr. Whitefield, when the secret intentions of man, together with all his unjust deeds, will be judged, how glad would you be then, not to have treated our society in general, and, in particular, that venerable person against whom your letter is chiefly levelled, and poor *I*, in so injurious, yea, I may say, impudent and wicked a manner. PETER BOHLER."

Hutton's letter eulogizes the count in the highest terms. "When he awakes in the morning, he is all sweetness, calmness, tender harmoniousness with those about him; and, all the day long, he is busied in doing and contriving the kindest offices for mankind." He is "usefully employed constantly eighteen hours in twenty-four, and very frequently more; and is a man of no expense at all upon his person, so that any one receiving £50 a year to find him in all necessaries, to his satisfaction, would certainly be no loser by

the bargain." And yet, "many bulls of Bashan round about, as brute beasts without understanding, roared madly against him; and, by daubings and grotesque paintings, described him as a Mahommed, a Caesar, an impostor, a Don Quixote, a devil, the beast, the man of sin, the whore, the antichrist."

It is right to add, that Thomas Rhodes, whose case Whitefield had quoted, says, in a letter dated October 21, 1733: "what Mr. Whitefield has written concerning the United Brethren and me, is, the greatest part, entire falsities, and the remainder are truths set in a false light." He admits, however, the sale of his estate.

Far from pleasant is the task of raking into dunghills such as this; but history cannot afford to forget unpleasant facts. Whitefield's letter, perhaps, was obtrusive, and officious, and, to some extent, incorrect; but there can be no doubt, that its leading allegations were founded upon truth.

Happily for himself, Wesley was not an actor in this humbling fracas; and yet, before the year was ended, he was involved within its meshes. In October, he spent four days at Bedford, where a Moravian congregation had been founded in 1744, and where, in 1747, "the chief labourer" startled some of the Brethren by announcing: "My brethren, we have received new orders. In London, Yorkshire, and all other places, no person is to go out of the town without the leave of the chief labourer. So it must be here. Observe, no one must go out of town, no not a mile, without leave from me." In 1750, they built a chapel; squabbles followed; and Wesley,

apparently by request, went, at the time above stated, to visit them. He writes: "I met the little society, just escaped with the skin of their teeth. From the account which each of these gave, it appeared clear to a demonstration—(1) That their elders usurped a more absolute authority over the conscience, than the Bishop of Rome himself does. (2) That, to gain and secure this, they used a continued train of guile, fraud, and falsehood of every kind. (3) That they scrape their votaries to the bone as to their worldly substance, leaving little to any, to some nothing, or less than nothing. (4) That still they are so infatuated as to believe, that theirs is the only true church upon earth."

But leaving the Moravians, let us track Wesley's footsteps during the year 1753.

The first two months were spent in London. He visited "the Marshalsea prison, a nursery of all manner of wickedness." "O shame to man," he writes, "that there should be such a picture of hell upon earth! And shame to those who bear the name of Christ, that there should need any prison at all in Christendom."

He visited many of the sick and poor, and writes: "Who could see such scenes unmoved? There are none such in a pagan country. If any of the Indians in Georgia were sick, those that were near them gave them whatever they wanted. Oh who will convert the English into honest heathen? I found some in their cells underground; others in their garrets, half starved both with cold and hunger; but I found not one of

them unemployed, who was able to crawl about the room. So wickedly, devilishly false is that common objection, 'They are poor, only because they are idle.' If you saw these things with your own eyes, could you lay out money in ornaments and superfluities?"

Just at this juncture, Wesley began to turn his attention to a subject, which afterwards became one of the greatest discoveries of the age.

A year previous to this, Benjamin Franklin had established the important fact of the identity of lightning and the electric fluid, From time to time, he had sent accounts of his experiments to the Royal Society of England; but the communications were not admitted into the printed transactions of that learned body. They were given, however, to Mr. Cave, the editor of the *Gentleman's Magazine,* who had sense enough to see their superlative importance, and who published them in a pamphlet, with a preface written by Dr. Fothergill. By additions subsequently made, the pamphlet grew into a quarto volume; was translated into French, German, and Latin; and attracted the attention of all the philosophers in Europe. The result was, that even the Royal Society began to reconsider the very experiments which they had treated with ridicule; and admitted Franklin, in 1753, into their honourable corporation, bestowing upon him the Copley medal, and all without solicitation, and without the payment of the customary fees.

With his characteristic keenness, Wesley laid hold of Franklin's facts as soon as they were published. They were new and startling; but he saw, that they were most momentous, and evidently entertained the hope, that they would be turned to practical account, in a way which would excite the amazement and gratitude of the human race. Hear what he says:—

> "1753, February 17.—From Dr. Franklin's letters, I learned,—1. That electrical fire is a species of fire, infinitely finer than any other yet known. 2. That it is diffused, and in nearly equal proportions, through almost all substances. 3. That, as long as it is thus diffused, it has no discernible effect. 4. That, if any quantity of it be collected together, whether by art or nature, it then becomes visible in the form of fire, and inexpressibly powerful. 5. That it is essentially different from the light of the sun; for it pervades a thousand bodies which light cannot penetrate, and yet cannot penetrate glass, which light pervades so freely. 6. That lightning is no other than electrical fire, collected by one or more clouds. 7. That all the effects of lightning may be performed by the artificial electric fire. 8. That anything pointed, as a spire or tree, attracts the lightning, just as a needle does the electrical fire. 9. That the electrical fire, discharged on a rat or fowl, will kill it instantly; but discharged on one dipped in water, it will slide off, and do it no hurt at all. In like manner, the lightning, which will kill a man in a moment, will

not hurt him, if he be thoroughly wet. What an amazing scene is here opened, for after ages to improve upon!"

Wesley's concluding sentence is remarkable; but even he had no idea that, in little more than a hundred years, electric fire would become the means of sending, almost instantaneously, its wondrous messages from England to India, and from shore to shore of the great Atlantic Ocean. Wesley, however, was one of the first to take an interest in the science of electricity. Six years before this, in 1747, he wrote: "I went to see what are called the electrical experiments. How must these also confound those poor half thinkers, who will believe nothing but what they can comprehend! Who can comprehend how fire lives in water, and passes through it more freely than through the air? How flame issues out of my finger,—real flame, such as sets fire to spirits of wine? How these, and many more as strange phenomena, arise from the turning round of a glass globe? It is all mystery; if haply, by any means, God may hide pride from man!" In 1756, he began to turn the discovery to practical account. Having procured an apparatus, he commenced electrifying persons for various disorders, and soon found his patients so numerous, that an hour every day had to be devoted to trying "the virtue of this surprising medicine." Moorfields, Southwark, St. Paul's, and the Seven Dials were the places of rendezvous; and here thousands resorted to avail themselves of Wesley's remedy. He writes: "Hundreds, perhaps thousands, have received unspeakable good; and I have not known one man, woman, or child, who has received any hurt thereby; so that, when I hear any talk of the danger of being electrified (especially if they

are medical men who talk so), I cannot but impute it to great want either of sense or honesty." "We know it is a thousand medicines in one; in particular, that it is the most efficacious medicine in nervous disorders of every kind, which has ever yet been discovered."

On February 26, Wesley left London for Bristol, reading on the road Mr. Prince's "Christian History," concerning which he makes the following remarks:—

> "What an amazing difference is there in the manner wherein God has carried on His work in England and in America! There, above a hundred of the established clergy, men of age and experience, and of the greatest note for sense and learning in those parts, are zealously engaged in the work. Here, almost the whole body of the aged, experienced, learned clergy, are zealously engaged against it; and few, but a handful of raw young men, engaged in it, without name, learning, or eminent sense. And yet, by that large number of honourable men, the work seldom flourished above six months at a time, and then followed a lamentable and general decay, before the next revival of it; whereas, that which God hath wrought, by these despised instruments, has continually increased for fifteen years together; and, at whatever time it has declined in any one place, has more eminently flourished in others."

In the same month, Wesley wrote concerning these "raw young, men," as follows:—

"LONDON, *February* 6, 1753.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—It is a constant rule with us, that no preacher should preach above twice a day, unless on Sunday or some extraordinary time; and then he may preach three times. We know nature cannot long bear the preaching oftener than this, and, therefore, to do it is a degree of self murder. Those of the preachers, who would not follow this advice, have all repented when it was too late.

"I likewise advise all our preachers not to preach above an hour at a time, prayer and all; and not to speak louder than the number of hearers require.

"You will show this to all our preachers, and any that desire it may take a copy of it.

"I am your affectionate brother,

"JOHN WESLEY."[5]

Such was Wesley's advice; his example, however, was often widely different.

On March 19, Wesley and his wife set out from Bristol for the north of England.

At Evesham, he preached in the town hall, where most of the congregation were still and attentive, excepting some at the lower end, who, he says, "were walking to and fro, laughing and talking, as if they had been in Westminster Abbey."

At Birmingham, he talked with Sarah B——, one of six wild enthusiasts, who had disturbed the society, and, by their antinomian blasphemy, shown themselves fit for Bedlam.

At Nantwich, he was "saluted with curses and hard names;" and soon afterwards, the mob pulled down the chapel.[6]

At Davyhulme, he found, what he had never heard of in England, a clan of infidel peasants. He writes' "a neighbouring alehouse keeper drinks, and laughs, and argues into deism all the ploughmen and dairymen he can light on. But no mob rises against him; and reason good: Satan is not divided against himself."

In the Manchester society, he found seventeen dragoons, who had been in the same regiment with John Haime in Flanders; but they utterly despised both John and his Master till they came to Manchester, where they were "now a pattern of seriousness, zeal, and all holy conversation."

At Chipping, when he was about to go into the pulpit of his friend, the Rev. Mr. Milner, a man thrust himself before him, and said, "You shall not go into the pulpit;" and by main strength pushed him back. Eight or ten noisy men joined the belligerent, and Wesley thought it best to desire Mr. Milner to read the prayers himself.

At Kendal, he preached in the chapel used by Benjamin Ingham's society; but was disgusted at the people coming in

and sitting down, without any pretence to any previous prayer. They let him sing the first hymn solely by himself; but God spake to them in His word, and in the singing of the hymn after the sermon most of them united; while the greatest part of them followed him to his inn, and conversed with him till he went to bed.

He now made his way to Scotland. Dumfries had two of the most elegant churches he had ever seen. Glasgow he took to be as large as Newcastle. The students of the university wore scarlet gowns, reaching only to their knees, very dirty, very ragged, and of very coarse materials. Here he was the guest of the Rev. John Gillies, the minister of the College kirk, at whose invitation he had come. Mr. Gillies was now preparing his Historical Collections, which, in the year following, he published, in two large octavo volumes. Wesley spent nearly a week with this devout and distinguished man. He assisted him in his "Collections," preached in his kirk, and seems to have been the means of introducing a novelty in the public worship of the Scots—the singing of hymns as well as doggerel versions of the Book of Psalms. At all events, on the first day of his visit, he observes: "After the sermon, Mr. Gillies concluded with the blessing. He then gave out, one after another, four hymns, which about a dozen young men sung. He had before desired those who were so minded to go away, but scarce any stirred till all was ended." This, however, was a serious innovation, and soon after Wesley left, Mr. Gillies wrote to him as follows: "The singing of hymns here meets with greater opposition than I expected. Serious people are much divided. Those of better

understanding and education are silent; but many others are so prejudiced, that they speak openly against it, and look upon me as doing a very sinful thing. I beg your advice, whether to answer them only by continuing in the practice of the thing, or whether I should also publish a sheet of arguments from reason, and Scripture, and the example of the godly. Your experience of dealing with people's prejudice, makes your advice of the greater importance. I bless the Lord for the benefit and comfort of your acquaintance; for your important assistance in my Historical Collections; and for your edifying conversation and sermons in Glasgow."[7]

The friendship thus commenced with Mr. Gillies was continued for many years. Both Wesley and Grimshaw rendered great assistance to Gillies in his valuable book on revivals, and were consulted as to the time of its being published. Mr. Gillies was an eminently devout and pious man and minister, but was living without the evidence of his adoption into the family of God. Hence the following to Wesley, under the date of September 5, 1753.

> "O when shall I get that Divine *elenchos* you mention, in my own soul! The other day I fasted and prayed all day in the fields; but a body of death still cleaves to me. I fear I have not yet the gift of the Holy Ghost. I know not what to do. I sometimes think I should be happy to be in some wilderness in America; to forget and be forgotten; to have none but God to converse with; digging for my daily bread. But is not this desire of solitude a vain thought, unless I could fly

from my own vile and wretched self? O that the Lord would show me what it is that separates my soul from Him, that it might be destroyed, and, that I might know, He is my God in Christ! This, this is all I want. Dear Mr. Wesley, continue to pray for your most unworthy, but affectionate brother and servant,

"JOHN GILLIES."[8]

Such was the religious experience of the author of the "Historical Collections of the Success of the Gospel," at the very time when that important book was being published.

On leaving Glasgow, Wesley proceeded direct to Newcastle, preaching on the way at Berwick and at Alnwick. He reached the latter town on April 25, the day on which those who had finished their apprenticeship, during the previous year, were made free of the corporation. This was done by the young fellows having to walk through a bog, purposely preserved for the occasion, and which took many of them up to the breast, and even to the neck in passing. Sixteen or seventeen, during Wesley's visit, thus waded their way to Alnwick dignity through Alnwick dirt. The Alnwick society had been split asunder by presbyterians, of whom good Jeannie Keith was one. Wesley writes: "a few violent presbyterians had, at length, separated themselves from us. It was well they saved me the trouble; for I can have no connection with those who will be contentious. These I reject, not for their opinion, but for their sin; for their unchristian temper and unchristian practice; for being haters of reproof,

haters of peace, haters of their brethren, and consequently of God."

While at Newcastle, Wesley presided at the first general quarterly meeting of Methodist stewards that was held in the north of England. He also preached in a chapel recently erected at Gateshead Fell, the second chapel built for the Methodists in the neighbourhood of Newcastle.

Wesley left Newcastle on the 7th of May, and, after preaching at Durham, Stockton, and Robin Hood's Bay, came, two days afterwards, to York, where he met with a rough salute, and preached in a room "hot as an oven."

On May 22, he met his conference at Leeds, there being present, besides himself, two clergymen, Grimshaw and Milner; twenty-five itinerant, and sixteen local preachers.

It was determined that, in future, the conferences should be held at London, Bristol, and Leeds, by turns. As a testimony against the corruptions of the Moravians, it was suggested, that it might be proper to reprint Wesley's "Letter to the Church at Herrnhuth," with some additions, and a dedication to the count. It was resolved to behave towards Mr. Ingham with all tenderness and love, and to unite with him when he returned to the old Methodist doctrine. The predestinarian preachers having done much hurt to the societies, it was agreed—"(1) That none of them should preach any more in our societies. (2) That a loving and respectful letter should be written to Mr. Whitefield, desiring him to advise his

preachers, not to reflect (as they had done continually, and that both with great bitterness and rudeness) either upon the doctrines, discipline, or person of Mr. Wesley, among his own societies; to abstain himself (at least when he was among Mr. Wesley's people) from speaking against either his doctrines, rules, or preachers; and not to declare war anew, as he had done by a needless digression in his late sermon."

In accordance with this resolution, Wesley addressed to Whitefield the following letter, which, up to the present, has been unpublished:—

"May, 1753.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—Between forty and fifty of our preachers lately met at Leeds, all of whom, I trust, esteem you in love for your work's sake. I was desired by them to mention a few particulars to you, in order to a still firmer union between us.

"Several of them had been grieved at your mentioning, among our people (in private conversation, if not in public preaching), some of those opinions which we do not believe to be true;—such as a man may be justified and not know it;' that, 'there is no possibility of falling away from grace;' and that, 'there is no perfection in this life.' They conceived, that this was not doing as you would be done to, and that it tended to create not peace but confusion.

"They were likewise concerned at your sometimes speaking lightly of the discipline received among us, of societies, classes, bands, and of our rules in general, of some of them in particular. This they apprehended to be neither kind nor just, nor consistent with the profession which you at other times make.

"Above all, they had been troubled at the manner wherein your preachers (so I call those who preach at the Tabernacle) had very frequently spoken of my brother and me, partly in the most scoffing and contemptuous manner, relating a hundred shocking stories as unquestionable facts, and propagating them with diligence, and with an air of triumph, wherever they came.

"These things I was desired by all our brethren to mention. Two or three of them, afterwards, desired me, in private, to mention further, that when you were in the north your conversation was not so useful as was expected; that it generally turned not upon the things of God, but on trifles and things indifferent,—that your whole carriage was not so serious as they could have desired, being often mixed with needless laughter,—and that those who scrupled any levity of behaviour, and endeavoured always to speak and act as seeing God, you rather weakened than strengthened, intimating that they were in bondage, or weak in faith.

"I am persuaded you will receive these short lines in the same love wherein I write them. That you may prosper more and more, both in your soul and in your labours, is the hearty desire of, my dear brother,

"Your affectionate fellow labourer,

"JOHN WESLEY."

This is a fine specimen of brotherly fidelity. Whitefield was misrepresented. Wesley has endorsed his copy of this manuscript letter with the words, "He denies all;" and this is partially confirmed by the following extract from a letter written some time before, and addressed to Mr. M——.

"LONDON, *March* 10, 1753.

"MY DEAR MR. M——,—I have preached at Spitalfields chapel twice. Both the Mr. Wesleys are agreed. Let brotherly love continue! I do not like writing against anybody, but I think that wisdom, which dwells with prudence, should direct you not to fill Mr. Wesley's people (who expect you will serve them) with needless jealousies. I hope to see the time, when you will talk less of persons and things, and more of Him who is the common head of His whole mystical body. This, and this alone, can make and keep you steady in yourself, and extensively useful to others. I am glad you know when persons are justified. It is a lesson I have not yet learnt. There are so many stony ground hearers, that

receive the word with joy, that I have determined to suspend my judgment till I know the tree by its fruits.

"I am, etc.,

"GEORGE WHITEFIELD."[9]

At the same conference of 1753, it was asked, "Does every one know the exact time when he was justified?" Answer: "It is possible he may not know what to call it, when he experiences this; especially if he has not been accustomed to hear the scriptural doctrine concerning it. And the change then wrought in some may not be so sudden, or so observable, as it is in others. But, generally, wherever the gospel is preached in a clear and scriptural manner, more than ninety-nine in a hundred do know the exact time when they are justified."

It was agreed, that they had not preached concerning both inward and outward holiness so strongly and closely as they ought. Many of the Methodists having lately married with unbelievers, it was resolved, that those who did this in future should be expelled from the society; and, that it should be a general rule, that no Methodist should marry without consulting the most serious of his brethren. It was ascertained, that sabbath breaking, dram drinking, evil speaking, unprofitable conversation, lightness, and contracting debts without sufficient care to discharge them, extensively prevailed; and it was determined, that none, who hereafter were guilty of such things, would be permitted to remain members of the society. Some of the married preachers were suffering great hardships, through no provision being made for the sustenance of their wives; and it was agreed that, in

future, preachers ought to be careful in marrying "hand over head"; that they ought first to consult their brethren; and that, if they neglected this, they must not take it amiss if left to provide for themselves and their wives in the best way they could; and that, if they did consult with their brethren first, and still married wives without anything, they must be content to return to their temporal business, and again become local preachers. The circuits were twelve in number, namely—London, Bristol, Devonshire, Cornwall, Staffordshire, Cheshire, Leeds, Haworth, Lincolnshire, Newcastle, Wales, and Ireland; and the preachers appointed to supply them, including the two Wesleys, were thirty-nine.[10]

The conference being ended, Wesley proceeded to Birstal, Haworth, Keighley, Heptonstall, and Todmorden; preaching, in three days, ten or eleven sermons, and meeting the societies, till his voice began to fail, though at Birstal it had been sufficiently powerful, and so exerted, that those who sat in John Nelson's windows, at a distance of a hundred yards, heard every word he uttered. Writing to his friend, Mr. Ebenezer Blackwell, on May 28, he says: "The harvest has not been so plenteous for many years as it is now, in all the north of England; but the labourers are few. I wish you could persuade our friend" [probably his brother] "to share the labour with me. One of us should, in anywise, visit both the north and Ireland every year. But I cannot do both; the time will not suffice, otherwise I would not spare myself. I hope my life, rather than my tongue, says, I desire only to spend and be spent in the work."[11]

On his way to London, Wesley paid his first visit to the town of Leicester. He writes: "June 10, WhitSunday:—After dinner, a gentleman who came from Leicester, eight miles off," [Markfield] "invited me thither. About eight I preached there, in a place near the walls, called the Butt-close. The people came running together from all parts, high and low, rich and poor; and their behaviour surprised me; they were so serious and attentive, not one offering any interruption."

Soon after this, a society was gathered, and was placed under the care of John Brandon, a dragoon, who subsequently became one of Wesley's itinerant preachers; and an old thatched building, in Milstone Lane, which had been successively used as a tithe barn, a theatre, a riding school, and a coal depot, was now turned into a Methodist chapel.

Wesley reached London, after a four months' absence, on the 12th of June. A month later, he started for the Isle of Wight, where one of his preachers had been already labouring.[12] Calling at Portsmouth, he writes: "I was surprised to find so little fruit here, after so much preaching. That accursed itch of disputing had well-nigh destroyed all the seed which had been sown. And this 'vain jangling' they called 'contending for the faith.' I doubt the whole faith of these poor wretches is but an opinion."

The society here mentioned was not Wesley's, but one belonging to the preachers of the Countess of Huntingdon. Immediately after this visit, however, a small class was formed by Wesley's itinerants, one of the members of which

was John Mason, an orphan child now approaching manhood, and who, in 1764, became an itinerant preacher, and died in peace in 1810.

Leaving Portsmouth, Wesley, after a three hours' voyage, landed at Cowes, in the Isle of Wight; which he says "as far exceeds the Isle of Anglesey, both in pleasantness and fruitfulness, as that exceeds the rocks of Scilly." He rode straight to Newport, where he "found a little society in tolerable order." He preached in the market-place to a large but noisy congregation. He walked to Carisbrook castle, and tells of the deep well, from which water was then drawn by an ass sixty years old.

Newport was the only place in the island at which Wesley preached. On July 12, he started thence for Cornwall. On reaching Bristol, he performed a service worth mentioning. At the end of May, hundreds of colliers, on account of the dearness of corn, had risen in riot; had smashed the windows of the council house; and forcibly boarded a vessel laden with grain for exportation. They had pelted the constables and city guards with stones, and committed other outrages, when a troop of the Scots Greys arrived, who killed four of the rioters, and took thirty prisoners.[13] At Wesley's coming, they were still in gaol; and he writes: "July 17.—At their earnest desire, I preached to the poor colliers confined in Newgate on account of the late riot. They would not hear the gospel while they were at liberty. God grant they may profit by it now!"

He spent three weeks in Cornwall; met the stewards; examined the societies; and told the Methodists of St. Ives, that they must cease smuggling, or he would not visit them again. Here he was seized with illness,—a flux, a continual headache, violent and frequent vomitings, and cramp in his feet and legs. By this he was made a prisoner for a week, when he recommenced preaching, and, on August 21, got back to Bristol.

Kingswood school, as usual, required attention. He writes: "Surely the importance of this design is apparent, even from the difficulties that attend it. I have spent more money, and time, and care, on this, than almost any design I ever had; and still it exercises all the patience I have. But it is worth all the labour."

On September 3, he "began visiting the little societies in Somersetshire and Wiltshire;" and, at Paulton, had an encounter with Stephen Plummer, a quondam Methodist, but now an insane Quaker. Wesley preached, and, as soon as he had done, Stephen began an outpouring. Wesley listened for half an hour; but, finding that his old acquaintance was no nearer the end of his discourse, he rose up to leave. Stephen's "sister then begged him to suspend his oration; on which he flew into a violent rage, and roared louder and louder, till an honest man took him in his arms, and gently removed him." Wesley adds: "What a wise providence was it, that this poor young man turned Quaker some years before he ran mad! So the honour of turning his brain now rests upon them, which otherwise must have fallen upon the Methodists."

Taking the Isle of Wight on his way, Wesley arrived in London, on October 9.

Almost for the first time, an estrangement now sprang up between Wesley and his brother. Their friendship, hitherto, had been of the most tender and confidential kind; but, for some reason, Charles began to be reserved, and, to some extent, restive. He was a married man, and had a happy home; and children were being born, whose claims were scarcely compatible with the domestic absences occasioned by his itinerant life. Added to this, Wesley's wife was perpetually brewing mischief. Towards Charles and his "dear Sally," she entertained and cherished feelings of strong aversion, which she was seldom backward to express. All this may help to explain the following extracts from two letters, from Wesley to his brother, and dated respectively October 20, and October 31.

> "I came back from Bedford last night. I know not whether it was your will or no (I believe not), but I am sure it was God's will for you, to call there. How do you judge whether a thing be God's will or no? I hope not by inward impressions. Let us walk warily. I have much constitutional enthusiasm; and you have much more. I give you a dilemma. Take one side or the other. Either act readily in connection with me, or never pretend it. Rather disclaim it; and openly avow you do and will not. By acting in connection with me, I mean, take counsel with me once or twice a year as to the places where you will labour. Hear my advice before you fix

whether you take it or no. At present you are so far from this, that I do not even know when and where you intend to go. So far are you from following any advice of mine; nay, even from asking it. And yet I may say, without vanity, that I am a better judge of this matter than either Lady Huntingdon, Sally, Jones, or any other: nay than your own heart, that is, will. You told William Briggs, that you never declined going to any place because my wife was there. I am glad of it. If so, I have hope we may sometime spend a little time together. Why do you omit giving the sacrament in Kingswood? What is reading prayers at Bristol, in comparison of this? I am sure, in making this vehement alteration, you never consulted me.

"My love to my sister. Adieu!"[14]

His brother was not the only one, among his friends, that gave Wesley trouble. Hence the following extracts from two other letters.

"You give five reasons why the Rev. Mr. P—— will come no more among us:—1. 'Because we despise the ministers of the Church of England.' This I flatly deny; I am answering letters this very post, which bitterly blame me for just the contrary. 2. 'Because so much backbiting is suffered amongst our people.' It is not *suffered:* all possible means are used, both to prevent and remove it. 3. 'Because I, who have written so much against hoarding up money, have put out £700 to

interest.' I never put sixpence out to interest since I was born; nor had I ever £100 together, my own, since I came into the world. 4. 'Because our lay preachers have told many stories of my brother and me.' If they did, I am sorry for them: when I hear the particulars, I can answer, and perhaps make those ashamed who believed them. 5. 'Because we did not help a friend in distress.' We did help him as far as we were able. You conclude with praying, that 'God would remove pride and malice from amongst us.' Of pride I have too much; of malice I have none: however, the prayer is good, and I thank you for it."

In the other letter, Wesley writes:—

"Some time since, I was considering what you said, concerning the want of a plan in our societies. There is a good deal of truth in this remark. Though we have a plan, as to our spiritual economy, it is certain, we have barely the first outlines of a plan with regard to our temporal concerns. The reason is, I had no design for several years, to concern myself with temporals at all; and when I began to do this, it was solely with a view to relieve, not to employ, the poor; except now and then, with respect to a small number; and even this I found was too great a burden for me, as requiring more money, more time, and more thought, than I could possibly spare. I say, than I could possibly spare; for the whole weight lay on me. If I left it to others, it surely came to nothing. They wanted either understanding, or

industry, or love, or patience, to bring anything to perfection.

"With regard to myself, you do well to warn me against 'popularity, a thirst of power, and of applause; against envy, producing a seeming contempt for the conveniences or grandeur of this life; against an affected humility; against sparing from myself to give to others, from no other motive than ostentation.' I am not conscious to myself, that this is my case. However, the warning is always friendly; and it is always seasonable, considering how deceitful my heart is, and how many the enemies that surround me."[15]

For months Wesley's health had been feeble and failing. On November 12, he preached at Leigh, in Essex, where he caught cold. On his return to London, two days after, he "had a settled pain in his left breast, a violent cough, and a slow fever." At this period, Dr. John Fothergill, a Quaker, and the son of Yorkshire Quakers, was the most popular of all the metropolitan physicians, and, soon afterwards, attained a practice the profits of which amounted to £7000 a year. Like many of his sect, he had a dash of extravagant eccentricity in his mental constitution; but his heart was benevolent and good. While at Edinburgh, he gave great offence by walking up the High Street, naked to the waist, denouncing God's vengeance on the inhabitants of *auld Reekie;* but, excepting occasional aberrations of this description, his habits were singularly temperate and discreet; and to him Methodism owes an incalculable debt, for, under God, he saved the life of

Methodism's founder in 1753. Wesley writes: "Dr. Fothergill told me plain, I must not stay in town a day longer; adding, 'If anything does thee good, it must be the country air, with rest, asses' milk, and riding daily.'"

Accordingly, Wesley was, at once, removed to the country house of his friend, Mr. Ebenezer Blackwell, at Lewisham, where he was kindly tended for the next five weeks. On the evening of his arrival, he wrote his epitaph. "Not knowing," he remarks, "how it might please God to dispose of me, to prevent vile panegyric, I wrote as follows."

Here lieth the Body
of
JOHN WESLEY,
A Brand plucked out of the burning;
Who died of a Consumption in the Fifty-first Year
of his Age,
not leaving, after his Debts are paid,
Ten Pounds behind him:
Praying,
God be merciful to me, an unprofitable Servant!

He ordered, that this, if any, inscription should be placed on his tombstone.

The news of Wesley's dangerous illness, caused deep and wide spread sympathy. Charles Wesley hurried up from Bristol, and though, he says, he found his brother considerably better, he was "still in imminent danger, being

far gone, and very suddenly, in a consumption." Charles fell on his neck and wept. Wesley requested his wife and his brother to forget their past differences, and to be reconciled to each other. They readily agreed to this; and, for a time, confidence seemed to be restored between Wesley and his brother, and friendship, or something like it, appeared to be created between Charles and Wesley's wife. Charles preached at the Foundery on the power of prayer, and declared it to be his opinion, that, if the life of his brother was prolonged, it would be in answer to the prayer of faith. Whitefield was penetrated with the profoundest sorrow. He was in the west of England at the time, and wrote as follows to his old and faithful friend.

"BRISTOL, *December* 3, 1753.

"REV. AND VERY DEAR SIR,—If seeing you so weak when leaving London distressed me, the news and prospect of your approaching dissolution have quite weighed me down. I pity myself and the church, but not you. A radiant throne awaits you, and ere long you will enter into your Master's joy. Yonder He stands with a massy crown, ready to put it on your head amidst an admiring throng of saints and angels; but I, poor I, that have been waiting for my dissolution these nineteen years, must be left behind. Well! this is my comfort, it cannot be long ere the chariots will be sent even for worthless me. If prayers can detain them, even you, reverend and very dear sir, shall not leave us yet: but if the decree is gone forth, that you must now fall asleep in Jesus, may He kiss your soul away, and give you to

die in the embraces of triumphant love! If in the land of the dying, I hope to pay my last respects to you next week. If not, reverend and very dear sir, F-a-r-e-w-e-l-l! *Prae sequar, etsi non passibus aequis.* My heart is too big; tears trickle clown too fast; and you, I fear, are too weak for me to enlarge. Underneath you may there be Christ's everlasting arms! I commend you to His never failing mercy, and am, reverend and very dear sir, your most affectionate, sympathising, and afflicted younger brother, in the gospel of our common Lord,

"G. WHITEFIELD."[16]

This is beautiful. Differences of opinion had not been few between Whitefield, and his now, as he thought, dying friend. Only a few months previous to this, Wesley, at the request of his conference, had written him a letter painfully faithful; but the two friends knew and loved each other far too well for the least leaven of unkindly feeling to find a lodgment in the heart of either. Whitefield's grief was on his own account and that of the church apparently about to be bereaved; on Wesley's account, he was full of joy, and wished to exchange places with him. On the same day as the above was written, he addressed another friend as follows:—"The physicians think Mr. John Wesley's disease is a galloping consumption. I pity the church, I pity myself, but not him. We must stay behind in this cold climate, whilst he takes his flight to a radiant throne, Lord, if it be Thy blessed will, let not Thy chariot wheels be long in coming. Even so, come Lord Jesus, come quickly! Poor Mr. Charles will now have double work."[17]

Leaving Wesley and his friends in the midst of this deep sorrow, we conclude the present chapter with the customary review of Wesley's publications, during the year 1753. Before proceeding to do this, however, there is one affair, which was arranged in 1753, in reference to Wesley's book concern, which must not be overlooked. In his Journal, on February 8, 1753, Wesley wrote:—"A proposal was made for devolving all temporal business, books and all, entirely on the stewards; so that I might have no care upon me (in London at least) but that of the souls committed to my charge. O when shall it once be! From this day? *In me mora non erit ulla."*

Wesley, apparently, was incredulous, and yet this proposal, to a great extent at least, was carried out. We have now before us a printed folio circular, with the autograph signatures of T. Butts and W. Briggs, which must have attention. The first four paragraphs contain nothing but Christian sentiment, and, for want of space, are here omitted. The rest of the circular is as follows.

"LONDON, FOUNDERY, *April* 20, 1753.

"To the Stewards at [*Manchester*].[18]

"BELOVED BRETHREN IN CHRIST,—Our minister, Mr. John Wesley, for good cause, and upon mature consideration, has entrusted the management of his books to the stewards of this society, and to us in particular whose names are hereunto subscribed. He has, by a proper power of attorney, invested in us the whole care of printing, publishing, and dispersing them; and has likewise given us full authority to receive all

their produce, and settle all accounts with booksellers or others, who are entrusted with the sale of them.

"Having undertaken this great concern, we are obliged, for our own security, and in order to prevent, if possible, all further inconveniences to our ministers, to use our utmost diligence, that, for the future, the book accounts in the country societies be kept with great exactness, and returns made with greater regularity than in times past. And, after seriously weighing various methods, we have come to this agreement,—to beg the stewards of each society, in the country, to take upon themselves the care of the book accounts; and we do hereby beseech you, dear brethren, for the love of Christ and His ministers, that you would be pleased to take upon yourselves the care of this article, and to observe the following regulations with the nicest punctuality:—

"1. Look upon yourselves, for the future, as the stewards of the *books,* as well as of the *other* temporal affairs of the society.

"2. Appoint one among yourselves, or see that a *proper* person be appointed, to take charge, and dispose, of the books under your direction.

"3. Be very careful, that he keeps an exact account of all things relating to the books; and that he keeps all the books in a clean, convenient place, and in good order.

"4. Let exact accounts be kept with all the country societies round about you, that have their books from your stock; and desire the stewards of those societies to take the care of those books they receive from you upon themselves, and to engage for punctual returns of money, or an account of the books unsold being safe in their hands.

"5. We here beg leave to intreat you, that the produce of the books, from the societies about you, may be brought into your hands, at least, *once a quarter,* and also, that you would send that, and the produce of your own stock, to us *once a quarter,* by a bill from some trader near you, who can draw on his correspondent here, or by some other safe method; and, with the money, we would beg of you to send up clear accounts of the state of your stock, at the time of your sending, that is, what books you have any call for, and what books you have not, or are wanting.

"6. Be pleased to note this well, that not one penny of the *book money* is, for the future, to be laid out in anything but with our knowledge and consent; and, that none of it, at any time or upon any occasion whatever, is to be given to the preachers, or any one else, but to *us only,* who have a power of attorney to receive it, and who are absolutely accountable for all the books we let go out of our hands.

"7. And that the above article may be observed without any exception or deviation, our ministers, the Mr. Wesleys, have agreed with us, that all the produce of the books shall come into our hands, and be sent to us *quarterly;* and that they themselves will, upon no account whatever, take up any of the book money in any of the country societies throughout England: and, accordingly, you are to observe, that we most earnestly desire, that you would do your utmost, that this agreement be exactly fulfilled.

"8. And we, moreover, seriously wish, that you would so take upon yourselves the management of the books, as to look upon yourselves as debtors to the book accounts; for, as we cannot carry on so large a concern without good security for punctual returns *every quarter,* so having your word for the security of such payments, we should cheerfully hope, for the future, by the blessing of God, that no confusion or irregularities would fall out in the progress of our undertaking.

"9. Having taken upon ourselves to manage this great concern, we find it impossible to do it effectually, unless you act heartily and zealously in connection with us; and, for this reason it is, that we have proposed the foregoing regulations, and do seriously hope, that you will comply with them in every point.

"10. We beg that you would, by one of your members, keep up a frequent correspondence with us,

and send your orders for books to *us only* (directing for *Mr. Briggs, in Hoxton Square, London*); at the same time giving us clear directions how, and to whom, we should direct, that letters or parcels may the most speedily reach you.

"Thus, dear brethren, we have, with the utmost freedom, delivered our sentiments to you on this important article, to which we desire your speedy answer, stating how far you can comply with the foregoing regulations, and how far not. And we further beg of you to send us what money you have in hand, with all speed, having printers and bookbinders to pay to a considerable amount. We beg also, that you would send us as exact an account as possible (from the time of your last settling accounts with Mr. Butts) of what cash you have received for books, how much of it you have sent to London, or paid elsewhere; and also, a general account of your stock, and an exact account of your wants to Ladyday last.

"These things being undertaken by you, as the labour of love, and for the benefit of our ministers (*we* ourselves having *no* profit from it, but the profits that will meet us in eternity), we are persuaded great good will follow; and, all things being done orderly and without confusion, our societies, we trust, will continue the great blessings of God. upon our nation.

"Commending you and ourselves to the grace and influence of the Spirit of Christ Jesus our Head, we subscribe ourselves, in truth, dear brethren, your most affectionate brethren, and hearty well wishers in the Lord,

T. BUTTS,
W. BRIGGS."

Such was the first circular of Wesley's first book stewards. Our information concerning Mr. Butts is scanty; but he wasas honest as honesty itself; and, in that respect, was admirably fitted for his office. At an early period, he was the travelling companion of the two Wesleys; and in 1744 was employed by Charles Wesley to carry, to Wednesbury, the sum of £60, which had been collected for the relief of the persecuted Methodists in that town and neighbourhood.[19] Our best glimpse of him, however, is in a letter which he addressed to Wesley, in 1750, on "the duty of all to pay their debts." He writes:—

"One of the greatest evils, in the society, is the disregard of some persons to pay their just debts. I would not take upon me to say, that Christianity requires persons enthralled in debt to live upon bread and water; but can honest persons indulge themselves in strong beer and tea, when small beer and water gruel are much cheaper, and full as wholesome? Or, can they justly deck themselves in any other than the very coarsest apparel? Not long ago, I sent to a man for some money he has owed these three or four years; he sent me

for answer—'that as cambrics were now forbidden, he wanted his money to buy muslin for his wife's caps; and therefore could not pay me.' I called upon a widow for a debt that had been owing long; she sent me word, 'she had nothing to do with her husband's debts'; and yet, some time after, I saw this member of our society dressed in the attire of a lady, in her silk gown and capuchin, her hair flowing down her neck, and her ruffles dangling to her knees. You have justly discouraged the society from going to law with each other; but, unless you, at the same time, take great care that dishonest members be expelled thence, the society will be a sanctuary for them."[20]

No wonder that Wesley chose such a man for his book steward.

William Briggs, for a time, was one of Wesley's preachers, or, at least, one whom he employed in visiting his societies,[21] and was present at the conference of 1748. On January 28, 1749, he was married, by Charles Wesley,[22] to Miss Perronet, daughter of the vicar of Shoreham.[23] Mr. Briggs, like Mr. Butts, was a man of uncompromising integrity; and who, while loving, honouring, and reverencing Wesley in a high degree, had honesty enough to tell him of what he conceived to be his faults. In a letter, written about the same time as Thomas Butts', after eulogizing Wesley for his many excellencies, he continues—

"But I think your experience is buried in your extensive knowledge. I think you feel not, abidingly, a deep sense of your own spiritual weakness, the nearness of Christ to save, nor a sweet communion with God by the Holy Ghost. You have the appearance of all Christian graces, but they do not, I think, spring from a deep experience. A good nature, with great abilities, will mimic grace; but grace is more than outward; it brings the soul to a deep union with God, and its fellow Christians; but there is a want of sympathy in your discourses and conversation;" etc.[24]

This was bold language to employ, and was unauthorised by facts; but it was the language of an honest, though mistaken, friend; and, three years afterwards, that friend was one of Wesley's book stewards.

The only tract of any consequence, published against the Methodists, in 1753, was "A serious Address to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, in relation to the principal doctrine advanced and maintained by him and his assistants. By John Parkhurst, M.A." 8vo, 31 pages. The doctrine referred to was the witness of the Spirit. The writer was the celebrated author of the well known Hebrew and Greek lexicons which bear his name. Parkhurst was a Rugby scholar, a fellow of Cambridge university, and the possessor of large estates. His "serious address" to Wesley, written in the twenty-fifth year of his age, was his first publication. He professes to examine the texts adduced by Wesley in support of the doctrine of the Spirit's

witness, and, in a friendly spirit, endeavours to refute Wesley's interpretation of them.

Perhaps we ought to mention another pamphlet, upon whose friendliness, or hostility, it would be difficult to pronounce an opinion. Its title was, "The Principles and Preaching of the Methodists considered. In a letter to the Rev. Mr.——." 8vo, 44 pages. In one page the author abuses the Methodists; in another he praises them. He tells his readers, that the masses, among whom the Methodists were labouring, were "honest souls, happily destitute of a taste for those modern embellishments, which enervate the word of God, and render it of no effect. In the simplicity of their hearts, they wanted no kickshaws to recommend a gospel entertainment; and found nourishment from the sincere milk of the word without its being converted into whipped syllabub."

Wesley's publications, in 1753, were the following.

1. Fourteen volumes of the "Christian Library," namely, Vol. XX. to Vol. XXXIII. inclusive, and making altogether more than four thousand and three hundred printed 12mo pages. This was no trifle to be undertaken and accomplished by a clergyman without money, and who was always traveling; but Wesley did more than this. Hence the additional publications belonging to this period, one of which had an enormous circulation, and was of great service to the Methodists, in their public and private meetings.

2. "Hymns and Spiritual Songs, intended for the use of real Christians of all Denominations." 12mo, 124 pages. For many years, this was *the* hymn-book of the Methodist meeting-houses. In thirty-three years, twenty-four editions were issued. The first edition, now before us, has no author's name, but that the work was Wesley's there can be no mistake. Besides the evidence arising from its being "printed by William Strahan; and sold at the Foundery in Upper Moorfields, and in the Horsefair, Bristol," we have Wesley's own statement, made in 1779, that he himself made the compilation "several years ago from a variety of hymn-books."[25] The hymns are eighty-four in number, but some are divided into as many as half-a-dozen parts. The first is the well known paraphrase on Isaiah lv., beginning with the line—

"Ho! every one that thirsts, draw nigh."

The last is a long hymn of twenty-six stanzas of eight lines each, entitled "The Communion of Saints," and beginning—

"Father, Son, and Spirit hear
Faith's effectual fervent prayer;
Hear, and our petitions seal,
Let us now the answer feel."

3. "An Extract of the Reverend Mr. John Wesley's Journal, from October 27, 1743, to November 17, 1746." 12mo, 160 pages.

4. "The Complete English Dictionary, explaining most of those hard words which are found in the best English writers. By a Lover of Good English and Common Sense. N.B.—The Author assures you he thinks this is the best English dictionary in the world." Such is Wesley's title page. The book is 12mo, and consists of 144 pages. The preface is in perfect keeping with the title page.

> "As incredible as it may appear, I must avow, that this dictionary is not published to get money, but to assist persons of common sense and no learning, to understand the best English authors; and that, with as little expense of either time or money, as the nature of the thing would allow. To this end, it contains, not a heap of Greek and Latin words, just tagged with English terminations (for no good English writers, none but vain or senseless pedants, give these any place in their writings); not a scroll of barbarous law expressions, which are neither Greek, Latin, nor good English; not a crowd of technical terms, the meaning whereof is to be sought in books expressly wrote on the subjects to which they belong; not such English words as *and, of, but,* which stand so gravely in Mr. Bailey's, Pardon's, and Martin's dictionaries; but 'most of those hard words which are found in the best English writers.'"

To rightly appreciate this curious publication, it must be borne in mind, that Wesley was now putting into the hands of thousands of the common people extracts from "the best English writers," in the numerous volumes of his "Christian

Library." Hence the necessity he felt of giving to the same readers a compendious dictionary explaining words in that Library, which many, at least, were not likely to understand.

In reference to his egotistic title page, Wesley waggishly continues—

> "I have often observed, the only way, according to the modern taste, for any author to procure commendation to his book, is vehemently to commend it himself. For want of this deference to the public, several excellent tracts, lately printed, but left to commend themselves by their intrinsic worth, are utterly unknown or forgotten. Whereas, if a writer of tolerable sense will but bestow a few violent encomiums on his own work, especially if they are skilfully arranged in the title page, it will pass through six editions in a trice; the world being too complaisant to give the gentleman the lie, and taking it for granted, he understands his own performance best. In compliance, therefore, with the taste of the age, I add, that this little dictionary is not only the shortest and the cheapest, but likewise, by many degrees, the most correct which is extant at this day. Many are the mistakes in all the other English dictionaries which I have yet seen. Whereas, I can truly say, I know of none in this; and I conceive the reader will believe me; for if I had, I should not have left it there. Use then this help, till you find a better."

This is hardly egotism, so much as satire; or, perhaps, both united. Be that as it may, there can be no question, that Wesley's little, though pretentious, dictionary was calculated to be of great service in assisting the poor, unlettered Methodists in understanding even the hardest words in his "Christian Library."

Wesley was a lover of plainness—plain food, plain clothing, plain truth, and plain language. "What is it," he wrote in 1764, "that constitutes a good style? Perspicuity, purity, propriety, strength, and easiness joined together. When any one of these is wanting, it is not a good style. As for me, I never think of my style at all; but just set down the words that come first. Only when I transcribe anything for the press, then I think it my duty to see every phrase be clear, pure, and proper. Conciseness, which is now, as it were, natural to me, brings *quantum sufficit* of strength. If, after all, I observe any stiff expression, I throw it out, neck and shoulders. Clearness, in particular, is necessary for you and me; because we are to instruct people of the lowest understanding. We should constantly use the most common, little, easy words (so they are pure and proper) which our language affords. When I had been a member of the university about ten years, I wrote and talked much as you do now. But when I talked to plain people in the castle, or the town, I observed they gaped and stared. This quickly obliged me to alter my style, and adopt the language of those I spoke to. And yet there is a dignity in this simplicity, which is not disagreeable to those of the highest rank."[26]

Holding such views, no wonder that Wesley compiled a dictionary to explain "the hard words in the English writers."

ENDNOTES

[1] "Life and Times of Howel Harris." p. 203.
[2] James Hutton's Memoirs.
[3] Whitefield's Works, vol. iv., p. 253.
[4] Ibid. vol. iii., p. 14.
[5] *Methodist Recorder,* Sept. 22, 1865.
[6] Whitefield's Works, vol. iii., p. 35.
[7] Whitehead's Life of Wesley, vol. ii., p. 273.
[8] *Methodist Magazine,* 1797, p. 512.
[9] Whitefield's Works, vol. iii., p. 7.
[10] Minutes (edit. 1862), p. 717.
[11] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 168.
[12] Ibid. vol. xiii., p. 318.
[13] *London Magazine,* 1753.
[14] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., pp. 107, 108.
[15] Whitehead's Life of Wesley, vol. ii., p. 276.
[16] *Methodist Magazine,* 1779, p. 318.
[17] Whitefield's Works, vol. iii., p. 43.
[18] The word "Manchester" is written, not printed.
[19] C. Wesley's Journal, vol. i., p. 364.
[20] *Methodist Magazine,* 1779, p. 259.
[21] Ibid. 1778, p. 232.
[22] C. Wesley's Journal, vol. ii., p. 51.
[23] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, for 1749, p. 44, contains the following announcement: "1749, January 28.—Marriage of William Briggs, Esq., of the Custom House, Secretary to Messrs. Wesley, to Miss Perronet, of Shoreham, Kent. £5,000."
[24] Whitehead's Life of Wesley, vol. ii., p. 261.

[25] See preface to Methodist Hymn-Book.
[26] Wesley's Works, vol. xiii., p. 394.

1754.

WESLEY began the year 1754, as an invalid, at the Hotwells, Bristol. On the first Sunday of the year, he commenced writing his "Notes on the New Testament,"—"a work," says he, "which I should scarce ever have attempted, had I not been so ill as not to be able to travel or preach, and yet so well as to be able to read and write." With the exception of the time prescribed for his taking exercise on horseback, two hours for meals, and one for private prayer, he spent sixteen hours a day on this,—the greatest work which he had yet attempted. For a few days, his brother assisted him in comparing the translation of the evangelists with the original, and in reading Dr. Heylyn's Lectures, and Dr. Doddridge's Expositor. In ten weeks, his *rough draft* of the translation, and the notes on the four gospels, was completed.

He now returned to London, and, retiring to the village of Paddington, he spent nearly the whole of the next three months in writing, with the exception of coming to town on Saturday evenings for the purpose of taking part in Sunday services.

Thus half of the year 1754 was spent in needed retirement, and in comparative silence. After an intermission of four months, Wesley preached, for the first time, at Bristol, on March 26. On Easter Sunday, he preached a sermon in West Street chapel, Seven Dials, which was the means of the conversion of Alexander Mather, who then, for the first time, saw and heard him, but afterwards became one of his chief

counsellors.[1] A month later, he preached to a densely crowded congregation, in what had been Sadlers Wells theatre; and, with less or more frequency, in other places in the metropolis until Whit Sunday, when he once more took the evening service at the Foundery; but writes, "I have not recovered my whole voice or strength; perhaps I never may; but let me use what I have."

In this way were spent his convalescent months of enforced retirement. Wesley found it impossible to live a life of inactivity.

Whitefield was off to America, having embarked in the month of March. Where Charles Wesley was employed we have no means of knowing. Of Wesley himself a few glimpses will be obtained in the following extracts from letters written during his seclusion.

Three days after his arrival at Bristol Hotwells, he wrote as follows to his friend Blackwell.

"BRISTOL, *January* 5, 1754.

"DEAR SIR,—If I write to my best friends first, I must not delay writing to you, who have been the greatest instruments, in God's hands, of my recovery thus far. The journey hither did not weary me at all; but I now find the want of Lewisham air. We are (quite contrary to my judgment, but our friends here would have it so) in a cold, bleak place, and in a very cold house. If the Hotwell water make amends for this, it is well. Nor

have I any place to ride, but either by the river side, or over the downs, where the wind is ready to carry me away. However, one thing we know,—that whatsoever is, is best. My wife joins me in tender love both to Mrs. Blackwell, Mrs. Dewall, and yourself."[2]

A fortnight after this, Whitefield addressed his old friend thus.

"LONDON, *January* 19, 1754.

"DEAR MR. WESLEY—"As my embarking for America seems to be very near at hand, your question must necessarily be answered in the negative. However, I thank you for your kind offer, and earnestly pray, that, wherever you are called to labour, you may find the work of the Lord prospering in your hands. I did not know, that there was any demur between you and those with whom you have been for some time connected; and I am sure, God is my witness, that I want to draw no man from them. People, money, power, are not my objects. We have blessed seasons here; the glory of the Lord fills our new Tabernacle. I hope you find your present illness sanctified. That is a sign of special love. Adieu, I am in great haste. But with greater love, I subscribe myself, dear Mr. Wesley, yours most affectionately in our common Lord,

"GEORGE WHITEFIELD."[3]

For four years past, Henry Venn had been curate of St. Matthew's church, in Friday Street, London. Twelve years

before, he had entered St. John's College, Cambridge, where he was reckoned one of the best cricket players in the university. His last game was in 1747, in a match between Surrey and All England, and was played a week before his ordination. As soon as it was over, he announced his intention not to play again. His friends asked him why. He answered, "Because I am to be ordained on Sunday; and I will never have it said of me, 'Well struck, parson!'" He now began to read Law's "Serious Call"; kept frequent fasts; and abandoned his gay companions.[4] In 1754, he wrote the following to Wesley.

"LONDON, *March* 21, 1754.

"DEAR SIR,—As I have often experienced your words to be as thunder to my drowsy soul, I presume, though a stranger, to become a petitioner, begging you would send me a personal charge, to take heed to feed the flock committed unto me. If you consider the various snares to which a curate is exposed—either to palliate the doctrines of the gospel, or to make treacherous allowances to the rich and great, or, at least, to sit down satisfied with doing the least, more than the best, among the idle shepherds,—you will not, I hope, condemn this letter, as impertinently interrupting you in your noble employment, or think one hour lost in complying with its request. It is the request of one, who though he differs from you, and possibly ever may in some points, yet must ever acknowledge the benefit and light he has received from your works and preaching; and, therefore, is bound to thank the Lord of the harvest,

for sending a labourer among us, so much endued with the spirit and power of Elias; and to pray for your long continuance among us, to encourage me and my brethren, by your example, while you edify us by your writings.

I am, sir, your feeble brother in Christ,

"HENRY VENN."[5]

One of Venn's acquaintance, at Cambridge, was Mr. Samuel Furley. He it was who recommended Venn to read Law's "Serious Call," which led to his adopting a new mode of life. Furley was still at college, and was only twenty-two years of age. Like Venn, he also wrote to Wesley for advice, and received the following answer.

"BRISTOL, *March* 30, 1754.

"DEAR SIR,—I received your letter, and rejoiced to find, that you are still determined to save yourself, by the grace of God, from this perverse generation. But this cannot possibly be done at Cambridge (I speak from long experience), unless you can make and keep one resolution, to have no acquaintance but such as fear God. I know it may be some time before you will find any that truly bear this character. If so, it is best to be alone till you do, and to converse only with your absent friends by letter. But if you are carried away with the stream into frequent conversation with harmless, good natured, honest triflers, they will soon steal away all your strength, and stifle all the grace of God in your soul.

"With regard to your studies, I know no better method you could pursue, than to take the printed rules of Kingswood school, and to read all the authors therein mentioned, in the same order as they occur there. The authors set down for those in the school, you would probably read in about a twelvemonth; and those afterwards named, in a year or two more: and it will not be lost labour. I suppose you to rise not later than five; to allow an hour in the morning and another in the evening for private exercises; an hour before dinner, and one in the afternoon for walking; and to go to bed between nine and ten. I commend you to Him who is able to carry you through all dangers, and am, dear sir, your affectionate brother and servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."[6]

In the fourth week of the month of May, Wesley held his annual conference. He writes: "The spirit of peace and love was in the midst of us. Before we parted, we all willingly signed an agreement, not to act independently of each other; so that the breach lately made has only united us more closely together than ever."

The breach, here referred to, was the withdrawal from the itinerant work of Samuel Larwood (whom Wesley buried two years afterwards), Charles Skelton, John Whitford, and one or two others, who had become dissatisfied with the itinerant plan, and with their position as mere evangelists. Wesley hoped that the evil was ended; but it was spread more widely than he imagined, as will be seen hereafter.

The appointments of the conference week will throw some light on the state of Methodism in London, in 1754; and it may gratify the curious reader to see a copy of the plan for the week beginning May 20, and to learn how often, and in what places, public services were held. The following is a literatim copy from Wesley's manuscript, with the exception of the figures for the appended notes.

	The F.[1]	Sp.[2]	Sn.[3]	Wap.[4]	Wells.[5]	Chap.[6]	Westmr.[7]
[8]M. M.	Jo. Fen.[9]				R. Swin.[10]	Jo. Jon.[11]	Ja. Deav.[12]
E.			Ja. Jo.[13]	Ja. De.[12]	C. Hor.[14]	{ Jo. Edw[15] / { Jo. Jon.[11]	
Tu. M.	Jo. Ed.[15]						
E.	C. W.[16]	{ Deptf. / { C. P.[17]					Jo. Jon.[11]
W.	R. Sw.[10]					C. W.[16]	
E.		C. Hr.[14]			Jo. Ha.[18]	W. Rob.[19]	
Th.	C. Hr.[14]						{ C. H. or / { W. Ro.[20]
E.	Jos. Co.[21]		Jo. Jo.[11]				
Fr.	T. Mitc.[22]					C. W.[16]	
E.		Jo. Jo.[11]					
S.	Jo. Jones						
E.		{ Deptf. / { T. Mi.[23]	J. W.[24]				
Su. M.	Jo. Jo.[11]		T. Wa.[25]		J. Row.[26]		
E.	C. W.[16]		T. Mi.[22]	W. Rob.[19]	R. Swin.[10]	Jo. Jon.[11]	Ja. Row.[26]

NOTES:—[1] Foundery. [2] Spitalfields. [3] Snowsfields. [4] Wapping. [5] Sadler's Wells. [6] The chapel in West Street, Seven Dials. [7] Westminster. [8] Days of week. [9] John Fenwick. [10] Robert Swindells. [11] Joseph or John Jones. [12] James Deaves. [13] Perhaps James Jones. [14] Christopher Hopper. [15] John Edwards. [16] Charles Wesley. [17] Deptford, Charles Perronet. [18] John Haime, or John Haughton, or John Hampson. [19] William Roberts. [20] Christopher Hopper, or William Roberts. [21] Joseph Cownley. [22] Thomas Mitchel. [23]

Deptford, Thomas Mitchel. [24] John Wesley. [25] Thomas Walsh. [26] Jacob Rowell. (See *Methodist Magazine,* 1855, p. 224.)

We thus find seven preaching places in London, of which Sadler's Wells theatre was one; sixteen preachers were employed, and thirty-seven sermons preached during the week the conference held its sittings.

The writer cannot refrain from giving another Methodist curiosity belonging to 1754. In his nearly complete set of society tickets, many are remarkable; but one, issued in the present year, is without a fellow. The ticket was given, by John Hampson, senior, to Otiwell Higginbotham, a man of considerable property, who lived at Marple, near Stockport, and, evidently, was intended to serve, not for one quarter merely, but for four. With the exception of a single line being substituted for a plainly ornamented border, the following is a copy:—

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit down with Me on My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne."
March 25, 1754. *Otwll Higginbottom. J. H.*
June 25.
September 29.
December 25.

On the 8th of July, Wesley, though still in enfeebled health, set out, for the first time, to Norwich, accompanied by his brother, by Charles Perronet, and by Robert Windsor. The whole city was in an uproar respecting the infamous conduct of James Wheatley. The mayor was employed in taking the affidavits of the women whom Wheatley had endeavoured to corrupt. The people were so scandalized and exasperated, that they were ready to rise, and tear the poor wretch to pieces. For four days, the Wesley brothers remained, in retirement, at the residence of Captain Gallatin, transcribing the "Notes on the New Testament." On the 14th, Charles ventured to preach in the open street, and the congregation was "tolerably quiet, all things considered." Five days later, his brother returned to London—being so seriously unwell as to necessitate his again taking the advice of Dr. Fothergill. Charles continued at Norwich some weeks longer. His congregations became large; and, on one occasion, he had three magistrates and nine clergymen among his auditors. He received the sacrament from the hands of the bishop; and took a lease for seven years, of a large old brewhouse, to serve as a place for preaching. A little society of eighteen members was instituted. Wheatley's people were furious and abusive. The city swarmed with papists, antinomians, and Socinians. The opposition was fierce, and, in some instances, brutal; but Charles Wesley was thoroughly aroused; became as courageous as ever; and preached with amazing power, and with great success. Methodism was now fairly started in the city of Norwich.

On his return to London, Wesley was ordered, by Dr. Fothergill, to repair to the Hotwells, at Bristol, without delay.

He did so; but such was his restless activity, that, within three weeks, he started on a preaching tour to Taunton, Tiverton, and other places. On September 5, he held the quarterly meeting of the Cornish stewards at Launceston. At Plymouth, he preached in the new chapel, recently erected, but which, though three or four times the size of the old one, was not large enough to contain the congregation. On September 10, he got back to Bristol, "at least as well as when" he left it. In eight days, he had preached eight times, besides travelling, visiting, and meeting his societies.

He now spent three weeks more at Bristol, during which he opened the first Methodist chapel at Trowbridge, a chapel built by Lawrence Oliphant, who, while a soldier, had been converted under the preaching of John Haime, in Flanders. Wesley writes: "September 17.—I rode to Trowbridge, where one who found peace with God while he was a soldier in Flanders, and has been much prospered in business since his discharge, has built a preaching house at his own expense. He had a great desire that I should be the first who preached in it; but, before I had finished the hymn, it was so crowded, and consequently so hot, that I was obliged to go out and stand at the door; there was a multitude of hearers, rich and poor."

About the time that Wesley preached at the opening of Trowbridge chapel, Samuel Bowden, M.D., bespattered the Wiltshire Methodists by the publication of a satirical poem, entitled "The Mechanic Inspired; or, the Methodist's Welcome to Frome," dedicated to Lord Viscount Dungarvan. A few of

the first lines of this scurrilous production will suffice as a specimen of all the rest:

"Ye vagabond Levites, who ramble about,
To gull with your priestcraft an ignorant rout,
Awhile your nonsensical canting suspend,
And now to my honester ballad attend.

The dupes of sly, Romish, itinerant liars,
The spawn of French Prophets, and mendicant friars;
Ye pious enthusiasts! who riot, and rob,
With holy grimace, and sanctified sob."[7]

Such were some of the choice epithets heaped upon Wesley and his helpers by this refined and accomplished son of Æsculapius.

On September 27, Wesley thought he "had strength enough to keep a watchnight, which he had not done before for eleven months;" but, at eleven o'clock, he almost lost his voice; and, the next evening, at Weavers' Hall, Bristol, it entirely failed. He now set out for London, halting at Salisbury on the way. While here, he walked to Old Sarum, "which," says he, "in spite of common sense, without house or inhabitants, still sends two members to the parliament."

On October 4, he arrived in London, where he seems to have continued during the remainder of the year. It was a year of great feebleness and affliction; but Wesley, though an invalid, crowded into it as much work as would have been

done by any ordinary man in the best of health. What were the works he published?

1. "An Extract of the Rev. John Wesley's Journal, from November 25, 1746, to July 20, 1749." 12mo, 139 pages.

2. "An Answer to all which the Rev. Dr. Gill has printed on the Final Perseverance of the Saints." 12mo, 12 pages.

This is a poem of thirty-seven stanzas of eight lines each, many of which are scorchingly sarcastic. The tract is now extremely scarce, and hence we give the following lengthened quotations. The devil, addressing the elect, is made to say—

"God is unchangeable,
And therefore so are you,
And therefore they can never fail,
Who once His goodness knew.

In part perhaps you may,
You cannot wholly fall,
Cannot become a castaway,
Like non-elected Paul.

Though you continue not,
Yet God remains the same,
Out of His book he cannot blot
Your everlasting name.

. . . . . .

God's threatenings all are vain,
You fancy them sincere;
But spare yourself the needless pain,
And cast away your fear.

He speaks with this intent,
To frighten you from ill,
With sufferings which He only meant
The reprobate to feel.

He only cautions all
Who never came to God,
Not to depart from God, or fall
From grace, who never stood.

'Gainst those that faithless prove,
He shuts His mercy's door,
And whom He never once did love
Threatens to love no more.

For them He doth revoke
The grace they did not share,
And blot the names out of His book
That ne'er were written there.

. . . . . .

Cast all your fears away,
My son, be of good cheer,
Nor mind what Paul and Peter say,
For you *must* persevere.

And did they fright the child,
And tell it it might fall?
Might be of its reward beguiled,
And sin and forfeit all?

. . . . . .

What naughty men be they,
To take the children's bread,
Their carnal confidence to slay,
And force them to take heed!

Ah, poor misguided soul!
And did they make it weep?
Come, let me in my bosom lull
Thy sorrows all to sleep.

They shall not vex it so,
By bidding it take heed;
You need not as a bulrush go,
Still bowing down your head.

Your griefs and fears reject,
My *other* gospel own,
Only believe yourself Elect,
And all the work is done."

The above will give the reader an idea of this rare and curious tract.

3. During the year 1754, Wesley also published eight additional volumes of his "Christian Library," from Vol. XXXIV. to Vol. XLI. inclusive, and containing invaluable extracts from the works of Dr. Goodman, Archbishop Leighton, Dr. Isaac Barrow, Dr. Samuel Annesley, Dr. Henry More, Dr. Stephen Charnock, Dr. Edmund Calamy, Dr. Richard Lucas, Bishop Reynolds, Richard Baxter, Madame Bourignon, and others.

ENDNOTES

[1] *Methodist Magazine,* 1800, p. 545.
[2] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 169.
[3] Whitefield's Works, vol. iii., p. 61.
[4] Life of Rev. H. Venn.
[5] *Methodist Magazine,* 1797, p. 569.
[6] *Christian Miscellany,* 1849, p. 115.
[7] "Methodism in Frome," p. 11.

1755.

AT the commencement of 1755, Wesley complied with the wish of his old friend, the Rev. James Hervey, and began a revision of Hervey's greatest work, which, soon after, was published, in three octavo volumes, with the title "Theron and Aspasio; or, a Series of Dialogues and Letters upon the most important and interesting subjects." Wesley's revision, however, was not to Hervey's taste. The manuscript of the first three dialogues (which make 129 printed pages) was sent, and was returned "with a few inconsiderable corrections." Hervey was not satisfied with this, and told Wesley, that he was not acting the part of a friend unless he took greater liberties in literary lopping. On Wesley promising that he would, the manuscript was a second time submitted for the purpose of being pruned. Wesley's alterations were now of a more important character; and Hervey was as much dissatisfied with the excessive as he had been with the insufficient parings. Wesley's work was ended. He was not again consulted. He had revised only 129 pages out of more than 1300; but even that was more than he got thanks for doing.[1] Hence the following, which Hervey addressed to Lady Frances Shirley, to whom the book was dedicated.

"WISTON, *January* 9, 1755.

". . . Mr. John Wesley takes me very roundly to task, on the score of predestination; at which I am much surprised. A reader, ten times less penetrating than he is, may easily see that this doctrine (be it true or false) makes no part of my scheme; never comes under

consideration; is purposely and carefully avoided. I cannot but fear, he has some sinister design. Put the wolf's skin on the sheep, and the flock will shun him; the dogs will worry him. I do not charge such an artifice, but sometimes I cannot help forming a suspicion. If I live to do myself the honour of writing again to your ladyship, I hope you will give me leave to relate the whole affair, as it stands between Mr. Wesley and myself."[2]

On the 1st of April, Wesley set out, from Bristol, on a three months' journey to the north of England. Birmingham is described as "a barren, dry, uncomfortable place. Most of the seed," he writes, "which has been sown for so many years, the 'wild boars' have rooted up; the fierce, unclean, brutish, blasphemous antinomians have utterly destroyed it. And the mystic foxes have taken true pains to spoil what remained, with their new gospel."

At Ashbourne, in Derbyshire, he formed a society of eighteen persons, one of whom was "Miss Beresford,—a sweet, but short lived flower," who, two years afterwards, exchanged earth for heaven.

At Hayfield, Wesley was the guest of the Rev. William Baddiley,—a sort of second Grimshaw,—a clergyman, who had formed a number of *irregular* societies, and who had committed the audacious act of employing laymen to assist him.[3] A few hours before Wesley's arrival, Mr. Baddiley's favourite daughter died, and it was Wesley's task to bury her,

and to preach to such a congregation as could scarcely have been expected in the Peak of Derbyshire. In the course of his sermon, Wesley had occasion to refer to the text in Ecclesiastes, stating that there is "a time to dance," and observed, "I know of no such time, except it be a time analogous to that in which David danced before the ark." "Be careful," he added, "that you don't dance yourselves into hell." This gave great offence to some of his auditors, who had dancing proclivities; and, as if to defy the itinerant parson, a dancing master was immediately engaged, and a school opened for teaching Mr. Baddiley's parishioners the art of gracefully tripping, on light fantastic toe, the downward path to the place of horrors with which Wesley had dared to threaten them. The dancing was in an alehouse. The alehousekeeper had an only child, whom the fiddling and the dancing exceedingly distressed. The child cried, and said, "I'll not stay here: I'll go home." He ran into the fields, and, being asked by some one whither he was going, answered, "Home." At the next dancing party, he was put for safety into a back kitchen, but escaped, and, when discovered, was found dead in a neighbouring river.[4]

From Hayfield, Wesley proceeded to Manchester, where he wrote as follows to his friend Blackwell.

"MANCHESTER, *April* 9, 1755.

"DEAR SIR,—I have another favour to beg of you,—to procure Mr. Belchier's leave for me to enclose my proof sheets to him. Mr. Perronet sends them down to me in franks; then I correct and send them back to

him. The next week I am to spend at Liverpool; toward the end of the week following, I hope to be at Haworth. God has blessed me with a prosperous journey hither, though the roads and the weather were rough."[5]

There can be no question, that the above relates to the *proof sheets* of his "Notes on the New Testament,"—sheets now in the possession of Mr. Bate, of Sittingbourne, and which have been kindly lent to the present writer.

On the 15th of April, Wesley paid his first visit to the town of Liverpool, where he spent the next five days. "It is," says he, "one of the neatest, best built towns I have seen in England: I think it is full twice as large as Chester; most of the streets are quite straight. Two thirds of the town, we were informed, have been added within these forty years. If it continue to increase, in the same proportion, in forty years more, it will nearly equal Bristol. The people in general are the most mild and courteous I ever saw in a seaport town; as, indeed, appears by their friendly behaviour, not only to the Jews and papists who live among them, but even to the Methodists. The preaching house is a little larger than that at Newcastle." He adds: "every morning, as well as evening, abundance of people gladly attended the preaching. Many of them, I learned, were dear lovers of controversy; but I had better work—I pressed upon them all 'repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.'"

Wesley's description of a town, now, in point of size, the second city in the kingdom, is not without interest. We have

before us a map of Liverpool, published in 1754, which represents the town as merely skirting the Mersey; while Everton and other places, now engulfed in the vast Liverpool population, are represented as somewhat distant villages, surrounded with fields and woods. At that period, there were only three churches—St. Nicholas's, St. Peter's, and St. George's; and two of these had been built within the last half century.

The first Methodist preaching place in Liverpool was a small, dingy, and inconvenient room in Cable Street. A society being formed, a piece of ground was purchased for the erection of a chapel,—the same as the site of the present Pitt Street chapel, and here was built the meeting-house, which Wesley describes as being a little larger than the Orphan House at Newcastle. The neighbourhood was unoccupied and dirty. At the front of the chapel was a large pool of water, through which the Methodists had to pass by the help of stepping stones.[6] Nearly forty years after the time of Wesley's first visit, the chapel was flanked by a large brickfield; and Adam Clarke, who was then the resident preacher, describes his house as being "neither in hell nor purgatory, yet in a place of torment." "But where is it?" asked his friend. "You must go," answered the warm-hearted Hibernian, "down Dale Street, then along East Street, and when you are up to the middle in clay and mud, call out lustily for Adam Clarke."[7]

One of the first worshippers in the first Pitt Street chapel was a diminutive tailor, whose Christian name was Timothy, and who had a spouse as great corporeally as he was little.

Timothy's wife helped to maintain his family by washing, but this was the only sense in which she was a helpmeet to him. She hated the Methodists, and did her utmost to make the life of poor Tim a scene of purgatorial misery. The little tailor, however, continued faithful; and one night, when he had gone to chapel, his persecuting queen engaged the services of a number of ragged boys to assist her in driving a herd of pigs into the Pitt Street meeting-house for the purpose of disturbing its congregation. Again and again the pigs were got to the chapel door, but as often they revolted, to the termagant's great vexation. Finding her toil fruitless, and seeing a seat, at the entrance of the chapel, vacant, she seated herself, and, for the first time, listened to the ministry of truth. She was convinced of sin, and went home in deep distress. On poor Tim's arrival, he was much surprised to see his wife in tears, and asked the reason of such a phenomenon. She related what had happened; Tim found it difficult to believe that the change was genuine; and yet so it was, for, henceforth, she became a sincere penitent; she soon found peace with God; and was as valiant a champion in the service of her Saviour as she had ever been in that of Satan. For sixteen years, she lived the life of a faithful Methodist, and then died happy in God, and went triumphantly to heaven.[8]

From Liverpool, Wesley went to Bolton, Todmorden, Heptonstall, Haworth, Keighley, Bradford, and Birstal, at which last mentioned place his brother met him. The next few days were spent in reading together, "A Gentleman's Reasons for his Dissent from the Church of England," the author of which was a Dissenting minister at Exeter. Wesley writes: "It

is an elaborate and lively tract, and contains the strength of the cause; but it did not yield us one proof, that it is lawful for us (much less our duty) to separate from the Church. In how different a spirit does this man write from honest Richard Baxter! The one dipping, as it were, his pen in tears, the other in vinegar and gall. Surely one page of that loving, serious Christian, weighs more than volumes of this bitter, sarcastic jester."

The reading of this treatise was a preparation for the chief business of the ensuing conference, which began at Leeds, on the 6th of May. Wesley says: "The point on which we desired all the preachers to speak their minds at large was, 'Whether we ought to separate from the Church.' Whatever was advanced, on one side or the other, was seriously and calmly considered; and, on the third day, we were all fully agreed in that general conclusion,—that, whether it was lawful or not, it was no ways expedient."

This was by far the largest conference that had yet been held, there being not fewer than sixty-three preachers present, being seventeen more than the entire number of itinerants then employed. Twelve are designated "half itinerants," namely, William Shent, William Roberts, Jonathan Jones, Jonathan Maskew, James Rouquet, John Fisher, Matthew Lowes, John Brown, Charles Perronet, Enoch Williams, John Haime, and John Furz. Fifteen are named as "our chief local preachers," namely, John Jones, Thomas Maxfield, Thomas Westall, J. Haughton, Francis Walker, Joseph Tucker, William Tucker, Thomas Colbeck, Titus Knight, John

Slocomb, James Morris, Eleazer Webster, Michael Calender, John Bakewell, and Alexander Mather.

"At the close of the conference," says Wesley, "I spoke thus:—It has been affirmed, that none of our itinerant preachers are so much alive as they were seven years ago. I fear many are not. But if so, they are unfit for the work, which requires much life. Otherwise your labour will be tiresome to yourself, and of little use to others. Tiresome, because you will no longer serve Christ and the people willingly and cheerfully. Of little use, because you will no longer serve them diligently, doing it with your might. I have several reasons to fear it is so with many of you; but let your own conscience be the judge. Who of you is exemplarily alive to God, so as to carry fire with him wherever he goes? Who of you is a pattern of self denial even in little things? Who of you drinks water? Why not? Who rises at four? Why not? Who fasts on Friday? Why not? Who has not four meals a day? Who goes through his work willingly and diligently? never on any account disappoints a congregation? Who has every part of the plan at heart? always meets society, bands, leaders? Who visits in Mr. Baxter's method? Who preaches the old thundering doctrine, no faith without light? Who constantly and zealously enforces practical religion? relative duties? recommends books? Kingswood school? Who is never idle? What assistant enforces uniformly every branch of the Methodist plan on the preachers and people? visits all the societies regularly? Do you see every preacher

observe the rules? Do you reprove, and, if need be, send me word of the defaulters? Do you send me a regular account quarterly? Is your whole heart in the work? Do not you give way to unconcern, indolence, and fear of man? Who will join heart and hand, according to the twelve rules? particularly the twelfth?"[9]

This was faithful dealing with a vengeance. Probably, it was not unneeded; but none but a man of Wesley's courage would have dared to use it. Affairs, however, were becoming desperate, and a strong hand was necessary to put them right. Some of the preachers had lost their zeal, and others were wishful to become Dissenters. The year 1755 was a crisis. It was an infinite mercy that Methodism was not dashed to pieces.

The great question was the necessity or propriety of the Methodists separating from the Established Church, and of the Methodist itinerant preachers administering the Christian sacraments. For years, there had been dissatisfaction and grumbling. The people, in many instances, had been repelled from the sacramental table in the church, and had been driven to the alternative, of either receiving the Lord's supper in Dissenting chapels (where such an irregularity might be permitted), or of absolutely committing sin by neglecting one of the most important ordinances of the Christian system. No wonder, that the Methodists were uneasy, and dissatisfied. No wonder, that not a few of Wesley's preachers, embracing nearly all the most pious and gifted, sighed for some arrangement to meet the emergency created by their own

success. Among these were the two Perronets—Edward and Charles—men of education, talent, and piety. Another was Thomas Walsh, pronounced by Wesley the best biblical scholar he ever knew. The leader of the dissentient band was Joseph Cownley, whom Wesley considered one of the best preachers in England. These were men of mark and influence among their less cultured brethren. They were as capable of forming correct opinions as the two Wesleys were. They had a right to be heard; and it was hardly fair to denounce them because they thought that the Methodists were entitled to the sacraments of the Christian church; and that they, as divinely called preachers of Christ's religion, might be *permitted* to administer ordinances which that religion solemnly enjoined. Cownley, Walsh, and the Perronets were right; but the time was scarcely come for this to be acknowledged. To a great extent, the Church of England was corrupt; it was also persecuting and repelling. What was there in such a church to make Methodists and Methodist preachers long for continued union with it?

Charles Wesley was irritated and fidgety to a most extraordinary extent. With all the bigotry of the high churchmanship of the present day, he seemed to think, and speak, and act as though salvation, out of the Church of England, was impossible. This may be forgiven, but it cannot be commended. He was unquestionably sincere; but his action, in this affair, was intolerant and absurd. His brother, with a mind far more equable, would probably have acted very differently from what he did, if he had been unfettered, and uninfluenced by his friends. But Charles worried him, and

others puzzled him; and the result, as we have already seen, was the agreement come to, after a three days' discussion by the conference of 1755, that, whether it was *lawful* or not, it was not *expedient* for the Methodists to separate from the Established Church.

This was a matter of high importance; and, as it will, ever and anon, present itself throughout the whole of Wesley's subsequent career, we shall be excused for giving further details respecting it at this period of its history. The following are extracts from unpublished letters written by Charles Wesley to the Rev. Walter Sellon, formerly a Methodist preacher, and master of Kingswood school, but now an ordained clergyman of the Church of England, and settled at Smithsby, near Ashby-de-la-Zouch.

> "MY DEAR BROTHER,—I have seen your honest, friendly letter to Charles Perronet, for which I thank you, both in behalf of myself, and the Church of England. You see through him and his fellows. Pride,—cursed pride has perverted him and them; and, unless the Lord interpose, will destroy the work of God, and scatter us all as sheep upon the mountains. In your fidelity to my old honoured mother, you are a man after my own heart. I always loved you, but never so much as now. How unlike the spirit of poor Perronet and his associates! What a pity, that such spirits should have any influence over my brother! They are continually urging him to a separation; that is, to pull down all he has built, to put a sword in our enemies' hands, to

destroy the work, scatter the flock, disgrace himself, and go out—like the snuff of a candle.

"May I not desire it of you, as a debt you owe the Methodists and me, and the Church, as well as him, to write him a full, close, plain transcript of your heart on the occasion? Charles Perronet, you know, has taken upon him to administer the sacrament, for a month together to the preachers, and twice to some of the people. Walsh and three others have followed his vile example.[10] The consequence you see with your own eyes. O that my brother did so too! Our worthy friend [Lady Huntingdon?] at Clifton could not but believe, my brother had *laid on hands,* or they would not have dared to act thus. You have her thoughts in mine. Write to my lady, that you may have her mind from herself. You must make one of our conference in Leeds, which will be in May. I give you timely notice. Pray for us. I stand alone, as the preachers imagine. Nevertheless the Lord stands by me. Fain would they thrust me out, that they may carry all before them. The Lord. bless and keep you!

"C. WESLEY."[11]

"LONDON, *December* 14, 1754.

"MY DEAR BROTHER AND FRIEND,—Write again and spare not. My brother took no notice to me of your letter. Since the Melchisedechians have been taken in, I have been excluded his cabinet council. They know me too well to trust him with me. He is come so far as

to believe a separation quite lawful, only not yet expedient. They are indefatigable in urging him to go so far, that he may not be able to retreat. He may *lay on hands*, say they, without separating. I charge you, keep it to yourself, that I stand in doubt of him; which I tell you, that you may pray for him the more earnestly, and write to him the more plainly. Our conference is in May. You must be there, if alive. The Methodist preachers must quickly divide to the right or left, the church or meeting. God be praised for this, that Satan is dragged out to do his worst, while we are yet living to look him in the face. I know none fitter for training up the young men in learning than yourself or J. Jones. We must, among us, get the sound preachers qualified for orders.

"You are a poor writer of shorthand. Perhaps I may teach you better when we meet.

"My partner salutes you in increasing love. Many thousands, besides her, shall prosper, because they love our Jerusalem. Farewell in Christ!

"C. WESLEY."[12]

"LONDON, *February* 4, 1755.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—There is no danger of my countenancing them, but rather of my opposing them too fiercely. 'Tis pity a good cause should suffer by a warm advocate. If God gives me meekness, I shall, at the conference, speak and not spare. Till then, it is best the matter should sleep, or we should make the

delinquents desperate, and their associates, among the preachers, hypocrites. My brother purposely holds his peace, that he may come to the bottom of them. Your letters, and some others wrote with the same honesty, have had due effect upon him; and made him forget he was ever inclined to their party. He has spoken as strongly of late, in behalf of the Church of England, as I could wish, and everywhere declares he never intends to leave her. This has made the Melchisedechians draw in their horns, and drop their design. *Sed non ego credulus illis.* We *must* know the heart of every preacher, and give them their choice of church or meeting. The wound can no longer be healed slightly. Those who are disposed to separate had best do it while we are yet alive. Write to my brother again, and urge it upon his conscience, whether he is not bound to prevent a separation both before and after his death. Whether, in order to this, he should not take the utmost pains to settle the preachers, discharging those who are irreclaimable, and never receiving another without this previous condition, 'that he will never leave the Church.' He is writing an excellent treatise on the question, whether it is expedient to separate from the Church of England, which he talks of printing. Be very mild and loving in your next, lest he should still say, 'The separatists show a better spirit than their opposers.' You may *honestly suppose* him now of our mind. I will answer for your admission to the conference at Leeds in the beginning of May. My brother says, his book will be out next summer. I will allow him till next winter. Is not

Nicholas Norton under the influence of Charles Perronet? Keep copies of yours to my brother. J. Jones will thank you for a title. I suppose you know, W. Prior is ordained, without learning, interest, or ought but Providence to recommend him. The Lord of the harvest is thrusting out labourers in divers places. Mr. Romaine, Venn, Dodd, Jones, and others here are much blessed. Pray for them as well as us. The Lord be your strength. Farewell in Christ!

"C. WESLEY."[13]

These letters are not worthy of the man who wrote them. The scruples of men like Cownley, Walsh, and the two Perronets deserved respect, instead of being denounced as "pride,—cursed pride." "The men," says Mr. Jackson, "were not children, either in years, understanding, or piety. They were rebuked, but not convinced; and were left to utter their complaints in all directions. To treat them in this manner was only to restrain the evil for a time. It was not removed."

As already stated, Charles Wesley met his brother at Birstal previous to the opening of the conference. While there, he wrote to his wife as follows.

"My time is chiefly spent with my brother in reading the Dissenter's book. He found and showed me many flaws in his arguments against the Church, which he interweaves and answers in his excellent treatise on that question. Mr. Grimshaw, whom the separatists claimed for their own, designed coming to the conference, only

to take his leave of us, if we did of the Church. All the preachers in the north are unanimous for it. Satan has done his worst, and confirmed us in our calling."[14]

Early in the morning of the day after the debate in conference was ended, Charles Wesley took his departure, without even informing his brother of his intention; and, on his way to London, composed a poetical "epistle to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley," which he read, to a "crowded audience," at the Foundery, and printed in a 12mo tract of 16 pages, four thousand copies being immediately put into circulation. He speaks of his brother as his "first and last, unalienable friend"; and denounces in withering language the unfaithful clergy,

"Who not for souls, but their own bodies care,
And leave to underlings the task of prayer."

After describing the true members of the Church of England, he proceeds:—

"Yet, while I warmly for her faith contend,
Shall I her blots and blemishes defend?
Inventions *added* in a fatal hour,
Human appendages of pomp and power
Whatever shines in outward grandeur great,
I give it up—*a creature of the State!*

Nor would I e'er disgrace the Church's cause,
By penal edicts, and compulsive laws.
Let others for the shape and colour fight,
Of garments short or long, or black or white;
Or, fairly matched, in furious battle join
For and against the sponsors and the sign;
Copes, hoods, and surplices *the Church* miscall,
And fiercely run their heads against the wall;
Far different care is mine; o'er earth to see
Diffused her true essential piety."

He then refers to the great revival of religion within the Church, and adds:—

"For her, whom her apostate sons despise,
I offer up my life in sacrifice,
My life in cherishing a parent spend,
Fond of my charge, and faithful to the end.
Thrust out as from her pale, I gladly roam,
Banished myself, to bring her wanderers home.
Yet well content, so I my love may show,
My friendly love, to be esteemed her foe,
Foe to her order, governors, and rules:
The song of drunkards, and the sport of fools
Or, what my soul doth as hell fire reject,
A pope—*a count*—and leader of a sect."

The battle was not ended. A month subsequent to the Leeds conference, the following letter was addressed to Wesley, by his clerical friend, the Rev. Mr. Baddiley.

"HAYFIELD, *June* 7, 1755.

"DEAR SIR,—I would speak with regard to the case debated in your last conference at Leeds. Some of your lay itinerant preachers had a desire, as such, to administer the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper. Now might it not be justly said unto them, *'Seemeth it but a small thing unto you, that God hath separated you from among the congregation, to bring you near to Himself, that ye thus seek the priesthood also? Alas! alas! ye take too much upon you, ye sons of Levi.'*

"What can the event be, but settling in such places as seem most commodious to them, and then settling upon their lees? Has not this been the general bane of scriptural Christianity? Has it not eaten out the life of religion, and caused the power of godliness to dwindle in Dissenters of every denomination? For who—who can bear ease and fulness of bread?

"Be not, dear sir, estranged in your affection, nor straitened in your bowels of love to the mother that bare you, and still continues, notwithstanding small irregularities in you, to dandle you on her knees. O! labour, watch, and pray, with all your might, that no such breach be made. Wherefore should the pickthank heathen have cause to say, 'Where is now their God?' I query much, if, upon dissenting from the Established Church, the divisions and subdivisions of the

Methodists among themselves would not exceed those of the anabaptists in Germany."[15]

Before leaving the subject, a few more letters must be added. The following were addressed by Wesley to his brother.

"LONDON, *June* 20, 1755.

"DEAR BROTHER,—Did not you understand, that they all promised, by Thomas Walsh, not to administer, even among themselves? I think that a huge point given up; perhaps more than they could give up with a clear conscience. They showed an excellent spirit. When I (not to say you) spoke once and again—spoke *satis pro imperio,* when I reflected on their answers, I admired their spirit, and was ashamed of my own. The practical conclusion was, 'Not to separate from the Church.' Did we not all agree in this? Surely either you or I must have been asleep, or we could not differ so widely in a matter of fact! Here is Charles Perronet raving 'because his friends have given up all'; and Charles Wesley, 'because they have given up nothing'; and I, in the midst, staring and wondering both at one and the other. I do not want to do anything more, unless I could bring them over to my opinion; and I am not in haste for that. Joseph Cownley says, 'For such and such reasons, I dare not hear a drunkard preach, or read prayers'; I answer, I dare—but I cannot answer his reasons. Adieu!

"JOHN WESLEY."[16]

"LONDON, *June* 28, 1755.

"DEAR BROTHER,—Go to Ireland, if you think so, and save Ireland. Wherever I have been in England, the societies are far more firmly and rationally attached to the Church than ever they were before. I have no fear about this matter. I only fear the preachers' or the people's leaving, not the Church, but the love of God, and inward or outward holiness. To this I press them forward continually. I dare not, in conscience, spend my time and strength on externals. If, as my laity says, all outward establishments are Babel, so is this establishment. Let it stand for me. I neither set it up nor pull it down. But let you and I build up the city of God. I have often desired our preachers to bury a corpse at Wapping; I mean, to give an exhortation closed with prayer. I do not know, that this is any branch of the sacerdotal office. Thomas Walsh (I will declare it on the housetop) has given me all the satisfaction I desire, and all that an honest man could give. I love, admire, and honour him; and wish we had six preachers in all England of his spirit. But enough of this. Let us draw the saw no longer, but use all our talents to promote the mind that was in Christ. We have not one preacher, who either proposed, or desires, or designs (that I know) to separate from the Church at all. Their principles, in this single point of ordination, I do not approve; but I pray for more and more of their spirit (in general) and practice. Driving me may make me fluctuate; though I do not yet. 'When the preachers in Ireland set up for

themselves, must you not disown them?' I answer, 'When.' Adieu.

"JOHN WESLEY."[17]

At this period the Rev. Samuel Walker was a zealous and useful clergyman in Cornwall. Born in Exeter, he had become a graduate of Exeter College, Oxford, and, for fourteen years, had been a minister of the Church of England. His labours had been greatly blessed at Truro. At least, eight hundred persons had repaired to him with the gaoler's question, "What must I do to be saved?" Within the last twelve months, he had formed his converts into societies, and had drawn up rules for their regulation. He was a deeply devoted man, and finished a laborious and useful life within six years after the time of which we are now writing. He was one of the friends of Wesley, who wrote to him as follows.

"BRISTOL, *September* 24, 1755.

"REVEREND DEAR SIR,—You greatly oblige me by speaking your thoughts so freely. All that you say concerning the inexpediency of a separation from the Church, I readily allow; as, likewise, that the first and main question must be, is it *lawful* to separate? Accordingly, this was debated first, and that at large, in seven or eight long conversations. And it was then only, when we could not agree concerning this, that we proceeded to weigh the *expediency* of it."

Wesley then proceeds to state the reasons assigned by his preachers, why they ought to separate from the Established

Church, namely:—1. Though the liturgy is, in general, possessed of rare excellence, "it is both absurd and sinful, to declare such an assent and consent, to any merely human composition," as is required to it. 2. Though they did not "object to the use of forms," they durst "not confine themselves to them." 3. Because they considered the decretals of the Church as "the very dregs of popery," and "many of the canons as grossly wicked as absurd. The spirit which they breathe is throughout popish and antichristian. Nothing can be more diabolical than the *ipso facto* excommunications so often denounced therein. While the whole method of executing these canons, in our spiritual courts, is too bad to be tolerated, not in a Christian, but in a Mahommedan or pagan nation." 4. Because they feared that many of the Church of England ministers neither *lived* the gospel, *taught* it, nor *knew* it; and because they doubted "whether it was lawful to attend the ministrations of those whom God had not sent to minister." 5. Because the doctrines preached by these clergymen were "not only wrong, but fundamentally so, and subversive of the whole gospel."

Having stated these as the reasons assigned for separation, Wesley proceeds.

> "I will freely acknowledge that I cannot answer these arguments to my own satisfaction; so that my conclusion, which I cannot yet give up, 'that it is lawful to continue in the Church,' stands almost without any premises that are able to bear its weight.

"My difficulty is very much increased by one of your observations. I know the original doctrines of the Church are sound; and I know her worship is, in the main, pure and scriptural; but, if the essence of the Church of England, considered as such, consists in her orders and laws; (many of which I myself can say nothing for) 'and not in her worship and doctrines,' those who separate from her have a far stronger plea than I was ever sensible of.

"At present, I apprehend those, and those only, to separate from the Church, who either renounce her fundamental doctrines, or refuse to join in her public worship. As yet, we have done neither; nor have we taken one step further than we were convinced was our bounden duty. It is from a full conviction of this, that we have—(1) preached abroad; (2) prayed extempore; (3) formed societies; and (4) permitted preachers who were not episcopally ordained. And were we pushed on this side, were there no alternative allowed, we should judge it our bounden duty, rather wholly to separate from the Church, than to give up any one of these points. Therefore, if we cannot stop a separation without stopping lay preachers, the case is clear: we cannot stop it at all.

"'But if we permit them, should we not do more? Should we not appoint them? Since the bare permission puts the matter out of our hands, and deprives us of all our influence?' In great measure it does; therefore, to

appoint them is far more expedient, if it be lawful. But is it lawful for presbyters, circumstanced as we are, to appoint other ministers? This is the very point wherein we desire advice, being afraid of leaning to our own understanding.

"It is undoubtedly needful, as you observe, to come to some resolution on this point, and. the sooner the better. I, therefore, rejoice to hear that you think, 'this matter may be better, and more inoffensively ordered; and that a method may be found, which, conducted with prudence and patience, will reduce the constitution of Methodism to due order, and render the Methodists, under God, more instrumental to the ends of practical religion.' This, sir, is the very thing I want. I must, therefore, beg your sentiments on this head; and that as particularly as your other engagements will allow. I remain, reverend dear sir,

"Your obliged and affectionate brother and servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."[18]

All must admit, that this is a most important letter. It proves three momentous facts. 1. That the conference of 1755 could not come to an agreement as to the *lawfulness* of separating from the Church of England; and that the only point settled was as to the present *expediency* of such a separation. 2. That the arguments used, in favour of a separation, were arguments which Wesley was not able to answer to his own satisfaction. And, 3. That rather than give up open air preaching, extemporaneous prayer, forming

societies, and permitting men not episcopally ordained to preach, Wesley would wholly separate himself from the Established Church.

Wesley's position was peculiar. Of all the Methodist clergymen then existing, he was the only one who evinced a willingness to look the difficulties of the situation fairly in the face. His brother was furious. Grimshaw threatened to leave the Methodists if the Methodists left the Church. Baddiley unworthily taunted the lay preachers with aspiring after priestly honours. Walker evidently held strong opinions against the contemplated movement. And Whitefield wrote to Lady Huntingdon as follows.

"NEWCASTLE, *September* 24, 1755.

"Oh, how hath my pleasure been alloyed at Leeds! I rejoiced there with trembling; for, unknown to me, they had almost finished a large house in order to form a separate congregation. If this scheme succeeds, an awful separation, I fear, will take place among the societies. I have written to Mr. Wesley, and have done all I could to prevent it. Oh this self love, this self will! It is the devil of devils."[19]

Another clergyman, who was consulted in this emergency, was the Rev. Thomas Adam, rector of Wintringham, near Malton, in Yorkshire, two years older than Wesley, born and educated in Leeds, a graduate of Christ's College, Cambridge, who obtained the Wintringham living at the age of twenty-

three, and retained it for about sixty years, until his death in 1784. Mr. Adam wrote to Wesley as follows.

"WINTRINGHAM, *October* 10, 1755.

"REVEREND SIR,—As you are pleased to desire my opinion on 'a formal separation of the Methodists from the Church of England,' I shall make no apology for giving it to you in as explicit a manner as I can.

"As you are not satisfied, in your conscience, of the lawfulness of a separation in form, but, on the contrary, have advanced many reasons against it, methinks your way is plain before you. If any considerable number of the Methodists should persist in carrying their design of separation into execution, you and others, your present scruples subsisting, will be obliged in conscience to disavow, and declare openly against it. Your present embarrassments are very great, and should be a warning to all how they venture upon a revolt from the authority and standing rules of the church to which they belong. I fear, sir, that your saying, you do not appoint, but only approve of the lay preachers, from a persuasion of their call and fitness, savours of disingenuity. Where is the difference? Under whose sanction do they act? Would they think their call a sufficient warrant for commencing preachers without your approbation, tacit or express? And what is their preaching upon this call, but a manifest breach upon the order of the Church, and an inlet to confusion? Upon the whole, therefore, I submit to your serious consideration, Whether the

separation is not wide enough already, particularly in the instance of unordained persons preaching, and gathering societies to themselves wherever they can; and. whether all the Methodists might not serve the interests of Christ better, by returning to a closer union with the Church, and repairing the breach they have made, than by making it still wider, and separating, what they think, the gospel leaven from the lump?"[20]

The following is Wesley's answer.

"LONDON, *October* 31, 1755.

"REVEREND SIR,—You have much obliged me by your clear and friendly answer; with the main of which I fully agree: for I am still in my former sentiment—'We will not *go out;* if we are *thrust out,* well.' And of the same judgment are, I believe, nineteen in twenty of our preachers, and an equal majority of the people. We are fully convinced, that, to separate from an established church is never lawful but when it is absolutely necessary; and we do not see any such necessity yet. Therefore, we have, at present, no thoughts of separation.

"With regard to the steps we have hitherto taken, we have used all the caution which was possible. We have done nothing rashly, nothing without deep and long consideration, and much prayer. Nor have we taken one deliberate step, of which we, as yet, see reason to repent. It is true, in some things, we vary from the rules

of the Church; but no further than we apprehend is our bounden duty. It is from a full conviction of this, that we preach abroad, use extemporary prayer, form those who appear to be awakened into societies, and permit laymen, whom ye believe God has called, to preach.

"I say *permit,* because we ourselves have hitherto viewed it in no other light. This we are clearly satisfied we *may* do; that we *may do more,* we are not satisfied. It is not clear to us, that presbyters, so circumstanced as we are, may *appoint* or *ordain* others; but it is, that we may *direct,* as well as *suffer* them to do, what we conceive they are *moved to by the Holy Ghost.* It is true, that, in *ordinary* cases, both an *inward* and an *outward* call are requisite. But we apprehend there is something far from *ordinary* in the present case; and, upon the calmest view of things, we think, they, who are only called of God, and not of man, have *more* right to preach than they who are only called of man, and not of God. Now that many of the clergy, though called of man, are not called of God to preach His gospel is undeniable: 1. Because they themselves utterly disclaim, nay, and ridicule the inward call. 2. Because they do not know what the gospel is: of consequence, they *do not* and *cannot* preach it.

"This, at present, is my chief embarrassment. That I have not gone too far yet, I know; but whether I have gone far enough, I am extremely doubtful. I see those running whom God hath not sent; destroying their own

souls, and those that hear them. Unless I warn, in all ways I can, these perishing souls of their danger, am I clear of the blood of these men? Soul damning clergymen lay me under more difficulties than soul saving laymen!

"Those among ourselves, who have been in doubt, whether they ought so to beware of these false prophets, as not to hear them at all, are not men of a 'forward, uncharitable zeal;' but of a calm, loving, temperate spirit. They are perfectly easy as to their own call to preach; but they are sometimes afraid, that the countenancing these blind guides is a dead weight even on those clergymen who are really called of God. 'Why else,' say they, 'does not God bless their labours?' We know several regular clergymen who preach the genuine gospel, but to no effect at all. There is one exception in England: Mr. Walker, of Truro. We do not know one more, who has converted one soul in his own parish. If it be said, 'Has not Mr. Grimshaw and. Mr. Baddiley?' No, not one, till they were *irregular:* till both the one and the other formed *irregular* societies, and took in laymen to assist them. Can there be a stronger proof that God is pleased with *irregular,* even more than with *regular* preaching?"[21]

No apology is needed for the insertion of these long extracts. In these days,—when the reunion, amalgamation, or absorption of the Methodists with the Church of England, is exciting so much attention, they deserve to be read with more

than ordinary interest. A recurrence to the subject will often be necessary; but, for the present, we must leave it, and track the footsteps of Wesley during the remainder of the year 1755.

The conference at Leeds being concluded, he left that town, on the 12th of May, for Newcastle, where he found some of the Methodists had left the Church already, and others were on the point of doing so, and all, "as they supposed, on his authority!" Three weeks were spent in the Newcastle circuit. He then set out for London, and, at the end of the first day's journey, reached Osmotherley.[22]

Here he made strict inquiry concerning an event of recent occurrence, and which at the time excited great attention. Osmotherley lies nestled nearly at the foot of a long mountain range, known by the name of Black Hambleton. A few weeks before, a part of the mountain consisting of a vast ridge of rock, called Whiston Cliff, was split asunder, amid a sound as of rolling thunder. On March 25, there was a loud noise issuing from the mountain, but nothing more. Next day, a huge piece of the rocky precipice, fifteen yards thick, ten high, and above twenty broad, was torn from the mountain side and thrown into the valley. The ground shook, and immense stones, of several tons weight, rose like giants out of the ground below, and rolled to and fro with marvellous velocity. On the three succeeding days, the ground continued trembling; in many places the earth clave asunder; and huge rocks turned upside down and moved in all directions. Patches of ground, as much as fifty yards in diameter, were

lifted bodily, and, burdened with rocks and even trees, were removed to a considerable distance, without the least fissure being created by the transit. In a space of about forty acres, the earth was cleft in a thousand places, while the cliff, from which the rest was torn: was white as snow, and, glittering in the sunlight, was visible at a distance of many miles.

Wesley, at all times keenly alive to the supernatural, took the deepest interest in this phenomenon. At Osmotherley, he met with eye and ear witnesses of this strange occurrence. He went with one of them, Edward Abbot, a weaver, to the spot, and "walked, crept and climbed, round and over great part of the ruins." He wrote a description of what he saw, which was published in the *London Magazine*, the *Gentleman's Magazine*, the *Public Advertiser*, and other periodicals. He endeavoured to account for the phenomenon, and came to the conclusion, that it was not produced by any "merely natural cause,—fire, water, or air, but by God Himself," who arose to shake terribly the earth; and who purposely chose such a place, where there was so great a concourse of nobility and gentry every year.[23] This excited the ire of an anonymous contributor to the *Gentleman's Magazine*, who declared that he had "caused an inquiry to be made into the fact, at no small trouble and expense; and found the whole to be a falsehood, without the least degree of truth for its foundation." A more audacious lie than this, it is difficult to imagine; and yet it was published. A few months later, Wesley wrote as follows to the editor of that periodical.

"BRISTOL, *March* 8, 1756.

"MR. URBAN,—I have met with many persons in my life, who did not abound with modesty; but I never yet met with one who had less of it than your anonymous correspondent. The whole account of Whiston Cliff, inserted in one of your magazines, I aver to be punctually true, having been an eye witness of every particular of it. And if F. D. will set his name, and aver the contrary, I will make him ashamed, unless shame and he have shook hands, and parted.

"Yours, etc.,

"JOHN WESLEY."

The editor adds, that, if his anonymous correspondent does not make good his assertion, he is treated in Wesley's letter with less severity than he deserves. This evoked a communication from a man who afterwards rose to fame in the literary world. John Langhorne, who, besides numerous other works, became the well known translator of Plutarch's Lives, was now in his twentieth year, and a private tutor in the neighbourhood of Thirsk. Having read the impudent mendacity of F. D., he wrote to *Mr. Urban*, stating that he himself had visited the scene of this strange upheaving, and fully confirmed Wesley's statement. Thus terminated this earthquake episode in Wesley's history.

From Whiston Cliff, Wesley went to Thirsk, and then to York, the society at the latter place being, number for number, the richest he had in England. "I hope," says he, "that York

will not prove, as Cork has done, the Capua of our preachers." He reached London on the 16th of June, and wrote:—

"From a deep sense of the amazing work which God has of late years wrought in England, I preached, in the evening, on those words (Psalm cxlvii. 20), 'He hath not dealt so with any nation;' no, not even with Scotland or New England. In both these, God has indeed made bare His arm; yet not in so astonishing a manner as among us. This must appear to all who impartially consider—(1) The numbers of persons on whom God has wrought. (2) The swiftness of His work in many, both convinced and truly converted in a few days. (3) The depth of it in most of these, changing the heart, as well as the whole conversation. (4) The clearness of it, enabling them boldly to say, 'Thou hast loved me, Thou hast given Thyself for me.' (5) The continuance of it. God has wrought in Scotland and New England, at several times, for some weeks or months together; but, among us, He has wrought for near eighteen years together, without any observable intermission. Above all, let it be remarked, that a considerable number of the clergy were engaged in that great work in Scotland; and, in New England, above a hundred, perhaps as eminent as any in the whole province, not only for piety, but also for abilities, both natural and acquired; whereas, in England, there were only two or three inconsiderable clergymen, with a few young, raw, unlettered men; and those opposed by well-nigh all the clergy, as well as laity, in the nation. He that remarks this must needs

own, both that this is a work of God, and that He hath not wrought so in any other nation."

Immediately after his return to London, Wesley entered into an important correspondence, which lasted for the next nine months, and which, in 1760, was published in an octavo pamphlet of 52 pages, with the title, "Original Letters between the Reverend Mr. John Wesley, and Mr. Richard Tompson, respecting the Doctrine of Assurance, as held by the former: Wherein that Tenet is fully examined. With some Strictures on Christian Perfection." Richard Tompson was no ordinary man. He makes no pretension to any knowledge of the learned languages; but he was unquestionably well acquainted with his own. Without the advantages of early education, he had, by great assiduity in reading, mastered the science of divinity, and was a respectable proficient in the study of literature in general. He was evidently a man of powerful mind, and there is the greatest fairness in his reasoning. Wesley wrote: "Of all the disputants I have known, you are the most likely to convince me of any mistakes I may be in; because you have found out the great secret of speaking the truth in love." This was praise which Tompson well merited. From first to last, there is nothing in his letters but what is consonant with the highest respect and sincerest love. And yet, he pins his opponent with consummate skill, states his objections in the clearest light, and deduces his conclusions with a power which Wesley found it difficult to resist. In former years, he had been a Methodist; at present he was not. Still, he was a man of enlightened and earnest piety, and of a sober and exemplary life. All his letters, except the last, were

anonymous; not because he was doubtful of his tenets, or ashamed of the doctrines he was endeavouring to defend, but because he not unreasonably apprehended, that, if his name was given, his letters might not be read, nor receive the attention which he knew their intrinsic worth deserved. When he divulged his name, Wesley, like a Christian gentleman, instead of being annoyed at being betrayed into a correspondence with one of whom he had spoken in his Journal somewhat disparagingly, addressed him with brotherly affection, and concluded this remarkable and able correspondence thus: "Your reasons for concealing your name were good: we cannot too carefully guard against prejudice. You have no need of any excuse at all. For you have done no wrong, but rather a pleasure, to your affectionate brother, JOHN WESLEY."

Wesley's letters are published in his collected works; but, of course, unaccompanied, by Tompson's; and, without the latter, no one can form a correct opinion concerning this courteous and loving contest. Our own honest conviction is, that Tompson is the master. It is true that, in the main matter of dispute, the difference between the two was more imaginary than real,—more in words than fact; but we feel bound to say, that, in *managing* the argument, Wesley, either for want of time or want of something else, is worsted.

The subject of Christian perfection is summarily dismissed. Tompson quotes texts of Scripture, and appeals to history, and concludes with an argument which has been elaborated in modern days: "Suppose that two persons, *absolutely free from*

the corruption of human nature, should marry and have children, it is very evident, that they could convey no corruption of nature to their offspring, nor they to theirs, even to the remotest generations: and, therefore, this *new species* of mankind would stand in no need of a Saviour; that is, in no need of Christ's righteousness to justify them; in no need of His Spirit to enable them to do their duty, they being possessed of that rectitude of nature which will enable them to act entirely for themselves."

This is quoted, not for its soundness, but, merely to show how feebly one of the ablest logicians of his age confronted it. The following is the whole of Wesley's answer: "As to Christian perfection, I believe two, who were made perfect in love, never did, or will, marry together." This was not argument, but assumption; and Tompson was not slow to avail himself of his advantage. In his next communication he asks, "Why is the marriage state proper for those only who are tainted with sin and corruption?" He reminds his opponent, that two persons, Adam and Eve, absolutely free from sin, have been married, and that by the express command of God Himself. Besides, he asks, "Suppose that two persons, already married, should attain to such a state,—the very same consequences would inevitably follow; and, I suppose, you will hardly venture to affirm, that God will never make any married couple (capable of having children) perfect. If you did, I should ask you first, what ground you had for such an arbitrary hypothesis? and secondly, how you came to marry yourself, when you judged it would be an infallible means of keeping either yourself, or your wife, from that state which is

of all others the most desirable?" Wesley, like a prudent man, attempted no reply to this; and so the matter ended.

It will thus be seen, that the doctrine of Christian perfection was not fairly and fully discussed by the two friendly antagonists. Their main subject of dispute was this: "that no person is a true believer in Christ, but he who either certainly knows, or has known, by the immediate revelation of the Holy Ghost, that his sins are forgiven." Tompson argues, that the definition of faith given by the Church of England,—"a sure trust or confidence in God that my sins are forgiven," applies not to that faith "which is the immediate proximate cause of justification," but to that faith which follows after justification. Wesley's reply to this, in brief, was: "I agree with you, that justifying faith cannot be a conviction that I am justified; but still, I believe that it *implies* such a conviction." Further correspondence followed, and Wesley's opinion, just given, was modified to this extent: "I believe there are some instances of a man who has not a *clear assurance* that his sins are forgiven, being in a state of justification." This, in substance, was all that Tompson contended for; and so terminated one of the most friendly controversies in Wesley's history. No man was more open to conviction than Wesley was; no man was more sincerely in search of truth; no man met a reasonable opponent in a more loving spirit. "If," said he, in his first reply to Tompson, "if you have observed anything in any of the tracts I have published, which you think is not agreeable to Scripture or reason, you will oblige me by pointing out, and by communicating to me any remarks you have occasionally

made. I seek two things in this world—truth and love; whoever assists me in this search is a friend indeed."

While on the subject of controversy, it may be added, that during the year 1755 a furious attack was made upon the Methodists, in an octavo pamphlet of 37 pages, entitled, "An Apology for the Clergy; with a view to expose the groundless assertions of a late Commentator on the 107th Psalm; and to undeceive the admirers of certain popular declaimers, by showing the dangerous consequences of their manner of preaching." In this precious *morceau*, the Wesleys and their fellow Methodists are spoken of as "giving vent to the rankest enthusiasm,"—as captivating the people "with unintelligible jargon," and "importing contraband doctrines into pulpits" which they had no right to enter. These were hard words, but hardly worth answering.

Another kindred publication was issued, with the title, "A Dissertation on Enthusiasm, showing the danger of its late increase. By Thomas Green, M.A., vicar of Wymeswould, Leicestershire." 8vo, 219 pages. In this, the Methodists were likened, not only to papists, but to Mahommedans, and fanatics of all descriptions. It was too late for scurrilous publications like these to obtain, or to deserve an answer. Like their authors, they soon sank into well merited oblivion.

On the 30th of June, Wesley set out for Norwich, where he spent the next four days, and spoke personally to each member of the society. On returning to London, at the request of "a friendly gentlewoman," he became a witness to her will,

wherein she bequeathed part of her estates to charitable uses; and part, during his natural life, to her dog Toby. "I suppose," says he, "her legacy to Toby may stand good; but that to the poor is null and void, by the statute of mortmain!" He dined with one who, for many years, was one of the most celebrated beauties in Europe; but who, suffering from a painful and nauseous disease, was now literally rotting. He called upon an old friend, after a separation of sixteen years, found him a beggar, forsaken by all his old acquaintance, and offered him all the assistance in his power. He held the first Methodist covenant service, at the French church in Spitalfields, above eighteen hundred persons standing up in testimony of their assent to the tenor of the covenant, still in use among the Methodist societies.

On the 18th of August, he started for Cornwall. On the way, he preached to "sleepy congregations" at Reading and at Salisbury. At Shaftesbury, he found a more lively people, In Cornwall, his congregations were large and attentive. Even at Helstone, all were quiet, except two drunken men, one of whom soon walked away, and the other fell asleep on his horse's neck. At Breage, the lions were now changed into lambs, though their wretched minister had told them, from the pulpit, a few years before, that John Wesley was expelled from the Oxford university for being the father of a bastard child; and that all the Methodists, at their private meetings, put out the lights. In the interval, this mendacious priest had grown thoughtful and melancholy, and had hanged himself. At St. Ives, Wesley visited a young attorney, who had attended the Methodist preaching, but who now sung, and

swore, and screamed, and cursed, as if possessed by legion; now, however, after prayer, he sunk down into a state of quietude. At St. Just, Wesley preached on the foundation stone of the new Methodist meeting-house; and, at Launceston, in a gentleman's dining room, capable of containing a congregation of some hundreds.

Having spent three weeks in Cornwall, he returned to Bristol to finish his "Notes on the New Testament." During this Cornish tour, he was accompanied by Michael Fenwick, whom he pronounces to be "an excellent groom, *valet de chambre*, nurse, and, upon occasion, a tolerable preacher."[24] He wrote to his friend Blackwell as follows.

"REDRUTH, *August* 31, 1755.

"DEAR SIR,—In my last journey into the north, all my patience was put to the proof again and again, and all my endeavours to please; yet without success. In my present journey, I leap, as broke from chains. I am content with whatever entertainment I meet with, and my companions are always in good humour, 'because they are with me.' This must be the spirit of all who take journeys with me. If a dinner ill dressed, a hard bed, a poor room, a shower of rain, or a dirty road, will put them out of humour, it lays a burden upon me, greater than all the rest put together. By the grace of God, I never fret; I repine at nothing; I am discontented with nothing. And to have persons at my ear, fretting and murmuring at everything, is like tearing the flesh off my

bones. I see God sitting upon His throne, and ruling all things well. Peace be with you all.

"I am, etc.

"JOHN WESLEY."[25]

At the end of October, he returned to London, and, on the first Sunday after his arrival, read prayers, preached, and gave the sacrament, at Snow's Fields, in the morning; preached and gave the sacrament at noon in West Street chapel; met the leaders at three; buried a corpse at four; preached at five; and afterwards met the society, and concluded the day with a general lovefeast.

Whitefield had returned from America in the month of May, and wrote: "The poor despised Methodists are as lively as ever; and, in several churches, the gospel is now preached with power. Many, in Oxford, are awakened to a knowledge of the truth, and I have heard almost every week of some fresh minister or another that seems determined to know nothing but Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. The greatest venom is spit out against Mr. Romaine, who, having been reputed a great scholar, is now looked upon and treated as a great fool."[26]

On November 5, after a long separation, Wesley and Whitefield met in London. "Disputings," writes the former, "are now no more: we love one another, and join hand in hand to promote the cause of our common Master." The remainder of the year was spent in the metropolis and its immediate vicinity.

At this period, John Fletcher, afterwards vicar of Madeley, was a young man, twenty-six years of age, and officiated as private tutor to the two sons of Thomas Hill, Esq., at Tern Hall, in Shropshire. He had recently been converted, principally by the instrumentality of the Methodists, and had already formed a warm attachment to Wesley, which continued to increase until his death, in 1785. One of his first letters to the great Methodistic leader, perhaps the very first, was dated "London, November 29, 1755," and is, in all respects, a remarkable production. He expresses a conviction that the end of the world is near at hand, and adduces elaborated reasons for this opinion. He confesses his belief in the second coming of our Saviour; in His making war among His enemies; and in His personal reign on earth for a thousand years. Fletcher's millenarian letter is far too long to be inserted here; it may be read in the *Methodist Magazine* for 1793; and is of some importance, as showing, that the millenarian theory, which is now attracting so much attention, found considerable favour among some of the most distinguished of the first Methodists. We shall have to recur to this important subject at a future period.

Before leaving the year 1755, it only remains to review Wesley's publications.

At the commencement of the year, an anonymous octavo pamphlet, of 32 pages, was published, entitled "Queries humbly proposed to the Right Reverend and Right Honourable Count Zinzendorf." James Hutton, who was Zinzendorf's chief disciple, believed this to be the work of

Wesley;[27] and, after a careful examination, we are bound to say, that we concur in this belief;[28] and as the pamphlet is extremely rare and also curious, a brief analysis of its contents may not be unacceptable. The Queries are arranged under ten divisions, and the writer hopes the count will give "speedy, plain, positive, categorical answers." He also states, that, in these Queries, he has "summed up, as briefly as possible, the most material parts of the charges against the Moravians." Viewed in such a light, the pamphlet is of great importance The following are specimens.

"1. With regard to yourself and your community. 1. Do you permit the Brethren to style you 'The angel of the church of Philadelphia'? 2. Do not they almost implicitly believe your assertions, and obey your directions? 3. Do not you think yourself, as a teacher, equal to any of the apostles? 4. Do not you believe your doctrinal writings are of equal authority with the Bible? 5. Do not you judge your church to be the only true church under heaven; and the members of it the only true Christians on earth? 6. Are the Brethren the 144,000 mentioned in the Revelation? 7. Is it honest to term yourselves the Moravian church, when you know you are not the Moravian church? 8. Do you yourself expect to be judged at the last day? 9. Do you believe a thousand souls of the wicked will be saved in that day at your intercession?

"II. With respect to your doctrines concerning the Trinity. Have you spoken these words, or anything to

the same effect, 'Praying to God the Father is not a whit better than praying to a wooden or stone God? The preachers of God the Father are Satan's professors? The Father and the Holy Ghost minister to Christ in all things? The Holy Ghost is the wife of God, the mother of Christ, and of the church?'

"III. With regard to the Son of God. Do you affirm, that He sometimes gave answers to people that are not fit to be examined according to logic; and, that He had nothing extraordinary in His turn of mind or gifts?

"IV. With regard to the apostles and Scriptures. Do you affirm, that the apostles, except St. Paul and John, did not know so much of the blood theology as the Brethren? Were these your words, 'I have ever, and still do protest, that the first Christians cannot properly be called a church, being no more than a troop of legalists'? Did you affirm, that there are more than six hundred blunders in the four gospels? Have you left out the whole epistle of St. James in your edition of the New Testament? Are there any persons among you who boast that they never read. the Bible in their lives? Have you used it as a term of reproach, to have 'heads full of *Biblish* lumber'? Did any of the Brethren say, 'The Bible is dung, fit only to be spit upon'?

"V. With regard to the moral law of God. Are these your own words, 'There is but one duty, which is that of believing'? 'Our method is to preach no commandment

but that of believing'? Is it true that, at some of the merry meetings of the Brethren, there was an uproar as if a madhouse had broken loose? that the Brethren threw one another on the floor, and struggled, with many gross indecencies? Is it true, that your son vindicated all this? And that you yourself said, it was blasphemy to censure it?

"VI. With regard to idolatry and superstition. Have you not hymns directed to angels, and the Virgin Mary? Has not a large image of our Saviour been placed in the midst of the Brethren met together? Has not incense been burnt for you?

"VII. With regard to your manner of conversation. Are not you of a close, dark, reserved temper and behaviour? Is not the spirit of secrecy the spirit of your community? Do not you, in many cases, use cunning, guile, dissimulation? Was not Mr. Gambold guilty of a calm, deliberate lie, in publicly affirming, you had not so much as seen those hymns, some of which you had not only seen but composed?

"VIII. With regard to moral honesty. Have you not distressed, if not totally ruined, numerous families?

"IX. With regard to your manner of answering for yourselves. Have you ordered the Brethren to give no answer to any accusation, but the general one, 'It's all a lie'? Do you still deem those who blame your hymns

worthy of having their tongues plucked out, or their hands chopped off?"

The above are fair specimens of all the Queries proposed by the writer of this curious pamphlet.[29] The conclusion is as follows.

"But I have done. I have proposed the Queries which you desired, and have endeavoured therein to come to the point. Permit me now to remind your lordship of the assurance given to the public, 'As soon as these Queries are finished, the Moravians, who expect them with earnest longing, will lose no time in answering them.' If your lordship is inwardly and deeply convinced, that the bulk of the preceding objections are just, and if you are determined to amend whatsoever is capable of amendment, then silence may be a sufficient answer. I am, my lord, your lordship's real well wisher, and humble servant."

What gave birth to this publication? Was Wesley justified in writing it? The following facts will help to answer these questions.

The reader has already seen that the eccentricities of the Moravian brotherhood had occasioned a large amount of public scandal. This, unfortunately, increased, rather than diminished; and, hence, on the last day of the year 1754, James Hutton published an advertisement in the *London Daily Advertiser*, calling for "Queries" to be proposed in

reference to the charges publicly circulated against the Brethren; and indicating that answers to the Queries would be furnished.[30]

What was the result? Seven days after the appearance of Hutton's advertisement, Wesley's Queries were published;[31] but we can hardly say that they were answered. It is true, that an octavo volume was issued soon after; but the jejuneness, irrelevance, and confusion of the answers to the Queries may be guessed from the cumbrous title of the book, which was as follows: "An Exposition, or True State of the Matters objected to in *England* to the people known by the name of *Unitas Fratrum:* in which *facts* are related as they are; the true *readings* and sense of *books,* said to be his, (which have been laid to his charge sometimes without sufficient proof that they were so, and been moreover perverted and curtailed) are restored; *principles* are laid down as they ought, fairly; the *practice,* as it has been, is at present, and is intended for the future, is owned. By the Ordinary of the Brethren. The notes and additions by the editor,"—that is, by Count Zinzendorf and James Hutton.

Passing to other publications. It was in 1755, that Wesley completed his "Christian Library," by the issue of ten additional 12mo volumes, containing more than 3000 printed pages. One of these was in the form of an index to the whole of the fifty volumes published; the others consisted of extracts from the writings of Reynolds, South, Flavel, Annesley, Nelson, Beveridge, Howe, and other distinguished authors.

Another of Wesley's publications, in 1755, arose out of one of the most fearful events of modern times. On November 1, occurred the great earthquake at Lisbon, a city containing 36,000 houses, 350,000 inhabitants, a cathedral, forty parish churches, as many monasteries, and a royal palace. In six minutes, the greatest part of the city was destroyed, and not less than 60,000 persons met with an untimely death. The same earthquake was severely felt in almost the whole of Europe.

In 1754, Whitefield visited Lisbon, on his way to America, and spent nearly a month in that ill fated city. Early in 1755, he published a 12mo pamphlet of 29 pages, giving an account of what he witnessed, little thinking that the scene of so much sin would soon become the graveyard of tens of thousands of its inhabitants. He found crucifixes, and images of the Virgin, and of other real or reputed saints, in almost every street, lamps hanging before them, and the people rendering them obeisance as they passed. Processions of priests and friars, with lighted wax tapers, were almost of daily occurrence. One of these was led by three popish dignitaries in scarlet clothes, followed by two little boys with wings fixed on their shoulders to make them resemble angels. Then came several images of St. Francis; then an image of our Saviour, with long black hair, and dressed in a purple gown; and then the virgin mother, to whom St. Francis rendered homage. After this, followed a mitred cardinal gaudily attired; a gorgeous friar under a splendid canopy; and then a long train of fat Franciscans. Another procession consisted of nearly two hundred penitents, all clothed in white, their faces veiled,

their feet bare, and chains fastened to their ankles; some having on their backs great stones; others carrying in their hands dead men's bones and skulls; some bearing upon their shoulders a heavy cross; and most lashing themselves with cords, or beating themselves with iron rods. In one of the churches, Whitefield found a solid silver altar of several yards circumference, and about twelve steps high. In another, he met with a golden altar, of nearly the same dimensions, its base studded with precious stones, each step lit up with large lighted silver candlesticks, and the top adorned with silver images of angels, in a large church, belonging to the convent of St. De Beato, he mingled with many thousands in witnessing what was meant to be a representation of the crucifixion of the Son of God. Upon a high scaffold were three full-sized figures of the blessed Saviour and of the crucified malefactors. At a little distance, was the holy Virgin, in long ruffles and widow's weeds, her face veiled with purple silk, and her head encircled with a crown of glory. At the foot of the Saviour's cross, lay, in a mournful posture, a living man, dressed in woman's clothes, personating Mary Magdalene; while near at hand was a younger man, arrayed in a bob-wig and a green silk vesture, representing the apostle John. On each side, stood two sentinels in buff, with formidable caps and beards; and, directly in front, a personation of the Roman centurion, with a large target in his hand. From behind the purple hangings came twenty purple-vested boys, all wearing golden caps, and adorned with wings, and each one bearing a lighted taper in his hand. Opposite to the stage, a black friar, mounted in a pulpit, preached a sort of fifteen minutes' sermon. Then came four long-bearded men,

two of them carrying a ladder, and the other two, as the representatives of Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathaea, bearing large gilt dishes filled with spices. Amid great ceremony, the body of the Saviour was taken down; Mary Magdalene wrapped the feet in her widespread handkerchief; the beloved disciple clasped the corpse to his loving heart; shrouded in linen, it was carried round the churchyard in grand procession; and then, followed by the Virgin, Mary Magdalene, and St. John, and by a whole troop of friars, bearing wax tapers in their hands, was conducted to an open sepulchre, and buried. Thus ended the Good Friday's superstitious tragedy in the far famed Lisbon. A year and a half afterwards, Lisbon was a heap of ruins.

Under the date of November 26, Wesley says: "Being much importuned thereto, I wrote 'Serious Thoughts on the Earthquake at Lisbon;' directed, not as I designed at first, to the small vulgar, but the great; to the learned, rich, and honourable heathens, commonly called Christians."

This was published in an octavo pamphlet of 34 pages; and, within a month, passed through two editions. Perhaps none of Wesley's publications contain so much fiery eloquence as this. The reader must peruse it for himself.

Another of Wesley's publications, in 1755, though small, was important—"Catholic Spirit. A Sermon on 2 Kings x. 15." 12mo, 31 pages. It contains the principles of an evangelical alliance, namely, belief in the Holy Trinity in Unity, love to God and man, and the practice of good works.

Wherever he found a man answering to this description, he was ready to recognise a Christian and a brother. He would not urge him to entertain his opinions, or to embrace his modes of worship. The presbyterian, the independent, the baptist, and even the quaker, had as much right to their opinions and preferences as he had to his. All he asked was this, If thine heart be as my heart, in the three great points already named, give me thine hand. In this respect, as in many others, Wesley was far in advance of the age in which he lived; and, more than a hundred years ago, was quite prepared for the Evangelical Alliance that has since been organised.

Wesley's principal publication, in 1755, was his "Explanatory Notes on the New Testament" (with a portrait), quarto, 762 pages.

Concerning the portrait, Wesley himself gives the following information, in his account of the death of John Downes, one of his untaught itinerants. "In 1744, while I was shaving, John Downes was whittling the top of a stick; I asked, 'What are you doing?' He answered, 'I am taking your face, which I intend to engrave on a copper plate.' Accordingly, without any instruction, he first made himself tools, and then engraved the plate. The second picture which he engraved was that which was prefixed to the 'Notes on the New Testament.' Such another instance, I suppose, not all England, or perhaps Europe, can produce."[32]

We believe this was the first instance in which Wesley's portrait was prefixed to any of his works. John Hampson pronounced it one of the best that he had seen.[33]

In his preface, Wesley tells the reader that, for many years, he had contemplated such a work as this; and that the Notes are written "chiefly for plain, unlettered men, who understand only their mother tongue, and yet reverence and love the word of God, and have a desire to save their souls."

In reference to his new translation of the text, he remarks that he has never altered the authorised version for altering's sake; but only where, first, the sense was made better, stronger, clearer, or more consistent with the context; and, secondly, where, the sense being equally good, the phrase was better or nearer the original.

He made the notes as short as possible, that the comment might not obscure or swallow up the text. Many of them were translations from Bengelius's "Gnomon Novi Testamenti;" many more were abridgments from the same learned and invaluable work. He also acknowledges himself largely indebted to the writings of Dr. Heylin, Dr. Guyse, and Dr. Doddridge.

A second edition of Wesley's Notes was published in 1757. In 1759, he and his brother carefully compared the translation with the original, and corrected and enlarged the Notes for a new edition, which was issued in 1760.[34]

It is a fact worth mentioning, that, before Wesley's Notes were put to press, he sent the manuscript to his old friend, the Rev. James Hervey, at that time one of the most popular writers of the day, and received the following answer.

"WESTON, *June* 29, 1754.

"DEAR SIR,—I have read your Notes, and have returned them, with such observations as occur to my mind. I think, in general, you are too sparing of your remarks and improvements. Many expositions are too corpulent, yours are rather too lean. May the good hand of the Lord be with them and their author."[35]

As a set off to this, Dr. Adam Clarke observes: "Though short, the notes are always judicious, accurate, spiritual, terse, and impressive; and possess the happy and rare property of leading the reader immediately to God and his own heart."[36]

ENDNOTES

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. x., p. 305.

[2] Hervey's Letters to Lady Frances Shirley, 1783, p. 222.

[3] *Methodist Magazine*, 1779, p. 375.

[4] Manuscript letter by Baddiley to Wesley.

[5] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 170.

[6] Manuscript, by Alex. Bell.

[7] Everett's Life of Adam Clarke, vol. i., p. 336.

[8] Manuscript, by Alex. Bell. We have a list of all the Liverpool Methodists in 1759, with their occupations, and places of residence, from which it appears that there were, at that period, 121 members, meeting in five classes, of which the respective leaders were Robert Jones, Enoch Norris, James Edmunds, Thomas Hodgson, and Thomas Beck.

[9] Minutes (edit. 1862), vol. i, p. 711.

[10] In his shorthand diary, Charles Wesley writes as follows. "1754: October 17.—Sister Macdonald first, and then sister Clay, informed me that Charles Perronet gave the sacrament to the preachers, Walsh and Deaves, and then to twelve at sister Garder's, in the Minories."

"October 18.—Sister Meredith told me that her husband had sent her word that Walsh had administered the sacrament at Reading."

"October 19.—I was with my brother, who said nothing of Perronet, except, 'We have in effect ordained already.' He urged me to sign the preachers' certificates; was inclined to lay on hands; and to let the preachers administer."

"October 24.—Was with my brother. He is wavering; but willing to wait before he ordains or separates."

[11] Manuscript letter.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Manuscript letter.

[14] Life of C. Wesley, vol. ii., p. 78.

[15] *Methodist Magazine,* 1779, p. 320.

[16] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 109.

[17] Ibid. vol. xii., p. 110.

[18] *Methodist Magazine,* 1779, p. 371.

[19] Whitefield's Works, vol. iii., p. 144.

[20] *Methodist Magazine,* 1779, p. 373.

[21] *Methodist Magazine,* 1779, p. 376.

[22] Osmotherley old society book has the following entry: "1755, June 2.—laid out for Mr. John Wesley, wife and daughter, Mr. Shent, and Mr. Downes, 5*s*.'

[23] It was noted as a place for training and running horses.

[24] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 171.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Whitefield's Works, vol. iii., pp. 121, 122.

[27] Hutton's Memoirs, p. 302.

[28] It was advertised in a list of books published by Wesley and his brother; and, to such an extent, was acknowledged by them.

[29] Except one class of Queries, here omitted, because referring to matters obscene and blasphemous. It may be added that, in this same year, 1755, Warburton, bishop of Gloucester, published a furious pamphlet, of 180 pages, entitled, "The Moravians Compared and Detected."

[30] Hutton's Memoirs, p. 301.

[31] Ibid. p. 302.
[32] Wesley's Works, vol. iv., p. 33.
[33] Hampson's Life of Wesley, vol. iii., p. 147.
[34] Wesley's Works, vol. ii., p. 495.
[35] *Methodist Magazine*, 1847, p. 965.
[36] Clarke's Commentary, General Preface, p. 10.

1756.

WHITEFIELD began the year 1756 with quinsy. A physician prescribed a perpetual blister; but Whitefield says, he found that a better remedy was perpetual preaching.[1] In February, he commenced preaching in a Dissenting chapel, in Long Acre. The bishop of the diocese sent him a prohibition.[2] Whitefield persisted. A mob, belonging to the bishop's vestry, assembled, with "bells, drums, clappers, marrow bones, and cleavers," and made the most hideous noises, to hinder Whitefield being heard. The chapel windows were smashed with stones, levelled at Whitefield in the pulpit. Anonymous letters were sent to him, full of the most fearful threats. One of these was forwarded to the government; who, at once, offered a reward and his majesty's pardon to any one who would detect the writer. This, together with steps taken to bring such an ecclesiastical outrage into a court of law, stopped the evil.

The annoyances at Long Acre led Whitefield to commence the erection of Tottenham Court chapel. The sabbath after he took possession of the ground, he obtained nearly £600 towards the expense of building. It was begun in May, and opened in November, 1756, and was called, by a neighbouring doctor, "Whitefield's Soul Trap."[3]

During the present year, an octavo volume, of 229 pages, was published, with the title, "The History of Modern Enthusiasm, from the Reformation to the present Times." A long list of subscribers' names is given, including dukes, earls,

lords, knights, members of parliament, bishops, deans, prebends, fellows of colleges, and rectors, vicars, and curates without number. In the preface, it is alleged that, "though Methodism is now almost quite extinct, yet several of its direful consequences still remain,—as, that sin is *no sin* in the elect; that faith can never be finally lost; and that *once* a saint, *for ever* a saint. The most zealous of the party now, in a great measure, wallow in lust and sensuality, and never stick at anything, be it ever so heinous." The Moravians are said to be, "in principle and practice, a scandal to Christianity. Inward experiences, dispensations, manifestations, discoveries, improvements, pledges, privileges, and prerogatives; out-goings, in-goings, and returns,—all this glorious apparatus had ended in fulfilling the lusts of the flesh!" Whitefield is accused of reviving antinomianism, of vain glory and boasting, of self conceit, self applause, and self sufficiency, of Luciferian pride, and of intolerably profaning Scripture. Wesley is equally abused. "The petty exhorters" are said to "ramble from place to place, venting crude, nonsensical, heretical, and blasphemous opinions, which are swallowed by the gaping multitude." "Most of their first admirers and followers were perfectly bewildered, and, having deserted both Wesley and Whitefield, had turned Moravians, or libertines, or deists, or papists, or quakers." The itinerant preachers and exhorters were "mechanics and illiterate vagrants, pretending to expound by inspiration, and fathering all their crude conceptions on the dictates of the Holy Spirit."

These are mild specimens of the rabid production of the Rev. Theophilus Evans, vicar of St. David's, Brecon. Is it

necessary to apologise for the reproduction of such mendacious scurrility? We think not; for, without this, the reader cannot form an adequate conception of the gross abuse poured upon Wesley and his friends, and of the terrific difficulties which the first Methodists had to meet.

Another attack, of a different kind, must be mentioned: "The Use and Extent of Reason in Matters of Religion. A Sermon preached before the University of Oxford, at St. Mary's, June 8, 1756. By Thomas Griffith, M.A., Fellow of Pembroke College. Published at the request of the Vice-Chancellor and Heads of Houses. Oxford, 1756." 8vo, 25 pages. Of course, Mr. Griffith eschews Mr. Evans's vulgarities, and it is fair to add, that the Methodists are hardly *named;* but it is also undeniable, that it was against them that he was chiefly preaching.

Wesley began the new year by writing his "Address to the Clergy," which will be noticed hereafter. He was, also, not forgetful of his own itinerants. Joseph Cownley had had a fever in 1755, which had left a permanent pain in his head, and from which he suffered until his death, thirty-seven years afterwards. After consulting the principal physicians in Ireland, he consulted Wesley, who wrote thus.

"LONDON, *January* 10, 1756.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—I have no objection to anything but the blister. If it does good, well. But if I had been at Cork, all the physicians in Ireland should not have put it upon your head. Remember poor Bishop

Pearson. An apothecary, to cure a pain in his head, covered it; with a large blister. In an hour, he cried out, 'O my head, my head!' and was a fool ever after, to the day of his death. I believe cooling things (if anything under heaven), would remove that violent irritation of your nerves, which probably occasions the pain. Moderate riding may be of use; I believe, of more than the blister. Only do not take more labour upon you than you can bear. Do as much as you can, and no more. Let us make use of the present time. Every day is of importance. We know not how few days of peace remain.

"I am, dear Joseph, your affectionate friend and brother,

"JOHN WESLEY."[4]

On January 26 and three following days, Wesley paid a visit to Canterbury, where he had a congregation containing "abundance of soldiers, and not a few of their officers." Some might think, that a city like Canterbury, with its magnificent cathedral, its numerous parish churches, and giving its name to the primate of all England, would have had no need of the services of a man like Wesley; and, perhaps, if special circumstances had not existed here, Wesley would not have come. But it was here that Edward Perronet resided, in a part of the old archbishop's palace. In the suburbs, Vincent Perronet, Wesley's confidential friend, the archbishop of Methodism as he was sometimes called, was the proprietor of a farm. Above all, Canterbury was a great military depot, and such was the interest which Wesley felt in the welfare of soldiers, that this fact, in itself, was enough to bring him to

this far famed city. Love begets love: large numbers of these brave defenders of the country's rights and honour were converted, and became deeply attached to the few Canterbury Methodists who had shown them kindness. It is said, that on one occasion, when certain regiments were on their way to Holland, and had to pass through the city, such was their grateful remembrance of bygone days, that the Methodists, in the regiments, determined to avail themselves of the opportunity of meeting in class with their former leader; and this they did in such numbers, that the military class-meeting lasted for nine successive hours.[5] No wonder that Wesley loved men like these. He came in January, and again a month afterwards, when he dined with one of the colonels, who said: "No men fight like those who fear God; I had rather command five hundred such, than any regiment in his majesty's army."

At this period, the unfortunate Dr. Dodd was struggling into notoriety and fame. Such were his application and talents, that, though only a sizar of Cambridge university, he had, five years before, taken the degree of B.A. with distinguished credit. Leaving Cambridge, he came to London, depending for support solely upon his pen. Here he followed every species of amusement with dangerous avidity. Though only a little past twenty-one, he married the daughter of one of Sir John Dolben's domestics, and immediately took and furnished a large house in Wardour Street, which, however, at his father's remonstrance, he soon relinquished. He then obtained ordination, and had now the lectureship of St. Olave, Hart Street; and was also the preacher of Lady Moyer's lectures at St. Paul's. He quickly distinguished himself as one of the most

popular of the metropolitan preachers. Of his subsequent career we shall have to speak hereafter.

Dodd was now a young man in the twenty-seventh year of his age,—wild and extravagant, but sincere, earnest, and greatly beloved by the crowds that flocked to hear him. In the month of January, he wrote to Wesley on the subject of Christian perfection. Wesley, twice as old as himself, and in all respects his superior, had no personal acquaintance with him, but replied as follows.

"February 5, 1756.

"REVEREND SIR,—I am very willing to consider whatever you have to advance on the head of Christian perfection. When I began to make the Scriptures my study (about seven and twenty years ago), I began to see, that Christians are called to *love God with all their heart,* and to *serve Him with all their strength;* which is precisely what I apprehend to be meant by the scriptural term, *'perfection.'* After weighing this for some years, I openly declared my sentiments before the university, in the sermon on *the Circumcision of the Heart.* About six years after, in consequence of an advice I received from Bishop Gibson, 'Tell all the world what you mean by perfection,' I published my coolest and latest thoughts, in the sermon on that subject. I therein build on no authority, ancient or modern, but the Scripture. If this supports any doctrine, it will stand: if not, the sooner it falls, the better. Neither the doctrine in question, nor any other, is anything to me, unless it be the doctrine of

Christ and His apostles. If, therefore, you will please to point out to me any passages in that sermon, which are either contrary to Scripture, or not supported by it, and to show that they are not, I shall be full as willing to oppose, as ever I was to defend them. I search for truth—plain Bible truth, without any regard to the praise or dispraise of men. If you will assist me in this search, more especially by showing me where I have mistaken my way, it will be gratefully acknowledged by, reverend sir, your affectionate brother and servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."[6]

This noble letter was followed by further correspondence, showing that, instead of being wedded to his own peculiar doctrines, Wesley's supreme anxiety was to know, what is truth. The following is an extract from a letter which fills nearly seven printed pages of the *Arminian Magazine*.

"KINGSWOOD, *March* 12, 1756.

"REVEREND SIR,—You and I the more easily bear with each other, because we are both of us *rapid* writers, and, therefore, the more liable to mistake. I will thank you for showing me any mistake I am in; being not so tenacious of my opinions now, as I was twenty or thirty years ago. Indeed, I am not fond of any opinion as such. I read the Bible with what attention I can, and regulate all my opinions thereby, to the best of my understanding. But I am always willing to receive more light: particularly with regard to any less common opinions; because the explaining and defending them

takes up much time, which I can ill spare from other employments. Whoever, therefore, will give me more light with regard to Christian perfection, will do me a singular favour. The opinion I have concerning it, at present, I espouse merely because I think it is scriptural; if, therefore, I am convinced it is not scriptural, I shall willingly relinquish it. I have no particular fondness for the term. It seldom occurs either in my preaching or writings. It is my opponents who thrust it upon me continually, and ask me what I mean by it.

"That the term 'perfection' is a scriptural term, is undeniable. Therefore, none ought to object to the use of the *term,* whatever they may do to this or that *application* of it. I still think, that perfection is only another term for holiness, or the image of God in man. God *made man perfect,* I think, is just the same as He made him *holy,* or in *His own image.* You are the very first person I ever read of or spoke with, who made any doubt of it. Now *this perfection* does certainly admit of degrees. Therefore, I readily allow the propriety of that distinction, perfection of kinds, and perfection of degrees. Nor do I remember one writer, ancient or modern, who excepts against it.

"I never meant any *more* by perfection than the loving God with all our heart, and serving Him with all our strength. But I dare not say *less* than this. For it might be attended with worse consequences than you seem to be aware of. If there be a mistake, it is far more

dangerous on the one side than on the other. If I set the mark too high, I drive men into needless fears: if you set it too low, you drive them into hell fire.

"With regard to fathers in Christ, you say, I 'set aside the experience of the best Christians.' I did not tell you so: I say nothing about them. In a sermon of a single sheet, I had no room for anything but plain arguments from Scripture. I have somewhat to say, if need should be, from the head of authority likewise: yea, and abundantly more than you seem to apprehend. My father gave me, thirty years ago, to reverence the ancient church and our own. But I try every church and every doctrine by the Bible. This is the word by which we are to be judged in that day. Whatever further thoughts you are pleased to communicate, will be seriously considered by, reverend and dear sir, your affectionate brother and fellow labourer,

"JOHN WESLEY."[7]

Thus, for the present, ended his correspondence with William Dodd.

The year 1756 opened under a cloud of gloom. "Men," says Wesley, "were divided in their expectations concerning the ensuing year. Some believed it would bring a large harvest of temporal calamities; others, that it would be unusually fruitful of spiritual blessings."[8]

Nine months before, the government had announced, that war with France was inevitable. Fears were felt for Ireland, which was dissatisfied and turbulent. A million of money was voted for the defence of our American possessions. The French ambassador at London, and the English ambassador at Paris, were recalled, and a war commenced which cost millions of human lives, devastated no inconsiderable part of Europe, and carried carnage into all the four quarters of the globe. Even before the end of 1755, three hundred French merchant ships, many of them extremely rich, and about eight thousand French seamen, were brought into English ports. Still great alarm existed. There were hostile preparations in the channel; and a descent of the French upon England and Ireland was feared. On February 6, a national fast was observed, throughout the kingdom, with unusual seriousness. Such a fast in London had not been seen since the Restoration. Business was suspended, and churches and meeting houses were more than full.[9] Charles Wesley reprinted the" Hymns for Times of Trouble." George Whitefield published an "Address to persons of all Denominations," in which he spoke of "an insulting, enraged, and perfidious enemy advancing nearer and nearer to the British borders," "accompanied with a popish Pretender, and thousands of Romish priests, to invade, subdue, and destroy the bodies and substance, and to blind, deceive, and tyrannise over the souls and consciences of the people belonging to this happy isle."[10]

All this was right, and deserves to be commended; but, as usual, Wesley was more practical than either his friend

Whitefield, or than his brother Charles. On the 1st of March, he addressed the following communication to the Hon. James West, Esq.

"SIR,—A few days since, Mr. Whitefield and I desired a friend to ask your advice,—to whom it would be proper to make an offer of raising a company of volunteers for his majesty's service. We apprehended the number would be about five hundred. Finding Mr. Whitefield has since been persuaded, that such an offer is premature, I am constrained to make the following, independently of him: To raise, for his majesty's service, at least two hundred volunteers, to be supported by contributions among themselves; and to be ready, in case of invasion, to act for a year, if needed so long, at his majesty's pleasure: only within —— miles of London.

"If this be acceptable to his majesty, they beg to have arms out of the Tower, giving the usual security for their return; and some of his majesty's sergeants, to instruct them in the military exercise.

"I am now hastening to Bristol, on account of the election; but if my return to London would be of any service, you may command, sir,

"Your obedient servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."[11]

Wesley arrived in Bristol on the 3rd of March, and found "voters and non-voters ready to tear each other in pieces." The two candidates were Jarrit Smith, Esq., and John Spencer, Esq. Wesley, having lost his voice, was not able to preach or to speak to the whole society; but desired those members who were freemen to meet him privately. The result is given in the following letter to Mr. Blackwell, written the day after.

"BRISTOL, *March* 4, 1756.

"DEAR SIR,—If the election of Mr. Spencer be a thing of any consequence, then it was extremely ill judged to prevent his coming down. He ought to have been here at all hazards, if he were not very dangerously ill. His absence will probably turn the scale; and, if the Jacobites gain one member now, they will have two the next time. Whereas there is reason to believe, had Mr. Spencer appeared, there would have been no opposition.

"Last night, I desired all the freemen of our society to meet me after preaching, and enlarged a little upon his majesty's character, and the reasons we had to spare no pains in his service. I believe all who had been wavering were fully convinced. But some had absolutely promised to vote for Mr. Smith; it having been confidently reported, that both the candidates were equally acceptable to his majesty.

"The whole city is in confusion. Oh what a pity there could not be some way of managing elections of every sort, without this embittering of Englishmen against

Englishmen, and kindling fires which cannot be quenched in many years!

"I remain, dear sir, yours most affectionately,

"JOHN WESLEY."[12]

The poll at Bristol ended on the 16th of March, when the numbers stood: for Mr. Smith, 2418, for Mr. Spencer, 2347; majority for Mr. Smith, 71.[13]

Wesley spent nearly a month in Bristol and its neighbourhood, and in the principality of Wales. While preaching at Pill, a press-gang landed from a man-of-war, and came to the place of meeting, but, after listening awhile, quietly departed. At Coleford, the little society had been harassed by disputatious baptists and quakers, but was now united and loving. He visited Howel Harris, at Trevecca, and met with a hearty welcome. "I wondered," says he, "that Howel Harris did not go out and preach as usual; but he now informed me, he preached till he could preach no longer, his constitution being entirely broken. While he was thus confined, he was pressed in spirit to build a large house; though he knew not why, or for whom. But as soon as it was built, men, women, and children, without his seeking, came to it from all parts of Wales; and, except in the case of the Orphan House at Halle, I never heard of so many signal interpositions of Divine providence."

On the 29th of March, Wesley embarked at Holyhead for Ireland. On landing, he was surprised to "find all Ireland in

perfect safety. None had any more apprehension of an invasion, than of being swallowed up in the sea."

Wesley employed a month in Dublin; during which he met about a hundred children, whom the Methodist preachers catechized publicly twice a week; he conducted the first covenant service in Ireland, in which nearly four hundred of the Dublin society united; and he held a conference of the Irish preachers. He writes: "I never before found such unanimity among them. They appeared now to be not only of one heart, but likewise of one mind and judgment."

He wrote as follows to his friend Blackwell.

"DUBLIN, *April* 19, 1756.

"DEAR SIR,—While you, in England, are under I know not what apprehensions, all here are as safe as if they were already in paradise. We have no fortifying of seaports; no military preparations; but all is in absolute peace and safety. Both high and low seem fully persuaded, that the whole talk of an invasion is only a trick to get money.

"I purpose going to Cork directly; and, after two or three weeks, turning back toward the north of Ireland. If it please God that troublous times come between the design and the execution, I shall go as far as I can, and no farther. But I take no thought for the morrow. To-day I am determined, by His grace, to do the work of Him

that sent me. I find encouragement so to do; for all the people here are athirst for the word of life.

"Do you, at London, believe that the danger of an invasion is over?

"I am, dear sir, your affectionate servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."[14]

Wesley set out for Cork on April 26. On his way, he preached at Edinderry, where the little society had built a commodious preaching house. At Tullamore, he preached in the market-place, and spent an hour with certain military officers in the barracks. At Kilkenny, he found a number of soldiers meeting in class; and preached in one of the officers' rooms. "Still," he writes, "in Ireland, the first call is to the soldiery." At Waterford, he had to remove "misunderstandings and offences." The society was split asunder, and was reduced to six-and-twenty members; but he succeeded in winning one-and-thirty back. At Clonmel, which he pronounces the pleasantest town he had seen in Ireland, he preached once in a large loft, capable of containing five or six hundred people; and once in the open street. At the latter service, the mayor of the town, and a number of soldiers and officers, were present, and gave great attention; but, in the midst of the sermon, a drunken man came marching down the street, attended by a popish mob, with a club in one hand, and a large cleaver in the other, grievously cursing and blaspheming, and swearing he would cut off the preacher's head. The soldiers were for punishing the man, and Wesley had difficulty in hindering them. The brute began to strike the

congregation; and wounded a constable in the wrist. He himself was then knocked down, and the mayor and constables marched him away to gaol.

Wesley arrived at Cork on the 12th of May, and preached in the new chapel, which he describes as being "very near as large as that in Dublin; and far better finished in every respect, though at £400 less expense." This, like the chapel at Dublin, had apartments for the preachers. It stood till 1826, when it was rebuilt, and again opened for Methodist services in 1827.

Having spent three weeks in Cork and its immediate neighbourhood, Wesley, on the 7th of June, turned his face northwards.

He came to Ballygarrane, a town of Palatines, who "retain," says he, "much of the temper and manners of their own country, having no resemblance of those among whom they live. I found much life among this plain, artless, serious people. The whole town came together in the evening, and praised God for the consolation. Many of those, who are not outwardly joined with us, walk in the light of God's countenance; yea, and have divided themselves into classes, in imitation of our brethren, with whom they live in perfect harmony. In examining the society, I was obliged to pause several times. The words of the plain, honest people came with so much weight, as frequently to stop me for a while, and raise a general cry among the hearers."

The Palatines, as previously intimated, were refugees from the Palatinate of the Rhine, in Germany, and were driven from their homes for having embraced the principles of Luther and of the Reformation. Thousands fled to the camp of the Duke of Marlborough; and seven thousand were brought to England in 1709. Of these, three thousand were sent to America; a few remained in England; and the rest were removed to Ireland, and settled principally on the estate of Lord Southwell, in the neighbourhood of Ballingran, where each man was supplied with a musket, called "a Queen Anne," to protect himself and family; while for every man, woman, and child, eight acres of ground were leased, at the annual rental of five shillings per acre, which the government, who wished to encourage the protestant interest, engaged to pay for the first twenty years. Having no gospel minister, these fugitive Germans soon became "eminent for drunkenness, cursing, swearing, and an utter neglect of religion." Now they were again reformed; "an oath was rarely heard among them, or a drunkard seen"; they had built a preaching house; numbers were Methodists; and those that were not imitated the Methodists, by forming themselves into classes, and by holding meetings for Christian fellowship. They continued to be a serious, thinking people. "By their diligence," says Wesley, "they turned all their land into a garden." Days of darkness, however, soon came. Rents were so raised, that tenants were starved, and obliged to emigrate. In 1760, a company of these, now oppressed, Irish Palatines embarked at Limerick, as Christian emigrants, for America. The crowd who saw them leave little thought that two of that small band on board—Philip Embury, the local preacher, and Barbara Heck, the honest Methodist—were

destined, in the mysterious providence of God, to influence for good countless myriads of human beings, and that their names would live as long as the sun and moon endure. That little and unpretending ship contained the germ of all the Methodist churches of the United States; churches which have now more or less beneath their influence about eight millions of the population of that prosperous hemisphere.

Leaving the Palatines, Wesley and Thomas Walsh proceeded to Limerick. At Ennis, he preached in the "courthouse; to a huge, wild, unawakened multitude, protestants and papists, many of whom would have been rude enough if they durst."

Riding through the counties of Galway and Connaught, Wesley and Walsh came to Castlebar, in the county of Mayo. For ten days, this was the centre of their operations. Wesley preached repeatedly in the churches at Castlebar, Hollymount, and Ballyheen, to large and attentive congregations.

On the 19th of July, he first set foot in the province of Ulster, though his preachers had been labouring there, for several years, with great success. Many had been converted, and a considerable number united together in Christian fellowship.[15] At Lisburn, he preached in the market-house. The rector and his curate called upon him, and "spent two hours in free, serious, friendly conversation." The society was small, and, their preaching house, either now or soon after, was the shop of a stocking weaver, named William Black; his stocking frames filling a large portion of the place.[16] He

spoke "plain," he says, "both to the great vulgar and the small. But between Seceders, old, self conceited presbyterians, new-light men, Moravians, Cameronians, and formal churchmen, it is a miracle of miracles, if any here bring forth fruit to perfection."

He proceeded to Belfast, where the great proportion of the population were presbyterians. There were four places of worship belonging to the body, two of which were Socinian or Arian. The parish church, in Donegall Street, was the only one then belonging to the Establishment, with the Rev. William Bristow for its vicar,—an able, orthodox, and liberal Christian.

At Carrickfergus, he preached in the session house to most of the inhabitants of the town. Here he was opposed by the notorious James Relly, who "begun a dull, pointless harangue, about hirelings and false prophets." "He cawed, and cawed," says Wesley," but could utter nothing, hardly three words together." Wesley preached, at the desire of the prisoners, near the prison door, so that the inmates might hear him. He went to church, and heard "a lively, useful sermon"; but, naturally enough, shocked one of the Methodists who asked him "to go to the meeting," by saying, "I never go to a meeting." "He seemed," says he, "as much astonished as the old Scot, at Newcastle, who left us because we were Church of England men. We are so; although we condemn none who have been brought up in another way." So Wesley salved his conscience, and feebly tried to free himself from the charge of bigotry.

On the 4th of August, he got back to Dublin, and, on the 10th, set sail, with three of his preachers, Walsh, Haughton, and Morgan, for England, having spent nineteen weeks in the sister island.

Preaching, on his way, at Chester, Bolton, Manchester, Chelmerton, Wednesbury, and other places, he arrived in Bristol on August 25, and held a conference with about fifty of his preachers. The rules of the society were "read, and carefully considered one by one; and all agreed to abide by them all, and to recommend them with all their might." The rules of the bands were similarly considered, and, after making some verbal alterations, all consented to observe and to enforce them. The rules of Kingswood school were also reviewed, and were pronounced "agreeable to Scripture and reason." It was also determined to begin a subscription for the school in every place; and, if needful, to make a collection every year.

The principal point discussed was the same as that which occupied so much of the time and attention of the conference of 1755. Wesley writes: "We largely considered the necessity of keeping in the Church, and using the clergy with tenderness; and there was no dissenting voice. God gave us all to be of one mind and of one judgment. My brother and I closed the conference by a solemn declaration of our purpose never to separate from the Church; and all our brethren concurred therein."

This, among the Methodists, was the great question of the day, and deserves the reader's best attention. "The attempt to force the Methodists to an attendance upon the services of the Church, by refusing to them the sacraments from their own preachers, and by closing their chapels during the sabbath, except early in the morning, and in the evening, drove many of them into a state of actual separation both from the Church and their own societies, and placed them in the hands of Dissenters. At Leeds, Mr. Edwards had assumed the character of an independent minister, as Charles Skelton had done in London, and had drawn away the greater part of the society with him."[17]

Besides this, Edward Perronet, a man of great wit, had published a withering satire on the national Establishment, entitled "The Mitre," 12mo, 279 pages. As the book was suppressed by Wesley,[18] and is now so extremely scarce, that perhaps not more than a dozen copies can be found,[19] the following selection, from the concluding verses of the first canto, may be acceptable, and may serve to suggest an idea of all the others. They are intended to describe the Established Church.

"To what compare thy fertile womb?
A den, a cavern, or the tomb?
Why not compare to all?
Dark, hollow, teeming, large and deep;
Or wild, or dead, or fast asleep;
And stubborn as a wall.

Or like a *mart,* high vending place;
Open for every age and face,
Who loiter, steal, or range:
Or, like the common road or street,
Where knaves, as honest, walk or meet;
As *Albion's* grand *Exchange.*

In short, thou'rt like a common shore,
Filling and emptying, never pure
From pride, or pomp, or sin:
That, (speak they truth who say they know,)
With all thy *scavengers* can do,
They cannot keep thee clean."

The second canto, which consists of 363 stanzas, is devoted to the Church's "Divine right" to take tithes, and to enact, and to enforce laws, in reference to Easter dues, leases, etc.; to impose creeds; to preach; and to give sacraments. The following are the second and third verses.

"This *sprite* unseen, whence does it spring?
Is it a beggar or a king?
Or vile hermaphrodite?
To me *this* seems to be its sex;
It sometimes asks, and sometimes takes,
Careless of *wrong* or *right.*

I think its source is easy traced,
As are its claims in order placed,
Its furniture and crests;
A blended spawn of Church and State,
Its father—*Constantine* the *Great,*
Its dam—the pride of priests."

The third canto is principally devoted to preachers and preaching; the fourth to christenings, confirmations, Church emoluments, the Lisbon earthquake, and England's danger. No one will agree with all the author's sentiments; but all must admit the pungency and power of his withering wit.

Space forbids the insertion of lengthened extracts from Edward Perronet's suppressed production; but the following are fair specimens of its style and spirit. To express the indignation and disgust of a Churchman at the thought of receiving the sacrament from a lay preacher, whose call to preach is as much Divine as is that of the preacher episcopally ordained, the poet writes,—

"What, take the ordinance from them!
O, what a frenzy of a dream!
Nor *deacon* nor a priest!
Sooner renounce our *grace* or friends,
Than take it from *their* fingers' ends!
A lay, unhallowed beast!"

Perronet, in a note, denounces the doctrine of the Lord's supper being "a sacrifice"; and says, so long as this delusion

is maintained, the sacrament must be administered by priests, and by priests only. He writes: "only reduce this *simple* institution to its *primitive* and *scriptural* standard, and then, a handful of *private* individuals, or a single family, may communicate, as the Christians did of old, and the *sacrament* (so called) become, once more, *literally,* a daily sacrifice of *prayer* and *thanksgiving."* (Page 128.)

In another note (page 235), after referring to a book entitled, "The Dissenting Gentleman's Answer to the Rev. Mr. White," he says: "I was born, and am like to die in the tottering *communion* of the Church of England; but I despise her nonsense; and thank God, that I have once read a book, that no fool *can* answer, and that no *honest* man *will."* He then proceeds to pronounce the Church's doom. The reader must be satisfied with two stanzas only.

"Permit me to foretell thy *doom,*
(Which has in *part* been that of *Rome,*)
Thou wilt be clean abhorred'
The *nation* will expose thy shame,
Cast out as dung thy putrid name,
The vengeance of the Lord!

For while her *orders,* and her *rules,*
Are made the *standard* of thy *schools,*
And all beside of blame:
What other portion canst thou hope,
But that the wise should give thee up,
Her *ape*—without her *name?"*

The book throughout is written in the same severe,—almost savage style. Remembering this; and also remembering, that numbers of Methodists had already turned Dissenters; and that separation from the Church of England was still the great question agitating the Methodistic mind; no wonder that the subject was re-discussed in the conference of 1756, and that a most important correspondence followed.

While in Ireland, Wesley wrote to a clergyman, the Rev. Mr. Clark, of Hollymount,[20] in the following terms.

"CASTLEBAR, *July* 3, 1756.

"REVEREND SIR,—I still believe the episcopal form of church government to be scriptural and apostolical. I mean, well agreeing with the practice and writings of the apostles. But, that it is *prescribed* in Scripture, I do not believe. This opinion, which I once zealously espoused, I have been heartily ashamed of, ever since I read Bishop Stillingfleet's 'Irenicon.' I think he has unanswerably proved, that neither Christ nor His apostles *prescribe* any particular form of church government; and, that the plea of *Divine right* for diocesan episcopacy was never heard of in the primitive church.

"As to *heresy* and *schism,* I cannot find one text in the Bible, where they are taken in the modern sense. I remember no one scripture, wherein *heresy* signifies 'error in opinion,' whether fundamental or not; nor any, wherein *schism* signifies a 'separation front the church,'

whether with cause or without. I wish, sir, you would reconsider this point, and review the scriptures wherein those terms occur.

"I would take some pains to recover any one from error, or to reconcile him to our church, I mean, to the Church of England; from which I do not separate yet, and probably never shall; but I would take much more pains to recover any one from sin. One who lives and dies in error, or in dissent from our church, may yet be saved: but one who lives and dies in sin, must perish. I would to God, we could all agree both in opinions and outward worship; but, if this cannot be, may we not agree in holiness? This is the great desire of, reverend sir, your very humble servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."[21]

Nineteen days before the Bristol conference was opened, Charles Wesley addressed the following to the Rev. Samuel Walker, of Truro.

"BRISTOL, *August* 7, 1756.

"REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,—My brother is coming hither to a conference with his preachers. Another letter from you might, by the blessing of God, confirm him in his calling. He seems resolved to temporize with them no longer. Mr. Grimshaw is coming to strengthen his hands. We shall have a private conference before the general one.

"I should have broken off from the Methodists and my brother, in 1752, but for the agreement.[22] I think every preacher should sign that agreement, or leave us. What I desire of my brother is:—1. That the unsound, unrecoverable preachers should be let depart just now. 2. That the wavering should be confirmed, if possible, and established in their calling. 3. That the sound ones should be received into the strictest union and confidence, and, as soon as may be, prepared for orders.

"To this end, my brother ought, in my judgment, to declare and avow, in the strongest and most explicit manner, his resolution to live and die in the communion of the Church of England. (1) To take all proper pains to instruct and ground both his preachers and his flock, in the same: a treatise is much wanting on this subject, which he might write and spread through all his societies. (2) To wait with me on the archbishop, who has desired to see him, and tell him our whole design. (3) To advise, as far as they think proper, with such of our brethren the clergy as know the truth, and do nothing without their approbation.

"I was advised long ago, by Lady Huntingdon, to write you on this subject, but could not do it till now. Your concern for the cause of God will, I doubt not, induce you to do all you can to promote it, and to hinder the work from being destroyed; although it would not be destroyed (as I often tell the Methodists) even if they all desert it, and turn aside to vain sectarian janglings.

Remember at the throne of grace, dear sir, your meanest fellow servant,

"CHARLES WESLEY."[23]

The above was confidential. Mr. Walker treated it as such; and, nine days afterwards, not only wrote a long letter to Wesley himself, which will be noticed shortly, but also a long reply to Charles. The following are extracts.

"August 16, 1756.

"REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,—I am greatly concerned about the issue of the conference your brother is to have with his lay preachers. We had a short correspondence on that head last winter, wherein I saw he was greatly pushed by his preachers, unwilling to part with them, and yet not caring to part from the Church of England.

"Lay preachers, being contrary to the constitution of the Church of England, are, as far as that point goes, a separation from it. It is quite another question, whether lay preachers be agreeable to the appointment of the Spirit respecting the ministry. The matter is not, whether lay preachers be needful, or what their calling may be. Be the one and the other as it will, the thing is plainly inconsistent with the discipline of the Church of England; and so, in one essential point, setting up a church within her, which cannot be of her. When, therefore, it is asked, shall we separate from the Church of England? it should rather be asked, shall we make the separation, we have begun, a separation in all forms?

And if we do not think ourselves allowed to do this, shall we unite with her? We do not, unless lay preaching is laid aside.

"Yourselves must judge of the call and necessity of lay preachers, and whether that, or anything beside, may justify a separation. Meantime, there is a continual bar kept up between you and any regular clergyman, who cannot in conscience fall in with this measure. The most he can do is not to forbid them; he cannot take them by the hand. And so there must be two disunited ministrations of the word in the same place, by people who yet do call themselves of the Church of England.

"After all these considerations, might not an expedient be found out which might correspond with the word of God and the Church of England; and, at the same time, both remove all objections, and render the body of Methodists more useful? I have long and often thought of such a thing. My scheme is this. 1. That as many of the lay preachers as are fit for, and can be procured, ordination, be ordained. 2. That those who remain be not allowed to preach, but be set as inspectors over the societies, and assistants to them. 3. That they be not moved from place to place, to the end they may be personally acquainted with all the members of such societies. 4. That their business may be to purge and edify the societies under their care, to the end that no person be continued a member, whose conversation is not orderly and of good report.

"If this should be made an objection, that hereby lay preachers would be prevented from preaching abroad, and so much good be put a stop to, I would suggest it to be inquired into, whether this lay preaching hath been so much to the honour or interest of religion or Methodism as may be supposed? I remember, when it first began, I said and thought lay preaching would be the ruin of Methodism.

"The archbishop is greatly to be commended for his labours after peace; and, without question, if the measures are obtained which you desire, it will be very desirable he be waited on, and informed of them. But this must be done with fear, lest the leaders among you, being taken notice of by such great ones, do abate their zeal. Especially, it would be capable of a very bad interpretation, should any of them be advanced to considerable preferment.

"To my thinking, you will not gain much by getting the preachers to subscribe the agreement of March 10, 1752. If things are left as they are, they will break out at last, nor can anything less be expected at your brother's death, which is an event at no great distance, in all human appearance. Or should he live, still the evil is unremoved.

"I am yours, etc.,

"SAMUEL WALKER."[24]

In his letter to Wesley himself, Mr. Walker urges him to do something decisive in the way of putting Methodism on a footing that will "render it more serviceable to the church of Christ, and the Church of England." He propounds the plan detailed in his letter to Charles Wesley. He wishes him, at the approaching conference: (1) To declare himself as satisfied concerning the *unlawfulness* of separation from the Church of England, and as fully determined to dispute that matter no more with any who dissented from his opinion; (2) to act with vigour, in requiring his preachers to declare themselves, suffering such to depart as declined to concur with him, and to make all his societies acquainted with the action he had taken. He adds: "Delays will make matters worse. The disaffected will grow upon you, corrupt others, and imagine you are afraid of them; while also, in so unsettled a state of things, nothing can go forward; the enemy has advantage; and the interests of vital religion must suffer." He concludes by requesting that the business "be so conducted as to give no offence to Dissenters of any denomination, lest unadvisedly old disputes and party heats should be revived."[25]

Before his brother's arrival in Bristol, Charles Wesley replied to Mr. Walker, as follows.

"BRISTOL, *August* 21, 1756.

"DEAR SIR,—Your last brings a blessing with it. I hope to consider it fully with my brother, who is expected every hour.

"Lay preaching, it is allowed, is a partial separation, and may, but *need* not, end in a total one. The probability of it has made me tremble for years past, and kept me from leaving the Methodists. I stay not so much to do good, as to prevent evil. I stand in the way of my brother's violent counsellors, the object of both their fear and hate.

"The regulations you propose are the same in substance which I have been long contending for in vain. I know my brother will not hear of laying aside his lay preachers in so many words. All I can desire of him, to begin, is: (1) To cut off all their hopes of his leaving the Church of England; (2) to put a stop to any more new preachers, till he has entirely regulated, disciplined, and secured the old ones. If he wavers still, and trims between the Church and them, I know not what to do. As yet, it is in his power, if he exert himself, to stop the evil. But I fear he will never have another opportunity. The tide will be too strong for him, and bear him away into the gulf of separation. Must I not, therefore, enter my protest and give up the preachers formally to him? *Hoc Ithacus volit,* and they impatiently wait for it. The restless pains of bad men, to thrust me out from the Methodists, seem a plain argument for my continuing with them. I want light, and would have no will of my own, but prove what is that good and perfect will of God. Continue your prayers for, dear sir, your sincere, though weak and despised brother,

"CHARLES WESLEY."[26]

Wesley arrived; the conference was held; and, a few days afterwards, the following sensible and Christian letter was sent to Mr. Walker.

"KINGSWOOD, *September* 3, 1756.

"REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,—I have one point in view, to promote, so far as I am able, vital, practical religion. On this single principle, I have hitherto proceeded, and taken no step but in subservience to it. With this view, when I found it to be absolutely necessary for the continuance of the work which God had begun in many souls, and which their *regular pastors* generally used all possible means to destroy, I permitted several of their brethren, whom I believed God had called thereto, and qualified for the work, to comfort, exhort, and instruct those who were athirst for God, or who walked in the light of His countenance. But, as the persons so qualified were few, and those who wanted their assistance very many, it followed, that most of these were obliged to travel continually from place to place; and this occasioned several regulations from time to time, which were chiefly made in our conferences.

"So great a blessing has, from the beginning, attended the labour of these itinerants, that we have been more and more convinced, every year, of the more than lawfulness of this proceeding. And the inconveniences, most of which we foresaw from the very first, have been both fewer and smaller than were

expected. Rarely two in one year, out of the whole number of preachers, have either separated themselves or been rejected by us. A great majority have all along behaved as becometh the gospel of Christ; and, I am clearly persuaded, still desire nothing more than to spend and be spent for their brethren.

"'How these may be settled on such a footing, as one might wish they might be after my death,' is a weighty point, and has taken up many of my thoughts for several years; but I know nothing yet. The steps I am now to take are plain. I see broad light shining upon them; but the other part of the prospect I cannot see; clouds and darkness rest upon it. 'To follow my own conscience, without any regard to consequences, or prudence, so called,' is a rule which I have closely followed for many years, and hope to follow to my life's end.

"The first of your particular advices is, 'to keep in full view the interest of Christ's church in general, and of practical religion; not considering the Church of England, or the cause of Methodism, but as subordinate thereto.' This advice I have punctually observed from the beginning, as well as at our late conference. You advise, (2) 'to keep in view the unlawfulness of a separation from the Church of England.' To this likewise I agree. It cannot be lawful to separate from it, unless it be unlawful to continue in it. You advise, (3) 'fully to declare myself on this head, and to suffer no dispute concerning it.' The very same thing I wrote to

my brother from Ireland. And we have declared ourselves without reserve. Nor was there any at the conference otherwise minded; those who would have aimed at dispute had left us before. All our preachers, as well as ourselves, purpose to continue in the Church of England. Nor did they ever before so freely and explicitly declare themselves on this subject.

"Your last advice is, 'that as many of our preachers as are fit for it, be ordained; and that the others be fixed to certain societies, not as preachers, but as readers or inspectors.'

"You oblige me by speaking your sentiments so plainly: with the same plainness I will answer. So far as I know myself, I have no more concern for the reputation of Methodism, than for the reputation of Prester John.

"Is that which you propose a better way? This should be coolly and calmly considered.

"If I mistake not, there are now in Cornwall about four and thirty of these societies, part of whom now experience the love of God; part are more or less earnestly seeking it. Four preachers,—Peter Jaco, Thomas Johnson, W. Crabb, and William Allwood,—design, for the ensuing year, partly to call other sinners to repentance, but chiefly to guide and feed those few feeble sheep.

"Now suppose, that we can effect, that Peter Jaco and Thomas Johnson be ordained and settled in the curacies of Buryan and St. Just; and suppose William Crabb and William Allwood fix at Launceston and the Dock, as readers and exhorters; will this answer the end I have in view, so well as travelling through the county?

"It will not answer it so well, even with regard to those societies with whom Peter Jaco and Thomas Johnson have settled. Be their talents ever so great, they will, ere long, grow dead themselves, and so will most of those that hear them. I know, were I myself to preach one whole year in one place, I should preach both myself and most of my congregation asleep. Nor can I ever believe, it was ever the will of our Lord, that any congregation should have one teacher only. We have found, by long and constant experience, that a frequent change of teachers is best. This preacher has one talent, that another. No one, whom I ever knew, has all the talents which are needful for beginning, continuing, and perfecting the work of grace in a whole congregation.

"But suppose this would better answer the end with regard to those two societies, would it answer in those where William Allwood and William Crabb were settled as inspectors or readers? First, who shall feed them with the milk of the word? The ministers of their parishes? Alas, they cannot: they themselves neither know, nor live, nor teach the gospel. These readers? Can then either they, or I, or you, always find something

to read our congregation, which will be as exactly adapted to their wants, and as much blessed to them, as our preaching? And here is another difficulty still: what authority have I to forbid their doing what I believe God has called them to do? I apprehend, indeed, that there ought, if possible, to be both an outward and inward call to this work; yet, if one of the two be supposed wanting, I had rather want the outward than the inward call. I rejoice, that I am called to preach the gospel both by God and man. Yet, I acknowledge, I had rather have the Divine without the human, than the human without the Divine call.

"But waiving this, and supposing these four societies to be better provided for than they were before, what becomes of the other thirty? Will they prosper as well when they are left as sheep without a shepherd? The experiment has been tried again and again, and always with the same event; even the strong in faith grew weak and faint; many of the weak made shipwreck of faith; the awakened fell asleep; and sinners, changed for a while, returned as a dog to the vomit. And so, by our lack of service, many of the souls perished for whom Christ died. Now, had we willingly withdrawn our service from them, by voluntarily settling in one place, what account of this could we have given to the great Shepherd of all our souls?

"I cannot, therefore, see how any of those four preachers, or any others in like circumstances, can ever,

while they have health and strength, ordained or unordained, fix in one place, without a grievous wound to their own conscience, and damage to the *general* work of God. Yet, I trust, I am open to conviction; and your further thoughts on this, or any subject, will be always acceptable to, reverend and dear sir, your very affectionate brother and fellow labourer,

"JOHN WESLEY."[27]

Such a letter ought to have been conclusive. By its practical common sense, it demolishes the fanciful theory of Charles Wesley and his friend Walker. The matter, however, was far from being settled. Walker accused Wesley of timidity. "He is," says he, in a letter to Charles Wesley, "hindered by his own fears, which give the preachers an advantage they could not otherwise possibly have. He sees the necessity of either laying the preachers aside, or making them a separate church; while also, on the one hand, his conscience will not digest separation; and, on the other, he has had too great a hand in setting them up, to think of pulling them down. It has been a great fault all along, to have made the low people of your council; and, if there be not power enough left in your brother's hands to do as he sees fit, they will soon show him they will be their own masters."[28]

Mr. Walker, on September 2, wrote to the Rev. Thomas Adam, rector of Wintringham, telling him that the affair had become exceedingly serious; and that, in his opinion, unless the lay preachers were laid aside, it would end in separation.

He adds, that Charles Wesley might consent to their dismissal; but Wesley himself would not.[29]

Three weeks later, Adam replied to Walker in the following, not over charitable, terms.

"*September* 21, 1756.

"DEAR SIR,—Methodism, as to its external form, is such a deviation from the rule and constitution of the Church of England, that all attempts to render it consistent must be in vain. Lay preaching is a manifest irregularity, and would not be endured in any Christian society. To salve this sore, you say, *let some of their lay preachers be ordained.* But suppose they were, to what end would they be ordained? That they might still go on to preach in fields, or private houses, and hold separate meetings? This would be as great a breach upon the order of the Church as ever, and perhaps attended with greater inconveniences than their present practice. J. Wesley will not, cannot give up the point of lay preaching; it will be giving up all; he must cry *peccavi*, and his heart will hold him a tug before it comes to that. Upon the whole, my judgment is, that they have embarrassed themselves past recovery; and must either go on in their present form, or separate totally and openly. The latter, many think; would be more ingenuous than an underhand separation. I think you must e'en let the Methodists alone. I do not see what help you can afford them, consistently with their

principles and your own. 'Every plant,' etc., should make us tremble on one side and the other.

"I am, reverend and dear sir,

"Your unworthy brother,

"THOS. ADAM."[30]

Amid such difficulties, such friends, and such opponents, poor perplexed Wesley had to grope his way as he best could. For a time, the feverish anxiety of his brother somewhat subsided. Within a week after the conference, he wrote to Mr. Walker, his confidential, if not wise, adviser, as follows.

"BRISTOL, *September* 6, 1756.

"DEAR SIR,—Between forty and fifty, or almost all, our itinerant preachers were present at our conference. I have talked largely with each, some of whom I had not known before so much as by name. Mr. Venn, a clergyman, was with us the whole time. Since our last conference at Leeds, two or three of our preachers, of a froward unhumbled spirit, have left us. The rest, except two here and two in Ireland, are, I have good reason to believe, men of a single eye, and humble, teachable spirit. My brother seems farther from a separation than ever. This morning, he set out for London; to print a new edition of his Notes. He has also undertaken to write a treatise, to confirm the Methodists in the Church. Next Monday, I expect to set out for the north on the same errand. Continue your prayers for, dear sir, your weakest brother,

"CHARLES WESLEY."[31]

On September 17, Charles Wesley started upon his northern mission. At Walbridge, he exhorted the forty-three members of the Methodist society "to continue steadfast in the communion of the Church of England." At Cheltenham, he writes: "I did not forget to confirm the brethren in their calling; that is, to live and die in the Church of England." At Sheffield, he "spake plainly and lovingly to the society of continuing in the Church; and, though many of them were Dissenters and predestinarians, none were offended." At Rotherham, he says: "I plainly told the society, that 'there is no salvation *out of the church,'* that is, out of the mystical body of Christ, or the company of faithful people." At Leeds, he tells us, the society "were unanimous to stay in the Church, because the Lord stays in it, and multiplies His witnesses therein, more than in any other church in Christendom." At York, he writes: "I exhorted them to go to church, that they might be found of Jesus in the temple." At Seacroft, where Grimshaw joined him, he "strongly exhorted the society to continue stedfast in fellowship with each other, and the whole Church of England." At Heptonstall, he "warned them of the wiles of the devil, whereby he would draw them away from the church, and the other means of grace." At Manchester, he challenged them "to show him one Methodist who had ever prospered by turning Dissenter." While here, he also addressed his brother as follows.

> "One thing might prevent, in great measure, the mischiefs which will probably ensue after our death; and that is, *greater, much greater deliberation and care in admitting preachers.* Ought any new preacher to be

received before we know, that he is grounded, not only in the doctrines we teach, but in the discipline also, and, particularly, in the communion of the Church of England? Ought we not to try what he can answer a baptist, a quaker, a papist, as well as a predestinarian or Moravian? If we do not insist on that στοργη for our desolate mother as a prerequisite, yet should we not be well assured, that the candidate is no enemy to the Church? Is it not our duty to stop J. C." [Joseph Cownley?] "and such like, from railing and laughing at the Church? Should we not now, at least, shut the stable door? The short remainder of my life is devoted to this very thing, to follow our sons with buckets of water, to quench the flame of strife and division, which they have or may kindle."

He also wrote, from the same place, to his friend Grimshaw, under date of October 29: "I could not leave this poor shattered society so soon as I proposed. They have not had fair play from our treacherous sons in the gospel. I have once more persuaded them to go to church and sacrament, and stay to carry them thither the next Lord's day. Nothing but grace can keep our children, after our departure, from running into a thousand sects, a thousand errors."

He likewise wrote to his "beloved brethren at Leeds, etc.," as follows: "I knew beforehand, that the Sanballats and Tobiahs would be grieved when they heard there was a man come to seek the welfare of the

Church of England. I expected they would pervert my words, as if I should say, *'The Church could save you.'* But let not their slanders move you. Continue in the old ship. Jesus hath a favour for our Church, and is wonderfully visiting and reviving His work in her."[32]

On November 6, he got back to Bristol, and, ten days later, sent the following furious letter to his brother—a letter now for the first time published.

"BRISTOL, *November* 16, 1756.

"Doubtless you guard in your 'Preservative' against that levelling, devilish, root and branch, spirit, which breathes in every line of the 'Mitre.' I kept my own thoughts till you imparted yours, with which I entirely agree. Only you do him too much honour by naming him with the *Independent Whig.* The religion of both is equal, but Ted exceeds in bitterness and malice beyond all comparison. Much wit I can see in the *Independent Whig;* but in the 'Mitre' none at all. Such insufferable dulness would surfeit every reader, but those whose hearts are as thoroughly corrupted as the writer's. I marvel how he can look you or me in the face, after writing and propagating such a book; how he can pretend to be our fellow labourer! Notwithstanding his promise to us, at J. Jones', he continues to spread his notions with his book. He does not sell, but gives it to *our* preachers and friends. One he made me the bearer of to York. I have heard none commend its wit, but Mrs. James, and Christopher Hopper, which convinces me

nothing is too stupid to do hurt. Is it right or fair, that he should go on to poison our children, and wound us through the influence which we lend him? I love both him and Charles and the whole family. So you do, as we have abundantly shown. But must we, therefore, suffer this madman to cast firebrands, and to tear our flock to pieces? I know he is totally fallen from grace; and *can* I, *ought* I, ever to trust him till he is sensible of his fall? In my private capacity, I show him what love and civility I can, and intend to continue his friend, as far as he is capable of receiving good from me; but, as ministers of Christ, as guardians of this particular church, as fathers of the poor Methodists, what ought we to do? Let us first agree betwixt ourselves, and cut off all his hopes of ever coming between us. Then, whatever you say, or do, or judge, I say, do, and judge the same. Only, what we do, we must do quickly. You can better write than speak your mind. He stays here another week. Suppose you wrote him a letter (for me also to subscribe and deliver), and set before him some of the things which he hath done.

"1. He has set himself against us, almost from the beginning, counteracting us with our preachers, spiriting them up, poisoning, proselyting them to his own wretched notions.

"2. He has withstood the utmost efforts both you and I have used to make him our friend.

"3. He has stirred up persecution against us, and given such a wound to the cause as may never be healed. For of all the prejudices, bitterness, disaffection of both preachers and people, he is *et caput et frons.* Unless he says Joseph Cownley corrupted him, and he his brother Charles.

"4. To sum up all, and perpetuate his evil, he has sent forth his 'Mitre,' in open contradiction of all we have said, wrote, done from the beginning. If we say, the Church of Christ and England are but one, he says, the Church of Rome and England are but one. If we condemn lay administering, he attempts to justify and prove it. What Charles told Dr. Tucker, that he had not one sentiment in common with the Church of England, Ted might say with equal truth.

"At Canterbury, I saw our Sacrament Hymns, which Ted has scratched out and blotted, hardly leaving twenty entire lines. How can two walk together except they be agreed? How can he pretend to labour with us? He has no power over his own will or words. If, in a relenting fit, he promises us to be quiet, his vanity soon betrays him again into his old spirit and conversation.

"Let us try, with the help of God, whether we cannot hinder his doing further mischief. Things are come to this, that we must conquer or be conquered. My advice is: 1. That you write and insist upon his keeping his promise to us, by calling in and destroying his book. If

he will part with that right eye, we may have some hope of him. 2. That he settle to *something.* He is unwilling to break with us—(1) Because he still in some sort loves us; (2) because he comes recommended by us to all our friends. But his own soul can never recover while he wanders from house to house in such a lounging way of life. Therefore, let him go home to his wife, and do as much good and as little harm as he can at Canterbury. Poor Mr. Lepine he had almost assimilated. I hope your late visit has set him right. I will join you in your *kindest* treatment of him; but make him not your companion or counsellor. Keep your absolute superiority, by steady, serious love. The same behaviour might suit his brother also. I have much more to say, but time and paper fail. When do you expect that your Notes will be out? I am half choked with a cold, yet setting out for the country. Farewell!

CHARLES WESLEY."

"To Mr. Windsor, in King Street,
Tower Hill, London, for J. W. with speed."

Thus was Wesley badgered. It certainly was strange, that one of the fiercest attacks upon the Church of England, ever published, should be written by a Methodist itinerant preacher; and that the preacher should be the son of a man, who, at one time at least, was Wesley's most confidential friend, Vincent Perronet; and further, that the writer should have lived on terms of the greatest intimacy with both Wesley and his brother. The book contains not a little which cannot be commended; but Charles Wesley's opinion of its dulness

and want of wit is preposterously opposed to fact. Charles was in a terrible fever of Church of England excitement; and all that he said and did, at this momentous period of Methodistic history, must be taken *cum grano salis.* Why Vincent Perronet was not consulted in these grave affairs we are left to guess.

Charles Wesley was most anxious to have the present preachers ordained, or otherwise attached to settled societies; and also to stop the employment of additional itinerants, or, at all events, without subjecting them to a most searching ordeal. On the other hand, his brother continued to employ them as usual; and, during this very year of 1756, called to the itinerant work five fresh labourers—William Allwood, John Catermole, Robert Gillespy, Thomas Greaves, and Matthew Lowes; while the only ones who left him were John Haughton, John Maddern, and James Morris.[33] Many, indeed most, of his preachers were without learning, but not without sense. They were thoroughly converted; and, though destitute of other knowledge, knew the Scriptures, and how to teach the gospel plan of salvation. In a letter, written at the close of the Bristol conference, Wesley says:—

"BRISTOL, *August* 31, 1756.

. . . "A careless reader of the Address may think I make it necessary for a minister to have much learning; and, thence, imagine I act inconsistently; seeing many of our preachers have no learning at all. But the answer is easy. First, I do not make any learning necessary even for a minister,—the minister of a parish, who, as such,

undertakes single to guide and feed, to instruct and govern, that whole flock,—but the knowledge of the Scriptures; although many branches of learning are highly expedient for him. Secondly, these preachers are not ministers; none of them undertakes single the care of a whole flock; but ten, twenty, or thirty, one following and helping another; and all, under the direction of my brother and me, undertake jointly what (as I judge) no man in England is equal to alone."[34]

In another letter, to Mr. Norton, he writes thus.

"KINGSWOOD, *September* 3, 1756.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—In your letters of July, and August 27, you charge me first with *self inconsistency,* in tolerating lay preaching, and not lay administering; and, secondly, with showing a spirit of *persecution,* in denying my brethren the liberty of *acting,* as well as *thinking,* according to their own *conscience.*

"As to the former charge, the fact alleged is true; but it is not true, that I am *self inconsistent* in so doing. I tolerate lay preaching, because I conceive there is an absolute necessity for it, inasmuch as, were it not, thousands of souls would perish everlastingly; yet I do not tolerate *lay administering,* because I do not conceive there is any such necessity for it; seeing it does not appear, that, if this is not at all, one soul will perish for want of it.

"As to the latter charge, I again allow the fact; but deny the consequence. I mean, I allow the fact thus far; some of our preachers, who are not ordained, think it quite right to administer the Lord's supper, and believe it would do much good. I think it quite wrong, and believe it would do much hurt. Hereupon I say: 'I have no right over your conscience, nor you over mine; therefore, both you and I must follow our own conscience. You believe it is a duty to administer do so; and therein follow your own conscience. I verily believe it is a sin; which consequently I dare not *tolerate;* and herein I follow mine.' Yet, this is no *persecution,* were I to separate from our society, (which I have not done yet,) those who practise what I believe is contrary to the word, and destructive of the work, of God.

"If John Jones, my brother, or any other preacher, has preached sharply on this head, I certainly am a stranger to it, and therefore not answerable for it. I persecute no man on this account, or any other; and yet, I cannot *consent,* that any of our lay preachers should either preach predestination, or administer the sacraments, to those who are under my care.

"But after all this pother, What is this persecution, concerning which you make so loud an outcry? Why, some of our lay preachers did what we thought was both ill in itself, and likely to do much harm among the people. Of this, complaint was made to me. And what did I do? Did I expel those preachers out of the

community? Not so. Did I forbid them to preach any more? Not so neither. Did I degrade them from itinerant to local preachers? Not so much as this. I told them, I thought the thing was wrong, and would do hurt, and therefore *advised* them to do it no more. Certainly this is a *new* species of *persecution!* You might as well call it *murder*. I have used no *arbitrary*, no *coercive* power; nay, no power at all in this matter, but that of love. I have given no man an ill word or an ill look on that account. I have not withdrawn my confidence or my conversation from any. I have dealt with every man as, if the tables were turned, I should desire he would deal with me.

"I am, your affectionate brother,

"JOHN WESLEY."[35]

We add only one more extract on this subject.

"LONDON, *September* 10, 1756.

"REVEREND SIR,—Concerning diocesan episcopacy, there are several questions I should be glad to have answered. 1. Where is it prescribed in Scripture? How does it appear, that the apostles settled it in all the churches they planted? How does it appear, that they settled it in any, as to make it of perpetual obligation? It is allowed, 'Christ and His apostles did put the churches under some form of government or other'; but, (1) Did they put all churches under the same precise form? If they did, (2) Can we prove this to have been

the very same which now remains in the Church of England?

"I am very far from being 'quite indifferent to any man's opinions in religion'; neither do I 'conceal my sentiments.' Few men less. I have written severally, and printed, against deists, papists, mystics, quakers, anabaptists, presbyterians, Calvinists, and antinomians. An odd way of ingratiating myself with them! Nevertheless, in all things indifferent, but not at the expense of truth, I rejoice to please all men for their good to edification.

"I have humoured you, so as to dispute with you a little; but with what probability of success? What man of threescore (unless perchance one in an age) was ever *convinced* of anything? Is not an old man's motto, *Non persuadebis etiamsi persuaseris?* When we are past middle age, does not a kind of stiffness and inflexibility steal upon the mind as well as the body? And how does this bar the gate against all conviction! O sir, what an idle thing is it for you to dispute about lay preachers! Is not a lay preacher preferable to a drunken preacher? to a cursing, swearing preacher?

"Yours, etc.,

"JOHN WESLEY."[36]

These are long extracts; perhaps, in the opinion of some, too long; but it must be borne in mind, that the subject of lay preaching, and of separation from the Established Church,

was one of the weightiest questions with which Wesley had to deal. For nearly fifty years, it occasioned him the utmost anxiety. Besides, there is no point upon which he has been more misunderstood than this. It is one which excites more interest now than it did even a century ago. It is high time that the controversy was settled. To help in doing this, we have collected all the facts with which we are acquainted. They have been stated with the utmost honesty. Comment would be easy; it is even tempting; but the reader can form his own opinions on the facts presented, and can comment for himself. All must agree, however, that Wesley was very far from being as rigid a Churchman as was his brother Charles, and as the clergy of the present day wish us to believe. This is a subject which will, again and again, demand attention.

On September 6, Wesley left Bristol for London, where he continued reading, writing, publishing, and preaching till the year was ended. Two days were spent in, what he calls, "settling his temporal business," the result of which was the following entry in his journal: "It is now about eighteen years since I begun writing and printing books; and how much in that time have I gained by printing? Why, on summing up my accounts, I found that, on March 1, 1756, I had gained, by printing and preaching together, a debt of £1236."

On September 10, he writes: "I preached at a famous place, commonly called 'The Bull and Mouth meeting'; which had belonged, I suppose, near a hundred years, to the people called Quakers. As much of real religion as was ever preached

there, I trust will be preached there still; and perhaps in a more rational, scriptural, and intelligible manner."

A month later, he says: "I preached to a huge multitude in Moorfields, on 'Why will ye die, O house of Israel?' It is field preaching which does the execution still; for usefulness there is none comparable to it."

Among other books, he read the following: "The case of Marriages between near Kindred particularly considered, with respect to the Doctrine of Scripture, the Law of Nature, and the Laws of England." By John Fry. 8vo, 146 pages. "It is," says he, "the best tract I ever read upon the subject; I suppose the best that is extant. And two points, I think, he has fully proved: (1) That many marriages, commonly supposed to be unlawful, are neither contrary to the law of nature, nor the revealed law of God, nor the law of the land. (2) That ecclesiastical courts have no right to meddle with any case of this kind." Twenty-nine years afterwards, Wesley read the same work again, and wrote: "I wonder it is not more known, as there is nothing on the head like it in the English tongue. I still think, he has proved, to a demonstration, that no marriages are forbidden, either by the law of God or of England, but those of brothers and sisters, and those in the ascending and descending line." Wesley's opinion on this subject is not without interest, especially at the present day, when discussion is rife respecting the propriety of repealing the law of the land which renders null and void the marriage of a man to his deceased wife's sister. Fry was strongly in favour of such marriages, and Wesley endorsed the soundness

of his arguments. In doing that, Wesley showed that, rather than sacrifice what he considered right and true, he was willing to be branded as a heterodox son of that church, which, by "the most reverend father in God, Matthew Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury," had issued an "Admonition," prohibiting all matrimonial alliances of this description.

Another book he read was Voltaire's "Henriade." He remarks: "Voltaire is a very lively writer, of a fine imagination; and allowed, I suppose, by all competent judges, to be a perfect master of the French language; and, by him, I am more than ever convinced, that the French is the poorest, meanest language in Europe; that it is no more comparable to the German or Spanish, than a bagpipe is to an organ; and that, with regard to poetry in particular, considering the incorrigible uncouthness of their measure, and their always writing in rhyme, it is as impossible to write a fine poem in French, as to make fine music upon a jew's harp."

Wesley also read a "Dissertation in Defence of the Hebrew Points," by Leusden, the eminent professor of Hebrew and Jewish antiquities at Utrecht, and says: "I was fully convinced, there is, at least, as much to be said on this as on the other side of the question. But how is it, that men are so positive on both sides, while demonstration is to be had on neither?"

The reading of Leusden was, doubtless, intended as a preparation for the reading of another author, whose works were then attracting great attention. John Hutchinson was

born at Spennythorn, in Yorkshire, in 1674. He was a man of undoubted genius; and, among other things, invented a chronometer, for the discovery of the longitude at sea, an instrument which obtained the approbation of Sir Isaac Newton. He is chiefly known, however, as the founder of a system of theology and philosophy, based on a fanciful etymology of Hebrew words. He held, that the Old Testament Scriptures were written in Hebrew without points; that this was the language of paradise; and that every Hebrew root has some important meaning, and is designed to signify spiritual and mental things. In this way, Hutchinson turned history into prophecy, and made Scripture sentences to mean what they were never meant to mean, and what they were incapable of meaning. He died in 1737; and, in 1748, his ingenious but fanciful productions were published in twelve volumes octavo, and obtained not a few admirers, including, among others, Dr. Samuel Clarke and Bishop Horne.

For some reason, Wesley began to read Mr. Hutchinson's philosophy with all the itinerant preachers at that time assembled in London; but says, he was not able to admire either "his sense or his spirit. His hypothesis was unsupported by Scripture; very ingenious, but quite precarious. When Dr. Bentley published his Greek Testament, one remarked: 'Pity but he would publish the Old; then we should have two New Testaments!' It is done. Those who receive Mr. Hutchinson's emendations certainly have two New Testaments! In order to learn all I could from his works, I read over the Glasgow abridgment with Mr. Thomas Walsh, the best Hebrean I ever knew. I never asked him the meaning of a Hebrew word but

he would tell me how often it occurred in the Bible, and what it meant in each place! We both observed, that Mr. Hutchinson's whole scheme is built upon etymologies; the most uncertain foundation in the world. We observed, secondly, that, if the points be allowed, all his building sinks at once; and, thirdly, that, setting them aside, many of his etymologies are forced and unnatural. Mr. Hutchinson affirms, the points were invented by the Masorites, only thirteen or fourteen hundred years ago, in order to destroy the sense of Scripture. I doubt this: who can prove it? Who can prove they were not as old as Ezra, if not coeval with the language? Let any one give a fair reading only to what Dr. Cornelius Bayley has offered in the preface to his Hebrew Grammar, and he will be as sick of reading without the points as I am."[37]

During his autumnal sojourn in the metropolis, Wesley took to task the editor of the *Monthly Review,* for "jumbling together, and condemning by the lump, the whole body. Of people called Methodists," the Moravians being bound up in the branded bundle. He also wrote a long letter, under the date of October 15, to his old friend Mr. Hervey, pointing out the excellencies and defects of his "Dialogues between Theron and Aspasio." "In the first dialogue, there are several just and strong observations, which may be of use to every serious reader." "The description in the second is often too laboured, and the language too stiff and affected; but the reflections on the creation make abundant amends for this." "The third and fourth dialogues contain an admirable illustration and confirmation of the great doctrine of Christ's satisfaction; yet

there are a few passages liable to exception." In the fifth and sixth dialogues, the author unnecessarily contends for the imputation of Christ's righteousness. "The seventh and eighth are full of important truths"; but contain sentiments and expressions to which Wesley cannot yield assent. "The ninth proves excellently well, that we cannot be justified by our works." The tenth contains several passages to which he takes exception. The eleventh proves, by irrefragable arguments, the doctrine of original sin, and has not a single sentence liable to objection. "The twelfth, likewise, is unexceptionable; and contains," says he, "such an illustration of the wisdom of God in the structure of the human body, as, I believe, cannot be paralleled in either ancient or modern writers." "The former part of the thirteenth dialogue is admirable;" to the latter he had some objection.

In the same style and spirit, he criticises the "Letters," and thus concludes his critique, which fills eighteen printed pages.

> "Upon the whole, I cannot but wish, that the plan of these dialogues had been executed in a different manner. Most of the grand truths of Christianity are herein both explained and proved with great strength and clearness. Why was anything intermixed which could prevent any serious Christian's recommending them to all mankind? anything which must necessarily render them exceptionable to so many thousands of the children of God? In practical writings, I studiously abstain from the very shadow of controversy. Nay, even in controversial, I do not willingly write one line, to

which any but my opponent would object. For opinions, shall I destroy the work of God? Then am I a bigot indeed. Much more, if I would not drop any mode of expression rather than offend either Jew, or Gentile, or the church of God.

"I am, with sincerity, dear sir,

"Your affectionate brother and servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."[38]

Hervey did not reply to this, but, a few years later, Wesley's letter led to great unpleasantness, which will have to be introduced hereafter. Hervey died in 1758. Wesley lost one friend, but gained another, in some respects his superior. John Fletcher wrote to him, on November 24, 1756, as his "spiritual guide," asking his advice respecting his entering into orders. He tells him that, seven years ago, when first converted, he resolved to dedicate himself to the service of the church, and prosecuted study with that design. Feeling himself, however, unequal to the burden of ministerial responsibilities, and "disgusted by the necessity he should be under to subscribe to the doctrine of predestination, he yielded to the desire of his friends, who wished him to go into the army." The disappointments with which he met occasioned his leaving Switzerland, and coming to England. "Here he was thrice called outwardly to enter into orders"; but had hitherto been prevented. Six weeks ago, a gentleman had offered him a living, and a clergyman a title. The living he intended to decline, as, he thought, he "could preach with more fruit in his own country and in his own tongue"; but he wishes Wesley to decide for him, "whether he can and must

make use of the offered title to go into orders. I know," says he, "how precious is your time. I desire no long answer; *persist*, or *forbear*, will satisfy and influence, sir, your unworthy servant, JOHN FLETCHER."[39]

Wesley said, "Persist," and, within four months afterwards, the young Swiss, in the twenty-eighth year of his age, was ordained, at Whitehall, London; and, "on the same day, being informed that Wesley had no one to help him at West Street chapel, he left as soon as the ordination was over, and assisted him in the administration of the Lord's supper."[40] Wesley writes: "How wonderful are the ways of God! When my bodily strength failed, and none in England were able and willing to assist me, He sent me help from the mountains of Switzerland; and a helpmeet for me in every respect: where could I have found such another?"

Thus began the lifelong friendship of these distinguished men, and thus commenced the renowned ministry of the vicar of Madeley.

On the 13th of December, 1756, young Fletcher sent to Wesley a most interesting letter, of which the following is an extract.

> "SIR,—Whenever I have received the sacrament in your chapels, though I admired the order and decency observed, I thought there was something wanting, which might make that awful part of the Divine worship still more profitable and solemn.

"As the number of communicants is generally very great, the time spent in receiving is long enough for many to feel their devotion languish for want of outward fuel. In order to prevent this, you interrupt, from time to time, the service of the table, to put up a short prayer, or to sing a verse or two of a hymn; and I do not doubt but many have found the benefit of that method. But as you can spare very little time, you are obliged to be satisfied with scattering these few drops, instead of a continual rain. Sir, would not this want be easily supplied, if you were to appoint the preachers, who may be present, to do what you cannot possibly do yourself, to pray and sing without interruption, as at a watch-night?

"I take the liberty of giving you this hint, because you said lately in the society, that you heard willingly the observations of your people, and were ready to follow or improve them, if they were just or reasonable.

"I am, sir, your unworthy servant,

"JOHN FLETCHER."[41]

Nothing now remains but to briefly notice Wesley's publications in 1756. They were as follows.

1. "An Extract of the Rev. Mr. John Wesley's Journal, from July 20, 1749, to October 30, 1751." 12mo, 107 pages.

2. "A Treatise on Baptism," dated November 11, 1756. This was his father's "Short Discourse on Baptism," published

in 1700. It is true, that Wesley has *slightly* abridged and verbally altered his father's work, but that is all; and yet he makes not the least reference whatever to its original author. In these days of sacramental controversy, it is only fair to give an extract.

> "By baptism, we, who were 'by nature children of wrath,' are made the children of God. And this regeneration, which our Church, in so many places, ascribes to baptism, is more than barely being admitted into the church, though commonly connected therewith; being 'grafted into the body of Christ's church, we are made the children of God by adoption and grace.' This is grounded on the plain words of our Lord: 'Except a man be born again of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.' By water then, as a means, the water of baptism, we are regenerated or born again. Herein a principle of grace is infused, which will not be wholly taken away, unless we quench the Holy Spirit of God by long continued wickedness."

This is strong, and somewhat startling language, and yet not really stronger than Wesley uses in his sermon on the New Birth: "It is certain our Church supposes, that all who are baptized in their infancy are, at the same time, born again; and it is allowed, that the whole Office for the Baptism of Infants proceeds upon this supposition. Nor is it an objection of any weight against this, that we cannot comprehend how this work can be wrought in infants. For neither can we comprehend how it is wrought in a person of riper years."[42]

It is true, that, in the same sermon, Wesley lays it down, that "baptism and the new birth are not one and the same thing, the one being an external, and the other an internal work"; and he also asserts, that "it is sure all of riper years who are baptized are not at the same time born again"; but, in reference to infants, he unquestionably held the high church doctrine of his father. It is no part of our proposed task either to justify or to condemn this opinion; our sole object is honestly to relate facts.

3. "The Good Soldier, extracted from a Sermon preached to a company of volunteers raised in Virginia, August 17, 1755." 12mo, 16 pages. The publication was doubtless occasioned by the threatened invasion of England, by the French, at the beginning of the year, when Wesley himself proposed to raise "for his majesty's service a body of at least two hundred volunteers."

4. "A Letter to the Rev. Mr. Law, occasioned by some of his late writings." 8vo, 102 pages. This has never been entirely reprinted, an extract only being given in Wesley's collected works.

Strangely enough, William Law,—a man of almost unequalled power and eloquence,—had become a Behmenite. Jacob Behmen, the "German theosophist," was born of poor parents, in 1575. At the age of ten, he was apprenticed to a shoemaker; at nineteen, he became a master, and was married. At twenty-five, he fell into a trance, which lasted for seven days, and afforded him an intuitive vision of God. This was

followed by others, in which his spirit was carried to the inmost world of nature, and was enabled to penetrate through the outward forms of bodies into their inward essences. At the age of thirty-seven, he began to publish his mysteries. He died in 1624, aged forty-nine. It is impossible, in a work like this, to give even the merest outline of the enthusiastic conceptions, visions, and revelations of this inventive German genius,—a motley mixture of mystical jargon, a jumble of astrological, philosophical, chemical, and theological extravagances, which he himself acknowledges no one can understand except those who have obtained illumination like his own. William Law was one of his warmest admirers, and had already published an English edition of his works in two vols., quarto.

This melancholy fact will account for the severity of Wesley's language in the letter he addressed to Law in 1756. Wesley begins by stating, that "there are few writers in the present age, who stand in any comparison with Mr. Law, as to beauty and strength of language; readiness, liveliness, and copiousness of thought; and, in many points, accuracy of sentiment." He acknowledges, that Law had "long employed his uncommon abilities, not to gain either honour or preferment, but to promote the glory of God, and peace and goodwill among men." "Several of his treatises, particularly his 'Christian Perfection,' and 'Serious Call,' must remain, as long as England stands, almost unequalled standards of the strength and purity of the English language, as well as of sound, practical divinity"; and had been of immense service "in reviving and establishing true, rational, scriptural religion"

among the people. Some of his late writings, however, were not of this meritorious order; and these Wesley proceeds to criticise. Law once said to Wesley, "You would have a philosophical religion; but there can be no such thing. Religion is the most plain, simple thing in the world. It is only, 'We love Him, because He first loved us.' So far as you add philosophy to religion, just so far you spoil it." Wesley now retorts, and tells him there is no "writer in England, who so continually blends philosophy with religion" as himself; and, to make things worse, his philosophy is "uncertain, dangerous, irrational, and unscriptural." "Bad philosophy, by insensible degrees, paves the way for bad divinity." He had also done Jacob Behmen "an irreparable injury by dragging him out of his awful obscurity, and by pouring light upon his venerable darkness. Men," says he, "may admire the deepness of the well, and the excellence of the water it contains; but, if some officious person puts a light into it, it will appear to be both very shallow and very dirty." He concludes:—

> "I have now delivered my own soul. And I have used great plainness of speech; such as I could not have prevailed on myself to use to one whom I so much respect, on any other occasion. Oh that your latter works may be more and greater than your first! Surely they would, if you could ever be persuaded to study, instead of the writings of Tauler and Behmen, those of St. Paul, James, Peter, and John; to spew out of your mouth and out of your heart that vain philosophy, and speak neither higher nor lower things, neither more nor less, than the oracles of God; to renounce, despise, abhor all the

highflown bombast, all the unintelligible jargon of the mystics, and come back to the plain religion of the Bible, 'We love Him, because He first loved us.'"

This was strong language to employ to a man like William Law, who held Jacob Behmen, the Crispin theosophist, in amazing admiration; but it was not unmerited. Whitefield pronounced Wesley's letter "a most ungentlemanlike, injudicious, unchristian piece";[43] but Whitefield was not so well acquainted with the Behmenite fooleries as Wesley was. Law himself was annoyed and angry, but declined to answer Wesley's critique, on the ground, that it did "not admit of a serious answer, because there was nothing substantial or properly argumentative in it; and to answer it, in the way of ridicule," was a thing to which he was unconquerably averse. "Mr. Wesley," says he, "is an ingenious man, and the reason why his letter to me is such a juvenile composition of emptiness and pertness, is because it was not ability, but necessity, that put his pen into his hand. He had condemned my books, preached much against them, and forbad his people the use of them. And, for a cover to all this, he promised, from time to time, to write against them. Therefore, an answer was to be made at all adventures.[44] I was once a kind of oracle with him; and I never suspected anything bad of him, or ever discovered any kind or degree of falseness in him; but, during all the time of his intimacy with me, I judged him to be much under the power of his own spirit. Still, whatever you hear of Mr. John Wesley concerning me, or my books, let it die with you; and wish him God speed in everything that is good."[45]

Here the controversy between Wesley and this exceedingly able and godly, though mistaken, man terminated. Five years afterwards, Mr. Law exchanged this world, where the wisest sees "through a glass, darkly," for a higher world, where all "see face to face."

5. The last of Wesley's publications, in 1756, which we have to notice, was not the least important, though an octavo tract of only thirty pages. The title was, "An Address to the Clergy." While addressed to the clergy of the Church of England especially, it was also addressed to all of every denomination, whom God had "called to watch over souls, as they that must give account." First of all, Wesley considers what ministers ought to be, in gifts as well as in grace. 1. A minister ought to have a good understanding. 2. Some liveliness and readiness of thought. 3. A good memory. 4. Knowledge of his own office; of the Scriptures; of Hebrew and Greek; of profane history; of the sciences, including logic; of metaphysics; of natural philosophy; of geometry; of the fathers. 5. Common sense. 6. Good breeding. 7. A strong, clear, musical voice, and a good delivery. In reference to grace, Wesley contends that a minister must have: (1) A single intention to glorify God, and to save souls; (2) an eminent measure of love to God, and to all his brethren; (3) he must be an example to his flock, in his private and public character.

The second part of the pamphlet is devoted to the inquiry, Are ministers what they ought to be? Wesley strongly denounces the old adage: "The boy, if he is fit for nothing

else, will do well enough for a parson." Acting upon this had introduced "dull, heavy, blockish ministers; the jest of every pert fool, and of every airy coxcomb that they met." Men entering the ministry for honour, or for income, are pronounced many degrees beneath Simon Magus, who instead of seeking the gift of God to get money, offered money to obtain the gift. "What a creature, he writes, "is a covetous, an ambitious, a luxurious, an indolent, a diversion loving clergyman! Is it any wonder that infidelity should increase, where any of these are found?"

In the publication of this pamphlet, Wesley probably aimed at a twofold object:—1. To give a new impulse to the Church of England, to awaken its dormant zeal, to infuse life into its lifeless ministers; and thus prevent the necessity of a separation. 2. To curb the ambition of his own lay preachers, by setting before them a ministerial standard, of which, in some respects, most of them fell immeasurably short. Was this object realised? This is a question which succeeding chapters will help to answer. At present, it is only fair to add, that it is somewhat difficult to reconcile Wesley's pamphlet with Wesley's letter already given, bearing date, August 31, 1756.

Wesley's "Address to the Clergy" was not left to pass unchallenged.

William Law, still smarting from Wesley's castigation, remarks in a letter, dated April 10, 1757: "Wesley's Babylonish 'Address to the Clergy' is empty babble, fitter for

an old grammarian, who has grown blear eyed in mending dictionaries, than for one who has tasted the powers of the world to come, and has found the truth as it is in Jesus."[46] Alas! William Law!

An unknown clergyman also issued a sixpenny pamphlet, entitled, "A Letter to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, occasioned by his Address to the Clergy. By one of the Clergy." The writer accuses Wesley of spiritual pride and presumption, and adduces extracts to support his charge; but, in all other respects, the production is unimportant. Another tract, however, of the same size, was published a few months later, and is more puzzling. "An Expostulatory Letter to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, occasioned by his Address to the Clergy," begins thus:—"We, W. B., G. C., J. M., etc., do, in behalf of ourselves and many others, who, by your appointment, instigation, or encouragement, have undertaken to preach the gospel of Christ, beg leave, in the spirit of meekness and love, to expostulate with you." And then these pretending disciples proceed very shrewdly to attack, not only the "Address," but likewise Wesley's late translation of the New Testament. Was this a genuine production? We cannot tell. If not spurious, it was of great importance.

ENDNOTES

[1] Whitefield's Works, vol. iii., p. 155.

[2] The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Herring, was quite as bitter as the Bishop of London. In a letter dated "January 25, 1756," he calls Whitefield, "Daniel Burgess *redivivus,"* and speaks of his "'joco-serious addresses." In the same letter, he says Wesley "is a man of good parts and learning; but a most dark, and saturnine creature, whose pictures may frighten weak people, but will make few converts, except for a day." (*Gentleman's Magazine,* 1777.)

[3] "Life and Times of Countess of Huntingdon," vol. i., p. 207.

[4] *Methodist Magazine.* 1794, p. 528.

[5] *Methodist Magazine,* 1837, p. 423.

[6] *Methodist Magazine,* 1779, p. 434.

[7] *Methodist Magazine,* 1779, p. 475.

[8] Wesley's Works, vol. xiii., p. 319.

[9] Wesley's Journal; and *London Magazine.*

[10] Whitefield's Works, vol. iv., p. 265.

[11] *Methodist Magazine,* 1848, p. 777.

[12] Ibid. 1848, p. 777.

[13] *London Magazine,* 1756, p. 146.

[14] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 172.

[15] Wesley's Works, vol. xiii., p. 321.

[16] *Irish Evangelist,* March, 1868.

[17] Jackson's Life of C. Wesley, vol. ii., p. 105.

[18] Atmore's "Methodist Memorial," p. 336.

[19] It is said that the entire edition was destroyed, with the exception of about thirty copies. (*Wesleyan Times,* Dec. 31, 1860.)
[20] Wesley's Works, vol. ii., p. 424.
[21] *Methodist Magazine,* 1779, p. 598.
[22] This agreement was signed by J. Wesley, C. Wesley, W. Shent, John Jones, John Downes, and John Nelson. See p. 138 of this volume.
[23] Life of Rev. S. Walker, p. 201.
[24] Walker's Life, p. 207.
[25] Walker's Life, p. 203; and *Methodist Magazine,* 1779, p. 641.
[26] Walker's Life, p. 215.
[27] *Methodist Magazine,* 1779, p. 644.
[28] Walker's Life, p. 216.
[29] Ibid. p. 221.
[30] Ibid. p. 224.
[31] Walker's Life, p. 228.
[32] C. Wesley's Journal.
[33] Myles's History.
[34] Wesley's Works, vol. xiii., p. 62.
[35] *Methodist Magazine,* 1779, p. 648.
[36] *Methodist Magazine,* 1779, p. 601.
[37] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 434.
[38] Wesley's Works, vol. x., p. 323.
[39] "Collection of Letters on Sacred Subjects." Dublin: 1784. p. 17.
[40] Wesley's Works, vol. xi., p. 275.
[41] *Methodist Magazine,* 1798, p. 92.
[42] Wesley's Works, vol. vi., p. 69.

[43] Whitefield's Works, vol. iii., p. 184.

[44] This was not true. Wesley writes: "I was under no necessity, though I doubt not but Mr. Law heard I was, and very seriously believed it. I very rarely mention his books in public; nor are they in the way of one in a hundred of those whom he terms my people. I had therefore no temptation, any more than power, to forbid the use of them to the Methodists in general. Whosoever informed Mr. Law of this, wanted either sense or honesty." (Wesley's Works, vol. iii., p. 18.) Still perhaps Law had some reason to complain. When Wesley paid his last visit to Dr. Byrom, in 1761, the doctor accused him of having expelled six men from the Methodist society, "for reading Jacob Behmen and Mr. Law." Wesley's reply was, that they were expelled, "not for reading the books, which was as indifferent as the colour of their hair; but, if they would thrust their hair into other people's eyes, and trouble them with their notions, *that* was his reason." Byrom adds: "Wesley put the matter very magisterially, upon his own authority; so that I used the expression of *Pope John* to him, and *Your Holiness."* (*Methodist Magazine,* 1863, p. 1104.)

[45] "Collection of Letters by W. Law." London: 1760.

[46] "Collection of Letters by W. Law." London: 1760. p. 198.

1757.

IN 1757, Charles Wesley seems to have ceased, to a great extent, to itinerate as a Methodist preacher. His journeys became less frequent and extensive, till his ministrations were chiefly confined to Bristol and London, with occasional visits to some intermediate and surrounding places. Why was this? The answer must be conjectural. It is a curious fact, that no document in his handwriting, bearing the date of 1757, is known to be in existence; nor even the fragment of a letter, of the same period, addressed to him by his brother. Some have attributed the cessation of his itinerancy to his marriage; and there is doubtless some truth in this. A regard for the feelings and society of his noble wife, with the care of his infant children, probably contributed to the change which now took place;[1] but the principal cause of his settling down was, unquestionably, the state of feeling which existed in many of the societies and preachers with regard to the Established Church. His brother thought, that separation was *inexpedient*, but could not regard it in the heinous light in which it appeared to Charles. Wesley was inclined to treat the disaffected with gentleness and persuasiveness; Charles was for the adoption of strong and compulsory measures. Their policy was different, and this was an obvious difficulty. Charles could not visit the societies as a mere friend, or as one of the ordinary preachers. He must appear as possessing a co-ordinate authority with his brother; and, their views being so widely different, it became impossible for them to regulate the societies in perfect concert. Hence, he doubtless thought it best to exercise a more settled ministry, and to leave the

people and the preachers generally in the hands of John. Still, to the end of life, he retained his union with the Methodists, and rendered important service, though in a more limited sphere than he had been wont to occupy. The effect of his retirement, so far as he was personally concerned, was the reverse of favourable. His mind was naturally of a somewhat melancholy cast; but, amid the excitement of the itinerancy, he had no time to indulge in morbid feeling. When he ceased to travel, he was at leisure to cherish his gloomy forebodings. Croakers and busybodies tormented him with letters, complaining of the ambition of the preachers, and of the alienation of the people from the Church. Often was he in agonies of fear lest the Methodists should become Dissenters; while his brother was as happy as an angel, flying through the three kingdoms, sounding the trumpet of the world's jubilee, and joyfully witnessing, every successive year, the steady advancement of the work of God.[2]

Whitefield spent about half of the year 1757 in the metropolis, and the remainder in evangelistic tours in England, Scotland, and Ireland. He preached fifty times, in twenty-five days, in the city of Edinburgh; attended the sittings of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland; and, by invitation, dined with the lord high commissioner. In Dublin he was well-nigh murdered. Attended by a soldier and four Methodist preachers, he repaired to Oxmanton Green, near the barracks, and sang, prayed, and preached, with no further molestation than the throwing of a few stones and clods. It being a time of war, he exhorted the people "not only to fear God, but to honour the best of kings, and then prayed

for success to the *Prussian arms."* On leaving the ground, "hundreds and hundreds of papists" surrounded him; volleys of stones were thrown at him; and, at every step he took, a fresh stone struck him, till he was red with blood. For a while, his strong beaver hat served to protect his head; but this, at last, was lost in the affray. Blows and wounds were multiplied; and, every moment, he expected, like Stephen, "to go off in this bloody triumph to the immediate presence of his Master." Providentially, the door of a minister's house was opened, and here he found a temporary refuge. On entering, he was speechless, but gradually revived, when the minister's wife desired his absence, fearing that his presence would lead to the destruction of her dwelling. What to do he knew not, being nearly two miles from Wesley's home for preachers. At length, a carpenter offered him his wig and coat to disguise himself; but, just at the same moment, a Methodist preacher and two other friends, brought a coach. "I leaped into it," he writes, "and rode in gospel triumph, through the oaths, curses, and imprecations of whole streets of papists. The weeping, mourning, but now joyful Methodists received me with inconceivable affection; a Christian surgeon dressed my wounds; and then I went into the preaching place, and joined in a hymn of praise and thanksgiving to Him, who stills the noise of the waves, and the madness of the most malignant people. Next morning, I set out for Portarlington, and left my persecutors to His mercy, who out of persecutors hath often made preachers."[3]

This was barbarous treatment, and suggests a sad idea of the political and religious bitterness of Irish papists a hundred

years ago. Poor Ireland! Whitefield declares, that, so far as he could learn, there was not a single minister in the whole of Ireland, either among Churchmen or Dissenters, who was faithfully and boldly witnessing for God and Christ.[4]

Wesley spent the first two months of 1757 in London, where, including the sacrament, one of his sabbath services usually lasted for about five successive hours. In fact, he considered his sabbath work, in London, equal to preaching eight sermons.

At the end of February, he paid a brief visit to Norwich, and made arrangements for the rebuilding of the Foundery, which the Norwich Methodists were using as a meeting-house, an unknown friend having given him money enough for that purpose.

After returning to London, he and Thomas Walsh visited the Methodist soldiers at Canterbury; and also made a preaching excursion to Beaconsfield and to High Wycombe. On Monday, the 11th of April, he held a covenant service at Spitalfields, at which twelve hundred Methodists met him, and which lasted for above five hours. Next morning, he set out on a four months' tour to the north of England.

His first halting place was Bedford, where the mayor of the town, Mr. Parker, was his host. Mr. Parker, we believe, was the first Methodist that ever filled the chair of a chief magistrate. Wesley writes: "Mr. Parker hath not borne the sword in vain. There is no cursing or swearing heard in the

streets of Bedford; no work done on the Lord's day; indeed, no open wickedness of any kind." For about forty years this mayor of Bedford was an "artless," but useful local preacher. He was a nursing father to the Bedford Methodists; a fine example of good works to all who knew him; and triumphantly went to heaven, in 1785, at the age of eighty.

From Bedford, Wesley proceeded to Leicester, Birmingham, Dudley, Nantwich, Chester, and Liverpool. At the last mentioned town, James Scholefield, an expelled itinerant, had swept away half the society by telling "lies innumerable." It was probably this first Liverpool division which induced Wesley to spend nearly a fortnight in the town and neighbourhood. He was introduced to Mr. Peter Whitefield, a man of strong understanding, whose "Dissertation in Defence of the Hebrew Points" Wesley considered the best that he ever read. He also had an interview with a novel kind of husband, "who, by the advice of his pastor, had, very calmly and deliberately, beaten his wife with a large stick, till she was black and blue, almost from head to foot." The man insisted, that it was his duty to do this, because his wife "was surly and ill natured; and, that he was full of faith all the time he was doing it, and had been so ever since."

From Liverpool, Wesley went to Warrington and to Manchester. He then rode over the mountains to Huddersfield, and says: "A wilder people I never saw in England. The men, women, and children filled the street as we rode along, and appeared just ready to devour us. They

were, however, tolerably quiet while I preached; only a few pieces of dirt were thrown, and the bellman came in the middle of the sermon. I had almost done when they began to ring the bells." The next few days were spent at Bradford, Birstal, Halifax, Heptonstall, Ewood, and Gawksham.

Gawksham was "a lone house, on the side of an enormous mountain, where the congregation stood and sat, row above row, in the sylvan theatre." "I believe," says Wesley, "nothing on the postdiluvian earth can be more pleasant than the road from hence, between huge, steep mountains, clothed with wood to the top, and washed at the bottom by a clear, winding stream." At the "lone house," in this grandly picturesque region, there was, in 1763, a society of forty-seven members, one of whom was David Lacy, who, as a young man, had been turned out of doors by his father, for becoming a Methodist, and, who, in his leisure hours, made besoms in order to save money to pay his pence at class. David became a leader, retained his Christian simplicity to the end, and died, possessed of considerable wealth, in 1803, at the advanced age of eighty-three.[5]

Leaving Gawksham, Wesley went to Padiham, and preached to "a large, wild congregation." One of his wild auditors was Robert Worsick, whose grandmother ran after Wesley, brandishing an axe, and threatening she would kill him. A chapel was built the year after, the trustees of which were Grimshaw, the incumbent of Haworth, and James Hunter and Jonas Moor, who were weavers.[6]

At Bingley, Wesley had the genteelest congregation he had lately seen. At Haworth, he had to preach in the churchyard, the congregation being three times larger than the church would hold; while, at the sacramental service following, he and Grimshaw had nearly a thousand communicants. After this, he hurried off to Whitehaven, Cockermouth, and Wigton. In a letter to his friend Blackwell, he writes:—

"WHITEHAVEN, *May* 28, 1757.

"DEAR SIR,—In every place, people flock about me for direction in secular as well as spiritual affairs; and I dare not throw even this burden off my shoulders, though I have employment enough without it. But it is a burden, and no burden; it is no incumbrance, no weight upon my mind. If we see God in all things, and do all for Him, then all things are easy. I think it is fourteen or fifteen days since my wife wrote to me. I am afraid she is not well.

"I am, dear sir, your most affectionate servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."[7]

Wesley now proceeded to Glasgow, where he was welcomed by Mr. Gillies, and preached in the yard of the poorhouse. He "met the members of the praying societies, and earnestly advised them to meet Mr. Gillies every week; and, at their other meetings, not to talk loosely and generally (as their manner had been) on some head of religion, but to examine each other's hearts and lives."

At Musselburgh, he was the guest of Bailiff Lindsey, and preached in the poorhouse; two thirds of the society "knew in whom they had believed"; and between forty and fifty dragoons were present.

He found a small society at Dunbar, and went into the street, "and began speaking to a congregation of two men and two women," which was "soon joined by about twenty little children, and, not long after, by a large number of young and old."

At Kelso, he and William Coward, "a wise and good man," who died in 1770, and for whom Wesley preached a funeral sermon, went to the market-house, but "neither man, woman, nor child came near them." At length, Wesley began singing a Scotch psalm; in due time, a congregation gathered; Wesley used "keen and cutting expressions," and says: "I believe many felt, for all their form, they were but heathens still."

He now made his way towards Newcastle. He writes: "About noon, I stood in the street at Wooler; and I might stand; for no creature came near me, till I had sung part of a psalm. Then a row of children stood before me; and, in some time, about a hundred men and women. I spoke full as plain as I did at Kelso; and pharisees themselves are not out of God's reach."

At Alnwick, the courthouse was too small for his congregation, and he was obliged to go into the market-place.

"O what a difference," he remarks, "between these living stones, and the dead, unfeeling multitudes in Scotland!"

Coming to Placey, he writes: "The society of colliers here may be a pattern to all the societies in England. No person ever misses his band or class; they have no jar of any kind among them; but, with one heart and one mind, provoke one another to love and to good works. After preaching, I met the society in a room as warm as any in Georgia."

At Sunderland, he told the society "none could stay with us, unless he would part with all sin; particularly robbing the king, selling or buying smuggled goods; which he could no more suffer, than robbing on the highway." "A few would not promise to refrain"; these were expelled; "but about two hundred and fifty were of a better mind."

At Chester-le-street, observing "some very fine, but not very modest, pictures, in the parlour" where he supped, he desired his companion to put them where they could do no hurt; and, accordingly, they were "piled on a heap in a corner of the room."

Having spent three weeks at Newcastle and in the neighbourhood, he started on the 4th of July for London.

At Durham, he preached in a meadow, near the river, to a congregation "large and wild." At Hartlepool, he found, that the Rev. William Romaine "had been the instrument of awakening several; but, for want of help, they soon slept

again." At Stockton, he preached in the street, and "none but two or three gentlemen seemed unconcerned." At Yarm, he preached near the market-place. "Many gentry were there, and all serious." "I find," says he, "in all these parts, a solid, serious people, quite simple of heart, strangers to various opinions, and seeking only the faith that worketh by love." On July 6, he preached at Osmotherley, where the rustic society, according to their old account book, were put to the enormous expense of half-a-crown "for Mr. John Wesley, William Fugill, and Michael Fenwick." From Osmotherley, he "rode through one of the pleasantest parts of England to Hawnby," where the zealous landlord had turned all the Methodists out of their houses. "This," says he, "proved a singular kindness; for they built some little houses at the end of the town, in which forty or fifty of them live together." One of these was William Hewgill, the grandfather of the eloquent and popular Rev. John Bumby; a most worthy man, who with a few of the ostracised Methodists walked sixty miles to Newcastle to hear Wesley preach, and at whose invitation he now came to the moorland village in which they dwelt.

Proceeding to Robinhood's Bay, Wesley preached to "the greatest part of the town; and all, except one or two, who were very wise in their own eyes, seemed to receive the truth in love." The next three days were the hottest he ever knew in England. At Slingsby, he met with a clergyman, an old acquaintance of his father's; the congregation was attentive, none making disturbance, except one poor drunkard. At York, he set a subscription on foot for building a more commodious room in Peasholm Green, which he afterwards opened, in

April, 1759, Dr. Cockburn, an old schoolfellow, residing in Aldwark, but not a Methodist, giving £100.[8] At Pocklington, he preached in the street; a large mob assembled; and, for "fear they should not make noise enough, the good churchwarden hired men to ring the bells." At Epworth, he "preached in the market-place to a listening multitude;" at Laceby, in a meadow; and, at Grimsby, in the new meeting-house just finished. At Misterton, he preached to the largest congregation he had seen since he left Newcastle; and "all behaved with deep seriousness, except a baptist preacher." At Clayworth, "none were unmoved, but Michael Fenwick; who fell fast asleep under an adjoining hayrick." At Rotherham, he addressed the largest congregation that Rotherham had ever witnessed. At Sheffield, he wrote: "How quiet is this country now, since the chief persecutors are no more seen! How many of them have been snatched away in an hour when they looked not for it! Some time since, a woman of Thorpe often swore she would wash her hands in the heart's blood of the next preacher that came. But, before the next preacher came, she was carried to her long home. A little before John Johnson settled at Wentworth, a stout, healthy man, who lived there, told his neighbours: 'After May-day we shall have nothing but praying and preaching; but I will make noise enough to stop it.' But before May-day he was silent in his grave. A servant of Lord R—— was as bitter as he, and told many lies purposely to make mischief: but, before this was done, his mouth was stopped. He was drowned in one of the fishponds."

On reaching London, Wesley at once held his annual conference, which continued from the 4th to the 11th of August. "From the first hour to the last," says he, "there was no jarring string, but all was harmony and love." This is all that is known of the conference of 1757, except that the Church question was again discussed. Hence the following letters, written soon after. The first was addressed to the Rev. Mr. Walker, of Truro, "on his advising Wesley to give up the Methodist societies to their several ministers:"

"HELSTONE, *September* 16, 1757.

"REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,—Nothing can be more kind than the mentioning what you think is amiss in my conduct. The more freedom you use in doing this, the more I am indebted to you.

"Two years since, eleven or twelve persons of Falmouth were members of our society. Last year, I was informed, that a young man there had begun to teach them new opinions, and that, soon after, offence and prejudice crept in, and increased till they were all torn asunder. What they have done since I know not; for they have no connection with us. I do 'exert myself' so far, as to separate from us those that separate from the Church. But, in a thousand other instances, I feel the want of more resolution and firmness of spirit. I exercise as little authority as possible, because I am afraid of the people depending upon me too much, and paying me more reverence than they ought.

"You say, 'If you believed Mr. V—— [9] to be a gracious person and a gospel minister, why did you not, in justice to your people, leave them to him?'

"There are several reasons why I did not do this. 1. No one mentioned or intimated any such thing, nor did it once enter into my thoughts. But if it had,—2. I do not know, that every one who preaches the truth has wisdom and experience to guide and govern a flock. 3. I do not know, whether Mr. V—— would or could give that flock all the advantages for holiness which they now enjoy; and to leave them to him, before I was assured of this, would be neither justice nor mercy. 4. Unless they also were assured of this, they could not in conscience give up themselves to him; and I have neither right nor power to dispose of them contrary to their conscience.

"'But they are already his by legal establishment.' If they receive the sacrament from him thrice a year, and attend the ministrations on the Lord's day, I see no more which the law requires. But, to go a little deeper into this matter of *legal establishment*—does Mr. Canon or you think, that the king and parliament have a right to prescribe to me what pastor I shall use? If they prescribe one which I know God never sent, am I obliged to receive him? If he be sent of God, can I receive him, with a clear conscience, till I know he is? And even when I do, if I believe my former pastor is more profitable to my soul, can I leave him without sin? Or

has any man living a right to require this of me? Before I could, with a clear conscience, leave the Methodist society even to such an one, all these considerations must come in.

"And with regard to the people,—far from thinking, that 'the withdrawing our preachers' from such a society, without their consent, would prevent a separation from the Church, I think, it would be the direct way to cause it. While we are with them, our advice has weight, and keeps them to the Church. But were we totally to withdraw, it would be of little or no weight. Nay, perhaps, resentment of our unkindness (as it would appear to them) would prompt them to act in flat opposition to it.

"'And will it not be the same at your death?' I believe not: for I believe there will be no resentment in this case. And the last advice of a dying friend is not likely to be soon forgotten.

"At our late conference, I proposed the question, 'What can be done, in order to a close union with the clergy, who preach the truth?' We all agreed, that nothing could be more desirable. I, in particular, have long desired it; not from any view to my own ease or honour, or temporal convenience of any kind; but, because I was deeply convinced, it might be a blessing to my own soul, and a means of increasing the general work of God.

"But you say, 'Really, before it can be effected, something must be done on your part.' Tell me what, and I will do it without delay; however contrary it may be to my ease, or natural inclination: provided only, that it consists with my keeping a good conscience toward God and toward man.

"But you add, 'Paying us visits can serve no other purpose, than to bring us under needless difficulties.' But what difficulties are those? All that are the necessary consequence of sharing our reproach. And what reproach is it which we bear? Is it the reproach of Christ, or not? It arose first, while my brother and I were at Oxford, from our endeavouring to be real Christians. It was increased abundantly when we began to preach repentance and remission of sins; and insisting, that we are justified by faith. For this cause, were we excluded from preaching in the churches; and this exclusion occasioned our preaching elsewhere, with the other irregularities that followed. Therefore, all the reproach consequent thereon is no other than the reproach of Christ.

"And what are we the worse for this? It is not pleasing to flesh and blood; but is it any hindrance to the work of God? Did He work more by us when we were honourable men? By no means. God never used us to any purpose, till we were a proverb of reproach. Nor have we now a jot more of dishonour, of evil report, than we know is necessary, both for us and for the

people, to balance that honour and good report, which otherwise could not be borne. You need not, therefore, be so much afraid of, or so careful to avoid this. It is a precious balm: it will not break your head, neither lessen your usefulness. And, indeed, you cannot avoid it, any otherwise than by departing from the work. You do not avoid it by standing aloof from us; which you call *Christian*,—I *worldly*, prudence. Perhaps when the time is slipped out of your hands, when I am no more seen, you may wish that you had not rejected the assistance of even

"Your affectionate brother,

"JOHN WESLEY."[10]

Further correspondence followed; hence the ensuing extract from another letter sent to Mr. Walker.

"October, 1757.

"REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,—I return you many thanks for the welcome letter from Mr. Adam, as well as for your own. I have answered his, and now proceed to consider yours.

"Two of our preachers are gone from us; but none of these remaining, to my knowledge, have, at present, any *desire* or design of separating from the Church.

"Yet I observe—1. Those ministers,who truly feared God near a hundred years ago, had undoubtedly much the same objections to the liturgy which some have

now. And I myself so far allow the force of several of those objections, that I should not declare my assent and consent to that book in the terms prescribed. Indeed, they are so strong, that I think they cannot safely be used, with regard to any book but the Bible. Neither dare I confine myself wholly to forms of prayer, not even in the church. I use indeed all the forms; but I frequently use extemporary prayer, either before or after sermon.

"2. In behalf of many of the canons, I can say little; of the spiritual courts, nothing at all. I dare not, therefore, allow the authority of the former, or the jurisdiction of the latter.

"I am still desirous of knowing, in what particular manner you think the present work of God could be carried on, without the assistance of lay preachers. This I will fairly weigh, and give you my thoughts upon it. Assist, both with your advice and prayers, dear sir, your very affectionate brother and servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."[11]

Walter Sellon, a Methodist clergyman, was addressed as follows.

"LONDON, *December* 1. 1757.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—Only prevail upon John Brandon to spend a month or two in London, or any other part of England, and I will immediately send

another preacher to Leicester, Ashby, and the adjacent places; but, during the present scarcity of labourers, we cannot spare a second for that small circuit, till you spare us the first.

"It is surprising that, from one end of the land to the other, so little good is done in a *regular way*. What have you to do, but to follow that way which the providence of God points out? When they drive you from Smithsby, you know where to have both employment and the things needful for the body. I think, also, it will be highly profitable for your soul, to be near those who have more experience in the ways of God.

"I am your affectionate brother,

"JOHN WESLEY."[12]

The following letter was written, to a friend, on "public worship"; but has an important bearing on the question of the Methodists continuing to exist as a distinct society.

"September 20, 1757.

"DEAR SIR,—The longer I am absent from London, and the more I attend the service of the Church in other places, the more I am convinced of the unspeakable advantage which the Methodists enjoy—I mean, even with regard to public worship, particularly on the Lord's day. The church where they assemble is not gay or splendid; which might be a hindrance on the one hand: nor sordid or dirty; which might give distaste on the other: but plain as well as clean. The persons who

assemble there, are not a gay, giddy crowd, who come chiefly to see and be seen; nor a company of goodly, formal, outside Christians, whose religion lies in a dull round of duties; but a people most of whom know, and the rest earnestly seek, to worship God in spirit and in truth. Accordingly, they do not spend their time there in bowing and curtseying, or in staring about them; but in looking upward and looking inward, in hearkening to the voice of God, and pouring out their hearts before Him.

"It is also no small advantage, that the person who reads prayers, though not always the same, yet is always one whose life is no reproach to his profession; and one who performs that solemn part of Divine service, not in a careless, hurrying, slovenly manner; but seriously and slowly, as becomes him who is transacting so high an affair between God and man.

"Nor are their solemn addresses to God interrupted either by the formal drawl of a parish clerk, the screaming of boys, who bawl out what they neither feel nor understand, or the unseasonable and unmeaning impertinence of a voluntary on the organ. When it is seasonable to sing praise to God, they do it with the spirit and with the understanding also: not in the miserable, scandalous doggrel of Hopkins and Sternhold, but in psalms and hymns which are both sense and poetry; such as would sooner provoke a critic to turn Christian, than a Christian to turn critic. What

they sing is selected for that end, not by a poor humdrum wretch, who can scarce read what he drones out with such an air of importance, but by one who knows what he is about, and how to connect the preceding with the following part of the service. Nor does he take just 'two staves'; but more or less as may best raise the soul to God; especially when sung in well composed and well adapted tunes; not by a handful of wild, unawakened striplings, but by a whole serious congregation; and then not lolling at ease, or in the indecent posture of sitting, drawling out one word after another; but all standing before God, and praising Him lustily and with a good courage.

"Nor is it a little advantage, as to the next part of the service, to hear a preacher, whom you know to live as he speaks, speaking the genuine gospel of present salvation, through faith wrought in the heart by the Holy Ghost; declaring present, free, and full justification, and enforcing every branch of inward and outward holiness. And this you hear done in the most clear, plain, simple, unaffected language; yet with an earnestness becoming the importance of the subject, and with the demonstration of the Spirit.

"With regard to the last and most awful part of Divine service, the celebration of the Lord's supper, although we cannot say, that either the unworthiness of the minister, or the unholiness of some of the communicants, deprives the rest of a blessing from God,

yet do they greatly lessen the comfort of receiving. But these discouragements are removed from you. You have proof, that he who administers fears God; and you have no reason to believe, that any of your fellow communicants walk unworthy of their profession. Add to that, the whole service is performed in a decent and solemn manner, is enlivened by hymns suitable to the occasion, and is concluded with prayer that comes not out of feigned lips.

"Surely then, of all the people of Great Britain, the Methodists would be the most inexcusable, should they let any opportunity slip of attending that worship which has so many advantages; should they prefer any before it; or not continually improve by the advantages they enjoy! What can be pleaded for them, if they do not worship God in spirit and in truth; if they are still outward worshippers only; approaching God with their lips while their hearts are far from Him? Yea, if having known Him, they do not daily grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"JOHN WESLEY."[13]

These are important letters, fully showing that Wesley had not the least intention of giving up the Methodist societies, and that he considered their religious services far superior to the general services of the Church of England.

It was about this period, Wesley commenced a correspondence with Martin Madan, who afterwards made

himself painfully notorious, and concerning whom we have to say something at another time. This remarkable man, a cousin to the poet Cowper, and possessed of a private fortune of £1800 a year, had recently been converted under Wesley's ministry, had renounced his profession of a barrister, and was now an ordained clergyman of the Church of England, and fast becoming one of the most popular preachers in the land. Extracts from two of his earliest letters to Wesley may be welcome.

"CHANCERY LANE, *May* 18, 1756.

"DEAR SIR,—My father's death has indeed made a considerable alteration in my worldly affairs, by adding, to what I had before, a plentiful estate; but, blessed be God, I can still cry out, with more and more earnestness, 'Like as the hart panteth after the water brooks,' etc. O sir! I desire, nothwithstanding all my worldly wealth, to be little and vile in my own eyes, and that Christ may be all in all. The only true riches are those of His grace; all things else, when compared to these, are dung and dross.

"My dear mother was with me, when your kind letter came, and she desired me to send her love and best wishes to you, when I answered it. She longs much, as well as myself and the rest of your friends, to see you once more in England.

"Adieu, dear sir. May the God of all peace and consolation be with you always! Amen, amen.

"I remain,

"Your truly affectionate servant and son in the gospel,

"MARTIN MADAN."[14]

"CHELTENHAM, *August* 6, 1757.

"DEAR SIR,—I received the favour of yours, and thank you much for the kind advice it contained, and hope God will give me grace to follow it.

"I have been a month at Cheltenham, to drink the waters, and have preached every Sunday. Some of the company are much offended; others very thankful. The poor people of the place are desirous to hear, and those of all persuasions flock to listen to the word of life. Last time, the quakers and baptists made no inconsiderable part of the congregation; and this confirms me in an opinion I have long had, that, if the truth was preached in the Church, few, if any, would separate from it.

"I propose to be in Bristol about the 17th inst., and about a week after that to be in London, where I hope to meet you in perfect health. My love attends Mrs. Wesley; pray accept the same yourself, etc.

"MARTIN MADAN."[15]

Alas! poor Martin Madan! He was now a young man of thirty, full of vigour, and, for years afterwards, was of great service to the church of Christ. His brother became

successively bishop of Bristol, and Peterborough; but he himself died in 1790, beneath the dark cloud of his chimerical and mischievous "Thelyphthora."

In the same year, 1757, Wesley began a remarkable correspondence with Sarah Ryan, the wisdom of which may be fairly doubted.

Sarah Ryan, the offspring of poor parents, was born in 1724. From childhood, she was, according to her own confession, excessively vain, and fond of praise. "As she grew in years, her ill tempers gathered strength; and she became artful, subtle, cunning; often loved and made lies; and had little regard either to justice, mercy, or truth." To obtain food and clothing, she went into domestic service. At the age of nineteen, she was married to a corkcutter, who pretended he had £150 a year; but who turned out to be a profligate, impoverished scamp. He was already married to another woman; he proposed to Sarah Ryan to stoop to infamy to obtain him money; he ran away; and the bailiff sold his goods to pay his debts. About a year subsequent to this, Sarah Ryan engaged herself to Solomon Benreken, an Italian; but, before she married him, Ryan, an Irish sailor, feigned illness, got her to sit up with him, and actually married her. Ryan's life was most profligate; and his treatment of his young wife abominably cruel. He went to sea; during his absence, Benreken, the Italian, renewed his proposals; and, for the third time, this worthless woman went to the hymeneal altar, and was actually married to a third husband, though the other two, to whom she had been already married, were still alive. The

Italian seemed to be the best of the trio. For two months, he treated her with great kindness; but, belonging to the navy, he was then obliged to leave her. After his departure, Ryan returned, and claimed her; and, though he treated her with great barbarity, she considered herself his lawful spouse, lived with him, and maintained herself by washing. Ryan again left her, and set sail for America. Once more, she became a domestic servant. While in service, the Italian, having returned to England, wished her to live with him; but to this she objected. She had now arrived at the age of thirty; she was seized with illness in the family where she was a servant; and was sent to the hospital. On her dismissal, she found herself in the greatest straits; and had, by her own labour, to maintain both herself and her mother. This was in 1754. She went to Spitalfields church, and professed to find peace with God, while Wesley was administering the sacrament. Ryan wrote to her, wishing her to join him in America; but, though she had three husbands living, she now preferred not to live with any of them. Her early religious experience, as published by Wesley in the *Magazine* for 1779, is wild and whimsical, rather than intelligent and devout.

Sarah Ryan was now resident with Mary Clarke, in a small house, in Christopher Alley, Moorfields. Here a select few of the more lively London Methodists held their meetings. Among others, Miss Bosanquet, afterwards Mrs. Fletcher, now a young girl of about sixteen years of age, was accustomed to make this her home. Here she met with Sarah Ryan and Sarah Crosby, both of them boarders with Mary Clarke. Such a conclave of Methodist females attracted

Wesley's notice; and, about two years after her conversion, that is in 1757, he made Sarah Ryan, the wife of three living husbands, at the age of thirty-three, his Bristol and Kingswood housekeeper.

With the utmost respect for Wesley, we cannot but consider this an exceedingly hasty and imprudent act. Perhaps Sarah Ryan was converted; but naturally, she was vain, flippant, giddy, and far from being what a Methodist housekeeper ought to be. In addition to this, though her sin of marrying three men in succession, without any of them dying, might be pardoned by the God whose commands she had so grossly broken, yet, all will admit, that a foolish young servant woman, who had so flagrantly transgressed the laws of her country, and, for her crimes, could, at any moment, be sent to prison, was not exactly the woman to be the matron of Kingswood school, and the favourite correspondent of Wesley in the years 1757 and 1758. No wonder that Wesley's naturally jealous wife was fired with indignation; and that, at one of the Bristol conferences, when Sarah Ryan was sitting at the head of a table, where sixty or seventy of the preachers were dining, Wesley's irritated spouse rushed into the room, and pointing to the presiding matron, shrieked, "The —— now serving you has three husbands living." For about four years, Sarah Ryan held her situation; and met a hundred persons every week in class or band, and also made excursions to the country societies around Bristol. In 1762, she returned to London, and became the guest of Miss Bosanquet, at Leytonstone, having told the young lady, that she needed a friend like herself. Here they held meetings, read

and expounded the Scriptures, formed a society, and made their home into an orphanage. In June, 1768, they removed their family of orphans to Yorkshire; and, on the 17th of August following, Sarah Ryan died, in the forty-fourth year of her age, and was buried in Leeds old churchyard; where to her name and age were added only these words—"who lived and died a Christian."[16] Some of her last utterances were: "I am dying. Glory be to God! Cut, cut, cut the thread, sweet Jesus! cut the thread!"

Part of this account is taken from an unpublished manuscript memoir, in the handwriting of Mrs. Fletcher, who regarded Sarah Ryan as one of the holiest of saints, and as her nearest and dearest friend. Judging from her own private diaries and letters, the present writer cannot dispute her piety; but, at the same time, he thinks that the eulogies by Wesley and by Mrs. Fletcher are excessive. Her career was a strangely chequered one, but her end was peace. We rejoice over her as a converted magdalen; but we cannot commend her being appointed as Wesley's housekeeper, and her being made Wesley's confidant concerning his wife's jealousy and unkind behaviour.

In the *Arminian Magazine,* for 1782, Wesley published eleven of her letters addressed to himself, and eight of his own addressed to her, written at different dates, extending from August 10, 1757, to March 20, 1758. Wesley tells her he had been censured for making her his housekeeper; but he could not repent of it. He gives her the rules of the family, which he wishes to be strictly kept; namely—"1. The family

rises, part at four, part at half an hour after. 2. They breakfast at seven, dine at twelve, and sup at six. 3. They spend the hour from five to six in the evening, after a little joint prayer, in private. 4. They pray together at nine, and then retire to their chambers; so that all are in bed before ten. 5. They observe all Fridays in the year as days of fasting, or abstinence." He adds:—

> "You, in particular, I advise,—Suffer no impertinent visitant, no unprofitable conversation in the house. It is a city set upon a hill; and all that is in it should be 'holiness to the Lord.' On what a pinnacle do you stand! You are placed in the eye of all the world, friends and enemies. You have no experience of these things; no knowledge of the people; no advantages of education; not large natural abilities; and are but a novice, as it were, in the ways of God! It requires all the omnipotent love of God to preserve you in your present station; but, if you continue teachable and advisable, I know nothing that shall be able to hurt you."[17]

At the end of 1757, Wesley, and it would seem his wife, went to Bristol. While there, conjugal unpleasantness occurred, of which Mrs. Wesley's jealousy of Sarah Ryan appears to have been the cause. The housekeeper says, she "dealt faithfully with both of them," and adds, "I will not despair of Mrs. W——."[18] Within a month, Wesley's wife left him, vowing she would not return. Wesley informed Sarah Ryan of this distressing fact. She advised him, "not to depend too much upon any creature; and to use much private

prayer;" and assured him, that "much good would come out of this."

Perhaps the reader will complain of so much being said concerning Ryan. The writer's apology is this,—though Sarah Ryan was unquestionably a converted woman, and though the correspondence between her and Wesley was, in the highest degree, pure and pious, there can be little doubt, it was the appointment of this converted magdalen to be his housekeeper, that led Wesley's jealous wife to the first conjugal separation which has been recorded in Wesley's history. Sarah Ryan went to Bristol in October, 1757; and, within three months afterwards, Wesley's wife, though she had often played the termagant, for the first time left him. Wesley's intention, in making the appointment, was benevolent; but, considering the antecedents of the woman, considering the importance of the office, considering the duty of consulting the feelings and prejudices of the parents and children committed to the housekeeper's care, and considering the morbid jealousy of his own uneducated and common minded wife, we are persuaded the appointment was a great mistake. From her conversion in 1754 to her death in 1768, Sarah Ryan conducted herself as a Christian; but no one will say that, because of this, she was a fit and proper person to be the manager of Wesley's house at Bristol. Her letters, wrote Wesley in 1782, "breathe deep, strong sense and piety. I know few like them in the English tongue."[19] Quite correct. And yet, was it not because her husband had chosen for his housekeeper a woman who had been so thoughtless, that Mrs. Wesley's unfounded, jealous bitterness, which had long been

smouldering, now, not unnaturally, burst into a furious flame? Before proceeding to trace Wesley's steps during the subsequent part of 1757, it may be added, that Miss Bosanquet's home, at Leytonstone, sheltered not only Sarah Ryan, but two other Methodist females, of great repute. One of them was Ann Tripp, who was born in 1745, and died at Leeds, in 1823, after being a member of the Methodist society more than sixty years. At the time of her decease, she was one of the oldest leaders in the Leeds society.[20] The other was the celebrated Sarah Crosby, who, in 1757, became a widow at the age of twenty, and continued such until her triumphant death in 1804.[21] She will be frequently mentioned in succeeding pages. Having concluded his conference in London, Wesley set out, on August 22, 1757, for Cornwall, where he spent the next six weeks. At Camelford, he cured his toothache, by rubbing his cheek with treacle. At St. Agnes, he was the welcome guest of Mrs. Donythorne, a widow lady, ninety years old, of unimpaired understanding, almost without a wrinkle, who read without spectacles, and walked without a staff. At St. Just, he opened the new meeting-house, "the largest and most commodious" in Cornwall. At Gwennap, it rained all the time he preached; but he characteristically observes," a shower of rain will not frighten experienced soldiers." At Bezore, finding that he would have to sleep in the same room as a man and his wife, he preferred to walk to Truro. At Grampound, "a mean, inconsiderable, dirty village," the mayor sent two constables, saying: "Sir, the mayor says you shall not preach within his borough." Wesley answered:" The mayor has no authority to hinder me; but it is a point not worth contesting. So," he adds, "I went about a musketshot

farther, and left the borough to Mr. mayor's disposal." At St. Austle, where he attended church, the whole service was performed by Mr. Hugo, who was almost a centenarian, and had been vicar of St. Austle nearly threescore years and ten. At Liskeard, which he pronounces "one of the largest and pleasantest towns in Cornwall," every one in the society had found peace with God. He got back to Bristol on October 8.

Here, and in the immediate neighbourhood, he spent the next four weeks. Part of the time he was disabled by a swelling in his face, which he cured by the application of boiled nettles. The Kingswood society was standing still. That at Bristol was reduced from nine hundred members to little more than half the number. That at Coleford was the most numerous and also the liveliest society in the county of Somerset. He opened the new meeting-house at Pill, lately an almost unparalleled "sink of sin"; but now a place where many were rejoicing in God their Saviour.

The chief event, however, which happened, during his Bristol sojourn, was an alarming fire at Kingswood school. On October 24, while Wesley was absent at Bath, about eight o'clock at night, a boy opened the staircase door, but was driven back by smoke. The lad shouted, "Fire! murder! fire!" Terrible alarm sprung up, and all in the house seemed paralysed. At length, John How, a neighbour, mounted a rotten ladder; and, with an axe, broke through the leaden roof. The suffocating smoke found vent; water was brought, and the fire quickly quenched. John How, under God, saved Kingswood school. Let his name be honourably borne in

mind. Wesley first heard of the event the day after it occurred, when a man met him, and told him "the school was burned." Wesley says: "I felt not a moment's pain, knowing that God does all things well." This was a rough beginning for Sarah Ryan.

On November 9, Wesley returned to London. A few days later, he set out for Norwich, where he was shown the unitarian chapel, occupied by Dr. Taylor—octagon in shape, built of the finest brick, with thirty-two windows, and eight skylights in the dome—the whole finished in the highest taste, and as clean as a nobleman's saloon—the communion table of fine mahogany, and the pew door latches of polished brass. "How can it be thought," he asks, "that the old coarse gospel should find admission here?" Query, what would Wesley have said concerning some of the highly ornamented *Methodist* chapels of the present day?

Returning to London, he found much confusion occasioned by certain imprudent words spoken by one who seemed to be strong in faith. He heard all who were concerned, face to face; but what one side flatly affirmed, the other flatly denied; and he found himself utterly bewildered among the wilful lies or human infirmities of high professors. "For the present," he writes, "I leave it to the Searcher of hearts, who will bring all things to light in due season."

Having baptized a Jew of more than sixty years of age, he returned to Lewisham, to write his "Preservative against unsettled Notions in Religion"; and here he remained till

Christmas, when he again returned to Bristol, where he witnessed the close of the year 1757.

Compared with former years, this was a period of peace. It is true, that persecution still dogged the steps of the poor Methodists; but it was not so violent as in days gone past. In Ireland, Whitefield was all but murdered by a mob of Irish papists. At Norwood, near London, a gang of godless rioters surrounded the house of Samuel Cole, and, because the Methodists held their meetings in it, threatened to burn it to the ground; for which threat Edward Frost, the leader of the rioters, was sent to Newgate prison.[22] Pamphleteers, also, were not idle; but almost all were ashamed to affix their names to their paltry publications. One of these anonymous attacks was entitled, "An Expostulatory Letter to the Rev. Mr. Wesley." Another was "A Short Examen of Mr. John Wesley's System." A third, the most enigmatical, was: "Methodism Displayed and Enthusiasm Detected; intended as an antidote against, and a preservative from, the delusive principles and unscriptural doctrines of a modern *sect* of seducing preachers, and as a defence of our regular and orthodox clergy, from their unjust reflections." 8vo, 36 pages. The reader is told, that the poor have become a prey to "ignorant, enthusiastic preachers"; and, that it is because of this, that "novel doctrines, extravagant follies, and destructive errors" are now so prevalent. Virtue was reclining her fainting head; morality, except in name, was almost banished; and vice, like a torrent, was deluging the land. While the infidel, on the one hand, was proud, presumptuous, and God-resisting; the enthusiast, on the other, was credulous,

unscriptural, and unmeaning, deceiving himself and others by his mere pretences to inspiration, and all for the sake of making gain by his godliness. Methodist preachers sing "sweet syren songs"; they are "new doctors and modern teachers tickling the ears, pleasing the pride, and flattering the vanity of the human mind", they are "quacks in divinity," using "unedifying jargon, unscriptural harangues, and false encomiums on the virtue and dignity of man"; they are "flatterers of human nature, sleek divines, downy doctors, velvet mouthed preachers, miserable daubers, and soul deceivers."

It is a strange fact, that the author of this pamphlet avows his firm belief in nearly all the doctrines that specially characterized Wesley's ministry, and yet, these are some of the spicy appellatives applied to Methodist preachers. It is difficult to divine the writer's object. At the beginning, he seems to belabour the poor Methodists; at the end, he defends and praises them.

The most malignant onset, however, during the year 1757, was published in the *London Magazine*, with the title, "A Dozen Reasons why the Sect of Conjurors, called Fortune Tellers, should have at least as much liberty to exercise their admirable art, as is now granted to Methodists, Moravians, and various other sorts of Conjurors." Dr. Faustus, the writer, accuses the Methodists of defrauding "both men and women out of their lands, tenements, and money", of "terrifying many of their followers out of their little wits, as Bedlam, and every private madhouse, about London, could testify"; of "very

lately inducing a poor woman to literally fulfil the Scripture, by pulling out one of her eyes, because she had looked upon a handsome young fellow with a longing look"; and, finally, as being disturbers of public government. These silly calumnies, falsehoods of the first magnitude, were vigorously refuted, in three succeeding numbers of the *London Magazine*, by one who signed himself "A Methodist."

Wesley's publications in 1757 were few in number, but one was of great importance.

1. "A Sufficient Answer to 'Letters to the Author of Theron and Aspasio,' in a Letter to the Author." 12mo, 12 pages. The supposed author, to whom Wesley addressed his answer, was John Glass, an expelled minister of the Church of Scotland, or Robert Sandeman, a Scotch elder, the founder of a sect sometimes called Sandemanians, and sometimes Glassites. Wesley's tract was really a defence of his friend, Hervey, on the subject of saving faith, in opposition to the Glassite or Sandemanian notion, that faith is a mere assent to the truthfulness of the gospel history. Wesley's answer was short, apposite, indignant, almost savage. He told Glass, or Sandeman, that he had "a peculiar pertness, insolence, and self sufficiency, with such an utter contempt of mankind, as no other writer of the present age had shown." His letter to Hervey was "full of slander." His notions of justifying faith were "stark, staring nonsense"; for, if true, "every devil in hell will be justified and saved." He evinced "such hatred, malevolence, rancour, and bitterness to all" who dissented from his opinions, as was "scarce ever seen in a Jew, a

heathen, or a popish inquisitor"; and, were it in his power, he "would make more bonfires in Smithfield than Bonnet and Gardiner put together." This is pretty strong; perhaps it was not undeserved. It was replied to in a threepenny pamphlet, entitled, "Remarks on the Rev. Mr. John Wesley's Sufficient Answer to the author of the Letters on Theron and Aspasio. By J.D." The writer was as great an adept in using strong expressions as Wesley was. Hence, he told his readers, that Wesley had "crowded more scandal, insolence, self sufficiency, hatred, malevolence, rancour, bitterness, and uncharitableness" into his penny tract than Hervey had into his five shillings book; with this difference, Hervey's was "sarcastical, lively, volatile, and pungent as the ether;" Wesley's "dense and dull as lead."

2. "The Doctrine of Original Sin; according to Scripture, Reason, and Experience." 8vo, 522 pages.

Wesley's work on original sin was one which he had purposed publishing for the last six years, ever since his visit to Shackerley in 1751. Dr. Taylor was, perhaps, the most eminent Socinian minister of his age, and, in 1740, had published his "Scripture Doctrine of Original Sin proposed to free and candid examination. In three parts." This was the work which Wesley answered. It had done immense mischief, not only in England, but even on the continent. Taylor was no ordinary antagonist. Wesley says: "He is a man of unusually strong understanding, joined with no small liveliness of imagination, and a good degree of various learning. He has an admirable command of temper, and a smooth and pleasing,

yet a manly and nervous style." Wesley believed Taylor's system to be nothing but "old deism in a new dress." "The deadly poison," he writes, "has been diffusing itself for several years, through our nation, our Church, and even our universities. One father of the Church has declared, that he knows 'no book more proper than this, to settle the principles of a young clergyman.'"

It is utterly impossible, in space so limited, to convey an adequate idea of Wesley's vigorous and triumphant answer. In the first part, he reviews, in most trenchant language, "the past and present state of mankind." Part second is "the scriptural method of accounting for this defended." Part third is "an answer to Mr. Taylor's supplement." The remainder of the work consists of extracts from the writings of Dr. Watts, the Rev. Samuel Hebden, minister at Wrentham, in Suffolk, and Boston, the author of the "Four-fold State of Man."

Is it too much to say, that Wesley's book is the ablest refutation of the Socinian errors respecting original sin, to be found in the English language? Throughout, he treats Dr. Taylor with the utmost respect, but, at the same time, utterly demolishes his system. Two years afterwards he wrote to him as follows.

"HARTLEPOOL, *July* 3, 1759.

"REVEREND SIR,—I esteem you as a person of uncommon sense and learning; but your doctrine I cannot esteem. And some time since, I believed it my duty to speak my sentiments at large, concerning your

doctrine of original sin. When Mr. Newton,[23] of Liverpool, mentioned this, and asked, whether you designed to answer, you said, you thought not; for it would only be a personal controversy between John Wesley and John Taylor. How gladly, if I durst, would I accept of this discharge from so unequal a contest! For I am thoroughly sensible, humanly speaking, it is *formica contra leonem.* How gladly, were it indeed no other than a personal controversy! But certainly it is not; it is a controversy *de re*, if ever there was one in the world. Indeed, concerning a thing of the highest importance; nay, all the things that concern our eternal peace. It is, Christianity or heathenism. For take away the scriptural doctrine of redemption, or justification, and that of the new birth; or, which amounts to the same, explain them as you do, suitably to your doctrine of original sin; and what is Christianity better than heathenism? Wherein, except in rectifying some of our notions, has the religion of St. Paul any preeminence over that of Socrates or Epictetus?

"This is, therefore, to my apprehension, the least a personal controversy of any in the world. Your person and mine are out of the question. The point is, are those things that have been believed for many ages throughout the Christian world, real, solid truths; or monkish dreams, and vain imaginations?

"But, farther, it is certain, between you and me there need be no personal controversy at all. For we may

agree to leave each other's person and character absolutely untouched, while we sum up and answer the several arguments advanced, as plainly and closely as we can.

"Either I or you mistake the whole of Christianity from the beginning to the end. Either my scheme or yours is as contrary to the scriptural as the Koran is. Is it mine or yours? Yours has gone through all England, and made numerous converts. I attack it from end to end; let all England judge whether it can be defended or not.

"Earnestly praying, that God may give you and me a right understanding in all things,

"I am, reverend sir, your servant for Christ's sake,

"JOHN WESLEY."[24]

This was a manly and respectful challenge; but it was not accepted. Indeed, within two years after it was written, Dr. Taylor died; having, as Wesley thinks, considerably modified his opinions. Hence the following, from one of Wesley's letters to Sir Harry Trelawney: "For some years, that great man, Dr. Taylor, of Norwich, was an earnest Calvinist; but afterwards, judging he could not get far enough from that melancholy system, he ran, not only into Arianism, but into the very dregs of Socinianism. I have reason, however, to believe he was convinced of his mistake some years before he died; but to acknowledge this publicly was too hard a task for him."[25]

ENDNOTES

[1] Berridge, in a letter to Lady Huntingdon, dated March 23, 1770, writes: "No trap so mischievous to the field preacher as wedlock. Matrimony has quite maimed poor Charles" [Wesley], "and might have spoiled John" [Wesley] "and George" [Whitefield], "if a wise Master had not graciously sent them a brace of ferrets." ("Life and Times of Lady Huntingdon," vol. i., p. 389.)

[2] Jackson's Life of C. Wesley, vol. ii., pp. 135-137.

[3] Whitefield's Works, vol. iii., p. 207.

[4] Ibid. p. 206.

[5] *Methodist Magazine,* 1856, p. 761.

[6] Manuscript.

[7] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 173.

[8] York society book.

[9] This was the Rev. Mr. Vowler, curate of St. Agnes. He died, within a year afterwards, on July 30, 1758. He was a young man, in the prime of life, who entered into all Mr. Walker's projects, with great zeal and piety. A weeping throng crowded to his burial, and Walker preached his funeral sermon to the society at Truro. (Walker's Life, p. 451.) Wesley bears testimony, that "he rejoiced in the love of God; both preached and lived the gospel; and was an upright, zealous, indefatigable labourer" in the great Master's vineyard. (Wesley's Works, vol. ii., p. 402; and vol. iii., p. 108.) He heard him preach in St. Agnes' church "two such thundering sermons as he had scarce heard these twenty years."

[10] *Methodist Magazine,* 1780, p. 48.

[11] Ibid. 1782, p. 269.
[12] Manuscript letter.
[13] *Methodist Magazine,* 1780, p. 110.
[14] *Methodist Magazine,* 1779, p. 536.
[15] Ibid. 1797, p. 611.
[16] Mrs. Fletcher's Life.
[17] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 202.
[18] See *Methodist Magazine,* 1782, p. 267; and p. 109 of this volume.
[19] *Methodist Magazine,* 1782, p. 44.
[20] Ibid. 1823, p. 706.
[21] Ibid. 1806.
[22] *Gentleman's Magazine,* 1757, p. 382.
[23] Afterwards the Rev. John Newton, vicar of Olney.
[24] Wesley's Works, vol. ii., p. 468.
[25] Wesley's Works, vol. xiii., p. 139.

1758.

WHITEFIELD spent about seven months of the year 1758 in London, and the rest in two lengthened journeys, one to Scotland, and the other to the west of England. His health was feeble, on which account, he says, "I have been reduced, for some time, to the short allowance of preaching only once a day, except Sundays, when I generally preach thrice."[1] He adds: "Though Mr. Wesley and I differ a little in some principles, yet brotherly love continues. I generally, when itinerating, preach among his people, as freely as among those who are called our own."

On the 13th of January, Wesley returned from Bristol to London, full of joy that, under Sarah Ryan's management, Kingswood school was, at length, what he had so long wished it to be,—a blessing to all its inmates, and an honour to the Methodists. Four days later he wrote as follows:—

"January 17.—I preached at Wandsworth. A gentleman, come from America, has again opened a door in this desolate place. In the morning, I preached in Mr. Gilbert's house. Two negro servants of his and a mulatto appear to be much awakened. Shall not His saving health be made known to all nations?"

On the 29th of November following, Wesley says: "I rode to Wandsworth, and baptized two negroes belonging to Mr. Gilbert, a gentleman lately come from Antigua. One of these is deeply convinced of sin; the other rejoices in God her

Saviour, and is the first African Christian I have known. But shall not our Lord, in due time, have these heathens also 'for His inheritance'?"

These seem simple entries; but, as the acorn contains the oak, so they contain the germ of the marvellous Methodist work and successes among the sable sons of benighted and degraded Africa from that day to this. We think not only of thousands of converted Africans in Namaqualand, Kaffraria, Bechuana, Natal, Sierra Leone, on the Gambia and the Gold Coast, in Dahomey and Guinea, but we also think of tens of thousands in the West Indies, and literally of hundreds of thousands in the southern states of America. This wonderful work of God began in the house of Nathaniel Gilbert, a temporary sojourner in the town of Wandsworth.

Who was Mr. Gilbert? A brief notice of himself and his family will not be out of place.

Nathaniel Gilbert was the inheritor of an estate in Antigua, which had been in the possession of his ancestors for several generations. The Gilbert family were among the earliest settlers in the island, and considered themselves descendants of Sir Humphrey Gilbert, the enterprising English navigator, and half brother of Sir Walter Raleigh.[2] Mr. Nathaniel Gilbert was a man of sound understanding, sharpened by a collegiate education, and the admirable training of an English court of law. He was confessedly an able man; and for some years, he had been the speaker of the House of Assembly in Antigua.[3] What brought him to England?

His brother, Francis Gilbert, gay and thoughtless, had been engaged in mercantile pursuits; but was often found in the ballroom when he ought to have been in his place of business, and dancing when he ought to have been balancing accounts. By the fraudulent conduct of his clerk, and his own gay life, he had been reduced to beggary. He sought concealment, first in Jamaica, and then in England. Adversity brought him to repentance. He was introduced to Vincent Perronet, and then to Wesley, of whose society he became a member. He sent to his brother Nathaniel a number of Wesley's publications, including Wesley's "Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion." Nathaniel had always believed Wesley to be an enthusiast, and, for some time, refused to read his books; but, at length, his sister read to him the "Appeal." This so altered his opinion, that he wished to visit England for the purpose of making Wesley's personal acquaintance. His wish was realised. He remained two years, and then returned in the autumn of 1759.[4]

Anxious for the conversion of the poor Africans in Antigua, Nathaniel Gilbert proposed to John Fletcher, recently ordained, to return with him; but Fletcher declined the proposal, on the ground that, in his own estimation, he had neither "sufficient zeal, grace, nor talents" for a missionary's life in the West Indies; and, moreover, he wished "to be certain that he was converted himself before he left his converted brethren, to convert heathens."[5] Failing in this, Mr. Gilbert turned evangelist himself. He fitted up a room, placed a pulpit in it, and was soon branded as a madman for preaching to his slaves. Meantime, his brother Francis

returned, and assisted him in his labours; a society, at St. John's, was formed; and Methodism, in the West Indian islands, was fairly started. Nathaniel Gilbert died in 1774, eleven years before the appointment of the first Methodist missionaries to Antigua, leaving behind him a Methodist society of about sixty members. "On what do you trust?" asked a friend. "On Christ crucified," was the quick response. "Have you peace with God?" He answered, "Unspeakable." "Have you no fear, no doubt?" "None," replied the dying saint. "Can you part with your wife and children?" "Yes. God will be their strength and portion." Thus died the first West Indian Methodist. His wife soon followed him. His daughters, Alice and Mary, had victoriously preceded him. His third daughter, Mrs. Yates, died an equally blessed death. His son Nicholas, for years, was a faithful minister of Christ, and, in his last moments, was a happy witness of the power and blessedness of gospel truth. And, finally, his brother Francis, his faithful fellow labourer, returned to England, and became a member of the Methodist class led by the immortal vicar of Madeley; the first class-paper containing four names, and four only,—John Fletcher, Mary Fletcher, Francis Gilbert, and George Perks; while, as late as the year 1864, Fletcher's clerical successor, in the Madeley vicarage, was the great grandson of Nathaniel Gilbert, and testified that he had reason to believe that no child or grandchild of the first West Indian Methodist had passed away without being prepared for the better world; and that almost all of them had been even distinguished among Christians for their earnest devotion to the Divine Redeemer. "Instead of thy fathers shall be thy

children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth" (Psalm xlv. 16).

On February 20, Wesley preached, to a crowded congregation, in the new meeting-house at Maldon, where, amid much opposition, Methodism had been introduced by Mrs. Denny, who died a few months after the place was opened.[6]

Returning to London, he retired to Lewisham, to write his sermon for the Bedford assizes. This was preached, in St. Paul's church, on Friday, the 10th of March, from the text, "We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ," and was published at the request of William Cole, Esq., high sheriff of the county, and others. The sermon is a remarkable production, full of bold thoughts, and fiery eloquence. The judge, Sir Edward Clive, immediately after the service was concluded, forwarded an invitation to Wesley to dine with him; but, having to be at Epworth, a distance of a hundred and twenty miles, the night following, he was obliged to send an excuse; and, at once, set out, amid a piercing storm of wind, snow, sleet, and hail; and, by almost continuous travelling, sometimes on a lame horse, and sometimes in a post chaise, reached Epworth on Saturday night at ten, having, on that day only, travelled ninety miles of execrable roads, in seventeen hours, and yet, he tells us, that he, a man fifty-five years old, was nearly as fresh at the end of his journey as he was at the beginning. The next day, he attended the morning and afternoon services in his father's church; after which he took his stand in the market-place, and, in the midst of wintry

winds and wintry rain, preached to an unflinching multitude, collected together from all the country round about. The day following, March 13, he "preached in the shell of the new meeting-house," and then set out for York.

Wesley was now on one of the longest journeys that he ever took, extending from the 6th of March to the 21st of October following. Let us hastily endeavour to track his wide wanderings.

After visiting York, Leeds, Manchester, and Bolton, he preached, on Easter Sunday, at Liverpool, and never "saw the house so crowded, especially with rich and genteel people, whom he did not spare."

From Manchester to Liverpool, he was accompanied by Francis Okeley. Okeley writes: "during our stay in Liverpool, which was ten days, Mr. Wesley preached morning and evening, to crowded auditories, consisting of all sorts. There is here a large, commodious room, built for the use of the Methodists, but not quite finished." He proceeds to tell how they dined at the house "of one Mr. Newton," little thinking, that the same Mr. Newton would develop into the renowned John Newton, curate of Olney.[7] One of the Liverpool Methodists, at this period, was an old woman, who lived upon Wavertree Green, and was known by the name of "Dame Cross." To obtain a livelihood, she kept a school, but was extremely poor. She was a staunch churchwoman; and had a high veneration for gowns and cassocks, and for those who wore them; but was withal a happy and devoted Christian.

One day, John Newton called upon her, and finding her surrounded by a flock of fowls, he asked, "Dame Cross, are these fowls yours?" "Not one of them," the octogenarian answered, "they are all my neighbours'; but I save all my crumbs and scraps for them; for I love to feed them, for the sake of Him who made them."[8]

On March 28, Wesley set sail for Dublin. When about eight miles from Liverpool, a boat overtook them, bringing him letters from London. Some of these earnestly pressed him to return to the metropolis, but, while consulting his travelling companions, the wind changed, and the boat left, and he had no choice but to proceed to Ireland. He arrived in Dublin on March 31.

Here he spent nearly a month. He found, to his great annoyance, that the five o'clock morning preaching had been discontinued; and that self denial, among the Dublin Methodists, had been a thing almost utterly unknown since Thomas Walsh had left the island. Rigorous discipline was indispensable, for the Irish "people in general were so soft and delicate, that the least slackness" was ruinous. He preached to an unstable people on the character of Reuben. He held a covenant service; and set apart a day for fasting and for prayer. He "met all the married men and women of the society, and brought strange things to their ears respecting the duties of husbands, and wives, and parents."

Francis Okeley, Wesley's present travelling companion, was fifteen years his junior, and, like himself, had been

educated in the Charterhouse school, London. In 1739, he became B.A. of St. John's college, Cambridge; and was the intimate friend of the two Wesleys and their associates. His intention had been to become a minister of the Church of England; but, because the Moravians had ordained him deacon, the bishop refused to ordain him priest; and, to the end of life, he officiated in the Brethren's congregations. He was now Moravian minister at Bedford; but kept Wesley company during the whole of his Irish tour, and even went with him to his conference, at Bristol, in the month of August following.[9] To some extent, he was infected with the Moravian lusciousness then so common; but he was also a man of much learning, of great piety, and of a catholic and Christian spirit. He was well versed in the old German divinity,—was an immense admirer of William Law,—the translator of the life of Jacob Behmen, and the visions of Hiel and Englebretet,—and a strong advocate of the doctrine of universal restoration. He was a frequent and valued correspondent of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, and the author of other works besides the above mentioned. He died, at Bedford, in 1794.[10]

On April 24, Wesley and Okeley left Dublin, on an excursion through the Irish provinces. At Edinderry, Wesley preached, under the castle wall, to a large congregation, which some of the quakers had used their utmost influence to prevent assembling. At Portarlington, he "was much concerned for his rich, gay hearers." At Mountmellick, most of the protestants of the town were present, and many papists also skirted the congregation. Bitter contentions, however,

had well-nigh torn the society in pieces. At Tullamore, at large number of protestants, many papists, and almost all the troopers in the town attended. At Drumcree, he opened a new chapel, "built in the taste of the country; the roof thatch, and the walls mud." At Terryhugan, he found a room built purposely for him and his itinerants, "three yards long, two and a quarter broad, and six feet high; the walls, floor, and ceiling mud; and the furniture a clean chaff bed;" but even in this mud-built hut, he found it true,—

"Licet sub paupere tecto
Reges et regum vitâ praecurrere amicos."

All the inhabitants of the village, with many others, were present at the morning five o'clock preaching, including a poor woman, brought to bed ten days before, and who walked seven miles, with her child in her arms, to have it baptized by Wesley. At Newtown, he addressed the largest congregation he had seen since he came to Ireland. At Belfast, he preached in the market-house; and at Carrickfergus in the courthouse. At Larn, his pulpit was a table, and his congregation nearly all the inhabitants of the town, both rich and poor. At Lurgan, he was taken to see the house which an eminent scholar had recently erected for himself,—"part mud, part brick, part stone, and part bones and wood; with four windows, but without glass in any; of two storeys, but without a staircase; on the floor three rooms,—one three square, the second with five sides, and the third with more." "I give," says Wesley, "a particular description of this wonderful edifice, to illustrate

the truth—There is no folly too great even for a man of sense, if he resolves to follow his own imagination."

At Coot Hill, he had "a tolerably serious congregation in the open street." At Granard, he preached in the barrack yard. At Edgeworthtown, his congregation was genteel; but at Longford, where he preached in the yard of the great inn, "the rudest, surliest, wildest people" he had seen in Ireland. At Newport, all the protestants of the town attended. At Hollymount, the churchyard served him as a preaching place. At Minulla, he found the papists unchanged,—retaining the same bitterness and thirst for blood as ever, and as ready to cut the throats of protestants as they were in the former century. He left the place at four o'clock in the morning, riding a horse without either bridle or saddle. At Ahaskra, four fifths of his congregation were papists. At Athlone, a few eggs and stones were thrown. At Coolylough, he held the quarterly meeting. At Limerick, he met Thomas Walsh, "alive, and but just alive," three of the best physicians attending him, and all agreeing that, "by violent straining of his voice, added to frequent colds, he had contracted a pulmonary consumption, which was now in the last stage, and consequently beyond the reach of any human help." Here Wesley held his Irish conference, fourteen preachers being present.

At Clare, his congregation in the street consisted of "many poor papists and rich protestants." At Ennis, "nine in ten" of those who came to hear him were papists. In an island near Limerick, he preached to thousands seated on the grass, row

above row. Here he overstrained himself, and next morning began spitting blood; and, for a week, was laid aside. Rest, however, and "a brimstone plaster, and a linctus of roasted lemon and honey," so far restored him, that, in a week, he resumed his ministry at Cork, and interred James Massiot.

Here, and in the neighbourhood, he remained a month, making a short excursion to Kinsale, where he had a large congregation of soldiers; and to Bandon, where he preached in the shell of a new meeting-house, the foundation of which had been laid only a fortnight previous. On August 8, he set sail, and three days afterwards arrived in Bristol.

A couple of letters, written during this Irish tour, and addressed to Mr. Blackwell, may be interesting.

"CASTLEBAR, *June* 5, 1758.

"DEAR SIR,—I have learned, by the grace of God, in every state to be content. What a peace do we find in all circumstances, when we can say, 'Not as I will, but as Thou wilt!'

"I have now gone through the greatest part of this kingdom: Leinster, Ulster, and the greater half of Connaught. Time only is wanting. If my brother could take care of England, and give me but one year in Ireland, I think every corner of this nation would receive the truth as it is in Jesus.

They want only to hear it; and they will hear me, high and low, rich and poor. What a mystery of Providence is this! In England, they may hear, but will not. In Ireland, they fain would hear, but cannot. So in both, thousands perish for lack of knowledge.

"I hope you find public affairs changing for the better. In this corner of the world, we know little about them; only we are told, that the great, little king in Moravia is not swallowed up yet.

"Till near the middle of next month, I expect to be at Mr. Beauchamp's in Limerick. My best wishes attend you all.

"I am, dear sir, your affectionate servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."

"BANDON, *July* 12, 1758.

"In a week or two, I shall be looking out for a ship. You people in England are bad correspondents. Both Mr. Downing, Mr. Venn, and Mr. Madan are a letter in my debt; and yet, I think they have not more business than I have. How unequally are things distributed here! Some want time, and some want work. But all will be set right hereafter. There is no disorder on that shore. I remain, dear sir, yours most affectionately,

"JOHN WESLEY."[11]

The assembling of Wesley's conference of preachers made his return to England a necessity.

The conference was opened, at Bristol, on August 12, and continued its sittings until August 16. Besides the two Wesleys, and Mr. Okeley, there were thirty-four preachers present. Fourteen were proposed as candidates for the itinerant work. Samuel Meggot was declined, until he had had further trial; and also William Darney, until he ceased "to rail, to print, and to sell wares without a licence." Thomas Briscoe, or Joseph Jones, was to be Wesley's travelling companion during the ensuing year; and Michael Fenwick was recommended to return to business. It was agreed, that many of the preachers were wanting in seriousness; and that, in future, they must be watchful in not conforming to the world in their manner of conversation; and also, that they must fast, as far as health permitted, every Friday. "You must," said Wesley, "do one of three things; either spend time in chitchat, or learn Latin or Hebrew, or spend all your time and strength in saving souls. Which will you do?" The response was, "The last, by the grace of God." Kingswood school was again in difficulty, and the question was discussed, "Shall we drop it?" Answer, "'By no means, if a fit master can be procured." It was found that Wesley's publications had not been diligently recommended; and, to promote the sale of them, it was agreed to allow one person in every circuit (if he desired it) ten per cent commission upon all he sold. It was asked, if Nicholas Manners had said, "I want no more grace for a year and a day." The reply was, "Ask himself. If he has, and will not be convinced of his fault, let him be publicly disowned." Another question of some importance was, "Ought any tickets to be given to children?" Answer, "Not to the unawakened; it makes them too cheap." To preach most profitably in the

morning, it was recommended frequently to read and explain half a chapter in the Bible; and sometimes to read and enlarge upon one of the tracts in the "Christian Library." Except once a year, none but members of the bands were to be admitted into lovefeasts; and, in order to purge the bands, and leave none in them but those living in the enjoyment of conscious pardon, it was resolved, that each assistant, at the next quarterly visitation, should take two or three sensible men with him (either preachers, stewards, or leaders), and should closely examine every person in the band societies, and expel all, even if it should be two thirds of the entire number, who were not exercising the faith by which a man is justified and finds peace with God. Such persons might be fit for penitential classes, but were not for the private bands.

Besides discipline, the conference also discussed doctrine. When in Dublin, four months before, Wesley had been drawn into a controversy by Miss H——, on the doctrine of perfection. The lady complained, that some of his preachers placed the doctrine "in a dreadful light; one of them affirming, that a believer, till perfect, is under the curse of God, and in a state of damnation"; and another saying, "If you die before you have attained it, you will surely perish." Wesley replied to this in a long letter, dated Dublin, April 5, 1758, in which he repudiates such sentiments.[12] He admits, that "young men" may have said these things, but their doctrines were not his. To settle the matter, he brought it before the Bristol conference as follows:—

Question.—"Do you affirm, that perfection excludes all infirmities, ignorance, and mistake?

Answer.—"We continually affirm just the contrary.

Q.—"Do you say, 'Every one who is not saved from all sin is in a state of damnation?'

A.—"So far from it, that we will not say any one is in a state of damnation, that fears God and really strives to please Him.

Q.—"In what manner would you advise those who think they have attained, to speak of their own experience?

A.—"With great wariness, and with the deepest humility and self abasement before God.

Q.—"How should young preachers, especially, speak of perfection in public?

A.—"Not too minutely or circumstantially, but rather in general and scriptural terms.

Q.—"What does Christian perfection imply?

A.—"The loving God with all the heart, so that every evil temper is destroyed, and every thought, and word, and work springs from, and is conducted to the end by the pure love of God and our neighbour."

It is a curious fact, that, while Wesley and eight other preachers were appointed to the London circuit, Charles Wesley had Bristol wholly to himself; three preachers, however, having charge of the adjoining country, under the

technical denomination of the "Wiltshire" circuit. This shows, that Charles had now substantially relinquished the itinerant ministry, and had made Bristol his principal place of residence. The circuits into which the United Kingdom was divided, were, including London and Bristol, thirteen in number; one of these, however, being "Wales," with two itinerants, and another "Ireland," with ten. "Cornwall" had seven; "Staffordshire" two; "Cheshire" three; "Leeds," "Haworth," and "York," had eight; "Lincolnshire" three; and "Newcastle" four.[13]

From the above condensed account of the proceedings of the conference of 1758, it will be seen, that Wesley was exceedingly anxious, and, in fact, resolved, at all hazards, to maintain the purity of his preachers and societies. "Are our societies," he asked, "in general as godly, and as serious, as the old Puritans? Why should they not? What means can we use to effect it?" Then follows the answer, to "enforce family discipline," and to "closely examine the state of every soul, not only at stated times, but in every conversation."[14] In accordance with this was a laconic letter, which, at the beginning of the year, Wesley wrote to Mr. Merryweather, of Yarm.

"LONDON, *January* 16, 1758.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—No person must be allowed to preach or exhort among our people, whose life is not holy and unblamable; nor any who asserts anything contrary to the gospel which we have received. And, if

he does not own his fault and amend it, he cannot be a leader any longer.

"I am your affectionate brother,

"JOHN WESLEY."[15]

The day after the Bristol conference closed its sittings, Wesley attended a performance of Handel's "Messiah" in Bristol cathedral; and, on August 21, set out on a tour in Wales, from which he returned to Bristol on September 2. Here he spent a considerable time, with the Rev. John Fletcher and other preachers, in discussing the doctrine of Christian perfection, and wrote down the general propositions in which they were all agreed.

On October 2, he started for London. At Bradford he met the stewards of the Wiltshire and Somersetshire societies. At Warminster, he preached in a good man's yard, his congregation being numerous, and consisting of "saints and sinners, rich and poor, churchmen, quakers, and presbyterians." "Some disturbance," says he, "was expected, but there was none. The whole assembly behaved well; and, instead of curses or stones, we had many blessings as we rode through the town for Salisbury." Strangely enough, this was Wesley's first and last visit to the town of Warminster. Some time afterwards, however, a class was formed; and, amid the bitterest persecutions, held on its way. Men would often enter the preaching house, and remain, during the whole service, covered with their slouching hats, cursing the preacher and his friends, and even smoking vile tobacco. Sometimes they would challenge the Methodists to fight; and, at others, sing

profane songs while the Methodists sang sacred ones. In one instance, they smashed the seats, and windows, and pulpit of the meeting-house in Back Street; threw John Spicer into a deep ditch; and so injured Caleb Daniel that he died soon after.[16]

From Warminster, Wesley proceeded to Portsmouth, where he preached in Whitefield's Tabernacle. At Newport, in the Isle of Wight, he found the town filled with soldiers, "the most abandoned wretches he ever saw," and used the corn-market as his preaching place. At Gosport, he occupied the Tabernacle; at Fareham, "a wild multitude" was his congregation; at Rye, he had "a crowded audience"; at Rolvenden, a "serious congregation," skirted with "a few drunkards"; at Northjam, "the house was stowed as full as possible," and many stood in the rain outside; at Canterbury, he had a dangerous fall from his horse, but found "the little society free from all divisions and offences." On October 21, after an absence of near eight months, he again reached London.

Four days later, he set out for Norwich. At Colchester, he preached on St. John's Green, and found that, in three months, a society of one hundred and twenty persons had been gathered. At Norwich, James Wheatley called upon him, and offered him his Tabernacle. Here he spent a week among "a settled and well united society." In returning, he visited, by request, the famous vicar of Everton.

John Berridge is too notable a man to be passed in silence. He was the son of a wealthy farmer, and was now forty-two years of age. Having taken degrees at the Cambridge university, he, in 1749, accepted the curacy of Stapleford, which he served for the next six years. In 1755, he removed to the vicarage of Everton, where he continued to reside until his death. The epitaph on his tomb, excepting the date of his death, was written by himself, and is as follows:—

> "Here lie the earthly remains of John Berridge, late vicar of Everton, and an itinerant servant of Jesus Christ: who loved his Master and His work; and, after running His errands many years, was called up to wait on Him above. Reader, art thou born again? No salvation without the new birth! I was born in sin, February, 1716. Remained ignorant of my fallen state till 1730. Lived proudly on faith and works for salvation till 1754. Admitted to Everton vicarage, 1755. Fled to Jesus alone for refuge, 1756. Fell asleep in Christ, January 22, 1793."

This is a truthful outline of the history of this remarkable man. To fill it up would require a volume. His preaching, up to the time of his conversion, had been useless; since then, it had been full of power. Three months before Wesley's visit, his ministry had been blessed to the Rev, Mr. Hicks, a clergyman at Wrestlingworth, about four miles from Everton, who became his companion in his itinerant tours, and was greatly useful. In learning, Berridge, it is said, was inferior to very few of the most celebrated sons of science and literature

in the Cambridge university. From his entrance at Clare Hall to his acceptance of the vicarage of Everton, a period of twenty-one years, he regularly studied fifteen hours a day. His understanding was strong; his wit almost without parallel. In stature, he was tall, but not awkward; lusty, but not corpulent. His voice was deep, but not hoarse; strong, but not noisy; his pronunciation distinct, but not broad. In his countenance there was gravity, without grimace: his address was solemn, but not sour; easy, but not careless; deliberate, but not drawling; pointed, but not personal; affectionate, but not fawning. He would often weep, but never whine. His sentences were short, but not ambiguous; his ideas collected, but not crowded. His itinerant circuit embraced the counties of Bedford, Cambridge, Essex, Hertford, and Huntingdon. In this circuit, for more than twenty years, he preached, upon an average, from ten to twelve sermons every week, and frequently rode a hundred miles. In some places, from ten to fifteen thousand persons composed his congregations. People came to hear him from a distance of twenty miles, and were at Everton by seven o'clock in the morning, at which early hour he preached. Four sermons on a Sunday were his regular work. His usefulness was great. During the first year after his conversion, he was visited by a thousand persons, under serious impressions; and it was computed, that, during the same space of time, about four thousand were awakened to a concern for the welfare of their souls, under his own and the joint ministry of Mr. Hicks. Magistrates, country squires, and others, furiously opposed him. The *old devil* was the only name by which he was distinguished among them for above twenty years; but, in the midst of all, the brave hearted,

eccentric vicar steadily pursued his work. Houses and barns were rented for preaching; lay preachers were employed and maintained; his church income and the fortune inherited from his father were appropriated to the support and extension of his work; and even his family plate was converted into clothing for his itinerant preachers. For nearly thirty years, he spent about three months annually in London, preaching in Whitefield's Tabernacle, in Tottenham Court chapel, and in other places. At his funeral, six neighbouring clergymen attended to bear his pall, while an immense concourse, from all parts of the country, by their undissembled grief and falling tears, paid a just eulogium to his character and worth. As he was never married, he left no widow to deplore his death, nor children to perpetuate his memory; but he long lived in the grateful remembrance of thousands, who had been benefited by his ministry; and, by his "Christian World Unmasked" and his "Sion's Songs" (the only books he ever published), he is known to myriads who never saw him.[17] He was a high Calvinist, but a devoted Christian. *Requiescat in pace!* Hundreds of racy anecdotes might be told concerning him, and well-nigh thousands of his pungent and witty sayings might be quoted; but it is time to return to Wesley.

Berridge had told the mayor of Bedford, that he wished an interview with Wesley, as soon as possible; and accordingly, on November 9, Wesley went to Everton. The two clerical itinerants started off to Wrestlingworth, to visit Hicks, a third. The same night Wesley preached in Mr. Hicks's well filled church; lodged in the vicarage; and preached in the church again next morning, of course having both Hicks and Berridge

as his hearers. In the midst of his sermon, a woman dropped down as dead, "deeply sensible of her want of Christ," The clerical trio then rode to Everton, where Wesley preached in Berridge's church at six in the evening, and at five next morning; and where some were struck just as the woman at Wrestlingworth. One was brought into the vicarage, with whom the three clergymen spent a considerable time in prayer.

This was Wesley's first interview with Berridge. "For many years," he writes, "Mr. Berridge was seeking to be justified by his works; but, a few months ago, he was throughly convinced, that 'by grace' we 'are saved through faith.' Immediately, he began to proclaim aloud the redemption that is in Jesus; and God confirmed His word exactly as He did at Bristol, at the beginning, by working repentance and faith in the hearers, and with the same violent outward symptoms."

This is a remarkable fact. At the commencement of Wesley's itinerant ministry, *stricken cases* were frequent and numerous; but, for the last fifteen years, they had been of rare occurrence. In Wesley's experience, they had principally happened, not in churches, but in barns, fields, and private meeting-rooms. Though the same puzzling phenomena had been witnessed in the great revivals in America and in Scotland, they had not been general in England, but had been chiefly confined to Kingswood, Bristol, and Newcastle upon Tyne. At the time, they created great commotion, but, for years, they had disappeared. Now, however, in 1758, under the ministry of Berridge and of Hicks, and even in parish

churches, they again occurred. On one occasion, while Berridge was preaching, several persons fainted, and many in agony cried out. A little girl was thrown into violent contortions, and wept aloud incessantly. The church was crowded, the windows filled within and without, and also the pulpit steps up to the pulpit door. Three fourths of the congregation were men. Thirty of them had come thirteen miles, and, in order to be in time, had started at two o'clock in the morning. Some shrieked, others roared, but the most general sound was a loud breathing, like that of people half strangled. Numbers fell down as dead; some sinking in silence, and some in the utmost agitation.

On another occasion, when Mr. Hicks was preaching at Wrestlingworth, fifteen persons fell prostrate on the ground, a few, for hours, crying out with the greatest violence, and the rest more silently struggling, as in the pangs of death.

These were novel scenes to be witnessed in a church; but besides these, occurring in sacred buildings, there were others in public roads, in the vicar's garden, in fields, and in private houses, where men, women, and children were found prostrate on the ground; and great numbers were filled with peace and joy, by believing in Christ Jesus. Faces, which had been almost black with terror, now beamed with happiness. "Jesus," cried one, "has forgiven all my sins! I am in heaven! I am in heaven! O how He loves me! And how I love Him!" Another, bathed in perspiration, and with every muscle quivering, clapped his hands, and with a smile exclaimed, "Jesus is mine! He is my Saviour!" Some burst into strange,

involuntary laughter; others roared, as if possessed by demons; most were, at length, made happy. In one instance, two hundred persons, chiefly men, were, at the same time, in Everton church, crying aloud for mercy. The groans, lamentations, prayers, and roars, were indescribable; as, also, were the shouts and the songs of praise after the penitents found peace with God.

Wesley's first visit to Mr. Berridge was on November 9. Within six weeks, on December 18, he went again; and, while preaching in the church at Everton, witnessed another scene like those that have been described; for "many," says he, "not able to contain themselves, cried aloud for mercy."

Wesley was now on his way to Norwich, where he spent the next six days, and where, besides preaching, he completed the purchase of the chapel, which had been built by the notorious James Wheatley.

On his return to London, he called at Colchester, and makes the following important entry in his Journal: "1758, December 29—I found the society had decreased since Laurence Coughlan went away; and, yet, they had had full as good preachers. But that is not sufficient; by repeated experiments, we learn that, though a man preach like an angel, he will neither collect, nor preserve a society which is collected, without visiting them from house to house."

We have reached the end of the year 1758; but some other matters, belonging to this period, must have attention.

It was in 1758, that Wesley formed an acquaintance, not only with Berridge, but with another distinguished man. John Newton was the son of a shipmaster, and was born in 1725. The chief part of his boyhood and youth was spent at sea. His life, up to the age of five and twenty, was a painfully chequered scene. Soon after the year 1750, he obtained the post of tidewaiter at Liverpool; where, by dint of severe application, he rapidly acquired a considerable knowledge of Greek and Hebrew. He now made some unsuccessful attempts to become the pastor of a Dissenting congregation. He then applied to the Archbishop of York for episcopal ordination; but was refused, on the ground that he had been preaching, without authority, among Dissenters. On his way to Ireland, in the spring of the present year, Wesley paid him a visit, during his ten days' stay in Liverpool. Mr. Newton was now thirty-eight years old; and, a few months later, wrote to Wesley as follows.

"LIVERPOOL, *August* 29, 1758.

"DEAR AND REVEREND SIR,—I am informed of your arrival at Bristol, which I much rejoice in, and desire to praise the Lord for. I hope He has yet much service for you to do; and, till your work is done, I know your life is secured. When it is fully accomplished, I think, I can give my consent, that you should be released from hence, and removed to that kingdom of love, and joy, and peace, where none of the evils of mortality can find admittance.

"I wait your directions where to send you the paper you left with me, and hope it will not be long, for it will give me double satisfaction to hear of your welfare, *propria manu.* Mrs. Newton concurs with me in tendering our sincerest respects, and requesting a remembrance in your prayers, and a share in your correspondence. I am, with respect and affection, reverend sir, your obliged friend and servant,

"JOHN NEWTON."[18]

Six years after this, Mr. Newton, through the interest of Lord Dartmouth, obtained ordination, and the curacy at Olney, where, from 1764 to 1779, he lived in the closest friendship with the poet Cowper and the Olney circle. He then removed to the rectory of St. Mary Woolnoth, Lombard Street, London, where he continued until his death in 1807. Like Berridge, he wrote his own epitaph, which was as follows:—

"John Newton, clerk: once an infidel and a libertine, a servant of slaves in Africa, was, by the rich mercy of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, preserved, restored, pardoned, and appointed to preach the faith he had long laboured to destroy, near sixteen years at Olney, in Bucks, and twenty-eight years in this church."[19]

In the same year, 1758, Wesley entered into correspondence with another man of distinguished talent, who afterwards became the bitterest opponent he ever had.

Augustus Montague Toplady was the son of a major in the army, and was born at Farnham, in Surrey, in the year 1740. He received the rudiments of his education at Westminster school; and thence went, with his widowed mother, to Ireland, to pursue claims to an estate which belonged to her in that island. Here, a little before he was sixteen years of age, he heard James Morris, one of Wesley's itinerants, preach in a barn at Codymain, and was converted. Soon after, he entered Trinity college, Dublin; and wrote to Wesley as follows.

"DUBLIN, *September* 13, 1758.

"REVEREND SIR,—I thank you for your satisfactory letter; particularly for your kind caution against trifling company. I do not visit three persons in the college, except one or two of the fellows. It is indeed Sodom epitomized; for I do not believe there is one that fears God in it.

"Your remarks on Mr. Hervey's style are too just; and I think a writer would be much to blame for imitating it; or indeed the style of any other; for if he has abilities of his own, he ought to use them; if he has not, he would be inexcusable for writing at all. I believe Mr. Hervey's mentioning the active, exclusive from the passive, obedience of Christ, is rather a casual than intentional omission; but an author cannot be too careful how he expresses himself on a point of so much importance. I have long been convinced, that self righteousness and antinomianism are equally pernicious; and that to insist on the imputation of Christ's righteousness, as alone

requisite to salvation, is only strewing the way to hell with flowers. I have myself known some make shipwreck of faith, and love, and a good conscience, on this specious quicksand.

"My heart's desire, and prayer is, that Christ would grant to keep me close to Him, with meek, simple, steady love. I think, of late, the studies I am unavoidably engaged in have done me some harm; I mean have abated that fervency with which I used to approach the throne of grace; and this, by insensible degrees. My chariot wheels have drove heavily for a month past; but I have reason to hope I am recovering my usual joy. I can attribute its declension to nothing else but assiduous application to my college business; which prevents my attending the preaching so often as I would. I depend on your candour to excuse this trouble given you, by, reverend sir, your most dutiful, humble servant,

"AUGUSTUS TOPLADY."[20]

This was an admirable letter, to be written by a youth not yet eighteen years of age. A year later, Toplady published a 12mo book of his poetic pieces; and, in 1762, was ordained, and inducted into the living of Blagdon in Somersetshire. In 1768, he obtained the vicarage of Broadhembury, which he held until his decease in 1778. Three years before he died, he removed to London, and became the preacher of the French church, in Orange Street, Leicester Fields. His death was very beautiful. "The sky," said he, "is clear; there is no cloud: come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!" Thus died Augustus

Toplady, on the 11th of August, aged thirty-seven. He was buried in a grave, which, by his own request, was thirteen feet deep, beneath the gallery in Tottenham Court chapel.

It is extremely difficult to form an estimate of Toplady's life and character. He was unquestionably a man of great talent, of extensive knowledge, and of burning zeal. His discourses were extemporary; his language eloquent; his voice melodious; his delivery and action engaging, elegant, and easy.[21] His private diary breathes with the richest piety; and yet, in the *Gospel Magazine*, of which he was the chief editor, and in his controversial works, his abuse of Wesley is rancorous to a degree which is almost without parallel, and is expressed in terms far more nearly allied to the slang of Billingsgate than to the language of a Christian and a gentleman.

Wesley, in 1758, was not without his troubles. Among other matters, the leaders of the Leeds society began to exercise prerogatives to which he had the strongest objection. Hence the following characteristic letter.

"LONDON, *December* 9, 1758.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—From time to time, I have had more trouble with the town of Leeds than with all the societies in Yorkshire. And I now hear, that the leaders insist, that such and such persons be put out of the society! I desire the leaders may know their places, and not stretch themselves beyond their line. Pray let me judge who should be put out of the Methodist

society, and who should not. I desire Faith and Ann Hardwick may not be put out of the society, unless some matter appear against them; and, if any new matter does appear, let it be laid before me. He shall have judgment without mercy who hath shown no mercy.

"I am your affectionate brother,

"J. WESLEY."[22]

Another annoyance was the publication of a sermon, preached against the Methodists, by the Rev. Mr. Potter, at Reymerston, in Norfolk. This was answered by Cornelius Cayley, jun., in an octavo pamphlet of 41 pages. In itself it was hardly worth Wesley's notice; but, having been preached and circulated in the neighbourhood of Norwich, where Methodism had to encounter difficulties of no ordinary kind, Wesley deemed it his duty to dissect it, which he did in a long "Letter to the Reverend Mr. Potter," 12mo, 11 pages.

During the year 1758, he also published "A short Account of the Life and Death of Nathaniel Othen, who was shot in Dover Castle, October 26, 1757." 12mo, 12 pages. This was the romantic history of a common soldier, who was executed for deserting the army.

Another of his publications was, "A Letter to a Gentleman at Bristol," dated January 8, 1758: 12mo, 24 pages. Wesley says, that this was written at the request of several of his friends, "in order to guard them from seeking salvation by works on one hand, and from antinomianism on the other."[23]

Another work of Wesley's, published in 1758, was entitled, "Reasons against a Separation from the Church of England." 12mo, 22 pages. This was an abstract from a larger work, which Wesley wrote, but never published, and which remains in manuscript to the present day. Wesley meant it for publication; but the Rev. Samuel Walker, of Truro, to whose friendly inspection it was submitted, advised that it should not be printed. The fact is, in this treatise against separation from the Church, Wesley conceded points, which Walker thought might be used as reasons *for* a separation rather than *against* it. The objections of Dissenters to some parts of the liturgy and canons, to the spiritual courts, and to the character of too many of the clergy, were acknowledged to be just; but Wesley argued, that these objections did not form a sufficient ground for separation. Walker was afraid that, if the premises were admitted, Wesley's readers might draw a conclusion opposite to what Wesley did; and hence the treatise was withdrawn;[24] with the exception that, in 1758, Wesley published an extract from it, with the title already given. The reasons are twelve in number. 1. Because, it would be a contradiction to the solemn and repeated statements of his brother and himself. 2. Because, it would give huge occasion of offence. 3. Because, it would prejudice many good Christians against being benefited by Wesley's preaching. 4. Because, it would hinder multitudes of the unconverted from hearing him at all. 5. Because, it would cause many hundreds, if not some thousands, to leave the Methodist societies. 6. Because, it would produce inconceivable strife and contention. 7. Because, it would engage him in a thousand controversies, both in public and private, and so divert him from useful

labours. 8. Because, to form the plan of a new church would require more time, care, thought, and wisdom than any of them possessed. 9. Because, barely entertaining a distant thought of it had already produced evil fruits. 10. Because, though the experiment of separation had been frequently tried by others, the success had never answered the expectation. 11. Because, melancholy instances of failure might now be witnessed. 12. Because, to separate would be to act in direct contradiction to the very end for which, he believed, the Methodists had been raised up by Providence.

Such were Wesley's reasons. He allows, that the *lawfulness* of the Methodists to separate from the Church of England is a point which may fairly be debated; but he has no doubt, that for them to separate is not *expedient.* He replies to the objections that, till they separate, they cannot be a compact, united body; and that it is mere cowardice, fear of persecution, that makes them desire to remain in union. He asserts, that the Methodists are not a party, but living witnesses, raised up by God, for the benefit of all. He suggests, that it should be a sacred rule with all the preachers, to evince "no contempt, no bitterness to the clergy," and also, "to frequent no Dissenting meeting"; for, if the preachers did this, the people would imitate their example; and this, in point of fact, would be separation. Many of the Dissenting ministers were "new-light men, denying the Lord that bought them, and overturning His gospel from the very foundations"; or they were predestinarians, whose doctrines were not wholesome food, but deadly poison. The singing at Dissenting meetings was slow, and drawling; and the prayers were objectionable

in tone, language, and length. He concludes, by expressing a wish, that all the Methodist preachers, except those who have scruples concerning it, would attend the services of the Church as often as they conveniently could; and that they would prepare themselves to answer the arguments usually employed in favour of separation.

To this notable pamphlet, Charles Wesley appended seven "Hymns for the Use of the Methodist Preachers; " and says: "I subscribe to the twelve reasons of my brother with all my heart. I am quite clear, that it is neither expedient, nor *lawful*, for *me* to separate. I never had the least inclination or temptation so to do. My affection for the Church is as strong as ever. Would to God, that all the Methodist preachers were, in this respect, likeminded with—CHARLES WESLEY."

In the year 1758, Wesley issued a remarkable 12mo volume of 246 pages, entitled "A Preservative against unsettled Notions in Religion." In his Journal he says: "I designed it for the use of all those who are under my care, but chiefly of the young preachers." In his brief preface, he observes: "My design, in publishing the following tracts, is not to reclaim, but to preserve: not to convince those who are already perverted, but to prevent the perversion of others. I do not, therefore, enter deep into the controversy even with deists, Socinians, Arians, or papists: much less with those who are not so dangerously mistaken, mystics, quakers, anabaptists, presbyterians, predestinarians, or antinomians. I only recite, under each head, a few plain arguments, which, by the

grace of God, may farther confirm those who already know the truth as it is in Jesus."

The first piece in the volume is "An extract of A Short and Easy Method with the Deists," by the celebrated Charles Leslie. The second, "A treatise concerning the Godhead of Jesus Christ, translated from the French." The third, Wesley's own production, is entitled, "The Advantage of the members of the Church of England over those of the Church of Rome." The fourth is, "An extract of a letter to the Rev. Mr. Law, occasioned by some of his late writings:" the letter here, in part, republished, was the one which Wesley addressed to Law in 1756. The fifth piece is "A letter to a Person lately joined with the People called Quakers," which Wesley first wrote in 1748. The sixth is "A treatise on Baptism,"—a treatise really written by his father, though published as his own in 1756. The seventh is "A letter to the Rev. Mr. Towgood, of Exeter; occasioned by his 'Dissent from the Church of England fully justified,'"—the object of Wesley's letter being "to show that a dissent from the Church of England is not the genuine and just consequence of the allegiance which is due to Christ as the only lawgiver in the church." The eighth, entitled "Serious Thoughts concerning Godfathers and Godmothers," was first published in 1752. The ninth, "The Scripture Doctrine of Predestination, Election, and Reprobation," was extracted from a late author, and published, in the first instance, by Wesley in 1741. The tenth, "An extract from A Short View of the Difference between the Moravian Brethren, and the Rev. Mr. John and Charles Wesley:" the eleventh, "An extract from A Dialogue

between an Antinomian and his Friend": both issued in 1745. The twelfth, "A letter to the Rev. Mr. Hervey," written in 1756, and which Hervey said was "palpably weak," and dealt "only in positive assertions and positive denials."[25] The last, his "Reasons against a Separation from the Church of England."

This was an important work, comprising, as it did, in a single volume, the opinions of Wesley on all the subjects which, at that time, excited the attention of the Methodists.

Two more publications, belonging to the year 1758, remain to be noticed.

1. "The Great Assize; a sermon preached at the assizes, in St. Paul's church, Bedford, on March 10, 1758." 8vo, 36 pages.

2. Two separate letters to the Rev. Dr. Free,[26] an everlasting pamphleteer, of the most scurrilous genus. Free was a native of Oxford, and was now forty-seven years of age, and vicar of East Coker, in the county of Somerset; also Thursday lecturer of St. Mary-Hill, London, and lecturer at Newington, Surrey. He lived long enough to be senior doctor of the Oxford university, and died in distress and poverty in 1791.[27] His publications against the Methodists were: 1. "A Display of the Bad Principles of the Methodists," 1758. 2. "Rules for the Discovery of False Prophets; or, the dangerous impositions of the people called Methodists, detected at the bar of Scripture and reason. A sermon preached before the

university at St. Mary's, in Oxford, on Whit Sunday, 1758." 3. His "Edition of the Rev. Mr. Wesley's Penny Letter." 4. His "Edition of Mr. Wesley's Second Letter." 5. His "Speech to the London Clergy, at Sion College." All these were published during the years 1758 and 1759. The following are spicy specimens of the style adopted by this clerical reviler. There is, says he, "in Mr. Wesley's second letter, such a strange mixture of sanctity and prevarication, such praying, sneering, canting, and recanting, expunging and forging, that I no longer feel bound to give him a civil answer." Again: "Wesley raves, and rants, and domineers, and scolds." He is, in the estimation of this Oxford doctor, a perfect "weathercock." He has "the itch of fame and popularity; and the romantic project of being the founder of a sect has prompted him to go a *madding* himself wherever he could find people like-minded." For their benefit, he has "extracted near fourteen volumes, all quintessences, from the fanaticism of the Germans, the English, and other nations." He "prints and distributes gratis his lying, and blasphemous, and delusive pamphlets, to the remotest corners of the land." Free informs his readers, that the name of Methodists was first given to Wesley and his friends, at Oxford, because they affected to be so "uncommonly methodical, as to keep a diary of the most trivial actions of their lives,—such as, how many dishes of tea they drank, and how many slices of bread and butter they eat, how many country dances they called for at their dancing club, and how many pounds of a leg of mutton they might devour after practising a fast."

No wonder that we find the following entries in Wesley's Journal for 1758. "May 2.—I wrote a short answer to Dr. Free's weak, bitter, scurrilous invective against the people called Methodists. But I doubt whether I shall meddle with him any more: he is too dirty a writer for me to touch." Again: "August 24—I wrote a second letter to Dr. Free, the warmest opponent I have had for many years. I leave him now to laugh, and scold, and witticise, and call names, just as he pleases; for I have done."

ENDNOTES

[1] Whitefield's Works, vol. iii., p. 229.
[2] *Methodist Magazine,* 1854, p. 58.
[3] Melville Horne's "Investigation," p. 37.
[4] *Methodist Magazine,* 1780, p. 330.
[5] Benson's Life of Fletcher; and *Methodist Magazine,* 1854, p. 58.
[6] *Methodist Magazine,* 1843, p. 1033.
[7] *Methodist Magazine,* 1863, p. 1101.
[8] "Memoirs of Rev. John Newton," second edition, p. 256.
[9] Minutes of Conference (edit. 1862), vol. i., p. 711.
[10] *Gentleman's Magazine,* 1794, p. 574.
[11] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 173.
[12] *Methodist Magazine,* 1780, p. 223.
[13] Minutes of Conference (edit. 1862), vol. i., p. 711.
[14] Minutes of Conference (edit. 1862), vol. i., p. 713.
[15] *Methodist Magazine,* 1826, p. 463.
[16] "Methodism in Frome," p. 41; and *Methodist Magazine,* 1835, p. 812.
[17] Whittingham's Memoir of Berridge.
[18] *Methodist Magazine,* 1797, p. 457.
[19] Memoirs of Newton.
[20] *Methodist Magazine,* 1780, p. 54.
[21] "Life and Times of Lady Huntingdon."
[22] *Wesleyan Chronicle,* 1843, p. 267.
[23] Wesley's Works, vol. ii., p. 411.
[24] Life of C. Wesley, vol. ii., pp. 84, 137.
[25] Hervey's Works, vol. vi., p. 343.
[26] Both 12mo, pages 10 and 16.

[27] Nichols' "Literary Anecdotes."

1759.

WESLEY begun the year 1759 at Bristol. On January 10, he left for London, where he continued the next six weeks. At this period, the nation was in great excitement, arising from the threatened invasion of the French; and the 16th of February was appointed to be observed as a public fast. On that day, Wesley preached, at five in the morning, at Wandsworth; at nine and at three, in the church at Spitalfields; and at half-past eight, in the Foundery. At the last mentioned service, Lady Huntingdon was present.

Her ladyship, feeling the peril of the country, instituted a series of prayer-meetings in her own mansion, which were conducted by Whitefield, by the two Wesleys, and by Messrs. Venn, Romaine, Madan, Jones, Fletcher, Downing, and Maxfield; and at which, among others, there were present the Earl and Countess of Dartmouth, the Earl and Countess of Chesterfield, Sir Charles and Lady Hotham, Mrs. Carteret, Mrs. Cavendish, and other persons of distinction.[1] This, to Wesley, was a new kind of congregation; but he writes: "O what are the greatest men to the great God? As the small dust of the balance." Charles Wesley says of the service, which was principally conducted by his brother: "All the ministers prayed in turn. It was a most blessed time of refreshment. My brother preached, and won all our hearts. I never liked him better, and was never more united to him, since his unhappy marriage."[2]

On the 1st of March, Wesley set out for Norwich, taking Everton and Colchester on his way. He wrote to Lady Huntingdon as follows.

"The agreeable hour, which I spent with your ladyship, the last week, recalled to my mind the former times, and gave me much matter of thankfulness to the Giver of every good gift. I have found great satisfaction in conversing with those instruments whom God has lately raised up. But still, there is I know not what in them whom we have known from the beginning, and who have borne the burden and heat of the day, which we do not find in those who have risen up since, though they are of upright heart. Perhaps too, those who have but lately come into the harvest are led to think and speak more largely of justification, and the other first principles of the doctrine of Christ. And it may be proper for *them* so to do. Yet *we* find a thirst after something farther. We want to sink deeper and rise higher in the knowledge of God our Saviour. We want all helps for walking closely with Him whom we have received, that we may the more speedily come to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

"Mr. Berridge seems to be one of the most simple, as well as most sensible, men of all whom it pleased God to employ in reviving primitive Christianity. They come now twelve or fourteen miles to hear him. His word is with power: he speaks as plain and home as John

Nelson, but with all the propriety of Mr. Romaine, and the tenderness of Mr. Hervey.

"At Colchester, likewise, the word of God has free course—only no house will contain the congregation. On Sunday, I was obliged to preach on St. John's Green; the people stood on a smooth sloping ground, sheltered by the walls of an old castle, and behaved as men who felt that God was there.

"I am persuaded your ladyship still remembers, in your prayers, your willing servant, for Christ's sake,

"JOHN WESLEY."[3]

Such was Wesley's critique upon the converted clergymen with whom he had been recently associated. One of them, a young man, died three years after this, and deserves a passing notice.

The Rev. Thomas Jones, A.M., of St. Saviour's, Southwark, was now in the thirtieth year of his age. Eight years before, he had been converted, and had begun to preach, with great eloquence and power, the truth which he himself had been brought to experience. His health was feeble; but his ministry was mighty. His zeal was greater than his strength, and frequently provoked the opposition of his enemies. He began to read prayers and to expound the Scriptures, in the chapel of an almshouse in his parish; but the chapel was closed against him. He set up a weekly lecture in his church; but, before long, the use of the pulpit, for that purpose, was

denied to him. He carried religious tracts and books to all his parishioners; and catechized children once a week, in his own private residence. In his thirty-third year, a fever seized him; and, after seven days' illness, he died triumphantly on the 6th of June, 1762, leaving a young widow to bewail her loss. As a preacher, he was too earnest to be polished, and was far more wishful, that his hearers should be benefited by the demonstration of the Spirit and of power, than that they should be merely pleased with the excellency of speech or wisdom. He writes: "I seldom begin to compose my sermons till Saturday in the afternoon, and often not till late in the evening. I have such a variety of business on my hands, that I can never find time to smooth my language, nor to embellish my discourses with pretty conceits, but am obliged to send them abroad into the world *in puris naturalibus."*[4]

The following is an extract from a letter, written to Wesley, by this young clergyman, three weeks after the holding of the intercession meetings in the house of the Countess of Huntingdon.

"CASTLE STREET, SOUTHWARK, *March* 21, 1759.

"DEAR AND HONOURED SIR,—I wish I knew how to express the sense I have of your kind and obliging notice of me. I can hardly expect a greater blessing, as to this world, than the offer you make me of your acquaintance. I hope the same gracious Father of all, who has induced you to make the proposal, will also enable you to give me such instructions as my youth and inexperience need. Let me beg all friendly admonition,

all brotherly, yea fatherly, freedoms from you. I crave your fervent prayers, that I may be daily more humble, *unaffectedly humble,* dead to the world and self, and alive unto our dear redeeming God.

"I am, with many thanks, and great respect, dear and honoured sir, your affectionate and obliged brother in Christ Jesus,

"THOMAS JONES."[5]

On the 6th of March, Wesley came to Norwich, where he continued until April 2. Norwich had become a Methodist station of great importance. Already, Wesley had converted an old foundery into a meeting-house, and now he occupied James Wheatley's chapel. Wheatley's society, once consisting of hundreds of members, had mouldered into nothing. Of the fifteen or sixteen hundred persons who had been *paying* seatholders, not one was left; but every one that pleased went into the seats without any questions asked. "Everything," says Wesley, "was to be wrought out of the ore, or rather out of the cinders."

Difficulties never discouraged, but rather made Wesley daring. He preached morning and evening in the Foundery; and, in less than a week, gathered a society of one hundred; and, in less than a month, by one means and another—by the recovery of Wheatley's lost sheep, and by fresh conversions—that society was increased to nearly six hundred persons; and Wesley believed that, if he could have remained a fortnight longer, it would have become a thousand.[6] He

instituted classes, and did his best to discipline the members. At society meetings, he required every one to show his ticket on entering. He insisted, that the men and women should sit apart, a regulation that appeared novel, if not harsh, among those who had been the loving lambs of James Wheatley's flock. He also found that, from the first, it had been a custom, in Wheatley's chapel, to have the galleries full of spectators while the Lord's supper was administered. This he judged to be highly improper; and, therefore, ordered that none should be admitted, but those who desired to communicate. The only concession which he made to existing prejudices was this. He writes: "as a considerable part of them were Dissenters, I desired every one to use what posture he judged best. Had I required them to kneel, probably half would have sat: now all but one kneeled down." Such was the beginning of Wesley's society at Norwich. It will often require notice in succeeding pages. Wesley wrote as follows to his friend, Mr. Ebenezer Blackwell.

"NORWICH, *March* 12, 1759.

"DEAR SIR,—I know not, if, in all my life, I have had so critical a work on my hands, as that wherein I am now engaged. I am endeavouring to gather up those who were once gathered together, and afterwards scattered, by James Wheatley. I have reunited about seventy of them, and hope this evening to make up a hundred. But many of them have wonderful spirits; having been always accustomed to teach their teachers; so that how they will bear any kind of discipline, I cannot tell.

"At Colchester, the case is far otherwise. About a hundred and sixty simple, upright people are there united together, who are as little children, minding nothing but the salvation of their souls; only, they are greatly distressed for a larger house. I desired them to look out for a piece of ground. It is true, they are poor enough; but, if it be God's work, He will provide the means.

"I remain, dear sir, your very affectionate servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."[7]

Colchester was evidently a favourite place; but it is only fair to add, that many of the hundred and sixty Methodists were either expelled, or seceding, Dissenters. Some of them had never had the rite of baptism administered; and it is a fact worth noticing, that, during this very visit, Wesley baptized seven of them, all adults, and two of them by dipping.

Having spent a month at Norwich, Wesley, on April 2, set out on his long journey to the north.

At Boston, in Lincolnshire, he found a small society, and a more unawakened and rude congregation than he had seen for years. From Boston, he "rode over the fens, fifteen miles broad, and near thirty miles long," to Coningsby, where he had "a numerous congregation, of a far different spirit." At Horncastle, he was roughly saluted by a mob. At Grimsby, he preached in the old churchyard; at Epworth, in the new chapel, and in the market-place; and at Selby, in a garden. At York, he opened the new unfinished chapel in Peasholm

Green, and visited two prisoners in the castle, "the most commodious prison in Europe." At Tadcaster, he had a well behaved congregation in a garden. At Stainland, he preached in a handsome chapel, "near the top of a mountain," his friend Grimshaw reading prayers. At Manchester, "wretched magistrates, by refusing to suppress, had encouraged the rioters, and had long occasioned tumults: but some were now of a better spirit." At Maxfield, "abundance of people ran together, but wild as colts untamed. Before he had done, all but four or five lubberly men seemed almost persuaded to be Christians." At Stockport, where Methodist meetings were held in a thatched shed belonging to William Williamson, Wesley preached on Pettycar Green, the shed being far too small to contain his congregation. The society was small, and could send only half a sovereign as its quarterage to the Manchester circuit meeting; but, soon afterwards, Matthew Mayer and other persons of respectability were converted; and old Hillgate chapel was erected, the pulpit of which James Chadwick carried upon his shoulders, a distance of nine miles, from a place near Altrincham. This humble edifice, without gallery and without pews, was opened by Grimshaw of Haworth; and Methodism in Stockport was permanently founded.[8]

From Stockport, Wesley proceeded to Northwich, Chester, and Mold in Wales. At Liverpool, the congregations were exceeding large; but many of the people "seemed to be like wild asses' colts." He made his way to Wigan, Bolton, Lancaster, Whitehaven, Cockermouth, Wigton, Dumfries, and Glasgow. At the last mentioned place, he found the little

society, which he had formed two years ago, all split to pieces. He tried to reorganise the members, and left about forty, who agreed to meet Mr. Gillies weekly. "If this be done," says Wesley, "I shall try to see Glasgow again: if not, I can employ my time better."

Leaving Glasgow, he went to Edinburgh, Musselburgh, and Dunbar. At Berwick, he preached to "a drowsy congregation" in the town hall; at Alnwick, in the court house, to a congregation "having the power as well as the form of godliness." On reaching Newcastle, June 5, he wrote: "Certainly, if I did not believe there was another world, I should spend all my summers here; as I know no place in Great Britain comparable to it for pleasantness. But I seek another country, and, therefore, am content to be a wanderer upon earth." Concerning Gateshead, he says: "In earnestness, the colliers of Gateshead utterly shame the colliers of Kingswood; scarce thirty of whom think it worth while to hear the word of God on a weekday, not even when I preach: and here the house will scarce contain the weekday congregation of a local preacher."

It was during this northern visit, that Wesley opened the first Methodist chapel in Sunderland. He writes: "Saturday, June 9—"I rode to Sunderland, and preached in the shell of their house. The people are hungry for the word, and receive it with all gladness." Hitherto, the Sunderland Methodists had worshipped in a small room at the top of Swine Alley; and then in a house in Ettrick's Garth, where, for the first time, they had space enough to set up a lilliputian pulpit, which,

with the benches of the place, was threatened to be sold by auction for an arrear of rent, amounting to about £3, and was only saved by the prompt interference of Charles Askell, one of the first leaders, who advanced the sum out of his own pocket, though, by doing so, he deprived himself of the means of setting up housekeeping with Ann Lightfoot, whom he was about to marry, and who, with her mother, resided in a small cottage (Wesley's home in Sunderland), in Playhouse Lane, maintaining themselves by sewing and by knitting.[9]

Wesley spent a month at Newcastle and in the immediate neighbourhood. At Chester-le-street, he "preached in Mr. Tinker's yard, to a crowded audience," says *Lloyd's Evening Post;* "and after that made an oration at the meeting-house." At Morpeth, he had a congregation of "officers, gentlemen, and common people, in the market-place, such as was never seen there before." At North and at South Shields, the lions were become lambs. At Swalwell, he preached in a Dissenters' chapel, with him a thing of rare occurrence. He held the quarterly meeting of the stewards, and found that there were in the Newcastle circuit about eighteen hundred members. In Newcastle itself, he not only preached in the Orphan House, but frequently out of doors, where his congregations were twice as large as the Orphan House could hold. He writes: "What marvel the devil does not love field preaching! Neither do I. I love a commodious room, a soft cushion, and a handsome pulpit. But where is my zeal, if I do not trample all these under foot, in order to save one more soul!" It was on one of these occasions, when preaching on the Exchange steps, that some of his congregation began to

pelt him with mud and rotten eggs; but, at length, a fishwoman, big, burly, and drunken, and the terror of the neighbourhood in which she lived, ran up the steps, and threw one of her arms round Wesley's neck, and shook the fist of the other in the face of Wesley's cowardly assailants, and cried, "If ony yen o' ye lift up another hand to touch ma canny man, ayl floor ye direckly." The fishwife's menace was quite enough, and Wesley was allowed to conclude in peace.[10]

On the 2nd of July, Wesley left Newcastle for London. On his way, he preached at Hartlepool, all the inhabitants of the town being present, either in the street or the adjoining houses, though "a queer, dirty, clumsy man, a country wit, took a great deal of pains to disturb the congregation." At Stockton, in the midst of his service in the market-place, the press-gang came and seized his travelling companions, Joseph Jones and William Alwood, but afterwards released them, the mob, however, having, in the meanwhile, broken the lieutenant's head and so stoned both him and his men, that, to save themselves from further injury, they ignominiously decamped. At Hutton-Rudby, he found that they had just built a preaching house. At Stokesley, he preached on the green; at Guisborough, in a meadow; at Robinhood's Bay, on the quay; and at Scarborough, in the street. Thence, he went to York, Pocklington, and Hull. He writes: "I had a fine congregation at Hull. For once, the rich have the gospel preached." On his way back to York, he preached in Mr. Hilton's yard, at Beverley. At Tadcaster, distant thunder did not lessen the number of his congregation. At Otley, he preached to an immense multitude at the foot of a high mountain. At

Guiseley, he was entertained at Mr. Marshal's, "the Capua of Yorkshire." At Keighley, he found "a loving, earnest, well established people." He then proceeded to Colne, Heptonstall, and Haworth. At the last mentioned place, Mr. Milner read prayers, and Wesley preached, standing on a scaffold close to the church, and the congregation standing in the churchyard. After the service, "the communicants alone filled the church." At a place near Huddersfield, he preached to "the wildest congregation he had seen in Yorkshire;" at Halifax, "the preaching house was like an oven"; at Bradford, he preached, not in the house, but at its door, "as it could not contain one half of the congregation"; at Morley, "a flame had suddenly broken out, where it was least of all expected, and was spreading wider and wider"; and at Birstal, the congregation nearly filled a field. At Sheffield, he was "desired to visit Mr. Dodge, curate of the new church, and found him on the brink of eternity, rejoicing in God his Saviour." At Rotherham, he conversed with eleven persons who believed themselves to be entirely sanctified. At Gainsborough, he preached to "a rude, wild multitude, in Sir Nevil Hickman's great hall," and was thanked by Sir Nevil for his sermon. At North Scarle, he had a great multitude to hear him; but, though he "spoke as plainly as he could, on the first, principles of religion, many seemed to understand him no more than if he was talking Greek."

On Sunday, August 5, he reached Everton, "faint and weary"; attended the morning and afternoon services in Mr. Berridge's church, where several "cried out aloud, not from sorrow or fear, but love and joy." At night, he preached in Mr. Hicks's church, at Wrestlingworth, and "two or three fell to

the ground, and were extremely convulsed; while one or two were filled with strong consolation." He "talked with Ann Thorn, and two others, who had been several times in trances"; and Berridge took him to Alice Miller, a girl fifteen years of age, whom he found "sitting on a stool, and leaning against a wall, with her eyes open and fixed upward." He made a motion as if about to strike her, but her eyes remained unmoved. Tears stole down her cheeks; her face was stamped with reverence and love; her lips were open, but not a word was uttered. In about half an hour, her countenance changed into the form of fear, pity, and distress; she burst into a flood of tears, and cried, "They will all be damned!" In five minutes, her smiles returned; this was followed by an exhibition of distress, when she again exclaimed, "They will go to hell! Cry aloud! Spare not!" After remaining in this state for some hours, "her senses returned." Wesley asked, "Where have you been?" She answered, "With my Saviour." "Why did you cry?" "Not for myself, but for the world; for I saw they were on the brink of hell." This is a strange story, which Wesley leaves, as he leaves many more, without comment. On August 7, he got back to London.

Before proceeding farther, the following extract from a letter, which Berridge wrote to Wesley three weeks before his visit, will not be out of place, and will furnish the reader with "an idea of the wonderful work and scenes witnessed at Everton, and in the surrounding country."

"July 16, 1759.

"DEAR SIR,—Mr. Hicks and myself have been preaching in the fields for this month past, and the power of the Lord is wonderfully present with the word. Near twenty towns have received the gospel in a greater or less degree; and we continually receive fresh invitations, whenever we go out. The word is everywhere like a hammer, breaking the rock in pieces. People fall down, cry out most bitterly, and struggle so vehemently, that five or six men can scarce hold them. It is wonderful to see how the fear of the Lord falls even upon unawakened sinners. When we enter a new village, the people stare, and laugh, and rail abundantly; but when we have preached night and morning, and they have heard the outcries of wounded sinners, they seem as much alarmed as if the French were at their doors. As soon as three or four receive convictions in a village, they are desired to meet together two or three nights in a week, which they readily comply with. At first, they only sing; afterwards they join reading and prayer to singing; and the presence of the Lord is greatly with them. Let me mention two instances. At Orwell, ten people were broken down in one night, only by hearing a few people sing hymns. At Grandchester, a mile from Cambridge, seventeen people were seized with strong convictions last week, only by hearing hymns sung. When societies get a little strength and courage, they begin to read and pray, and then the Lord magnifies His

love as well as power amongst them by releasing souls out of bondage.

"Of late, there has been a wonderful outpouring of the spirit of love among believers; insomuch, that they have fainted under it, fallen down, and lain upon the ground, as dead, for some hours; their bodies being so weakened by these transports of joy, that they have not been able to endure hard labour for days afterwards.

"I would not have you publish the account of A.T. It might only prejudice people against the Lord's work in this place. I find our friends in town begin to be in great pain about the work. They are very slow of heart to believe what they do not see with their own eyes. Give my love to Mr. Grimshaw, and John Nelson; and believe me your affectionate servant for Christ's sake,

"JOHN BERRIDGE."[11]

The work and its accompaniments at Everton created anxiety in London. No wonder. Twenty years previously, the same sort of scenes had been witnessed at Bristol, Kingswood, and Newcastle. Thoughtful and even religious people disliked them; but what then? Were they altogether fanatical, the work of the devil, and intended to injure the work of God? Many thought so; but Wesley did not. After narrating what he saw at Everton, he writes: "I have generally observed more or less of these outward symptoms to attend the beginning of a general work of God; so it was in New England, Scotland, Holland, Ireland, and many parts of

England; but, after a time, they gradually decrease, and the work goes on more quietly and silently. Those whom it pleases God to employ in His work ought to be quite passive in this respect; they should choose nothing, but leave entirely to Him all the circumstances of His own work."

On the 8th of August, the day after his arrival in London, Wesley opened the annual conference of his preachers, which lasted the next three days. Almost the whole time was spent "in examining whether the spirit and lives of the preachers were suitable to their profession." The conference throughout was marked with great unanimity and love.

Three weeks were spent in London and its neighbourhood; and then Wesley set out for Norwich, taking Everton on his way. He again preached in the church of his friend Berridge. He writes: "I went to the church unusually heavy, and hardly expecting to do any good. I preached on these words in the second lesson, 'We know that we are of God.' One sunk down, and another, and another. Some cried aloud in agony of prayer. I would willingly have spent some time in prayer with them; but my voice failed, so that I was obliged to conclude the service, leaving many in the church, crying and praying, but unable either to walk or stand."

Arriving at Norwich, Wesley found that, in taking Wheatley's chapel and congregation, he had not taken an unmixed comfort. He says: "August 30—I preached to a large, rude, noisy congregation. I took knowledge what manner of teachers they had been accustomed to, and determined to

mend them or end them. Accordingly, the next evening, after sermon, I reminded them of two things: the one, that it was not decent to begin talking aloud as soon as service was ended, and hurrying to and fro, as in a bear garden; the other, that it was a bad custom to gather into knots just after sermon, and turn a place of worship into a coffee house. I, therefore, desired that none would talk under that roof, but go quietly and silently away. And on Sunday, September 2, I had the pleasure to observe, that all went as quietly away, as if they had been accustomed to it for many years."

So far, so good. Having mended the bad manners of the Norwich congregation, his next effort was to mend the society. He found, that there were about five hundred members; but a hundred and fifty of those did not even pretend to meet in class at all; and the rest were very far from being what they ought to be. "I told them," says he, "in plain terms, that they were the most ignorant, self conceited, self willed, fickle, untractable, disorderly, disjointed society, that I knew in the three kingdoms. And God applied it to their hearts; so that many were profited; but I do not find that one was offended." Such was Wesley's method of mending or ending James Wheatley's "lambs" at Norwich.

Having spent eleven days at Norwich, Wesley returned to London, preaching at Colchester on his way, where, for the first time, since he was six years old, he had a sleepless night. "But," he writes, "it is all one: God is able to give strength, either with sleep or without it. I rose at my usual time, and preached at five, without any faintness or drowsiness."

At the commencement of his ministry, Wesley and his Oxford friends seemed ostracised. All the clergy shunned them, and not a few railed against, and censured them. Now it began to be otherwise: Venn, Romaine, Madan, Jones, Walker, Milner, Grimshaw, Berridge, Hicks, and others were zealously and successfully preaching their grand old doctrine of justification by faith *only;* and every year added to the number of their clerical adherents. During his northern journey, in 1759, Wesley formed a friendship with two who deserve a notice.

One of them was the Rev. Thomas Goodday, of Sunderland, in whose church, at Monkwearmouth, Wesley preached more than once in after years. The following extract from one of Mr. Goodday's letters to Wesley will afford a glimpse of his religious character.[12]

"MONKWEARMOUTH, *July* 13, 1759.

"REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,—Your kind letter reached me at a critical hour; and another favour, of the same nature, would be as refreshing to my soul as the dew of heaven to the parched glebe. Your seasonable hints are judicious and pertinent, and I shall endeavour to make them the rule of my future conduct. Your harmless, inoffensive, and good natured men are a very dangerous set of creatures; and such were most of my former associates. I have had enough to do also with the *prudent* children of this generation. They are perpetually pestering my ears with the *rational scheme,* and would fain persuade me, that it can in no way conduce to the

glory of God, nor my own interest, to deviate, in the least, from the old beaten track I have been so long accustomed to, both in thinking, preaching, and praying. They are often whispering, 'The world will call you a fool.' O when will it once be, that, in the cause of God, I can set my face as a flint against those two busy demons, false shame, and the fear of man? I would be a Christian; but I know I am a fool, a babe, a mere novice in the faith; and yet, if another should tell me so, I have so much of the old tinder left in me, as to take fire immediately. Whenever my wife and myself put up our petitions to the God of all mercy, it is our bounden duty never to leave out this,—that He would be pleased to preserve the life of Mr. John Wesley long, as a blessing to the nation.

"I am dear sir, your sincere and affectionate brother,

"THOMAS GOODDAY."[13]

Another clergyman, between whom and Wesley a friendship sprung up, was the Rev. Richard Conyers, LL.D., at this time thirty-four years of age, and vicar of Helmsley, where he diligently devoted himself to the work of improving the morals of his extensive parish. He instituted female schools, and began himself to instruct young men in arithmetic and the lower branches of the mathematics. He habituated the people to an attendance upon Divine service, in which they had been exceedingly remiss; and, for this purpose, introduced singing, which he encouraged by personal example. He adopted the practice of catechizing children and young people in the church; and, though his parish was ten

miles wide, he left no part of it neglected, but regularly visited the most indigent and illiterate. He assembled, at his own house, companies of young men for prayer and religious improvement; and yet, all the while, he was not converted, and was in the greatest danger of becoming a Socinian. All men praised him, but he was not happy. To obtain peace of conscience, he fasted more frequently than had been his wont, and sometimes, at the altar in his church, signed, with his own blood, solemn covenants to devote himself to the service of his Maker, and to render himself acceptable to heaven by his sanctity. Still he was unhappy; but, at length, by reading the Scriptures, he was led to see the gospel plan of salvation, and, on Christmas day, 1758, trusted in Christ, and found peace. "I went up stairs and down again," said he, "backwards and forwards in my room, clapping my hands for joy, and crying, 'I have found Him; I have found Him, whom my soul loveth'; and, for a little time, whether in the body or out of it, I could hardly tell." On the ensuing sabbath, Mr. Conyers publicly related his conversion in his parish church; and, at once, began to preach, "By grace are ye saved, through faith, not of works, lest any man should boast." His preaching was now attended with marvellous success. The converts in the hamlets, in his widely extended parish, he formed into classes, men by themselves, women by themselves; and these into married and unmarried classes. At appointed times, he met them for spiritual communion; and, every day, at eleven o'clock, preached in some part of his parish. He erected a room, adjoining the parsonage, which was open every morning and evening for all who thought proper to attend his

domestic worship; and the greater part of his personal and parochial income was devoted to the relief of poverty.

Such was good Dr. Conyers. Six months after his conversion, he wrote to Wesley as follows.

"HELMSLEY, *July* 9, 1759.

"REVEREND SIR,—I received your obliging letter yesterday, and sincerely thank you for your affectionate prayers to God for me. He has been pleased, I believe, to make you a noble instrument of promoting His glory; and great, I doubt not, will be your reward in heaven. May He still enable you to spread through all your societies the gospel of the blessed Jesus! May they all, like their great Master, be meek and lowly, humble, inoffensive; laying aside all warm disputations, which gender strife; all railings, bitterness, and false accusations! O sir, these rank weeds grow very fast, even in religious hearts. Let us watch and be sober. The fruits of God's blessed Spirit will grow apace in a heart thus guarded by watchfulness and prayer. Humility and love, peace and joy, will be its constant visitants; it will be preserved from the power of sin, from the author of sin, from the consequences of sin; and will be carried on, under the protection of an almighty arm, step by step, through all difficulties and dangers, into the possession of an eternal life.

"I am, dear sir,
your affectionate friend and fellow servant,
"RICHARD CONYERS."[14]

A third clergyman, with whom Wesley commenced a correspondence in 1759, must be mentioned. The Hon. and Rev. Walter Shirley was a first cousin of the Countess of Huntingdon, in whose London mansion he became acquainted with the Methodistic leaders of the day. He was converted by the ministry of Venn, and held a Church living in Ireland. He was now thirty-three years old; his preaching was richly evangelical; and to convert sinners was the one object of his life. Cope, bishop of Clonfert, warned him to "lay aside his exceptionable doctrines," and threatened to "proceed in the most effectual manner to suppress them." "Menaces, my lord," said Shirley, "between gentlemen, are illiberal; but when they cannot be put into execution, they are contemptible." The Archbishop of Tuam knew how to respect him, and, more than once, treated the charges brought against him with well merited contempt. On one occasion, the curate of Loughrea came with an air of great importance, and with a certainty of ruining the intractable Methodist. "Oh, your grace," exclaimed this weak headed curate, "I have such a circumstance to communicate to you, one that will astonish you!" "Indeed," replied the arch-bishop, "what can it be?" "Why, my lord," rejoined the curate with a solemn air, "Mr. Shirley wears white stockings."[15] "Very anti-clerical, and very dreadful," responded the waggish prelate: "does Mr. Shirley wear them over his boots?" "No, your grace." "Well, sir," added the archbishop, "the first time you find him with his stockings over his boots, pray inform me, and I shall deal with him accordingly."[16]

The following is an extract from Shirley's letter to Wesley in 1759.

"LOUGHREA, *August* 21, 1759.

"REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,—Your obliging and truly Christian letter was welcome to my soul, ten thousand, thousand times; and brought a satisfaction, which could only be exceeded by the pleasure of a personal conversation with you. I am not without hope, that, when you shall think fit to visit those blessed seminaries of vital religion in this kingdom, of your own planting, you will take an opportunity of honouring this place, and more particularly my house, with the presence of one, whose labours in the gospel of my dear Master are so eminent. I highly honour and love Mr. Berridge, and Mr. Grimshaw. May God bless them with increasing success! And may He endue me with the same noble courage! What will you say, dear sir? Will you not give up every favourable opinion of so unworthy a minister as I am, when I inform you, that, though there are many under my charge, who confess they have been awakened, yet I dare not boast of any confirmed converts, through my preaching and ministry. I am now about to leave them for two or three months; being in a very bad state of health, and advised to go to Bath. Let me entreat your earnest prayers.

"I am your affectionate brother,

"WALTER SHIRLEY."[17]

We must now come back to Wesley. On his return to London from Norwich, on September 14, he gave orders for the immediate repairing of West Street chapel, the main timbers of which were actually rotten. He rode to Canterbury, where his congregation included "two hundred soldiers, and a whole row of officers." At Dover, he found a new chapel just finished, and opened it.

Returning to London, he preached, on September 23, to a vast congregation in Moorfields, and wrote: "Who can say the time for field preaching is over, while—(1) greater numbers than ever attend; (2) the converting, as well as convincing, power of God is eminently present with them?"

He then set out for Bristol. At Basingstoke, he preached "to a people slow of heart and dull of understanding." He opened a new chapel at Whitchurch; and pronounced another at Salisbury "the most complete in England." Here large numbers of the Hampshire militia attended preaching; but, he says, "it was as music to a horse; such brutish behaviour have I seldom seen." At Bristol, he employed his leisure time in finishing the fourth volume of his sermons, "probably," says he, "the last which I shall publish." He walked to Knowle, a mile from Bristol, to see the French prisoners, eleven hundred of whom were lying on beds of straw, covered with thin rags, and in danger of dying. He went back, and the same night preached on, "Thou shalt not oppress a stranger; for ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt"; he made a collection of £24; and, out of this, bought some dozens of stockings, shirts, waistcoats, and breeches for

the poor captives. Wesley was not content with this; but wrote the following letter, which was published in *Lloyd's Evening Post,* of October 26.

"BRISTOL, *October* 20, 1759.

"SIR,—Since I came to Bristol, I heard many terrible accounts concerning the French prisoners at Knowle: as, 'That they were so wedged together, that they had no room to breathe; that the stench of the rooms where they lodged was intolerable; that their food was only fit for dogs; that their meat was carrion, their bread rotten and unwholesome; and that, in consequence of this inhuman treatment, they died in shoals.'

"Desiring to know the truth, I went to Knowle, and was showed all the apartments there. But how was I disappointed? 1. I found they had large and convenient space to walk in, if they chose it, all the day. 2. There was no stench in any apartment I was in, either below or above. They were all sweeter and cleaner than any prison I have seen either in England or elsewhere. 3. Being permitted to go into the larder, I observed the meat hanging up, two large quarters of beef. It was fresh and fat, and I verily think as good as ever I desire to eat. 4. A large quantity of bread lay on one side. A gentleman took up and cut one of the loaves. It was made of good flour, was well baked, and perfectly well tasted. 5. Going thence to the hospital, I found that, even in this sickly season, there are not thirty persons dangerously ill, out of twelve or thirteen hundred. 6.

This hospital was sweeter and cleaner throughout, than any hospital I ever saw in London. I think it my duty to declare these things, for clearing the innocent, and the honour of the English nation.

"Yet one thing I observed with concern. A great part of these poor men are almost naked: and winter is now coming upon them in a cold prison, and a colder climate than most of them have been accustomed to. But will not the humanity and generosity of the gentlemen of Bristol prevent or relieve this distress? Did they not make a noble precedent during the late war? And surely they are not weary of well doing. Tuesday night, we did a little according to our power; but I shall rejoice, if this be forgotten through the abundance administered by their liberality, in a manner which they judge most proper. Will it not be, both for the honour of the city and country, for the credit of our religion, and for the glory of God, who knows how to return it sevenfold into their bosom?

"I am your humble servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."

Wesley's effort was not without results: "Presently after, the corporation of Bristol sent a large quantity of mattresses and blankets; and it was not long before contributions were set on foot in London, and in various parts of the kingdom," for the selfsame object as that for which Wesley preached his impromptu sermon, and wrote his letter.

On October 26, he returned to London, where he remained until November 22, when he again set out for Everton, at which place he had to officiate for Berridge, who had gone to preach before the university at Cambridge.

On his way, Wesley stopped at Bedford, and writes: "We had a pretty large congregation; but the stench from the swine under the room was scarce supportable. Was ever a preaching place over a hogstye before? Surely they love the gospel, who come to hear it in such a place." This garret to a pigstye was an upper room, used for spinning, in a yard leading from the High Street. The room was bad enough, the stye was worse, and Alderman Parker's nephew was worst of all; for the young fellow always took care to arrange that the feeding of the pigs and the din consequent thereon, should be contemporaneous with his uncle's preaching. At length, however, the spinning room and the swinish residence underneath were taken down; a small chapel was erected on the site; and an adjoining workhouse was converted into the home of itinerant Methodist preachers.[18]

At Everton, Wesley observed a remarkable difference, in the manner of the work, since his previous visit. "None now were in trances, none cried out, none fell down or were convulsed; only some trembled exceedingly, a low murmur was heard, and many were refreshed." He continues: "the danger *was,* to regard such extraordinary circumstances too much, as if they were essential to the inward work. Perhaps the danger *is,* to regard them too little; to condemn them altogether; to imagine they had nothing of God in them, and

were an hindrance to His work. Whereas the truth is: (1) God suddenly and strongly convinced many, that they were lost sinners; the natural consequences whereof were sudden outcries and strong bodily convulsions. (2) To strengthen and encourage them that believed, and to make His work more apparent, He favoured several of them with Divine dreams, others with trances and visions. (3) In some of these instances, after a time, nature mixed with grace. (4) Satan likewise mimicked this work of God, in order to discredit the whole work; and yet, it is not wise to give up this part, any more than to give up the whole. At first, it was, doubtless, wholly from God. It is partly so at this day; and He will enable us to discern how far, in every case, the work is pure, and where it mixes or degenerates. The shadow is no disparagement of the substance, nor the counterfeit of the real diamond."

Wesley returned to London on November 28; and on December 9, "for the first time, held a lovefeast for the whole society." Hitherto, none had been admitted to Methodist lovefeasts except the members of the bands, that is, persons who were *justified;* now the members of the classes, that is, persons who were *penitent,* were allowed to join in the same privilege of Christian fellowship, and to evince brotherly affection by taking together "a little plain cake and water."

December 12, he spent part of the afternoon in the British Museum, recently instituted. On the 14th, he was at, what he calls, "a Christian wedding, two or three relatives and five clergymen" forming the company. On the 19th, he read over

a chancery bill, in a suit to recover £10, which filled a hundred and ten sheets of paper. He desired the plaintiff and defendant to meet him, and settled the matter by arbitration. On the 23rd, he opened the new chapel at Colchester, which he describes as "twelve square," and as "the best building, of the size, for the voice, that he knew in England." The end of the year he spent at Norwich, where he found the society "fewer in number, but of a teachable spirit, willing to be advised, and even reproved."

We have tracked the steps of Wesley during the year 1759. Before closing the chapter, two or three other matters must be noticed.

One was a savage onslaught, made upon Methodism, by the Rev. John Downes, rector of St. Michael, Wood Street, and lecturer of St. Mary-le-bow, London. This was a large pamphlet entitled, "Methodism Examined: being the substance of four discourses from Acts xx. 28-30." The reader must be troubled with a few selections from this malignant *morceau*, especially as Wesley condescended to notice it.

> The founders of Methodism, in 1734, were "two bold, though beardless divines, so young, that they might rather be called wolflings than wolves, novices in divinity, and lifted up with spiritual pride. They were ambitious of being accounted ministers of greater eminence and authority than either bishops or archbishops; missionaries immediately delegated by heaven, to correct the clergy in the true nature of

Christianity, and to caution the laity not to venture their souls in any such unhallowed hands as refused to be initiated into all the mysteries of Methodism. Their Journals were ostentatious trash, filled with jargon, that passed for inspiration. Their followers seem to look upon every place upon which they tread, as holy ground; they are comforted and refreshed with their very shadows passing over them; and they follow in crowds, wherever it is noised about, that they are to vociferate."

"The Methodists deny the necessity of good works; they make their boast, that they are the only persons who know the truth as it is in Jesus Christ, and that all others are unenlightened, and uninformed, interpreting the Scriptures according to the letter which killeth, but ignorant of the Spirit which giveth life. They endeavour to support their weak and wild notions by the abuse and perversion of Scripture, and talk as proudly as the Donatists of their being the only true preachers of gospel truth. They insult the Established Church, despise dominions, speak evil of dignities, and trample all rule and authority beneath their feet. Their doctrines or notions coincide with many of the oldest and rankest heresies, that ever defiled the purity and disturbed the peace of the Christian church; particularly those of the Simonians, the Gnostics, the Valentinians, the Donatists, the predestinarians, the Montanists, and the antinomians. They treat Christianity as a wild, enthusiastical scheme, which will bear no examination;

they will have it, that we may be saved by faith in Christ, without any other requisite on our part; they consider man as a mere machine, unable to do anything towards his own salvation; they represent faith as a supernatural principle, altogether precluding the judgment and understanding, and discerned by internal signs and operations; and they build all their notions upon Scripture authority, putting sacred texts to the torture, and racking them till they speak to their purpose. The whole strength of their cause lies in the perversion of the Scriptures, and the abuse of the clergy. By the most peevish and spiteful invectives, the most rude and rancorous revilings, the most invidious calumnies, they strive to poison the minds of the people against their true and rightful pastors."

Such are extracts from what Mr. Downes designates "the full portrait of that frightful monster called Methodism." The following is a sort of summing up.

"These new gospel preachers are close friends to the Church of Rome, by harmonizing or agreeing with her in almost everything except the doctrine of merit; they are no less kind to the cause of infidelity, by making the Christian religion a light and airy phantom, which one single breath of the most illiterate freethinker can easily demolish; they cut up Christianity by the roots, by insinuating that a good life is not necessary to justification; they are enemies, not only to the Christian, but to every religion whatsoever, in which reason or

> common sense hath any share, by labouring to subvert the whole system of morality, and by erecting a proud and enthusiastic faith upon the ruins of practical holiness and virtue."

Poor Mr. Downes—fiery, furious, and false, but not foolish—died soon after this; and his widow published, by subscription, in 1761, two volumes of his sermons, to illustrate and confirm his anti-Methodistic principles, the list of subscribers including the Archbishop of Canterbury, several bishops, and, marvellously enough, two of Wesley's old friends at Manchester, the Rev. John Clayton, and Dr. Byrom. The sermons are marked by the same bitterness as the pamphlet. Methodist preachers are designated "canting zealots," and Methodists themselves are "crazy converts." They are "dirty dabblers," "'conveying to the world a foul torrent of falsehood and infamy, through the pure channel of the holy Scriptures." "From every pulpit, into which the new style preachers can by any means thrust their heads, they bellow vile and clamorous reflections." "Methodism is the greatest tax upon ignorance and superstition, that this kingdom perhaps ever knew." Its preachers "choose rather to talk than to work for their bread, to get their living rather by their lungs than by their labour." "They turn religion into riot, prayer into strife, themselves into wolves, and the temple of the Lord into a den of devils."

But enough of the trenchant railings of the Rev. Mr. Downes,—a man possessed of talents that ought to have been devoted to a better cause. Let us see how Wesley dealt with

him, in his letter, dated November 17, 1759. He correctly accuses him of uttering "many senseless, shameless falsehoods," but, as an excuse for him, adds: "I hope you know nothing about the Methodists, no more than I do about the Cham of Tartary; that you are ignorant of the whole affair, and are so bold, only because you are blind. Bold enough! Throughout your whole tract, you speak *satis pro imperio*,—as authoritatively as if you were, not an archbishop only, but apostolic vicar also; as if you had the full papal power in your hands, and fire and fagot at your beck! And blind enough; so that you blunder on, through thick and thin, bespattering all that come in your way, according to the old laudable maxim, 'Throw dirt enough, and some will stick.'" Wesley tells him that, if he can prove any one of the charges he has advanced against him, he may call him not only a wolfling or a wolf, but an otter, if he pleases. He then, in pungent, pointed sentences, replies to his reviler's accusations, and concludes thus.

> "If you fall upon people that meddle not with you, without either fear or wit, you may possibly find, that they have a little more to say for themselves than you were aware of. I 'follow peace with all men'; but if a man set upon me without either rhyme or reason, I think it my duty to defend myself, so far as truth and justice permit. Yet still I am (if a poor enthusiast may not be so bold as to style himself your brother),
>
> "Reverend sir, your servant for Christ's sake,
>
> "JOHN WESLEY."[19]

Before proceeding to notice Wesley's publications, in 1759, it may be interjected that, in the month of November in this year, "faithful Sam Francks," as Charles Wesley calls him,[20] became Wesley's book steward,[21] an office which he continued to hold till 1773, when, in a fit of despair, he hung himself, in the old Foundery; and, strange to say, a fortnight afterwards, Matthews, the Foundery schoolmaster, copied his mad example.[22]

1. "An Extract of the Rev. Mr. John Wesley's Journal, from November 2, 1751, to October 28, 1754." 12mo, 90 pages.

2. "A short Exposition of the Ten Commandments. Extracted from Bishop Hopkins." 12mo, 96 pages.

3. "Advices with respect to Health. Extracted from a late Author." 12mo, 218 pages.

The "late author" was Dr. Tissot. Wesley, in his preface pronounces the opinion that Tissot's work was "one of the most useful books of the kind that had appeared in the present century. His descriptions of diseases were admirable; his medicines few, simple, cheap, and safe." He deprecates, however, "his violent fondness for bleeding, his love of glysters, his uncleanly ointment for the itch, and his vehement recommendation of the Peruvian bark, as the only infallible remedy either for mortifications or intermittent fevers." In reference to the bark, he says, that he himself "took some pounds of it when he was young, for a common tertian ague,"

but without any good effect, and that he "was cured unawares by drinking largely of lemonade."

Wesley appends to Tissot's advices a number of his own prescriptions, in the form of notes, some of which are curious enough, as that "a poultice of boiled nettles" will cure the pleurisy, and the quinsy; that erysipelas in the head or face will be remedied by applying "warm treacle to the soles of the feet"; and that "electrifying cures all sorts of sprains"; but, being on such subjects profoundly ignorant, we forbear from further extracts.

4. "Thoughts on Christian Perfection." 12mo, 30 pages. This, at the time, was an important publication. The doctrine of Christian perfection was obtaining great attention, and the sentiments of the Methodists respecting it were not harmonious. At the conference of 1758, it had been earnestly considered; and again at the conference of 1759. Wesley saw that there was a danger of a diversity of opinions insensibly stealing in among the Methodists and their preachers; and hence the publication of his tract;—not to prove the doctrine, nor to answer the objections against it; but simply to declare his own views concerning it. He affirms that, on this subject, his thoughts are just the same as he had entertained for above twenty years. His sentiments had been controverted, and lampooned, but they were not altered. All sorts of constructions had been put upon his doctrine, but very rarely the right one. "What," he asks, "is Christian perfection?" Answer—"The loving God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength. This implies that no wrong temper remains in the

soul; and that all the thoughts, words, and actions are governed by pure love."

The controversy, just at present, was chiefly on the point whether a man, who had attained Christian perfection, was still liable to ignorance and mistake, and needed Christ in His priestly office. Wesley's opinion was the affirmative of this; but some of his followers were evidently disposed to hold the negative, and thereby to set the doctrine of perfection far too high. Some talked about their attainments too much; some thought it best not to talk at all: Wesley advised those who had obtained the blessing to speak of it to their fellow Christians, but not to the unconverted; and he requested his preachers to prevent such from being unjustly or unkindly treated by their religious associates who were less advanced in grace. He specifies the proofs whereby it may be known whether an entirely sanctified man's profession is correct. Taking pleasant in preference to unpleasant, though equally wholesome, food; smelling a flower, eating a bunch of grapes, marriage, attention to worldly business, were all of them things perfectly compatible with Christian perfection.

The mentioning of such matters may seem somewhat frivolous; but, in reality, it is not so. These were things seriously discussed by earnest, if not well informed, Methodists in 1759; and these and kindred questions agitated the Methodist societies for some years afterwards.

Some were disposed to doubt the high profession of their sanctified brethren, because they did nothing except what was

done by "common believers"; others because they felt "no power in their words and prayers"; and others, because, notwithstanding their profession, they failed to "come up to their idea of a perfect Christian." These were objections which Wesley had to meet. His task was delicate and difficult; but he lays it down, that no one ought to believe that he is fully sanctified, till he has "the testimony of the Spirit, witnessing his entire sanctification, as clearly as his justification"; and that all ought to wait for this great change, "not in careless indifference, or indolent inactivity; but in vigorous, universal obedience, in a zealous keeping of all the commandments, in watchfulness and painfulness, in denying ourselves, and taking up our cross daily; as well as in earnest prayer and fasting, and a close attendance on all the ordinances of God." He adds: "If any man dream of attaining it any other way, yea, or of keeping it when it is attained, he deceiveth his own soul. It is true, we receive it by simple faith; but God does not, will not, give that faith, unless we seek it with all diligence, in the way which He hath ordained."[23]

From the above brief notices, the reader will form an idea of the excitement created in the Methodist societies, in 1759, by the doctrine of Christian perfection. The subject will have to be repeatedly introduced in succeeding years.

ENDNOTES

[1] "Life and Times of Lady Huntingdon," vol. i., p. 395.
[2] C. Wesley's Journal, vol. ii., p. 219.
[3] "Life and Times of Lady Huntingdon," vol. i., p. 399.
[4] See Jones's Works.
[5] *Methodist Magazine,* 1780, p. 165.
[6] Wesley's Works, vol. xiii., p. 326.
[7] Wesley's Works, vol xii., p. 175.
[8] Manuscript; and *Methodist Magazine,* 1827, p. 20.
[9] Manuscript.
[10] Manuscript.
[11] *Methodist Magazine,* 1780, p. 611.
[12] The letter was written about a month after Wesley had been at Sunderland.
[13] *Methodist Magazine,* 1780, p. 168. Mr. Goodday lived in Hallgarth Square, next door to the Methodist meeting-house, into which he had a private entrance. Here he constantly took his seat; nor was he ever known to absent himself from hearing the plainest preacher, or the feeblest exhorter. (*Methodist Magazine,* 1829, p. 795.)
[14] *Methodist Magazine*, 1797, p. 354. It may be added, that, in 1775, Dr. Conyers became rector of Deptford, where he converted his coach-house and stable into a domestic chapel, and established lectures four nights every week. On April 23, 1786, after preaching to a crowded congregation in Deptford church, and while pronouncing the benediction, his speech faltered; he was taken home; and, within four hours afterwards, he was in heaven.

[15] After all, this was an ecclesiastical peccadillo. The following is an extract from the seventy-fourth canon of the Church of England, and has never been repealed. "All deans, masters of colleges, archdeacons and prebendaries, doctors in divinity, bachelors in divinity, and masters of arts, having any ecclesiastical livings, shall usually wear, in their journeys, cloaks with sleeves, without gards, welts, long buttons, or cuts. And no ecclesiastical person shall wear any coif or wrought nightcap, but only plain nightcaps of black silk, satin, or velvet. In private houses and in their studies, the said persons ecclesiastical may use any comely and scholarlike apparel, provided that it be not cut or pinckt, and that in public they go not in their doublet and hose, without coats or cassocks; and that they wear not any *light coloured stockings."* How is it that the ritualists of the present day disregard this canon of their church?

[16] Stevens's "History of Methodism," vol. ii., p. 19.

[17] *Methodist Magazine,* 1780, p. 168.

[18] *Methodist Magazine,* 1780. p. 104; and 1833, p. 52.

[19] Wesley's Works, vol. ix., p. 104. In the year following, Mr. Downes's widow published a letter against Wesley, which, says he, "scarce deserves any notice at all, as there is nothing extraordinary in it, but an extraordinary degree of virulence and scurrility." (*Lloyd's Evening Post,* Nov. 24, 1760.)

[20] C. Wesley's Journal, vol. ii., p. 245.

[21] S. Francks' manuscript letter.

[22] Manuscript.

[23] Wesley's Works, vol. xi., p. 378, etc.

1760.

WESLEY began the year 1760 at Norwich, by holding a service at four o'clock in the morning. On January 7, he returned to London, and preached in West Street chapel, now enlarged and thoroughly repaired.

Wesley was a philanthropist; hence the following letter, published in *Lloyd's Evening Post*, of February 22, 1760.

"WINDMILL HILL, *February* 18, 1760.

"SIR,—On Sunday, December 16 last, I received a £20 bank bill, from an anonymous correspondent, who desired me to lay it out, in the manner I judged best, for the use of poor prisoners. I immediately employed some in whom I could confide, to inquire into the circumstances of those confined in Whitechapel and New prison. I knew the former to have very little allowance, even of bread, and the latter none at all. Upon inquiry, they found one poor woman in Whitechapel prison, very big with child, and destitute of all things. At the same time, I casually heard of a poor man, who had been confined for nine months in the Poultry Compter, while his wife and three children (whom he before maintained by his labour) were almost perishing through want. Not long after, another poor woman, who had been diligent in helping others, was herself thrown into Whitechapel prison. The expense of discharging these three, and giving them a few necessaries, amounted to £10 10*s*. One pound and

fourteen shillings I expended in stockings and other clothing, which was given to those prisoners who were in the most pressing want. The remainder, £7 16*s*. was laid out in bread, which was warily distributed thrice a week. I am, therefore, assured that the whole of this sum was laid out in real charity. And how much more noble a satisfaction must result from this, to the generous benefactor, than he could receive from an embroidered suit of clothes, or a piece of plate, made in the newest fashion! Men of reason, judge!

"I am, sir, your humble servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."

On the 3rd of March, Wesley left London, on a tour which occupied the next six months.

At Towcester, he found one converted person; and at Birmingham, a society of a little more than fifty. At Wednesbury, he preached in the new chapel, whose congregation, either in number or seriousness, had few superiors. In fact, the five o'clock morning congregation exceeded that of the Foundery in London. Here, also, he found two females professing to have received the blessing of entire sanctification, and prayed, "May God increase the number a thousand fold!" At Burslem, "a scattered town, inhabited almost entirely by potters," he preached thrice. Some of his congregation "seemed quite innocent of thought; five or six laughed and talked nearly all the time; and one threw a clod of earth, which struck his head, but which neither disturbed him nor his congregation." At Congleton, he

preached from a scaffold, fixed in the window of the chapel, to a crowd assembled in an adjoining meadow. In making his way from Stockport to Leeds, his horse was "embogged," on the top of a high mountain; he was thrown into the morass; and then had a walk which, "for steepness, and bogs, and big stones intermixed," was such as even he had not before encountered.

From Leeds, Wesley proceeded to Liverpool, where he had a lengthened interview with John Newton. "His case," says he, "is very peculiar. Our Church requires that clergymen should be men of learning, and, to this end, have a university education. But how many have a university education, and yet no learning at all! Yet these men are ordained! Meantime, one of eminent learning, as well as unblamable behaviour, cannot be ordained, *because he was* not at the university! What a mere farce is this! Who would believe that any Christian bishop would stoop to so poor an evasion!"

At this period, there existed between Newton and Wesley the sincerest friendship. Hence the following letter, written a few months after.

"September 9, 1760.

"REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,—I have taken a double journey since I saw you, to London and to Yorkshire. I had a very agreeable progress, found a happy revival in several places, and made many valuable acquaintance, particularly among the clergy. It gave me much pleasure to see the same work promoted by very different

instruments; all contentions laid aside; and the only point of dispute, amidst some variety of sentiments, seeming to be this, who should labour most to recommend and to adorn the gospel.

"It was with some regret, I heard you were so near as at Parkgate, without coming over to us at Liverpool. Had I known it in time, I would gladly have met you there, but you were gone. Our next pleasure will be to hear from yourself of your welfare. I inquired several times after Mr. Charles Wesley, when in London, but he was in the country, and out of the reach of a stranger's importunity; though, had he been in health, I believe the distance would not have secured him from a visit. I should be glad to hear the Lord has restored him to his former strength and usefulness.

"I hope, dear sir, you will still allow me a place in your friendship, correspondence, and prayers; and believe me to be your obliged and affectionate servant in our dear Lord,

"JOHN NEWTON."[1]

On March 30, Wesley embarked for Ireland, and, on April 6, Easter Sunday, introduced, at Dublin, the English custom of beginning religious service at four o'clock in the morning. The Dublin society was larger now than it had been for several years, consisting of more than five hundred members.

After three weeks' labour in Dublin, he started for the provinces. At Terryhugan, he "spent a comfortable night in the prophet's chamber, nine feet long, seven broad, and six high, the ceiling, floor, and walls all made of clay." At Moira, his pulpit was a tombstone near the church. At Lisburn, the people were "all ear." Newtown had usually the largest Methodist congregation in Ulster. At Belfast, he preached in the market-place "to a people who cared for none of those things."

On the 5th of May, he came to Carrickfergus. Some months before, John Smith, one of Wesley's itinerants, was preaching in an inland town, in the north of Ireland, when he made a sudden pause, and then exclaimed, "Ah! the French have just landed at Carrickfergus!" The mayor heard this, and, sending for the preacher, reprimanded him for exciting a needless alarm and disturbing the public tranquillity. Strangely enough, however, Smith's utterance was correct; and, in a few hours, an express arrived with the intelligence, that Thurot had landed a thousand soldiers, commanded by General Cavignac, and that they had taken possession of the town.[2] Thurot had been tossed about by storms, till he and all his men were almost famished, having only an ounce of bread per man daily. Their object in landing was chiefly to obtain provisions; but fighting followed; the garrison was conquered; and articles of capitulation were signed. Five days afterwards, Thurot set sail again, and was met by three English frigates. A battle ensued (February 28), and three hundred of the enemy were killed and wounded, Thurot himself being shot through the heart.[3]

General Cavignac was at Carrickfergus at the time of Wesley's visit, and was resident in the house of Mr. Cobham, who also invited Wesley to be his guest. The following letter, to Mr. Blackwell, refers to these events.

"CARRICKFERGUS, *May* 7, 1760.

"DEAR SIR,—I can now give you a clear and full account of the late proceedings of the French here; as I now lodge at Mr. Cobham's, under the same roof with Monsieur Cavignac, the French lieutenant-general. When the people here saw three large ships anchor near the town, they took it for granted they were English; but, in an hour, the French began landing their men. The first party came to the north gate. Twelve soldiers, planted on the wall, fired on them as they advanced, wounded the general, and killed several. But when they had fired four rounds, having no more ammunition, they were obliged to retire. The French then entered the town, keeping a steady fire up the street, till they came near the castle. The English then fired hotly from the gates and walls, and killed their second general, who had burst open the gate, and gone in, sword in hand, with upwards of fourscore men. Having no more cartridges, the English soldiers thought it best to capitulate. They agreed to furnish, in six hours, a certain quantity of provisions, on condition that the French should not plunder. But they began immediately to serve themselves with meat and drink, and took all that they could find, chiefly from the houses where the inhabitants had run away. However, they neither hurt

nor affronted man, woman, or child, nor did any mischief for mischief's sake; though many of the inhabitants affronted them, cursed them to their face, and even took up pokers and other things to strike them.

"I have had much conversation with Monsieur Cavignac, and have found him not only a very sensible man, but thoroughly instructed even in heart religion. After one general was killed, and the other wounded, the command devolved on him. I asked him, if it was true that they had a design to burn Carrick and Belfast. He cried out, *Jesu, Maria!* we never had such a thought. To burn, to destroy, cannot enter into the head or heart of a good man.' One would think, the French king sent these men on purpose to show what officers he has in his army. I hope there are some such in the English army; but I never found them yet.

"I am, dear sir, your affectionate servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."

Wesley further tells us, that his host, Mr. Cobham, was sent to Belfast, to obtain the provisions for the French that had been promised, and had to leave his wife with General Cavignac, as an hostage for his return. During his absence, Thurot himself entered Mr. Cobham's house, and stated that he had neither ate nor slept for eight and forty hours. The commodore was hospitably entertained; and, after six hours of rest, he politely thanked his Irish hostess, and went aboard his ship.

Wesley had lengthened conversations with Cavignac, not only on affairs in general, but on religion. "He seemed," says he, "to startle at nothing; but said more than once, and with emotion, 'Why, this is my religion; there is no true religion besides it!'"

The following is an extract from another letter to Mr. Blackwell, and, though written some days previous to the former one, refers to the same subject.

"NEWRY, *April* 26, 1760.

"DEAR SIR,—Hitherto I have had an extremely prosperous journey; and all the fields are white unto the harvest. But that the labourers are few, is not the only hindrance to the gathering it in effectually. Of these few, some are careless, some heavy and dull; scarce one of the spirit of Thomas Walsh. The nearest to it is Mr. Morgan; but his body too sinks under him, and probably will not last long.

"In a few days, I expect to be at Carrickfergus, and to hear from those on whose word I can depend, a full account of that celebrated campaign. I believe it will be of use to the whole kingdom. Probably, the government will at last awake, and be a little better prepared against the next encounter.

"I am, dear sir, your ever affectionate servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."[4]

Leaving Carrickfergus, Wesley proceeded to Larn, where he had "a very large, as well as serious congregation." At Garvah, he preached in the house of Mr. Burrows to a "well behaved audience of churchmen, papists, presbyterians, and Cameronians." At Ballymena, he had "a large concourse of people." At Coot Hill, he preached to "most of the protestants in the town." At Belturbet, there was neither papist nor presbyterian in the place; but there were "abundance of sabbath breakers, drunkards, and common swearers." At Sligo," the congregation was a little disturbed by two or three giddy officers." At Newport, "all the protestants of the town were present, and many of the papists, notwithstanding the prohibition and bitter curses of their priests." At Castlebar, all the gentlemen of the surrounding country were assembled to hear a trial about the plunder of a Swedish ship. "It was to be heard," says Wesley, "in the court house, where I preached; so they met an hour sooner, and heard the sermon first."

Having been to the extreme west of Ireland, Wesley was now returning to the east, accompanied by William Ley and James Glasbrook, two of his itinerants. On reaching Carrick upon Shannon, he had no sooner begun to preach, than a magistrate came with a mob and a drum to silence him. While the magistrate harangued the mob in the street, Wesley quietly removed his congregation into the garden behind the house. William Ley was standing at the door. The magistrate, armed with a halbert and a sword, ran at him, and, striking him, broke his halbert upon William's wrist. The mobmaster pushed along the passage to the other door, but found James Glasbrook holding it so firmly on the outer side, that egress

into the garden was impossible. Not to be foiled, the magistrate and his minions ran round the house, climbed over the garden wail, and, with a volley of oaths and curses, rushed up to Wesley, bawling, "You shall not preach here to-day." "Sir," said Wesley, with the most provoking calmness, "I don't intend it; for I have preached already." The man now foamed more furiously than ever. He belaboured poor James Glasbrook with the truncheon of his halbert till it snapped asunder; and then took vengeance on Wesley's hat, which, says Wesley, "he beat and kicked most valiantly; but a gentleman rescued it out of his hands, and we rode quietly out of the town."

Wesley now made his way to Tyrrell's Pass, where "a heap of fine, gay people came on Sunday in their postchaises to the preaching." At Portarlington, he preached at five o'clock in the morning; and again "at ten, for the sake of the gentry: but," he adds, "even that was too early, they could not rise so soon." At Coolylough, he "found a congregation gathered from twenty miles round; and held the quarterly meeting of the stewards, a company of settled, sensible men. Nothing," says he, "is wanting in this kingdom but zealous, active preachers, tenacious of order and exact discipline." At Sligo, "a large, commodious" preaching room had been procured since his previous visit, and here he spent five days, preaching in the market, the barrack yard, and other places.

Preaching daily, and riding long journeys over the roughest roads, and on all kinds of horses down to one "about the size of a jackass," Wesley came to Limerick on July 4, where he

held a three days' conference with ten of his Irish preachers. He then proceeded to the settlements of the Palatines at Ballygarane, Killeheen, and Court Mattrass, three towns scarcely to be equalled; for there was "no cursing or swearing, no sabbath breaking, no drunkenness, no alehouse, in any of them." At Clare, he preached in the new chapel; and at Clonmel, near the barracks, "to a wild, staring people," whom the soldiers present kept quiet. At Bandon, he found a new meeting-house, "very neat and lightsome." At Kinsale, his congregation consisted of "a multitude of soldiers, and not a few of the dull careless townsfolk." "Surely," says he, "good might be done here, would our preachers always preach in the Exchange, as they might without any molestation, instead of a little, ugly, dirty garret."

After a tour of thirteen weeks, Wesley got back to Dublin on the 20th of July. He had preached scores of sermons, travelled many hundreds of miles, been subjected to great hardships, and sometimes to serious danger; but, in the midst of all, God was with him, and he was happy and prosperous in his glorious work. In making up the numbers, he found that there were, in Connaught, a little more than two hundred members; in Ulster, about two hundred and fifty; in Leinster, a thousand; and in Munster, about six hundred.

Wesley was now obliged to leave Ireland for the purpose of attending the Bristol conference, which was to open on July 25. Five days only were left to make the journey,—ample time as things are now, but not so in the days of Wesley. Then there were no steamers crossing the channel daily; and even

sailing vessels then were remarkable for nothing except their want of punctuality. Wesley had been advised, that Captain Dansey would sail on the 19th or 20th; but, on arriving at Dublin, he found he would not start, at the earliest, before the 25th, on which day Wesley had arranged to begin his conference in Bristol. He then inquired for a Chester ship, and found one was expected to sail on the 22nd; but, in the morning of that day, the captain sent him word he had to wait for General Montague. Such delays were trying; but Wesley calmly writes: "So we have one day more to spend in Ireland. Let us live this day as if it were our last." At length, on July 24, he and forty or fifty other passengers embarked for Chester, and, after a two days' voyage, during which there were two dead calms, and Wesley preached two good sermons, they landed at Parkgate, thirty-six hours after Wesley ought to have been in Bristol. For nothing was Wesley more famed than for his strictness in fulfilling his appointments. The passengers were landed at Parkgate, but, it being the time of low water, Wesley's horses could not be landed. To wait for high water and his horses was out of question; hence, he bought one and hired another, and set out for Bristol with the utmost speed. At Wolverhampton, his new horses failed and were unable to proceed farther. Fresh ones were hired, and the others left behind; but no sooner had Wesley and his companion started on their newly acquired nags, than one fell lame, and the other, which Wesley rode, tumbled, and gave its rider a most serious shock. At length, with great difficulty, they got to Newport; and there, abandoning their horses, they took a chaise, and reached Bristol a little before midnight on July 28. He writes: "I spent

the two following days with the preachers, who had been waiting for me all the week; and their love and unanimity were such as soon made me forget all my labour."

This is all we know concerning the conference of 1760. It began on July 29, and ended on July 30. Wesley had been six months from London and his wife; and yet, on the very next day but one after his conference concluded, he set out on another month's tour to Cornwall. But here we must make a pause, to insert some of Wesley's letters.

We have seen that a year and a half previous to this, Wesley had become acquainted with Berridge, a devoted Christian and an able and useful minister; but an eccentric genius, and sometimes conceited and somewhat obstinate. Wesley, in more respects than one, was a most *faithful* friend. Hence the letter following.

"DUBLIN, *April* 18, 1760.

"DEAR SIR,—*Disce, docendus adhuc quae censet amiculus;* and take it in good part, my mentioning some particulars which have been long on my mind: and yet, I knew not how to speak them. I was afraid it might look like taking too much upon me, or assuming some superiority over you. But love casts out, or, at least, overrules that fear. So I will speak simply, and leave you to judge.

"It seems to me, that, of all persons I ever knew, save one, you are the *hardest to be convinced.* I have

occasionally spoken to you on many heads; some of a speculative, others of a practical nature; but I do not know that you were ever convinced of one, whether of great importance or small. I believe you retained your own opinion in every one, and did not vary a hair's breadth.

"I have likewise doubted whether you were not full as *hard to be persuaded*, as to be convinced: whether your will do not adhere to its first basis, right or wrong, as strongly as your understanding. I mean with regard to any impression, which another may make upon them. For, perhaps, you readily—too readily change of your own mere motion; so that it is not easy to please you long, but exceeding easy to offend you. I have frequently observed great *fickleness* and great *stubbornness* meet in the same mind.

"Does not this imply the *thinking* very *highly* of *yourself?* Does it not imply something of *self* sufficiency? 'You can stand alone; you care for no man. You need no help from man.' It was not so with my brother and me, when we were first employed in this great work. We were deeply conscious of our own insufficiency; and though, in one sense, we trusted in God alone, yet we sought help from all His children, and were glad to be taught by any man. And this, although we were really alone in the work; for there were none that had gone before us therein. There were none then in England, who had trod that path, wherein

God was leading us. Whereas *you* have the advantage which we had not; you tread in a beaten path. Others have gone before you, and are going now in the same way, to the same point. Yet it seems you *choose* to stand alone; what was necessity with *us*, is choice with *you*. You like to be unconnected with any, thereby tacitly condemning all. But possibly you go farther yet. Do not you explicitly condemn all your fellow labourers, blaming one in one instance, one in another, so as to be thoroughly pleased with the conduct of none? Does not this argue a very high degree of censoriousness? Do you not censure even *peritos in sua arte?*

"Permit me to relate a little circumstance to illustrate this. After we had been once singing a hymn at Everton, I was just going to say, 'I wish Mr. Whitefield would not try to *mend* my brother's hymns. He cannot do it. How vilely he has murdered that hymn! *weakening* the sense, as well as *marring* the poetry!' But how was I afterwards surprised to hear it was not Mr. Whitefield but Mr. Berridge! In very deed, it is not easy to *mend* his hymns, any more than to imitate them.

"Has not this aptness to find fault frequently shown itself in abundance of other instances? Sometimes with regard to Mr. Parker, or Mr. Hicks; sometimes with regard to me. And this may be one reason why you take one step which was scarce ever before taken in Christendom: I mean the discouraging of the new converts from reading, at least, from reading anything

but the Bible. Nay, but get off the consequence who can: if they ought to *read* nothing but the Bible, they ought to *hear* nothing but the Bible; so away with sermons, whether spoken or written! I can hardly imagine, that you discourage reading even our little tracts out of jealousy, lest we should undermine you, or steal away the affections of the people. I think you cannot easily suspect this. I myself did not desire to come among them; but you desired me to come. I should not have obtruded myself either upon them or you; for I have really work enough; full as much as either my body or mind is able to go through; and. I have (blessed be God!) friends enough, I mean as many as I have time to converse with; nevertheless, I never repented of that I spent at Everton: I trust it was not spent in vain.

"I have not time to throw these thoughts into a smoother form. May the God, whom you serve, give you to form a right judgment concerning them, and give a blessing to the rough sincerity of, dear sir, your affectionate servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."[5]

Seven months elapsed before Wesley received an answer, which was as follows.

"EVERTON, *November* 22, 1760.

"DEAR SIR,—I received your letter from Ireland, and purposely delayed my answer till your return to

England, that I might not write in a spirit unbecoming the gospel. I wish all that love the Lord Jesus Christ were perfectly agreed in their religious sentiments; but this, I find, is a matter rather to be wished than expected. Perhaps a little disagreement, in non-essentials, may be designed as one part of our trial, for the exercise of our candour and patience.

"I discourage the reading of any books, except the Bible and the Homilies, not because of the jealousy mentioned by you, but because I find they, who read many books, usually neglect the Bible, and soon become eager disputants, and in the end turn out predestinarians. At least, this has so happened with me. If my sentiments do not yet altogether harmonise with yours, they differ the least from yours of any others. And as there is nothing catching or cankering in those sentiments of yours which are contrary to mine, I am not only willing but desirous you should preach at Everton, as often as you can favour us with your company.

"Last week, I was at Bedford, and preached to your society; from whom I heard you were returned from the west, and purposed to come amongst us soon. Will you call at Everton, as you go to, or return from Bedford? You will be welcome. My invitation is sincere and friendly: accept of it. I send my love to your brother, and to all that labour among you. May grace, mercy, and

peace be multiplied on you, and your affectionate servant,

"JOHN BERRIDGE."[6]

Charles Wesley was an itinerant preacher no longer. He preached at London and at Bristol, and wrote invaluable hymns; but the whole of the rough work of the Methodist movement now devolved upon his brother. This was not fair. Both were married; and, on that ground, both had an equal claim to remain at home. One, however, was happy in his married life; the other not. The following letter to Charles Wesley is characteristic.

"COOLYLOUGH, *June* 23, 1760.

"DEAR BROTHER,—Where you are I know not; and how you are, I know not; but I hope the best. Neither you nor John Jones has ever sent me your remarks upon that tract in the late volume of sermons. You are not kind. Why will you not do all you can to make me wiser than I am? Samuel Furley told me his objections at once: so we canvassed them without loss of time. Do you know what is done, anything or nothing, with regard to the small edition of the Notes?

"Mr. I'anson writes me a long account of the Sussex affair. It is of more consequence than our people seem to apprehend. If we do not exert ourselves, it must drive us to that bad dilemma, leave preaching, or leave the Church. We have reason to thank God, it is not come to this yet. Perhaps it never may.

"In this kingdom, nothing is wanting but a few more zealous and active labourers. James Morgan, John Johnson, and two or three more do their best: the rest spare themselves.

"I hope Sally and your little ones are well. Where and how is my wife? I wrote to her on Saturday last. Adieu!

"Where must the conference be? at Leeds or Bristol? If we could but chain or gag the blatant beast, there would be no difficulty.

"I am, etc.,

"JOHN WESLEY."[7]

What Wesley calls "the Sussex affair" was probably[8] a trial at the sessions held at Maidstone. On the 13th of March, fifteen Methodists, including the family, met in the house of Thomas Osborne, at Rolvenden, for religious worship. Information of this being given to a neighbouring magistrate, he thought proper to put into execution the law made in the reign of Charles II., to prevent and suppress conventicles; and, accordingly, summoned what was called "the vagrant itinerant Methodist preacher," who exhorted in the meeting, to appear before him; and then convicted him in the sum of £20. Besides this, Thomas Osborne, the master of the house, was also fined £20; and fourteen hearers five shillings each. All these penalties, amounting to £43 10*s*., were paid to the magistrate on March 29. The parties, however, appealed to the next quarter sessions, which were held on April 15, Charles Whitworth, Esq., M.P. for Minehead, in the chair, and a

whole bevy of magistrates on the bench. These illustrious worthies confirmed the convictions. Upon this the appellants applied to the court of King's Bench for writs of *certiorari*, to remove the convictions and appeals to that court of justice, and to have the judgment of the court thereupon. Accordingly, in Trinity term, 1760, the writs were granted, and, on the 3rd of June, the case was argued. After hearing counsel on both sides, the court quashed the convictions of the magistrate and of the sessions, and so the matter ended.[9]

Another letter, though not by Wesley, but addressed to him, deserves insertion here. The necessity for a Methodist training college for young evangelists, and for provision for superannuated preachers and preachers' widows, was felt long before funds for such purposes were raised.

"SNISBY, *July* 12, 1760.

"REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,—I would have done myself the pleasure to have met you at your conference, but, having two churches to supply, and none at that time to assist me, I must lay aside all thoughts of it.

"I need not tell you what Mr. Tizzard has been doing in these parts, as he is with you to give you an account himself. But as his labours are a good deal intermixed with mine, I take the liberty to offer my advice concerning carrying on the work hereabouts. W. Kendrick is expelled from his societies for his adulteries; his people are in great confusion; and it is generally thought, that the sincere part of them will

renounce their errors, and come over to us. Some have done so already; and others say, 'We have been deceived: we have been mumbling the shell, while those whom we have despised have been eating the kernel.' R. Gillespy, for the same crime, is expelled from among the baptists. Through the offence occasioned by these two poor wretches, the minds of many of the people are rendered sore; and some are wavering. Excepting Markfield, and two or three other places, all your societies here are in their infancy; and, because of all this, I think it would not be amiss if Mr. Tizzard were continued another quarter in this round, as he seems to be pretty well received in most places. But if it be thought proper to remove him, I must advise you to send a picked man,—a man of gifts, of grace, of prudence, of seriousness, and of a tender, healing spirit; for such an one is necessary for the people he will have to deal with.

"What say you to an hospital for poor superannuated Methodist preachers, and for travelling preachers' wives; together with a college for a master and four fellows, and a certain number of students, to be chosen from Kingswood school, or elsewhere? To build and endow such a place would be a very great expense; yet, I am persuaded, not too great for the Methodists to bear, if they had only a willing mind. To make a beginning, I will promise to subscribe £20 down, as soon as such an undertaking shall be agreed upon. I will not say how much more at present. How many have you in society

that can afford to give £1 apiece? How many that can and will give that and more? How many, that are much more able than I, that will give but half as much? If the ends proposed be thought worth obtaining, consider at your conference what can be done in it. Make an estimate of what you think can be raised. I apprehend such an undertaking would free the preachers from many fears and cares, which must now almost necessarily attend them. Under God, it would be a sure means of perpetuating the work for ever, which you have begun, as there would be from hence a constant supply of travelling preachers to spread abroad the doctrine you have revived. It would ease the societies of considerable expense hereafter; and would be the means of causing the gospel to keep a footing in some of our churches for ever, beside other good ends that might be mentioned. May the Lord be with you, and direct you in your consultations, and prosper all your undertakings, for His glory and the good of mankind!

"I am, dear sir, your unworthy brother in Christ,

"WALTER SELLON."[10]

Such was the noble scheme of good Walter Sellon, more than seventy years before the first Methodist theological institution was opened. Wesley answered the letter on September 4; but unfortunately his answer has not been found.

After the Bristol conference, Wesley set out, on September 1, for Cornwall. At Launceston, he found "the small remains

of a dead, scattered society"; and was not surprised, as they "had scarce any discipline, and only one sermon in a fortnight." He found another such society at Camelford; "but their deadness was owing to bitterness against each other." At Port Isaac, the society "diligently observed all the rules, with or without a preacher. They constantly attended the church and sacrament, and met together at the times appointed." Thirty out of the thirty-five members were walking in the light of God's countenance. At St. Agnes, he was "surprised and grieved to find, that, out of ninety-eight members, all but three or four had forsaken the Lord's table." At St. Ives, a rock served him as "a very convenient pulpit; and nearly all the town, high and low, rich and poor, assembled together." At St. Just, "abundance of backsliders were present, ten of whom he rejoined to the society, and also added new members."

Some idea of Wesley's labours may be formed from the fact that, during his Cornish visit, besides visiting the societies and travelling, he preached thirty times in eleven days. This is not an unfair specimen of his ministerial labours, all over the United Kingdom.

On his return from Cornwall, he found the society at Plymouth reduced from seventy members to thirty-four; and even these were as "dead as stones." He preached in the church of Maryweek, also at Collumpton, Halberton, Tiverton, and other places, and got back to Bristol on October 3.

During this interval, Wesley wrote as follows to his brother Charles, who was out of health.

"PLYMOUTH, *September* 28, 1760.

"DEAR BROTHER,—I care not a rush for ordinary means; only that it is our duty to try them. All our lives, and all God's dealings with us, have been extraordinary from the beginning. We have reason, therefore, to expect, that what has been will be again. I have been preternaturally restored more than ten times. I suppose you will thus be restored for the journey; and that, by the journey, as a natural means, your health will be re-established; provided you determine to spend all the strength which God shall give you in this work.

"Cornwall has suffered miserably by my long absence, and the unfaithfulness of the preachers. I left seventeen hundred in the societies, and I find twelve hundred. If possible, you should see Mr. Walker. He has been near a month at the Hot Wells. He is absolutely a Scot in his opinions, but of an excellent spirit. My love to Sally. Adieu.

"JOHN WESLEY."[11]

Wesley spent a month at Bristol, and in its vicinity. He preached a charity sermon in Newgate for the use of poor prisoners. He visited again the French captives at Knowle; and, "in hope of provoking others to jealousy, made another collection for them, and ordered the money to be expended in linen and in waistcoats." Three days were employed in

speaking "severally" to the members of the Bristol society, of whom he writes: "As many of them increase in worldly goods, the great danger I apprehend now is, their relapsing into the spirit of the world; and then their religion is but a dream." He also took another step of vast importance. He requested the children of the members of society to meet him. Eighty came. Half of these he divided into two classes, two of boys, and two of girls; and appointed proper leaders to meet them separate; he himself meeting them all together twice a week. Were not these Methodism's first *catechumen* classes? We think so.

It was during Wesley's present visit to the city of Bristol, that George II. suddenly expired, in his palace at Kensington, in the seventy-seventh year of his age, and the thirty-fourth of his reign. Wesley writes, perhaps with more loyalty than discrimination: "October 25—King George was gathered to his fathers. When will England have a better prince?" The following Friday was set apart by Wesley and the Bristol society, "as a day of fasting, and prayer for the blessing of God upon the nation, and, in particular, on his present majesty. They met at five, at nine, at one, and at half past eight."

On November 8, after an eight months' absence, Wesley got back to London, where, with the exception of a visit to Canterbury and Dover, he continued during the remainder of the year. At the latter place, he found "a serious, earnest people, and some of the best singers in England." He visited the sick in London, and met the penitents, "a congregation

which," he says, "he wished always to meet himself." He preached, he prayed, and, as we shall see shortly, wrote letters to the newspapers. The year, from first to last, was full of labour.

Before proceeding to less pleasant topics, the introduction of another letter to Wesley from the pious John Newton may not be deemed an intrusion. Newton had preached for the Dissenters, but was dissatisfied with their ecclesiastical economy. He wished to become a clergyman, but the bishop refused to ordain him. Wesley seems to have proposed to him to join the ranks of the Methodist itinerant preachers. The following is his answer.

"November 14, 1790.

"REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,—How shall I thank you for the obliging notice you take of me? I wonder you can find time, in the midst of so many more important concerns, to encourage so poor a correspondent. In one sense only, I think myself not altogether unworthy your friendship; that is, I am not ungrateful. I honour and esteem you; I pray for your success, and sincerely rejoice in it. I know no one to whom my heart is more united in affection, nor to whom I owe more, as an instrument of Divine grace.

"I am at some seasons impatient enough to be employed; but I am really afraid of setting myself to work. It appears, by the event, that, in the attempts I

have already made, I have mistaken, either the place, or the manner, in which I am to appear.

"I forgot to tell you in my last, that I had the honour to appear as a Methodist preacher. I was at Haworth; Mr. Grimshaw was pressing, and prevailed. I spoke, in his house, to about one hundred and fifty persons; a difficult auditory in my circumstances, about half Methodists, and half Baptists. I was afraid of displeasing both sides; but my text, John i. 29, led me to dwell upon a point in which we were all agreed; and, before I had leisure to meddle with doctrines (as they are called), the hour was expired. In short, it was a comfortable opportunity.

"Methinks here again, you are ready to say, Why not go on in the same way? what more encouragement can you ask, than to be assisted and accepted? My answer is, I have not either strength of body or mind sufficient for an itinerant preacher. My constitution has been broken for some years. To ride an hour in the rain, or more than thirty miles in a day, usually unfits me for everything. You must allow me to pay some regard to flesh and blood, though I would not consult them. Besides, I have a maintenance now in my hands,[12] the gift of a kind Providence; and I do not see that I have a call to involve myself, and a person who has entrusted all her concerns to me, in want and difficulties. I have likewise an orphan sister, for whom it is my duty to provide; consequently, it cannot be my duty to disable

myself from fulfilling what I owe to her. The weightiest difficulty remains; too many of the preachers are very different from Mr. Grimshaw; and who would wish to live in the fire? So, though I love the Methodists, and vindicate them from unjust aspersions upon all occasions, and suffer the reproach of the world for being one myself, yet, it seems not practicable for me to join them farther than I do. For the present, I must remain as I am, and endeavour to be as useful as I can in private life.

"Have there been any more prosecutions upon the Conventicle Act? I have been informed, that a bill is in embryo to restrain the clergy to their own parishes.

"Pray for me, dear sir. Mrs. Newton sends her love, and will rejoice to see you. Will you permit me to subscribe myself, your unworthy but affectionate and obliged brother in the gospel hope,

"JOHN NEWTON."[13]

The year 1760 was full of varied, anxious, and painful interest.

One matter must be mentioned, though Wesley himself was not concerned in it, except as he deeply sympathised with the noble and afflicted family. Earl Ferrars, cousin of Lady Huntingdon, and brother of the Hon. and Rev. Walter Shirley, at the commencement of the year, deliberately shot Mr. Johnson, his steward, who had been a servant in the family for

thirty years. Horace Walpole's version of the matter is, that Earl Ferrars' wife was the fortuneless sister of Sir William Meredith; and that the earl maintained, that she trepanned him into marriage while he was in a state of drunkenness. Before his marriage, Mrs: Clifford was his mistress, by whom he had several children; and, from the first, his wife was hated. He always carried pistols to bed with him, and often threatened to kill her before morning. By an act of parliament, she obtained a divorce, and an allowance out of his estates; one of the receivers for that purpose being his steward, Mr. Johnson. Finding that Johnson had paid Lady Ferrars £50 without his knowledge, the earl resolved to murder him, and shot him accordingly. He was arrested, and lodged in the Tower of London. The trial, in Westminster Hall, in the month of April, lasted for three days, the sentence being, that the earl be hanged, and his body delivered to Surgeons' Hall, to be dissected and anatomized. Charles Wesley attended the trial, and tells us "most of the royal family, the peeresses, the chief gentry of the kingdom, and the foreign ambassadors were present." A plea of lunacy was set up. Walter Shirley and Dr. Munro were the best witnesses; but their testimony failed to prove his madness. One hundred and six of the peers of England, including Lord Talbot, his friend, and Lord Westmoreland, his father-in-law, pronounced the prisoner guilty, and his doom was fixed. The execution took place on the 5th of May; the unhappy culprit having spent the night previous in playing at piquet with the warders of the prison. He rode to Tyburn in his own landau and six, wearing his wedding clothes, and chewing pigtail tobacco; his mistress throwing a letter into his carriage, telling him that the crowd

was so enormous she was unable to meet him at a certain place as she had promised. A mourning coach and six, with some of his lordship's friends, and a hearse and six, to carry his corpse to Surgeons' Hall, followed in a procession, which took two hours and three quarters in making its way through the streets of London, from the Tower to the place of execution. After hanging an hour and five minutes, the body was dissected; and then the mangled remains of the highborn murderer were delivered to his friends, and interred in Leicestershire. On the table in his room, just before he went to execution, he wrote:

"In doubt I lived, in doubt I die,
Yet stand prepared the vast abyss to try,
And undismayed expect eternity."[14]

Such was the end of this godless noble, the near relative of some of the best Christians then living. Their distress was indescribable. His broken hearted brother (Walter Shirley), his cousin (Lady Huntingdon), and others, all endeavoured to effect his conversion, but without success. Prayer was made for him in the closet, in the family, and in public congregations; special meetings of intercession were held in his behalf; Charles Wesley evinced the tenderest concern for the wretched culprit; and the Methodists in London generally followed his example; a day of fasting and prayer was kept at the Foundery: but all to no effect.

Three weeks after the execution, the Hon. and Rev. Mr. Shirley wrote to Wesley as follows.

"*May* 27, 1760.

"REVEREND AND VERY DEAR BROTHER,—I bear in mind, with all thankfulness, the tender love and charitable prayers, with which God was pleased to inspire your heart, and the hearts of His dear children in Ireland, for my unhappy brother, myself, and our afflicted family. I have reason to bless God for the humbling lessons He has taught me, through these His awful visitations. O sir, is there much danger now, that I should pride myself upon my family? I doubt not, but that your labours in Ireland have been amply paid in their success. Earnest desires draw me towards you, but I am detained here, very much against my will, by a trust reposed in me by my late brother, to see his debts discharged, and other matters properly settled, that no further dishonour may be reflected on his memory. I would to God, I may meet you in Connaught, and give you a poor but hearty welcome at Loughrea; but fear that I cannot possibly be there before you leave. Let me entreat you, however, to pay a visit to my poor flock, for whom I am sorely grieved in my absence from them; and can only be comforted in the sweet hope, that you will not neglect them in your travels. You are heartily welcome to my church, if you please to make use of it; and I hope you will be truly welcome to the ears and hearts of all the people.

"Your most unworthy,
yet ever affectionate brother in the Lord,
"WALTER SHIRLEY."[15]

Another unpleasantness, belonging to the year 1760, was a most foul and dastardly attack on Whitefield, and, through him, upon the Methodists in general.

At this period, Samuel Foote, the inimitable zany, was at his zenith. He was born of highly respectable parents, at Truro, about the year 1720, and was educated at Worcester college, Oxford. He entered himself of the Temple, with a view of being called to the bar; but, instead of studying law, plunged into all the gaieties and dissipation of fashionable life; losing at the gaming table what his extravagance in living was not sufficient to consume. He married in 1741; but his conduct, as a husband, was far from affectionate; and, soon after his marriage, he was arrested for debt, and sent to gaol. Having squandered his fortune, he turned to the stage as a means of support, and made his theatrical *debut*, in the Haymarket, at the age of twenty-four. His success was great, but his prodigality was greater. In 1766, a fall from his horse rendered it necessary to amputate his leg. He died in 1777, and was buried by torchlight in Westminster Abbey. His character, as delineated by his biographers, presents scarcely one amiable or respectable feature; and, indeed, considered apart from his peculiar and almost unequalled abilities for mimicking the foibles and faults of others, he was in all respects contemptible.

Such was the man who attacked Whitefield and Methodism in 1760. For ninety years, the execrable comedies, acted in English theatres, had been the bane and the reproach of the English nation. Comic poets had been the unwearied

ministers of vice, and had done its work so thoroughly, that there was hardly a single virtue which had not been sacrificed at its polluted shrine. Innocence had been the sport of abandoned villainy, and religion made the jest of the licentious. In 1760, Samuel Foote crowned the whole, by "The Minor; a Comedy acted in the Haymarket theatre"' 8vo, 91 pages. Its professed object was to expose the absurdity, and to detect the hypocrisy, of Methodism; the author holding the idea, that ridicule was the only way of redressing an evil which was beyond the reach of law, and which reason was not able to correct. On the principle, that a man cannot touch pitch without defiling his fingers, we refrain from giving even the barest outline of Foote's disgraceful comedy. Thousands applauded the inimitable, actor, and laughed at Mrs. Cole and Dr. Squintum; all of them forgetting, that religion is too sacred to become the butt of theatrical buffoonery and of public mockery. The indignation of religious people was aroused; letters were written to newspapers; articles were published in magazines; and a whole swarm of pamphlets were given to the excited public; the most able of which were two by "A Minister of the Church of Christ," one of them being entitled—"Christian and Critical Remarks on 'The Minor'; in which the blasphemy, falsehood, and scurrility of that piece, are properly considered, answered, and exposed:" 8vo, 41 pages. Foote himself replied to this, in his own bantering and obscene style, telling the author that, from the title he assumes, "it is impossible to determine whether he is an authorised pastor, or a peruke maker; a real clergyman, or a corncutter." He also published, but durst not act, another comedy, entitled "The Methodist; being a continuation and

completion of the plan of 'The Minor.'" The buffoon tells his readers, that Whitefield's "countenance is not only inexpressive, but ludicrous; his dialect is not only provincial, but barbarous; his deportment not only awkward, but savage." His mother, during her pregnancy, "dreamt that she was brought to bed of a tinder box, which, from a collision of the flint and steel, made by the midwife, conveyed sparks to Gloucester cathedral, and soon reduced it to ashes." Whitefield himself, in his boyhood, "was dull, stupid, and heavy, totally incapable of attending to the business of his mother's public house, though he had the credit of inventing the practice of soaping the tops of the pewter pots to diminish the quantity of liquor, and to increase and sustain the froth."

This is too mild to be given as a fair *specimen* of Foote's disgusting ribaldry; but it is almost fouler than we like to print. Suffice it to remark further, that, though "The Minor" was performed before crowded London audiences for several months, such was the outcry raised against its profanity, that in November, 1760, Foote himself introduced several alterations, which he thought were less objectionable than the original terms and sentences.

But enough of the profligate Samuel Foote, who (according to the testimony of a person who knew the particulars of the case) was seized at Dover, with his mortal illness, while mimicking religious characters in general, and the Methodists in particular,[16] and almost immediately expired.

Other attacks were made upon Methodism, in 1760, though none so vulgar as Foote's. One of these was "A Friendly and Compassionate Address to all serious and well disposed Methodists; in which their principal Errors concerning the doctrine of the new birth, their election, and the security of their salvation, and their notion of the community of Christian men's goods, are largely displayed and represented. By Alexander Jephson, A.B., rector of the parish of Craike, in the county of Durham." 8vo, 80 pages. Mr. Jephson tells the Methodists, that they have "fallen into fatal and dangerous errors, which may be of pernicious consequence to them both in this life and the next." He affirms that, "when any persons are duly baptized into the Church, there is no doubt but that all their sins are immediately forgiven, and a new principle of piety and virtue is directly instilled into their minds by the grace of God's Holy Spirit." He exhorts the Methodists not to forsake the pastors of the Church of England, by giving up themselves "to the direction of guides who have nothing to recommend them, but vain and idle pretences to inspiration, and intimate conversations with God, and such immediate and powerful effects of their preaching as have caused, in some of their hearers, the most dreadful shriekings and groanings, convulsions and agitations." Methodist itinerants are described as "an enthusiastical set of preachers, who are wandering up and down, through the whole nation, to destroy and unsettle all the reasonable notions of religion, and to throw men into the utmost distraction and confusion." These are fair cullings from Mr. Jephson's *"friendly* and compassionate address." Wesley says concerning it: "the tract is more considerable for its bulk, than for its matter, being

little more than a dull repetition of what was published some years ago in 'The Enthusiasm of the Methodists and Papists Compared.'"[17]

Another hostile publication was, "A Genuine Letter from a Methodist Preacher, in the country, to Laurence Sterne, M.A., prebendary of York. 1760." 8vo, 22 pages. The letter pretends to rebuke Sterne for writing "Tristram Shandy," and says the prebend has "studied plays more than the word of God, and takes his text generally from the writings of Shakspeare" rather than from the writings of the apostles. Altogether, it was a meaningless and profane performance, whose only object seems to have been to create a laugh.

Another publication, belonging to the same year, was, "A Vindication of the Seventeenth Article of the Church of England, from the Aspersions cast on it in a Sermon lately published by Mr. John Wesley. By John Oulton." 8vo, 55 pages. This was intended to be a refutation of Wesley's sermon on free grace, preached from Romans viii. 32, and deserves no further notice.

Another was entitled, "The Principles and Practices of the Methodists considered, in some Letters to the Leaders of that Sect." 8vo, 78 pages. The writer, who signed himself "Academicus," was a man of mark, the Rev. John Green, D.D.,[18] born at Beverley about 1706; a sizar in St. John's college, Cambridge; then an usher in a school at Lichfield; then domestic chaplain of the Duke of Somerset; then rector of Borough Green; then regius professor of divinity, and one

of his majesty's chaplains; then, in 1756, dean of Lincoln; and, in 1764, bishop of Lincoln; a liberal prelate,—the only one who voted for the bill for the relief of protestant Dissenters; and who died suddenly, at Bath, in 1779. The pamphlet of Dr. Green is addressed to Mr. Berridge, of Everton. The author speaks of Berridge's "graceless fraternity"; and warns him against being "led away by the vain presumption of extraordinary illuminations," and against "contracting one of the most dangerous and deceitful of all religious maladies, the tumour of spiritual pride." He tells him, that "he makes lofty pretensions, and assumes confident airs to amuse the vulgar." He speaks of "the mysteries of Methodism, its conceits and inadvertencies, its foibles and failings, being cruelly exposed to the laughter of the incredulous, and the scoff of the profane." He says, "elocution from a stool, or vociferation from a hillock, will act with much more effect, upon the multitude, than any kind of sober instruction given from that old fashioned eminence, the pulpit"; and describes, as the result of "Methodistical oratory, a number of groaners, sighers, tumblers, and convulsionists, breaking out into a dreadful concert of screams, howlings, and lamentations." In succession, Whitefield, Wesley, Hervey, Zinzendorf, and others come under the writer's lash. The "fraternity" are charged with "dealing in all the little tricks of calumny and misrepresentation"; with endeavouring "to raise their own reputation by attempts to undermine that of others"; with "playing the droll, and enlivening their popular harangues with occasional diversions, and strokes of humour"; and with having "recourse to obscure and mystical language, which none but the elect can understand."

Dr. Green was not content with this priestly onslaught. Immediately after, he published a second pamphlet of seventy-four pages, with the same title, but addressed, in this instance, to Whitefield, who is, not too politely, reminded of his "blue apron and snuffers at the Bell inn, in Gloucester"; and is told, that his "pretensions are weakly supported, though set off with so much pomp of expression,—like some aqueous plants, which spread a broad and stately leaf on the surface of the water, while the fibre, on which they depend for their support, is slenderer than a thread." His Journal is called, "that curious repository of religious anecdotes,—that profound repertory of private reflections, exhibiting a medley of seeming pride and affected lowliness, of immoderate conceit and excessive humility." These must serve as samples. Dr. Green, bishop of Lincoln, was an able man, and a vigorous writer; but he might have employed his learning and his talents to better purpose than in bantering the poor Methodists. On receiving his pamphlet, Wesley wrote: "in many things, I wholly agree with him; but there is a bitterness in him, which I should not have expected in a gentleman and a scholar."[19]

Another unfriendly pamphlet, issued in 1760, was entitled, "A Fragment of the true Religion. Being the substance of two Letters from a Methodist Preacher in Cambridgeshire, to a Clergyman in Nottinghamshire." 8vo, 25 pages. The "Methodist Preacher" was Berridge of Everton, and the first letter was one in which Berridge gave an account of his conversion and subsequent course of action; and was intended, by its writer, to be strictly private and confidential.

The clergyman, however, to whom it was addressed, dishonourably allowed copies to be taken and circulated; and, moreover, commenced railing against the man who had written to him as a friend. Upon this, Berridge wrote to him a second letter, remonstrating with him on account of his treacherous behaviour; and, this also being copied and circulated, both the letters were surreptitiously published, with a scurrilous introduction, dated, "Grantham, February 2, 1760," and signed "Faith Workless."

In his second letter, Berridge, with righteous indignation, remarks:

> "You charge me with being a Moravian. Credulous mortal! Why do you not charge me with being a murderer? You have just as much reason to call me one as the other. If you had lived in this neighbourhood, you would have known that I am utterly detested and continually reviled by the Moravians. And no wonder; for I warn all my hearers against them, both in public and private. Nay, I have been to Bedford, where there is a nest of them, to bear a preaching testimony against their corrupt principles and practices. However, since you are determined to call me a Moravian, and Mr. Wheeler is pleased to call me a madman, I think myself obliged to come down into the country, as soon as I can, to convince my friends, and your neighbours, that I am neither the one nor the other. I shall go round the neighbourhood, and preach twice a day. If your brethren will allow me the use of their pulpits, they shall have

my thanks: if they will not, the fields are open, and I shall take a mountain for my pulpit, and the heavens for my sounding board. My blessed Master has set me the example; and, I trust, I shall neither be ashamed nor afraid to tread in His steps."

Brave old Berridge! and yet, in the introduction to this very pamphlet, the Everton vicar is represented as "traveling round the country, attended by several idle sluts, who will neither mend his clothes nor wash his linen," the result being that he had "preached many a discourse when he was sadly out at the elbows, and when his shirts were almost as black as the chimney."

Another infamous production of the year 1760 must be noticed,—an octavo pamphlet of forty-eight pages, with the title, "The Crooked Disciple's Remarks upon the Blind Guide's Method of Preaching for some years; being a collection of the principal words, sayings, phraseology, rhapsodies, hyperboles, parables, and miscellaneous incongruities of the sacred and profane, commonly, repeatedly, and peculiarly made use of by the Reverend Dr. Squintum, delivered by him *viva voce*, *ex cathedra*, at Tottenham Court, Moorfields, etc. A work never before attempted; taken verbatim from a constant attendance. By the learned Mr. John Harman, Regulator of Enthusiasts." John Harman was a whimsical watchmaker, who was at the pains of taking down a number of Whitefield's peculiarities, in shorthand.[20] The pamphlet which bears his name is one of the basest, coarsest, and most profane, published in the early

days of Methodism. It professes to give a prayer and a sermon by Whitefield, with Whitefield's action and intonation, and the people's responses; and finishes with a postscript, informing the reader, that Whitefield's "hummers, sighers, and weepers are hireling hypocrites, at two shillings and sixpence per week, and are the approbatives to his doctrine."

Besides the above pamphlets, all published in England, there was another, larger than any yet mentioned, which was published in Ireland, in 1760, with the title, "Montanus Redivivus; or Montanism Revived, in the Principles and Discipline of the Methodists (commonly called Swaddlers): Being the substance of a sermon upon 1 John iv. 1, preached in the parish church of Hollymount, in the Diocese of Tuam, in the year 1756. To which are added several letters, which passed between the Rev. John Wesley and the Author. Also an Appendix. By the Rev. Mr. James Clark, a Presbyter of the Diocese of Tuam." 8vo, 100 pages.

In this Irish effusion, the Methodists are described as "a set of enthusiastic pharisees in practice, but perfect latitudinarians in principle; quite indifferent as to any form of church government, whether presbyterian, independent, or episcopal, and looking upon the latter in no other light than that of some human law or constitution, subject to be changed at pleasure." In accordance with this, they had "acted in a barefaced defiance to the authority and jurisdiction of the bishops; and, without their consent, had formed societies or conventicles, under certain rules of discipline and government, of their own invention, appointing leaders,

directors, and superintendents over them. They had set up a new ministry of their own, contrary to the ministry of the Church, committing the preaching of the word of reconciliation, and the exercise of the power of the keys, to mere laymen and mechanics; and, though they occasionally came to church and sacrament, yet they plainly enough insinuated to the world, that they only waited for a seasonable opportunity, and more able heads, to form a new church, and make a total separation." Mr. Clark proceeds to show, that, in their principles, practices, and pretences, the Methodists are the counterpart of the Montanists, "enthusiastic sectaries who make the way to heaven much more narrow and difficult than either Jesus Christ or His apostle's have made it; and requiring such degrees of perfection as are not in the power of human nature, in its present state of infirmity, to attain to; the natural consequence of which is, that such as find themselves unable to arrive at such perfection grow desperate, and give themselves over to all manner of licentiousness; and such as, through a heated and enthusiastic imagination, fancy that they either actually do or can attain to such perfection, are filled with all manner of spiritual pride, blasphemy, and arrogance." Mr. Clark's readers are exhorted "never to give ear to the vain and fantastical flights of crazy pated enthusiasts, schismatical, unauthorised, illegal lay preachers, whose discourses are stuffed with praises and panegyrics of their own righteousness and holiness."

Wesley had recently published his sermon, entitled "Catholic Spirit," in which he stated, that he once zealously maintained the opinion, that every one born in England ought

to be a member of the Church of England, and, consequently, to worship God in the manner which that Church prescribes. This opinion he could maintain no longer. He believed his own mode of worship to be "truly primitive and apostolical"; but acknowledges that his "belief is no rule for another." He believed the episcopal form of church government to be scriptural and apostolical; but, he adds, "if you think the presbyterian or independent is better, think so still; and act accordingly." Wesley sent this celebrated sermon to Mr. Clark, and this led to the correspondence between Clark and Wesley, published in "Montanus Redivivus."[21] Mr. Clark, in his first letter, informs Wesley that, when he preached his sermon on 1 John iv. 1, Mr. Langston, said to be one of Wesley's lay preachers, was present; and, taking offence, wrote him an epistle, in which "the Spirit forgot to direct him to write common sense, orthography, or English"; and that he suspects Langston's representations to Wesley had induced the latter to send him the sermon on "Catholic Spirit," as "a genteel and tacit reproof, for making any inquiry into the religion and principles of the Methodists." He states that Langston had publicly declared "himself to be as righteous and as free from sin as Jesus Christ; and that it was impossible for him to sin, because the Spirit of God dwelt bodily in him." Mr. Clark further states, that he has read Wesley's sermon, and asserts that Wesley's "propositions and observations have no more foundation in the text, than in the first chapter of Genesis." It is right to add, that Langston was not one of Wesley's preachers, and that Wesley thought the man an enthusiast.

Another publication, belonging to the year 1760, must have a passing notice,—"Scriptural Remedies for Healing the unhappy Divisions in the Church of England, particularly of those People called the Methodists. By Edward Goldney, sen., gent., widower." 8vo, 64 pages. The intention of the eccentric author was good; but that is the highest, indeed, the only, praise we can render him. He finds fault with the clergy, who only visit those of their parishioners who "give them a jugg of good smooth ale, or a mugg of strong October, a bottle of wine, or a bowl of punch"; and then, in his own way and style, argues that, if the clergy would only become what they ought to be, "both high and low, rich and poor would soon be cured of itching ears. Then cobblers and shoemakers, tinkers and braziers, blacksmiths and farriers, tailors and staymakers, barbers and periwig makers, carpenters and joiners, masons and bricklayers, bakers and butchers, farmers and cowkeepers, maltsters and brewers, combers and weavers, plumbers and glaziers, turners and cabinet makers, hedgers and ditchers, threshers and thatchers, colliers and carriers, carmen and scavengers, coopers and basket makers, would have no hearers." With this enumeration of the trades and calling of the Methodist itinerants, we make our *congé* to hairbrained Edward Goldney.

These were the principal anti-Methodistic pamphlets published in 1760; but, besides these, there was scrimmaging in newspapers and magazines, which deserves attention. An anonymous writer, in the *London Magazine*, attacked the Methodists, as "a restless, turbulent people, remarkable for nothing, but their abusive language and uncharitable

sentiments"; and described Methodism as "a spurious mixture of enthusiasm and blasphemy, popery and quakerism"; and the teaching of its preachers as "gross, personal abuse; vague, incoherent reasoning; and loose, empty declamation."[22] A writer, who signed his letter "Hermas," replied to this stale balderdash; and rejoinder after rejoinder followed. Grave objection was raised to the name of Methodist, as a misnomer, because the Methodists were utterly without *method*.[23] A class-leader was described as "an illiterate hog, a feeder of swine, presiding at the holy rites of confession, as spiritual pastor and father confessor." "Old as I am," wrote the nameless soothsayer, "I make not the least doubt but, with these eyes, I shall see, that this imaginary candle of the Lord, which the Methodists have set up, will soon dwindle into a snuff, and expire in a stink."[24] In a base inuendo, he insinuated that some of the mysterious meetings of the Methodists were "in dark rooms, with naked figures, typical fires, and rattling chains."[25]

In the same periodical,[26] Stephen Church proposed to Wesley twenty queries, in which he coarsely assailed him as "the first protestant pope; a cunning quaker in disguise, acting the second edition of Friend Barclay, and privately betraying the Church, as Judas did his Master, with a kiss." Another correspondent, signing his letter "R.," remarked: "the present troublers of our Israel are that heterogeneous mass, the Methodists; who, whatever they may pretend, are avowed enemies to the doctrine and discipline of our Church, and have faithfully, copied the worst men in the worst times. If such men's enthusiastical notions be the true doctrine of Jesus

Christ, better it would be to be a Jew, a Turk, an infidel, than to be a Christian; for it is much better not to believe in Jesus Christ, than to believe such doctrines to be His; as are against common reason and common sense, and are repugnant to the first principles of truth and equity."[27]

In *Lloyd's Evening Post* the same paper war was waged. "Philodemus" wished for "a court of judicature, to detect the cunning cant and hypocrisy of all pretenders to sanctity and devotion;" and depicted the Methodists in colours not the brightest. Wesley replied to him as follows.

"November 17, 1760.

"SIR,—In your last paper, we had a letter, from a very angry gentleman, who *personates* a clergyman, but is, I presume, a retainer to the theatre. He is very warm against the people vulgarly termed Methodists, 'ridiculous impostors,' 'religious buffoons,' as he styles them; 'saint errants' (a pretty and quaint phrase), fun of 'inconsiderateness, madness, melancholy, enthusiasm'; teaching 'a knotty and unintelligible system of religion,' yea 'a contradictory or self contradicting,' nay 'a mere illusion,' a 'destructive scheme, and of pernicious consequence.'

"Methinks the gentleman has a little mistaken his character: he seems to have exchanged the sock for the buskin. But, be this as it may, general charges prove nothing; let us come to particulars. Here they are."

Wesley then proceeds to answer the remarks of "Philodemus" concerning "the grace of assurance, good works," etc., and continues:

> "This is the sum of your correspondent's charge, not one article of which can be proved. But whether it can or no, 'we have made them,' says he, 'a theatrical scoff, and the common jest and scorn of every chorister in the street.' It may be so; but whether you have done well herein, may still admit of a question. However, you cannot but wish, 'we had some formal court of judicature erected to take cognisance of such matters.' Nay, *cur optas quod habes?* Why do you wish for what you have already? The court is erected; the holy, devout playhouse is become the *house of mercy;* and does take cognisance 'of all pretenders to sanctity, and happily furnishes us with a discerning spirit to distinguish between right and wrong.' But I do not stand to their sentence; I appeal to Scripture and reason; and, by these alone, consent to be judged.
>
> "I am, sir, your humble servant,
>
> "JOHN WESLEY."[28]

"Philodemus" pretended to answer Wesley's letter, under another alias, "Somebody;" but was obliged to have recourse to blustering abuse, telling Wesley that "every serious protestant despises the enthusiastic madness of Methodism, and rejects him and his followers as members of that community"; and then politely adding, that "arguing with Methodists is like pounding fools in a mortar."

In the next issue of *Lloyd's Evening Post,* November 24, Wesley referred to this and other attacks as follows.

"November 22, 1760.

"SIR,—Just as I had finished the letter published in your last Friday's paper, four tracts came into my hands: one written, or procured to be written, by Mrs. Downes;[29] one by a clergyman in the county of Durham;[30] the third by a gentleman of Cambridge;[31] and the fourth by a member (I suppose, dignitary) of the Church of Rome.[32] How gladly would I leave all these to themselves, and let them say just what they please! as my day is far spent, and my taste for controversy is utterly lost and gone. But this would not be doing justice to the world, who might take silence for a proof of guilt. I shall therefore say a word concerning each."

After doing this, he concludes thus:

"Is it possible any protestants, nay, protestant clergyman, should buy these tracts to give away? Is then the introducing popery the only way to overthrow Methodism? If they know this, and choose popery as the smaller evil of the two, they are consistent with themselves. But if they do not intend this, I wish them to consider more seriously what they do.

"I am, sir, your humble servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."

The correspondence between Wesley and "Philodemus," who changed his signature every time he wrote a new letter, was continued until Christmas. The anonymous slanderer accused Wesley of plundering the poor; and, in proof, referred to the meeting-houses he had built. Wesley replied:

> "Don't you know, sir, those houses are none of mine? I made them over to trustees long ago. I have food to eat, and raiment to put on; and I *will have no more,* till I turn Turk or pagan.
>
> "I am, sir, in very good humour, your well wisher,
>
> "JOHN WESLEY."[33]

Wesley suspected "Philodemus" to be a friend of Foote's; or, at all events, a patron of the theatre; but this the fighter in ambush positively denied, and said he was a constant attender at church, had read the Bible in four different languages, and was personally known to some of the best theologians in the nation. The man, however, lost his temper. His letters evinced considerable ability; but Wesley's answers stung him to the quick. He was wounded, and could not avoid wincing. In his last lucubration, published December 10, he observed: "I shall not give myself the trouble to write to you any more, as it is only wasting paper to cavil with shuffling controvertists;" and then he finished by proposing to hold a personal discussion with Wesley, at which "a dignified clergyman of the Church of England should preside, and be the umpire of the debate." On December 24, Wesley replied as follows.

"For the Editor of 'Lloyd's Evening Post.'

"To Mr. T. H., *alias* E. L., etc., etc.

"What my good friend again? only a little disguised with a new name, and a few scraps of Latin? I hoped, indeed, you had been pretty well satisfied before; but, since you desire to hear a little further from me, I will add a few words, and endeavour to set our little controversy in a still clearer light.

"Last month you publicly attacked the people called Methodists, without either fear or wit. I considered each charge, and, I conceive, refuted it, to the satisfaction of all indifferent persons. You renewed the attack, not by *proving* anything, but by *affirming* the same things over and over. I replied, and, without taking notice of the dull, low scurrility, either of the first or second letter, confined myself to the merits of the case, and cleared away the dirt you had thrown.

"You now heap together ten paragraphs more, most of which require very little answer."

After answering nine of them, Wesley continues:

"In the last, you give me a fair challenge to a 'personal dispute.' Not so: you have fallen upon me in public; and to the public I appeal. Let all men, not any single umpire, judge, whether I have not fully refuted your charge, and cleared the people called Methodists

from the foul aspersions, which, without why or wherefore, you had thrown upon them. Let all of my countrymen judge, which of us have spoken the words of truth and soberness, and which has treated the other with a temper suitable to the gospel.

"If the general voice of mankind gives it against you, I hope you will be henceforth less flippant with your pen. I assure you, as little as you think of it, the Methodists are not such fools as you suppose. But their desire is to live peaceably with all men; and none desires this more than

"JOHN WESLEY."[34]

Mob persecution was bad enough; but persecution like this was worse. No wonder that Wesley felt, that his "taste for controversy was utterly lost and gone." His one object was to preach Christ and to save souls; but, despite himself, large portions of his time were most vexatiously occupied in defending himself and his societies from the malignant and unscrupulous attacks of his enemies. He was a match for the most trenchant of his foes; but preaching, not fighting, was the work to which he wished to devote his talents, his energies, and his life.

Besides this annoyance from the public press, Wesley had great anxiety from his own societies. The question of separation from the Established Church was still, among the Methodists, the great topic of the time. The agitation existed not in England only; but had spread to Ireland also. At

Athlone, for instance, some of the Methodists went to church and sacrament; but others absolutely refused to go, because the minister was not a child of God, nor a preacher of sound doctrine. The Hon. and Rev. Walter Shirley wrote to Wesley, in great alarm, concerning this, and, in conclusion, said: "I have hitherto learnt to consider the Methodists, not as any sect, but as the purer part of the Church of England; but, if any of them grow so wantonly fond of division as to form a schism, I foresee they will lose much of the gospel meekness, humility, and love; and a party zeal will take place, instead of a zeal according to knowledge."[35]

In London, the same subject created great excitement. A week after Wesley left the metropolis for his tour to the north and to Ireland, Thomas Maxfield wrote to him as follows: "The affair of leaving the Church has hurt the minds of many, on both sides. I hope it will be fully settled at conference. I endeavour, as far as I can safely, to be on neither side."[36]

The preachers at Norwich—Paul Greenwood, Thomas Mitchell, and John Murlin, without Wesley's permission, or consulting any of their coadjutors, began to administer the sacrament to the somewhat mongrel society in that city. Charles Wesley was enraged, and, early in March, wrote to his brother thus.

> "DEAR BROTHER,—We are come to the Rubicon. Shall we pass, or shall we not? In the fear of God, and in the name of Jesus Christ, let us ask, 'Lord, what wouldest *Thou* have us to do?' The case stands thus.

Three preachers, whom we thought we could have depended upon, have taken upon them to administer the sacrament, without any ordination, and without acquainting us, or even yourself, of it beforehand. Why may not all the preachers do the same, if each is judge of his own right to do it? And every one *is* left to act as he pleases, if we take no notice of them that have so despised their brethren. That the rest will soon follow their example I believe; because (1) They think they may do it with impunity. (2) Because, a large majority imagine they have a right, as preachers, to administer the sacraments. So long ago as the conference at Leeds, I took down their names. (3) Because, they have betrayed an impatience to separate. The preachers in Cornwall, and others, wondered it had not been mentioned at our last conference. Jacob Rowell's honesty I commend. Christopher Hopper, Joseph Cownley, John Hampson, and several more, are ripe for a separation. Even Mr. Crisp says, he would give the sacrament if you bade him. The young preachers, you know, are raw, unprincipled men, and entirely at the mercy of the old. You could persuade them to anything; and not you only, but Charles Perronet could do the same, or any of the preachers that have left us, or any of the three at Norwich. Upon the whole, I am fully persuaded, almost all our preachers are corrupted already. More and more will give the sacrament, and set up for themselves, even before we die; and all, except the few that get orders, will turn Dissenters before or after our death. You must wink very hard not to see all

this. You have connived at it too, too long. But I now call upon you to consider with me what is to be done; first, to prevent a separation; secondly, to save the few uncorrupted preachers; thirdly, to make the best of those that are corrupted."[37]

Charles Wesley's terms were far too strong. To say that "almost all the preachers were *corrupted,"* because they wished to separate from a *corrupted* church, and because they were desirous that their societies and congregations generally should have the same advantages which the Methodists in London and Bristol had,—namely, the Lord's supper in their own chapels, and Divine service there on the forenoon of the sabbath day,—was to employ language either unmeaning, or unauthorised; either extravagantly foolish, or something worse. Charles Wesley's temper was warm; his spirit was impetuous; and, had it not been for John's more calm and sober action, his impulsiveness would, more than once, have shaken Methodism to its centre, if not absolutely have shivered it into a thousand atoms. No wonder, that while he speaks of the influence of his brother, and even of Charles Perronet, he makes no mention of his own. The truth is, by his extreme churchism, his influence among the preachers was almost *nil;* and, to the day of his death, he never recovered the position in which he stood when Methodism was first begun.

The action taken by the itinerant triumvirate at Norwich thoroughly alarmed him. On the 6th of March, he wrote to Nicholas Gilbert, one of the oldest preachers, saying:—

"You have heard of Paul Greenwood, John Murlin, and Thomas Mitchell's presuming to give the sacrament at Norwich. They never acquainted their fellow labourers, no, not even my brother, of their design. They did it without any ordination, either by bishops or elders; upon the sole authority of a sixpenny licence: nay, all had not that. Do you think they acted right? If the other preachers follow their example, not only separation, but general confusion, must follow. My soul abhors the thought of separating from the Church of England. You and all the preachers know, if my brother should ever leave it, I should leave him, or rather he me. You would rather waive your right, if you had it (which I absolutely deny), of ordaining yourselves priests, than occasion so great an evil. You must become at last either Church ministers or Dissenting. Such as addict themselves thereto, God will make a way for their regular ordination in the Church. With these I desire to live and die. If you are of the number, I look upon you as my brother, my son, and owe you all I can do for you, as to soul, body, and estate. Now consider, and speak your mind. Will you take me for your father, brother, friend? or will you not?"[38]

What was this but an attempt to divide the Methodist itinerants, and to place himself at the head of one party, while his brother was left as the leader of the other?

A day later, he wrote to the same effect to John Johnson, an itinerant of five years' standing, and added:—

"Things are come to a crisis. Every preacher must consider now what will become of him. My brother and I have almost finished our course. After our departure, you *must* become either Dissenting or Church ministers. To which have *you* addicted yourself? If to the meeting, let us part friends. If your conscience suffers you to accept of orders in the Church of England, I nothing doubt your admission. If you love the Church, you are nearer and dearer to me than all my natural relations. All I can do for you, as to soul, body, and estate, I ought and will do, the Lord being my helper."[39]

Three weeks after, he wrote as follows to John Nelson.

"LONDON, *March* 27, 1760.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—I think you are no weathercock. What think you then of licensing yourself as a protestant Dissenter, and baptizing and administering the Lord's supper, and all the while calling yourself a Church of England man? Is this honest? consistent? just? Yet this is the practice of several of our sons in the gospel, even of some whom I most loved, and most depended on. My brother suffers them. Will not all the rest follow their example? and will not general separation ensue? John, I love thee from my heart; yet rather than see thee a Dissenting minister, I wish to see thee smiling in thy coffin."[40]

He had already written to Christopher Hopper, and Christopher had answered him. The following was a rejoinder.

"LONDON, *March* 27, 1760.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—You justly observe, it is not my way to hear one side only. You have not been suffered to speak; your complaints have been slighted; your reasons not attended to; your old worn out brethren left, to the parish. What must be your end? This question ought to be asked, considered, urged, insisted on, till it be answered to your full satisfaction.

"Here is a poor Methodist preacher, who has given up his business for the sake of preaching the gospel. Perhaps he has got a wife, and children, and nothing to keep them. By labouring like a horse, and travelling like a postboy, for ten or a dozen years, his strength is exhausted; yet he is able, and quite willing, to do what he can still. But how shall he get bread for his family? That Mr. Superintendent will look to.

"Well; be it so. But what will become of this old, faithful preacher, when my brother and I are dead. 'He must turn Dissenting or Church minister.' I grant it; there is no medium.

"'But will you,' you ask us, 'now use all your interest to get him ordained?' I answer for myself, yes; and will begin to-morrow; or never blame him for turning

Dissenter. If any of you prefer the service of the Dissenters, I would let you depart in peace. If your heart is as my heart, and you dare venture in the same bottom, then am I your faithful servant for the residue of my days, and bound to do all I can for you, as to soul, body, and estate."[41]

On the same day, he wrote the following to Grimshaw, of Haworth.

"LONDON, *March* 27, 1760.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—Our preaching houses are mostly licensed, and so are proper meeting-houses. Our preachers are mostly licensed, and so are Dissenting ministers. They took out their licences as protestant Dissenters. Three of our steadiest preachers give the sacrament at Norwich, with no other ordination or authority than a sixpenny licence. My brother approves of it. All the rest will most probably follow their example. What then must be the consequence? Not only separation, but general confusion, and the destruction of the work, so far as it depends upon the Methodists.

"My brother persuades himself, that none of the other preachers will do like those at Norwich; that they may all license themselves, and give the sacraments, yet continue true members of the Church of England; that no confusion or inconvenience will follow from these things; that we should let them do as they please till conference: where, I suppose, it must be put to the vote,

whether they have not a right to administer the sacraments; and they themselves shall be the judges.

"I cannot get leave of my conscience, to do nothing in the meantime towards guarding our children against the approaching evil. They shall not be trepanned into a meeting-house, if I can hinder it. Every man ought to choose for himself. I am convinced things are come to a crisis. We must now resolve either to separate from the Church, or to continue in it the rest of our days."[42]

On March 31, Grimshaw replied, stating:—

"This licensing the preachers, and preaching houses, is a matter that I never expected to have seen or heard of among the Methodists. If I had, I dare say I had never entered into connection with them. I am in connection, and desire to continue so: but how can I do it consistently with my relation to the Church of England? What encouragement was given to the preachers at the last conference to license themselves, God and you best know; but, since then, many of the preachers in these parts have got licensed at the quarter sessions. Several of the preaching houses and other houses also are licensed. The Methodists are no longer members of the Church of England. They are as real a body of Dissenters from her as the presbyterians, baptists, quakers, or any body of independents.

"I little thought, that your brother approved or connived at the preachers' doings at Norwich. If it be so, 'to your tents, O Israel!' it is time for me to shift for myself; to disown all connection with the Methodists; to stay at home, and take care of my parish; or to preach abroad in such places as are unlicensed, and to such people as are in connection with us. I hereby, therefore, assure you, that I disclaim all further and future connection with the Methodists. I will quietly recede, without noise or tumult.

"As to licensing of preachers and places, I know no expedient to prevent it. The thing is gone too far. It is become inveterate. It has been gradually growing to this ever since erecting preaching houses was first encouraged in the land; and if you can stem the torrent, it will be only during your lives. As soon as you are dead, all the preachers will then do as many have already done. Dissenters the Methodists will all shortly be: it cannot, I am fully satisfied, be prevented.

"Nor is this spirit merely in the preachers. It is in the people also. There are so many inconveniences attend the people, that in most places they all plead strenuously for a settled ministry. They cannot, they say, in conscience, receive the sacraments as administered in our Church. They cannot attend preaching at eight, twelve, and four o'clock, on the Lord's days, and go to church. They reason these things with the preachers, and urge upon them ordination and residence. They can

object little against it; therefore they license. I believe the Methodists (preachers and members) have so much to say for their separation from our Church, as will not easily, in a conference or otherwise, be obviated."[43]

There can be no doubt, that Charles Wesley and Grimshaw were technically right. The act of toleration, under which Methodist preachers, and Methodist meeting-houses, were licensed, was an act passed in the first year of the reign of William and Mary, and was intended, not for churchmen, but "for exempting their majesties' protestant subjects *dissenting from the Church of England*, from the penalties of certain laws." Before the licences could be granted, the oaths must be taken, and the persons taking them must declare themselves Dissenters.

What induced the Methodists and the Methodist preachers to take such a step as this? Was it because the persecuting spirit of magistrates and others began to put in force, at Rolvenden and other places, the old "conventicle act," and the "five mile act," passed in the reign of Charles II.? Or, was it because the Methodists and their preachers began to be impatient of their present anomalous position, and wished to avow themselves to be what they really were,—Dissenters from the Church of England? Or rather, was not the step they took, and which so alarmed Charles Wesley and his clerical friend Grimshaw, induced by both the reasons just mentioned? We think it was; indeed, there can be little doubt of it.

No wonder that Charles Wesley thought the crisis had arrived! From the beginning, the Methodists, if members of the Church of England at all, had been *irregulars.* Many of them, for various reasons, had long refused to go to church and sacrament; and now, by availing themselves of an act of parliament, they openly, in courts of law, avowed themselves to be Dissenters.

Charles, the high churchman, was wroth to the uttermost; John, the zealous evangelist, was calmly pursuing his great mission in Staffordshire, Yorkshire, and Lancashire. The one, was preaching, the other plotting: both equally sincere, and well intentioned; but one acting much more wisely than the other.

Charles Wesley's private correspondence with the preachers was scarcely fair to his absent brother, and cannot be commended as honourable. John was the real, almost the only, leader of the Methodists; and to tamper with his preachers, by offering them episcopal ordination and family support, was not brotherly behaviour; neither was the offer one which was likely to be realised. True, he wrote as if he was authorised to say, that those itinerants who wished might certainly obtain orders in the Church of England. He was a friend of Lady Huntingdon's; and, perhaps, her ladyship's encouragement was his assumed authority; but who believes that Charles Wesley could have obtained, for any considerable number of the Methodist itinerants, ordination by bishops? His scheme was visionary, and ended in nothing. Joseph Cownley wrote to him as follows.

"There are several of my brethren, who have no thoughts of fleeing to the gown or cloak for succour, unless they could do it, and be Methodist preachers still. I can easily believe, that many, if not most, of those who shall survive you, will separate from the Church, except, as my friend Hopper says, you get them fastened where they are by prevailing on one or more of the bishops to ordain them. But then what bishop, either in England or Ireland, will ever do this? will ordain a Methodist preacher, to be a Methodist preacher? For my part, as poor and worthless a wretch as I am, I could not submit to it on the terms on which most of my brethren have hitherto got it."

Cownley then adds a significant paragraph, showing that Charles Wesley's influence among the Methodists was waning. "Give me leave now to press you to do what I think is your bounden duty: I mean, to visit the north this summer. We have excused you to the poor people, till we can do it no longer. If you refuse to come now, we can say neither more nor less about it, than, that you cannot, because you will not. If you could not preach at all, it would do them good only to see your face."[44]

An extract from another letter, by Charles Wesley to his wife, may be added.

"SPITALFIELDS CHAPEL, *April* 13, 1760.

"Poor Mr. I'anson is in great trouble for our people. A persecuting justice has oppressed and spoiled them by

the conventicle act. We have appealed. I am fully persuaded God has suffered this evil, to reprove our hypocrisy, and our mistrust of His protection.

"I met all the leaders, and read them my brother's and Mr. Grimshaw's letters. The latter put them in a flame. All cried out against the licensed preachers; many demanded, that they should be silenced immediately; many, that they should give up their licences; some protested against ever hearing them again. Silas Told and Isaac Waldron, as often as they opened their mouths, were put to silence by the people's just complaints and unanswerable arguments. The lay preachers pleaded my brother's authority. I took occasion from thence to moderate the others, to defend the preachers, and desired the leaders to have patience till we had had our conference; promising them to let them know all that should pass at it. They could trust me. I added, that I would not betray the cause of the Church, or deceive them; that I was resolved no one of them all should be ensnared into a meeting-house. If they chose to turn Dissenters, they should do it with their eyes open. My chief concern upon earth, I said, was the prosperity of the Church of England; my next, that of the Methodists; my third, that of the preachers: that, if their interests should ever come in competition, I would give up the preachers for the good of the Methodists, and the Methodists for the good of the whole body of the Church of England; that nothing could ever force me to leave the Methodists, but their

leaving the Church. You cannot conceive what a spirit rose in all that heard me. They all cried out, that they would answer for ninety-nine out of a hundred in London, that they would live and die in the Church. My business was to pacify and keep them within bounds. I appointed another meeting on this day fortnight, and Friday seven-night as a fast for the Church."[45]

This wonderful leaders' meeting, strangely enough, was held on a Sunday. Unfortunately, no report of the discussions of the ensuing conference now exists; but this is certain, that the agitation of the Methodists was not smothered. In the month of December, the following puzzling queries were proposed to Charles Wesley, in *Lloyd's Evening Post.*

"1. Are you not a sworn member and minister of the Church of England?

"2. Are you not bound, as such, to discountenance and prevent, as far as lies in you, every schism and division in the Church, or separation from it?

"3. Do not you countenance and support this by administering the sacrament at Kingswood, near Bristol, and other places in London, not licensed by the bishop, in time of Divine service at the parish churches?

"4. Is not the attending such meetings at such time an actual separation from the Church of England,

according to the doctrine laid down in a small tract lately published by you?

"5. Are not such assemblies contrary to the laws of the land, when the places and the persons officiating are not licensed by the bishop of the diocese where such meetings are held, or at the quarter sessions of the peace?

"6. Is it honest to call yourself a member and minister of the Church of England, when it appears from your own confession you are not?

"7. Are you not bound to submit to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake?

"8. Should you not, therefore, submit to the authority of the Church of England, or qualify yourself as the law enjoins?

"9. Is not your late incapacity to preach, and the distractions among you, a judicial stroke, for your gross disingenuity, and sin against God?

"I am yours, etc.,

"LOVE TRUTH."

This was turning the tables upon the vehement churchman; and with this we, for the present, leave the question, whether, in 1760, the Methodists were Dissenters or were members of the Church of England.

Wesley was at this period too much occupied with other matters, to have time to devote to literary pursuits; and yet the year 1760 was not, even in this respect, altogether barren.

For instance, he published a 12mo pamphlet of 72 pages, entitled, "The Desideratum: or Electricity made plain and useful. By a Lover of Mankind, and of Common Sense." In his preface, he states, that he has endeavoured to "comprise in his tract the sum of all that had hitherto been published on this curious and important subject." Electricity he considered "the noblest medicine yet known."

The only other publication which he issued, in 1760, was a 12mo volume of more than three hundred pages, with the title, "Sermons on Several Occasions. By John Wesley, M.A." The title was imperfect, for in the same volume, and continuously paged, there are the following additional pieces: namely, "Advice to the Methodists, with regard to Dress," 20 pages; "The Duties of Husbands and Wives," 70 pages; "Thoughts on Christian Perfection, 30 pages; and "Christian Instructions, Extracted from a late French Author," 54 pages.

The sermons are seven in number. The first, on Original Sin; the second, on the New Birth; the third, on the Wilderness State; the fourth, on Heaviness through Temptations; the fifth, on Self Denial; the sixth, on the Cure of Evil Speaking; and the seventh, on the Use of Money.

The last mentioned sermon is pregnant with not a few of Wesley's most strongly expressed sentiments. Concerning

himself, he tells us that, from "a peculiar constitution of soul," he is "convinced, by many experiments, that he could not study, to any degree of perfection, either mathematics, arithmetic, or algebra, without being a deist, if not an atheist; though others may study them all their lives without sustaining any inconvenience."

On the payment of taxes, he remarks: "It is, at least, as sinful to defraud the king of his right, as to rob our fellow subjects; the king has full as much right to his customs as we have to our houses and apparel."

"Drams, or spirituous liquors, are liquid fire," and all who manufacture or sell them, except as medicine, "are poisoners general. They murder his majesty's subjects by wholesale. They drive them to hell like sheep. The curse of God is in their gardens, their walks, their groves. Blood, blood is there: the foundation, the floor, the walls, the roof of their dwellings, are stained with blood."

In the same sermon, he powerfully elaborates his three well known rules,—Gain all you can; Save all you can; Give all you can.

In his "Advice to the Methodists with regard to Dress," he says: "I would not advise you to imitate the quakers, in those little particularities of dress, which can answer no possible end, but to distinguish them from all other people. To be singular, merely for singularity's sake, is not the part of a Christian. But I advise you to imitate them, first, in the

neatness, and secondly in the plainness, of their apparel." He continues: "Wear no gold, no pearls or precious stones; use no curling of hair; buy no velvets, no silks, no fine linen; no superfluities, no *mere ornaments*, though ever so much in fashion. Wear nothing which is of a glaring colour, or which is, in any kind, gay, glistering, showy; nothing made in the very height of fashion; nothing apt to attract the eyes of bystanders. I do not advise women to wear rings, earrings, necklaces, lace, or ruffles. Neither do I advise men to wear coloured waistcoats, shining stockings, glittering or costly buckles or buttons, either on their coats or in their sleeves, any more than gay, fashionable, or expensive perukes. It is true these are little, very little things; therefore, they are not worth defending; therefore, give them up, let them drop, throw them away, without another word." What will the fashionable followers of Wesley say to this? And yet Wesley enforces his advices, and answers objections, in a manner which, we suspect, the devotees of fashion will find it difficult to set aside.

"The Duties of Husbands and Wives" was a republication, in an abridged form, of Whateley's "Directions for Married Persons," published, in 1753, in Vol. XXII. of the "Christian Library."

The "Thoughts on Christian Perfection" have been already noticed; and "Christian Instructions" contains nothing which deserves further mention.

A quarter of a century had elapsed since Wesley set sail for America. With what results? To say nothing of the success of the labours of Whitefield and his coadjutors, Methodism had been introduced into almost every county of England and Ireland; ninety itinerant preachers were acting under Wesley's direction; also a much larger number of local preachers, leaders, and stewards; chapels had been built in London, Bristol, Kingswood, Newcastle on Tyne, Redruth, St. Just, St. Ives, Whitehaven, Gateshead, Sunderland, Teesdale, Colchester, Portsmouth, Whitchurch, Bacup, Bolton, Flixton, Liverpool, Epworth, Louth, Norwich, Kinley, Misterton, Coleford, Tipton, Wednesbury, Lakenheath, Salisbury, Bradford, Halifax, Hutton Rudby, Haworth, Leeds, Osmotherley, Stainland, Sheffield, York, Cardiff, Bandon, Cork, Dublin, Edinderry, Tullamore, Court Mattrass, Pallas, Castlebar, Waterford, and other places;[46] and to these sacred edifices must be added scores, probably hundreds, of private houses, schools, barns, and rooms, which were regularly used as preaching places. In addition to all this, the Wesley brothers, John and Charles, had published about a dozen volumes and about thirty tracts and pamphlets of hymns and poetry; while Wesley himself had issued nine numbers of his Journal, about one hundred and thirty separate sermons, tracts, and pamphlets, and nearly seventy volumes of books, including his "Notes on the New Testament," his Sermons, and his "Christian Library."

Can this be equalled, all things considered, in the same space of time, in the life of any one, in this or in any other age and nation of the world? We doubt it. Wesley began his

career as a penniless priest; he was without patrons and without friends; magistrates threatened him; the clergy expelled him from their churches, and wrote numberless and furious pasquinades against him; newspapers and magazines reviled him; ballad singers, in foulest language, derided him; mobs assaulted, and, more than once, well-nigh murdered him; and not a few of his companions in toil forsook him and became his antagonists; and yet, despite all this, such were some of the results of the first five-and-twenty years of his unequalled public ministry.

ENDNOTES

[1] *Methodist Magazine,* 1780, p. 390.
[2] *Irish Evangelist,* Nov. 1, 1860.
[3] *London Magazine,* 1760, p. 147.
[4] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 176.
[5] *Methodist Magazine,* 1780, p. 499.
[6] *Methodist Magazine,* 1797, p. 305.
[7] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 111.
[8] I say *probably.* I think it possible that Wesley used the word "Sussex" in mistake for "Kentish."
[9] *London Magazine,* 1761, p. 413; *Lloyd's Evening Post,* July 1, 1761.
[10] *Methodist Magazine,* 1848, p. 1227; and manuscript letter, kindly lent by Mr. G. Stevenson.
[11] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 112.
[12] Mr. Newton now filled the office of tide surveyor at Liverpool, and was in possession of a comfortable salary. In this same year, 1760, he published a volume of his sermons, though he was not ordained for four years afterwards. The emoluments of his Olney curacy were only £60 per annum. ("Life of Rev. John Newton.")
[13] *Methodist Magazine,* 1780, p. 441.
[14] Walpole's Letters, vol. iii.; and *London Magazine* and *Christian Magazine,* for 1760.
[15] *Methodist Magazine,* 1797, p. 459.
[16] Everett's Folio, vol. iii., p. 451.
[17] *Lloyd's Evening Post,* Nov. 24, 1760.
[18] Nichols' Literary Anecdotes, vol. viii., p. 229; and *Gentleman's Magazine,* 1761, p. 286.

[19] *Lloyd's Evening Post,* Nov. 24, 1760.
[20] *Monthly Review,* 1761, p. 473.
[21] One of Wesley's letters is given on p. 244 of this volume.
[22] Pp. 296-299.
[23] P. 470.
[24] P. 472.
[25] P. 516.
[26] P. 586.
[27] P. 690.
[28] *Lloyd's Evening Post,* Nov. 17, 1760.
[29] Widow of the Rev. John Downes, whose attack on Methodism is mentioned on p. 342 of this volume.
[30] The Rev. Alexander Jephson.
[31] Dr. Green, dean of Lincoln.
[32] Author of "Caveat against the Methodists," which I have not seen.
[33] *Lloyd's Evening Post,* Dec. 1, 1760.
[34] *Lloyd's Evening Post,* Dec. 24, 1760.
[35] *Methodist Magazine,* 1780, p. 334.
[36] *Methodist Magazine,* 1780, p. 386.
[37] Jackson's Life of C. Wesley, vol. ii., p. 180.
[38] Life of C. Wesley, vol. ii., p. 183.
[39] Life of C. Wesley, vol. ii., p. 184.
[40] Ibid. p. 185.
[41] Life of C. Wesley, vol. ii., p. 186.
[42] Ibid. p. 188.
[43] Life of C. Wesley, vol. ii., p. 191.
[44] Life of C. Wesley, vol. ii., p. 196.
[45] *Methodist Magazine,* 1848, p. 1205.

[46] This list is taken, chiefly, from Myles's "Chronological History"; but it is far from being perfect.

PART III.

1761.

UPON the whole, the reign of the second George had been a prosperous one. Money was plentiful; waste lands were cultivated; mines were opened; and the exports of the country doubled. But still, the population of England and Wales was only about six millions, one half of whom were living on barley and oaten cakes.

Lord Holland was now at the zenith of his fame, a man of distinguished talent, but a gambler, and of no fixed principles, either of religion or of morals. William Pitt, Earl of Chatham, was premier, his eye armed with lightning, and his lips clothed with thunder. Lord Bute was plotting to become his successor. Secker, the son of a Dissenter, had recently been made primate. Newton, soon afterwards bishop of Bristol, was publishing his Dissertations on the Prophecies. Lowth had given to the public his Lectures on Hebrew Poetry, and was rising into literary reputation. Beilby Porteus was a young man, just becoming popular. Kennicott was collecting sacred manuscripts. William Dodd was already the idol of the London populace. The learned and pious Horne was working his way to the see of Norwich; and Horsley, afterwards bishop of St. Asaph, had just been appointed to the rectory of Newington. Robert Robinson had recently commenced his ministry at Cambridge. Dr. Gill was publishing his ponderous folios of Calvinistic divinity. Towgood was educating young dissenting ministers; and Job Orton was writing his

Exposition of the Scriptures. Shenstone, Akenside, Gray, Collins, and Goldsmith were among the chief poets of the period. John Harrison was completing the chronometer, which obtained him a parliamentary reward of £20,000. John Dollond was constructing telescopes; Thomas Simpson was lecturing on mathematics; and James Ferguson on stars. James Brindley was executing the great Bridgewater canal; and Hogarth, Reynolds, and Gainsborough were making pictures almost breathe. Macklin, Foote, and Garrick were the idols of the pleasure loving world. These are a few of the distinguished men who lived and flourished at the commencement of the reign of King George III.

Perhaps we are justified in saying that, from this period, literature in England became more than ever a distinct profession. Persons of all ranks, including ladies like Madame D'Arblay, Mrs. Hannah More, Miss Seward, and Mrs. Barbauld, turned authors. Johnson poured forth his sonorous eloquence. Burke issued his brilliant pamphlets. Adam Smith wrote his Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations; and Reid, his Essays on the Intellectual Powers; Campbell, his Dissertations on Miracles; Robertson, his Histories; and Gibbon, his Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.

Other distinguished names belonging to the last thirty years of Wesley's life might be mentioned,—as Blair the rhetorician, Sir William Jones the linguist, Herschel the astronomer, Hutton the geologist, Hunter the anatomist, Banks the naturalist, Cook the navigator, Howard the

philanthropist; Crabbe, Rogers, and Burns the poets; Watt the engineer, Arkwright the cotton spinner, Wedgwood the potter, Wyatt the architect, and Bruce the traveller. England was awaking into unwonted life.

It is impossible, in a work like this, to give even the barest outline of the great political events of the first thirty years of the reign of George III. War committed fearful havoc. Politics were in bitterest confusion. The Earl of Bute, cold, stiff, and unconciliating, was the subject of numberless caricatures, lampoons, and squibs. The popularity of Pitt, the patriot minister, was partially obscured with mists and clouds, while his friends and partisans extolled him in the highest terms of eulogy. The Duke of Newcastle, after occupying a seat in the English cabinet for five-and-thirty years, had to retire, in comparative poverty, to the dreary mansion of an ex-minister. Terrible were the contentions in parliament, respecting the American rebellion, the stamp act, and other matters. The political horizon was alarmingly threatening, and the period was almost a continuous thunderstorm.

In a moral point of view, the state of the nation was deplorable. Wesley had, under God, *begun* a reformation; but that was all. The upper and the middle classes were revelling in luxury; the poor often were in a state of starvation. Wilkes, Lord Sandwich, Sir Francis Dashwood, and other fashionable rakes, were notoriously living in the worst private excesses, and in Palace Yard were indulging in all the frowsy indecencies of the Dilettante club, and at Medmenham Abbey were practising the mysteries, obscenities, and mockeries of

the Hell Fire club of the Duke of Wharton's days. Warburton, bishop of Gloucester, declared that "the blackest fiend in hell would not keep company with Wilkes on his arrival there"; and yet, mournful to relate, Wilkes was the popular hero of the London populace. The sabbath was the day for routs among the nobility and gentry; and political ministers, foreign and domestic, being too busy on other days, gave their grand entertainments on this. Gambling, though not so rampant as it had been, was still a prevailing vice. Rakes were plentiful. Seeing life meant keeping all sorts of company; drinking much, and appearing great; swearing in fashionable language, and singing licentious songs; the being impious in morals and wanton in debaucheries; learned in obscenity and skilled in wickedness; spending the night at Vauxhall or Ranelagh; and then reeling through the streets, at early dawn, like a beau of the first magnitude, breaking windows and wrenching knockers; and, at last, finishing a drunken frolic in being carried, either home or to the lock up, speechless, senseless, and motionless. Reckless extravagance was general. The mansions, furniture, tables, equipages, gardens, clothes, plate, and jewels of the nobility were as gorgeous as wealth could make them. Young tradesmen had their country houses, drove their carriages, and, to a ruinous extent, left the management of their business to their servants. Dress was ludicrously expensive. The upper classes indulged in their brocades, laces, velvets, satins, and silver tassels; and even the sons of mechanics sported their gold buttons, high quartered shoes, scarlet waistcoats, and doeskin breeches. But, perhaps, the most absurd of all was the ladies' powdered headdress; curled, frizzled, and stuffed with wool; and pinned, greased, and

worked up into an immense protuberance, which, for months, put it out of the lady's power to comb her head, and created an effluvia of not the most pleasant odour, and gave birth to animalculae which ladies could have done well enough without.

The country, if not so flagrantly wicked as the town, was, notwithstanding, steeped in ignorance and sin. There were thousands of godly people, but the bulk of the population were little better than baptized barbarians. The clergy, in many instances, were lazy, or drunken, or non resident. Numbers of them were most miserably paid, and had to practise meannesses to eke out insufficient incomes. Others were more fond of preaching over pewter pots, in dirty alehouses, than of preaching in their pulpits, or of visiting their flocks. Others revelled amid all the luxuries of a fat benefice, leaving the duties of their parishes to young, half starved curates, who had to live on the mere gleanings of their master's vintage; and others had a far greater penchant for persecuting Methodists than for saving souls.

It may be said that these remarks are extravagant; they are simply defective; that is all. Let the candid reader peruse the histories of the period, and especially its broad-sheets, magazines, newspapers, essays, and other periodicals, and he will readily acknowledge, that facts are not misstated, nor pictures overdrawn.

Methodism had begun its mission; but who will say it was no longer needed? It is time to return to its chief actors.

Charles Wesley and Whitefield were both in ill health during the year 1761, and were, to a great extent, laid aside from public labours; but Wesley himself was, if possible, more active than ever.

He began the year in London, by writing letters to the newspapers. He had been to Newgate prison, once one of the darkest "seats of woe on this side hell"; but now he found it "clean and sweet as any gentleman's house." There was no fighting, no quarrelling, no cheating, no drunkenness, and no whoredom, as there used to be; and all this he attributes to the "keeper," who "deserved to be remembered full as well as the Man of Ross."

In the *Westminster Journal*, Wesley replied to a correspondent, who had represented Methodism as "an ungoverned spirit of enthusiasm, propagated by knaves, and embraced by fools." By it, "the decency of religion had been perverted, the peace of families had been ruined, and the minds of the vulgar darkened to a total neglect of their civil and social duties." Wesley says: "I am almost ashamed to spend time upon these threadbare objections, which have been answered over and over. But if they are advanced again, they must be answered again, lest silence should pass for guilt."

His first journey, in 1761, was an excursion to Norwich, extending from January 9 to February 7. One Sunday he spent at Everton, where he preached twice for his friend Berridge. Ash Wednesday he divided between Berridge at Everton and Hicks at Wrestlingworth. "Few," says he, "are now affected as

at first, the greater part having found peace with God. But there is a gradual increasing of the work in the souls of many believers."

At Norwich, Wesley found about three hundred and thirty persons who professed to meet in class; but "many of them were as bullocks unaccustomed to the yoke." "All jealousies;" however, "and misunderstandings were vanished; but how long," he asks, "will they continue so, considering the unparalleled fickleness of the people in these parts?"

Returning to London, Wesley spent some days in visiting the classes, and ascertained that, after leaving out one hundred and sixty "to whom he could do no good at present," there were still in the London society 2375 members. His reason for excluding the 160 is exceedingly indefinite. Were they immoral? If so, why could not Wesley be of use to them? Were they consistent Christians, but, by some means, beyond Wesley's reach? Perhaps they were; but if so, while such a reason might be sufficient for removing them from membership with a mere society, it was insufficient for removing them from the church of Christ.

The life of Wesley was full of anxiety. It could hardly be otherwise. A man cannot be the leader of a great movement without incurring great responsibilities. Wesley had had to settle many a hard question already. In 1760 and succeeding years he had another. He had shocked the prejudices of his clerical brethren by appointing unordained *men* to preach; now he had to decide whether *women* should be allowed to

exercise the same sacred function. Sarah Crosby, a godly female, left London for Derby, at the commencement of 1761, and began to meet classes with great success. On February 8, when she expected a class of about thirty persons, she found, to her surprise, a congregation of about two hundred. She writes: "I found an awful, loving sense of the Lord's presence. I was not sure whether it was right for me to exhort in so public a manner; and, yet, I saw it impracticable to meet all these people by way of speaking particularly to each individual. I therefore gave out a hymn, and prayed, and told them part of what the Lord had done for myself, persuading them to flee from sin."[1] On the Friday following, she did the same to another equally large congregation; and says: "My soul was much comforted in speaking to the people, as my Lord has removed all my scruples respecting the propriety of my acting thus publicly."

This was a startling step to take. The new preacheress wrote to Wesley on the subject; and he answered her as follows.

"LONDON, *February* 14, 1761.

"MY DEAR SISTER,—Miss —— gave me yours on Wednesday night. Hitherto, I think you have not gone too far. You could not well do less. I apprehend all you can do more is, when you meet again, to tell them simply, 'You lay me under a great difficulty. The Methodists do not allow of women preachers; neither do I take upon me any such character. But I will just nakedly tell you what is in my heart.' This will, in a

great measure, obviate the grand objection, and prepare for J. Hampson's coming. I do not see, that you have broken any law. Go on calmly and steadily. If you have time, you may read to them the Notes on any chapter before you speak a few words; or one of the most awakening sermons, as other women have done long ago.

"The work of God goes on mightily here, both in conviction and conversion. This morning, I have spoken with four or five who seem to have been set at liberty within this month. I believe, within five weeks, six in one class have received remission of sins, and five in one band received a second blessing. Peace be with you all! I am your affectionate brother,

"JOHN WESLEY."[2]

Such was the commencement of female preaching among the Methodists; a thing never formally sanctioned by Wesley's conference, but which was practised to the end of Wesley's life. Sarah Crosby continued preaching till her death, in 1804; and, in this, she was imitated by Hannah Harrison, Miss Bosanquet, Miss Horral, Miss Newman, Mary Barrett, and others. To say the least, Wesley connived at it, as we shall have other opportunities of seeing.

On the 9th of March, Wesley set out on his long journey to the north, which occupied nearly the next six months. Taking High Wycombe and Oxford on his way, he came to Evesham, where he "found the poor shattered society almost sunk into

nothing." At Birmingham, the room was far too small for the congregation. At Wednesbury, he preached to eight or ten thousand people in a field. Arriving at Wolverhampton, he writes: "None had yet preached abroad in this furious town; but I was resolved, with God's help, to make a trial, and ordered a table to be set in the inn yard. Such a number of wild men I have seldom seen; but they gave me no disturbance, either while I preached, or when I afterwards walked through the midst of them."

Wesley proceeded to Dudley, Bilbrook, Burslem, Congleton, Macclesfield, Manchester, and Leeds. At the last mentioned town, he held a sort of conference. He writes: "I had desired all the preachers in those parts to meet me; and a happy meeting we had, both in the evening and morning. I afterwards inquired into the state of the societies in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire. 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 at Epworth on my father's tomb. In the afternoon, I talked with several who believe they are saved from sin; and, after a close examination, I found reason to hope that fourteen of them are not deceived. In the evening, I expounded 1 Corinthians xiii., and exhorted all to weigh themselves in that balance, and see if they were not 'found wanting.'"

Leaving Leeds, Wesley returned on March 25 to Manchester, where, he says, "I met the believers, and strongly exhorted them to go on unto perfection. To many it seemed a new doctrine. However, they all received it in love; and a

flame was kindled, which, I trust, neither men nor devils shall ever be able to quench."

From Manchester, he went to Chester and other places, and then to Liverpool, Bolton, Whitehaven, etc.; after which, he, on April 27, crossed Solway Frith, and entered Scotland; but here we must pause to insert extracts from his correspondence.

The first letter was addressed to the Rev. Mr. G——; and is possessed of considerable interest as casting light on the *real* antinomian Methodists; and as showing what Wesley considered to be the most strongly marked feature of his numerous writings.

"April 2, 1761.

"REVEREND SIR,—I have no desire to dispute: least of all with one whom I believe to fear God and work righteousness. And I have no time to spare. Yet I think it my duty to write a few lines, with regard to those you sent to Mr. Bennet.

"You therein say, 'I know numbers, who call themselves Methodists, and assert their assurance of salvation, at the very time they wallow in sins of the deepest dye.'

"Permit me, sir, to speak freely. I do not doubt the fact. But (1) those who are connected with *me* do not *call themselves* Methodists. Others call them by that

nickname, and they cannot help it; but I continually warn them not to pin it upon themselves. (2) We rarely use that ambiguous expression, 'Christ's righteousness imputed to us.' (3) We believe a man may be a real Christian, without being 'assured of his salvation.' (4) We know no man can be 'assured of his salvation' while he lives in any sin whatever. (5) The wretches who talk in that manner are neither Methodists nor Moravians, but followers of William Cudworth, James Relly,[3] and their associates, who abhor us as much as they do the pope, and ten times more than they do the devil. If *you* oppose these, so do *I*, and have done, privately and publicly, for these twenty years.

"Some of my writings, you say, 'you have read.' But allow me to ask, did not you read them with much prejudice? or little attention? Otherwise surely you would not have termed them *perplexing.* Very few lay obscurity or intricacy to my charge. Those who do not allow them to be *true* do not deny them to be *plain.* And if they believe me to have done any good at all by writing, they suppose it is by this very thing, by speaking, on practical and experimental religion, more plainly than others have done.

"I quite agree, we 'neither can be better men, nor better Christians, by continuing members of the Church of England.' Yet, not only her doctrines, but many parts of her discipline I have adhered to, at the hazard of my life. If, in any point, I have since varied therefrom, it

was not by choice but necessity. Judge, therefore, if they do well, who throw me into the ditch and then beat me, because my clothes are dirty.

"I remain, reverend sir,

"Your affectionate brother,

"JOHN WESLEY."[4]

Another letter, written four days after the above, deserves attention, as showing the position occupied by Wesley as a minister of the Church of England. It also was addressed to a clergyman.

"LIVERPOOL, *April* 6, 1761.

"DEAR SIR,—Let who will speak, if what is spoken be true, I am ready to subscribe it. If it be not, I accept no man's person. *Magis amica veritas.* I had an agreeable conversation with Mr. Venn, who I suppose is now near you. I think, he is exactly as regular as he ought to be.[5] I would observe every punctilio of order, except where the salvation of souls is at stake. Here I prefer the end before the means.

"I think it great pity, that the few clergymen in England, who preach the three grand spiritual doctrines,—original sin, justification by faith, and holiness consequent thereon,—should have any jealousies or misunderstandings between them. What advantage must this give to the common enemy! What a hindrance is it to the great work wherein they are all engaged! How desirable is it, that there should be the

most open, avowed intercourse among them! Surely if they are ashamed to own one another, in the face of all mankind, they are ashamed of Christ! Excuses, indeed, will never be wanting; but will these avail before God? For many years, I have been labouring after this: labouring to unite, not scatter, the messengers of God. Not that I want anything from them. As God has enabled me to stand, almost alone, for these twenty years, I doubt not but He will enable me to stand, either with them or without them. But I want all to be helpful to each other; and all the world to know we are so. Let them know 'who is on the Lord's side.' You, I trust, will always be of that number. Oh let us preach and live the whole gospel!

"I am, dear sir,

"Your ever affectionate brother and servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."[6]

This is a manly and Christian letter. He longed for union and for help, not for his own sake so much as for the sake of others. For twenty years, he had done his work without the cooperation of his brethren, the clergy; and he could do so still; but, like his great Master, he prayed for unity among Christians, that there might be faith among sinners.

The Church question was still unsettled. Four days after writing the above, Wesley addressed, to another correspondent, an unusually long letter, from which we select the following.

"April 10, 1761.

"DEAR SIR,—Some years since, two or three clergymen of the Church of England, who were above measure zealous for all her rules and orders, were convinced, that religion is not an external thing, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; and, that this righteousness, peace, and joy are given only to those who are justified by faith. As soon as they were convinced of these great truths, they preached them; and multitudes flocked to hear. For these reasons, and no others, real or pretended (for as yet they were strictly regular), they were forbid to preach in the churches. Not daring to be silent, they preached elsewhere, in a school, by a river side, or upon a mountain. And more and more sinners forsook their sins, and were filled with peace and joy in believing."

Wesley adds, that "huge offence was taken at their gathering congregations in so irregular a manner"; and proceeds to answer the objections that were raised. He affirms: "If a dispensation of the gospel is committed to me, no church has power to enjoin me silence. If there be a law, that a minister of Christ, who is not suffered to preach the gospel in the church, should not preach it elsewhere; or a law that forbids Christian people to hear the gospel of Christ out of their parish church, when they cannot hear it therein, I judge that law to be absolutely sinful, and that it would be sinful to obey it." He maintains, that the "fundamental principles" of the Methodist clergymen are "the fundamental principles of the Established Church; and so is their practice

too, save in a few points, wherein they are constrained to deviate, or to destroy their own souls, and let thousands of their brethren perish for lack of knowledge." He declares that, though "they gather congregations everywhere, and exercise their ministerial office therein, this is not contrary to any restraint which was laid upon them at their ordination; for they were not ordained to serve any particular parish; and it was remarkable, that Lincoln college" (of which he was a fellow) *"was* founded *'ad propagandam Christianam fidem, et extirpandas haereses.'"* He admits, that he and his friends "maintain that, in some circumstances, it is lawful for men to preach, who are not episcopally ordained; especially, where thousands are rushing into destruction, and those who are *ordained* and appointed to watch over them neither care for, nor know how to help them." He allows that, "hereby they contradict the twenty-third article, to which they had subscribed"; but he adds, "we subscribed it in the simplicity of our hearts, when we firmly believed none but episcopal ordination valid; and Bishop Stillingfleet has since fully convinced us, that this was an entire mistake." He continues: "In every point of an indifferent nature, we obey the bishops, for conscience sake; but we think *episcopal* authority cannot reverse what is fixed by *Divine* authority." In conclusion, he says, though they (the Methodist clergymen) are irregular, "that is not their choice. They must either preach irregularly or not at all." Besides, he reminds these sticklers for church order, that "if none ought to speak or hear the truth of God, unless in a *regular* manner," Martin Luther could not have preached as he did, and there could have been no reformation from popery.[7]

On April 27, Wesley entered Scotland, where Christopher Hopper was his travelling companion. He visited Edinburgh, Dundee, and Aberdeen. At the last mentioned place, by the consent of the principal and regent, he preached in the college hall, and in the college close, and added forty to the small society, which now numbered ninety members. The principal, and the divinity professor, and Sir Archibald Grant, and others, invited him to their houses, and showed him great attention. Three years afterwards, Christopher Hopper was appointed to Aberdeen, and a chapel was erected.[8]

The *Scots' Magazine*, for 1763, page 421, inserts a long letter, dated "Aberdeen, June 2, 1763," proposing to give "an account of the rise and progress of Methodism" in that city. The writer was unfriendly towards Wesley, but his statements will be read with interest.

He says, four or five persons, belonging to Aberdeen, being in England, went to hear Wesley and some of his brethren preach. On returning home, they formed a society, which met every morning at five o'clock, when they sung a hymn, read a portion of Scripture and Wesley's commentary, then sung a second time, and concluded with a prayer. Soon a considerable number of people joined themselves to this infant congregation. They then applied to Wesley, who sent two of his preachers to visit them. These itinerants, for a few weeks, preached twice a day, at the castle hill, at 5 a.m. and at 6 p.m. The society so increased, that no room, in an ordinary dwelling house, could hold them; and hence, after the preachers had left them, they hired "a waste house," in

which they continued to assemble twice every day. While they had no preacher, three of their principal men acted as public speakers; one singing a hymn and praying, the second reading the Scriptures and a commentary thereon, and the third singing another hymn and offering the concluding prayer. Thus were the services of the Methodists, in Aberdeen, conducted until Wesley's visit in 1761. He remained nearly a week, preaching twice daily, at five in the morning, in the common school of the Marischal college, and at seven in the evening, in the college close.

> "All his discourses" [says the writer] "abounded with comical stories, which generally concluded with something to his own praise. Before his departure, he caused a paper to be written, containing words to this purpose: 'On such a day, at such a sermon, we, the following subscribers, were converted from the evil of our ways to the true faith of Jesus Christ.' Many persons ignorantly put their names to this paper, without knowing what they signed. This document Mr. Wesley carried with him to show the great success of his ministry in Aberdeen. He also purchased a place for a tabernacle, which is now fitted up with seats, and to which he sends a new preacher every six months. They preach in this tabernacle every Sunday at 7 a.m. and at 6 p.m.; and also on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, at 5 a.m. and at 7 p.m.; while, on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays they meet at 6 p.m. for private examination.

"The preachers frequently declare, in their public discourses, that they come not for stipend, but to win souls to Christ. And yet, it is well known, that every person who joins the society pays to a common collector, who is accountable to Mr. Wesley, one penny per week, and also, for a ticket of admission to their private examinations, sixteen pence every quarter. This tax is paid by servant maids and the lower class of hearers; but people in more opulent circumstances pay considerably more; and it may justly be questioned whether the people of any religious sect in Britain pay so much towards the maintenance of their ministers as the Methodists; for the lowest of their hearers pay 9*s*. 8*d*. per annum, which, considering the vast number of Methodists in Scotland, England, and Ireland, amounts to a very great sum.

"Having thus established the church at Aberdeen, Mr. Wesley, at the request of an honourable gentleman, accompanied him to his country seat. The minister of the parish complimented him with his pulpit; where, at the gentleman's desire, he held forth against the pernicious practice of *stealing wood;* which so irritated his hearers, that they would infallibly have stoned him, had they not been restrained through fear of disobliging their master landlord.

"Mr. Wesley came again to Aberdeen on the 24th ultimo; and, during his stay, preached twice a day, as formerly, and had private conferences with his

> congregation at night, and recommended the keeping of a love-feast at every full moon. Such a lovefeast was held before Mr. Wesley left. In the morning of the day on which the full moon happens, all the men meet in one place; in the afternoon, the women meet by themselves; and at night both men and women meet together. Their employment then is to eat bread and drink water with one another, to spend the whole night in prayer and singing hymns, and then to part with a brotherly kiss."

This account is given, not because of belief in its accuracy, but because of its general historic interest.

Having spent a fortnight across the Tweed, Wesley, on the 14th of May, came to Berwick; and, after preaching there, and at Alnwick, Warksworth, Alemouth, Widdrington, Morpeth, and Placey, reached Newcastle four days afterwards. A month was occupied in itinerating the Newcastle circuit. He preached in the new chapel at Sunderland; and also in Monkwearmouth church. He visited Allandale, Weardale, Teesdale, and Swaledale. In Weardale he came "just in time to prevent all the society turning Dissenters, being quite disgusted at the curate, whose life was no better than his doctrine." In Teesdale, most of the lead miners had been turned out of their work for being Methodists; but had been reinstated. In Swaledale, he "found an earnest, loving, simple people, whom he likewise exhorted not to leave the Church, though they had not the best of ministers."

While in the north, Wesley wrote as follows to his sister, Mrs. Hall.

"NEAR NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE, *June* 14, 1761.

"DEAR PATTY,—Why should any of us live in the world without doing a little good in it? I am glad you have made a beginning. See that you are not weary in well doing; for it will often be a cross. But bear the cross; the best fruit grows under the cross.

"I have often thought it strange, that so few of my relations should be of any use to me in the work of God. My sister Wright was, of whom I should least have expected it; but it was only for a short season. My sister Emily and you, of whom one might have expected more, have, I know not how, kept at a distance, and sometimes cavilled a little, at other times, as it were, approved, but never heartily joined in the work. Where did it stick? Did you not thoroughly understand what my brother and I were doing? Did you not see the truth? Or, did the cause lie in your heart? You had no will to join hand in hand. You wanted resolution, spirit, patience. Well the day is far spent. What you do, do quickly.

"My work in the country cannot be finished before the latter end of August, as the circuit is now larger by some hundred miles than when I was in the north two years ago. Oh let the one thing be ever uppermost in our thoughts!

"To promote either your temporal or eternal good will always: be a pleasure to,

"Dear Patty, your affectionate brother,

"JOHN WESLEY."[9]

Let us follow Wesley in his enlarged circuit. His labours were prodigious. He writes: "Three days in a week I can preach thrice a day without hurting myself; but I had now far exceeded this, besides meeting classes and exhorting the societies."

On the 15th of June, he rode to Durham, and preached in a field, by the river side, "the congregation," says Christopher Hopper, his companion, "behaving tolerably well, except that one poor man was hit by a stone, and lost a little blood." In the evening, Wesley preached at Hartlepool, Hopper remaining behind to preach in the field at Durham, where a gentleman, so called, hired a base fellow to strip himself naked, and swim the river so as to disturb the hearers.[10] Shortly after this, Durham had its Methodist society, one of the first members of which was Mrs. Elizabeth Ward, whose house was the home of Wesley and his preachers,—a neat but nervous Christian lady, who, at the age of eighty-three, died in 1826, calling upon her friends to "magnify the Lord!"[11]

From Hartlepool, Wesley proceeded to Stockton, where Methodism had been fostered, if not introduced, by John Unthank, a farmer and local preacher, at Billingham, who, besides meeting a class at Stockton, and another at Billingham, met a third at Darlington, at a distance of fifteen

miles. He died in 1822, aged ninety-three.[12] One of Unthank's first converts was John MacGowan, the son of a prosperous baker at Edinburgh, and intended for a minister of the Church of Scotland, but who, at nineteen years of age, joined the rebel army of the Pretender, and fought at the battle of Culloden. He then fled to Durham, and apprenticed himself to a linen weaver, and was now tossing the shuttle in the vicinity of Stockton. MacGowan became a local preacher; but, being Calvinistic in his sentiments, he left the Methodists, and, in 1766, became the minister of Devonshire Square chapel, London, where he continued until his death in 1780. His "Dialogues of Devils," his "Shaver," and other works, making two octavo volumes, were once in great repute. He was a man of good natural abilities, and of lively imagination, a hard student, and a laborious preacher. His death was triumphant, some of his last words being, "Methinks I have as much of heaven as I can hold."[13] Before leaving Stockton, it may be added, that, in 1769, a small chapel, twelve yards by nine, with a gallery at the end, was built; and that, afterwards, Stockton society sent out Christopher Smith, who removed to Cincinnati, in the United States, about the year 1800, where his joiner's shop was then the only Methodist place of preaching, and he himself made the twenty-second member of the Methodist society, in "the queen city of the west," now so beautifully built on the banks of the Ohio.[14]

After preaching at Stockton, Wesley went to Darlington, and preached his first sermon there. Here Methodism had been introduced by Unthank and MacGowan, and its

meetinghouse was a thatched cottage with a mudden floor. One of its first converts was John Hosmer, who afterwards became an itinerant preacher, was a son of thunder, and a man mighty in prayer and in the Scriptures, but whose failing health obliged him to relinquish the itinerancy, when he settled as a surgeon at Sunderland, and, after enduring great affliction, died in peace, at York, about the year 1780.[15]

Leaving Darlington, Wesley went to Yarm, where Mr. George Merryweather had fitted up his hayloft for a preaching room, in which, for three years past, the people had been favoured with a sermon or sermons, from the itinerant preachers, on at least every alternate Sunday. In 1763, the hayloft cathedral was superseded by a chapel, and Yarm was the head of a Methodist circuit, embracing Stockton, Hartlepool, Guisborough, Stokesley, Whitby, Thirsk, Ripon, Northallerton, and thirty ether places.[16] For many years, Mr. Merryweather was one of Wesley's most faithful friends; and, of course, his house, at Yarm, was Wesley's home. Here he always met with the most loving welcome, and sometimes with *softer* kindness than he wished. An old Methodist, at Yarm, a few years ago, related that she well remembered Wesley,—his cassock, his black silk stockings, his large silver buckles, and his old lumbering carriage, with a bookcase inside of it. In fact, she herself and another little girl, while playing, ran the pole of the carriage through Mr. Merryweather's parlour window; for which they deservedly received a scolding. She further stated that, on one occasion, when Mr. Merryweather's servant entered Wesley's room, she found Wesley's coachman rolling himself up and down the

feather bed most vigorously, because, as he affirmed, Wesley would not sleep in it until it was made as hard as possible.

Wesley held the quarterly meeting of the stewards of the Yarm circuit at Hutton Rudby, a small country village, with a new chapel, and a society of about eighty members, of whom nearly seventy were believers, and sixteen sanctified. He also preached at Potto, where Mrs. Moon resided, one of his valued correspondents and friends, whose conversion had been brought about by an old woman, a Methodist from Birstal, who came to the house of Mr. Moon to card his sheep "doddings," and to spin them into linsey woolsey yarn.[17] In this way, Methodism was originated at Potto, Hutton Rudby, Stokesley, and the neighbourhood round about.

Wesley visited his old friend Mr. Adams, the popish priest, at Osmotherley, heard a useful sermon in the parish church, and then preached in the churchyard himself. He proceeded to Guisborough, where Thomas Corney, who, for about half a century, entertained the preachers, and who died in the faith, in 1807, was one of the members.[18] Here also resided John Middleton, a miller, who, in 1766, removed to Hartlepool, where, for many years, he was the best friend that Methodism had, and where he peacefully expired in 1795.[19]

From Guisborough, Wesley went to Whitby, and preached on the top of a hill which had to be ascended by a hundred and ninety steps. At Robinhood's Bay, in the midst of his sermon, a large cat, frighted out of a chamber, leaped upon a woman's head, and ran over the shoulders of many more; but

so intent were they upon the truths to which they were listening, "that none of them moved or cried out, any more than if the cat had been a butterfly."

On June 25, Wesley wended his way to Scarborough, and preached from a balcony, to several hundreds of people standing in the street. The first Methodist here was a pious female of the name of Bozman, who regularly went to Robinhood's Bay to meet in class, a distance of fourteen miles, which she frequently rode upon an ass. In 1756, Thomas Brown, a local preacher, came from Sunderland, procured a preaching room in Whitehead's Lane, and formed a Methodist society. In 1760, Mr. George Cussons joined them, the society now numbering six-and-thirty members.[20] Persecution followed; and, on one occasion, Brown, Cussons, and others were seized by a press gang, and were only released by the interference of General Lambton, then member of parliament for the city of Durham. In 1768, the Scarborough society sent, as its contribution to the York quarterly meeting, the magnificent sum of half a guinea;[21] and, four years afterwards, erected a chapel, which Wesley pronounced a model, for its "beauty and neatness."[22]

From Scarborough, Wesley proceeded to Hull, where he found "some witnesses of the great salvation"; and to Beverley, Pocklington, and York. At York, he had far the genteelest audience he had seen since leaving Edinburgh, but he found many of the members "utterly dead," and the society not at all increasing, which he attributed in part to the neglect of out-door preaching.[23]

On July 6, Wesley proceeded to Tadcaster, and then to Otley. At the latter place he found ten or twelve professing to be entirely sanctified. Here resided John Whitaker, who had his first society ticket from the hands of Grimshaw, was a Methodist sixty-eight years, a leader sixty-four, a circuit steward more than fifty, and who finished his course in peace in 1825, aged eighty-four.[24] Here, especially, were the Ritchie family. John Ritchie, Esq., a sensible, amiable, well informed, godly man, had served many years as a surgeon in the navy. His wife was Beatrice Robinson, of Bramhope. His daughter Elizabeth, afterwards Mrs. Mortimer, was, for many years, Wesley's friend and correspondent. Mr. Ritchie died in the faith in 1780; and his wife in 1808; their house being open to Wesley and his preachers for upward of half a century.[25] Here, as in other places, Methodism was cradled in persecution, the resident magistrate telling the mob, that they might do what they liked with the Methodists, except breaking their bones.

At Knaresborough, Wesley preached in the assembly room, where "the people looked wild enough when they came in; but were tame before they went out."

He then made his way to Guiseley, Bingley, and Keighley. At Bingley, the first preaching place was a blacksmith's shop; and among its first Methodists were, not only Jonathan Maskew and Thomas Mitchell—honoured names, but, Benjamin Wilkinson, a simple hearted, zealous, good old pilgrim, who died in the parish workhouse, and found a pauper's grave, but at whose funeral the streets were crowded

by those who wished to do him honour, while the singers of the chapel sang a solemn hymn of praise until they entered the sacred precincts of the parish church, where, as Methodists, they were allowed to sing no longer. Another Bingley Methodist, belonging to about the same period, was Joseph Pickles, who died at the age of ninety-five, in 1829, after being a Methodist nearly sixty-five years, leaving behind him seven children, seventy-three grandchildren, one hundred and seventy-nine great grandchildren, and fifty great great grandchildren, in all three hundred and nine surviving descendants, exclusive of one hundred and one others who died before him,—a total progeny of four hundred and ten.[26]

On Sunday, July 12, the crowd at Haworth was so immense that, after the liturgy had been read in the interior of the church, Grimshaw caused a scaffold to be fixed outside one of the windows, so that Wesley, at the same time, might preach to the congregations within and without. Well might the preacher exclaim, as he gazed on the vast multitude, in the picturesque churchyard, "What has God wrought in the midst of those rough mountains!"

During the ensuing week, Wesley preached at Colne, Padiham, Bacup, Heptonstall, Ewood, Halifax, and other places; and on Sunday, July 19, thrice at Leeds and Birstal, where he also held a lovefeast, which, marvellously enough, was the first that Birstal had. "Many," says he, "were surprised when I told them, 'The very design of a lovefeast is a free and familiar conversation, in which every man, yea, and

woman, has liberty to speak whatever may be to the glory of God.'"

The next week was spent in preaching in the neighbourhood. At Kippax, he was joined by the Rev. Henry Venn; the Rev. William Romaine read prayers; and Wesley preached on "Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness." On the Sunday following, he preached again at Birstal, where numbers were converted. On July 27, he proceeded to Staincross; and thence to Sheffield. He preached under the hollow of a rock at Matlock Bath; and opened the new octagon chapel at Rotherham, remarking, "Pity our houses, where the ground will admit of it, should be built in any other form." The cost of the Octagon was £235 16*s*. 3½*d*.; the subscriptions amounted to £68 14*s*., of which sum £20 were given by Valentine Radley, a currier.[27] It is said that, while Wesley was preaching the opening sermon, the rabble drove in an ass, which stood in the aisle, lifted up its eyes to the preacher, remained quiet till the sermon was ended, then turned round and leisurely walked away, without making the disturbance that the mob expected.[28] Wesley pronounced the ass the most attentive hearer that he had.

On leaving Rotherham, Wesley made his way to Lincolnshire. At Misterton, he preached twice "to a lifeless, money getting people," in his sharpest manner. Epworth cross again served him as a pulpit. At Gainsborough, he preached in "the old hall to a mixed multitude, part civil, part rude as bears."

At Barrow, the mob was in readiness to receive him with violence, but their hearts failed them, and they only gave a few huzzas. At Horncastle, they "threatened terrible things," but contented themselves with "a feeble shout," as he was entering the town. At Sibsey "there were a few wild colts." At Boston, which, he says, was nearly as large as Leeds, and far better built, the "congregation was much astonished, not being used to field preacing."

From Boston, he made his way to Norwich, and thence to London, where he arrived on Saturday, August 22, He writes: "I found the work of God swiftly increasing. The congregations, in every place, were larger than they had been for several years. Many were, from day to day, convinced of sin. Many found peace with God. Many backsliders were healed. And many believers entered into such a rest, as it had not before entered into their hearts to conceive. Meantime, the enemy was not wanting in his endeavours to sow tares among the good seed. I saw this clearly, but durst not use violence, lest, in plucking up the tares, I should root up the wheat also."

This brings us to an important epoch in Wesley's history; but, before adverting to it further, a few extracts from his letters must be given.

The first was addressed to one of his oldest itinerants, Alexander Coates, who died in 1765. Mr. Coates was puzzled with the rumours concerning the doctrine of Christian perfection. Wesley, after explaining what he meant by the doctrine, proceeds in the following, characteristic style.

"OTLEY, *July* 7, 1761.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—. . . This way of talking is highly offensive. I advise you—1. If you are willing to labour with us, preach no doctrine contrary to ours. I have preached twenty years in some of Mr. Whitefield's societies; yet, to this day, I never contradicted him among his own people. I did not think it honest, neither necessary at all. I could preach salvation by faith, and leave all controversy untouched. I advise you—2. Avoid all those strong, rhetorical exclamations, 'O horrid O dreadful!' and the like; unless when you are strongly exhorting sinners to renounce the devil and all his works. 3. Acquaint yourself better with the doctrine we preach, and you will find it not dreadful, but altogether lovely. 4. Observe that, if forty persons think and speak wrong, either about justification or sanctification (and perhaps fancy they have attained both), this is no objection to the doctrines themselves. They must bear their own burden; but this does not at all affect the point in question. 5. Remember, as sure as you are that 'believers cannot fall from grace,' others are equally sure they can; and you are as much obliged to bear with them as they are to bear with you. 6. Abstain from all controversy in public. Indeed, you have not a talent for it. You have an honest heart, but not a clear head; practical religion is your point. Therefore—7. Keep to this: repentance toward God, faith in Christ, holiness of heart and life, a growing in grace and in the knowledge of Christ, the continual need of His atoning blood, a constant confidence in Him, and all these every moment

to our life's end. In none of these will any of our preachers contradict you, or you them.

"When you leave this plain path, and get into controversy, then you think you 'invade the glories of our adorable King, and the unspeakable rights, and privileges, and comforts of His children'; and can they then 'tamely hold their peace?' O Sander, know the value of peace and love!

"I am, your affectionate brother,

"JOHN WESLEY."[29]

The following was addressed to Mr. Ebenezer Blackwell, and refers to his clerical friends, and his difficulties with respect to them.

"BRADFORD, *July* 16, 1761.

"DEAR SIR,—Mr. Venn was so kind as to come over hither yesterday, and spend the evening with us. I am a little embarrassed on his account, and hardly know how to act. Several years before he came to Huddersfield, some of our preachers went thither, carrying their lives in their hands, and, with great difficulty, established a little, earnest society. These eagerly desire them to preach there still; not in opposition to Mr. Venn, (whom they love, esteem, and constantly attend,) but to supply what they do not find in his preaching. It is a tender point. Where there is a gospel ministry already, we do not desire to preach; but whether we can leave off preaching because such an one comes after, is another

question; especially, when those, who were awakened and convinced by us, beg and require the continuance of our assistance. I love peace, and follow it; but whether I am at liberty to purchase it at such a price, I really cannot tell.

"I hear poor Mr. Walker is near death. It seems strange that, when there is so great a want of faithful labourers, such as he should be removed: but the will of God is always best; and what He does, we shall know hereafter! I have been, for some days, with Mr. Grimshaw, an Israelite indeed. A few such as he would make a nation tremble. He carries fire wherever he goes. Mr. Venn informs me, that Mr. Whitefield continues very weak. I was in hope, when he wrote to me lately, that he was swiftly recovering strength. What need have we, while we do live, to live in earnest!

"I am, dear sir, your affectionate servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."[30]

In another letter, written a month later, Wesley refers again to the Huddersfield difficulty as follows.

"NORWICH, *August* 15, 1761.

"DEAR SIR,—Mr. Venn and I have had some hours' conversation together, and have explained upon every article. I believe there is no bone of contention remaining; no matter of offence, great or small. Indeed, fresh matter will arise, if it be sought; but it shall not be sought by me. We have amicably compromised the

affair of preaching. He is well pleased, that the preachers should come once a month.

"I am, etc.,

"JOHN WESLEY."[31]

This was an important precedent; and an additional indication that, even under the most favourable circumstances, it was impossible to absorb Methodism in the Established Church. If such was Wesley's difficulty, in the case of Mr. Venn and Huddersfield Methodism in 1761, who can doubt what would have been Wesley's answer to the advocates of absorption, or amalgamation, in 1870?

On September 1, Wesley met his conference, in London. Three days alter it ended, John Manners wrote as follows to Mr. Merryweather, of Yarm.

"LONDON, *September* 9, 1761.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—At present, there is the most glorious work in London I have ever seen. Many scores praise God from Monday morning till Saturday night. Their words and prayers are full of faith and fire. 'We have had the most satisfactory and solemn conference that has been held for several years. It was honoured with the presence of Mr. Whitefield and other clergy several times. The minutes you may see with Tommy Johnson, the assistant of your circuit.

"I am, yours, etc.,

"J. MANNERS."[32]

Strangely enough Charles Wesley was not present. Hence the following, addressed to him, two days after the conference closed.

"LONDON, *September* 8, 1761.

"DEAR BROTHER,—Our conference ended, as it began, in peace and love. All found it a blessed time:

'Excepto, quod non simul esses, caetera laeti.'

"The minutes John Jones can help you to, who sets out hence in two or three days. The right hand of the Lord bringeth mighty things to pass.

"I do not at all think, (to tell you a secret,) that the work will ever be destroyed, Church or no Church. What has been done to prevent the Methodists leaving the Church, you will see in the minutes of the conference. I told you before, with regard to Norwich, *Dixi.* I have done, at the last conference, all I can or dare do. Allow me liberty of conscience, as I allow you. My love to Sally. Adieu!

"JOHN WESLEY."[33]

Unfortunately, the minutes of 1761 have not been found; but it is evident, that separation from the Church was still a debated question.

Another matter was also probably discussed. The doctrine of entire sanctification, attainable in an instant, by the

exercise of faith, was now agitating Methodism throughout the country. Twelve months before this, sixteen, out of the 2350 members composing the London society, professed to have attained to this state of grace; and these had now increased to thirty. There were also not a few at Otley, in Yorkshire, who declared themselves to the same effect. In fact, Otley was the place where the perfection movement had its origin. "Here," says Wesley, *"began* that glorious work of sanctification, which had been nearly at a stand for twenty years; but which now, from time to time, spread first through various parts of Yorkshire, afterwards in London, then through most parts of England, next through Dublin, Limerick, and all the south and west of Ireland. And wherever the work of sanctification increased, the whole work of God increased, in all its branches."[34]

In this respect, Otley will always be famed in Methodistic annals. Wesley heard of its sanctified Methodists; and, in 1760, he went to visit and to examine them, one by one. The testimony of some of them he doubted; but concerning a large majority, he writes: "Unless they told wilful and deliberate lies, it was plain—(1) That they felt no inward sin; and, to the best of their knowledge, committed no outward sin. (2) That they saw and loved God every moment; and prayed, rejoiced, and gave thanks evermore. (3) That they had constantly as clear a witness from God of sanctification as they had of justification." Wesley adds: "In this, I do rejoice, and will rejoice, call it what you please. I would to God, thousands had experienced thus much; let them afterwards experience as much more as God pleases."

This was an important, and, in some respects, a novel movement. Wesley had held the doctrine of Christian perfection ever since the year 1733, when he preached his sermon on the circumcision of the heart; but now, for the first time, he found people professing to experience and practise it. Yea more, they professed to have attained to this state of purity in a moment, and by simple faith.[35] No wonder Wesley was excited, and that, besides examining the Otley Methodists, he now began to sift those in London. Once a week, he met about thirty, who, to use his own expression, "had experienced a deep work of God"; and says concerning them: "Whether they are saved from sin or no, they are certainly full of faith and love, and peculiarly helpful to my soul." On March 6, he writes: "I met again with those who believe God has delivered them from the root of bitterness. Their number increases daily. I know not if fifteen or sixteen have not received the blessing this week."

Wesley himself had not received it; and it is an important fact that, so far as there is evidence to show, to the day of his death, he never made the same profession as hundreds of his people did. He preached the doctrine most explicitly and strongly, especially after the period of which we are writing; but where is the proof that he professed to experience it? All the way, in his long northern journey, he was evidently anxious to hear what those who were entirely sanctified had to say. He also sought information by epistolary correspondence. He conversed with Grimshaw and his preachers. This, in some respects, was a new fact in Methodism; and, by prayerfully sifting evidence, he was

extremely desirous to satisfy himself concerning it. At Newcastle and in the neighbourhood, he inquired how it was that there were "so few witnesses of full salvation;" and says, "I constantly received one and the same answer: 'We see now, we sought it by our works; we thought it was to come gradually; we never expected it to come in a moment, by simple faith, in the very same manner as we received justification.'"[36]

We have said, that Wesley himself did not profess to have attained to this state of grace; and hence the following extract from a letter addressed to him by Miss B——, one of his favourite correspondents, and bearing date "April 17, 1761."

> "Do *you* seem to be a great way off? You are not out of God's reach; not farther from being healed than the man covered with leprosy was, the moment before Christ said, 'I will; be thou clean.' Jesus heals *all* diseases as well as *one.* He does not expect you to bring Him *fruit* in order to fetch the *root.* All you want, He will give with a new heart; all He asks of you is, to *claim your right.* Do you seek a sacrifice beside? Oh, He is all-sufficient! He has paid the full debt for both actual and original sin. By His stripes you are healed. Why should you be without the blessing any longer? It is His will that, from the time you read this, you should never sin against Him any more. Now believe, and His blood shall so flow over your soul, that no spot shall be found there. He will keep your heart, as with a garrison, that it shall never open to anything but His love. There

needs but one grain of faith, and the mountain shall be removed. All you say of wanting desire and earnestness, I can still say, with regard to a farther blessing,—that constant uninterrupted intercourse with God, of which Lopez speaks, when he says that, for thirty-six years, he had never discontinued one moment, making an act of love with all his strength. For want of this, I do not keep quite clear of idle reasonings. I never had a clear *abiding* witness, that I was saved from sin; but I feel my soul hangs on Jesus, and I do believe He will keep me for ever. My peace is more solid than it was at first, and my soul seems more sunk into God. But what I judge more by, is the change I feel; my one desire is to do His will: and I feel nothing but love to every creature, let them use me well or ill. Oh pray for me, and stir up all you can, to seek all my Saviour has to give."[37]

This extract is given, not because it contains no unjustifiable expressions, but because it establishes the fact already mentioned, and because it is a fair specimen of the loose language which came into use at this important juncture. It was addressed to Wesley, and was published by him in one of his earliest magazines, in which he also inserts a large number of other letters, on the same subject, received by him at and about the period of which we are now writing. The following are extracts taken from the correspondence, dated 1761.

"M. W." writes to him:

"The Lord has graciously given me a clean heart; and I hope to use it in His service. I find I speak less than I did, and what I do speak I know is according to the will of God. Mr. Edward Perronet questioned me much yesterday. I simply answered him; and he, at last, prayed that he might feel what we enjoyed. Before you left town, I was agonizing with excess of desire to love God alone. I knew the power was ready, whenever I asked for it in faith. I found it was like throwing myself into a rapid stream, where I must swim or perish. The Lord gave me faith, and a sweet serenity. Prayer is sweet. I would not accept the empire of the world, to keep me from that food of immortal souls."

"Mr. J. C. M." writes:

"From the time Jesus cleansed my heart from sin, I was ever happy in His love; though, at times, I was much tempted. Satan did, indeed, sift me as wheat; but he gained no advantage over me. His chief temptation was, to deny the work of God; not to believe I was sealed with His Spirit. I cried earnestly to the Lord, that, if it was not done yet, He would do it; and, on Easter Monday, at chapel, I found I had access unto the Father through the Son; and He showed me, He had made with *me* an everlasting covenant. I then knew, my soul was *sealed* in heaven with the blood of Jesus. I could say, 'I am the Lamb's wife'; and was answered, 'the spotless bride.' From this time, I never found a doubt that God had taken away the root of sin; but yet, as the light

shined clearer, I saw many things lacking in my soul. I wanted to have my whole *mind,* and to have all my *thoughts* fixed on God. Above all, I wanted to live every moment in a spirit of sacrifice. My peace increased; but I found Satan had power to inject wandering thoughts, and thereby cloud my understanding, so that I could not clearly discern the state of my soul. On April 30, for near two hours, my cry was, 'Let my whole *mind* be fixed on Thee!' I trust to Thy faithfulness, to keep my *mind,* as Thou hast kept my *heart.* I *will* believe, and according to my faith it shall be unto me.' At first indeed, this faith was weak; but it grew stronger and stronger. The next day Satan assaulted me on every side, to draw my *mind* from God; but I am enabled to stand on my watchtower, and to keep the eye of my soul continually fixed on the Lamb of God."

Another correspondent, who professed entire sanctification, was questioned by Wesley concerning *wandering* thoughts, and answered:

"Useless, unedifying thoughts pass through, though they do not lodge in, my *mind.* Therefore, I judge I have not received the blessing which others have; but I have a clear witness, that my *heart* never departs from God, and am enabled to discern, that I do offer unto the Lord an uninterrupted act of love. Still, I live too much *without,* not enough *within.* My life is not sufficiently a hidden life. I *would* find, in the whole creation, nothing but God and my own soul."

Another says:

"In the latter end of February, my wife wrote me concerning the work God was doing in London; adding, that one of my acquaintance had gotten a *clean heart.* I started when I read that word; but I hastened home. My soul thirsted for God, and most of the day was spent in prayer. I called God *my Father;* and knew He *could* save me *now.* Meantime, Satan was ready to tear me in pieces, till I cried vehemently, 'Lord! wouldst Thou have me believe Thee?' As soon as I spoke, He answered, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' My soul fell upon Him; I *did* believe, and peace sprung up like a river in my soul. I cannot tell you, what a glorious liberty I was now brought into. I hung upon Him, and loved Him with all my heart. Since then, my heart has been continually burning with love to God and all mankind. I laid at His feet, and loathed myself. He talked with me all the day long. I found Him building up the ruined places, and making my soul as a watered garden. After a while, however, I found my *mind wandering* as I walked in the street. I told brother Biggs of it. He said, 'You want to have your *mind* stayed upon God, as well as your affections.' I saw the thing clearly. It was not long before some of our brethren spoke of having received this blessing. I clearly saw, that I did love God with all my *heart;* but that this was wanting still, that *every thought should be brought into subjection to the obedience of Christ.* This I expected to receive at the Lord's table, but did not. Then, I prayed

the Lord to show me the hindrance. And He *did* show me; I had been seeking it, as it were, by the works of the law. I then pleaded the blood of Jesus Christ, and cast myself upon Him, believing. And I felt His power delivering me, I think, more clearly than when He took the root of bitterness out of my heart. The deadness to all things, which I have found since then, is more than I can express."

Hannah Harrison gives an account of obtaining this entire freedom from sin; but adds:

"For some time, all the evidence I could produce arose from the nature of the change. I found the want of a clear and *direct* witness. This I received about February 1759; and this I have never lost, but can acknowledge, to the glory of God, that it is as clear now as at the first. I know not how to describe the difference between the witness and the work itself; but this I know; many, in whom we believe the work is wrought, are often in doubt concerning it; whereas, the testimony of the Spirit enables the soul to rise superior to those doubtful disputations, which sometimes hinder the progress of those who are really saved from sin. I neither have, nor desire to have a witness, that 'sin will never enter more;' for my everlasting life depends upon patiently continuing in well doing. I feel great love to Jesus Christ; but when I think of God the Father, I can find nothing but boundless inconceivables. Many unnecessary things are presented to my imagination;

but, as soon as they appear to be such, I can as easily dismiss them as I can move my hand. 'Tis long since I had the shadow of a doubt of my final acceptance with God; but yet, I cannot say, that I am sealed to the day of redemption. Though I am possessed of every natural passion, it is long since I felt a desire, inordinate either in kind or degree."

John Fox testified that he "knew he was saved from sin, and loved God with all his *heart;* yet his *mind* was not always stayed upon Him. But he saw, that this, as well as the former blessing, was to be received by simple faith. From this time, he continually prayed for an increase of faith; and it was not long before his soul was brought as into the immediate presence of God, who, from that hour, did every moment keep his *heart* and his *mind* also."

Daniel Carney said:

"Mr. M—— spoke some time since, concerning the necessity of watching over the wandering of the eye and ear. This struck me exceedingly; for I remembered how often, when I was happy in God, my eye was nevertheless wandering, to look at my child, or something else that did not profit. I cried mightily to be delivered from this; and one morning pleaded that promise, 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee.' I said, 'Why not now Lord?' Thou canst give it me *now!'* Immediately it was to me

according to my faith. I have found no wanderings since."

Carney adds:

> "Brother Biggs and Calvert received the same blessing about the same time. This morning, Sarah Guildford, and another of our brethren, testified the same thing. And they all declare, this is as different from what they received before, as that is from justification."

These testimonies might be multiplied; but enough has been adduced, to show that great excitement existed. All agreed that the *second* blessing, as it was often termed, was to be obtained by simple faith; but, on other matters, there was much confusion. Some speak of a *direct witness* of entire sanctification; others speak of persons entirely sanctified who were without such witness. Some speak not only of a *second,* but a *third blessing;* not only of the sanctification of the *heart,* but of the *mind;* and speak of them as distinct acts, experienced at different times, though both obtained by faith.

Wesley was a student of the Bible. He drew his theology from that; but he was always anxious to have his theology confirmed by the experience of Christians. For this purpose, when he, in 1738, embraced the doctrine of justification by faith only, he went to Herrnhuth to make himself acquainted with the views and feelings of the people in that Moravian settlement; and now, in 1761, when the doctrine of entire

sanctification from sin, attainable in an instant, by simple faith, was becoming popular among the Methodists, he not only weighed the doctrine in the balances of holy Scripture, but did his utmost to ascertain what those who professed to experience it had to say concerning it. There was much to be disapproved; but there was also much to be encouraged. In the midst of the agitation, Wesley wrote, "Otley, July 7, 1761:"

> "The perfection I teach, is perfect love; loving God with all the heart: receiving Christ as Prophet, Priest, and King, to reign alone over all our thoughts, words, and actions. The papists neither teach nor believe this; give even the devil his due. They *teach* there is no perfection here, which is not consistent with *venial* sins; and among venial sins they commonly reckon fornication. Now this is so far from the perfection I teach, that it does not come up to any but Mr. Relly's perfection. To say, Christ will not reign alone in our hearts, *in this life*, will not enable us to give Him *all* our hearts. This, in my judgment, is making Him *half* a Saviour; He can be no more, if He does not *quite save* us from our sins."[38]

In another letter, dated "December 26, 1761," he says:

> "I know many who love God with all their heart, mind, soul, and strength. He is their one desire, their one delight, and they are continually happy in Him. They love their neighbour as themselves. They feel as sincere, fervent, constant a desire for the happiness of

every man, good or bad, friend or enemy, as for their own. They rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks. Their souls are continually streaming up to God in holy joy, prayer, and praise. This is plain, sound, scriptural experience. And of this we have more and more living witnesses.

"But these souls dwell in a shattered, corruptible body, and are so pressed down thereby, that they cannot *exert* their love as they would, by always thinking, speaking, and acting *precisely right.* For want of better bodily organs, they sometimes inevitably think, speak, or act wrong. Yet, I think, they need the advocacy of Christ, even for these involuntary defects; although, they do not imply a defect of *love,* but of *understanding.* However that be, I cannot doubt the fact. They are *all love;* yet they cannot *walk* as they desire. 'But are they *all love* while they grieve the Holy Spirit?' No surely: they are then fallen from their steadfastness; and this they may do even after they are sealed. So that, even to such, strong cautions are needful. After the heart is cleansed from pride, anger, and desire, it may suffer them to re-enter. Therefore, I have long thought, some expressions in the hymns are abundantly too strong; as I cannot perceive any state mentioned in Scripture from which we may not, in a measure at least, fall."[39]

As already stated, much loose language on the subject of entire sanctification was employed; though, for this, Wesley can hardly be held responsible. Still it gave offence, and

created disquietude. Grimshaw wrote to Wesley a letter, dated "July 23, 1761," complaining, that even some of the preachers had said: "He is a child of the devil, who disbelieves the doctrine of sinless perfection; and he is no true Christian, who has not attained to it." Grimshaw adds:

> "Brother Lee declared, (and I could not but believe him,) that you did, and would utterly reject any such expressions. *Sinless* perfection is a grating term to many of our dear brethren; even to those who are as desirous to be holy in heart and life, as any perhaps of them who affect to speak in this unscriptural way. Should we not discountenance the use of it, and advise its votaries to exchange it for terms less offensive, but sufficiently expressive of true Christian holiness? By this, I mean all that holiness of heart and life, which is literally, plainly, abundantly taught us all over the Bible; and without which no man, however justified through faith in the righteousness of Christ, can ever expect to see the Lord. This is that holiness, that Christian perfection, that sanctification, which without affecting strange, fulsome, offensive, unscriptural expressions, I ardently desire and strenuously labour to attain. This is attainable: for this let us contend; to this let us diligently exhort and excite all our brethren daily; and this the more as we see the day—the happy, the glorious day—approaching."[40]

Wesley acted upon Grimshaw's hint; and, before the conference in London broke up, preached from the text, "In many things we offend all;" from which he took occasion to

observe—(1) That, as long as the soul is connected with the body, it cannot think but by the help of bodily organs. (2) As long as these organs are imperfect, we shall be liable to *mistakes,* both speculative and *practical.* (3) For all these we need the atoning blood, as indeed for every defect or omission. Therefore, (4) All men have need to say daily, *forgive us our trespasses.*[41]

About the same time, he preached and published his sermon on "Wandering Thoughts," in which he lays it down, that every man, either in sleep, or from some other cause, is, more or less, innocently delirious every four-and-twenty hours; and that the only "wandering thoughts," which are sinful, and from which we should pray to be delivered, are—(1) All those thoughts which wander from God, and leave Him no room in the mind; (2) all which spring from sinful tempers; (3) all which produce or feed sinful tempers. In summing up the whole, he writes: "To expect deliverance from wandering thoughts, occasioned by evil spirits, is to expect that the devil should die or fall asleep. To expect deliverance from those which are occasioned by other men, is to expect, either that men should cease from the earth, or that we should be absolutely secluded from them. And to pray for deliverance from those which are occasioned by the body, is, in effect, to pray that we may leave the body."

The sermon is well worth reading; and, at the time, was of the utmost importance, in checking the fanaticism of the London Methodists respecting what they called the sanctification of the *mind.*

Conference being ended, Wesley "spent a fortnight more in London, guarding both the preachers and people against running into extremes on the one hand or the other"; and then, on Sunday, September 20, set off, by coach, to Bristol, where he employed the next six weeks. "Here likewise," he writes, "I had the satisfaction to observe a considerable increase in the work of God. The congregations were exceeding large, and the people hungering and thirsting after righteousness; and every day afforded us fresh instances of persons convinced of sin, or converted to God. Indeed, God was pleased to pour out His Spirit this year, on every part both of England and Ireland; perhaps, in a manner we had never seen before; certainly not for twenty years. Oh what pity, that so many even of the children of God did not know the day of their visitation!"

At Kingswood the society, which had been much diminished, had now again nearly three hundred members, "many of whom," says he, "were now athirst for full redemption, which for some years they had almost forgotten." He desired all in Bristol and its neighbourhood, who believed themselves to be entirely sanctified, to meet him. About eighteen responded. He says, "I examined them severally, as exactly as I could; and I could not find anything in their tempers (supposing they spoke true) any way contrary to their profession."

On October 31, Wesley returned to London, and immediately began a course of sermons on Christian perfection. On November 23 he went to Canterbury, where he

found many with "a deeper work of God in their heart than they ever had before." On Sunday, November 29, he writes: "We had a lovefeast in London, at which several declared the blessings they had found lately. We need not be careful by what name to call them, while the thing is beyond dispute. Many have, and many do daily, experience an unspeakable change. After being deeply convinced of inbred sin, particularly of pride, self will, and unbelief, in a moment, they feel all faith and love; no pride, no self will, or anger; and, from that moment, they have continual fellowship with God, always rejoicing, praying, and giving thanks. Whoever ascribes such a change to the devil, I ascribe it to the Spirit of God."

With the exception of a brief visit to Colchester, the remainder of the year was spent in London, part of the time being occupied in writing "Farther Thoughts on Christian Perfection," and part in removing misunderstandings fomented by Thomas Maxfield and others, which will have to be more fully noticed in ensuing pages.

The following letter to Charles Wesley, who was out of health, is full of interest.

"LONDON, *December* 26, 1761.

"DEAR BROTHER,—Spend as many hours in the congregation as you can; but exercise alone will strengthen your lungs; or electrifying, which I wonder you did not try long ago. Never start at its being a quack medicine. I desire no other; particularly since I was so

nearly murdered by being cured of my ague *secundum artem.* You should always write standing and sloping.

"We are always in danger of enthusiasm; but I think no more now than any time these twenty years. The word of God runs indeed, and loving faith spreads on every side. Do not take my word, or any one else's; but come and see. It is good to be in London now.

"It is impossible for me to correct my own books. I sometimes think it strange, that I have not one preacher that will and can. I think every one of them owes me so much service.

"Pray tell R. Sheen, I am hugely displeased at his reprinting the Nativity Hymns, and omitting the very best hymn in the collection,—'All glory to God in the sky,' etc.

"I beg they may never more be printed without it. Omit one or two, and I will thank you. They are namby-pambical. I wish you would give us two or three invitatory hymns; we want such exceedingly. My love to Sally. My wife gains ground. Adieu!

"JOHN WESLEY."[42]

This was an eventful year. Charles Wesley was ill, and out of town. Wesley was most of the time employed in visiting country societies. London was left in the hands of inexperienced and enthusiastic guides; and a great work of

God was injured by the fanaticism of well meaning but weak minded people. But more of this anon.

The year began with an attack, in the *London Magazine*, on the Methodist doctrine of assurance, the writer taking upon himself to say, that "the Methodists insist, that they themselves are sure of salvation; but that all others are outcasts from God's favour, and in a damnable state."[43] In other articles, in the same periodical, Wesley was branded as "an enemy to religion, and a deceiver of the people;" "an enthusiast, a very great enthusiast;" with no more "knowledge of and esteem for the holy Scriptures than a Mahommedan."[44] It is affirmed, that one of Wesley's preachers, "who instructed the good people of England, at or near Rye, in Sussex, was known to be a popish priest, by a gentleman, who was no stranger to his person and functions in foreign parts." The writer continues: "the Methodists may with as much reason be considered good sons of the Church, as an unruly boy that runs away from his parents may be deemed a dutiful, obedient child. I can consider them only as spies, deserters, and incendiaries. Was I to form a judgment of Christ's disciples by your followers, very just would be the sarcasm of Zosimus on Christianity, 'That it was only a sanctuary for villains.'"[45] In fact, "Methodism was a spurious mixture of enthusiasm and blasphemy, popery and quakerism."[46]

Wesley replied to this anonymous scribbler, in a characteristic letter, dated "February 17, 1761," and addressed "to Mr. G. R., *alias* R. A., *alias* M. K., *alias* R. W." He

writes: "As you are stout, be merciful; or I shall never be able to stand it. Four attacks in one month! and pushed so home! Well, I must defend myself as I can." And defend himself he did, most trenchantly.[47]

Another writer described the Methodists as "a race of men, which seemed to bear a near resemblance to the new species of rats. They were amphibious creatures, between the church and the conventicle, as those animals are between land and water. They made settlements in every part of the country, and devoured the fruits of the earth; they drew the simple folk from that necessary business, which God and nature designed them for, to the great loss, if not total ruin, of their families; and they filled men's heads with doubts and fears, and emptied their pockets of their money."[48]

Further attacks were made in *Lloyd's Evening Post,* and in other periodicals, but of a more moderate and courteous character; with the exception of an infamous article in St. *James's Chronicle,* in which Whitefield is ridiculed, in a long, lying piece, entitled "Similes, Metaphors, and Familiar Allusions made use of by Dr. Squintum." There was likewise published a scandalous pamphlet of thirty-two pages, bearing the title of "A Journal of the Travels of Nathaniel Snip, a Methodist Teacher of the Word; containing an account of the marvellous adventures which befel him on his way from the town of Kingston upon Hull to the city of York." Another production was an octavo pamphlet, of forty-three pages, entitled, "An Address to the Right Honourable ——; with several Letters to the D—— of —— from the L——. In

vindication of her conduct on being charged with Methodism." In this high sounding piece of preposterous pretentiousness, Methodist preachers are described as men who "think their *assurance* to be the *gift*, and their *nonsense* to be the *dictates*, of the Holy Ghost." They are like some of the "designing men" mentioned by Tillotson, who "recommend themselves to the ignorant, by talking against reason, just as nurses endear themselves to children by noise and nonsense."

The most respectable onslaught, in 1761, was in two sermons, preached before the university of Oxford, at St. Mary's, on Act Sunday, July 12, by Dr. Hitchcock, fellow of St. John's college, and one of the preachers at his majesty's chapel at Whitehall; and on July 19, by the Rev. John Allen, M.A., vice principal of St. Mary Magdalene hall." Dr. Hitchcock's sermon was entitled, "The mutual Connection between Faith, Virtue, and Knowledge," and was published at the request of the vice chancellor, and the heads of houses; Mr. Allen's bore the title of "No Acceptance with God by Faith only," and was published at the request of the vice chancellor alone. There can be little doubt, that this was a concerted movement, and was intended to be an unanswerable refutation of Wesley's heresies. Of course, such men were not likely to employ the coarse abuse which newspapers and magazines were wont to cast upon the Methodists; but even here, in St. Mary's, before the university of Oxford, where Methodism had its rise, and after it had existed and triumphed for more than twenty years, Dr. Hitchcock coolly told the vice chancellor, the heads of houses, and his illustrious

congregation, that the Methodists were men of "no knowledge"; that they were building "up a church upon enthusiasm, rhapsody, and nonsense"; and Mr. Allen "willingly undertook" to refute "the leading tenet of modern enthusiasm by proving the following proposition, That faith, in its highest degree, when alone, or distinct from other virtues, is so far from saving or justifying any person, that it doth not *necessarily produce* good works."

Wesley himself was too busy, in 1761, to write and publish much. His productions were the following.

1. "A Plain Account of Genuine Christianity." 12mo, 12 pages. This was simply a reprint of the conclusion of Wesley's letter to Dr. Middleton, published in 1749. Wesley's description of a Christian, and of Christian faith, in this little tract, deserves the reader's best attention.

2. "An Extract of the Rev. Mr. John Wesley's Journal, from February 16, 1755, to June 16, 1758." 12mo, 146 pages.

3. "Select Hymns: with Tunes Annexed: designed chiefly for the Use of the People called Methodists." 12mo, 139 pages. Would that the Methodists of the present day would sing the tunes furnished by their founder, instead of leaving choirs to repeat, parrot like, the inane noises now too generally attached to Charles Wesley's glorious and glowing hymns, and which, by a monstrous perversion of truth, taste, and language, are considered sacred music of pure and classic type. We are weary of such singing in Methodist chapels, and

most deeply deplore the day when, by some mistaken theoriser, it was introduced. It is devouring the very vitals of Methodistic worship, and no more harmonizes with the Wesley hymns than an automatic scarecrow with a breathing, living man.

Musicians, in Wesley's day, were as self conceited and as obstinate as musicians now. In the preface to his Tunes Annexed, he tells us:

> "I have been endeavouring, for more than twenty years, to procure such a book as this; but in vain. Masters of music were above following any direction but their own; and I was determined, whoever compiled this should follow *my* direction: not *mending* our tunes, but setting them down, neither better nor worse than they were. At length, I have prevailed. The following collection contains all the tunes which are in *common use* among us. They are pricked *true*, exactly as I desire all our congregations may sing them; and here is prefixed to them a collection of those hymns which are, I think, some of *the best* we have published. The *volume* likewise is *small*, as well as the *price*. This, therefore, I recommend, preferable to all others."

Appended to the tunes are Wesley's well known directions concerning singing, which it would be well if all his societies would follow. Wesley himself was full of music, and to this, in great part, may be attributed the glorious singing of the

early Methodists. With such a leader, and with their hearts full of the love of God, it is not surprising that their service of praise has become proverbial. They sang with the spirit, and with the understanding also.

It may be added here, once for all, that Wesley's book of music, with some variations and improvements, was republished in several succeeding years, with the altered titles of "Sacred Melody; or, a Choice Collection of Psalm and Hymn Tunes"; and "Sacred Harmony: or, a Choice Collection of Psalm and Hymn Tunes, in two or three Parts—for the Voice, Harpsichord, and Organ." These editions are now before us; but further description is unnecessary.

ENDNOTES

[1] *Methodist Magazine,* 1806, p. 518.

[2] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 329.

[3] This wretched man, in 1761, published a silly octavo two-shilling pamphlet, entitled, "Union: or, a Treatise of the Consanguinity and Affinity between Christ and His Church." The *Monthly Review* of that period, p. 87, observes:—"The author says he is quite *above uncertainly,* in respect of the matter and scope of his treatise; but freely owns his defects as a writer,—which are, indeed, so many and so great, that he does not even 'pretend to the abilities of *falliable* authors.' However, if some 'busy critic, whose genius leads him ever in search of offal, or the *pidling* pedant, who feeds on garbage,' should pretend to detect in his book, not only bad grammar (of which there is plenty), but inaccuracies in phrase and errors in judgment, yet, he says, he has 'an *infalliable* remedy in silence.'" Other particulars of this mischievous antinomian could easily be given; but suffice it to add that, in 1764, a case came before the lord chancellor, in Lincoln's Inn, in which a Yorkshire lady was plaintiff, and James Relly and others were defendants. The allegations of the plaintiff were—(1) that Relly had fraudulently obtained from her, while she was labouring under a fit of enthusiastic frenzy, a deed securing to him an annuity of £5 per annum for his life, without giving to her any valuable consideration; and (2) that, in addition to this deed, Relly had received from her a considerable sum of money, under the like circumstance. The hall, at the hearing of the case, was crowded; and the

decision of the court, which gave great satisfaction, was that the deed be cancelled, and the money be refunded. (*London Magazine*, 1764, p. 654.)

[4] *Methodist Magazine*, 1780, p. 670.

[5] At this period, the Rev. Henry Venn had recently removed from Clapham to Huddersfield, where his church became crowded to such an extent, that many were not able to procure admission. His irregularities were such as the following. He would often address the congregation from the desk, briefly explaining and enforcing the psalms and the lessons. He would frequently *begin* the service with a solemn, extemporised exhortation. Instead of reading his sermons, he only used short notes. He statedly visited, on the week days, the different hamlets in his extensive parish, and held service in private houses. (Venn's Life, p. 26.)

[6] *Methodist Magazine*, 1780, p. 672.

[7] *Methodist Magazine*, 1781, p. 219.

[8] Ibid. 1781, p. 143.

[9] *Methodist Magazine*, 1846, p. 1188.

[10] *Methodist Magazine*, 1781, p. 142.

[11] Ibid. 1827, p. 428.

[12] "History of Methodism in Darlington," p. 17.

[13] Private manuscripts, and Wilson's "Dissenting Churches."

[14] Dixon's "Methodism in America," p. 75.

[15] Atmore's "Methodist Memorial."

[16] Jacob Rowell's manuscripts. The following are some of the entries in Yarm society book, for 1761:—"Mr. Fugill's and Mr. Wesley's charges, 13*s*. 8*d*. Paid the lad for dressing the horses, 1*s*. 6*d*. Half a pound of *lickrish* for Mr. Megget's

horse, 6*d*. A pound and a half of candles, 9*d*. Preacher's watch mending, 2*s*. 3*d*. *Lousing* a letter, 4*d*."

[17] "History of Methodism in Darlington."

[18] *Methodist Magazine,* 1808, p. 88.

[19] Ibid. 1810, p. 216.

[20] Memoir of Cussons, p. 6.

[21] Manuscript.

[22] *Methodist Magazine,* 1826, p. 595.

[23] An idea of the low state of Methodism at York may be formed from a fact, stated in the old society book, namely, that the seat rents of the chapel amounted to only £8 per year; that the monthly collections averaged not more than about 5*s*. 8*d*. each; and the class moneys hardly 6*s*. 6*d*. weekly.

[24] *Methodist Magazine,* 1827, p. 225.

[25] Ibid. 1845, p. 116.

[26] Old newspaper.

[27] Everett's "Methodism in Sheffield."

[28] Manuscript.

[29] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 224. We have before us two unpublished letters, written by Alexander Coates to Wesley, and dated respectively "July 14, 1761," and "September 29, 1761." Both refer to the points which Wesley here mentions; but the letters, though deeply interesting, are too lengthy for insertion. Suffice it to say, that Sandy Coates believed that he would be sanctified just before he had to die; and that, meanwhile, it was his "duty and his privilege to persevere in grace." He confesses, that Wesley's "perfect folk" gave him but little satisfaction, and that he had received tempting offers, both at London and

Leeds, to leave the Methodists; but he had no intention of doing so. Coates, as his letters show, was a good man, with great courage and independency of thought; but though he read several languages, he was without any mental discipline. No doubt, he was serviceable in saving souls; but he was utterly unfit for the professor's chair; and to think of him solving the vexed questions which were now agitating the Methodists was simply ridiculous.

[30] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 177.

[31] Ibid. p. 178.

[32] Manuscript.

[33] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 113.

[34] Wesley's Works, vol. xiii., p. 331.

[35] At the first Methodist conference, in 1744, it was asked, "Is faith the condition, or the instrument, of sanctification?" And it was answered, "It is both the condition and instrument of it. When we begin to believe, then sanctification begins; and as faith increases, holiness increases, till we are created anew."

[36] Wesley's Works, vol. xiii., p. 332.

[37] *Methodist Magazine,* 1781, p. 390.

[38] *Methodist Magazine,* 1783, p. 106.

[39] Ibid. 1782, p. 272.

[40] Whitehead's Life of Wesley, vol. ii., p. 297.

[41] Ibid. p. 298.

[42] Wesley's Works, vol xii., p. 113.

[43] *London Magazine,* 1761, p. 19.

[44] Ibid. p. 36.

[45] Ibid. p. 35.

[46] Ibid. p. 91.

[47] Ibid. p. 91; also Wesley's Works, vol. xiii., p. 371.
[48] *London Magazine*, 1761, p. 356.

1762.

WHITEFIELD and Charles Wesley were still invalids, and, though they preached with more or less frequency, their evangelistic labours, in 1762, were limited when compared with the labours of former years.

Wesley began the year with a grand service, in the chapel at Spitalfields, at which nearly two thousand members of the London society were present. Besides Berridge and Maxfield, he was assisted by Benjamin Colley, a young man, born at Tollerton, near Easingwold, who had recently received episcopal ordination, and was now officiating, as a clergyman, in Methodist chapels. His ministerial gifts were small;[1] but his piety was sincere and earnest. Strangely enough, this young Yorkshire Levite was carried away by the fanatical enthusiasm of Bell and Maxfield (to be noticed shortly), and though he did not live more than half-a-dozen years afterwards, his life was clouded, and not what it might have been.[2]

The remarkable work of sanctification was rapidly spreading throughout the whole of the United Kingdom. Wesley wrote:

> "Many have been convinced of sin, many justified, and many back-sliders healed. But the peculiar work of this season has been, what St. Paul calls 'the perfecting of the saints.' Many persons in London, in Bristol, in York, and in various parts, both of England and Ireland,

have experienced so deep and universal a change, as it had not entered into their hearts to conceive. After a deep conviction of inbred sin, of their total fall from God, they have been so filled with faith and love (and generally in a moment), that sin vanished, and they found, from that time, no pride, anger, desire, or unbelief. They could rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks. Now, whether we call this the destruction or suspension of sin, it is a glorious work of God; such a work as, considering both the depth and extent of it, we never saw in these kingdoms before. It is possible some have been mistaken; and it is certain some have lost what they then received. A few (very few, compared to the whole number) first gave way to enthusiasm, then to pride, next to prejudice and offence, and at last separated from their brethren. But although this laid a huge stumbling block in the way, still the work of God went on. Nor has it ceased to this day in any of its branches. God still convinces, justifies, sanctifies. We have lost only the dross, the enthusiasm, the prejudice, and offence. The pure gold remains, faith working by love, and, we have ground to believe, increases daily."[3]

This was written at the end of 1763. On the last day of 1762, Wesley remarked in his Journal: "I looked back on the past year; a year of uncommon trials and uncommon blessings. Abundance have been convinced of sin; very many have found peace with God; and, in London only, I believe full two hundred have been brought into glorious liberty. And,

yet, I have had more care and trouble in six months, than in several years preceding. What the end will be, I know not; but it is enough that God knoweth."

To understand Wesley's allusions here, we must briefly glance at the history of two of the principal men concerned.

Thomas Maxfield was one of Wesley's first preachers. For more than twenty years, he had acted under Wesley's direction. His origin in Bristol was humble, but he had married a wife with considerable fortune. At Wesley's instigation, a friend had recommended him to Dr. Barnard, bishop of Londonderry, for ordination. The bishop said, "Sir, I ordain you, to assist that good man, that he may not work himself to death."[4] Maxfield thus became one of Wesley's most important preachers; and, perhaps, this was one of the reasons why not a few regarded him with envy. At all events, many censured him; and Wesley "continually and strenuously defended him; thereby offending several of his preachers, and a great number of his people."

As early as 1760, Wesley had appointed Maxfield to meet, every Friday, a sort of select band in London, consisting of Messrs. Biggs, Latlets, Calvert, and Dixon,[5] all of whom professed to be entirely sanctified. Some of these favoured ones soon had dreams, visions, and impressions, as they thought, from God; and Maxfield, instead of repressing their whimsies, encouraged them. Presently, their visions created contempt for those who had them not; and were regarded as proofs of the highest grace. Some of the preachers opposed

these holy visionaries with a considerable amount of roughness. This excited their resentment. They refused to hear their rebukers preach, and followed after Maxfield. Their numbers multiplied; and Maxfield told them, they were not to be taught by man, especially by those who had less grace than themselves. The result was, when Wesley returned to London in October, 1762, he found the society in an uproar, and Maxfield's friends formed into a sort of detached connexion. Enthusiasm, pride, and intense uncharitableness were now the chief characteristics of these high professors. Wesley tenderly reproved them. One of them resented, and cried out, "We will not be browbeaten any longer; we will throw off the mask;" and, accordingly, returned her own and her husband's tickets, saying, "Sir, we will have no more to do with you; Mr. Maxfield is our teacher."

At the conference of 1761, Maxfield had been arraigned, for some misdemeanour not specified; but Wesley spoke in his defence, and silenced his accusers.[6] Still Wesley was in doubt concerning him, and wrote him a long letter, telling him mildly all he heard or feared concerning him. Maxfield resented, and said he had no thought of a separation, and that Wesley was at liberty to call him John or Judas, Moses or Korah, as he pleased. He alleged, that Wesley and his brother contradicted the highest truths; and that almost all who "called themselves ministers of Christ, or preachers of Christ, contended for sin to remain in the heart as long as we live, as though it was the only thing Christ delighted to behold in His members."

George Bell, a native of Barningham, near Barnardcastle, had been a corporal in the Life Guards. He was converted in the year 1758, and pretended to be sanctified in the month of March, 1761. A few days afterwards, he wrote an account of this to Wesley, in a letter tinged with a frenzy, which Wesley was too ready to regard as the breathings of a superior piety.[7] Bell soon developed into a full blown enthusiast, and helped to taint not a few of his Methodist associates. He began to hold meetings of his own, declaring, that God had *done* with all preachings and sacraments, and was to be found nowhere but in the assemblies of himself and his London friends.[8] He diligently propagated the principle, that "none could teach those who are renewed in love, unless they were in the state themselves."[9] His admirers fancied themselves more holy than our first parents, and incapable of falling. They professed to have the gift of healing, and actually attempted to give eyesight to the blind, and to raise the dead.[10] From a misconstrued text in the Revelation, they inferred, that they were to be exempt from death.[11] Wesley writes, on November 24, 1762: "Being determined to hear for myself, I stood where I could hear and see, without being seen. George Bell prayed, in the whole, pretty near an hour. His fervour of spirit I could not but admire. I afterwards told him what I did not admire; namely, (1) his screaming, every now and then, in so strange a manner, that one could scarce tell what he said; (2) his thinking he had the miraculous discernment of spirits; and, (3) his sharply condemning his opposers."

Meanwhile, Wesley and his brother had an interview with Maxfield, and found that, in some things, he had been blamed

without a cause; other things he promised to alter. On November 1, 1762, Wesley sent to Maxfield, Bell, and others, a written statement of what he liked and disliked in their doctrine, spirit, and behaviour. In reference to the first, he says, he liked their "doctrine of perfection or love excluding sin; their insisting that it is merely by faith; that it is instantaneous, though preceded and followed by a gradual work; and, that it may be now, at this instant." But he disliked their "supposing man may be as perfect as an angel; that he can be absolutely perfect; that he can be infallible, or above being tempted; or, that the moment he is pure in heart, he cannot fall from it." He disliked their "depreciating justification, by saying a justified person is not born of God, and that he cannot please God, nor grow in grace." He disliked their doctrine, that a sanctified person needs no self examination, no private prayer; and that he cannot be taught by any one who is not in the same state as himself.

Then, in reference to their *spirit*, he told them, that he liked their confidence in God, and their zeal for the salvation of sinners; but he disliked (1) their appearance of pride, of overvaluing themselves, and undervaluing others; (2) their enthusiasm, namely, overvaluing feelings and impressions, mistaking the mere work of the imagination for the voice of the Spirit, expecting the end without the means, and undervaluing reason, knowledge, and wisdom in general; (3) their antinomianism, in not magnifying the law enough, in not sufficiently valuing tenderness of conscience, and in using faith rather as contradistinguished from holiness than as productive of it; and (4), their littleness of love to their

brethren, their want of union with them, their want of meekness, their impatience of contradiction, their counting every man an enemy who reproved or admonished them in love, their bigotry and narrowness of spirit, and their censoriousness or proneness to think hardly of all who did not agree with them.

As to their outward behaviour, he liked "the general tenour of their life, devoted to God, and spent in doing good"; but he disliked their slighting any of the rules of the society; their appointing meetings which hindered people attending the public preaching; their spending more time in their meetings than many of them could spare from the duties of their calling; the speaking or praying of several of them at once; their praying to the Son of God only, or more than to the Father; their using bold, pompous, magnificent, if not irreverent, expressions in prayer; their extolling themselves rather than God, and telling Him what they were, not what they wanted; their using poor, flat, bald hymns; their never kneeling at prayer, and using postures or gestures highly indecent; their screaming so as to make what they said unintelligible; their affirming people will be justified or sanctified just now, and bidding them say, 'I believe'; and their bitterly condemning all who oppose them, calling them wolves, and pronouncing them hypocrites, or not justified."

This is a mournful picture, especially of people making such high professions. The result was, the London society was thrown into great confusion. Wesley writes: "1762, November 8—I began visiting the classes; in many of which we had hot

spirits to deal with. Some were vehement for, some against, the meetings for prayer, which were in several parts of the town. I said little, being afraid of taking any step which I might afterwards repent of."

The delay in the exercise of discipline was too long. For twelve months, Wesley had seen it necessary to deal with these enthusiasts. At the beginning of 1762, he wrote to his brother: "If Thomas Maxfield continue as he is, it is impossible he should long continue with us. But I live in hope of better things. This week, I have begun to speak my mind concerning five or six honest enthusiasts. But I move only a hair'sbreadth at a time. No sharpness will profit. There is need of a lady's hand, as well as a lion's heart."

We incline to think Wesley used the lady's hand too long, and that the lion's paw would have been far more useful. At length, however, he began to preach on the subject. On December 5, 1762, he endeavoured to show in what sense sanctification is gradual, and in what sense it is instantaneous. A fortnight later, he preached on Christian simplicity, showing that it is not ignorance or folly, nor enthusiasm or credulity; but faith, humility, willingness to be taught, and freedom from evil reasonings. Despite all this, Bell waxed worse and worse; and, on December 26, Wesley desired him to take no further part in the services at West Street, or at the Foundery. "The reproach of Christ," he writes, "I am willing to bear; but not the reproach of enthusiasm, if I can help it." In a manuscript letter, dated "London, January 28, 1763," Sarah Crosby writes:

"There has been much confusion here, The simple brethren keep meeting at various places, brother Bell being their chief speaker. The substance of what they say is, 'Believe, and be simple. Believe all that is in the word of God, and all that is not there,—that is, if anything is revealed to you.' They say they have a great gift in discerning spirits; but others dispute it. Nevertheless, I think they are good folk, and there has been a great outpouring of the Spirit in London these two or three years past."

About the same time, Fletcher of Madeley wrote to Charles Wesley—

"I have a particular regard for Mr. Maxfield and Mr. Bell; both of them are my correspondents. I am strongly prejudiced in favour of the witnesses, and do not willingly receive what is said against them; but allowing that what is reported is one half mere exaggeration, the tenth part of the rest shows that spiritual pride, presumption, arrogance, stubbornness, party spirit, uncharitableness, prophetic mistakes,—in short, every sinew of enthusiasm, is now at work among them. I do not credit any one's bare word; but I ground my sentiments on Bell's own letters."[12]

Bell consummated his fanaticism, by prophesying that the world would be brought to an end on February 28, 1763; and, strange to say, not a few believed him. The evil spread. Wesley preached sermons on the sin of division, and on

judging; but what he said was "turned into poison" by those who needed his admonitions; and one of the friends of Bell remarked: "If the devil had been in the pulpit, he would not have preached such a sermon." Meanwhile, Maxfield was privately promoting disunion, telling the people that Wesley was not capable of teaching them, and insinuating that no one was except himself. Mrs. Coventry came to Wesley, and threw down the tickets of herself, her husband, her daughters, and her servants, declaring that "they would hear two doctrines no longer, and that Mr. Maxfield preached perfection, but Mr. Wesley pulled it down." About a dozen others, including Bell, copied Mrs. Coventry's example. Maxfield, in a huff, removed his meeting of the sanctified from the Foundery, because Wesley instructed his preachers to be present at it, whenever he was not able to be there himself. One of the seceders told Wesley to his face, that he was a hypocrite, and, for that reason, they had resolved to have no further fellowship with him. About thirty, who thought themselves sanctified, had left the society; but there were above four hundred others, who witnessed the same confession, and seemed more united than ever.

Meanwhile, the 28th of February, 1763—George Bell's day of judgment—drew nigh. Wesley denounced the mad corporal's prognostication, in private, in the society meetings, in the pulpit, and, at length, in the public papers. He says that Maxfield was silent on the subject, and that he had reason to think he was a believer in Bell's prophecy; though Maxfield himself afterwards denied that this was true.[13] Be that as it might, a number of Maxfield's followers spent the night at the

house of his most intimate friend, Mr. Biggs, every moment in full expectation of hearing the blast of the archangel's trumpet.

On the day previous to the predicted final catastrophe, Bell and his believers ascended a mound near the site of St. Luke's hospital, to have a last look at the city before its conflagration;[14] but, unfortunately for the mad prophet, two constables, with a warrant, arrested him, and carried him first, before a magistrate in Long Acre, and then before another in Southwark, as it was there, "in an unlicensed meeting-house, that he had often vented his blasphemies." The Borough magistrate committed him to the new prison, there to await the fulfilment of his prediction.[15] "I am sorry," writes Whitefield, "to find that Mr. Bell is taken up. To take no notice would be the best method. A prison or outward punishment is but a poor cure for enthusiasm, or a disordered understanding. It may increase but not extinguish such an *ignis fatuus."*[16]

On the evening of what was to be the world's last day, Wesley preached at Spitalfields, on "Prepare to meet thy God"; and largely showed the utter absurdity of the supposition, that the world was to end as Bell predicted; but, notwithstanding all that he could say, many were afraid to go to bed, and some wandered in the fields, being persuaded that, if the world at large did not become a wreck, at all events an earthquake would engulf London.

Of course, Bell's insane ravings turned out to be a fantastic falsehood; but the injury done to Methodism was serious. A writer, signing himself "Philodemas," sent an abusive letter to *Lloyd's Evening Post*, stating that, on going to a friend's house on the evening of February 28, he found the family in the utmost consternation, because they were momentarily expecting the world to be dissolved; and then he proceeds to denounce Methodism as "the most destructive and dangerous system to government and society that ever was established. Neither good subjects, good servants, nor good wives could reasonably be expected to be found amongst the Methodists. Nursed up in enthusiasm and pretended miracles, attended with the dangerous doctrine of *assuring grace*, they had learned to look upon the rest of their fellow creatures as a set of wretches reserved for vengeance hereafter. There was scarce a street in the metropolis, where the common people lived, but what was infected, more or less, with this heretical system; some boasting their sins were forgiven; some in despair; many raving mad; and others neglecting their necessary occupations for the sake of it, and living in beggary and misery."[17]

Wesley replied to this as follows.

"March 18, 1763.

"SIR,—A pert, empty, self sufficient man, who calls himself 'Philodemas,' made use of your paper, a few days ago, to throw abundance of dirt at the people called Methodists. He takes occasion from the idle prophecy of Mr. Bell, with whom the Methodists have nothing to

do, as he is not, nor has been for some time, a member of their society. Had he advanced anything new, or any particular charge, it would have deserved a particular answer. But, as his letter contains nothing but dull, stale, general slanders, which have been confuted ten times over, it would be abusing the patience of your readers to say any more concerning it.

"I am, sir, your humble servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."[18]

After all, this deplorable outburst of fanaticism, in the London society, was not without good results. It was now, in 1763, that Wesley wrote his important sermon on "Sin in Believers," in which he says: "I cannot, by any means, receive this assertion, that there is no sin in a believer from the moment he is justified; first, because it is contrary to the whole tenour of Scripture; secondly, because it is contrary to the experience of the children of God; thirdly, because it is absolutely new, never heard of in the world till yesterday, when those under the direction of the late Count Zinzendorf preached it; and lastly, because it is naturally attended with the most fatal consequences; not only grieving those whom God hath not grieved, but perhaps dragging them into everlasting perdition."

It was now also, that Wesley published his "Cautions and Directions given to the greatest Professors in the Methodist societies;" which, in brief, were as follows: 1. Watch and pray continually against pride. 2. Beware of enthusiasm. 3. Beware of antinomianism. 4. Beware of sins of omission. 5. Beware

of desiring anything but God. 6. Beware of schism. 7. Be exemplary in all things. The reader, who wishes to have a full view of the extravagances of those who professed sanctification in 1762, will do well to read Wesley's "Cautions and Directions," at length, as elaborated by himself. An enormous evil had sprung up, and it was one of the greatest facts of his eventful life, that Wesley was able to check the bad and to preserve the good.

On April 28, 1763, Maxfield fully and finally separated himself from Wesley, the latter taking as his text on the occasion, "If I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved." In 1767, Maxfield, in his vindication of himself, gave his views of sanctification,—views misty, mystical, and muddy, and, to say the least, widely different from those of Wesley.

He became Wesley's enemy. "He spake," says Wesley, "all manner of evil of me, his father, his friend, his greatest earthly benefactor. To Mr. M——n he said, 'Mr. Wesley believed and countenanced all which Mr. Bell said; and the reason of our parting was this: he said to me one day,—Tommy, I will tell the people you are the greatest gospel preacher in England; and you shall tell them I am the greatest! For refusing to do this, Mr. Wesley put me away!'"

That Maxfield should utter such calumnies is almost incredible; and yet, it is certain that, in his "Vindication," he writes of his old friend in terms not the most respectful. He talks of Wesley's "penny history of Methodism"; whines about Wesley injuring his character, and thereby his usefulness;

complains of Wesley keeping scores, if not hundreds, of his spiritual children from him; declares that, while he disapproved of Bell's proceedings, Wesley encouraged them; taunts him with having been guilty of the same enthusiasm as Bell by his gloomy prophecies concerning Dr. Halley's comet; asserts, that the reasons Bell assigned for leaving Wesley were his "double dealings and unfaithful proceedings"; and says that, in a society meeting at the Foundery, Wesley boastfully glorified himself, with the following epitaph of Philip of Macedon:—

"Here Philip lies, on the Dalmatian shore,
Who did what mortal never did before.
Yet, if there's one who boasts he more hath done,
To me he owes it, for he was my son."

Maxfield lived twenty years after this separation. He took with him about two hundred of Wesley's London society, and preached to a large congregation in a chapel in Ropemaker's Alley, Little Moorfields. Towards the close of life he again became friendly with the Methodists; and Wesley visited him in his last illness, and also preached in his chapel.[19] In 1766, Maxfield published a hymn-book of more than four hundred pages, many of his hymns being selections from those published by his old friends, the Wesleys. In the preface, he still complains of persecution, in being represented as "heading a party of wild enthusiasts"; but says, "such a groundless charge deserves no answer," and appeals to his hymn-book as a proof.

George Bell, for many years, was Maxfield's survivor, but made no pretension to religion. "He recovered his senses," says Southey, "to make a deplorable use of them; passing from one extreme to another, the ignorant enthusiast became an ignorant infidel; turned fanatic in politics, as he had done in religion; and, having gone through all the degrees of disaffection and disloyalty, died, at a great age, a radical reformer."

We only add that, in 1762, Charles Wesley, who had been laid aside by ill health from preaching, published, in two volumes, his "Short Hymns on Select Passages of the Holy Scriptures," in the preface to which he says: "Several of the hymns are intended to prove, and several to guard, the doctrine of Christian perfection. I durst not publish one without the other. In the latter sort I use some severity; not against particular persons, but against enthusiasts and antinomians, who, by not living up to their profession, give abundant occasion to them that seek it, and cause the truth to be evil spoken of."

Mr. Jackson writes:

> "Until this time, it had been understood, that Mr. Charles Wesley agreed with his brother on this as well as every other doctrine of Christian verity; although he had repeatedly used unguarded expressions in his hymns, which could not be justified. But now his views on this subject appear to have undergone a change, in consequence of the extravagance and pride of which he

was a distressed witness. He did not, from this time, contend, as do many, for the necessary continuance of indwelling sin till death; but he spoke of Christian perfection as a much higher attainment than either he or his brother had previously regarded it. In his estimation, it is not to be obtained by a present act of faith in the mercy, truth, and power of God; but is rather the result of severe discipline, comprehending affliction, temptation, long continued labour, and the persevering exercise of faith in seasons of spiritual darkness, when the heart is wrung with bitter anguish. By this painful and lingering process, he believed that the death of 'the old man' is effected, and a maturity is given to all the graces of the Christian character. Hence, he condemned 'the witnesses,' as he called them; that is, the persons who testified of the time and manner in which they were delivered from the root of sin, and made perfect in love, regarding them as self deceived. In some of his 'Short Hymns,' he has given considerable importance to these peculiarities of opinion.

"This change in Mr. Charles Wesley's manner of speaking on the subject of Christian perfection, as might be expected, gave considerable uneasiness to his brother, who felt it to be very undesirable that they should even seem to contradict each other in their ministry and writings. In a letter, therefore, to Miss Furley, he says, 'Take care you are not hurt by anything in the "Short Hymns," contrary to the doctrines you have long received.' And, on the same subject, he also

says, in a letter to Charles,—'That perfection which I believe, I can boldly preach; because I think I see five hundred witnesses of it. Of that perfection which you preach, you think you do not see any witness at all. Why, then, you must have far more courage than me, or you could not persist in preaching it. I wonder you do not, in this article, fall in plumb with Mr. Whitefield. For do not you, as well as he, ask, "Where are the perfect ones?" I verily believe there are none upon earth; none dwelling in the body. I cordially assent to his opinion, that there is no such perfection here as you describe; at least, I never met with an instance of it; and I doubt I never shall. Therefore I still think, to set perfection so high is effectually to renounce it.'

"At a subsequent period, he again addressed Charles on the same subject. 'Some thoughts,' says he, 'occurred to my mind this morning, which, I believe, it may be useful to set down; the rather, because it may be a means of our understanding each other clearly; that we may agree as far as ever we can, and then let all the world know it.

"'I was thinking on Christian perfection, with regard to the thing, the manner, and the time.

"'1. By perfection I mean the humble, gentle, patient love of God and man, ruling all the tempers, words, and actions; the whole heart, and the whole life.

"'I do not include a possibility of falling from it, either in part or in whole. Therefore, I retract several expressions in our hymns, which partly express, partly imply, such an impossibility. And I do not contend for the term *sinless*, though I do not object against it. Do we agree or differ here? If we differ, wherein?

"'2. As to the manner, I believe this perfection is always wrought in the soul by faith, by a simple act of faith; consequently, in an instant. But I believe a gradual work, both preceding and following that instant. Do we agree or differ here?

"'3. As to the time, I believe this instant generally is the instant of death, the moment before the soul leaves the body. But I believe it may be ten, twenty, or forty years before death. Do we agree or differ here?

"'I believe it is usually many years after justification; but that it *may be* within five years, or five months after it. I know no conclusive argument to the contrary. Do you?

"'If it *must be* many years after justification, I would be glad to know how many. *Pretium quotus arrogat annus?* And how many days, or months, or even years, can you allow to be between perfection and death? How far from justification *must* it be? and how near to death?

"'If it be possible, let you and me come to a good understanding, both for our own sakes, and for the sake of the people.'

"What answer Mr. Charles Wesley returned to this candid and sensible letter, we have no means of ascertaining."[20]

The reader must excuse this long digression, on the ground, (1) That the enthusiasm of this period was one of the great events in Wesley's history, and issued not only in a disruption of the London society, but in serious results which were more than coeval with Wesley's life. John Pawson, in a manuscript letter, dated "London, January 13, 1796," remarks: "We have a very blessed work here; but the old people are so afraid of George Bell's work returning, that they can hardly be persuaded it is the work of God, because of a little disorder that attends it." And a month later, he writes: "The good work is not so lively as it was. This, I think, has been chiefly caused by the old members being so exceedingly afraid of George Bell's days. An excess of prudence has hindered it." We have here, thirty-three years after Maxfield and Bell's secession, one of the effects of their fanatical behaviour. Then, (2) it must be borne in mind, that it was not until now that the doctrine of Christian perfection, attainable in an instant, by a simple act of faith, was made prominent in Methodist congregations; but that, ever after, it was one of the chief topics of Wesley's ministry, and that of his itinerant preachers. Of this we shall have ample proof in succeeding pages.

We now return to Wesley's Journal, and follow him in his peregrinations, during the year 1762. "This year," says he, "from the beginning to the end, was a year never to be forgotten. Such a season I never saw before. Such a multitude of sinners were converted, in all parts both of England and Ireland, and so many were filled with pure love."[21]

On January 2, he set out for Everton, to supply for Berridge, who was hard at work in London, and whose church and pulpit he occupied on two successive Sundays, preaching to large and lively congregations; but not now witnessing there any of the extravagances which had been so manifest a few years before. "Indeed," says Wesley, "the people were now in danger of running from east to west. Instead of thinking, as many did then, that none can possibly have true faith but those that have trances, they were now ready to think, that whoever had anything of this kind had no faith."

During his sojourn at Everton, Wesley visited many of the surrounding villages, and everywhere testified the gospel of the grace of God. Though it was the depth of winter, he preached at Harston by moonlight. In every place, crowds flocked to hear him. Some cried out in great distress, others dropped down as dead; and several found peace with God.

On January 12 he came to Norwich, where he excluded two hundred members, because they neglected to meet in class; and left about four hundred remaining, "half of whom appeared to be in earnest."

Returning to London on January 23, he writes: "I had a striking proof, that God can teach by whom He will teach. A man full of words, but not of understanding, convinced me of what I could never see before, that *anima est ex traduce,* that all the souls of his posterity, as well as their bodies, were in our first parent."

On the 15th of March, Wesley left London for Ireland, taking Bristol and Wales on his way. He arrived at Dublin about three weeks afterwards. For the first time, he now saw Dublin chapel *"throughly filled."*

On April 19, he started on his tour through the Irish provinces. At Newry, the society had been reduced from nearly a hundred members to thirty-two. At Carrickfergus, he had to delay the morning preaching, because "the delicate and curious hearers could not possibly rise before ten o'clock." At Belfast, he preached in the market house. At Newtown, "the poor shattered society was reduced from fifty to eighteen members," which were doubled, however, before he left. At Lisburn he had "many rich and gentle hearers." At Lurgan he had, what he had long desired, an opportunity of conversing with Mr. Miller, who had executed a piece of mechanism "the like of which was not to be seen in Europe." At Clanmain, he opened the new chapel. At Enniskillen, "the inhabitants gloried, that they had no papist in the town." At Sligo, he preached to "abundance of dragoons, and many of their officers;" a company of strolling players acting in the upper part of the market house, while the Methodists sang hymns below.

It was either here, or somewhere else in Ireland, that Wesley met with an adventure worth relating. The scene is a public house, the spectators a number of Irish tipplers; the performers in the drama, Wesley, a termagant landlady, and a starving player. The last mentioned reclines on a wooden couch in the chimney corner, arrayed in a motley dress that, like its owner, seemed to have seen better days. The landlady, addressing him in furious tones, bawls rather than speaks: "Turn out, you pitiable ragamuffin; plenty of promises, but no money; either pay your way, or you and your doll of a wife turn out." Just at this juncture, Wesley enters, and the terrible tongued woman, in an instant, becomes one of the mildest of Abigails. "Dear sir," she says, "I am glad you're come; this man, sir, is a very bad man, sir; as you said in your sermon yesterday, 'He that oppresseth the poor is a bad man,' sir." "What has he done?" asks Wesley. "Why, sir, I have kept him and his wife for a fortnight, and have never seen the colour of his money. Three crowns is my due, and I'll have it, if law can get it." "Who is this gentleman?" "Who is he? why he is one of those you preach against, one of your player men. I wish you could preach them out of the town. Why, sir, they are all starving. I don't think this man has got a good meal for a fortnight, except what I have given him, and now you see his gratitude." Wesley approached the poor, starving, dejected actor, and said: "You serve the stage, young man; would I could teach you to serve your God; you would find Him a better Master. Pardon me, I mean not to upbraid you, or to hurt your feelings. My Master sent you this; "putting into his hand a guinea; "retire, and thank Him." "Who is your master?" cried the actor; "where and how shall I thank him?"

"God is my Master, return Him thanks." "How?" "On your knees when in private; in public at all times, in your principles and in your practice; farewell, go comfort your wife and children." The poor, astonished player, though a dealer in words, was dumbfoundered, and sobbing a gratitude which he was not able to articulate, he left the room. "Three crowns is your demand on our afflicted brother?" said Wesley to the termagant. "Yes, sir, fifteen shillings; and if he does not pay me, I'll seize his rags upstairs, sell them, and pay myself." "I will pay you," said Wesley; "but what can you think of yourself? How terrible will be your condition on your death bed, calling for that mercy, which you refuse to a fellow creature! I shudder whilst under your roof, and leave it, as I would the pestilence. May the Lord pardon your sins!" With this, he put fifteen shillings on the table, and made his exit. "Pardon my sins?" quoth the irate female tapster; "pardon my sins, indeed! and why not his own? I'll warrant he has as much to answer for as I have; getting a parcel of people together, that ought to be minding their work. Why it was only yesterday, he was preaching everybody to the devil that encouraged the players, and to-day he is the first to do it himself." "This gentleman is a clergyman, I suppose," said one of the spectators. "A clergyman!" replied the landlady; "not he, indeed; it's only John Wesley, the Methodist, that goes preaching up and down, and draws all the idle vagabonds of the country after him."[22]

Space forbids our following Wesley to Longford, Athlone, Hollymount, Newport, Galway (where all the society were young women), Limerick, Cork, Youghal, Kinsale, Bandon,

Waterford, Kilkenny, Birr, Portarlington, and other places. "Poor, dead Portarlington! writes Wesley; "and no wonder it should be so, while the preachers coop themselves up in a room with twenty or thirty hearers. I went straight to the market place, and cried aloud, 'Hearken! behold a sower went forth to sow.' God made His word quick and powerful, and sharp as a two-edged sword."

Wesley got back to Dublin on July 26, and, a few days afterwards, embarked for England.

On reviewing the work in Ireland, he says that, in Dublin, he found forty persons who professed to have obtained the blessing of entire sanctification within the last four months. Contrasting the work there with that in London, he writes:

> "1. It is far greater in Dublin than in London, in proportion to the time and the number of the people. That society had above seven-and-twenty hundred members; this not above a fifth part of the number. Six months after the flame broke out in London, we had about thirty witnesses of the great salvation. In Dublin, there were above forty in less than four months.
>
> "2. The work was more pure. In all this time, while they were mildly and tenderly treated, there were none of them headstrong or unadvisable; none that were wiser than their teachers; none who dreamed of being immortal or infallible, or incapable of temptation; in short, no whimsical, or enthusiastic persons; all were

calm and sober minded. I know several of these were, in process of time, moved from their stedfastness. I am nothing surprised at this; it was no more than might be expected; I rather wonder, that more were not moved. Nor does this, in any degree, alter my judgment concerning the great work which God then wrought."

In Limerick, the society was stirred up by Wesley to seek entire deliverance from sin; and, in a few weeks, ten women and thirteen men professed to obtain the blessing. This Wesley considered a greater work than even that at Dublin.

On reaching England, he found, at Chester, about a dozen who believed themselves sanctified, and whose lives did not contradict their profession. At Liverpool, where the work of sanctification had begun in the previous month of March, he spoke severally with those who said they had been fully saved from sin. They were fifty-one in number; twenty-one men, twenty-one women, and nine young people or children. In one of these, the change was wrought three weeks after she was justified; in three, one week; in one, five days; and in Sus. Lutwich, aged fourteen, two days only. At Macclesfield, he spoke to forty, one by one, who believed the blood of Christ had cleansed them from all unrighteousness. He writes: "Some of them said they received that blessing ten days, some seven, some four, some three days, after they found peace with God; and two of them the next day. What marvel, since one day is with God as a thousand years!" At Manchester, he spoke with sixty-three who "believed God had cleansed their

hearts; to about sixty of whom he could find no reasonable objection."

We give these facts as we find them. The reader will form his own opinion concerning them.

On August 10, Wesley met his conference, at Leeds, at which were present Lady Huntingdon, with the Revs. Messrs. C. Wesley, Whitefield, Romaine, Madan, and Venn.[23] Of the proceedings of this conference we know nothing. Wesley simply says: "We had great reason to praise God for His gracious presence from the beginning to the end."

Wesley got back to London on the 19th of August, and, four days afterwards, set out for Cornwall. When he began service at Exeter, his congregation consisted of two women and one man. "This," says he, "comes of omitting field preaching." He himself went out of doors, and preached, on Southernhay green, to "a multitude of people; but a lewd, profane, drunken vagabond had so stirred up many of the baser sort, that there was much noise, hurry, and confusion."

At Polperro, he had abundance of people; but "an old, grey-headed sinner bitterly cursed all the Methodists."

At Truro, he expected some disturbance, as it was market day; but all was quiet. "Indeed," says he, "both persecution and popular tumult seem to be forgotten in Cornwall." Here resided a clergyman, Mr. C——, who was also a magistrate, but had not always been as peaceable as now. Some years

before, a Methodist preacher, at his instigation, was arrested as a vagrant. To his astonishment, the vagrant turned out to be Wesley, an old college acquaintance at Oxford. His worship, however, proceeded, in severe language, to censure Wesley's irregular proceedings; when, all at once, the floor of the room, which was filled with spectators, fell; the magistrate was hurled from his judicial chair; his wig flew off his head; the table, with its pens, ink, and paper, was overturned; while screams from all sides increased the general confusion. When order was restored, and the clerical functionary was once more seated, Wesley, with his characteristic coolness asked, "Well, sir, shall we proceed further in this business?" "No, no," replied the magistrate, "go your way, go your way, Mr. Wesley; 'sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.'" After this affair, Wesley had no farther trouble from his reverend acquaintance, Mr. C——.[24]

Wesley spent a month in visiting the Cornish societies, and held the quarterly meeting of the stewards of the two circuits into which the county was divided. He writes concerning the eastern circuit: "What a change is wrought in one year's time! That detestable practice of cheating the king is no more found in our societies. And since that accursed thing has been put away, the work of God has everywhere increased."

It is a remarkable fact, however, that he mentions no instances of sanctification during his Cornish tour; but remarks: "The more I converse with believers in Cornwall, the more I am convinced, that they have sustained great loss for the want of hearing the doctrine of Christian perfection

clearly and strongly enforced. I see, wherever this is not done, the believers grow dead and cold. Nor can this be prevented, but by keeping up in them an hourly expectation of being perfected in love, I say an hourly expectation; for to expect it at death, or some time hence, is much the same as not expecting it at all."

Wesley returned to London on November 6, reading on the road "The Death of Abel," concerning which he characteristically observes: "That manner of writing, in prose run mad, I cordially dislike; yet, with all that disadvantage, it is excellent in its kind, as much above most modern poems as it is below 'Paradise Lost.'"

The rest of the year was spent in the metropolis, and its immediate vicinity. He buried the remains of Jane Cooper, "a pattern of all holiness, and of the wisdom which is from above"; he transcribed his answer to Warburton; he corrected his notes on the Apocalypse; at the desire of Maxfield, he baptized two foreigners, who professed to have been Turks; and he tried to control, though far too tenderly, the insane ravings of George Bell and the high professors.

We have already mentioned the Rev. Mr. Furley, a clergyman of the Church of England, as one of Wesley's correspondents. Mr. Furley was the brother of Miss Furley, who, in 1763, became the wife of John Downes, one of Wesley's first preachers. The brother and sister were now resident at Kippax, near Ferrybridge, in Yorkshire; and the

following letters, addressed to them during the year 1762, will be read with interest.

"LONDON, *January* 25, 1762.

"DEAR SAMMY,—If you entangled yourself with no kind of promise to the archbishop, I doubt not but your ordination will prove a blessing. The care of a parish is, indeed, a weighty thing, which calls for much and earnest prayer. In managing it, you must needs follow your own conscience, whoever is pleased or displeased. Then, whether your success be less or more, you will, by-and-by, give up your account with joy.

"I myself hear frequently unscriptural, as well as irrational, expressions from those at whose feet I shall rejoice to be found in the day of the Lord Jesus; but blasphemy I never heard from one of them, either teacher or hearer. What is wide of Scripture or reason, I mildly reprove; and they usually receive it in love. Generally they are convinced; when I cannot convince, I can bear with them, and, indeed, rejoice at the grace of God which is in them.

"Sammy, beware of the impetuosity of your temper! It may easily lead you awry. It may make you evil affected to the excellent ones of the earth. Don't expect propriety of speech from uneducated persons. The longer I live, the larger allowances I make for human infirmities. I exact more from myself, and less from

others. Go thou and do likewise! I am, with love to Nancy,

"Your ever affectionate friend and brother,

"JOHN WESLEY.

"Take nothing, absolutely nothing, at second hand."[25]

The next contains an invitation to Mr. Furley to meet Wesley at the conference about to be held in Leeds, and treats on, what was then the great topic of the time, Christian perfection.

"DUBLIN, *July* 30, 1762.

"DEAR SAMMY,—If I am unanswered, then I am unanswerable.' Who can deny the consequence? By such an argument you carry all before you, and gain a complete victory. You put me in mind of the honest man, who cried out, while I was preaching, *'Quid est tibi nomen?'* and, upon my giving no answer, called out vehemently, 'I told you he did not understand Latin.'

"I do sometimes understand, though I do not answer. This is often the case between you and me. You love dispute, and I hate it. You have much time, and I have much work. *Non sumus ergo pares.* But if you will dispute the point with Nicholas Norton, he is your match. He has both leisure and love for the work.

"For me, I shall only once more state the case. There are forty or fifty people, who declare (and I can take their word, for I know them well), each for himself,

'God has enabled me to rejoice evermore, and to pray and give thanks without ceasing. I feel no pride, no anger, no desire; no unbelief, but pure love alone.' I ask, 'Do you then believe you have no further need of Christ, or His atoning blood?' Every one answers, 'I never felt my want of Christ so deeply as I do now.' But you think: 'They cannot want the merit of His death, if they are saved from sin.' They think otherwise. They know and feel the contrary, whether they can *explain* it, or no. There is not one, either in this city, or in this kingdom, who does not agree in this.

"Here is a plain fact. You may dispute, reason, cavil about it, just as long as you please. Meantime, I know, by all manner of proof, that these are the happiest and holiest people in the kingdom. Their light shines before men. They have the mind that was in Christ, and walk as Christ also walked. And shall I cease to rejoice over these holy, happy men, because they mistake in their judgment? If they do, I would to God you and I and all mankind were under the same mistake; provided we had the same faith, the same love, and the same inward and outward holiness!

"I am, dear Sammy, yours affectionately,

"JOHN WESLEY.

"Will you not meet us at Leeds on the 10th of August?"[26]

The next two letters were both written on the same day: the first being addressed to Mr. Furley, the second to his sister.

"ST. IVES, *September* 15, 1762.

"DEAR SIR,—I have entirely lost my taste for controversy. I have lost my readiness in disputing; and I take this to be a providential discharge from it. All I can now do, with a clear conscience, is, not to enter into a formal controversy about the new birth, or justification by faith, any more than Christian perfection, but simply to declare my judgment; and to explain myself as clearly as I can upon any difficulty that may arise out of it.

"I still say, and without any self contradiction, I know no persons living, who are so deeply conscious of their needing Christ, both as prophet, priest, and king, as those who believe themselves, and whom I believe, to be cleansed from all sin; I mean, from all pride, anger, evil desire, idolatry, and unbelief. These very persons feel more than ever their own ignorance, littleness of grace, coming short of the full mind that was in Christ, and walking less accurately than they might have done after their Divine Pattern; are more convinced of the insufficiency of all they are, have, or do, to bear the eye of God without a Mediator.

"If Mr. M—— or you say, 'that coming short is sin'; be it so, I contend not. But still I say, 'These are they whom I believe to be scripturally perfect.' If in saying this, I have 'fully given up the point,' what would you have more? Is it not enough that I leave you to 'boast your superior power against the little, weak shifts of

baffled error?' 'Canst thou not be content,' as the quaker said, 'to lay J. W. on his back, but thou must tread his guts out?'

"O let you and I go on to perfection! God grant we may so run as to attain!

"I am your affectionate friend and brother,

"JOHN WESLEY."[27]

"ST. IVES, *September* 15, 1762.

"MY DEAR SISTER,—Certainly sanctification, in the proper sense, is 'an instantaneous deliverance from all sin'; and includes 'an instantaneous power, then given, always to cleave to God.' Yet this sanctification (at least in the lower degrees) does not include a power never to think a useless thought, nor ever speak a useless word. I myself believe, that such a perfection is inconsistent with living in a corruptible body; for this makes it impossible 'always to think right.' While we breathe, we shall, more or less, mistake. If, therefore, Christian perfection implies this, we must not expect it till after death.

"I want you to be all love. This is the perfection I believe and teach. And this perfection is consistent with a thousand nervous disorders, which that high strained perfection is not. Indeed, my judgment is that, in this case particularly, to overdo is to undo; and, that to set perfection too high (so high as no man that we ever heard or read of attained) is the most effectual, because

unsuspected, way of driving it out of the world. Take care you are not hurt by anything in the 'Short Hymns,' contrary to the doctrines you have long received. Peace be with your spirit!

"I am your affectionate brother,
"JOHN WESLEY."[28]

We add one more letter, addressed to Mr. Furley, on this momentous subject.

"BRISTOL, *October* 13, 1762.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—As to this particular question, I believe I am able to answer every objection which can be made; but I am not able to do it without expending much time, which may be better employed. For this reason, I am persuaded it is so far from being my duty to enter into a formal controversy about it, that it would be a wilful sin; it would be employing my short residue of life in a less profitable way than it may be employed.

"The proposition which I hold is this: A person may be cleansed from all *sinful tempers,* and yet need the atoning blood. For what? For negligences and ignorances; for both words and actions, as well as omissions, which are, in a sense, transgressions of the perfect law. And I believe no one is clear of these, till he lays down this corruptible body.

"Now, Sammy, dropping the point of contradiction, tell me simply what you would have more. Do you believe, that evil tempers remain till death? All, or some? If some only, which? I love truth wherever I find it; so if you can help me to a little more of it, you will oblige,

"Dear Sammy, yours, etc.,

"JOHN WESLEY."[29]

Two other letters, belonging to this period, will be welcome. Both refer to the excitement in London concerning Christian perfection, and both were addressed to his brother Charles.

"LONDON, *December* 11, 1762.

"DEAR BROTHER,—For eighteen or twenty days, I have heard with both ears, but rarely opened my mouth. I think I now understand the affair, at least as well as any person in England.

"The sum is this: 1. The meeting in Beech Lane, before I came to town, was like a bear garden; full of noise, brawling, cursing, swearing, blasphemy, and confusion. 2. Those who prayed were partly the occasion of this, by their horrid screaming, and unscriptural, enthusiastic expressions. 3. Being determined either to mend them or end them, I removed the meeting to the Foundery. 4. Immediately, the noise, brawling, cursing, swearing, blasphemy, and confusion ceased. 5. There was less and less screaming, and less

unscriptural and enthusiastic language. 6. Examining the society, I found about threescore persons who had been convinced of sin, and near fourscore who were justified, at those meetings. So that, on the whole, they have done some hurt, and much good. I trust, they will now do more good, and no hurt at all. Seven persons had left the society on this account; but four of them are come back already.

"I bought the ground before Kingswood school of Margaret Ward, and paid for it with my own money. Certainly, therefore, I have a right to employ it as I please. What can any reasonable man say to the contrary?

"I have answered the bishop, and had advice upon my answer. If the devil owes him a shame, he will reply. He is a man of sense; but I verily think he does not understand Greek! Adieu!

"JOHN WESLEY."[30]

"LONDON, *December* 23, 1762.

"DEAR BROTHER,—This is too critical a time for me to be out of London.

"I believe several in London have imagined themselves saved from sin upon the word of others'; and these are easily known. For that work does not stand; such imaginations soon vanish away. Some of these, and two or three others, are still wild. But the matter

does not stick here. I could play with all these, if Thomas Maxfield were right. He is *mali caput et fons;* so inimitably wrong headed, and so absolutely unconvincible; and yet (what is exceeding strange) God continues to bless his labours.

"My kind love to Sally. I shall soon try your patience with a long letter. Adieu!

"JOHN WESLEY."[31]

The bishop, referred to in one of the above letters, was Warburton, bishop of Gloucester; but, as Wesley's answer was not published till the beginning of 1763, we defer any further notice of this furious episcopal onslaught upon Wesley and his friends.

Other publications, however, must be mentioned. The following was an octavo shilling pamphlet, which originated in a dispute in the *London Chronicle:* "Presbyters and Deacons not commissioned to preach without the Bishop's Allowance. A Discourse addressed to a certain Methodist Clergyman." The title suggests the substance of this bigoted performance.

Another harmless missile, hurled at the poor Methodists, was by the renowned translator of Plutarch's Lives, now a young curate in the county of Essex: "Letters on Religious Retirement, Melancholy, and Enthusiasm. By John Langhorne." 8vo, 87 pages. Dedicated to the Bishop of Gloucester. The worst thing said of Methodism is, that,

though averse to popery, it holds one of its worst doctrines, namely, a pretence to plenary inspiration; and, that all the difference between the two systems is that, instead of one pope, the Methodists "find a thousand in their ignorant teachers, whom they consider as so many gods, and whose crude and undigested preachments they regard as oracles."

A third, and infinitely worse production, was a small half-crown octavo, with the title, "A plain and easy Road to the Land of Bliss; a Turnpike set up by Mr. Orator." The *Monthly Review* (no friend to Methodism) remarks concerning this miserable book: "It is a dull and indecent satire on the Methodists, in imitation, as its author imagines, of the celebrated Tale of a Tub, which it resembles in no respect whatever. It is not only contemptible for its stupidity; but in itself is a filthy, obscene thing, for which its writer ought to be washed in a horsepond."[32]

A fourth was the following: "A Specimen of Preaching, as practised among the People called Methodists. By J. Helme." A number of phrases, said to be used by the Methodists, are here strung together, in the shape of a sermon, founded upon the text, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" Helme expresses the opinion, that the jesuits and other emissaries of the Church of Rome are at the bottom of the Methodist "schemes of nonsense and delusion"; and that "the manner in which the fanatics take upon themselves to treat the sublime truths of Christianity cannot fail to shock both the ear and the understanding of all who make any pretensions to religion or common sense."[33]

Another hostile publication, issued in 1762, was a miscellaneous octavo volume, of 380 pages, entitled, "Various Tracts by the Rev. James Penn, A.B., under Grammar Master of Christ's Hospital, and Lecturer of the united parishes of St. Ann and Agnes, and St. John Zachary, Aldersgate." The reverend pedagogue tells his readers, that "Methodism, which arose from a slender beginning, is branched out into various sects, and has met with such success as to become alarming. It had its origin partly from the neglect of the superior clergy of the duties of their function; and this neglect continued is its great support. The clergy have talked, they have wrote, they have preached against the Methodists and their tenets, with justice indeed, but not without acrimony; and this has rendered their design abortive, and not a little served the cause of their adversaries. Unless some expedient is found to check the progress of the enthusiasm, it will soon become formidable, and have its spacious tabernacles in every city and county, as well as in London and Middlesex. It has encouraged a great number of laymen, many of whom are the refuse of the people, or the meanest of mechanics, to assume the ministerial office, and bellow out, in the lanes and alleys of the city, their wild notions, in a language rude, irrational, unintelligible. In their places of worship, here sits melancholy, there despair. Sighs and groans are heard from one corner; frightful and hideous looks are seen at another. The words of some speak assurance of their salvation, and an uncommon familiarity with their Maker; whilst others are overwhelmed with a horrible dread of damnation."

The reader has had enough of the Rev. James Penn; but we add another extract, which will convey an idea of the reverend author's principles. "A man's character is no more to be suspected by his being at a playhouse, than at a church. All are not saints, who frequent the latter; nor are all to be accounted sinners, who go to the former. Players are no more to be condemned, because some of the audience depart unimproved, than the preacher censured, if some of his congregation should go away unedified." In the list of subscribers to Mr. Penn's octavo volume, the names of fifty clergymen are given.

Wesley's works, published in 1762, were as follows.

1. "Cautions and Directions given to the greatest Professors in the Methodist Societies." These were afterwards embodied in the "Plain Account of Christian Perfection."

2. "A Letter to the Rev. Mr. Horne: occasioned by his late Sermon preached before the University of Oxford." 8vo, 22 pages.

This was a pamphlet, principally on the subject of justification by faith and works. Dr. Horne was now a young man of thirty-two years of age; a thorough Hutchinsonian; and a considerable author. He subsequently became chaplain to George III.; vice chancellor of Oxford; dean of Canterbury; and, in 1790, bishop of Norwich. He was learned, pious, and benevolent; and will always be remembered for his "Commentary on the Book of Psalms." Wesley's letter is

exceedingly respectful; as indeed it ought to be. He writes: "If I have said anything offensive, anything that implies the least degree of anger or disrespect, it was entirely foreign to my intention. Nor indeed have I any provocation. I have no room to be angry at your maintaining what you believe to be the truth of the gospel: even though I might wish you had omitted a few expressions."

3. Another of Wesley's publications was a small, tract, entitled: "A Blow at the Root; or Christ stabbed in the House of his Friends." 12mo, 11 pages. The title resembles the title of another pamphlet published "By an impartial Hand" some years previous,—"A Blow at the Root: or an attempt to prove that no time ever was, or very probably ever will be, so proper and convenient as the present, for introducing a further Reformation into our National Church, Universities, and Schools. Most humbly dedicated to his royal highness, William Duke of Cumberland." The object of Wesley's tract, however, was widely different from the object of this. His intention was to refute a heresy recently sprung up, "that Christ had *done,* as well as suffered, *all:* that *His righteousness* being imputed to *us,* we need none of *our own:* that, seeing there was so much righteousness and holiness *in Him,* there needs no more *in us;* that, to think we have any, or to desire to seek any, is to renounce Christ: that, from the beginning to the end of salvation, all is *in Christ,* nothing *in man;* and that those who teach otherwise are *legal preachers,* and know nothing of the *gospel."*

4. This was followed by another on the same subject, with the title, "Thoughts on the Imputed Righteousness of Christ," 12mo, 11 pages. The cause of this publication was the issue of a tract, in the name of Wesley, not one word of which was his, and which, as will be seen hereafter, he found it necessary to repudiate in 1763.

This was not much for a man like Wesley to produce; but it must be remembered, that, owing to his brother's illness, he was now single handed; and that, besides being "in journeyings often, and in perils; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst," there came upon him preeminently, and almost exclusively, "the care of all the churches."

ENDNOTES

[1] Manuscript letter of J. Pawson.
[2] *Methodist Magazine,* 1782, pp. 157, 386; and 1783, p. 328.
[3] Wesley's Works, vol. iii., p. 149.
[4] Moore's Life of Wesley, vol. ii., p. 218.
[5] *Methodist Magazine,* 1780, p. 385.
[6] Wesley's Works, vol. iii., p. 120.
[7] *Methodist Magazine,* 1780, p. 674.
[8] Maxfield's "Vindication," p. 14.
[9] Wesley's Works, vol. iii., p. 117.
[10] *Methodist Magazine,* 1790, p. 42.
[11] Wesley's Works, vol. iii., p. 76.
[12] *Methodist Magazine,* 1795, p. 50.
[13] Maxfield's "Vindication," p. 16.
[14] Manuscript.
[15] *London Chronicle,* Feb. 26, 1763; and *London Magazine,* 1763, p. 162.
[16] Whitefield's Works, vol. iii., p. 287.
[17] *Lloyd's Evening Post,* March 2, 1763.
[18] Ibid. March 21, 1763.
[19] Wesley's Works, vol. iv., p. 232.
[20] Jackson's Life of C. Wesley, vol. ii., p. 210.
[21] Wesley's Works, vol. xiii., p. 333.
[22] Reilly's "Memoir of an Actor."
[23] "Life and Times of Countess of Huntingdon," vol. i., p. 281. Grimshaw had died triumphantly four months before.
[24] *Christian Miscellany,* 1865, p. 284.
[25] *Methodist Magazine,* 1865, p. 985.
[26] *Methodist Magazine,* 1856, p. 988.

[27] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 342.
[28] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 193.
[29] *Methodist Magazine,* 1783, p. 108.
[30] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 115.
[31] Ibid. p. 116.
[32] *Monthly Review,* 1762.
[33] *Monthy Review,* 1762.

1763.

IN almost every successive year, the Methodist movement devolved more and more on Wesley. His brother was in feeble health, had an increasing family, and employed himself almost exclusively in writing hymns, and in preaching to the Methodists of London and of Bristol. Whitefield's asthma had become chronic, and well-nigh disabled him. He spent the first six months of 1763 chiefly in the north of England and in Scotland; but, for six weeks of that period, he was entirely silent; and during the remainder, his preaching was often intermitted, and in no instance was more frequent than once a day. Three months were occupied with his voyage to America, where he landed about the beginning of September, and speaks of himself as "wearied and almost worn out"; and where he was not able to preach more than twice or thrice a week. Comparatively speaking, his work was already done; though still preaching, it was as an invalid. For the last five and twenty years, it would be difficult to say whether Whitefield or Wesley, simply considered as evangelists, had been in labours more abundant. For twenty-eight years after this, Wesley was almost the only itinerant clergyman living. Grimshaw was dead; Whitefield, to a great extent, was disabled, and, as early as the year 1770, was removed to the rest of heaven; Charles Wesley had already become a settled minister; Berridge's itinerancy was confined to his own comparatively small circuit, and to his visits to the metropolis; Romaine, Venn, Rowland Hill, and others, had pastoral charges, which necessarily prevented them leaving home, as often as they wished. Wesley, and Wesley only, was

unfettered. He was without a church, and really without a home. His wife made him miserable, and he had no children to demand his time. His health was as vigorous as ever, and his heart as warm; and hence, while all his old clerical friends either died, or were disabled, or otherwise were obliged to relinquish the itinerant ministry, he and he alone ended as he first began; and, from 1735 to 1791, a period of five and fifty years, lived not the enviable life of a settled pastor, but the homeless life of a wandering evangelist, and devoted his health, energies, and talents to a work resembling his who said, "I am a debtor both to the Greeks, and to the barbarians"; "so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ."

At the commencement of 1763, Wesley was in the midst of the fanatical troubles, chiefly created by Bell and Maxfield. The following letters refer to these affairs. They were all published in the *London Chronicle.*

"SOUTHWARK, *January* 6, 1763.

"SIR,—One Bell, said to be a Lifeguardsman, holds forth to an assembly, near Hanover Square. He is supposed to belong to the Methodists; but he advances things which many Methodists abhor. Nevertheless, his delusions spread. Many of his followers think themselves perfect, and declare they shall never die, 'because,' as they say, 'our dear Lord, who certainly will come a second time, is at the door, and we shall see Him come.'

"God only knows where this folly of Mr. Bell's may end, if not soon stopped. Soon after the Reformation in Germany, many sprung up who held that they were perfect; they despised authority, and declared Christ was at the door (as Mr. Bell does) to destroy the world. Many of them, men and women, worshipped naked, and appeared so in the streets of Amsterdam and elsewhere, declaring that, as clothes came in only in consequence of sin, so they being free from sin were to wear none.

"IMPARTIALITY."[1]

"WINDMILL HILL, *January* 7, 1763.

"SIR,—When I returned to London two or three months ago, I received various accounts of some meetings for prayer, which had lately been held by Mr. Bell and a few others. Some highly applauded them; others utterly condemned; some affirmed they had done much good; others that they had done much hurt. This convinced me, that it was requisite to proceed with caution, and to do nothing rashly. The first point was to form my own judgment, and that upon the fullest evidence. To this end I first talked with Mr. Bell himself, whom I knew to be an honest, well meaning man. Next, I told him they were at liberty, for a few times, to meet under my roof. They did so, both in the society room at the Foundery, and in the chapel at West Street. By this means, I had an opportunity of hearing them myself, which I did at both places. I was present also, at the next meeting after that, which is mentioned by Mr. Dodd and Mr. Thompson, in the *Public Ledger.*

The same things which they blame I blame also; and so I told Mr. Bell the same evening. I was in hopes they would be done away, which occasioned my waiting till this time. But now, having lost that hope, I have given orders that they shall meet under my roof no more.

"JOHN WESLEY."[2]

"*February* 9, 1763.

"SIR,—I take this opportunity of informing all whom it may concern—1. That Mr. Bell is not a member of our society; 2. That I do not believe either the end of the world, or any signal calamity, will be on the 28th instant; and 3. That not one in fifty, perhaps not one in five hundred, of the people called Methodists, believe any more than I do, either this or any other of his prophecies.

"I am, etc.,

"JOHN WESLEY."[3]

Christian perfection, for a season, took the place of Church separation. The Methodists, for years past, had been on the point of declaring themselves Dissenters; now they were not unlikely to become fanatics. From the first, Wesley had taught the doctrine of Christian perfection; but now some of Wesley's followers were in danger of attaching to that doctrine whims which Wesley never sanctioned. Besides, is there not truth in the statement of Dr. Whitehead, a man well qualified to judge: "The doctrine of *perfection,* or *perfect* love, was undoubtedly taught among the Methodists from the beginning; but the *manner* in which it was *now* preached,

pressing the people to expect what was called the destruction of the *root* of sin, in one moment, was most certainly *new;* I can find no trace of it before the period at which I have fixed its introduction"?[4]

Wesley's annoyance was great, and his forbearance with the London fanatics exposed him to the censure of his friends. John Downes, in a letter to Joseph Cownley, wrote: "I consider the follies and extravagance of the witnesses as the devices of Satan, to cast a blemish upon a real work of God. The more I converse with the solid ones, the more I long to experience what they do. It is a state worthy of a Christian. As to the follies of the enthusiasts, Mr. Charles hears every week less or more. Why his brother suffers them we cannot tell. He threatens, but cannot find in his heart to put in execution. The consequence is, the talk of all the town, and entertainment for the newspapers."[5]

Charles Wesley, in a letter dated February 1, 1763, remarks: "Sad havoc Satan has made of the flock. What they will do after my brother's departure, I leave to the Lord; for I dare not think of it. I gave warning four years ago of the flood of enthusiasm which has now overflowed us; and of the sect of ranters that should arise out of the witnesses. My last hymns are a further standing testimony. Tell Christopher Hopper, I reverence him for his stand against the torrent."[6]

This was well, so far as it went; but it would have been considerably better, if Charles Wesley had joined with his warnings and vaticinations his active cooperation to stem the

torrent of which he had prophesied. Wesley wrote to him on February 8, saying: "The sooner you could be here the better; for the mask is thrown off. George Bell, John Dixon, Joseph Calvert, Benjamin Briggs, etc., etc., have quitted the society, and renounced all fellowship with us. I wrote to Thomas" (Maxfield), "but was not favoured with an answer. This morning I wrote a second time, and received an answer indeed! The substance is, 'You take too much upon you.'"[7]

Charles evidently declined to come to his brother's help; hence the following extracts from two other letters, dated respectively February 26 and March 6, 1763:

> "I perceive, *verba fiunt mortuo;* so I say no more about your coming to London. Here stand I; and I shall stand, with or without human help, if God is with us. That story of Thomas Maxfield is not true. But I doubt more is true than is good. He is a most incomprehensible creature. I cannot convince him, that separation is any evil; or, that speaking in the name of God, when God has not spoken, is any more than an innocent mistake, I know not what to say to him, or do with him. He is really *mali caput et fons."*[8]

A fortnight after this, Wesley wrote as follows to the Countess of Huntingdon.

> *"March* 20, 1763.
>
> "MY LADY,—By the mercy of God, I am still alive, and following the work to which He has called me,

although without any help, even in the most trying times, from those of whom I might have expected it. Their voice seemed to be rather, '*Down with him, down with him; even to the ground.*' I mean (for I use no ceremony or circumlocution) Mr. Madan, Mr. Haweis, Mr. Berridge, and (I am sorry to say it) Mr. Whitefield. Only Mr. Romaine has shown a truly sympathising spirit, and acted the part of a brother. As to the prophecies of these poor wild men, George Bell and half-a-dozen more, I am not a jot more accountable for them than Mr. Whitefield is, having never countenanced them in any degree, but opposed them from the moment I heard them; neither have these extravagances any foundation in any doctrine which I teach. The loving God with all our heart, soul, and strength, and the loving all men as Christ loved us, is, and ever was, for these thirty years, the sum of what I deliver, as pure religion and undefiled. However, if I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved! The will of the Lord be done!

'Poor and helpless as I am,
Thou dost for my vileness care,
Thou hast called me by Thy name,
Thou dost all my burdens bear.'

"I am, your ladyship's servant for Christ's sake,
"JOHN WESLEY."[9]

Wesley thought he had one friend left, though only one, in Mr. Romaine; but in this he was mistaken. Hence the following, written within a week after the above.

"LAMBETH, *March* 26, 1763.

"MADAM,—Thanks to your ladyship for your kind remembrance of me in your last. Enclosed is poor Mr. John Wesley's letter. The contents of it, as far as I am concerned, surprised me; for no one has spoken more freely of what is now passing among the people than myself. Indeed, I have not preached so much as others whose names he mentions, nor could I. My subject is one, and I dare not vary from it. A perfection out of Christ is with me all rank pride and damnable sin. Man cannot be laid too low, nor Christ set too high. I would therefore always aim, as good brother Grimshaw expresses it, to get the old gentleman down, and keep him down; and then Christ reigns like Himself, when He is *all*, and man is nothing.

"I pity Mr. John from my heart. His societies are in great confusion; and the point, which brought them into the wilderness of rant and madness, is still insisted on as much as ever. I fear the end of this delusion. As the late alarming providence has not had its proper effect, and *perfection* is still the cry, God will certainly give them up to some more dreadful thing. May their eyes be opened before it is too late!

"Things are not here as at Brighton. The Foundery, the Tabernacle, the Lock, the Meeting, yea, St. Dunstan's, has each its party, and brotherly love is almost lost in our disputes. Thank God, I am out of them.

"My wife joins me in duty and affection to your ladyship, and we are your faithful servants in our most dear and eternally precious Jesus,

"W. ROMAINE."[10]

Such, in the midst of his London troubles, was Wesley's want of sympathy and help from those whom he had been accustomed to regard as friends. Fletcher of Madeley continued faithful, but the duties of his distant vicarage were a bar to his rendering assistance in the metropolis. As early as November 22, 1762, he wrote Charles Wesley:[11] "Many of our brethren are overshooting sober Christianity in London. Oh that I could stand in the gap! Oh that I could, by sacrificing myself, shut this immense abyss of enthusiasm, which opens its mouth among us! The corruption of the best things is always the worst of corruptions."

In another letter, dated September 9, 1763, Fletcher writes: "If Mr. Maxfield returns, the Lord may correct his errors, and give him so to insist on the fruits of faith as to prevent antinomianism. I believe him sincere; and, though obstinate and suspicious, I am persuaded he has a true desire to know the will, and live the life of God. I reply in the same words you quoted to me in one of your letters: 'Don't be afraid of a

wreck, for Jesus is in the ship.' After the most violent storm, the Lord will, perhaps all at once, bring our ship into the desired haven."[12]

Fletcher thoroughly understood Wesley's doctrines; but it is clear that Romaine did not. When and where did Wesley preach "a perfection out of Christ"? What was Romaine's meaning when he employed that expression? Who can tell? Could Romaine himself? We greatly doubt it. Wesley, in the plainest language, had said all he had to say, both in the former and in the Farther Thoughts on Christian Perfection. Had Romaine read these tracts? If he had, he ought to have known that they contained not a single syllable concerning any *"perfection out of Christ";* if he had not, he was culpable in branding a doctrine, the meaning of which he had yet to learn. In a letter to Mrs. Maitland, dated May 12, 1763, Wesley declares, that he can say nothing on the subject of Christian perfection but what he has said already. Nevertheless, at her request, he is willing to add a few words more. He proceeds:—

> "As to the word *perfection,* it is scriptural. Therefore, neither you nor I can in conscience object to it, unless we would send the Holy Ghost to school, and teach Him to speak, who made the tongue.
>
> "By *Christian* perfection I mean, (as I have said again and again,) the so loving God and our neighbour, as to 'rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks.' He that experiences this is

scripturally perfect. And if you do not, yet you may experience it; you surely will, if you follow hard after it, for the Scripture cannot be broken.

"What then does their arguing prove, who object against Christian perfection? Absolute or infallible perfection, I never contended for; sinless perfection I do not contend for, seeing it is not scriptural. A perfection such as enables a person to fulfil the whole law, and so need not the merits of Christ, I do not acknowledge. I do now, and always did protest against it.

"But is there no sin in those who are perfect in love? I believe not; but, be that as it may, they feel none,—no temper contrary to pure love, while they rejoice, pray, and give thanks continually. Whether sin is suspended, or extinguished, I will not dispute. It is enough, that they feel nothing but love. This you allow we should daily press after; and this is all I contend for."[13]

In 1759, Wesley published his "Thoughts on Christian Perfection"; and now he issued another 12mo tract of thirty-nine pages, entitled "Farther Thoughts upon Christian Perfection," in which he says: "In most particulars, I think now as I did then; in some I do not. My present thoughts I now offer to your consideration; being still open to further conviction; and willing, I trust, to be taught of God, by whatever instrument He shall choose." He proceeds to show, that the highest degree of sanctification attainable on earth will not save a man from "unavoidable defect of

understanding," and from "mistakes in many things"; and that "these mistakes will frequently occasion something wrong, both in our tempers, and words, and actions." For this reason, "the holiest of men still need Christ, as their prophet, king, and priest." He maintains, that the sanctified have a direct, as well as an indirect, witness of their sanctification; and that "*some*, though not all, may have a testimony from the Spirit" of their final perseverance. He admits that, in most instances, those who are "justified *gradually* die to sin and grow in grace, till at, or perhaps a little before death, God perfects them in love"; but, in some instances, "God cuts short His work. He does the work of many years in a few weeks: perhaps in a week, a day, an hour." Concerning those in London, who professed to have attained to Christian perfection, he says: "there is a wide difference between some of them and others." He adds: "I think most of them, with whom I have spoken, have much faith, love, joy, and peace. Some of these, I believe, are renewed in love, and have the *direct* witness of it; and they manifest the *fruit* of it in all their words and actions. But some, who have much love, peace, and joy, have not the direct witness; and others, who think they have, are manifestly wanting in the fruit. How many I will not say: perhaps one in ten, perhaps more or fewer. *Some* are undeniably wanting in *longsuffering;* some in *gentleness;* some in *goodness;* some in *fidelity;* some in *meekness;* and some in *temperance."* To these last mentioned he says: "Let us not fight about words; in the thing we clearly agree. You have not what I call *perfection.* If others will call it so, they may."

After laying it down, that "those who are perfect may grow in grace, not only while they are in the body, but to all eternity," he proceeds to say: "formerly, we thought, one saved from sin could not fall. Now, we know the contrary. We are surrounded with instances of those, who lately experienced all that I mean by perfection. They had both the fruit of the Spirit and the witness; but they have now lost both. There is no such height of holiness as it is impossible to fall from. If there be any that *cannot fall*, this wholly depends on the promise and faithfulness of God."

His advices to those who professed perfection are—

"1. Watch and pray continually against pride. Always remember, *much grace* does not imply *much light.* These do not always go together. Give not place to the dangerous mistake that none can teach *you,* but those that are themselves saved from sin. 2. Beware of that daughter of pride, enthusiasm. Do not hastily ascribe things to God. Do not easily suppose dreams, voices, impressions, visions, or revelations to be from God. They may be from Him. They may be from nature. They may be from the devil. Try all things by the written word, and let all bow down before it. 3. Beware of antinomianism, making void the law, or any part of it, through faith. Do not put your head on the hole of a cockatrice's den. Beware of Moravianism, the most refined antinomianism that ever was under the sun, producing the grossest libertinism, and most flagrant breach of every moral precept, such as could only have

sprung from the abuse of true Christian experience. Beware of Moravian bigotry, stillness, self indulgence, censoriousness, and solifidianism. 4. Beware of sins of omission. Lose no opportunity of doing good in any kind. Give no place to indolence. Lose no shred of time. Do not talk much; neither long at a time: few can converse profitably above an hour. Keep at the utmost distance from pious chit-chat, from religious gossiping. 5. Beware of desiring anything but God. Admit no desire of pleasing food, or of any pleasure of sense; no desire of pleasing the eye, or the imagination, by anything grand, or new, or beautiful; no desire of money, of praise, or esteem; of happiness in *any creature.* 6. Beware of schism, of making a rent in the church of Christ. Do not extol, or run down, any preacher. Never omit meeting your class or band; never absent yourself from any public meeting. These are the very sinews of our society. Beware of impatience of contradiction, of touchiness, of testiness. Beware of tempting others to separate from *you.* Be particularly careful in speaking of yourself. Avoid all magnificent, pompous words. 7. Be exemplary in all things: particularly in outward things, as in dress; in little things; in laying out your money, avoiding every needless expense; in deep, steady seriousness; and in the solidity and usefulness of all your conversation."

Such are some of the salient points in Wesley's "Farther Thoughts upon Christian Perfection." Opinions respecting

them will vary; but all will admit the sincerity and intense earnestness of the man who wrote them.

Let us now track his footsteps in 1763. With the exception of a brief visit to Norwich, and another to Bristol, the first four months were spent in London and its vicinity, during which two or three incidents occurred, besides the perfectionist agitation, that are worth mentioning.

One was the death of Mrs. Charity Perronet, the good vicar of Shoreham's wife, whom Wesley buried on February 11.

Another was an effort to relieve the sufferings of the London poor. The year opened with one of the severest frosts on record. The Thames was so covered with ice, that passengers and carriages crossed from one shore to the other; and booths were erected, and fairs held, on the river's ice-glazed surface. Navigation was entirely stopped, and many thousands of watermen, with their families, were plunged into extreme distress. In some places, the ice was measured, and found to be six feet thick. Sea gulls came up as high as London Bridge; and other birds, in great numbers, were driven from their usual haunts, and were seen in the streets of the metropolis. Many persons were frozen to death; and large bodies of famished men wandered throughout the capital, begging bread and clothes.[14] Wesley was not the man to witness such suffering without endeavouring to relieve it. "Great numbers," says *Lloyd's Evening Post*, "of poor people had pease pottage and barley broth given them at the Foundery, at the expense of Mr. Wesley; and a collection was

made, in the same place of worship, for further supplying the necessities of the destitute, at which upwards of £100 was contributed."[15] Considering the value of money at that period, this was not amiss for the poor Foundery Methodists.

A third incident must be mentioned. We have just seen Wesley trying to relieve misery; we shall now see him endeavouring to put an end to vice. The Society for the Reformation of Manners was first instituted about the year 1677.[16] From 1730 to 1757, the society was defunct. In the last mentioned year, and perhaps as one of the results of Methodism, it was revived. The approbation of the lord mayor of London, and of the court of aldermen, was obtained. Thousands of books of instruction were sent to parish officers and parish constables, to remind them of their duty. The laws against immorality were again enforced. Streets, and fields, and public houses were swept of their notorious offenders. In five years, about ten thousand persons were brought to justice, chiefly for gambling, swearing, sabbath breaking, lewdness, and selling obscene engravings.

There can be little doubt that Wesley was connected with the revival of this useful association. At all events, in 1763, when the society consisted of one hundred and sixty members, nearly half of that number were Methodists.[17] On January 30, the society met at Wesley's chapel, in West Street, Seven Dials; where he preached, before its members, the annual sermon, taking as his text the very scripture which had been selected by his father, when performing the same service sixty-five years before: "Who will rise up with me against the

wicked?" Wesley attached considerable importance to this sermon, as is seen from the fact, that he retired to Lewisham to compose and write it, and that it was immediately published in an octavo pamphlet of thirty pages. Three years afterwards, the society, a second time, ceased to be; chiefly through an action instituted against it in the King's Bench, where an adverse verdict was obtained, by the false swearing of a man whom the society subsequently convicted of wilful perjury. Still the death blow to the society was struck. Wesley writes: "They could never recover the expense of that suit. Lord, how long shall the ungodly triumph?"

In the early part of the year 1763, a shameful fraud was attempted upon Wesley, and is referred to in the following letter, published in the *London Chronicle.*

"April 5, 1763.

"SIR,—Some time since, I heard a man in the street bawling, 'The Scripture Doctrine of Imputed Righteousness, asserted and maintained by the Rev. John Wesley.' I was a little surprised, not having published anything on the head; and more so when, upon reading it over, I found not one line of it was mine, though I remembered to have *read* something like it. Soon after, to show what I really do maintain, I published 'Thoughts on the Imputed Righteousness of Christ': mentioning therein that 'pious fraud,' which constrained me so to do.

"The modest author of the former publication now prints a second edition of it, and faces me down before all the world, yea, and proves, that it is mine.

"Would you not wonder, by what argument? Oh, the plainest in the world. 'There is not,' says he, 'the least fraud in the publication, nor imposition on Mr. Wesley; for the words are transcribed from the ninth and tenth volumes of his Christian Library.' But the Christian Library is not Mr. Wesley's writing; it is 'Extracts from and Abridgments of other writers; the subject of which I highly approve, but I will not be accountable for every expression. Much less will I *father* eight pages of I know not what, which a shameless man has picked out of that work, tacked together in the manner he thought good, and then published in my name. He puts me in mind of what occurred some years since. A man was stretching his throat near Moorfields, and screaming out: 'A full and true Account of the Death of the Rev. George Whitefield.' One took hold of him, and said: 'Sirrah! what do you mean? Mr. Whitefield is yonder before you.' He shrugged up his shoulders, and said: 'Why, sir, an honest man must do something to turn a penny.'

"I am, sir, your humble servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."[18]

On the 16th of May, two months later than usual, Wesley left London for the north."[19] By travelling in postchaises, he reached Newcastle in three days, and in three more came to

Edinburgh, where he had an interview with his old friend Whitefield. He writes: "Humanly speaking, he is worn out; but we have to do with Him who hath all power in heaven and earth."

At Edinburgh, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland were holding their annual conference, and many of the ministers, nobility, and gentry flocked together to hear Wesley preach in the High School yard, at seven a.m. He says: "I spake as plain as ever I did in my life. But I never knew any in Scotland offended at plain dealing. In this respect, the north Britons are a pattern to all mankind."

One of Wesley's hearers, on this occasion, was Lady Frances Gardiner, the widow of the renowned Colonel Gardiner, who fell at the battle of Preston Pans. A month afterwards, this Christian lady wrote to him, congratulating him on sending Mr. Hanby and Mr. Roberts to Edinburgh, where their labours had been greatly blessed; and then adding: "I have never, I own, been at the preaching house in a morning yet, as they preach so early; but I ventured to the High School yard the morning you left Edinburgh; and it pleased God, even after I got home, to follow part of your sermon with a blessing to me."[20]

A year later, Wesley formed an acquaintance, at Edinburgh, with Lady Maxwell, who about the year 1761 had been left a widow, at nineteen years of age. She now became a Methodist; and, in 1770, for the purpose of affording a Christian education to poor children, she established a school

in Edinburgh, which she liberally sustained for forty years; and, at her death, made provision for its existence to the end of time.[21] In the same year, Wesley was introduced to Lady Glenorchy, who also, a few months afterwards, became a widow at the age of thirty-one, and opened a chapel, which had been a popish church, for the supply of which Wesley obtained the services of the Rev. Richard de Courcy; the agreement being that, while this young minister of the Church of England should take the principal duties of the chapel, one night in the week should be set apart for the preaching of Wesley's itinerants; and that liberty should be given to any presbyterian clergyman, who might be willing occasionally to officiate.[22] The plan was utopian, and was soon a failure.

Of the Methodist chapel which, during the year 1763, was built in Edinburgh,[23] we know nothing; but, in 1788, a second was erected, under the auspices of Zechariah Yewdall,[24] which Valentine Ward described as "a dirty, damp, dark, dangerous hole, seating six hundred people;[25] and which, twenty-seven years afterwards, was bought by the Edinburgh commissioners, for the sum of £1900, in order to build the bridge from Shakespeare Square to Calton Hill.[26]

During his present stay in Scotland, Wesley also preached at Dunbar, where, eleven years before, a company of English dragoons held a prayer-meeting, at which Andrew Affleck was converted; became a member of the Methodist society, which was then formed; and, for fifty-nine years, lived the life of an earnest Christian, and then expired, saying, "Dying is hard work, but the grace of God is sufficient for me."[27]

Wesley returned to Newcastle on the 1st of June, preaching at Alnwick and Morpeth on his way. In a few days, he proceeded to Barnardcastle, where there was a remarkable revival of religion. A few months before, the societies throughout "the dales," or Barnardcastle circuit, had been exceeding lifeless. Samuel Meggot recommended them to observe every Friday with fasting and prayer. The result has just been stated. Twenty in Barnardcastle had found peace with God, and twenty-eight had been sanctified.

For sixteen years, Methodism had existed in this small country town, and here, as in other places, had been baptized in suffering. Many a time had Catherine Graves, one of the first members, been hunted by the rabble, and been pricked with pins for the purpose of drawing blood, and thereby depriving her of the power of sorcery; but now the Barnardcastle Methodists, comparatively speaking, were no longer a feeble folk. They built themselves a chapel; and became the head of perhaps the widest Methodist circuit then existing. They were pious, but they were poor, and contributed, upon an average, not more than a farthing per member per week; and, of course, their circuit allowances were upon a corresponding scale. The following is a *verbatim et literatim* extract from their stewards' book, for the quarter ending Midsummer, 1768.

To Diner and Letters	£1	0	0
Mr. Rowell and Family	5	15	0
Mr. Bramer and Wife	5	15	0
Mr. Hunter and Wife	4	6	0
Mr. Fenwick	3	5	0
Mr. Rowell to the Conference.	2	2	0
Intrist	0	6	0
Mr. Bramer for the dockter	1	1	0
Mr. Rowell balance for his horse.	2	12	0
Mr. Bramah's House Rent	1	5	0
Quarter's Expenditure	£27	7	0

In other words, in 1768, three married Methodist ministers, and an unmarried one, cost the Barnardcastle circuit about £109 8*s*. a year; or, including house rent, doctors' bills, circuit horse, allowances for wives, conference expenses, and interest on borrowed money, about ten shillings and sixpence per minister per week. *O tempora! O mores!*

In his journey southwards, Wesley omitted visiting several of his preaching places in the north of Yorkshire. One of these was Helmsley, to which the following letter, by Dr. Conyers, refers.

"*June* 7, 1763.

"REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,—I have had information, from many hands, of your design of calling upon me at Helmsley, in your return from Scotland. I take this opportunity, frankly and freely, to declare to you, that

my house and my heart are, and ever shall be, open to you. I presume our archdeacon will be with me, from Stokesley, on Wednesday evening, as he always takes a bed, and spends a night or two with me, when he is upon his visitation, which is at this place on Friday next. How far you may alter your design of preaching here, on that account, I leave to yourself. I speak this not out of fear; for I love *you* as I love my own soul: my only apprehension is, that he, being upon the spot, may shut my church doors against you. But if you only mean a friendly visit to me, I shall be glad to see you, let who will be here; and it will be the comfort of my heart, to have you preach to my flock in every room of my house, at any time when you come this way. As far as the doctrine you teach has come to my knowledge, I know not one part to which I could not subscribe, both with hand and heart.

"I am, reverend and dear sir, your affectionate friend and servant in Christ,

"RICHARD CONYERS."[28]

On the 13th of June, Wesley came to Epworth, where, while he was preaching, "a kind of gentleman" hired a company of boys and a drunken man to disturb the congregation. The boys shouted; the drunkard, as well as he could articulate, bawled ribaldry and nonsense; and the gentleman, with a French horn, did his utmost in blowing blasts of discord; but, despite the hubbub, the congregation quietly listened to the preacher's sermon.

From Epworth, Wesley proceeded to Doncaster, Leeds, Dewsbury, and Manchester. While at Manchester, he paid his first visit to Matthew Mayer, at Portwood Hall, near Stockport, now a young man twenty-three years of age, a Methodist of about four years' standing, but who had found peace with God only a few months before. In conjunction with John Morris, he had established weekly prayer-meetings at Davyhulme, Dukinfield, Ashton under Lyne, and other places, in one of which John Whitehead, the biographer of Wesley, was converted. Wesley invited young Mayer to accompany him to Birmingham, which invitation was accepted; and thus commenced a remarkable career of earnest and successful preaching, which lasted fifty years. Matthew Mayer never became, in the common sense of the designation, an itinerant preacher; and yet he itinerated tens of thousands of miles; and there are few towns, or even large villages, in Cheshire, Staffordshire, Derbyshire, the south of Lancashire, or the west of Yorkshire, in which there were not numerous living witnesses of the Divine, converting power that attended his preaching. Matthew Mayer was one of the most remarkable local preachers that Methodism has ever had. He died in 1814, and Joseph Benson went all the way from London to Lancashire, in the depth of winter, purposely to preach his funeral sermon.

Wesley left Stockport on the 20th of June, and reached the metropolis four days afterwards. Finding that the ferment, arising out of Thomas Maxfield's separation, still continued, he resolved to remain in London until after his conference had met.

Unfortunately, no explicit record of the proceedings of this conference exists. It is known that the first edition of what are called "The Large Minutes" was published in 1753. A second edition, containing the added legislation of the last ten years, was issued in 1763. Comparing the two, we find the following decisions arrived at during the interval between the dates just mentioned.

1. "We believe the design of God, in raising up the preachers called Methodists, is to reform the nation, and, in particular, the Church; to spread scriptural holiness over the land."[29]

2. "The greatest hindrance to field preaching is to be expected from the rich, or cowardly, or lazy Methodists. But regard them not, neither stewards, leaders, nor people. Whenever the weather will permit, go out in God's name into the most public places, and call all to repent and believe the gospel. Every assistant, at least, in every circuit, should endeavour to preach abroad every Sunday; especially in the old societies, lest they settle upon their lees."[30]

3. In order to prevent strangers being present more than twice or thrice at society meetings, "See that all, in every place, show their tickets before they come in. If the stewards and leaders are not exact and impartial herein, employ others which have more resolution."[31]

4. "Examining and instructing the people" [under our care] "at their own houses, at times set apart for that purpose, has never been effectually done yet; though Thomas Walsh took some steps therein. Who will take up that cross? It will be of great use to others, and a blessing to his own soul. Do all you *can* herein, if not all you *would.* Inquire in each house, 'Have you family prayer? Do you read the Scripture in your family? Have you a fixed time for private prayer?' Examine each as to his growth in grace, and discharge of relative duties."[32]

5. "Should we insist everywhere on the band rules? particularly that relating to ruffles?

> "Answer. By all means. This is no time to give any encouragement to superfluity of apparel. Therefore, give no band tickets to any in England or Ireland, till they have left them off. In order to this, (1) Read, in every society, the 'Thoughts concerning Dress.' (2) In visiting the classes, be very mild, but very strict. (3) Allow no exempt case, not even of a married woman; better one suffer than many.

"To encourage meeting in band: (1) In every large society, have a lovefeast quarterly for the bands only. (2) Never fail to meet them, apart from the society, once a week. (3) Exhort all believers to embrace the advantage. (4) Give a band ticket to none till they have met a quarter on trial."[33]

6. "At each meeting of children, in every place, we may first set them a lesson in the 'Instructions,' or 'Tokens for Children.' (2) Hear them repeat it. (3) Explain it to them in an easy, familiar manner. (4) Often ask, 'What have I been saying?' and strive to fasten it on their hearts."[34]

7. "Ought any woman to marry without the consent of her parents?

> "Answer. In general she ought not. Yet there may be an exception. For if (1) a woman be under necessity of marrying; if (2) her parents absolutely refuse to let her marry any Christian: then she may, nay ought, to marry without their consent. Yet even then a Methodist preacher ought not to marry her."[35]

8. "Read the sermon upon evil speaking, in every society. Extirpate smuggling, buying or selling uncustomed goods, out of every society; particularly in Cornwall, and in all seaport towns. Let no person remain with us, who will not totally abstain from every kind and degree of it. Extirpate bribery; receiving anything, directly or indirectly, for voting in any election. Show no respect of persons herein, but expel all who touch the accursed thing. Let this be particularly observed at Grimsby and St. Ives."[36]

9. Let every preacher in town "examine carefully what state the sick is in; and instruct, reprove, or exhort accordingly."[37]

10. "Rarely spend above an hour at a time in conversing with any one. Earnestly recommend the five o'clock hour to all."[38]

11. The preachers were requested to offer constantly and fervently, at set times, private, family, and public prayer; consisting of deprecation, petition, intercession, and thanksgiving. They were to forecast, wherever they were, how to secure the hour at five in the evening, and the hour before or after morning preaching, for private devotion. They were constantly to read the Scriptures, Wesley's tracts, and the Christian Library. They were to devote their mornings to reading, writing, prayer, and meditation. They were always to have a New Testament in their pockets; and were to see that Wesley's Notes thereon were in every society, and were to explain them to the congregations. They were devoutly to use the Lord's supper at every opportunity. They were advised to fast every Friday, Wesley avowing his purpose generally to eat only vegetables on Friday, and to take only toast and water in the morning. They were to meet every society weekly; also the leaders, and the bands, if any. They were diligently to inquire into the state of the books, to do all they could to propagate them. They were to keep watchnights once a month, and lovefeasts twice a year for the whole society. They were to visit

every society once a quarter; to take a regular catalogue of the members, at least, once a year; and to write Wesley an account of all the defects of "the common preachers," which they could not themselves cure. They were steadily to watch against the world, the devil, themselves, and besetting sins; and to deny themselves every useless pleasure of sense, imagination, and honour. They were recommended to use only that kind and that degree of food, which was best both for the body and the soul; to eat no flesh and no late suppers; and to take only three meals a day.[39]

12. "What can be done to make the people sing true?

"Answer. (1) Learn to sing true yourselves. (2) Recommend the tunes everywhere. (3) If a preacher cannot sing himself, let him choose two or three persons in every place, to pitch the tune for him."[40]

13. "What is it best to take after preaching?

"Answer. Lemonade; candied orange peel; or a little soft, warm ale. But egg and wine is downright poison. And so are late suppers."[41]

14. Preachers on probation were "not to ramble up and down, but to go where the assistant directed, and there only."[42]

15. No one was to exhort in any of the societies without a note of recommendation from the assistant, which was to be renewed yearly.[43]

16. To make the Methodists sensible of the excellency of Kingswood school, every assistant was to read an account of it yearly; to exhort parents, who were able, to send their children thither; to answer all their objections, and refute all the lies they had heard about it; and to make a collection for it, at Midsummer, in every preaching house throughout England.[44]

17. "Has the office of an assistant been thoroughly executed? "Answer. No; not by one assistant out of three. For instance, every assistant ought (1) To 'see that the other preachers behave well.' But who has sent me word whether they did or no? (2) 'To visit the classes, regulate the bands, and deliver tickets quarterly.' How few have done this! (3) Lovefeasts for the bands have been neglected. (4) Nor have persons been regularly taken in, and put out of, the bands. (5) I fear many of the quarterly meetings are formal, not spiritual. (6) The societies are not half supplied with books; not even with 'Kempis,' 'Instructions for Children,' and. 'Primitive Physic,' which ought to be in every house. And why should not each of you do like William Pennington—carry books with you through every round? Exert yourselves in this. Be not ashamed. Be not weary. Leave no stone unturned. And let none print anything of his own, till it has been approved by the

conference. (7) How few accounts have I had, either of remarkable deaths or remarkable conversions! (8) How few exact lists have we received of the societies! Take more time and more pains in preparing them. (9) Who of you has met the married and single men and women once a quarter, even in the largest societies? (10) You have not provided a private room everywhere for the preacher; nor a bed to himself; neither the 'Library,' for want of which some still read trash. Till this can be done, let there be, immediately, in every place, at least the 'Notes,' and the tract on original sin."[45]

18. "Is there any other advice which you would give assistants?

> "Answer. Yes. In every place, exhort those who were brought up in the Church, constantly to attend its service. And in visiting the classes, ask every one, 'Do you go to church as often as ever you did?' Set the example yourself. And immediately alter every plan that interferes therewith. Is there not a cause for this? Are we not unawares, by little and little, tending to a separation from the Church? Oh remove every tendency thereto with all diligence. (1) Let all our preachers go to church. (2) Let all our people go constantly. (3) Receive the sacrament at every opportunity. (4) Warn all against niceness in hearing; a great and prevailing evil. (5) Warn them likewise against despising the prayers of the Church. (6)

> Against calling our society a church, or the church. (7) Against calling our preachers ministers, our houses meeting-houses (call them plain preaching houses). (9) Do not license them as such. The proper form of a petition to the judge is, 'A. B. desires to have his house in C. licensed for public worship.' (10) Do not license yourself, till you are constrained; and then not as a Dissenter, but a Methodist preacher. It is time enough when you are prosecuted, to take the oaths. Thereby you are licensed."[46]

19. "What do you advise with regard to public buildings?

> "Answer. (1) Let none be undertaken without the consent of the assistant. (2) Build, if possible, in the form of Rotherham house. (3) Settle it in the following form."

Here follows the trust deed for the chapel in Manchester, to the effect that, during their lifetime, Wesley, his brother, and Grimshaw of Haworth, and others, whom they might appoint, should have the use of the said chapel; and that, after their death, the trustees should permit such persons to preach in it as were appointed by the yearly conference; provided always, that such persons preach no other doctrine than is contained in Wesley's Notes upon the New Testament, and his four volumes of sermons, and provided also, that they preach

—— evenings in every week, and at five o'clock on each morning following.[47]

20. "How may we raise a general fund?

"Answer. By a yearly subscription, to be proposed by every assistant when he visits the classes at Christmas, and to be received at the visitation following."

To this end, the assistant was to enlarge on the following hints. (1) That the debts on the chapels of the Connexion amounted to about £4000. (2) That God had raised up preachers, and that they were greatly needed; but could not be employed for want of money to find them food. (3) That, in order to quell riotous mobs, it was necessary to have recourse to the King's Bench, and that a suit there usually cost £50 or £60, which must be met by a general contribution.[48]

21. "How may provision be made for old or worn out preachers?

"Answer. As to their employ, they may be supernumerary preachers, or assistants, in those circuits wherein there is most need. As to their subsistence,—(1) Let every travelling preacher contribute ten shillings yearly. (2) Let this be lodged in the hands of three stewards, approved of by the majority of the preachers. (3) Out of this, let what is needful be allowed yearly; first for the old or sickly preachers and

their families; then for the widows and children of those that are dead."[49]

22. "If God should call you away, what would be the most probable means of preventing the people from being scattered?

"Answer. Let all the assistants, for the time being, immediately go up to London, and consult what steps are fittest to be taken. And God will then make the way plain before them."[50]

We have thus endeavoured, in as brief a form as possible, to embody all the points, in the Minutes published in 1763, that are not contained in the previous publication of 1753. Some of these are curious, and others of the greatest consequence. Three connexional funds are sanctioned and recommended. A trust deed for chapels is supplied. Continued union with the Church of England is strongly urged. To say nothing of the discipline prescribed for the preachers, and for the people, these were matters of the utmost moment, and deserve more attention than we have space to give them. Facts are furnished; the reader himself must ponder them.

Before leaving the conference of 1763, it may be added, that its sessions were held in the chapel at Spitalfields; and that Howel Harris was present, and exhorted the preachers to have faith in God, and whenever they met a man, in any of their journeyings, to speak to him about his soul. "If I meet a poor man," said he, "I give him a halfpenny, if I have one; but

I always remember that the man has a soul as well as a body, and therefore I say something to him respecting his salvation. And if I meet a rich man, why should I be afraid of him? For aught I know, he may be worse than the beast he rides upon. Perhaps the beast carries the devil upon its back."[51]

The conference being ended, Wesley set out, on the 15th of August, perhaps in company with Howel Harris, to the principality of Wales. At all events, four days afterwards, he reached Trevecca, and wrote: "Howel Harris's house is one of the most elegant places which I have seen in Wales. The little chapel, and all things round about it, are finished in an uncommon taste; and the gardens, orchards, fish-ponds, and mount adjoining, make the place a little paradise. He thanks God for these things, and looks through them. About sixscore persons are now in the family; all diligent, all constantly employed; all fearing God and working righteousness."

Wesley continues: "August 20.—We took horse at four in the morning, and rode through one of the pleasantest countries in the world. I will be bold to say, all England does not afford such a line of fifty miles' length, for fields, meadows, woods, brooks, and gently rising mountains, fruitful to the very top."

On completing his Welsh tour, Wesley wrote: "I was more convinced than ever, that the preaching like an apostle, without joining together those that are awakened, and training them up in the ways of God, is only begetting children for the murderer. How much preaching has there been for these

twenty years all over Pembrokeshire! But no regular societies, no discipline, no order or connection; and the consequence is, that nine in ten of the once awakened are now faster asleep than ever."

These are weighty words, and well worth pondering by those, in modern days, who advocate a revision of the laws respecting Methodists meeting together in weekly class. Wesley spoke from experience; these are theorists, who, in the absence of experience, will do well to hesitate before they step.

During his journey in Wales, Wesley informed himself respecting a Welsh extravagance, referred to in the following letter, published in *Lloyd's Evening Post*, for June 27, 1763.

> "There is here" [at Lancroyes] "what some call a great reformation in religion among the Methodists; but the case is really this. They have a sort of rustic dance in their public worship, which they call religious dancing, in imitation of David's dancing before the ark, Some of them strip off their clothes, crying out, Hosannah, etc., in imitation of those that attended our Saviour when He rode into Jerusalem. They call this the glory of the latter day; and when any person speaks to them of their extravagance, the answer they give is, 'You have the mark of the enemy in your forehead.' Such are the delusion and uncharitableness of this people."

These Welsh jumpers are called Methodists; but they were Methodists over whom Wesley had no control. He writes:

> "1763, August 27.—Mr. Evans gave me an account, from his own knowledge, of what has made a great noise in Wales. 'It is common, in the 'congregations attended by Mr. W. W., and one or two other clergymen, after the preaching is over, for any one that has a mind, to give out a verse of a hymn. This they sing over and over with all their might, perhaps above thirty, yea, forty times. Meanwhile the bodies of two or three, sometimes ten or twelve, are violently agitated; and they leap up and down, in all manner of postures, frequently for hours together.' I think, there needs no great penetration to understand this. They are honest, upright men, who really feel the love of God in their hearts. But they have little experience, either of the ways of God, or the devices of Satan. So he serves himself in their simplicity, in order to wear them out, and to bring a discredit on the work of God."

Strangely enough this jumping in public worship found an advocate in good William Williams, the Welsh hymnist, who wrote a pamphlet in defence of it.[52] To the injury of religion it was perpetuated for many years.

At the end of August, Wesley came to Bristol, in the neighbourhood of which he remained a month, frequently preaching out of doors, and expressing the opinion, that in no other way could the outcasts of men be reached. He cautioned

the Bristol Methodists, not to "love the world, neither the things of the world"; and writes, in language and tone which ought to be a warning to the Methodists of the present day: "This will be their grand danger; as they are industrious and frugal, they must needs increase in goods. This appears already; in London, Bristol, and most other trading towns, those who are in business have increased in substance sevenfold, some of them twenty, yea, an hundredfold. What need, then, have these of the strongest warnings, lest they be entangled therein, and perish!"

On October 1, he returned to London, and says: "I found our house in ruins, great part of it being taken down, in order to a thorough repair. But as much remained as I wanted; six foot square suffices me by day or by night." He adds: "All this week, I endeavoured to confirm those who had been shaken as to the important doctrine of Christian perfection, either by its wild defenders, or wise opposers, who much availed themselves of that wildness."

He then made a three weeks' tour to Norwich, where he read the rules of the society, adding: "Those who are resolved to keep these rules may continue with us, and those only." He told them he would immediately put a stop to Methodist preaching in the time of Church service; and wound up by saying: "For many years I have had more trouble with this society, than with half the societies of England put together. With God's help, I will try you one year longer; and I hope you will bring forth better fruit."

On October 29, Wesley returned to London, where he continued the remainder of the year. He visited the classes, and found that, since February, one hundred and seventy-five persons had left the society, one hundred and six of whom were Thomas Maxfield's friends. All his leisure hours he employed in reading over, with the London preachers, the publications of himself and his brother; considering the objections that had been made against them; and correcting whatever they judged wrong either in matter or expression.

Hitherto Wesley had consorted but little with Dissenting ministers. He had visited Doddridge, and had been in friendly communication with Gillies and a few of the presbyterians of North Britain; but that was well-nigh all. With a heart big enough to embrace all men, without distinction of nation, sect, or colour, he had, hitherto, intentionally or otherwise, been as exemplary an observer of the etiquette of episcopal caste as almost any high church ritualist could wish. In December, 1763, he added to his friends the presbyterian minister of Staplehurst, in Kent. A few months before, the Rev. Jacob Chapman, the minister alluded to, wrote to Wesley, saying: "I am a minister of the presbyterian denomination; but my Master has enabled me to love real Christians of all denominations. I have reason to bless God for my acquaintance with the Methodists; they have been great blessings to me and my dear wife. The Lord has inclined us to receive the preachers most freely and joyfully."[53] Mr. Chapman was not an episcopalian; but he was a Christian, and, on December 7, Wesley went to visit him. He writes: "Mr. Chapman, who loves all that love Christ, received us

gladly. At six, the congregation, gathered from many miles round, seemed just ripe for the gospel; so that, contrary to my custom in a new place, I spoke merely of 'the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.'"

Immediately after Wesley's return to London, Mr. Chapman wrote him as follows.

"STAPLEHURST, *December* 10, 1763.

"REVEREND SIR,—You shall be always most heartily welcome to the best part of my house, for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ, whose you are, and whom you serve. Whatever preachers you send, we shall joyfully receive, be their opinions what they may. I would like those best, who are most like Christ. I very greatly approve of the rules of the society, and very fervently love you; and I trust never to let a day pass without praying for you. I make no doubt, the lay preachers are sent by our Lord as extraordinary messengers; and that His design is, that they should *go about* calling poor sinners to repent and believe the gospel, and consequently that they are *not to settle* anywhere. This is a very difficult office. The Lord strengthen them for the arduous undertaking."[54]

The friendship, thus begun, was long continued. Mr. Chapman's house and chapel were open to the Methodist preachers. He himself became a member of the Methodist society, and was as docile and humble as though he had been one of the most illiterate among the people. His stipend was

£80 per annum; he lived on £20, and gave away the rest in charity. He almost, if not entirely, used a vegetarian diet, and principally for the purpose of being able to relieve the necessities of his poorer brethren. He survived Wesley; and when visited by Robert Miller, about the year 1790, gave him the heartiest welcome, saying: "I have entertained the preachers for seven-and-twenty years, and hope they will never forsake me while I live." Mr. Miller adds: "Mr. Chapman was one of the best men I ever knew";[55] and good old John Reynolds testified: "Of all the men of God, with whom I have had the happiness to be acquainted, in a life of more than threescore years, I have never known one who appeared to possess so much of the mind of Christ as Mr. Chapman."[56]

The world is full of changes. Man's circle of acquaintance alters in character, though not materially in size. New friends spring up on earth; but old friends are removed to heaven. Thus it was with Wesley. In 1763, he became acquainted with Mr. Chapman; in the same year, he was bereaved of Dr. Byrom.

Byrom was the son of a linen draper, and born at Kersal, near Manchester, in 1691. After being educated in his native town, and at the Merchant Taylors' school in London, he was, at the age of sixteen, admitted a pensioner of Trinity college, Cambridge. In 1714, he was elected fellow of his college, and, in the same year, became a contributor to Addison's *Spectator*. Two years later, he resigned his college preferment, and went to Montpelier, to study physic. On his

return to England, he assumed the office of teacher of shorthand writing, of which he was preeminently a master. On the death of his brother, he came into possession of the family estate, at Kersal, and gave himself up to the enjoyment of domestic and social felicity. He was a profound admirer of the great English mystic, William Law; but was also a man of unaffected piety. At a time when much obloquy was attached to the name of Methodist, he was not ashamed of being known as the particular friend of Wesley. He died September 28, 1763.[57] His only son died ten years afterwards.[58]

In many respects, Byrom was a remarkable man. In stature, he was one of the tallest men in England; so that, in the course of fifty years, he appears to have met only two others taller than himself.[59] In stenography, he was the greatest proficient then existing. The extent, variety, and accuracy of his literary studies were amazing, as is shown by his manuscripts still extant. There seems hardly to have been any language, or which the literature was of any value, which he did not master; and his writing of Hebrew, Arabic, etc., was such as the engraver might vainly attempt to imitate.[60] His poetry, quaint but pungent, is too well known to need description. As a specimen of it, and of his politics, the following is far from being bad:

"God bless the King, and bless the Faith's Defender;
God bless—no harm in blessing—the Pretender;
But who Pretender is, and who is King,
Why, bless us all, that's quite another thing."[61]

Wesley inserted not a few of his poems in the old *Arminian* magazines; and writes: "It cannot be denied, that he was a man of uncommon genius, a man of the finest and strongest understanding; and, yet, very few even of his countrymen and contemporaries have so much as heard his name."[62] "He has all the wit and humour of Dr. Swift, together with much more learning, and, above all, a serious vein of piety. A few things, in the second volume of his poems, are taken from Jacob Behmen; to whom I object, not only, that he is obscure, and not only, that his whole hypothesis is wholly unsupported either by Scripture or reason; but also, because the ingenious madman over and over contradicts Christian experience, reason, Scripture, and himself. But setting these things aside, we have" [in Dr. Byrom's poems,] "some of the finest sentiments that ever appeared in the English tongue; some of the noblest truths, expressed with the utmost energy, and the strongest colours of poetry."[63]

One or two other matters, belonging to this period of Wesley's history, must be mentioned.

The increase of Methodism was one of Wesley's difficulties, as well as his great encouragement. His societies, especially the larger ones, naturally wished to receive the sacrament in their own chapels: but as Wesley had no clerical helper, entirely devoted to the work, except his brother; and as he himself was almost always itinerating, it was physically impossible to meet the demands of London, Bristol, and other places. Neither of the Wesleys was prepared to allow the unordained preachers to administer, and they themselves were

utterly unable to attend to the reasonable claims of all that wanted them. Hence the difficulty. This was partly met, when Thomas Maxfield received ordination from an Irish bishop. For several years, Maxfield was stationed in London, to read the liturgy and to administer the sacrament in Wesley's absence. But now Maxfield had left him, and his embarrassment was greater than ever. One of his principal helpers was John Jones, a man of considerable learning, of good abilities, and of deep piety, and who, for seventeen years, had faithfully acted the part of an itinerant preacher. Just at this juncture, Erasmus, a bishop of the Greek church, visited London; and, as it was impossible to obtain ordination, for the Methodist preachers, from the bishops of the English Church, it occurred to Wesley, that it might be expedient to apply to Erasmus to ordain Mr. Jones. Previous, however, to doing this, Wesley felt it necessary to satisfy himself, that Erasmus really was a bishop. By his direction, Jones wrote to the patriarch of Smyrna on the subject; and received an answer, stating that Erasmus was bishop of Arcadia in Crete. To this was added the testimony of several gentlemen who had met the eastern prelate in Turkey. Wesley says, "he had abundant unexceptionable credentials as to his episcopal character."[64] Being fully satisfied of this, Wesley requested him to set apart Mr. Jones, to assist him in administering the sacrament to his societies. Erasmus did so; and, if the matter had ended here, the thing would hardly have deserved further notice.

No sooner was it known, however, that one of the itinerants had been ordained, than several others applied to

the good tempered bishop for the same episcopal favour. The following appeared in *Lloyd's Evening Post*, for December 7, 1764.

> "To the article in the papers relating to three tradesmen being ordained by a Greek bishop, another may be added, a master baker. And two celebrated Methodist preachers made also an application to the same bishop, to consecrate one or both of them bishops; but the Greek told them, it was contrary to the rule of his church for *one* bishop to make another: yet, notwithstanding all he said, they very unwillingly took a denial."

Whether this was strictly true, we can hardly tell; but certain it is, that John Jones, Samson Staniforth, Thomas Bryant, and others were ordained. The result was, Charles Wesley took huge offence; and, shortly after, Mr. Jones was obliged to leave the connexion; Samson Staniforth had to refrain from exercising his priestly functions; and Thomas Bryant put on a gown, and made a rent in the Methodist society of Sheffield.[65]

The unpleasantness did not end even here. In 1771, Augustus Toplady, one of Wesley's bitterest opponents, published "A Letter to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley," in which he revived the thing. With his unenviable scurrility, he called Erasmus "a foreign mendicant"; and said: "to this day, the Greek church in Amsterdam believes him to be an impostor."

He also supplied a certificate, written in Greek, of which the following is a translation.

"Our measure from the grace, gift, and power of the All-holy and Life-giving Spirit, given by our Saviour Jesus Christ to His Divine and holy apostles, to ordain subdeacons and deacons; and also, to advance to the dignity of a priest; of this grace which hath descended to our humility, I have ordained subdeacon and deacon, at Snowfields chapel, on the 19th day of November, 1764, and at Wells Street chapel on the 24th of the same month, priest the reverend Mr. W. C.[66] according to the rules of the holy apostles, and of our faith. Moreover, I have given to him power to minister and teach, in all the world, the gospel of Jesus Christ, no one forbidding him in the church of God. Wherefore, for that very purpose, I have made this present letter of recommendation from our humility, and have given it to the ordained Mr. W. C. for his certificate and security.

"Given and written at London, in Britain, November 24, 1764.

"ERASMUS, Bishop of Arcadia."

Toplady proceeds to ask Wesley four insinuating questions.

"1. Did you get him to ordain several of your lay preachers according to the Greek ritual? 2. Did not these preachers both dress and officiate as clergymen of the Church of England, in consequence of that ordination;

and under your own sanction and approbation? Nay, did you not repeatedly declare, that their ordination was, to all intents and purposes, as valid as your own? 3. Did you not strongly press this supposed Greek bishop to consecrate you a bishop, that you might be invested with a power of ordaining what ministers you pleased, to officiate in your societies as clergymen? And did he not refuse to consecrate you, alleging this for his reason,—That, according to the canons of the Greek church, more than one bishop must be present to assist at the consecration of a new one? 4. In all this, did you not palpably violate the oath of supremacy, which you have repeatedly taken? part of which runs thus: 'I do declare, that no foreign prince, person, prelate, state, or potentate, hath, or ought to have, any jurisdiction, power, superiority, preeminence, or authority, ecclesiastical or spiritual, within this realm.'"

How much truth was there in all this? It will be seen, that the pretended certificate was signed only a fortnight before the statement, already quoted, appeared in *Lloyd's Evening Post.* Both the chapels mentioned were Wesley's chapels. Alexander Mather, who had been six years in the itinerancy, was a baker before he entered it, and had a considerable amount of innocent ambition. Wesley was in great difficulty arising from the want of ordained preachers to administer the sacraments; and, though he had long held the theory of Lord King, that, according to New Testament teaching, every presbyter was, in reality, a bishop; and therefore, that he himself, being a presbyter, was also a bishop, and as fully

authorised to ordain others as any bishop in the world; yet, for prudential reasons, this was an authority which, at present, he was not prepared to exercise: and, hence, it would not have been surprising if he had made the application to Erasmus which it is surmised he did.

All this gives considerable plausibility to the half affirmative queries of Augustus Toplady. On the other hand, however, we have the absolute declaration of Wesley himself, that Erasmus never rejected any overture that he made to him;[67] and, if this were so, it follows that, either Erasmus did actually ordain him a bishop (which no one ventures to assert); or, that Toplady's insinuation is calumniously untrue. To this, also, must be added, the testimony of Thomas Olivers, who with Wesley's consent,[68] if not at his request, replied to Toplady's attack; namely, that though Wesley did get Erasmus to ordain John Jones, and though John Jones did dress as a clergyman of the Church of England, and did assist Wesley in administering the Lord's supper in the Methodist societies, yet Wesley had authorised him (Olivers) to give the most positive and unqualified denial to the insinuation, that he had asked Erasmus to ordain himself to the high office of a bishop. "But," continues Olivers, "suppose he had, where would have been the blame? Mr. Wesley is connected with a number of persons who have given every proof, which the nature of the thing allows, that they have an *inward call* to preach the gospel. Both he and they would be glad if they had *an outward* call too. But no bishop in *England* will give it them. What wonder then, if he was to endeavour to procure it by any other innocent means?"[69]

This was written in 1771, only six or seven years after the alleged events took place. Which is likeliest to be true—the bitter insinuation of a malignant opponent like Toplady; or the positive assertion of Wesley himself, and the authorised declaration of Wesley's friend Olivers? Here the matter must be left. Though somewhat tedious, it is also important, as tending to show, that the growth of Methodism was one of Wesley's greatest difficulties, and rendered it absolutely imperative—either that he should make the Methodists Dissenters; or, that he should procure episcopal ordination for his preachers; or, that he should do something else, which he tried to do in 1764, and which will have to be noticed in the year following.

Wesley's life was a continued warfare. In 1763, there was published, "A Caution against Religious Delusion: a sermon preached at the visitation of the Archdeacon of Ely, in the church of St. Michael, Cambridge, on Thursday, May 19, 1763. By William Backhouse, M.A., fellow of Christ's college, and vicar of Meldreth." 8vo, 20 pages. Of course, this was another attack on Methodism. Methodist preachers are "modern pretenders to supernatural informations"; they are "hurried away with the exorbitancies of ungoverned piety"; they are "enthusiastic preachers, who are mindful enough of one part of St. Paul's injunction to Timothy, 'to give attendance to *exhortation,* and to *doctrine,'* but alas! if they really would, they could not give heed to the first and fundamental part of it—*reading."*

Another onslaught was made by a greater Church dignitary than Mr. Backhouse. Dr. Thomas Rutherforth was a fellow of the Royal Society, archdeacon of Essex, regius professor of divinity at Cambridge, and an author of repute; though Warburton says of him: "If he knows no more of theology than he does of morals, he is the meanest pedant of the age." In 1763, Rutherforth published "Four Charges to the Clergy of the Archdeaconry of Essex"; in which he took the liberty to tell his readers, that though "the Methodists pretend to be the genuine sons of the Church of England, they adopt the language and opinions of the conventicle; for they maintain, that every believer, provided he has the gift of utterance, is qualified to preach, and that human learning is rather an impediment than otherwise." His pamphlet of ninety-five pages, octavo, is dull and dreary, though upon the whole, respectful. Five years afterwards, Wesley wrote an answer to it, from which the following are extracts. Rutherforth charges Wesley with maintaining contradictions. Wesley replies:—

> "If all my sentiments were compared together, from the year 1725 to 1768, there would be truth in the charge; for, during the latter part of this period, I have relinquished several of my former sentiments. During these last thirty years, I may also have varied in some of my sentiments and expressions without observing it. I will not undertake to defend all the expressions which I have occasionally used during this time, but must desire men of candour to make allowance for those

'Quas aut incuria fudit,
Aut humana parum cavit natura.'

It is not strange if, among these inaccurate expressions, there are some seeming contradictions, especially considering, I was answering so many different objectors, frequently attacking me at once. Nevertheless, I believe there will be found few, if any, real contradictions in what I have published for near thirty years."

Again, Dr. Rutherforth had objected to the Methodists, on the ground of their doctrine of assurance. Wesley's reply to this is well worth pondering.

"I believe a few, but very few, Christians have an assurance from God of everlasting salvation; and that is the thing which the apostle terms *full assurance of hope.*

"I believe more have such an assurance of being now in the favour of God as excludes all doubt and fear; and this, if I do not mistake, the apostle means by the *full assurance of faith.*

"I believe a consciousness of being in the favour of God, (which I do not term *full assurance,* since it is frequently weakened, nay, perhaps interrupted, by returns of doubt or fear,) is the common privilege of Christians, fearing God. and working righteousness. Yet I do not affirm there are no exceptions to this general

rule; but, I believe, this is usually owing either to disorder of body, or to ignorance of the gospel promises. Therefore, I have not, for many years, thought a consciousness of acceptance to be essential to justifying faith.

"After I have thus explained myself once for all, I hope all reasonable men will be satisfied; and whoever will dispute with me on this head must do it for disputing's sake."

Rutherforth's main accusation, however, is that the Methodists teach, that "Christianity rejects the aid of human learning." To this Wesley replies: "Mr. Berridge thinks it does; but I am not accountable for him, from whom, in this, I totally differ." In proof of this he appeals to his "deliberate thoughts on human learning" in his "Serious Address to the Clergy"; to his establishment of Kingswood school; and to the fact that, though his preachers did not profess to know the languages and philosophy, yet some of them understood both one and the other better than great part of his pupils at the university did. He continues:

"What I believe concerning learning is this: that it is highly expedient for a guide of souls, but not absolutely necessary. What I believe to be absolutely necessary is, a faith unfeigned, the love of God and our neighbour, a burning zeal for the advancement of Christ's kingdom, with a heart and life wholly devoted to God. These I judge to be necessary in the highest degree; and next to

these a competent knowledge of Scripture, a sound understanding, a tolerable utterance, and a willingness to be as the filth and offscouring of the world."[70]

Noble words are these of Wesley. Let all Methodist quarterly and district meetings and conferences act upon them.

The most furious attack on Wesley, in 1763, was by Warburton, bishop of Gloucester, in an octavo volume of 259 pages, first published in 1762, and entitled, "The Doctrine of Grace: or, The Office and Operations of the Holy Spirit vindicated from the Insults of Infidelity, and the Abuses of Fanaticism." Warburton allows, that Wesley is "an extraordinary man"; but finds fault with him for having "laid claim to almost every apostolic gift and grace in as full a measure as they were possessed of old." In earnest raillery, and trenchant language, the Gloucester prelate professes to establish this, by citations from Wesley's Journals. To attempt a summary of his episcopal scoldings is impracticable; indeed, it would be of little use. It is a curious fact, that Warburton sent the manuscript to Wesley before the work was printed, with a request to notice its errors. Wesley says: "the manuscript abounded with quotations from poets, philosophers, etc., both in Greek and Latin. After correcting the false readings, improper glosses, and other errors, I returned it."[71] This incident helps to explain a sentence in one of Wesley's letters to his brother, dated "January 5, 1762": "I was a little surprised to find Bishop Warburton so entirely

unacquainted with the New Testament; and, notwithstanding all his parade of learning, I believe he is no critic in Greek."[72]

Wesley lost no time in replying to Warburton's attack. This he did, in "A Letter to the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of Gloucester. Occasioned by his tract on the office and operations of the Holy Spirit. London: 1763." 12mo, 144 pages. The character and substance of Wesley's answer may be inferred from its concluding paragraphs.

> "I have now finished what I had to say, either concerning myself, or on the operations of the Holy Spirit. In doing this, I have used great plainness of speech, and yet, I hope, without rudeness. If anything of that kind has slipped from me, I am ready to retract it. I desire, on the one hand, to *accept no man's person;* and yet, on the other, to give *honour to whom honour is due.*
>
> "If your lordship should think it worth your while to spend any more words upon me, may I presume to request one thing of your lordship,—to be more *serious?* It cannot injure your lordship's *character,* or your *cause."*

Warburton's book was principally an attack on Wesley and Conyers Middleton; but as the title page, at least, referred to the "office and operations of the Holy Spirit," others, beside Wesley, deemed it their duty to call the jaunty bishop to account for his errors and omissions. Whitefield, I though

scarcely alluded to by Warburton, sent forth a pamphlet of twenty-four pages, in which he charges the bishop with having, "in effect, robbed the church of its promised Comforter; and, thereby, left us without any supernatural influence or Divine operations whatsoever." The Rev. John Andrews, LL.B., of St. Mary hall, Oxford, published a book of 224 pages to correct his lordship's notions; and soon after was dismissed from a small Church benefice the prelate had previously bestowed upon him. John Payne also, once a bookseller, but afterwards accountant of the Bank of England, issued a volume of five hundred pages, accusing the bishop of unfairness to Mr. Law. Dr. Thomas Leland, a fellow of Trinity college, Dublin, the most admired preacher of that city, and whose classical learning Dr. Johnson considered to be unrivalled, gave to the world his "Dissertation on the Principles of Human Eloquence," in which he refuted the arguments used by Warburton in reference to the style and composition of the New Testament. Thus the irate bishop got into a nest of hornets. Wesley considered, that he himself had so *"untwisted the bishop's arguments,"* that to put them together again was a thing impossible.[73] Andrews so stung his lordship, that he was soon dismissed from his benefice. And Leland so vanquished his antagonist, that, instead of the bishop defending his own, Dr. Hurd, in a tone of sarcasm and contempt, thought proper to answer on behalf of his episcopal master, and, three years afterwards, was made archdeacon of his master's diocese. Samuel Charndler, also, of Newington, appeared as the bishop's champion, in "An Answer to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley's Letter to William, Lord Bishop of Gloucester." 8vo, 22 pages. With no slight degree of egotism,

he tells his readers, that his "remarks are not the fruits of idle conceit, or mere conjecture, not party suggestions, or newfangled notions, but a plain series of well considered thoughts." He informs Wesley, that Methodist "doctrine has filled Bedlam and the several madhouses in England with shoals of patients"; that he had "occasioned many and great violations of the peace"; and that he is "well skilled in the rudiments of deceit." Poor Samuel Charndler, by the side of Bishop Warburton, was a Lilliputian playing antics in the presence of a Patagonian giant.

The other publications of Wesley, in 1763, were as follows.

1. "Letters wrote by Jane Cooper, to which is prefixed some account of her Life and Death." 12mo, 41 pages. Jane Cooper was born in Norfolk, in 1738; and, in the twentieth year of her age, came to London as a domestic servant; was converted; and joined the Methodists. Four years afterwards she died of smallpox, and Wesley buried her. She was evidently one of Wesley's pattern saints, and professed to live in the enjoyment of Christian holiness. Indeed, her experience forms a part of Wesley's "Plain Account of Christian Perfection." Considering her social position, her letters are remarkable productions. "All here," says Wesley, "is strong, sterling sense, strictly agreeable to sound reason. Here are no extravagant flights, no mystic reveries, no unscriptural enthusiasm. The sentiments are all just and noble; the result of a fine natural understanding, cultivated by conversation, thinking, reading, and true Christian experience." The last

words of this servant maid were: "My Jesus is all in all to me; glory be to Him through time and eternity." Wesley calls her "a pattern of all holiness, and of the wisdom which is from above."

2. "Farther Thoughts upon Christian Perfection." 12mo, 39 pages. This has been already noticed.

3. As also the following: "A Sermon preached before the Society for the Reformation of Manners; on Sunday, January 30, 1763. At the chapel in West Street, Seven Dials." 8vo, 31 pages. At the end of it, the names of five gentlemen are given, who would receive subscriptions to the funds of the society, on behalf of which it was delivered.

4. The substance also of another pamphlet has been already given: "Minutes of several Conversations between the Rev. Mr. John and Charles Wesley, and others." 12mo, 30 pages.

5. The "Sermon on Sin in Believers" was written March 28, 1763. Its object is to refute the doctine of Zinzendorf, that *all* true believers are *entirely* sanctified. The sermon is one of Wesley's ablest homilies; and, doubtless, had its origin in the excitement arising out of the subject of Christian perfection. "I wrote it," says he, "in order to remove a mistake which some were labouring to propagate,—that there is no sin in any that are justified."

6. "An Extract from Milton's 'Paradise Lost,' with Notes." 18mo, 320 pages. Wesley's object, in this publication, may be

gathered from his preface. "This inimitable work, amidst all its beauties, is unintelligible to abundance of readers: the immense learning, which Milton has everywhere crowded together, making it quite obscure to persons of a common education. This difficulty I have endeavoured to remove in the following extract: first, by omitting those lines which I despaired of explaining to the unlearned; and secondly, by adding short and easy notes. To those passages, which I apprehend to be peculiarly excellent, either with regard to sentiment or expression, I have prefixed a star; and these, I believe, it would be worth while to read over and over, or even to commit to memory."[74]

7. "A Survey of the Wisdom of God in Creation; or, a Compendium of Natural Philosophy." 2 vols., 12mo. This work was begun as early as the year 1758;[75] and was published by subscription. In a circular to his assistants, Wesley said: "Spare no pains to procure subscriptions for the Philosophy. It will be the most complete thing of its kind in the English tongue."[76] A second edition, in three volumes, was issued in 1770; a third, in five volumes, in 1777. In the *London Magazine*, for 1774, a long letter, signed "Philosophaster," was addressed to Wesley, criticising some of his statements. In his reply,[77] Wesley, in some points, acknowledges himself to be in error; but not in others; and then concludes: "Permit me, sir, to give you one piece of advice. Be not so *positive;* especially with regard to things which are neither easy nor necessary to be determined. I ground this advice on my own experience. When I was young, I was *sure* of everything. In a few years, having been mistaken

a thousand times, I was not half so sure of most things as before. At present, I am hardly sure of anything, but what God has revealed to man."

ENDNOTES

[1] *London Chronicle,* Jan. 8, 1763.
[2] *London Chronicle,* Jan. 15, 1763.
[3] Ibid. Feb. 10, 1763.
[4] Whitehead's Life of Wesley, vol. ii., p. 299.
[5] *Methodist Magazine,* 1794, p. 565.
[6] Ibid. 1794, p. 566.
[7] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 116.
[8] Ibid. vol. xii., pp. 116, 117.
[9] "Life and Times of Countess of Huntingdon," vol. i., p. 329.
[10] "Life and Times of Countess of Huntingdon," vol. i., p. 330.
[11] *Methodist Magazine,* 1795, p. 49.
[12] Ibid. p. 151.
[13] *Methodist Magazine,* 1797, p. 351.
[14] *London Magazine,* 1763, p. 48.
[15] *Lloyd's Evening Post,* Jan. 26, 1763.
[16] For a full account of the society, see the" Life and Times of the Rev. Samuel Wesley," pp. 213-224.
[17] The figures were: Whitefield's followers, about 20; Wesley's, about 50; Churchmen, about 20; Dissenters, about 70.
[18] *London Chronicle,* April 5, 1763.
[19] The reason of this was the excited state of the London Methodists. Hence, the following extract from an unpublished letter, kindly lent by Charles Reed, Esq., M.P.

"LONDON, *March* 21, 1763.

"MY DEAR SISTER,—My coming into the country is quite uncertain, till I see what turn things here will take. I am glad to hear the work of God prospers among you; etc.

"J. WESLEY."

[20] *Methodist Magazine,* 1782, p. 443.
[21] Lady Maxwell's Life.
[22] Lady Glenorchy's Life.
[23] Myles's "Chronological History."
[24] Manuscript letter.
[25] Ward's "Strictures."
[26] Rev. Valentine Ward's manuscript diary.
[27] *Methodist Magazine,* 183, p. 74.
[28] *Methodist Magazine,* 1782, p. 216.
[29] "Minutes of Several Conversations," etc. 1763: 12mo. 30 pages. P. 2.
[30] "Minutes of Several Conversations," etc. 1763: 12mo. 30 pages. P. 3.
[31] Ibid. p. 4.
[32] Ibid. p. 5.
[33] Ibid. p. 6.
[34] Ibid. p. 6.
[35] Ibid. p. 7.
[36] "Minutes of Several Conversations," etc. 1763: 12mo. 30 pages. Pp. 7, 8.
[37] Ibid. p. 9.
[38] Ibid. p. 11.
[39] Ibid. pp. 12-15.
[40] Ibid. p. 18.
[41] Ibid. p. 18.

[42] "Minutes of Several Conversations," etc. 1763: 12mo. 30 pages. P. 19.
[43] Ibid. p. 19.
[44] Ibid. pp. 20-22.
[45] Ibid. pp. 23, 24.
[46] "Minutes of Several Conversations, etc. 1763: 12mo. 30 pages. Pp. 24, 25.
[47] Ibid. pp. 25-27.
[48] Ibid. pp. 27-30.
[49] "Minutes of Several Conversations," etc. 1763: 12mo. 30 pages. P. 30.
[50] Ibid. p. 30.
[51] *Methodist Magazine,* 1804, p. 269.
[52] Evans's "Sketch of all Religions."
[53] *Methodist Magazine,* 1782, p. 550.
[54] Ibid. 1782, p. 667.
[55] Ibid. 1801, p. 194.
[56] *Methodist Magazine,* 1821, p. 883.
[57] Life of Byrom, prefixed to his Poems.
[58] *Lloyd's Evening Post,* April 23, 1777.
[59] *Methodist Magazine,* 1863, p. 905.
[60] *Methodist Magazine,* 1863, p. 777.
[61] Ibid. p. 599.
[62] Wesley's Works, vol. xiv., p. 272.
[63] Ibid. vol. iii., p. 475.
[64] Wesley's Works, vol. x., p. 432.
[65] "Life and Times of Lady Huntingdon," vol. i., p. 331; "Methodism in Sheffield," p. 185; and manuscript letter of John Pawson.
[66] Was this William Crabb, who left the itinerancy in 1764?

[67] Wesley's Works, vol. x., p. 432.
[68] Myles's History, p. 88.
[69] Olivers' Letter to Toplady, 1771, p. 50.
[70] Wesley's Works, vol. xiv., p. 329.
[71] Everett's Life of Dr. A. Clarke, vol. i., p. 244.
[72] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 114.
[73] Wesley's Works, vol. x., p. 340.
[74] The following are the first lines of the paragraphs, in Book I., which Wesley distinguishes as "peculiarly excellent." They will serve as specimens of all the others.

"Say first, for heaven hides nothing from thy view."
"Nine times the space that measures day and night."
"If thou art he; but oh how fallen! how changed!"
"But see the angry Victor hath recalled."
"Thus Satan talking to his nearest mate."
"He scarce had ceased when the superior fiend."
"He called so loud, that all the hollow deep."
"These feminine. For spirits when they please."
"To flutes and soft recorders; such as raised."
"Their dread commander; he above the rest."
"He spake; and to confirm his Words, out flew."

[75] Wesley's Works, vol. ii., p. 441.
[76] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 435.
[77] *London Magazine,* 1765, p. 26.

1764.

CHARLES Wesley, in feeble health, seems to have spent the year 1764 in London and in Bristol. Whitefield was in America, and so much an invalid, that he could only preach about thrice a week. Though distant, he affectionately remembered his old friend Wesley. Hence the following.

"PHILADELPHIA, *September* 25, 1764.

"REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,—Your kind letter, dated in January last, through the negligence of those that received the parcel, did not reach me till within these few days. I have been mercifully carried through the summer's heat; and, had strength permitted, I might have preached to thousands and thousands thrice a day. Zealous ministers are not so rare in this new world as in other parts. Here is room for a hundred itinerants. Fain would I end my life in rambling after those that have rambled away from Jesus Christ. I am persuaded you are like minded. I wish you and all your dear fellow labourers much prosperity. I do not repent being a poor, despised, cast out, and now almost worn out itinerant. I would do it again, if I had my choice. If you and all yours would join in praying over a poor, worthless, but willing pilgrim, it would be a very great act of charity, he being, though less than the least of all,

"Reverend and very dear sir, ever yours in Jesus,

"GEORGE WHITEFIELD."[1]

Whitefield was away from England; but even that was not enough to save him from the malignant attacks of his English enemies. At the very commencement of the year, the half insane watchmaker, mentioned in a previous chapter, published another of his shilling pamphlets, with the fantastic title: "Remarks upon the Life, Character, and Behaviour of the Rev. George Whitefield, as written by himself, from the time of his birth to the time he departed from his Tabernacle; demonstrating, by astronomical calculation, that his ascension, meridian, and declination were necessarily actuated by planetary influence, and that his doctrine was not Divine mission, but from a mere fatality evident, as daily seen in the sad catastrophe of his unhappy, gloomy, and misguided followers. The whole being a choice new year's gift for Methodists, and one of the most valuable prizes that ever was drawn since Methodism has been in being. By John Harman, astronomer." Well might the *Monthly Review* remark: "Harman styles himself 'regulator of enthusiasts,' and 'astronomer'; we look upon him as a comical genius, who has contrived to plague the Methodists and their great leader, in the style of an almanack maker, and with all the antiquated jargon of astrology."[2]

During the month of January, Wesley, besides preaching in London and its immediate vicinity, visited Dorking, High-Wycombe, Oxford, and Witney.

Within three miles of the last mentioned town, at South Leigh, Wesley preached his first sermon, in the year 1725;

but, oddly enough, this was the first time that he preached at Witney itself.[3]

Wesley writes: "This is such a people as I have not seen; so remarkably diligent in business, and, at the same time, of so quiet a spirit, and so calm and civil in their behaviour."

Near to Witney, at Blandford Park, resided Mr. Bolton and his unmarried sister, whose house, for many years, was one of Wesley's much loved haunts. Miss Bolton was one of Wesley's favourite correspondents, and Mr. Bolton one of his best local preachers. On one occasion, when the two friends were snugly seated in Mr. Bolton's parlour, and Wesley, as usual, was employed with his book and pen, the Witney host, wishful to draw his guest into conversation, began remarking how much pleasanter it was to live in the country than in town; "All is silent," said he, "all retired, and no distracting noises of the busy multitude intrude themselves." "True, Neddy," replied Wesley with his usual quickness, "but *noisy thoughts* may." The hint sufficed, and Neddy subsided into silence.

On February 2, Wesley reopened the old Foundery, in London, which had been closed, for several weeks, in order to be repaired and otherwise improved. "It is now," says he, "not only firm and safe, but clean and decent, and capable of receiving several hundreds more."

On February 6, he opened the new chapel at Wapping. Ten days later, he writes: "I once more took a serious walk

through the tombs in Westminster Abbey. What heaps of unmeaning stone and marble! But there was one tomb which showed common sense; that beautiful figure of Mr. Nightingale, endeavouring to screen his lovely wife from death. Here, indeed, the marble seems to speak, and the statues appear only not alive."

It is well known, that the Rev. Martin Madan, minister at the Lock hospital, and his curate, the Rev. Thomas Haweis, were both most passionately fond of music, and themselves composers.[4] Once a year, their chapel was turned into a concert room for the performance of oratorios; and, on two occasions at least, Wesley was a listener. He writes: "1764, February 29.—I heard 'Judith,' an oratorio, performed at the Lock. Some parts of it were exceeding fine; but there are two things in all modern pieces of music, which I could never reconcile to common sense. One is, singing the same words ten times over; the other, singing different words by different persons, at one and the same time. And this, in the most solemn addresses to God, whether by way of prayer or thanksgiving. This can never be defended by all the musicians in Europe, till reason is quite out of date."

He was present again the year following, when "Ruth" was the oratorio performed, and observed: "The sense was admirable throughout; and much of the poetry not contemptible. This, joined with exquisite music, might possibly make an impression even upon rich and honourable sinners."

Some will wonder at Wesley attending the performance of oratorios; but why so? Fault may properly be found with Martin Madan for using a place of worship for such performances; but Martin Madan was merely copying the example of his superiors, who, even then, once a year, gave the use of their cathedrals to the choirs of Gloucester, Hereford, and Worcester, for the same musical purposes. Indeed, some of the early Methodists adopted the same doubtful usage. We have before us more than one of Handel's oratorios, specially printed, for performance in Oldham Street chapel, Manchester, only two or three years after Wesley's death. All this was dubious; indeed, we venture to designate it desecration. A Christian sanctuary is a place far too sacred to be used as a place of intellectual entertainment, even though, as in the case of Martin Madan, the pleasure be of the most refined and exalted character; but, excepting the fact that a place of worship was turned into a concert hall, who can reasonably find fault with Wesley attending the performance of the oratorios in question? Music was a passion in the Wesley family; and no one felt it stronger than the subject of this memoir. His brother's sons, Charles and Samuel, were young Mozarts; and his own taste was exquisitely beautiful and pure. The music sung by the first Methodists was music of his own selecting; and, in after years, even he himself marvelled that, without studying the science, his selections had been so classical, and so much in harmony with the severest taste of the greatest masters. In 1768, he wrote: "I was much surprised in reading an 'Essay on Music,' written by one who is a thorough master of the subject, to find, that the music of the ancients was as simple as that of the Methodists;

that their music wholly consisted of melody, or the arrangement of single notes; that what is now called harmony, singing in parts, the whole of counterpoints and fugues, is quite novel, being never known in the world till the popedom of Leo X."

On the 12th of March, Wesley commenced his long northern journey, which occupied nearly the next five months. At Stroud, he writes: "How many years were we beating the air in this place! one wrong headed man pulling down all we could build up; but, since he is gone, the word of God takes root, and the society increases both in number and strength."

At Birmingham, Wesley preached in the chapel which had formerly been a playhouse, and remarks: "Happy would it be, if all the playhouses in the kingdom were converted to so good an use. After service, the mob gathered, and threw dirt and stones at people going out."

At Dudley, "formerly a den of lions, but now quiet as Bristol, they had just finished their preaching house, which was thoroughly filled." Mr. Southall and his family were a part of the first society; in his house meetings for prayer were held; and more than once were his windows smashed, and the congregation cursed with the most bitter oaths and curses.[5]

At Wednesbury, Wesley had the largest congregation he had seen since he left London. The riots here, when Methodism was first introduced, have been already noticed. Suffice it to add further, that a quaker was the means of

quelling them. This "Friend" happening to ride through the town, the mob swore he was a preacher, pulled him from his horse, dragged him to a coalpit, and threatened to throw him in. The man of peace availed himself of law, and prosecuted his assailants at the assizes; and, from that time, the tumults of the town subsided.[6]

At Walsall, notwithstanding the inclemency of the season, he had to preach out of doors, at seven o'clock in the morning, the chapel not being able to contain the people. Remembering past scenes, well might Wesley say, "How is Walsall changed! Now has God either tamed the wild beasts, or chained them up!"

On March 26, Wesley paid his first visit to Ashby-de-la-Zouch. The chapel and the chapel yard both were filled; "and I saw," says Wesley, "but one trifler among them all, which, I understood, was an attorney. Poor man! if men live what I preach, the hope of his gain is lost."

On leaving Ashby, Wesley went to Derby, and attempted to preach in the market-place, but he no sooner announced his text than the mob raised such a noise, that he found it impossible to make himself heard; and, hence, he quietly retired to the house of Mr. Dobinson, "an innumerable retinue" following after and throwing stones.

At Sheffield, Wesley found about sixty who professed to be entirely sanctified. He writes: "I could not learn, that any among them walk unworthy of their profession. Many watch

over them for evil; but they 'overcome evil with good.' I found nothing of self conceit, stubbornness, impatience of contradiction, or London enthusiasm, among them."

From Sheffield, he proceeded to Rotherham, Doncaster, Epworth, and Grimsby. At Rotherham, he preached at the opening of a new chapel, a donkey, who had walked up to the door, being, as he relates, apparently one of his most attentive auditors. At Doncaster, a society had recently been formed, which met in the house of Betty Riley, and had Thomas Naylor as its leader. The rabble were rude and often violent; but truth was mighty, and its triumphs great. On one occasion, in 1765, while Jeremiah Cocker of Sheffield was preaching, a bull was driven up to him; but the preacher quietly laid his hands upon its horns, and continued his discourse. Still, for many years, Methodism in Doncaster was a feeble thing, and even as late as 1793, when it had sixty members, it raised only £1 5*s*. per quarter for the support of the work of God, or about a farthing and a half per member weekly. In reference to Grimsby, Wesley writes: "Grimsby, once the most dead, is now the most lively place in all the country. Here has been a large and swift increase both of the society and hearers, so that the house, though galleries are added, is still too small. The mayor and all the gentry of the town were present; and so was our Lord, in an uncommon manner. Some dropped down as dead; but, after a while, rejoiced with joy unspeakable. One was carried away in violent fits. I went to her after the service. She was strongly convulsed from head to foot, and shrieked out in a dreadful manner. The unclean spirit did tear her indeed: but his reign was not long. In the morning both her

soul and body were healed, and she acknowledged both the justice and mercy of God."

This is a curious entry, which the reader is left to ponder.

Proceeding to Gainsborough, Wesley no sooner began to preach in Sir Nevil Hickman's hall than a cock began crowing above his head. The noisy rival, however, was speedily dislodged, and the service was carried on in peace. Wesley then went to Hull, and Beverley, at the latter of which places, the original hive of the Methodist congregations was the house of a shoemaker, where "the Culamite preachers," as the itinerants were called, were often literally besieged by furious rabbles, and became "a hissing" to the people.

Wesley spent nearly a week at York; after which he proceeded to Helmsley, where he found his friend, the Rev. Dr. Conyers, greatly changed. The Calvinists had prejudiced him against the Arminians, and, notwithstanding the warmth of his friendship twelve months before, he was now suspicious, cold, and distant. The itinerant then wended his way to Scarborough, Robinhood's Bay, Whitby, Guisborough, Stokesley, Hutton, Potto, Yarm, Stockton, Darlington, Barnardcastle, and Newcastle on Tyne. He also paid a visit to Weardale, a beautiful valley, above twenty miles long, with only five places of religious worship, to which however was now added a Methodist chapel, built at High House in 1760.[7]

After a three weeks' stay at Newcastle and in its neighbourhood, Wesley set out for Scotland, preaching at

Morpeth, Alnwick, and Berwick on his way. Nearly a month was spent in North Britain. At Edinburgh, he attended the sessions of the General Assembly; and, when he preached on Calton Hill, many of the ministers were there to hear him. With some hesitation, he joined, at the West Kirk, in the celebration of the Lord's supper. He visited Dundee, Brechin, Aberdeen, Old Meldrum, Banff, Inverness, Nairn, and other places. In several instances, he preached in the parish kirks; and remarks: "There is seldom fear of wanting a congregation in Scotland. But the misfortune is, they know everything; so they learn nothing." Two months afterwards, he wrote the following, hitherto unpublished, letter to Lady Maxwell, then a young Scotch widow of twenty-two.

"LONDON, *August* 17, 1764.

"MY DEAR LADY,—Since I had the pleasure of yours, I have hardly had an hour that I could call my own, otherwise I would not have delayed writing so long, as I have a tender regard for you, and an earnest desire, that you should be altogether a Christian. I cannot be content with your being ever so harmless, or regular in your behaviour, or even exemplary in all externals. You have received the fear of God already; but shall you stop here? God forbid! This is only the beginning of wisdom. You are not to end there. Fear shall ripen into love. You shall know (perhaps very soon) that love of God which passeth knowledge. You shall witness the kingdom of God within you, even righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. It is no small instance of the goodness of God toward you, that you are conscious of your want

of living faith. And this goodness herein is more remarkable, because almost all your neighbours would set you down for a right good believer. O beware of these flatteries. Hold fast to the convictions which God has given you. Faith,—living, conquering, loving faith, is undoubtedly the thing you want; and of this you have frequently a taste, to encourage you in pressing forward. Such is the tender mercy of Him that loves you! Such His desire, that you should receive all His precious promises! Do not think they are afar off. Do not imagine you must stay long months, or years, before you receive them. Do not put them off a day, an hour. Why not now? Why should you not look up this instant, and see, as it were, Jesus Christ evidently set forth, crucified before your eyes? O hear His voice, 'Daughter, be of good cheer! thy sins are forgiven thee!' 'Say not, in thy heart, who shall go up into heaven, or who shall go down into the deep?' No! 'The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart.' 'Lord, I believe! Help my unbelief!' Joy in the Holy Ghost is a precious gift of God; but, yet, tenderness of conscience is a still greater gift. And all this is for you—just ready.

'The speechless awe, that dares not move,
And all the silent heaven of love.'

"I am no great friend to solitary Christianity. Nevertheless, in so peculiar a case as yours, I think an exception may be admitted. It does seem most expedient for *you*, to retire from Edinburgh, at least for

a season, till God has increased your strength. For the company of those who know not God, who are strangers to the religion of the heart, especially if they are sensible, agreeable persons, might quite damp the grace of God in your soul.

"You cannot oblige me more than by telling me all that is in your heart. There is no danger of your tiring me. I do not often write so long letters as this; but when I write to *you,* I am full of matter. I seem to see you just before me,—a poor, feeble, helpless creature, but just upon the point of salvation; upright of heart (in a measure), full of real desires for God, and emerging into light. The Lord take you whole! So prays, my dear lady, your affectionate servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."

Such was Wesley's encouraging advice to this noble penitent. Soon afterwards, Lady Maxwell became a member of the Methodist society, and continued such until her death in 1810.

Returning to Newcastle, Wesley started, on June 21, for Whitehaven, of whose society he writes: "What has continually hurt this poor people is offence. I found the society now all in confusion, because a woman had scolded with her neighbour, and another had stolen a twopenny loaf. The want of field preaching, also, has been one cause of deadness here. I do not find any great increase of the work of

God without it. If ever this is laid aside, I expect the whole work will gradually die away."

On June 25, he came to Kendal, where "the people had been so harassed by seceders, and disputers of every kind, that they were now dry and dead as stones." The next day he preached four times, and rode fifty miles, without weariness. He then made his way to Otley, Guiseley, Keighley, Bradford, Birstal, Leeds, Wakefield, Dewsbury, Halifax, Huddersfield, and Manchester. For the last ten days, he had preached three times every day, and many of the times in the open air. He then proceeded to Bolton, Wigan, Liverpool, Warrington, Chester, Macclesfield, Congleton, Burslem, Madeley, and Shrewsbury. The enumeration of these places will furnish an idea, not only of Wesley's labours, but of the chief towns where Methodism had been introduced.

From Shrewsbury, he went through Wales to Bristol. On the first day's journey, he and his companion were in the saddle from four o'clock in the morning till eight at night, when they found they had missed their way. They were told to ride in a certain direction; but their path soon ended in a bog. Then an honest man mounted his horse, and galloped before them, up hill and down, till he brought them into a road, which, he said, led to Roesfair. They rode on, till another met them, and said, "No; this is the way to Aberystwith. If you would go to Roesfair, you must turn back, and ride down to yonder bridge." At the bridge, the master of a little public house directed them to the next village, where they inquired again, and were again set exactly wrong. Having

wandered an hour upon the mountains, "through rocks, and bogs, and precipices," they got back to the bridge, whence they had been directed. It was now past ten o'clock, and they had been riding and preaching for the last eighteen hours; but to obtain rest was impracticable; for the public house was full of drunken, roaring miners; and, besides that, there was but one bed in the roadside inn, and neither grass, nor hay, nor corn for cattle. At length, they hired one of the miners, who was "miserably drunk," to walk with them to Roesfair whither they were travelling. On his way, the man fell all his length into a river, which partly restored his senses. Between eleven and twelve they reached their destination; but, even here, provender for their beasts of burden there was none; and, to make bad things worse, the ostler and the miner, after the travellers were gone to bed, mounted the jaded animals for a ride; and, next morning, the mule of Wesley's friend was found cut in several places, whilst Wesley's horse was bleeding from a wound, two inches deep, made, it seemed, by a stroke with a pitchfork. Wesley got safe to Bristol on August 4.

Here we must pause, in his itinerancy, to notice other matters, which occurred during his five months' journey.

One is a letter referring to exercise on horseback, not inappropriate to the adventure just related. The letter was addressed to his friend, Mr. Ebenezer Blackwell, who had begun to drive his carriage.

"LIVERPOOL, *July* 14, 1764.

"DEAR SIR,—My brother informs me, that you have been so extremely ill, that your life was hardly expected. I really am under apprehensions lest that chariot should cost you your life. If, after having been accustomed to ride on horseback for many years, you should now exchange a horse for a carriage, it cannot be that you should have good health. It is a vain thing to expect it. I judge of your case by my own. I must be on horseback for life, if I would be healthy. Now and then, indeed, if I could afford it, I should rest myself for fifty miles in a chaise; but, without riding near as much as I do now, I must never look for health.

"I am, dear sir,

"Your very affectionate servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."[8]

Let the railway riding and carriage driving public of the present day take a hint from this.

Another letter may be inserted here, which shows, that, in the Methodist movement, Wesley was now without a counsellor. His brother, to whom the letter was addressed, had retired into comparative seclusion; and there was no one to occupy his place. The letter also contains historical allusions of considerable importance.

"HADDINGTON, *May* 25, 1764.

"DEAR BROTHER,—Is there any reason why you and I should have no further intercourse with each other? I

know none; although possibly there are persons in the world, who would not be sorry for it. I hope you find peace and unity in the south, as we do in the north; only the seceders and Mr. Sandeman's friends are ready to eat us up. And no wonder; for these, as well as deists and Socinians, I oppose *ex professo.* But how do Thomas Maxfield and his friends go on? quietly, or *gladiatario animo?* And how are John Jones, Downes, and Richardson? and my best friend, and yours?

"The frightful stories, written from London, had made all our preachers in the north afraid even to mutter about perfection; and, of course, the people, on all sides, were grown good Calvinists in that point. It is what I foresaw from the beginning; that the devil would strive, by Thomas Maxfield and company, to drive perfection out of the kingdom.

"O let you and I hold fast whereunto we have attained; and let our yea be yea, and our nay nay! I feel the want of some about me, that are all faith and love. No man was more profitable to me than George Bell, while he was simple of heart. O for heat and light united! My love to Sally. Adieu!

"JOHN WESLEY."[9]

The next matter to be mentioned was of paramount importance. The desertion of Maxfield, the retirement of Wesley's brother, and the Greek ordination of John Jones have been already noticed. Just at this juncture, Providence

raised up the Rev. John Richardson, a young Yorkshireman, who was episcopally ordained, had a curacy in Sussex, and, in 1762, was made a happy witness of the power of Divine truth under a sermon preached by Thomas Rankin. Within a year after this, Richardson relinquished his curacy, joined the Methodists, and became Wesley's assistant in London. Still, Wesley, in the spring of 1764, was in the greatest difficulty. He was bound to visit his country societies; his brother declined to supply his place in London, and also objected to John Jones taking any part in administering the sacraments during Wesley's absence. Things were in this position when Wesley wrote to his brother as follows.

"LONDON, *March* 1, 1764.

"DEAR BROTHER,—You 'have no thoughts of venturing to London before May!' Then I must indeed 'do the best I can.' So I must comply with the advice of the stewards, as well as my own judgment, and insist upon John Jones's assisting me on Sunday. I have delayed all this time purely out of tenderness to you. Adieu!

"JOHN WESLEY."[10]

This was bringing the matter to an issue; and Charles Wesley must have felt that, if John Jones, ordained by the dubious Erasmus, was really employed in giving the sacrament to the London Methodists, he had no one to blame except himself. Mr. Jones was so annoyed by Charles Wesley's opposition, that he left the Methodist connexion,

procured reordination from the Bishop of London, and was presented to the living of Harwich.

A fortnight after writing thus to Charles, Wesley went to Bristol, where his brother was residing. "Here," he says, "I met several serious clergymen. I have long desired, that there might be an open, avowed union between all who preach those fundamental truths—original sin, and justification by faith, producing inward and outward holiness; but all my endeavours have been hitherto ineffectual. God's time is not fully come."

Some further explanation of this is necessary. In the spring of the present year, Wesley had a correspondence with the Countess of Huntingdon, and with the Rev. Mr. Hart, of Bristol, respecting the desirability of promoting union among gospel preachers. The following letter has not been previously published; it was addressed to the countess.

"NEWCASTLE, *May* 16, 1764.

"MY DEAR LADY,—I am much obliged to your ladyship for your encouraging answer, which plainly speaks a heart devoted to God, and longing for the furtherance of His kingdom. I have likewise received an exceeding friendly letter from Mr. Hart, testifying a great desire of union among the preachers of the gospel; only he carries the point considerably farther than I do, proposing a free debate concerning our several opinions. Now this, I fear, we are not yet able to bear: I fear it might occasion some sharpness of expression, if

not of spirit too, which might tear open the wounds before they are fully closed. I am far from being assured, that I could bear it myself; and perhaps others might be as weak as I. To me, therefore, it still seems most expedient to avoid disputing of every kind: at least, for a season, till we have tasted each other's spirit, and confirmed our love to each other. I own freely, I am sick of disputing: I am weary to bear it; my whole soul cries out, 'Peace! Peace!' at least with the children of God, that we may all unite our strength, to carry on the war against the 'rulers of the darkness of this world.' Still I ask but one thing, 'Is thy *heart* right, as my heart is with thine?' If it be, give me thine hand. Let us take 'sweet counsel together, and strengthen each other in the Lord.'

"And the advantage in the proposal I make is this: if it should be (which God forbid!) that I should find none to join me therein, I will, by God's help, comply with it myself. None can hinder this; and, I think, my brother will be likeminded, yea, and all who act in connection with us.

"Probably it might contribute much to this end, if those of our brethren who have opportunity would be at Bristol, on Thursday, the 9th of August. We might then spend a few hours in free conversation, either apart from, or in conjunction with, the other preachers. I apprehend, if your ladyship could then be near, it might be of excellent service in confirming any kind and

friendly disposition, which our Lord might plant in the hearts of His servants. Surely if this can be effectually done, we shall again see Satan, as lightning, fall from heaven.

"I am, my dear lady, your ladyship's most affectionate and obedient servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."

Previous to this, on April 19, while at Scarborough, Wesley had drawn up a letter, which he subsequently sent to about fifty clergymen, bearing on the subject of Christian union. It is said[11] that this letter had been submitted to Lord Dartmouth more than two years previous to this; be that as it may, it was now forwarded to the clergymen who were preaching the doctrines above mentioned. These included Messrs. Perronet, Romaine, Newton, Shirley, Adam, Fletcher, Baddiley, Roquet, Sellon, Venn, Richardson, Furley, Conyers, Berridge, and Hicks, all of whom have been alluded to in previous pages of the present history. Besides these, there were Mr. Colley, occasionally one of Wesley's assistants; Mr. Jesse, perpetual curate of West Bromwich; Mr. Talbot, vicar of St. Giles's, Reading; Mr. Stillingfleet, of Shawbury; Mr. Andrews, vicar of Stinchcombe; Mr. Jane, vicar of Acton; Mr. Hart, vicar of St. George's, Bristol; Mr. Browne, vicar of Olney; Mr. Burnett, vicar of Elland, Yorkshire; Mr. Bentley, curate of Dr. Conyers; and Messrs. Downing, Riland, Johnson, Symes, and King, of whom we know nothing.

After mentioning the above clergymen as agreeing in the three essentials—(1) original sin; (2) justification by faith; and (3) holiness of life—Wesley proceeds to state:

> "I do not desire a union of opinions among these. They might agree or disagree, touching absolute decrees on the one hand, and perfection on the other. Not a union in expressions. These may still speak of the imputed righteousness, and those of the merits of Christ. Not a union with regard to outward order. Some may remain still quite regular, some quite irregular; and some partly regular, and partly irregular. But these things being as they are, as each is persuaded in his own mind, is it not a most desirable thing that we should—
>
> "1. Remove hindrances out of the way? Not judge one another, not despise one another, not envy one another? Not be displeased at one another's gifts or success, even though greater than our own? Not wait for one another's halting, much less wish for it, or rejoice therein?
>
> "Never speak disrespectfully, slightly, coldly, or unkindly of each other; never repeat each other's faults, mistakes, or infirmities, much less listen for and gather them up; never say or do anything to hinder each other's usefulness, either directly or indirectly? Is it not a most desirable thing that we should—

"2. Love as brethren? Think well of and honour one another? Wish all good, all grace, all gifts, all success, yea, greater than our own, to each other? Expect God will answer our wish, rejoice in every appearance thereof, and praise Him for it? Readily believe good of each other, as readily as we once believed evil?

"Speak respectfully, honourably, kindly of each other; defend each other's character; speak all the good we can of each other; recommend one another where we have influence; each help the other on in his work, and enlarge his influence by all the honest means he can?

"This is the union which I have long sought after; and is it not the duty of every one of us so to do? Would it not be far better for ourselves? a means of promoting both our holiness and happiness? Would it not remove much guilt from those who have been faulty in any of these instances? and much pain from those who have kept themselves pure? Would it not be far better for the people, who suffer severely from the clashings and contentions of their leaders, which seldom fail to occasion many unprofitable, yea hurtful, disputes among them? Would it not be better even for the poor blind world, robbing them of their sport, 'Oh, they cannot agree among themselves!' Would it not be better for the whole work of God, which would then deepen and widen on every side?

"'But it will never be; it is utterly impossible.' Certainly it is with men. Who imagines we can do this? that it can be effected by any human power? All nature is against it; every infirmity, every wrong temper and passion; love of honour and praise, of power, of preeminence, anger, resentment, pride; long contracted habit and prejudice lurking in ten thousand forms. The devil and all his angels are against it. For if this takes place, how shall his kingdom stand? All the world, all that know not God, are against it, though they may seem to favour it for a season. Let us settle this in our hearts, that we may be utterly cut off from all dependence on. our own strength or wisdom.

"But surely 'with God all things are possible'; therefore 'all things are possible to him that believeth'; and this union is proposed only to them that believe, that show their faith by their works.

"When Mr. C." [Conyers?] "was objecting the impossibility of ever effecting such a union, I went upstairs, and, after a little prayer, opened Kempis on these words:—*'Expecta Dominum: viriliter age: noli diffidere: noli discedere: sed corpus et animam expose constanter pro gloria Dei.'*

"I am, dear sir, your affectionate servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."

Will it be believed that, though this superlatively Christian letter was sent to about fifty *evangelical* clergymen, only three

of them condescended to return an answer? This brotherly union was the chief subject discussed at the conference, which commenced in Bristol on the 6th of August. In describing its proceedings Wesley writes: "The great point I now laboured for was a good understanding with all our brethren of the clergy, who are heartily engaged in propagating vital religion." A dozen of the clergymen, to whom Wesley's circular had been sent, attended the conference; but for what purpose? John Pawson, who was present, says:

> "In the year 1764, twelve of those gentlemen attended our conference in Bristol, in order to prevail with Mr. Wesley to withdraw the preachers from every parish where there was an awakened minister; and Mr. Charles Wesley honestly told us, that if he was a settled minister in any particular place, we should not preach there. To whom Mr. Hampson replied, 'I would preach there, and never ask your leave, and should have as good a right to do so as you would have.' Mr. Charles Wesley's answer was in a strain of high church eloquence indeed! but I leave it. His prediction was never accomplished, nor ever can be. However, these gentlemen failed in their attempt that time; Mr. Wesley would not give up his societies to them."[12]

With this glimpse of the finale of Wesley's Christian proposal, we must now rest satisfied. He did his duty; but only three, even of the best clergy in the land, were prepared to cooperate with him.

It has been hinted, that Wesley's circular was, in the first instance, submitted to Lord Dartmouth, the great friend of the Countess of Huntingdon, and the principal patron of the evangelical clergy of that period. There can be little doubt that it was so; and that another epistle on the same subject, dated "July 26, 1764," was addressed to the same nobleman. Without quoting that part of the letter which gives the history of Wesley's proposal for union, we merely furnish the two concluding paragraphs, and chiefly because they are strikingly characteristic of the writer's almost rough fidelity, and courage.

> "If your lordship has heard any objections" [to the proposed union], "I should be glad to know them. May I be permitted to ask, Have not the objections you have heard made some impression upon your lordship? Have they not occasioned, if I may speak freely, your lordship's standing-aloof from me? Why do I ask? Indeed, not upon my own account. *'Quid mea? Ego in portu navigo.'* I can truly say, I neither fear nor desire anything from your lordship: to speak a rough truth, I do not desire any intercourse with any persons of quality in England. I mean, for my own sake; they do me no good, and I fear I can do none to them. If it be desired, I will readily leave all those to the care of my fellow labourers; I will article with them so to do, rather than this shall be any borne of contention.
>
> "Were I not afraid of giving your lordship pain, I would speak yet still further. Methinks, you desire I

should; that is, to tell you once for all, every thought that rises in my heart. I will then. At present I do not want *you*, but I really think you want *me*. For have you a person, in all England, who speaks to your lordship so plain and downright as I do? who considers not the *peer*, but the *man?* not the *earl*, but the *immortal spirit?* who rarely commends, but often blames, and perhaps would do it oftener if you desired it? who is jealous over you with a godly jealousy, lest you should be less a Christian by being a nobleman, lest, after having made a fair advance towards heaven, you should measure back your steps to earth again? O my lord, is not such a person as this needful for you in the highest degree? If you have any such, I have no more to say, but that I pray God to bless him to your soul. If you have not, despise not the assistance which it may please God to give you by, my lord,

"Your lordship's ready servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."[13]

We must now hastily trace Wesley's footsteps during the remainder of the year 1764.

The conference in Bristol being ended, he came to London on August 11. On the 18th he preached, for the first time, in the new chapel at Snowsfields. On the 20th, he says: "I went to Canterbury, and opened our new chapel there.[14] How is it, that many protestants, even in England, do not know that no other consecration of church or chapel is allowed, much less required, in England, than the performance of public worship

therein? This is the only consecration of any church in Great Britain which is necessary, or even lawful. It is true, Archbishop Laud composed a form of consecration; but it was never allowed, much less established, in England. Let this be remembered by all who talk so idly of preaching in unconsecrated places!"

On September 3, Wesley returned to Bristol, in the neighbourhood of which he spent the next month, meeting classes and preaching. On Saturday, October 6, he got back to London; preached the next day thrice, and administered the Lord's supper; and then, a little before midnight, started, by coach, for Norwich, whose society he pronounced the most changeable in all England. In 1759, when James Wheatley's tabernacle and congregation were taken, there were 760 Norwich Methodists; in two years, the 760 were reduced to 412; a year afterwards they became 630; and now, two years later, they were only 174.

It was during this Norfolk visitation, that Wesley preached, for the first time, at Lowestoft. He writes: "a wilder congregation I have not seen; but the bridle was in their teeth. All attended, and a considerable part seemed to understand something of what was spoken."

On his return to London, Wesley called the leaders together, and proposed a scheme for defraying the debts on the London chapels, now about £900; and, in six days, by a personal canvas, he raised nearly two thirds of that amount. "What was done," says he, "was done with the utmost

cheerfulness. I remember but one exception; only one gentleman squeezed out ten shillings as so many drops of blood." Wesley also met the London preachers, every morning, to read with them his "Compendium of Natural Philosophy." He employed his spare moments in writing; and made short tours to Kent, Sussex, and Essex, for the purpose of visiting his societies there. In this diversified employment, the year was ended.

The amount of labour through which Wesley passed was almost incredible. His preaching, his travelling, his society visitations, his writing and publishing, were enough to have occupied half-a-dozen ordinary men; but to all these must be added his correspondence, and his having to give counsel to all sorts of people, and on all sorts of matters. Even this, single and alone, was no trifle, as will be seen by what follows, and which may be taken as fair specimens of things constantly occurring.

For a quarter of a century, Wesley and his brother had bestowed a large amount of ministerial labour on the inhabitants of Bristol; and it was undeniable, that their services had produced incalculable good. Under such circumstances, there was no presumption in their occasionally taking part in the public business of the city. This they did in 1764. At that time, the Bristol Methodists were alarmed by a proposal to build a new theatre. Charles Wesley and others thought it desirable to send to the Bristol corporation a formal petition against the proposal. Wesley himself thought, that he and his brother were sufficiently well known in Bristol to

render a formal petition needless; and that a letter, written on behalf of the Bristol Methodists, would do quite as well. Hence the following, addressed "to the mayor and corporation of Bristol."

"LONDON, *December* 20, 1764.

"GENTLEMEN,—Both my brother and I, and all who have any connection with us, are extremely sensible of our obligations to you, for the civility which you have shown us on all occasions; and we cannot but feel ourselves deeply interested in whatever we apprehend, in any degree, to concern your honour, or the general good and prosperity of the city of Bristol. This occasions my giving you the present trouble, which, whether it has any further effect or no, you will please to receive as a testimony of the high regard which we shall ever retain for you.

"The endeavours lately used to procure subscriptions for building a new playhouse, in Bristol, have given us not a little concern; and that on various accounts: not barely as most of the present stage entertainments sap the foundation of all religion, as they naturally tend to efface all traces of piety and seriousness out of the minds of men; but as they are peculiarly hurtful to a trading city; giving a wrong turn to youth especially, gay, trifling, and directly opposite to the spirit of industry and close application to business; and as drinking and debauchery of every kind are constant attendants on these entertainments, with indolence,

effeminacy, and idleness, which affect trade in a high degree.

"It was on these very considerations, that the corporation of Nottingham lately withstood all solicitations, and absolutely forbade the building of a new theatre there; and I doubt not but thousands will reap the benefit of their wise and generous resolution.

"It does not become me, gentlemen, to press anything upon you; but I could not avoid saying thus much, both in behalf of myself and all my friends. Wishing you the continuance and increase of every blessing,

"I remain, gentlemen,
your obliged and obedient servant,
"JOHN WESLEY."[15]

Before leaving Bristol, another of Wesley's papers may be inserted here, for, though without date, it seems to have been written about the year 1764. It is, in point of fact, a pastoral address, and one of the first that Methodism ever issued. The reader will perceive, that it refers to bribery, smuggling, sacraments, books, class-meetings, and connexional debts.

"To the Societies at Bristol.

"MY DEAR BRETHREN,—I was much comforted among you when I was with you last; finding my labour had not been in vain. Many of you I found rejoicing in God your Saviour, walking in the light of His

countenance, and studying to have a conscience void of offence towards God and man. In order to assist you therein, suffer me to remind you of a few things, which, I think, are of no small concern, in order to your retaining the life of faith, and the testimony of a good conscience towards God.

"1. For God's sake, for the honour of the gospel, for your country's sake, and for the sake of your own souls, beware of bribery. Before you see me again, the trial will come at the general election for members of parliament. On no account, take money, or money's worth. Keep yourselves pure. Give, not sell, your vote. Touch not the accursed thing, lest it bring a blast upon you and your household.

"2. Have nothing to do with stolen goods. Neither sell nor buy anything that has not paid the duty. No, not if you could have it at half price. Defraud not the king, any more than your fellow subject. Never think of being religious unless you are honest. What has a thief to do with religion? Herein mind not men, but the word of God; and whatever others do, keep yourselves pure.

"3. Lose no opportunity of receiving the sacrament. All who have neglected this have suffered loss. Most of them are as dead as stones; therefore be you constant herein, not only for example, but for the sake of your own souls.

"4. To the public, constantly add the private means of grace, particularly prayer and reading. Most of you have been greatly wanting in this; and, without this, you can never grow in grace. You may as well expect a child to grow without food, as a soul without private prayer; and reading is an excellent help to this. I advise you to read, in particular, constantly and carefully, the New Testament; 'Lessons for Children,' which are all the choicest parts of the Old Testament, with short notes; 'Instructions for Children,' which are a body of divinity for plain people; and that golden treatise, 'The Christian Pattern'; the 'Plain Account of the Methodists.' No Methodist ought to be without these, nor the 'Primitive Physic,' which (if you have any regard for your bodies, or your children) ought to be in every house. To all that can understand it, I recommend one book more, 'The Preservative against unsettled Notions'; a book which, by the blessing of God, may help you from being tossed about with divers winds of doctrines. Permit me to give you one advice more under this head: do not encourage young raw men to exhort among you. It does little good either to you or them. Rather, in every society, where you have not an experienced preacher, let one of the leaders read the Notes, or the Christian Library. By this the wisest among you may profit much; a thousand times more than by listening to forward youths, who neither speak English nor common sense.

"5. Let all of you, who have faith, meet in band, without excuse and without delay. There has been a

shameful neglect of this. Remove this scandal. As soon as the assistant has fixed your band, make it a point of conscience never to miss without an absolute necessity; and the preacher's meeting you all together one night out of two will be an additional blessing.

"6. If you constantly meet your band, I make no doubt that you will constantly meet your class; indeed, otherwise you are not of our society. Whoever misses his class thrice together thereby excludes himself; and the preacher that comes next ought to put out his name. I wish you would consider this. Halt not between two. Meet the brethren, or leave them. It is not honest to profess yourself of a society, and not observe the rules of it. Be therefore consistent with yourself. Never miss your class till you miss it for good and all. And when you meet it, be merciful after your power; give as God enables you. If you are not in pressing want, give something, and you will be no poorer for it. Grudge not, fear not; lend unto the Lord, and He will surely repay. If you earn but three shillings a week, and give a penny out of it, you will never want. But I do not say this to you who have ten or fifteen shillings a week, and give only a penny! To see this has often grieved my spirit. I have been ashamed for you, if you have not been ashamed for yourself. Why, by the same rule that you give a penny, that poor man should give a peppercorn! O be ashamed before God and man! Be not straitened in your own bowels. Give in proportion to your substance. You can better afford a shilling than he a penny. This is

more to him than that to you. Open your eyes, your heart, your hand. If this one rule was observed, throughout England, we should need no other collection. It would soon form a stock sufficient to relieve all that want, and to answer all occasions. Many of these occasions are now exceeding pressing, and we are nowise able to answer them; so that the cause of God suffers, and the children of God, and that without remedy.

"7. This is, in great measure, owing to our not considering ourselves (all the Methodists) as one body. Such undoubtedly they are throughout Great Britain and Ireland; and, as such, they were considered at our last conference. We then seriously considered the heavy burden which now lies on our brethren in various parts. When we could hire no place that could contain the congregation, they were constrained to build; but hereby they were unavoidably involved in debt, some of them to the amount of several hundred pounds. The assistants were desired to lay this case before all our brethren in England, and to receive what each of them were willing to give, either at that time, or at Easter, or Midsummer. But the greater part of them thought no more about it. Four or five of them did, and brought in all about £200 at our last conference. This was divided among our societies who were most distressed; and all the assistants were desired, when they visit the classes at Christmas, to ask each particular person, poor or rich, What will you give towards the relief of the brethren?

Give either now, or at Easter, or at Midsummer; it is all one.' If this be done in good earnest, I trust, in two or three years, all our societies may be out of debt. And by this shall all men know whose disciples we are, because we love one another.

"8. I mention but one thing more. Let all, who are able, constantly attend the morning preaching. Whenever the Methodist preachers or people leave off this, they will soon sink into nothing.

"I am, my dear brethren, your affectionate brother,

"JOHN WESLEY."[16]

This was plain speaking,—a pastoral address which even the Methodist conference of the present day would hardly have courage to imitate.

Another matter must have attention. Under the date of "December 1, 1764," Wesley writes: "M. B—— gave me a further account of their affairs at Leytonstone. It is exactly *Pietas Hallensis* in miniature. What it will be, does not yet appear."

"M. B." was Mary Bosanquet. Either she or Wesley published, in 1764, a 12mo tract of twenty-three pages, with the title, "A Letter to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley. By a Gentlewoman. London. Sold at the Foundery, in Upper Moorfields." The letter is dated "*Laton*-Stone, November 8, 1764," and gives the reasons why Miss Bosanquet had fixed her home at Leytonstone, and the nature of her employment

there. She and her friend Sarah Ryan had commenced meetings for reading and prayer; then, they obtained the service of some of Wesley's preachers; and then two classes were formed. Then she took into her house a number of destitute orphan children, and engaged a person to teach them. The design was to fit them for good servants, and her endeavour was, "to inure them to labour, early rising, and cleanliness." Three of them, who were eleven years of age, rose at four in the morning, and lighted the fires. At five, the others were called. When the lesser children were dressed, and had said their prayers, they went into the garden from six till half-past six o'clock, the elder ones being employed in making beds and cleaning rooms. At half-past six, they had household prayer; at seven, breakfast, "two or three upon herb tea, the rest upon milk porridge." From eight to twelve, was spent in school; when, after a few minutes devoted to the exercise of prayer, the pupils all came to Miss Bosanquet, who read to them, and otherwise instructed them. At one, they dined; at two, school duties were recommenced and were continued until five. At six, they supped; and at seven went to bed. No one was allowed to give them toys; and their recreation was, either running in the garden for a quarter of an hour, or in watering the plants and flowers.

To feed, clothe, and educate such a number of children involved a greater expense than Miss Bosanquet had means to meet; and, hence, she put up a box in the hall with the inscription,—"For the maintenance of a few poor orphans, that they may be brought up in the fear of the Lord"; and, in this way, she obtained assistance for her Methodist

orphanage. She was often in straits; sometimes her fund was reduced to a single penny, and she had considerable bills to meet; but, as in the case of the orphanage at Halle, and the present one at Bristol, help always came when needed.

Such was Miss Bosanquet's *"Pietas Hallensis* in miniature." Her tract is a rich, religious curiosity, strongly reminding the reader of the marvellous publications of Mr. Muller, and of August Herman Francke.

A list of the evangelical clergy of the country, to whom Wesley addressed his circular on union, is given in a previous page; but, remarkably enough, one name of considerable distinction is omitted,—the name of the Rev. Thomas Hartley, M.A., rector of Winwick, in Northamptonshire. Mr. Hartley was a friend of the Countess of Huntingdon, and of the Shirley family. He was a man of learning; and of strong, cultivated mind. He was an earnest, devout, energetic Christian; an able, liberal, unbigoted minister; and an author whose style is clear and forcible, and sometimes eloquent; and whose valuable works are still well worth reading. Mr. Hartley, however, was a millenarian and a mystic. In 1764, he published an octavo volume of 476 pages, entitled, "Paradise Restored: or, A Testimony to the Doctrine of the blessed Millennium: with some Considerations on its approaching Advent from the Signs of the Times. To which is added, A Short Defence of the Mystical Writers, against a late Work, entitled, 'The Doctrine of Grace,' etc."

To begin with the last work first. There can be no question, that Mr. Hartley was a most ardent admirer of Jacob Behmen, Dr. Henry More, Madame Bourignon, and Mr. Law. In the last paragraph of his Defence, he tells us that "Divine charity is the great compass by which the mystics steer; it is their very polestar; nay, their latitude, and longitude, and centre too: their employment and delight is love; their hearts and every pulse beat love; it is the element of their life, their *summum bonum,* and their *summum totum.* Perhaps the very angels stretch not farther into the vast expanse of love than some of these have done." And then he proceeds to state that, in the exercise of this charity, some of them "hope that Jesus Christ will, in some remote age of eternity, by an omnipotent act of His love, reverse the sentence, which strict justice has passed on fallen men and fallen angels; and will give to them repentance, add to their repentance faith, and to their faith charity; that so, blessed again with the renewal of the Divine image, they may rise from their beds of penal, long enduring fire, to join the heavenly host, in praises to the eternal King; no longer peccable as before; but standing firm on the sure basis of never ceasing, ever grateful love. Amen."

The Defence was professedly a reply to Bishop Warburton; and hence, though he says there are "many instances in Wesley's numerous writings of injudicious and wrong applications of Scripture," yet they are all used "seriously and in the fear of God."

> "Whatever be the errors and the faults of Wesley, he is an able minister, has been abundant in labours, and

has turned many to righteousness; and therefore deserves honourable mention instead of scurrilous treatment. Had Mr. Whitefield and Mr. Wesley gone on to build up, as they laid the foundation, their adversaries would not have been able to stand before them; but here they failed, and fell into divisions, fierce disputings, and errors in doctrine; and their uncharitable censurings of others have brought more than double upon themselves; and yet I lay not this to the charge of all the Methodists. What cause had Mr. Wesley, among others, for that obloquy he pours on these excellent men, the mystics, who teach the way to Christian perfection on surer principles than he has yet done, and, I believe, attained to higher degrees of it? What is most excellent among the Methodists comes the nearest to what is laid down in their spiritual writings; and had Mr. Wesley studied them more himself, and brought his hearers acquainted with them, they might not have stopped so short as, in general, they have done, but have grown up into a higher stature of Christian life and Divine knowledge."

Wesley read Mr. Hartley's strictures. What was his reply?

"March 27, 1764.

"DEAR SIR,—I thank you for your remarks on that bad performance of the Bishop of Gloucester, which undoubtedly tears up, by the roots, all real, internal religion. Yet, at the same time, I cannot but bewail your vehement attachment to the mystic writers: with whom I conversed much for several years, and whom I then

admired, perhaps, more than you do now. But I found, at length, an absolute necessity of giving up either them or the Bible. So, after some time, I fixed my choice, to which I hope to adhere to my life's end. It is only the extreme attachment to these, which can account for the following words (in your Defence): 'Mr. Wesley does, in several parts of his Journals, lay down some marks of the new birth, not only doubtful, but exceptionable; as particularly where persons appear agitated or convulsed, under the ministry; which might be owing to other causes rather than any regenerating work of God's Spirit.'

"Is this true? In what *one* part of my Journals do I lay down any doubtful, much less exceptionable, marks of the new birth? In *no* part do I lay down those agitations or convulsions as any mark of it at all; nay, I *expressly declare* the contrary, in those very words which the bishop himself cites from my Journal. I declare, 'these are of a disputable nature; they may be from God; they may be from nature; they may be from the devil.' How is it, then, that you tell all the world, 'Mr. Wesley lays them down in his Journals, as marks of the new birth'?

"Is it *kind?* Would it not have been far more kind, suppose I had spoken wrong, to tell me of it in a *private* manner? How much more unkind was it, to accuse me, to all the world, of a fault which I never committed!

"Is it *wise* thus to put a sword into the hand of our common enemy?

Are we not both fighting the battle of our Lord, against the world, as well as the flesh and the devil? And shall I furnish them with weapons against *you*, or you against *me?* Fine diversion for the children of the devil! And how much more would they be diverted, if I would furnish my quota of the entertainment, by falling upon *you* in return! But I bewail the change in your spirit. You have not gained *more* lowliness or meekness since I knew you! Oh beware! You did not use to *despise* any one. This you have *gained* from the authors you admire. They do not express *anger* towards their opponents, but *contempt*, in the highest degree. And this, I am afraid, is far more antichristian, more diabolical, than the other. The God of love deliver you and me from this spirit, and fill us with the mind that was in Christ! So prays, dear sir, your still affectionate brother,

"JOHN WESLEY."[17]

Five years after this, Wesley published the thirteenth number of his Journal, in which the following entry occurs.

"1764, February 5.—I began Mr. Hartley's ingenious 'Defence of the Mystic Writers.' But it does not satisfy me. I must still object—1. To their sentiments. The chief of them do not appear to me to have any conception of church communion. Again: they slight

not only works of piety, the ordinances of God, but even works of mercy; and yet most of them, yea, all that I have seen, hold justification by works. In general, they are 'wise above what is written,' indulging themselves in many unscriptural speculations. I object—2. To their spirit. Most of them are of a dark, shy, reserved, unsociable temper; and are apt to despise all who differ from them, as carnal, unenlightened men. I object—3. To their whole phraseology. It is 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?"

It has been already stated, that Mr. Hartley was, not only a mystic, but a millenarian; and we feel it right to add, that his "Paradise Restored," making 356 pages, octavo, is, by far, the most sober, sensible, scriptural, and learned work on the millennium that it has been our lot to read. He professes to show "the great importance of the doctrine of Christ's glorious reign on earth with His saints"; and maintains that "it was typified in many of the Levitical institutes; was foretold and described in numberless places by the inspired prophets; was made the subject of many precious promises in the gospel; was delineated in the Revelation of St. John; and was received as an apostolical doctrine by the primitive Christians, according to the testimony of several of the ancient fathers," as St. Barnabas, St. Hermas, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Origen, and Lactantius. He further argues, that the

doctrine received the sanction of the Council of Nice, called by Constantine the Great, and composed of bishops from all parts of the Christian world; and that it is embodied in the Catechism of King Edward VI., which was revised by English bishops, and published, by royal authority, in the last year of King Edward's reign.

His arguments, to illustrate the importance of the doctrine, are, to say the least, exceedingly ingenious and able, but far too elaborated to be condensed in a work like this. His theory is substantially the same as that of the millenarians of the present day; without, however, many of the minute whimsies which foolish and fanatical people attach to it. Having, as he thinks, established his doctrine, Mr. Hartley proceeds to answer objections; and concludes with a chapter on "the signs of the times."

It is difficult, and almost impossible, in our limited space, to give the chief points of Mr. Hartley's millenarian creed; but the following are some of them:—1. That Christ will come a second time, and will set up a kingdom, and *visibly* reign on the earth for a thousand years. 2. That, during this reign, His saints will be raised and be restored to the perfection of the first man, Adam; and earth all over will be made a copy of the primeval paradise. 3. That, during this millenarian theocracy, saints will flourish, and sinners be in absolute subjection: hostility and discord will cease, and all things harmonize in unity and peace. 4. That some of the saints will be crowned and sit on thrones; some be set over ten cities, and some over five; some will sit at table with Christ, and others serve; some

follow Him whithersoever He goes, and others come periodically to worship in His presence. There are other topics on which Mr. Hartley claims the right to hold a private opinion; but which he does not attempt decisively to prove: such as—1. The duration of this holy empire. 2. Whether the administration of it will be under the constant abiding presence of our Lord's visible humanity, or only occasional manifestations of it; whilst the government for the most part may devolve upon apostles and patriarchs, as His viceregents, under the immediate influences of His Holy Spirit. 3. Whether the universal conflagration will be before or after the millennial reign. 4. Whether the subjects of this kingdom will consist only of the saints who are living at the time of Christ's second advent, and of some others, as martyrs, who will then be raised from the dead; or whether there will not be a continued succession of the redeemed ones raised, according to their order and time. 5. Whether the account of Gog and Magog, spoken of in Revelation xx., may not be understood to mean that, "as a great part of the world never heard of Christ, and yet the gospel was to be preached in all the world, for a witness to all nations,—so those, who have died in ignorance of the Christian dispensation, will be raised to spend, in the uttermost parts of the earth, another period of probation; they will have the gospel preached to them by emissaries from the millenarian kingdom; many will believe, be converted, and have their portion with the saved; but many will be seduced by Satan, on his enlargement at the end of the thousand years; will invade Christ's glorious kingdom; and will be destroyed by fire, as mentioned in the Revelation."

These are a few of the salient points of Mr. Hartley's learned and able book. Why are they enumerated here? Because, in substance, they were held by Wesley. Wesley read the book, and read it with approbation. He writes to the author: "Your book on the millennium was lately put into my hands. I cannot but thank you for your strong and seasonable confirmation of that comfortable doctrine: of which I cannot entertain the least doubt, as long as I believe the Bible."[18]

With such a statement, in reference to such a book, there can be no doubt, that Wesley, like his father before him, was a millenarian, a believer in the second advent of Christ, to *reign* on earth, visibly and gloriously, for a thousand years.

This is a matter which none of Wesley's biographers have noticed; and, yet, the above is not the only evidence in support of it. In his letter to Dr. Middleton, published in 1749, he refers to the millenarian creed of Justin Martyr, namely, that, at Christ's second coming, the martyrs will be raised, and, for a thousand years, will reign, with Christ, in Jerusalem, which will be then rebuilt, enlarged, and richly adorned, according to the prophets (Isaiah lxv.); and that, at the end of the thousand years, there will be a universal resurrection, in order to the final judgment. These were the views of Justin Martyr;[19] views which, Wesley says, Justin deduced from the prophets and the apostles, and which were also adopted by the fathers of the second and third centuries. In fact, "to say, that they believed this, was neither more nor less than to say, they believed the Bible."[20] There is also a remarkable article in Wesley's *Arminian Magazine*, for 1784

(page 154), on "The Renovation of all Things,"—in which it is argued, that, according to prophetic promises, there will be a middle period "between the present pollution, corruption, and degradation" of the earth, "and that of a total, universal restoration of all things, in a purely angelical, celestial, ethereal state;" and that, in this middle period, "between these two extremes," the earth will be restored to its "paradisaical state," and be "renewed in its primitive lustre and beauty."

These are facts in Wesley's history with which the reader must deal as he thinks proper. It is no part of our present plan, either to defend or condemn Wesley's doctrines; but simply and honestly to supply the incidents of his wondrous history. There is no evidence to prove, that Wesley held many of the wild whimsies of the millenarians of the present age, or that he ever pretended to fix the date of Christ's second coming. "I have no opinion at all," said he, "upon when the millennial reign of Christ will begin; I can determine nothing at all about it; these calculations are far above, out of my sight."[21] Still, Wesley was a believer in the certainty of such a reign; and so was Fletcher, as we have already seen; and so was Wesley's friend, the vicar of Bexley, Mr. Piers;[22] and so seem to have been the writers of some of the hymns in the Methodist hymn-book. The following are quotations from the book, published by Wesley himself, in 1787.

"Lo! He comes with clouds descending,
Once for favoured sinners slain!
Thousand, thousand saints attending,
Swell the triumph of His train.
Hallelujah!
God *appears on earth to reign."*

"O might we quickly find
The place for us designed!
See the long expected day
Of our full redemption *here!*
Let the shadows flee away;
Let the *new-made world appear!*

High on Thy great white throne,
O King of saints, *come down!*
In the *New Jerusalem*
Now triumphantly *descend;*
Let the final trump proclaim
Joys begun, which ne'er shall end."

Was Wesley right in this, or was he wrong? This is a point which those who are learned in theological disputes must be left to determine. References may be made to his notes on Revelation xx.; and to his sermons on "The Great Assize," "The General Deliverance," "The General Spread of the Gospel," and "The New Creation"; and, in some of them, statements may be found scarcely harmonizing with the millenarian theory; but these are matters which we leave to those who take a deeper interest in the millenarian theory than

ourselves. We have tried to furnish facts, and must now pass to something else.

In 1764, as in former years, the press was not idle in its attacks on Methodism. The following pamphlets belong to this period. 1. "A Sovereign Remedy for the Cure of Hypocrisy, and Blind Zeal. By an Enemy to Pious Fraud,"—a shilling production, which assailed the Methodists with more fury than force. 2. "The Methodist Instructed: or the absurdity and inconsistency of their principles demonstrated. In a letter to the Brethren at Gravesend. By Philagathus Cantabrigiensis." 3. "Enthusiasm Delineated: or, the absurd conduct of the Methodists displayed. In a letter to the Rev. Messrs. Whitefield and Wesley. By a Blacksmith."

Besides these, there was also issued a small 12mo volume of 103 pages, with the title, "A Conference, between a Mystic, an Hutchinsonian, a Calvinist, a Methodist, and Others. Wherein the tenets of each are examined and confuted. By William Dodd, M.A., prebend of Brecon, and chaplain in ordinary to his majesty." So far as Wesley is concerned, the object of Dr. Dodd is to prove, that Wesley and the Methodists are *real* separatists from the Church of England. "They have broken loose from all obedience to their ordinary; they have entirely leaped over all parochial unity and communion; they have built and continually preach in conventicles, under a licence, as Dissenters; they disuse the liturgy of the Church of England; they preach in all places without reserve; and, what is worst of all, and a source of innumerable evils, they employ and send forth laymen, of the

most unlettered sort, to preach the gospel, without any authority from God or man. After all this, to hear such men disclaiming separation has something in it so double and offensive, as to raise the indignation of every serious and reasonable Christian." It is further alleged, by his majesty's chaplain, at that time one of the most popular preachers in London, that "Wesley fights against everybody. Indeed, not only is his hand against every man, and every man's hand against him, but his own hand is also against himself. His writings abundantly contradict themselves; and it would be no hard matter to set *John* against *Wesley*, and *Wesley* against *John."*

Others, besides Dr. Dodd, took the liberty of accusing Wesley of self contradiction. The reader will remember that, in 1755, the Rev. James Hervey published his "Theron and Aspasio," having previously sent the first three dialogues to Wesley for his revision. In the year following, after reading the entire work, Wesley wrote a long letter to Hervey, giving, with his accustomed brevity, his criticisms on the whole.[23] In 1758, he published this critique, in his "Preservative against unsettled Notions in Religion." Hervey was greatly mortified and offended; and, at once, set to work, to reply to Wesley, and to defend his "Theron and Aspasio." In this instance, he submitted his manuscript to Wesley's old antagonist, the Rev. William Cudworth. Hervey died on Christmas day, 1758,[24] almost before his work was finished, and certainly before it had received its final revision. Cudworth was extremely anxious to have it published, and wrote to the dying man to

that effect. Hervey's answer, ten days before his death, was the following.

"December 15, 1758.

"DEAR MR. CUDWORTH,—I am so weak, I am scarcely able to write my name,

"JAMES HERVEY."[25]

On the evening before he died, his brother asked him, "Whether he would have the letters to Mr. Wesley published after his death?" He answered, "By no means, because he had only transcribed about half of them fair for the press; and because the corrections and alterations of the latter part were mostly in a shorthand, entirely his own, and which others would not be able to decipher. Therefore, as it is not a finished piece, I desire you will think no more about it."[26]

Notwithstanding this request, however, the work was published, it is said surreptitiously, in 1764, and again, by Hervey's brother, in 1765, in a 12mo volume of 297 pages, with the title, "Eleven Letters from the late Rev. Mr. Hervey, to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley; containing an Answer to that Gentleman's Remarks on 'Theron and Aspasio.' Published from the author's manuscript, left in the possession of his brother, W. Hervey. With a preface, showing the reason of their being now printed."

What was the result of this? Of course, Hervey's letters are highly Calvinistic; but they are not abusive. He hits hard; but he does it fairly and respectfully. He contends, that many of

the sentiments which Wesley condemned in his critique on "Theron and Aspasio" are sentiments which Wesley himself had openly avowed; and that others had been greatly misunderstood by him. The most personal and offensive remarks are the following.

> "Your objections have rather the air of a caveat, than a confutation. You seem to have forgotten, that propositions are not to be established, with the same ease, as doubts are started; and therefore have contented yourself with a brevity, which produces but little conviction, and more than a little obscurity."[27] "When you add 'pleasing sound to James Wheatley! Thomas Williams! James Relly'! I am quite ashamed of your meanness, and grieved at your uncharitable rashness. How unworthy is such a procedure, either of the gentleman, the Christian, or the man of sense!"[28] "Mr. Wesley, cased in his own self sufficiency, esteemeth all the aforementioned evidences as mere nothings. He totally disregards them. Reason, grammar, precedents, are eclipsed by his bare negative; and vanish into an insignificancy not worthy of notice."[29]

These are the worst specimens we can find, and would probably have been expunged, if Hervey had lived to send his letters to the press himself.

It was impossible for Wesley to allow the publication of Hervey's eleven letters to pass in silence. Accordingly, at the beginning of 1765, he printed "A Treatise on Justification,

extracted from Mr. John Goodwin; with a preface, wherein all that is material, in letters just published under the name of the Rev. Mr. Hervey, is answered." 12mo, 215 pages.

In his preface, Wesley states, that the reason why he printed his letter to Hervey, in his "Preservative," was, because he had "frequently and strongly recommended" "Theron and Aspasio," and deemed it his duty to point out what he disapproved. When he heard, that Hervey was about to answer him, he wrote requesting to see the manuscript before it was published, remarking, that if he did not return him privately a satisfactory answer within a year, he should have his free consent "to publish it to all the world." Wesley continues:

> "In this prefatory discourse, I do not intend to answer Mr. Hervey's book. Shall my hand be upon that saint of God? No; let him rest in Abraham's bosom. When my warfare is accomplished, may I rest with him till the resurrection of the just! I purpose only to speak a little on the personal accusations which are brought against me. The chief of these are twelve:—1. That I assert things without proof. 2. That I am self sufficient, positive, magisterial. 3. That I reason loosely and wildly. 4. That I contradict myself. 5. That I do not understand criticism and divinity. 6. That I have acted in a manner unworthy a gentleman, a Christian, or a man of sense. 7. That I am impudent. 8. That I deny justification by faith, and am an enemy to the righteousness of Christ. 9. That I am an heretic, and my

doctrine is poisonous. 10. That I am an antinomian. 11. That I teach popish doctrine. 12. That I am a knave, a dishonest man, one of no truth, justice, or integrity."

We are bound to say, that Wesley puts the accusations too broadly. For instance, it is not fair to say that Hervey calls him *impudent,* a *knave* and a *dishonest man.* Hervey was too gentle to be capable of using such appellatives; and it was not just for Wesley to put them into Hervey's mouth. Hervey had a high respect for Wesley, and Wesley loved Hervey as a father loves a son. It was a mournful, miserable occurrence when the two friends misunderstood each other. It was a mistake for Wesley to write his critique on Hervey's "Theron and Aspasio," in terms so laconic and apparently dogmatical; but, of course, his time was too much occupied to write at greater length. On the other hand, it was an equal mistake for Hervey to permit his extreme sensitiveness to take such offence as to sink into a sort of sulky silence, without seeking a friendly explanation. It was a blunder for Wesley to publish his critique, in his "Preservative," for it was really no adequate reply to Hervey, but mere hints of what a reply ought to be, the hints being couched in language which friends might easily understand, but which enemies might easily misinterpret. And then, finally, though Hervey's eleven letters are ably written, it was a great misfortune, that he himself did not live long enough to give them a finishing revision; and it was an almost unpardonable breach of trust, as well as a grave impertinence, for either his brother, or William Cudworth, or both united, to revise what Hervey had

left unrevised, and then, contrary to his dying injunction, to commit it to the public press.

The truth is, there can be little doubt, that William Cudworth was far more anxious for the letters to be published than Hervey was; and it is more than possible, that some of the most offensive expressions used were not Hervey's, but were interjected by Hervey's too zealous friend. Be that as it may, it is only fair to add, that Cudworth died in 1763,[30] and therefore about the time when the surreptitious edition of the letters was published, if not actually before it. These facts will help to explain Wesley's closing paragraph.

> "'And is this thy voice, my son David?' Is this thy tender, loving, grateful spirit? No, 'the hand of Joab is in all this!' I acknowledge the hand, the heart, of William Cudworth. I perceive it was not an empty boast, which he uttered to Mr. Pearse at Bury, before my friend went to paradise,—'Mr. Hervey has given me full power to put out and *put in* what I please.' But he too is gone hence; and he knows now whether I am an honest man or no. It cannot be long, even in the course of nature, before I shall follow them. I could wish till then to be at peace with all men; but the will of the Lord be done! Peace or war, ease or pain, life or death, is good, so I may but 'finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God."

This was dated November 16, 1764; and well would it have been if the matter had ended here; but, after this, Dr. Erskine rushed to the rescue; and, to enlighten the darkness of the Scotch Methodists, republished Hervey's letters, with a venomous preface of his own. Then, good old James Kershaw, one of Wesley's itinerants, a man of no mean mind, printed, also at Edinburgh, "An Earnest Appeal to the Public, in an honest, amicable, and affectionate Reply" to Erskine's preface. Erskine again took up the cudgel, and published a "Defence" of his preface,—a defence in which Wesley was more violently attacked than ever. And then, to consummate the whole, in 1767, Walter Sellon let off his anger in a shilling pamphlet, entitled "An Answer to 'Aspasio Vindicated, in Eleven Letters': said to be wrote by the late Rev. Mr. James Hervey." To say nothing about the answer itself, which however might have been more polite without being less powerful, Sellon's preface is a perfect tempest of wrathful indignation. Who can justify the following furious effusion respecting Hervey? "Mr. Hervey was deeply sunk into antinomianism; and had he lived much longer would, in all probability, have done *much mischief.* Managed by W. Cudworth, that *weak* man drew his pen, dipped in *antinomian venom,* and wrote with the *utmost bitterness* against his friend, to whom he lay under *various* and *great* obligations."[31] Or the following, in reference to Hervey's brother, and the surreptitious edition of the letters? "That edition was *planned* in the *bottomless pit, inspired* by the *prince thereof,* and published by a *knave.* And you think it your duty to *patronise* all the *railing, scurrility, antinomianism, blasphemy, lies,* and *lewdness,* contained in

that book, and to make your brother's name *stink* to the latest posterity! A *worthy brother*, truly!"

Mr. Sellon meant to serve Wesley; but he mistook the right way of doing it. The above is slang slander, not sober statement. Mr. Sellon was a good man, and possessed of considerable mental power; but it would have fulfilled his purpose better, if, before writing his preface to the "Answer to Aspasio Vindicated," he had gone back to Kingswood school, and taken lessons in Christian courtesy.

The results of this wretched fracas were: 1. In Scotland, Wesley's doctrines were stigmatized and rejected as foul and dangerous heresies; and the progress of Wesley's Methodism was effectually retarded for the next twenty years. And, 2. In England, the squabble culminated in the memorable Calvinian controversy, which ostensibly sprung out of the conference minutes of 1770, but which really originated in the facts above recited. Fortunately, Wesley then had Fletcher, instead of Sellon, for his champion; and, unfortunately for the Calvinistic party, the only man at all competent to enter the lists with John Fletcher was James Hervey, who, twelve years before, had been removed to that better world where controversial strife does not exist.

Wesley had great faith in the power of books; and made it one of the duties of his itinerants to promote the sale of his own publications. Hence the following, addressed to Thomas Rankin.

"BRISTOL, *September* 21, 1764.

"DEAR TOMMY,—I sometimes wonder, that all our preachers are not convinced of this: that it is of unspeakable use to spread our practical tracts in every society. Billy Pennington, in one year, sold more of these in Cornwall, than had been sold for seven years before. So may you, if you take the same method. Carry one sort of books with you the first time you go the round; another sort the second time; and so on. Preach on the subject at each place; and after preaching, encourage the congregation to buy and read the tract. Peace be with your spirit!

"I am your affectionate friend and brother,

"JOHN WESLEY."[32]

Hence again the following, in reference to the work already mentioned.

"LONDON, *November* 2, 1764.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—At the request of several of our preachers, I have at length abridged Goodwin's 'Treatise on Justification.' I trust it will stop the mouths of gainsayers concerning imputed righteousness; and teach them to speak as the oracles of God.

"I desire you to read the proposal and preface in every society within your circuit; then enforce it, as you see best, both in public and private conversation. Spare no pains. Exert yourself. See what you can do. Give this

proof of your love for the truth, for the people, and for your affectionate friend and brother,

"JOHN WESLEY."[33]

Wesley's publications, in 1764, were fewer than usual.

1. "An Extract of the Rev. Mr. Wesley's Journal, from June 17, 1758, to May 5, 1760." 12mo, l06 pages.

2. "A Short History of Methodism." 12mo, 11 pages. He begins by stating, that many of the accounts given of the Methodists were as remote from truth as that given by a gentleman in Ireland, namely, that "the Methodists are the people who place all religion in *wearing long beards."* He then proceeds to notice the rise of Methodism in the Oxford university; the mission to Georgia; the separation of Whitefield; then the separation from Whitefield of William Cudworth and James Relly, both of them "properly antinomians, absolute, avowed enemies to the law of God;" then the springing up of Venn, Romaine, Madan, Berridge, and others; and then the schism of Bell and Maxfield. He concludes:

"Those who remain with Mr. Wesley are mostly Church of England men. They love her articles, her homilies, her liturgy, her discipline, and unwillingly vary from it in any instance. All who preach among them declare, 'We are all by nature children of wrath. But by grace we are saved through faith; saved both from the guilt and from the power of sin.' They

endeavour to live according to what they preach, to be plain *Bible Christians.* And they meet together, at convenient times, to encourage one another therein. They tenderly love many that are Calvinists, though they do not love their opinions. Yea, they love the antinomians themselves; but it is with a love of compassion only. For they hate their doctrines with a perfect hatred; they abhor them as they do hell fire: being convinced nothing can so effectually destroy all faith, all holiness, and all good works."

Such was Wesley's manifesto concerning the Methodists in 1764.

ENDNOTES

[1] *Methodist Magazine,* 1782, p. 439.
[2] *Monthly Review,* 1764, p. 76.
[3] *Youth's Instructor,* 1832, p. 38.
[4] Lady Huntingdon's Life and Times, vol. i., p. 364.
[5] *Methodist Magazine,* 1823, p, 568.
[6] Hampson's Life of Wesley, vol. ii., p. 32.
[7] Manuscript.
[8] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 178.
[9] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 117.
[10] Ibid.
[11] See *Methodist Magazine,* 1849, p. 1297.
[12] Pawson's "Affectionate Address," 1795, p. 11.
[13] *Methodist Magazine,* 1783, p. 163.
[14] The new chapel was built of the old materials of St. Andrew's church, which stood in the middle of St. Andrew's Street, and was pulled down in 1763, because it was an annoyance to travellers. (*Methodist Magazine,* 1837, p. 423.)
[15] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 120.
[16] *Methodist Magazine,* 1837, p. 821.
[17] *Methodist Magazine,* 1783, p. 499.
[18] *Methodist Magazine,* 1783, p. 498.
[19] See Hartley's "Paradise Restored," p. 169.
[20] Wesley's Works, vol. x., pp. 29, 30.
[21] *Methodist Magazine,* 1827, p. 392.
[22] Hartley's "Paradise Restored," p. 221.
[23] See pp. 261, 262, of this volume.

[24] The following is an extract from the last letter Wesley wrote to Hervey. "LONDON, *November* 29, 1758. Dear Sir,—Every one is welcome to write what he pleases concerning me. But would it not be well for you to remember, that, before I published anything concerning you, I sent it to you in a private letter: that I waited for an answer for several months, but was not favoured with one line; that, when at length I published part of what I had sent to you, I did it in the most inoffensive manner possible, in the latter end of a larger work, purely designed to *preserve* those in connection with me from being tossed to and fro by various doctrines. What therefore I may fairly expect from my friend, is to mete to me with the same measure: to send to me first, in a private manner, any complaint he has against me: to wait as many months as I did; and if I give you none, or no satisfactory answer, then to lay the matter before the world, if you judge it will be to the glory of God. But whatever you do in this respect, one thing I request of you,—Give no countenance to that insolent, scurrilous, virulent libel, which bears the name of William Cudworth. Indeed, how you can converse with a man of his spirit, I cannot comprehend. O leave not your old well tried friends! The new is not comparable with them. I speak not this because I am *afraid* of what any one can say or do to *me;* but I am really concerned for *you.* An evil man has gained the ascendant over you, and has persuaded a dying man, who had shunned it all his life, to enter into controversy as he is stepping into eternity! Put off your armour, my brother! You and I have no moments to spare. Let us employ them all in promoting peace and

goodwill among men. And may the peace of God keep your heart and mind in Christ Jesus! So prays your affectionate brother and servant, JOHN WESLEY." (*Methodist Magazine*, 1778, p. 136.)

[25] Works of Hervey, folio edition, 1789, p. 444.

[26] Preface to the Eleven Letters to Wesley.

[27] Ibid. p. 83.

[28] Ibid. p. 192.

[29] Ibid. p. 255.

[30] "Life and Times of Lady Huntingdon."

[31] The italics are not ours.

[32] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 299.

[33] Ibid.

1765.

WESLEY began the year 1765 with a visit to High Wycombe and Witney. At the former place resided Hannah Ball, now in the twenty-second year of her age, and earnestly seeking salvation. For many years, Wycombe had been occasionally visited by Methodist preachers. The first to entertain them was Thomas Humphreys, who, on one occasion, manfully stood by the side of Thomas Walsh, amid a shower of stones. At present, Miss Ball was one of the chief members,—the young lady, who, in 1769, commenced a Methodist Sunday-school, fourteen years before Raikes begun his at Gloucester. Miss Ball became one of Wesley's favourite correspondents, and, in 1770, wrote: "The children meet twice a week, every Sunday and Monday. They are a wild little company, but seem willing to be instructed. I labour among them, earnestly desiring to promote the interest of the church of Christ."[1]

Returning to London, Wesley started off to Essex, and preached in the churches at Ovington and Titbury. Coming back to the metropolis, he read Mr. Romaine's "Life of Faith," and observes: "I thought nothing could exceed Mr. Ingham's book; but really this does; although they differ not a hair'sbreadth from each other, any more than from Mr. Sandeman." He employed his leisure hours in revising his letters and papers, abundance of which he burnt.

On February 18, he made a hurried visit to Norwich, and says, he "spent a few days there with more comfort than he had ever done before."

On March 10, at nine in the morning, he preached in the old French church, Grey Eagle Street, Spitalfields, and made a collection, in his poor Methodist congregation, of £40, for the benefit of the weavers out of work;[2] and, in the evening of the same day, the society contributed £14 more for a few of its own distressed members.

The day after, he began a tour, which occupied the next two-and-thirty weeks.

On his way to Bristol, his horse dropped down dead. At Stroud, he preached in the new chapel. Towards the close of the sermon, a young man fell to the ground, and vehemently prayed for mercy. After supper, a young gentleman cried, "I am damned," and sunk prostrate on the floor. A second did so quickly after, and was much convulsed, and yet quite sensible. Leaving Stroud, Wesley proceeded to Worcester, Birmingham, Derby, and Sheffield.

At Manchester, Bolton, and Liverpool, he had overflowing congregations. He wished to embark for Ireland; but, after a fortnight's waiting, on account of unfavourable winds, he set out, on April 11, for Kendal, where Francis Gilbert resided, brother of Nathaniel Gilbert, Esq., of Antigua. Here also was Miss Mary Gilbert, a girl fourteen years of age, who had been sent by her father from Antigua to be educated, but who, three

years afterwards, triumphantly expired, leaving behind her the beautiful journal which Wesley immediately published.

From Kendal, Wesley proceeded across the mountains, in the midst of a rainy hurricane, to Barnardcastle, where he examined those who, two or three years before, had professed to be entirely sanctified. The result was far from satisfactory. In London, about two thirds of the high professors had lost their confidence; and he found the same proportion in Barnardcastle.

On April 22, Wesley set out for Scotland, where he says: "my coming was quite seasonable, as those bad letters, published in the name of Mr. Hervey, and reprinted here by Mr. John Erskine, had made a great deal of noise." After preaching at Dunbar, Edinburgh, Musselburgh, and Glasgow, he made his way, in company with his itinerant, James Kershaw, along the west coast of Scotland, till he reached Portpatrick, where he and his horse got into an *open boat,* and crossed the Channel to Donaghadee, in Ireland.

From May 2 to August 2, he was incessantly travelling, writing, and preaching in the sister island. Coming to Londonderry, he knew no one, nor where the preacher lodged; but while he stood musing how to act, a gentleman, on horseback, asked his name, and took him home with him. This was Alexander Knox, Esq., a member of the corporation and a Christian, whose son for thirty years carried on a correspondence with Bishop Jebb.

After Thomas Williams, the first Methodist itinerant in Ireland, was discarded by Wesley, he visited Londonderry, became popular as a preacher, formed a society, fell into sin, married, and then went off, leaving his wife behind him. This was in 1764. Two of Williams's members wrote to Dublin for a preacher, and James Clough was sent.[3] This was the preacher whom Wesley wanted, when he was met by Mr. Knox. Wesley's host took him to the church, and led him to a pew, where he was placed next the mayor. He gave him hospitable entertainment for a fortnight, and he and his wife became members of Wesley's society; and, though he ultimately left the Methodists, yet, as will be seen hereafter, to the end of life, he retained the profoundest respect for his friend.

During his stay with Mr. Knox, Wesley wrote as follows:—

"LONDONDERRY, *May* 14, 1765.

"DEAR SIR,—You have admirably expressed what I mean by an opinion, contradistinguished from an essential doctrine. Whatever is 'compatible with love to Christ, and a work of grace,' I term an *opinion.* And certainly the holding particular election and final perseverance is compatible with these.

"'Yet what fundamental errors,' you ask, 'have you opposed with half that fervency as you have opposed these opinions?' I have printed near fifty sermons, and only one of these opposes them at all. I preach about

eight hundred sermons a year; and, taking one year with another, for twenty years past, I have not preached eight sermons in a year upon the subject. But 'how many of your best preachers have been thrust out, because they dissented from you in these particulars?' Not one, best or worst, good or bad, was ever thrust out on this account. Two or three voluntarily left us, after they had embraced those opinions; and two I should have expelled for immoral behaviour; but they withdrew, and *pretended* not to hold our doctrine. Set a mark, therefore, on him that told you that tale, and let his word for the future go for nothing.

"'Is a man a believer in Jesus Christ, and is his life suitable to his profession?' are not only the *main*, but the *sole*, inquiries, I make, in order to his admission into our society. If he is a Dissenter, he may be a Dissenter still: but if he is a Churchman, I advise him to continue so.

"I think on justification, just as I have done any time these seven-and-twenty years; and just as Mr. Calvin does. In this respect, I do not differ from him an hair'sbreadth.

"I am, dear sir, your affectionate brother and servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."

Wesley did not get to Dublin till the 18th of July, in the evening of which day, he says, "I began expounding the deepest part of the holy Scripture, namely, the first epistle of

St. John, by which above all other, even inspired, writings, I advise every young preacher to form his style. Here are sublimity and simplicity together, the strongest sense and the plainest language. How can any one, that would speak as the oracles of God, use harder words than are found here?"

During Wesley's tour in Ireland, Whitefield arrived in England from America. His health was shattered; and, no sooner was he at home again, than he became the butt of malignant wit. *Lloyd's Evening Post* published a long "Lecture on Heads," in which Whitefield was caricatured as "the bell-wether of the flock, who had broken down orthodoxy's bounds, and was now rioting on the common of hypocrisy"; and then followed a ribald harangue put into his mouth, and far too foul for quotation.

Wesley, also, in the same periodical, had his share of personal abuse; and was calumniated as the patron of a practice then in vogue, namely that of parties of religious people using cards, with Scripture texts, to ascertain their spiritual condition, and eternal hopes.[4] Both, however, were too accustomed to such scurrility, to suffer it to disturb their peace.

On August 2, Wesley embarked for England, and landed, at Whitehaven, on the 6th. He hurried to Newcastle; and, on Sunday, the 11th, preached thrice, held a covenant service, spoke for an hour at a society meeting, and rode nearly thirty miles. Pretty well, for a man more than threescore years of age.

On his way southwards, he preached at Sunderland, Durham, Yarm, Leeds, and Huddersfield. He then rode to Chester to preach in the octagon chapel, just erected, and said to be capable of containing from six to eight hundred people. At this period, Chester was included in the Manchester circuit, the society raising, by their united efforts, about a shilling per week for the support of their preachers.[5]

On August 20, Wesley opened his conference, in Manchester. The circuits in England at this period were twenty-five in number: namely—London, Sussex, Canterbury, Colchester, Norwich, Bedford, Oxfordshire, Wilts, Bristol, Devon, Cornwall (East), Cornwall (West), Staffordshire, Salop, Lancashire, Derbyshire, Sheffield, Epworth, Grimsby, Leeds, Birstal, Haworth, York, Yarm, The Dales, and Newcastle. It is a fact worth noting, that six of these circuit towns, nearly a fourth of the entire number, were in Yorkshire. In addition, there were four circuits in Scotland: namely—Edinburgh, Dundee, Aberdeen, and Glasgow; two in Wales—Glamorganshire and Pembroke; and eight in Ireland—Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Waterford, Athlone, Castlebar, Newry, and Londonderry. To these thirty-nine circuits ninety-two itinerant preachers were appointed, twelve of whom were admitted, on trial, at the present conference.

This will give the reader an idea of the growth of Methodism, during the first twenty-five years of its eventful history; and it may be added that, while at the Manchester conference, of 1765, there were only ninety-two preachers for the whole of the circuits in England, Ireland, Scotland, and

Wales, there were, a hundred years later, in 1865, not fewer than one hundred and seventeen, for the circuits in the Manchester district only; in other words, the Manchester district, only, had, in 1865, nearly one third more ministers than the whole of the Methodist connexion had in 1765.

The proceedings of the conference may be gathered from the following synopsis of its minutes.

The connexional collection for the support of Kingswood school was ascertained to be £100 9*s*. 7*d*. The yearly subscription in the classes was £707 18*s*.; of which £578 was devoted to the payment of chapel debts; £38 17*s*. was spent in defraying law expenses, and the remaining £91 1*s*. was divided among the preachers who were in want. Rules were adopted for the management of the fund for the support of superannuated preachers, their widows, and their children. Many of the chapels being still deeply involved in debt, it was determined, that no new chapel should be begun, but by the advice of one of the assistants; and that no assistant should consent to a new erection without an absolute necessity. Some of the chapels already built were not vested in trustees, and several trustees of other chapels were already dead. To remedy these defects, a person was to be sent through England, to examine the deeds, and to appoint trustees where needed. In all future buildings, there were to be sash windows, opening downwards; but no "tub pulpits," and no backs to the seats. Men and women were to sit apart everywhere; outdoor preaching had often been omitted to please societies or their stewards, but this was not to be done

again; weeknight preaching, except in harvest time, was never to commence later than seven o'clock, and a lovefeast should never continue longer than an hour and a half, for every one ought to be at home by nine. Breaking bread to each other at lovefeasts, "a silly custom invented by James Wheatley," was to be discountenanced, on the ground that it created much confusion. Some of the preachers were not "merciful to their beasts," and it was directed, that hard riding should be abandoned, and that every one should "see with his own eyes his horse rubbed, fed, and bedded." It was resolved, that members, removing from one society to another, should not be received, unless they brought a certificate from the assistant officiating where they left.

Other regulations were adopted by the conference of 1765. No preacher was to print anything without Wesley's approbation. Societies and congregations were to be taught singing. The preachers were to meet the societies, bands, and children; to use intercession on Fridays; and to recommend fasting, both by precept and example. The people were to be urged to use family prayer twice a day; to be good economists; to guard against "little oaths, as upon my life, my faith, my honour;" and against little compliments, or unmeaning words. The members might "tenderly and prudently call each other brother and sister; but, as a rule, they talked too much and read too little, and ought to amend in this." Many of them were "absolutely enslaved to snuff"; some drank drams; and the religion of most was usually too superficial. To remedy such evils, the preachers were enjoined, on no account, to take snuff or to drink drams

themselves; and were to speak to any one they saw snuffing in sermon time, to answer the pretences that drams cured the colic and helped digestion, and to preach on the most spiritual subjects, and earnestly recommend private prayer, reading the Scriptures, and universal self denial.

These are tempting topics for discussion; but it can only be added, that Wesley was far from thinking, that the Methodists were perfect. Besides the hints above given, he remarks, at this very conference:—"God thrust me and my brother out, utterly against our will, to raise a *holy* people. Holiness was our point,—inward and outward holiness. When Satan could no otherwise prevent this, he threw *Calvinism* in our way; and then *antinomianism.* Then many Methodists grew *rich,* and thereby *lovers* of the present *world.* Next, they married unawakened or half awakened *wives,* and conversed with *their relations.* Thence, *worldly prudence, maxims, customs,* crept back upon us, producing more and more *conformity to the world.* Then there followed gross neglect of *relative duties,* especially *education* of children." This is a faithful but not bright picture of the Methodists of a hundred years ago. Wesley adds: "This is not cured by the preachers. Either they have not *light,* or not *weight* enough. But the want of these may be in some measure supplied, by publicly reading the sermons" (Wesley's own sermons) "everywhere; especially the fourth volume, which supplies them with remedies suited to the disease."

The Manchester conference lasted four days. Sammy Bardsley, then a youthful Methodist, and employed as a bottle

cleaner, and an errand boy in the vaults of a Manchester wine and spirit merchant, writes: "There were present a *deal* of preachers. Everything was carried on with decency and order. The Rev. Mr. Wesley preached every evening. On Sunday morning, he preached in Marsden's Square to a numerous congregation. Something remarkable to me was his humility, in taking me by the arm, and walking through the town with me. The Lord grant, that I may be as serviceable for the good of souls, according to my abilities, as he has been!"[6] Three years afterwards, the wine merchant's bottle cleaner became one of Wesley's itinerants.

We have already seen that, in 1761, the Rev. Henry Venn wished Wesley to withdraw his preachers from Huddersfield, on the ground that he, the minister of the Huddersfield parishioners, preached the same truths that Wesley did. The Huddersfield Methodists demurred to this absorption in the Established Church; and the matter was compromised by Wesley and Venn agreeing that the Methodist preachers should not invade the parish of Huddersfield oftener than once a month. After this, Wesley went a step farther, and, to please his clerical friend, agreed that, for the space of one year, the preaching of the itinerants should be suspended altogether. This was carrying the thing too far. Wesley seemed to forget, for the moment, that other men had consciences as well as he. As a sop to Venn, the concession failed; and, besides this, that which was meant to be a peace offering to the Huddersfield vicar became a bone of contention to the Huddersfield Methodists. Both they and their preachers were vexed; and, 1765, the latter took the

affair into their own hands, and, despite the clerical compact, again began preaching within Mr. Venn's ecclesiastical preserves. The curate took the pains to go from house to house entreating the people not to hear them; but all to no purpose.[7] The following letter, to Mr. Venn, refers to these and other facts.

"*June* 22, 1765.

"REVEREND AND DEAR SIR—Having, at length, a few hours to spare, I sit down to answer your last, which was particularly acceptable to me, because it was written with so great openness. I shall write with the same. Herein you and I are just fit to converse together, because we both like to speak blunt and plain, without going a great way round about. I shall likewise take this opportunity of explaining myself on some other heads. I want you to understand me inside and out. Then I say, '*Sic sum: si placeo, utere.*'

"Were I allowed to boast myself a little, I would say, I want no man living, I mean, none but those who are now connected with me, and who bless God for that connection. With these I am able to go through every part of the work to which I am called. Yet, I have laboured after union with all whom I believe to be united with Christ. I have sought it again and again; but in vain. They were resolved to stand aloof. And, when one and another sincere minister of Christ has been inclined to come nearer to me, others have diligently kept them off, as though thereby they did God service.

"To this poor end, the doctrine of perfection has been brought in head and shoulders. And when such concessions were made as would abundantly satisfy any fair and candid man, they were no nearer; rather farther off: for they had no desire to be satisfied. To make this *dear* breach wider and wider, stories were carefully gleaned up, improved, yea, invented and retailed, both concerning me and 'the perfect ones.' And, when anything very bad has come to hand, some have rejoiced as though they had found great spoils.

"By this means chiefly, the distance between you and me has increased ever since you came to Huddersfield; and, perhaps, it has not been lessened by that honest, well meaning man, Mr. Burnet, and by others, who have talked largely of my dogmaticalness, love of power, errors, and irregularities. My dogmaticalness is neither more nor less than a 'custom of coming to the point at once,' and telling my mind flat and plain, without any preface or ceremony. I could indeed premise something of my own imbecility, littleness of judgment, and the like: but, first, I have no time to lose; I must despatch the matter as soon as possible; secondly, I do not think it frank or ingenuous. I think these prefaces are mere artifice.

"The *power* I have never *sought.* It was the undesired, unexpected result of the work. God was pleased to work by me. I have a thousand times sought

to devolve it on others; but, as yet, I cannot. I therefore suffer it till I can find any to ease me of my burden.

"If any one will convince me of my *errors,* I will heartily thank him. I believe all the Bible, as far as I understand it, and am ready to be convinced. If I am a heretic, I became such by reading the Bible. All my notions I drew from thence; and with little help from men: unless in the single point of justification by faith. But I impose my notions upon none; I will be bold to say, there is no man living further from it. I make no opinion the term of union with any man; I think and let think. What I want is, holiness of heart and life. They who have this, are my brother, sister, and mother.

"'But you hold perfection': true; that is, loving God with *all* our heart, and serving Him with *all* our strength. I teach nothing more, nothing less than this. And whatever infirmity, defect, ανομια, is consistent with this, any man may teach, and I shall not contradict him.

"As to *irregularity,* I hope none of those, who cause it, do then complain of it. Will they throw a man into the dirt, and beat him because he is dirty? Of all men living, those clergymen ought not to complain, who believe I preach the gospel, as to the substance of it. If they do not ask me to preach in their churches, *they* are accountable for my preaching in the fields.

"I come now directly to your letter, in hopes of establishing a good understanding between us. I agreed to suspend, for a twelvemonth, our stated preaching at Huddersfield, which had been there these many years. If this answered your end, I am glad; my end it did not answer at all. Instead of coming nearer to me, you got farther off. I heard of it from every quarter, though few knew that I did; for I saw no cause to speak against *you*, because you did against *me.* I wanted you to do more, not less good; and, therefore, durst not do or say anything to hinder it. And, lest I should hinder it, I will make a farther trial, and suspend the preaching at Huddersfield for another year.

"1. To clear the case between us a little farther, I must now adopt your words: 'I, no less than you, preach justification by faith only, the absolute necessity of holiness, the increasing mortification of sin, and rejection of all past experiences and attainments. I abhor, as you do, all antinomian abuse of the doctrine of Christ, and desire to see my people walking even as He walked. Is it then worth while, in order to gratify a few bigoted persons, or for the sake of the minute differences between us,' to encourage 'all the train of evils which follow *contention for opinions,* in little matters as much as in great?'

"2. If I was as strenuous with regard to perfection on one side, as you have been on the other, I should deny you to be *a sufficient* preacher; but this I never did. And

yet, I can assure you, I can advance such reasons for all I teach, as would puzzle you, and all that condemn me, to answer; but I am sick of disputing. Let them beat the air, and triumph without an opponent.

"3. 'None,' you say, 'preach in your houses, who do not hold the very same doctrine with you.' This is not exactly the case. You are welcome to preach in any of those houses; as I know we agree in the main points; and wherein soever we differ, you would not preach there contrary to me. 'But would it not give you pain to have any other teacher come among those committed to your charge, so as to have your plan disconcerted, your labours depreciated, and the affections of your flock alienated?' It has given me pain, when I had reason to fear this was done, both at Leeds, Birstal, and elsewhere; and I was 'under a temptation of speaking against you': but I refrained even among my intimate friends. So far was I from publicly warning my people against one I firmly believed to be much better than myself.

"4. Indeed, I trust 'the bad blood is now taken away.' Let it return no more. Let us begin such a correspondence as has never been yet, and let us avow it before all mankind. Not content with not weakening each other's hands, or speaking against each other, directly or indirectly, let us defend each other's character to the utmost, against either ill or well meaning evil speakers. I am not satisfied with 'Be very civil to the

Methodists, but have nothing to do with them.' No; I desire to have a league, offensive and defensive, with every soldier of Christ. We have not only one faith, one hope, one Lord, but are directly engaged in one warfare. We are carrying the war into the devil's own quarters, who, therefore, summonses all his hosts to war. Come then, ye that love Him, to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty! I am now well-nigh *'miles emeritus, senex, sexagenarius.'* Yet I trust to fight a little longer. Come and strengthen the hands, till you supply the place, of your weak, but affectionate brother,

"JOHN WESLEY."[8]

This is a long letter, but far too important to be abridged.

Wesley had been more than five months from London; but, instead of returning thither, he proceeded, from the Manchester conference, direct to Cornwall.

On his way, he attempted to preach at Northtawton, in Devonshire; but, for once in his life, was hindered. He writes: "I went to the door of our inn; but I had hardly ended the psalm, when a clergyman came, with two or three (by the courtesy of England called) gentlemen. After I had named my text, I said, 'There may be some truths which concern some men only; but this concerns all mankind.' The minister cried out, 'That is false doctrine, that is predestination.' Then the roar began, to second which they had brought a huntsman with his hounds; but the dogs were wiser than the men; for they could not bring them to make any noise at all. One of the

gentlemen supplied their place. He assured us he was such, or none would have suspected it; for his language was as base, foul, and porterly as ever was heard at Billingsgate. Dog, rascal, puppy, and the like terms, adorned almost every sentence. Finding there was no probability of a quiet hearing, I left him the field, and withdrew to my lodging."

At Gwennap, Wesley had as large a congregation as he had ever seen assembled in Moorfields. At Redruth, he met with Grace Paddy, "a well bred, sensible young woman," who professed to be "convinced of sin, converted to God, and renewed in love, within twelve hours." Almost everywhere, he was received with the warmest welcome, and rejoiced to find the work of God in general prosperity. Still, as in the case of the Asiatic churches, the Cornish ones were not perfect; and hence the following characteristic letter, addressed to Thomas Rankin.

"ST. JOHN'S, *September* 11, 1765.

"DEAR TOMMY,—There is a good work in Cornwall. But where the great work goes on well, we should take care to be exact in little things. I will tell you several of these, just as they occur to my mind.

"Grace Paddy, at Redruth, met in the select society, though she wore a large glittering necklace, and met no band.

"They sing all over Cornwall a tune so full of repetitions and flourishes, that it can scarce be sung

with devotion. It is to these words, 'Praise the Lord, ye blessed ones.' Away with it: let it be heard no more.

"They cannot sing our old common tunes. Teach these everywhere. Take pains herein.

"The societies are not half supplied with books; not even with Jane Cooper's Letters, or the two or three sermons which I printed last year; no, not with the shilling hymn-book, or 'Primitive Physic.'

"They almost universally neglect fasting.

"The preaching houses are miserable, even the new ones. They have neither light nor air sufficient; and they are far, far too low, and too small. Look at Yarm house.

"Recommend the 'Notes on the Old Testament,' in good earnest. Every society, as a society, should subscribe. Remind them, everywhere, that two, four, or six might join together for a copy, and bring the money to their leader weekly.

"We have need to use all the common sense God has given us, as well as all the grace.

"I am, dear Tommy,
your affectionate friend and brother,
"JOHN WESLEY."[9]

Tommy Rankin was a faithful man, and if things in Cornwall were not all right it was not Tommy's fault. Hence another of Wesley's own peculiar letters, written two months afterwards.[10]

"LONDON, *November* 18, 1765.

"DEAR TOMMY,—You have satisfied me with regard to the particulars which I mentioned in my letter from Cornwall. Only, one thing I desire you to remember. Never sit up later than ten o'clock; no, not for any reason (except a watchnight), not on any pretence whatever. In general, I desire you would go to bed about a quarter after nine.

"Likewise be temperate in speaking; never too loud; never too long: else Satan will befool you; and, on pretence of being more useful, quite disable you from being useful at all.

"Richard Henderson desired, that he might be the bookkeeper this year in Wiltshire, and save me two shillings in the pound. But whoever you approve of, so do I. Write to Mr. Franks accordingly.

"I am, dear Tommy,
your affectionate friend and brother,
"JOHN WESLEY."

On September 21, Wesley returned to Bristol, where he found fifty members fewer than he had left twelve months before. He writes: "One reason is, Christian perfection has

been little insisted on; and wherever this is not done, be the preachers ever so eloquent, there is little increase, either in the number or the grace of the hearers." "There are now about twenty persons here, who believe they are saved from sin; but, if these lose what they have received, nothing will be more easy than to think they never had it. There were four hundred in London, who, unless they told me lies, had the same experience. If near half of these have lost what they had, I do not wonder if they think they never had it; it is so ready a way of excusing themselves for throwing away the blessed gift of God."[11]

It was about this period that Captain Webb and Wesley became acquainted.[12] Thomas Webb was now in the thirty-first year of his age. Seven years before, he had been with General Wolfe, in Canada, where he lost his right eye, and was wounded in his right arm. He found peace with God on March 23, 1765, while conversing in Bristol with Mr. Cary, a Moravian minister; and, soon after, was introduced among the Bristol Methodists by the Rev. James Roquet.[13] Immediately after his conversion, he began to preach at Bath; and, in 1769, was one of the principal agents employed in planting Methodism in America. About the year 1783, he settled in England, and spent the remainder of his life, till 1796, in preaching Christ. He was twice married, and had two sons and a daughter. The sons became resident in America;[14] the daughter died at Stourport, three years after her father.[15] Wesley had a high respect for the brave captain, and, by applying to Lord North, obtained him a pension of a hundred pounds a year.[16] "The captain," says he, "is all life and fire;

and many are convinced under his preaching, some are justified, and a few built up in love."[17] Charles Wesley's opinion, as might be expected, was more qualified. "He is," he writes, "an inexperienced, honest, zealous, loving enthusiast."[18]

We shall meet with Captain Webb again; suffice it to add here, that, to the end of life, he furnished a bright example of Christian diligence and zeal. For several years, he annually made a summer's visit to the French prisoners at Winchester, addressing them in their own language, which he had studied while in Canada. Portsmouth, also, was often favoured with his services. Here crowds of soldiers and sailors listened, with all possible veneration, to the Christian warrior, and, under the spontaneous effusions of his holy eloquence, trembled, as they would not have trembled in the midst of battle, and wept on account of sin, when they would have scorned to weep on account of pain. In Bristol and its vicinity, his labours were greatly blessed; and to him, in an eminent degree, Bristol is indebted for the erection of Portland chapel, where he lies interred.[19] The good old captain was carried to his grave by six local preachers, and his pall was borne by six itinerants.[20] His funeral sermon was preached and published by John Pritchard. "Webb," says Dr. Dixon, "seems to have been a perfect embodiment of the true genius and spirit of primitive Methodism."[21] He was not perfect, and John Pawson found great fault with Pritchard's funeral sermon, for being far too eulogistic of the captain's virtues;[22] but, maugre Pawson's criticism, there cannot be a doubt, that the brave and generous wounded old warrior was as courageous and as zealous, in the

cause of Christ, as he ever was in the service of his country. His native talent was respectable; he had seen much of life; his education enabled him to read his Greek Testament, which is still a much prized relic in America;[23] his enthusiasm was almost unbounded; and his impassioned eloquence sometimes overwhelming. His name must be for ever illustrious in the history of Methodism in the United States; and he well deserved the eulogium on his monument in Portland chapel, Bristol: "Brave, active, courageous, faithful, zealous, and successful."

Wesley left Bristol on October 21, and reached London three days afterwards. On October 28, he writes: "I breakfasted with Mr. Whitefield, who seemed to be an old, old man, being fairly worn out in his Master's service, though he has hardly seen fifty years; and yet it pleases God, that I, who am now in my sixty-third year, find no disorder, no weakness, no decay, no difference from what I was at five-and-twenty; only that I have fewer teeth, and more grey hairs."

During the first week in December, Wesley paid a visit to the societies at Canterbury, Dover, Margate, and Faversham. At Canterbury, he found all the members, without exception, "upright and blameless in their behaviour." At Dover, where the Methodists met in a cooper's shop, some had formerly indulged in smuggling, but they had ceased to "rob the king," and were now in prosperity.

At Margate, the society were "earnestly opposed" by the parson of the parish, who thought he was "doing God service." At Faversham, says Wesley, "the mob and the magistrates had agreed together to drive Methodism out of the town. After preaching, I told them what we had been constrained to do by the magistrate at Rolvenden; who, perhaps, would have been richer, by some hundred pounds, had he never meddled with the Methodists; concluding, 'Since we have both God and the law on our side, if we can have peace by fair means, we had much rather; but if not, we will have peace.'"

From a manuscript, written by Miss Perronet, we learn that, five months before Wesley's visit to Faversham, Mrs. Pizing had gone to Canterbury, to consult with Charles Perronet, respecting her husband, who had been threatened with expulsion from the situation he held, if he continued to attend the Methodist services at Faversham, or entertained the preachers at his house. The mob, also, were determined to assault the congregation, and to punish them with vengeance. Charles Perronet exhorted Mrs. Pizing and her husband to continue faithful; and Miss Perronet went to visit them. During her stay, many of the female members, as sisters Butler, Godfrey, Pizing, Clark, Whitehead, and Rigden, found peace with God; and there was, what Miss Perronet designates, "a blessed work of God among them." These were some of the poor Methodists threatened by the mob and magistrates of Faversham.

Wesley's friendship with the Perronet family was of long standing, and was unabated. On December 15, he buried the remains of Henry, one of the vicar's sons, who "had been a child of sorrow from his infancy," but who died in hope and happiness. Wesley spent some days at the Shoreham parsonage, endeavouring to comfort his old and faithful friend; he himself suffering at the time from a serious accident, which occurred to him while he was on his way to the house of mourning. In riding through Southwark, his horse fell, with Wesley's leg under it. A gentleman picked him up, and took him into an adjoining shop, where he was exceeding sick, but was relieved by hartshorn and water. After a brief rest, he called a coach, and proceeded on his journey, but soon found himself severely bruised in his right arm, his breast, his knee, his leg, and ankle, all of which were greatly swollen. Arriving at Shoreham, he applied treacle plasters twice a day; and, within a week, was able to return to London in a carriage, where, to the treacle applications, he added electrifying every morning and every night. He gradually improved; but, for many months afterwards, he was a serious sufferer, though he refused to permit his pain to interrupt his work. "I am not quite free," he wrote, on May 6, 1766, "from the effects of my fall at Christmas, and perhaps never shall be in this world. Sometimes my ankle, sometimes my knee, and frequently my shoulder, complains. But, blessed be God, I have strength sufficient for the work to which I am called. When I cannot walk any farther, I can take a horse, and now and then a chaise; so that, hitherto, I have not been hindered from visiting any place which I purposed to see before I left London."[24]

Comparatively speaking, there was, in 1765, a cessation of the printed attacks on Methodism. There was one, however, which must be mentioned: "Mumbo Chumbo: a Tale written in antient manner. Recommended to modern Devotees." 4to, 19 pages. The title page of this precious morsel is adorned with Mumbo Chumbo's picture—a sort of humanised monster, with hair on end, hands and fingers long and bony, eyes glaring, and mouth belching fire on a crowd of women and little children; while, just behind, stand two persons in parsonic costume, and also a drawing of Whitefield's tabernacle, in Tabernacle Row. Of course Mumbo Chumbo means Methodism. The following is the last verse but two in this disgraceful production, and may be taken as a fair sample of all the rest. Addressing women, in reference to Methodist preachers, the Mumbo Chumbo poet sings:

"Still let them rave, and their loud throats uprear,
As if the walls they'd crack, and split the doors;
Be not dismayed, nor aught give way to fear,
Only think this—that Mumbo Chumbo roars."

Wesley's publications, during the year 1765, were as follows.

1. "The Scripture Way of Salvation. A Sermon on Ephesians ii. 8." 12mo, 22 pages. Wesley's text, in this instance, was the same as the one he took when he preached, twenty-seven years before, his famous sermon before the Oxford university. The divisions also are *substantially* the same; but the discourses are different. There are no

contradictions; but there are further elucidations. The sermon published in 1738 was exactly adapted to the times; and so was the sermon published in 1765. During that interval, controversies had sprung up respecting faith, repentance, and Christian perfection; Sandemanianism had become rampant, and it was become necessary to define, with great exactness, the nature of saving faith, and also the nature of repentance, and in what sense it is essential to salvation. The fanatical theories of Thomas Maxfield and George Bell had thrown all the Methodist ideas of entire sanctification into confusion; and it was of the highest importance, that Wesley should state most distinctly, not only what he meant by being entirely sanctified, but, how such a state was to be attained. These are questions which the second sermon discusses; and, in that respect, it is a most important appendix to the first. Thoroughly to understand Wesley's doctrine, the two must be read together.

2. "The Lord our Righteousness. A Sermon preached at the chapel in West Street, Seven Dials, on Sunday, November 24, 1765." 8vo, 36 pages. This, also, was a sermon for the times. The controversy respecting Hervey's notions of imputed righteousness had attracted great attention. Wesley was misrepresented, and misunderstood; and the object of his sermon is to correct the errors in circulation concerning him. His two divisions are: 1. What is the righteousness of Christ? 2. When, and in what sense, is it imputed to us? Wesley most conclusively shows, that the accusations respecting his having changed his opinions are unfounded; and that, really, the difference between him and men like Hervey is merely verbal.

He wrote in his journal, on the day he preached the sermon: "I said not one thing which I have not said, at least, fifty times within this twelvemonth; yet it appeared to many entirely new, who much importuned me to print my sermon, supposing it would stop the mouths of all gainsayers. Alas! for their simplicity! In spite of all I can print, say, or do, will not those who seek occasion of offence find occasion?" Well might Wesley write thus; for, though his sermon is written in language the most explicit and unmistakable, no sooner was it published than a sixpenny octavo pamphlet was issued with the title,—"A Letter to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, concerning his inconsistency with himself. Occasioned by the publication of his sermon, entitled 'The Lord our Righteousness.'" The spirit of the letter may be surmised from the motto on the title page: "Rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith."

3. "Thoughts on a Single Life." 12mo, 11 pages. This is a queer tract; and the less said about it the better. A man holding such sentiments had no right to have a wife; and yet Wesley declares: "My present thoughts upon a single life are just the same they have been these thirty years, and the same they must be, unless I give up my Bible."

About the same time, another tract, of the same size, was written with the title, "Jesus altogether lovely; or, a letter to some of the single women of the Methodist society"; but, though it was sold at Wesley's "preaching houses, in town and country," it is far from certain that Wesley was its author. Still, it is not unlikely that one was connected with the other.

At all events, both substantially aim at the same thing, namely, to show that, though marriage is not sinful, it is a high state of perfection, and the result of a great gift of God, to be able to live a single life.

In 1765, also was published, "The Christian's Pocket Companion: consisting of select Texts of the New Testament, with suitable observations in prose and verse. By John Barnes, Carmarthen." 372 pages. The preface to this Welsh production was written by Wesley, and is as follows:

> "To the Reader. Perhaps few books, lately published, have been more useful, to serious and pious readers, than that entitled 'The Golden Treasury.' It will be easily observed, that this is wrote on the same plan, containing a short exercise of devotion for every day of the year. The chief difference, between the one and the other, I apprehend, is this,—they do not only contain the first principles of religion, repentance towards God, and faith in Christ, the doctrine of justification, and the new birth; but likewise the whole work of God in the soul of man, till being rooted and grounded in love he is able to comprehend, with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, and to be filled with all the fulness of God.
>
> "PEMBROKE, *July* 30, 1764.
>
> "JOHN WESLEY."

4. In *Lloyd's Evening Post,* for June 5, 1765, appeared the following advertisement.

> "On Thursday the 1st of August will be published, price 6*d*., Number 1. of Explanatory Notes upon the Old Testament. By John Wesley, M.A., late fellow of Lincoln college, Oxford. Conditions. 1. That this work will be printed in quarto, on a superfine paper. 2. That it will be comprised in about 60 numbers (as near as can be computed) making two handsome volumes.[25] 3. That each number will contain three sheets of letterpress, printed on a new type. 4. That the first number will be considered as a specimen, and, if not approved of, the money paid for it shall be returned. 5. That the work will be delivered weekly to the subscribers, without interruption, after the publication of the first number. 6. That the whole will be printed in an elegant manner, no way inferior to the very best work of the kind ever offered to the public. Bristol: Printed by William Pine. Sold by J. Fletcher & Co., in St. Paul's Churchyard, London; and by the Booksellers of Great Britain and Ireland."

Such was the advertisement. The work was really published in three quarto volumes, making 2622 printed pages, the preface being dated "April 25, 1765," and the last page of the work, "December 24, 1766." Wesley writes:

> "About ten years ago, I was prevailed upon to publish Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament. When that

work was begun, and, indeed, when it was finished, I had no design to attempt anything further of the kind. Nay, I had a full determination not to do it, being thoroughly fatigued with the immense labour of writing twice over a quarto book containing seven or eight hundred pages.

"But this was scarce published, before I was importuned to write Explanatory Notes upon the Old Testament. This importunity I have withstood for many years. Over and above the deep conviction I had of my insufficiency for such a work, of my want of learning, of understanding, of spiritual experience, for an undertaking more difficult by many degrees than even writing on the New Testament, I objected, that there were many passages in the Old which I did not understand myself, and consequently could not explain to others, either to their satisfaction or my own. Above all, I objected the want of time: not only as I have a thousand other employments, but as my day is near spent, as I am declined into the vale of years."

He then proceeds to state, that he cannot entertain the thought of *"composing* a body of notes on the whole of the Old Testament"; but that he will give the pith of Matthew Henry's Exposition; leaving out the whole of what Henry wrote in favour of particular redemption; also all his Latin sentences, abundance of his quaint sayings, and the far greater part of his inferences from and improvements of the chapters. His notes however would not be "a bare abridgment of Mr.

Henry's Exposition"; for he would make as many additions from Mr. Pool's Annotations as he made extracts from Mr. Henry's Exposition; and would add to the whole such further observations, either of his own or of other authors, as might occur to him. Here and there he had made a verbal alteration in the text; but, he says, "I have done this very sparingly, being conscious of my very imperfect acquaintance with the Hebrew tongue." He concludes: "my design is not to write sermons, not to draw inferences from the text, or to show what doctrines may be proved thereby, but to give the direct literal meaning of every verse, of every sentence, and, as far as I am able, of every word, in the oracles of God."

ENDNOTES

[1] Ball's Memoirs.
[2] *Lloyd's Evening Post.*
[3] *Methodist Magazine,* 1835, p. 123.
[4] *Lloyd's Evening Post,* Sept. 27, 1765.
[5] *Methodist Magazine,* 1843, p. 380.
[6] S. Bardsley's manuscript journal.
[7] Pawson's "Affectionate Address," p. 10.
[8] *Methodist Magazine,* 1782, p. 495.
[9] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 301.
[10] Ibid. p. 302.
[11] *Methodist Magazine,* 1799, p. 201.
[12] Drew's Life of Coke, p. 47.
[13] Pritchard's funeral sermon for Webb.
[14] Sprague's "Annals of American Methodist Pulpit."
[15] *Methodist Magazine,* 1799, p. 272.
[16] Ibid. 1850, p. 161.
[17] Wesley's Works, vol. iii., p. 461.
[18] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 391.
[19] *Methodist Magazine,* 1849, p. 386.
[20] Ibid. 1845, p. 427.
[21] Dixon's "Methodism in America," p. 162.
[22] Manuscript letter.
[23] Stevens' History of Methodist Episcopal Church, vol. i., p. 62.
[24] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 179.
[25] Dr. Adam Clarke, in the general preface to his commentary, says that Wesley's notes on the Old Testament are "meagre and unsatisfactory"; and, that

Wesley himself told him, that this was owing to "Mr. Pine, the printer, who having set up and printed off several sheets in a type much larger than was intended, it was found impossible to get the work within the prescribed limits of *four volumes*, without retrenching the notes, or cancelling what was already printed. The former measure was unfortunately adopted." It is difficult to reconcile Clarke's statement with Wesley's advertisement.

1766.

THE following is Wesley's first entry in his Journal for 1766. "January. 1.—A large congregation met in the Foundery at four o'clock, and ushered in the new year with the voice of praise and thanksgiving. In the evening we met as usual in Spitalfields to renew our covenant with God. This is always a refreshing season, at which some prisoners are set at liberty."

Wesley was still suffering from the fall of his horse, and, to some extent, was crippled; but, on January 13, he set out on his accustomed Norfolk visit.

On reaching Yarmouth, he wrote: "The word of God was increasing here, when poor Benjamin Worship was converted to Calvinism. Immediately, he declared open war, tore the society in pieces, took all he could to himself, wholly quitted the Church, and raised such a scandal as will not soon be removed." This was an early rupture. It was hardly six years ago since Howel Harris had come to Yarmouth, with his regiment of volunteers, and, in martial costume, begun to preach the gospel of the Prince of Peace. Among others then converted was this selfsame Benjamin Worship, a young solicitor, who became classleader and local preacher; and now tore the infant society in pieces, organised a society of his own, obtained a small chapel in one of the rows, preached for about two years, and then had the mortification to see the whole collapse. John Simpson, a draper, succeeded Worship among the few forsaken Methodists; but, strangely enough, he

also turned Calvinist, took possession of the meeting-house, and so divided the small society that only eight poor members were left remaining; and, before the year 1780, Methodism in Yarmouth was utterly defunct. Shortly after, a new society was formed; and, in 1783, a chapel was built, and was opened by Wesley, who says: "Often this poor society has been well-nigh shattered in pieces: first by Benjamin Worship, then a furious Calvinist, tearing away near half of them; next by John Simpson, turning antinomian, and scattering most that were left. It has pleased God, contrary to all human probability, to raise a new society out of the rest; nay, and to give them courage to build a new preaching house, which is well finished, and contains about five hundred persons."

Wesley returned to London on January 24, and, finding the London society £610 in debt, three meetings were held, at which more than the whole was readily subscribed. The number of members had been reduced from 2800 to 2200. "Such," says Wesley, "is the fruit of George Bell's enthusiasm, and Thomas Maxfield's gratitude."

Whitefield was now in London, his health greatly enfeebled, often well-nigh breathless, but still struggling to preach three or four times a week.[1] Wesley writes: "January 31—Mr. Whitefield called upon me. He breathes nothing but peace and love. Bigotry cannot stand before him, but hides its head wherever he comes."

From this period, there was a closer union between Whitefield and Wesley than there had been for the last quarter

of a century. They had occasionally exchanged letters; and, sometimes, preached in each other's pulpits; but there had been no hearty cooperation. Wesley's plan of union among the evangelical clergymen of the Church of England had failed; he now entered into an alliance with Whitefield and the Countess of Huntingdon. In the month of October, 1765, her ladyship's chapel at Bath had been opened by Whitefield, who had been succeeded by Messrs. Madan, Romaine, and Fletcher. About the same time, Charles Wesley named his third daughter Selina, as a mark of respect to the countess;[2] and, on August 21, 1766, wrote: "This morning I and my brother spent two blessed hours with George Whitefield. The threefold cord, we trust, will never more be broken. On Tuesday next, my brother is to preach in Lady Huntingdon's chapel at Bath. That and all her chapels are now put into the hands of us three."[3]

This was an important meeting. Wesley had just held his conference at Leeds, and had started on his usual autumnal tour, when he received, from Lady Huntingdon, a letter requesting him to come at once to London. Accordingly, he writes: "August 18—I turned off from the road I had designed to take, and on the 20th reached London. It was at the earnest request of ——, whose heart God has turned again, without any expectation of mine, that I came hither so suddenly; and if no other good result from it but our firm union with Mr. Whitefield, it is an abundant recompence for my labour. My brother and I conferred with him every day; and let the honourable men do what they please, we resolved, by the

grace of God, to go on, hand in hand, through honour and dishonour."

Wesley went direct, from this conference in London, to preach in her ladyship's chapel in Bath. This was a remarkable event. Up to the present, the chapels of the Countess of Huntingdon had been almost as hermetically closed against him as the churches of the Church of England. Now, for a little season, it began to be otherwise. Wesley says: "1766, August 26—Many were not a little surprised at seeing me in the Countess of Huntingdon's chapel, at Bath. The congregation was not only large, but serious; and I fully delivered my own soul. So I am in no concern, whether I preach there again, or no. I have no choice concerning it."

Notwithstanding his avowed indifference, Wesley wrote to her ladyship, offering to preach in her chapel weekly during his intended stay in Bristol; and, in answer, she addressed to him the following important letter.

"September 14, 1766.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I am most highly obliged by your kind offer of serving the chapel at Bath during your stay at Bristol: I mean on Sundays. It is an important time, being the height of the season, when the great of this world are only within reach of the sound of the gospel from that quarter. The mornings are their time; the evenings, the inhabitants' chiefly."

Her ladyship then proceeds to speak of the new alliance with Whitefield and herself.

"I do trust, that this union, which is commenced, will be for the furtherance of our faith, and mutual love to each other. It is for the interest of the best of causes, that we should all be found, first faithful to the Lord, and then to each other. I find something wanting, and that is, a meeting now and then agreed upon, that you, your brother, Mr. Whitefield, and I should, at regular times, be glad to communicate our observations upon the general state of the work. Light might follow, and would be a kind of guide to me, as I am connected with many.

"Pray, when you have leisure, let me hear from you, and believe me most faithfully your affectionate friend,

"S. HUNTINGDON."[4]

Such was the proposed quadruple alliance, between the three great evangelists of the age and a noble Christian lady, who, had she been a man, would have aspired to be a bishop. The alliance, as will be seen hereafter, was not of long duration; but that probably was owing, not to the unfaithfulness of any of the four, but rather to Whitefield's death, and the envious cabals of the Calvinistic clergy, by whom the countess was surrounded, and some of whom, as Southey says, "abounded as much with bigotry and intolerance as with zeal."

Wesley fulfilled his promise, and, during the month of October, preached several times in the chapel of the countess at Bath; and, on one occasion, administered the sacrament of

the Lord's supper. At this period, the chapel was attended by not a few of the nobility: as Lord Camden, then lord chancellor of England, Lord Northington, Earl Chatham and family, Lord Rockingham, Lady Malpas, Lord and Lady Powys, Lord and Lady Buchan, the Duke of Bedford and family, Dr. Barnard, bishop of Londonderry, and last, but not least, Horace Walpole, who, in a letter to John Chute, Esq., dated "Bath, October 10, 1766," gives the following lively, if not strictly accurate, description of what he saw and heard.

> "I have been at one opera—Mr. Wesley's. They have boys and girls, with charming voices, that sing hymns in parts to Scotch ballad tunes; but, indeed, so long, that one would think they were already in eternity, and knew not how much time they had before them. The chapel is very neat, with true gothic windows. I was glad to see that luxury is creeping in upon them before persecution." [Here follows a description of the chapel.] "Wesley is a clean, elderly man, fresh coloured, his hair smoothly combed, but with a little *soupcon* of curl at the ends. Wondrous clever, but as evidently an actor as Garrick. He spoke his sermon, but so fast, and with so little accent, that I am sure he has often uttered it, for it was like a lesson. There were parts and eloquence in it; but, towards the end, he exalted his voice, and acted very ugly enthusiasm, decried learning, and told stories, like Latimer, of the fool of his college, who said, 'I *thanks* God for everything.! Except a few from curiosity, and *some honourable women*, the congregation was very mean."[5]

Considering the many years during which Wesley had been accustomed to preach at Bath, it may seem strange to some, that he should now be preaching, not in his own chapel, but in another's. The truth is, though so much time and labour had been bestowed on Bath, by himself, his brother, and their preachers, the results were exceeding small. They had a preaching place in Avon Street; but it was mean, and surrounded by a population not the most respectable. They had a society; but it was dwindling instead of growing. In 1757, the members were fifty-five in number; in 1762, they were thirty-one; in 1767, they were twelve. In a letter to Miss Bishop, in the last mentioned year, Wesley says: "We have had a society in Bath for about thirty years; sometimes larger and sometimes smaller. It was very small this autumn, consisting of only eleven or twelve persons, of whom Michael Hemmings was leader. I spoke to these one by one, added nine or ten more, divided them into two classes, and appointed half of them to meet with Joseph Harris."[6]

But leaving the quadruple alliance already mentioned, we must return to Wesley's gospel wanderings.

On the 10th of March, he set out, from London, on his long journey to the north. Coming, as usual, to Bristol, he wrote: "I rode to Kingswood, and having told my whole mind to the masters and servants, spoke to the children in a far stronger manner than ever I did before. I will kill or cure. I will have one or the other: a Christian school, or none at all."

From Bristol, Wesley made his way to Stroud and Cheltenham. The latter town, like Bath, was a place of fashion and of pleasure, and, therefore, not a friendly soil for Methodism. Wesley had preached here twenty-two years before, "to a company," he says, "who seemed to understand just as much of the matter as if he had been talking Greek." He now tried again, out of doors, in the midst of a piercing wind, and none, rich or poor, went away till his sermon was concluded. Three years afterwards, the Methodist itinerants began to visit Cheltenham; and, among others converted, was Miss Penelope Newman,[7] who soon became the leader of two classes, and a select band,[8] and who, for years, was one of Wesley's correspondents. Before her conversion, she kept a bookshop; afterwards, she devoted herself wholly to the work of God, making visits to adjacent towns and villages, and, like Sarah Crosby and others, occasionally giving public exhortations.[9] For long years, the meeting place of the Methodists at Cheltenham was a small house in Pitville Street, which was alternately occupied by them and by the baptists;[10] and such was the slow progress of Methodism in this place of fashionable resort, that it was not until the year 1813 that the Methodists obtained a chapel of their own, and even then there were only twenty in society.[11]

Leaving Cheltenham, Wesley proceeded to Evesham, where the mob, encouraged by the magistrate, made noise enough; but as they used neither stones nor dirt, Wesley says, "We were well contented."

After preaching at Birmingham, Wesley, on March 20, paid his first visit to Burton on Trent, where Thomas Hanby had introduced Methodism by preaching in the house of a shoemaker, the mob smashing poor Crispin's windows, and the preacher having to hide himself from his murderous enemies beneath the cutting board.[12]

Proceeding to Nottingham, Wesley preached in the octagon chapel, which had just been built at the cost of £128 2*s*. 7*d*. No wonder that he says, "it was filled with serious hearers." Up to the present, the Nottingham Methodists had held their meetings in the house of Matthew Bagshaw, who, to accommodate the people, fixed, in the floor of his chamber, a large trap door, which, when lifted up, converted Matthew's dormitory into a sort of gallery; and the preacher, standing in the aperture, with his head just through the floor, was thus enabled to preach to the female part of his congregation in the room below, and, at the same time, to the men occupying the room above.

From Nottingham, Wesley made his way to Sheffield. Here two Methodist meeting-houses had been demolished by Sheffield mobs; but a third was now erected in Mulberry Street, fifty-four feet long, and six-and-thirty wide, and in this Wesley preached on March 26. He writes: "We had a numerous congregation. There has been much disturbance here this winter; but to-night all was peace." The disturbance mentioned was occasioned by a buffoon general leading on a mob of empty headed young fellows from sixteen to twenty years of age. Often were the cloaks and gowns of females cut

into tatters with knives or scissors. Sometimes the chief, dressed as a harlequin, would enter the chapel, concealing, beneath his clothing, cats, or cocks and hens, whose mewings, cacklings, and crowings, were not calculated to improve the devotion of the people. When expelled from the interior of the building, he would contrive to climb the roof, where, in front of a large skylight nearly over the pulpit, he was wont to mimic the action of the preacher down below. The chapel windows were smashed, and when shutters were put up, these were pelted with bricks, stones, and sticks. For some reason, the captain and his gang were quiet at the time Wesley preached; but their annoyances and persecutions were continued for three months longer; at the end of which the poor wretch was bathing in the Don, and, after besporting himself in the dingy river for a considerable time, exclaimed, with an air of mockery and mirth, "Another dip, and then for a bit more sport with the Methodists!" In he plunged; down he sunk; and, sticking in the mud, was drowned, before his associates could get him out.[13]

From Sheffield, Wesley proceeded to Eyam, Stockport, and Manchester. Here, as in London and Bristol and other places, there was a large decrease in the number professing Christian perfection. The fifty at Manchester had dwindled down to one third of that number.

Why was this? The reader must imagine an answer for himself; we profess only to furnish facts. Whitefield, of course, was an opponent of Wesley's doctrine; perhaps because he scarcely understood it. In a letter dated "June 2,

1766," he writes: "That *monstrous doctrine of sinless perfection*, for a while, turns some of its deluded votaries into temporary monsters."[14] Charles Wesley was almost equally incredulous. Wesley addressing him on July 9, 1766, remarks: "That perfection which I believe, I can boldly preach; because, I think, I see five hundred witnesses of it. Of that perfection which you preach, you think you do not see any witness at all. I wonder you do not, in this article, fall in plumb with Mr. Whitefield. For do not you, as well as he, ask, 'Where are the perfect ones?' I verily believe there are none. I cordially assent to his opinion, that there is no perfection here such as you describe; at least, I never met with an instance of it, and I doubt I never shall. Therefore, I still think, to set perfection so high is effectually to renounce it."[15]

Thus was Wesley between two fires; Whitefield setting the doctrine too low, and Charles Wesley setting it too high; and both of them ready to ridicule what Wesley called its witnesses. There can be no question, that some of those witnesses injured the doctrine instead of helping it. Wesley himself, on June 28 of this very year, writes to "Mrs. R.," probably Sarah Ryan, finding fault with her in reference to this matter. "You *appear*," says he, "to be above instruction from man. You *appear* to think that none understands the doctrine of sanctification like you. Nay, you sometimes speak *as if* none understood it *beside you.* You *appear* to undervalue the experience of almost every one, in comparison of your own. I am afraid, also, you are in danger of enthusiasm. We know there are Divine dreams and impressions; but how easily may you be deceived herein! It has also been frequently

said, with some *appearance* of truth, that you endeavour to *monopolize* the affections of all that fall into your hands; that you destroy the nearest and dearest connection they had before, and make them quite cool and indifferent to their most intimate friends."[16]

If such superciliousness, fanaticism, and selfishness *appeared* to be budding in a witness like Sarah Ryan, is it surprising that men like Whitefield should stand in doubt? Wesley, in this matter, almost stood alone, with the exception of his friend Fletcher, who wrote to him the following hitherto unpublished letter.

"MADELEY, *February* 17, 1766.

"REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,—As this is the time that you generally plan your journeys, and you did not make Shropshire in your way last year, I beg leave to put you in mind, that Christ and you have some friends here, who would be glad to hear the word from your mouth, and treasure it up in honest and simple hearts. Could not you so order matters as to let us have you at Madeley one Sunday? If this should be impracticable, call some week day; this would be better than to pass us by altogether. The Lord, in mercy, gives me more love to these few sheep, and to the brethren in general, than I ever had, which makes my waiting upon them to be freedom; I hope it will be soon *perfect* freedom.

"I think we must define exactly what we mean by the *perfection* which is attainable here. In so doing we may,

through mercy, obviate the scoffs of the carnal, and the misapprehension of the spiritual world, at least, in part. The light, that I now see the thing in, is this: as the body is not capable of perfection on this side the grave, all those powers of the soul whose exertion depends, in part, on the frame and well being of the body, or the happy flow of the animal spirits, will not, cannot be perfected here. Of this sort are, I apprehend: (1) the understanding; (2) the memory; (3) the passionate affections, or the affections as they work, by means of the animal spirits, on the animal frame. These are no doubt susceptible of admirable impressions, and very high improvements; but still, '*corpus affiget humi Divinae particulam aurae,'* more or less.

"The one power, then, that I see can be perfected here, because it is altogether independent from the body, is *the will,* and, of course, the *affections* so far as they work on the will.

"I have had, for some time, a desire to execute the plan of a work, which appears to me likely to be useful, if God gives me wisdom to go through with it, and my friend's help and direction. It should be by way of dialogues, not between fine gentlemen, like Theron and Aspasio; but, between a minister and one of his parishioners. Six dialogues upon these subjects: the doctrine of the fall; salvation by faith alone; the new birth; the inspiration of the Spirit; the necessity of feeling His operations; the assurance of salvation: each

point proved by Scripture, reason, experience, and the authority of the church, with the most common objections answered. The second part would contain another set of dialogues, between the minister and other parishioners of different characters—(1) an infidel; (2) a formalist; (3) a moralist; (4) a worldling; (5) a railer at godly ministers and people; with proper answers to their respective objections. I bespeak your direction and corrections if I should execute this plan; and, that you may be better able to judge whether I am to set about it in earnest, or lay it aside, I shall prepare a dialogue for your perusal, by way of specimen.

"The gentleman from West Bromwich, which was at my house when you were here, has a hopeful son, seriously inclined, between fourteen and fifteen, who waits to be bound apprentice to some chemist or druggist, if one is to be found wanting an apprentice. Do you know of none in the circle of your acquaintance?

"Brother Mather is so kind as to strengthen my hands in the neighbourhood. I trust he will be an instrument of much good.

"I recommend myself to your prayers and direction; and, wishing that the Lord may renew and increase your bodily and spiritual strength daily,

"I remain, dear sir, your unworthy servant,

"JOHN FLETCHER."

To this, Wesley replied as follows.

"LEWISHAM, *February* 28, 1766.

"What I mean by perfection, I have defined both in the first, and in the farther thoughts upon that subject. 'Pure love, rejoicing evermore, praying always, in everything giving thanks.' And I incline to think, the account you give will amount to the very same thing. But we may observe, that, naturally speaking, the animal frame will affect more or less every power of the soul; seeing, at present, the soul can no more *love* than it can *think* any otherwise than by the help of bodily organs. If, therefore, we either think, speak, or love aright, it must be by power from on high. And if our affections or will continue right, it must be by a *continued* miracle. Have we reason to believe, or have we not, that God will *continually* sustain the stone in the air?

"Allow yourself compass enough, and I do not doubt the work you speak of will be of use. But, I think, you will want to close the whole with a dialogue on Christian perfection. Unity and holiness are the two things I want among the Methodists. Who will rise up with me against all open or secret opposers of one or the other? Such are, in truth, all *prudent,* all *delicate,* all *fashionable,* all *half hearted* Methodists. My soul is weary because of these murderers of the work of God. O let us go through with our work. Why should we not

give *totum pro toto?* I hope you will always love and pray for, dear sir, your affectionate brother and servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."[17]

This was strong language; but Wesley was a firm believer in the doctrine that he preached, and hence he was in earnest. There was a serious reaction in reference to Christian perfection, and he was exceedingly distressed. In May, 1766, he writes to Sarah Crosby: "A general faintness, in this respect, is fallen upon the whole kingdom. Sometimes, I seem almost weary of striving against the stream both of preachers and people."[18] Wesley, however, continued striving, for, rightly or wrongly, he regarded the doctrine of Christian perfection as indispensable to a continuance of the work of God. Hence, the following, addressed to Mr. Merryweather, of Yarm.

"February 8, 1766.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—Where Christian perfection is not strongly and explicitly preached, there is seldom any remarkable blessing from God; and consequently little addition to the society, and little life in the members of it. Therefore, if Jacob Rowell is grown faint, and says but little about it, do *you* supply his lack of service. Speak and spare not. Let not regard for any man induce you to betray the truth of God. Till you press the believers to expect *full salvation now,* you must not look for any revival.

"It is certain, God does, at some times, without any cause known to us, shower down His grace in an extraordinary manner; and He does, in some instances, delay to give either justifying or sanctifying grace, for reasons which are not discovered to us. These are some of those secrets of His government, which it hath pleased Him to reserve in His own breast. I hope you and your wife keep all you have, and gasp for more.

"I am your affectionate brother,

"JOHN WESLEY."[19]

We must again pursue Wesley in his journeyings.

Leaving Manchester, he came, on April 2, to Chester, whither the Gilbert family had removed from Kendal, and where he remained five days, preaching from the texts following: Romans viii. 32-34; John v. 8, 9; John xvii. 3; Matthew ix. 5; and Isaiah xxxv. 8.[20]

On April 7, he reached Warrington, where a society was already formed, and where he had "a large congregation," at noonday, "of rich and poor, learned and unlearned." He says: "I never spoke more plain; nor have I ever seen a congregation listen with more attention." One of the members at this period was William Young, who, for about twenty years together, preached at Warrington every Monday night, extended his labours to many parts of Lancashire and Cheshire, and who died in 1823, uttering, as his last words on earth: "Come Lord Jesus; glory! glory! angels, angels, coming, coming to take me to Abraham's bosom."[21]

At Liverpool, Wesley examined the new trust deed of Pitt Street chapel, to which he objected, as follows: "1. It takes up three large skins of parchment, and so could not cost less than six guineas; whereas our own deed, transcribed by a friend, would not have cost six shillings. 2. It is verbose beyond all sense and reason; and withal so ambiguously worded, that one passage only might find matter for a suit of ten or twelve years in chancery. 3. It everywhere calls the house a meeting-house, a name which I particularly object to. 4. It leaves no power either to the assistant or me, so much as to p1ace or displace a steward. 5. Neither I, nor all the conference, have power to send the same preacher two years together. To crown all,—6. If a preacher is not appointed at the conference, the trustees and the congregation are to choose one by most votes! Can any one wonder I dislike this deed, which tears the Methodist discipline up by the roots?"

On April 11, Wesley preached at Wigan, "to a large number of serious, well behaved people, mixed with a few as stupidly insolent creatures as he ever saw." He then made his way to Brinsley, Bolton, Middleton, Chapel-en-le-Frith, Rotherham, Doncaster, Awkborough, Barrow, Grimsby, Louth, Horncastle, and other Lincolnshire towns and villages. He writes: "John Hill has done more mischief at Horncastle than a man of far greater talents can do good. By that unhappy division of the society, he has opened the mouths of all the gainsayers; and, to complete the scandal, he and six-and-twenty more have been dipped!" He adds: "I do not choose to preach above twice or thrice in a day; but when I am called to do more, it is all one: I find strength according to my need."

On April 28, he got to York; and, the day after, preached in the new chapel at Thirsk; "almost equal," he says, "to that at Yarm; and why not quite, seeing they had the model before their eyes, and had nothing to do but to copy after it? Is it not an amazing weakness, that, when they have the most beautiful pattern before them, all builders will affect to mend something?" This was a hard rap at good old Mr. Wells, who built the chapel;[22] but architects and builders who spoil chapels to gratify their own vain ambition have no right to wish or to expect tender treatment from those who suffer by their preposterous folly.

On reaching Newcastle, he spent nearly three weeks, partly in comparative rest, and partly in preaching, and in visiting neighbouring societies. He writes: "I know not to what it is owing, that I have felt more weariness this spring than I had done before for many years; unless to my fall at Christmas, which perhaps weakened the springs of my whole machine more than I was sensible of."

On the 19th of May, he set out, with his wife and daughter,[23] for Scotland, preaching at Placey, Morpeth, Felton, Alnwick, Belford, and Berwick on the way. The next five weeks were employed in the towns and villages across the Tweed. The following are extracts from his Journal.

> "Saturday, May 24.—I went to the room at Preston Pans; and I had it all to myself; neither man, woman, nor child offered to look me in the face; so I ordered a chair to be placed in the street. Then forty or fifty crept

together; but they were mere stocks and stones; no more concerned than if I had talked Greek."

"Monday, May 26: Edinburgh.—I spent some hours at the meeting of the National Assembly. I am very far from being of Mr. Whitefield's mind, who greatly commends the solemnity of this meeting. I have seen few less solemn. I was extremely shocked at the behaviour of many of the members. Had any preacher behaved so at our conference, he would have had no more place among us."

"Thursday, June 5: Dundee.—I took occasion to repeat most of the plausible objections which had been made to us in Scotland. I then showed our reasons for the things which had been objected to us; and all seemed to be thoroughly satisfied. The sum of what I spoke was this. I love plain dealing. Do not you? I will use it now. Bear with me. I hang out no false colours; but show you all I am, all I intend, all I do. I am a member of the Church of England; but I love good men of every church. My ground is the Bible; yea, I am a Bible bigot. I follow it in all things, both great and small. Therefore—1. I always use a short private prayer, when I attend the public service of God. Do not you? Why do you not? Is not this according to the Bible? 2. I stand, whenever I sing the praise of God in public. Does not the Bible give you plain precedents for this? 3. I always kneel before the Lord my Maker, when I pray in public. 4. I generally in public use the Lord's prayer,

because Christ has taught me, when I pray, to say, ——. I advise every preacher connected with me, whether in England or Scotland, herein to tread in my steps."

"Sunday, June 8.—Knowing no reason why we should make God's day the shortest of the seven, I desired Joseph Thompson to preach, at Aberdeen, at five. At eight, I preached myself. In the afternoon, I heard a strong, close sermon, at Old Aberdeen; and afterwards preached in the college kirk, to a very genteel, and yet serious congregation. I then opened and enforced the way of holiness, at New Aberdeen."

"Sunday, June 15: Edinburgh.—Our room was very warm in the afternoon, through the multitude of people; a great number of whom were people of fashion, with many ministers. I spoke to them with the utmost plainness, and, I believe, not in vain. It is scarce possible to speak too plain in England; but it is scarce possible to speak plain enough in Scotland. If you do not, you lose all your labour, you plough upon the sand."

"Wednesday, June 18: Glasgow.—What a difference there is between the society here, and that at Dundee. There are about sixty members there, and scarce more than six scriptural believers. Here are seventy-four members, and near thirty among them lively, zealous believers; one of whom was justified thirty years ago, and another of them two-and-forty; and several of them

have been for many years rejoicing in God their Saviour."

"Monday, June 23.—At Thorny Hill, I met with Mr. Knox's 'History of the Church of Scotland.' And could any man wonder, if the members of it were more fierce, sour, and bitter of spirit, than some of them were? For what a pattern have they before them! I know it is commonly said, 'The work to be done needed such a spirit.' Not so! the work of God does not, cannot, need the work of the devil to forward it. A calm, even spirit goes through rough work far better than a furious one. Although, therefore, God did use, at the time of the Reformation, some sour, overbearing, passionate men, yet He did not use them because they were such, but notwithstanding they were so. And there is no doubt, He would have used them much more, had they been of an humbler and milder spirit."

Wesley terminated his Scottish tour at Dumfries, and, in reaching Solway Frith, had a somewhat dangerous adventure. He writes: "June 24.—Designing to call at an inn by the frith side, we were directed to leave the main road, and go straight to the house which we saw before us. In ten minutes, Duncan Wright was embogged: however, the horse plunged on, and got through. I was inclined to turn back; but Duncan telling me I need only go a little to the left, I did so, and sunk at once to my horse's shoulders. He sprung up twice, and twice sank again, each time deeper than before. At the third plunge, he threw me on one side, and we both made shift to scramble out. I was covered with fine, soft mud, from my feet to the crown of my head; yet, blessed be God, not hurt at all."

Wesley was again in England; and, after visiting Whitehaven, rode, on June 30, more than seventy miles, through a rough, mountainous region, on his way to Barnardcastle, where he says: "At six, I preached in an open space, adjoining to the preaching house. As the militia were in town, the far greater part of them attended, with a large congregation from town and country. It rained most of the time I was speaking; but, I believe, hardly six persons went away."

On July 2, he preached in Weardale, and says: "Here a poor woman was brought to us, who had been disordered several years, and was now raving mad. She cursed and blasphemed in a terrible manner, and could not stand or sit still for a moment. However, her husband held her by main strength, although she shrieked in the most dreadful manner; but, in a

quarter of an hour, she left off shrieking, and sat motionless and silent, till she began crying to God, which she continued to do, almost without intermission, till we left her."

After spending three days at Newcastle, and in its neighbourhood, Wesley started for the south. At Yarm, on July 9, he held the quarterly meeting, and remarks: "The societies in this circuit increase; that is, among the poor; for the rich, generally speaking, 'care for none of these things.'"

The Yarm circuit, at this period, extended as far south as Ripon, a distance of thirty miles, where some of the Methodists had been subjected to harsh and unlawful usage. This led Wesley to address the following characteristic letter to the Rev. Mr. Wanley, dean of Ripon; who, though a magistrate, had for many years refused to administer justice in the case of persecuted Methodists.[24]

"YARM, *July*, 9, 1766.

"REVEREND SIR,—The regard which I owe to a fellow Christian, and much more to a clergyman and a magistrate, constrains me to trouble you with a few lines, though I have no personal acquaintance with you. Ralph Bell has just been giving me an account of the late affair at Ripon. What he desires is—(1) to have the loss he has sustained repaired; and (2) liberty of conscience; that liberty which every man may claim as his right, by the law of God and nature, and to which every Englishman, in particular, has a right by the laws of his country. I well know the advantage these laws

give us in the present case: I say us, because I make the case my own, as I think it my bounden duty to do. I have had many suits in the King's Bench, and, blessed be God, I never lost one yet. But I would far rather put an amicable end to any dispute, where it can be done. Not that I am afraid of being overborne by the expense: if I am not, I know them that are able to bear it. But I love peace. I love my neighbour as myself, and would not willingly bring loss or trouble upon any man. Be so good as to impute to this motive my interfering in this matter.

"I am, reverend sir, your servant for Christ's sake,

"JOHN WESLEY."[25]

Wesley was a man of peace; but he was not a man to relinquish lightly the lawful rights of himself and his people. With all the generosity of a great leader, he was as ready to fight for the poorest of his followers as for himself. A man unknown to fame, like Ralph Bell, of Ripon, was as sure to secure his sympathy as the most illustrious disciple that he had.

From Yarm, Wesley proceeded to the small village of Hutton Rudby, where there was the largest society in the Yarm circuit, and where only two out of the sixteen, who professed to be entirely sanctified two or three years before, had "lost the direct witness of that salvation." At Stokesley, he preached in the new chapel; and went from there to Guisborough, Whitby, Robinhood's Bay, Scarborough, Pickering, and Malton. In the two last mentioned towns,

societies had been formed by John Manners, three years before; the members at Pickering numbering fifteen, and at Malton nineteen. Mr. Hebdon, a clergyman, commanded the churchwardens and constables to pull Mr. Manners down, and threatened that he would, in the week following, banish all the Methodists from the town and neighbourhood. It so happened, however, that, in going from an entertainment a few nights after, the vindictive parson fell from his horse, and broke his neck.[26]

From Malton, Wesley proceeded to Beverley, Hull, Pocklington, and York. Here an odd incident occurred. Wesley simply writes: "York, Sunday, July 20, 1766.—After preaching at eight, I went to St. Saviour-gate church. Towards the close of the prayers, the rector sent the sexton to tell me the pulpit was at my service. I preached on the conclusion of the gospel for the day, 'Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord,' etc. I did not see one person laugh or smile, though we had an elegant congregation."

Wesley says no one laughed or smiled, a fact worth noting, for there was enough in the event to make men smile against their wish. The truth is, the rector, the Rev. Mr. Cordeux, in his simplicity, made a great mistake. On previous occasions, he had felt it to be his duty to warn his congregation against hearing "that vagabond Wesley preach"; and now he himself invited Wesley to preach to the very congregation who had been warned against him. The explanation of the affair is this: Wesley, after preaching in his own chapel at Peasholm Green, went in his canonicals to Mr. Cordeux's church. Mr. Cordeux

saw that he was a clergyman, and, without knowing who he was, offered him his pulpit. After service, he asked his clerk if he knew who the stranger was. The clerk replied, "Sir, he is the vagabond Wesley, against whom you warned us." "Aye, indeed!" said the astonished rector, "we are trapped; but never mind, we have had a good sermon." The Dean of York heard of the affair, and threatened to lay a complaint before the archbishop; but Mr. Cordeux outstripped the dean, and told the story to the archbishop before the dean could reach him. "You did right," replied his grace; and so the matter ended, with the exception, that when Wesley came again, Mr. Cordeux made him a second offer of his pulpit, and Wesley preached upon the eight beatitudes.[27]

From York, Wesley went to Tadcaster and Pateley Bridge. At the latter place he had the largest congregation he had seen since he left Newcastle. "As it rained," says he, "I desired the men to put on their hats; but, in two or three minutes, they pulled them off again, and seemed to mind nothing but how they might 'know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.'" This devout behaviour was widely different to the rough treatment of Thomas Lee, fourteen years before, when his head was broken with a stone, and he himself rolled in the common sewer, and then thrown into the river.

On leaving Pateley, Wesley wended his way to Skipton, Addingham, Baildon, and Bradford. "At Bradford," he writes, "there was so huge a multitude, and the rain so damped my voice, that many, in the skirts of the congregation, could not hear distinctly. They have just built a preaching house, fifty-

four feet square, the largest octagon we have in England; and it is the first of the kind where the roof is built with common sense, rising only a third of its breadth; yet, it is as firm as any in England; nor does it at all hurt the walls. Why then does any roof rise higher? Only through want of skill, or want of honesty, in the builder."

The first Methodist meeting-house in Bradford was the second floor of a large building near the cockpit, and which subsequently became the meeting place of the followers of Joanna Southcote, and then of the Swedenborgians, and then, in succession, was used as a barrack room, a paint shop, a school, a vagrants' refuge, a warehouse, a printing office, and a joiner's shop. Here the Methodists worshipped till about the year 1760, when the floor gave way, and they removed to Mr. Garnett's barn. Then they erected the octagon chapel, so eulogised by Wesley, the first subscription to which, obtained by Richard Fawcett, amounted to the munificent sum of twopence,[28] and the entire cost of which was £997 8*s*. 9*d*.[29]

From Bradford, Wesley made a tour to Colne, Padiham, Bacup, Heptonstall, Ewood, and Halifax. John Nelson had preached the first Methodist sermon in the last mentioned town, his pulpit being a washing tub turned upside down; and, among others who had been converted, was the celebrated Titus Knight, originally a poor collier, but ultimately one of Wesley's itinerants, then an able Dissenting minister, and the father of a son who became vicar of this important town in Yorkshire. Another, who equally deserves notice, was a female, who suffered total blindness for nearly fourscore

years, and who, when she joined the Methodists, had only three halfpence a day to live upon; and yet, out of that poor pittance, insisted upon giving a weekly contribution in her class, and assisted in paying the debts of Titus Knight.[30]

Grimshaw of Haworth was dead, and so was his son at Ewood; but Haworth church was still open; and, besides this, there was the small Methodist chapel, which had been built by Grimshaw, and which served the Methodists till 1828.[31] Grimshaw's successor was the Rev. John Richardson, a native of Crosby, in Westmoreland, a man of polished manners, of unaffected piety, and of a mild and amiable disposition, and who died at Haworth a few weeks after Wesley died in London.[32]

Wesley had witnessed many a glorious scene in Grimshaw's old churchyard; but never a more glorious one than awaited him on Sunday, August 3, 1766. He writes: "When the prayers at Haworth were ended, I preached from a little scaffold on the south side of the church. The communicants alone (a sight which has not been seen since Mr. Grimshaw's death) filled the church. In the afternoon, the congregation was supposed to be the largest which had ever been there; but strength was given me in proportion; so that I believe all could hear." He continues:

"Monday, August 4.—At one, I preached at Bingley, but with a heavy heart, finding so many of the Methodists here, as well as at Haworth, perverted by the anabaptists. I see clearer and clearer, none will keep to us, unless they keep to the

Church. Whoever separate from the Church will separate from the Methodists."

It will thus be seen that separation from the Church was still one of the ghosts that haunted Wesley's path; and, hence, it will be found that this was one of the great topics discussed at his approaching conference, which was commenced in Leeds eight days after.

But before reviewing the proceedings of the conference, it is of some importance to understand the relation in which Wesley, at this time, stood towards his brother Charles. For many years, his brother had ceased to itinerate, and had confined his labours almost exclusively to London and Bristol; so that the gigantic toil of visiting all the Methodist societies in the United Kingdom fell upon Wesley himself. But, added to this, Charles Wesley was no longer his brother's warm hearted, confidential counsellor. Charles disliked his brother's marriage; and he was almost horrified at his brother's concessions to the preachers who advocated separation from the Church; and, hence, without the thing being openly confessed, there was undoubtedly a sort of silent estrangement between them, very different from the close, genial, trustful, fraternal friendship which existed at the commencement of their Methodist career. The following extracts from Wesley's letters refer to this.

"LEWISHAM, *February* 28, 1766.

"DEAR BROTHER,—We must, we must, you and I at least, be all devoted to God! Then wives, and sons, and

daughters, and everything else, will be real, invaluable blessings. *Eia age, rumpe moras!* Let us this day use all the power we have! If we have enough, well; if not, let us this day expect a fresh supply. How long shall we drag on thus heavily, though God has called us to be the chief conductors of such a work? Alas! what conductors! If I am, in some sense, the head, and you the heart, of the work, may it not be said, 'The whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint'? Come, in the name of God, let us arise, and shake ourselves from the dust! Let us strengthen each other's hands in God, and that without delay. Have *senes sexagenarii* time to lose? Let you and I, and our house, serve the Lord in good earnest. May His peace rest on you and yours! Adieu!

"JOHN WESLEY."[33]

"WHITEHAVEN, *June* 27, 1766.

"DEAR BROTHER,—I think you and I have abundantly too little intercourse with each other. Are we not old acquaintance? Have we not known each other for half a century? and are we not jointly engaged in such a work as probably no two other men upon earth are? Why then do we keep at such a distance? It is a mere device of Satan. But surely, we ought not, at this time of day, to be ignorant of his devices. Let us, therefore, make full use of the little time that remains. We, at least, should think aloud, and use to the uttermost the light and grace on each bestowed, and insist everywhere on full redemption, receivable now by faith alone! consequently to be looked for now. You are

made, as it were, for this very thing. Just here you are in your element. In connection I beat you; but in strong, short, pointed sentences, you beat me. Go on, in what God has peculiarly called you to. Press the instantaneous blessings; then I shall have more time for my peculiar calling, enforcing the gradual work.

"We must have a thorough reform of the preachers. I wish you would come to Leeds, with John Jones, in the machine. It comes in two days; and, after staying two days, you might return. I would willingly bear your expenses up and down. I believe it would help, not hurt, your health. My love to Sally.

"JOHN WESLEY."[34]

Did Charles Wesley go to the conference at Leeds? It is probable he did; indeed, almost certain. Hence, in a letter to his wife at Bristol, written just about the date when the conference closed, he says: "My brother, I presume, will look upon you on Wednesday sennight, in his flight to the Land's End. He is an astonishing youth! and may be saluted, like the eastern monarchs, 'O king, live for ever!'"[35] It would thus seem, that Charles Wesley had seen his brother; and if so, it must have been at Leeds. The settling of this point is of considerable importance, inasmuch as at no conference did Wesley enter so elaborately into the three great questions of the day,—separation from the Church, his own administrative power, and what he calls, in the foregoing letter, "a thorough reform of the preachers."

On the first of these points, the question is asked,—

"Are we not Dissenters? Answer.—We are irregular: 1. By calling sinners to repentance, in *all places* of God's dominion. 2. By frequently using *extemporary prayer.* Yet we are not *Dissenters* in the only sense which our law acknowledges; namely, persons who believe it is sinful to attend the service of the Church; for we do attend it at all opportunities. We will not, dare not, separate from the Church, for the reasons given several years ago. We are not *seceders,* nor do we bear any resemblance to them. We set out upon quite opposite principles. The seceders laid the very foundation of their work, in judging and condemning *others;* we laid the foundation of our work, in judging and condemning *ourselves.* They begin everywhere, with showing their hearers, how fallen the *Church* and *ministers* are; we begin everywhere, with showing our hearers, how fallen they are *themselves.*

"And as we are not Dissenters from the Church now, so we will do nothing willingly, which tends to a separation from it. Therefore, let every assistant so order his circuit, that no preacher may be hindered from attending the church more than two Sundays in a month. Never make light of going to church, either by word or deed.

"But some may say, 'Our own service is public worship.' Yes, *in a sense;* but not such as supersedes the

church service. We never designed it should. We have a hundred times professed the contrary. It presupposes public prayer, like the sermons at the university. Therefore, I have over and over advised, use no *long prayer,* either before or after the sermon. Therefore, I myself frequently use only a collect, and never enlarge in prayer, unless at intercession, or on a watchnight, or on some extraordinary occasion.

"If it were designed to be instead of church service, it would be essentially defective; for it seldom has the four grand parts of public prayer; deprecation, petition, intercession, and thanksgiving. Neither is it, even on the Lord's day, concluded with the Lord's supper.

"The hour for it on that day, unless where there is some peculiar reason for a variation, should be five in the morning, as well as five in the evening. Why should we make God's day the shortest of the seven?

"But if the people put ours in the place of the church service, we *hurt* them that stay with us, and *ruin* them that leave us: for then they will go nowhere, but lounge the sabbath away without any public worship at all. I advise therefore all the Methodists in England and Ireland, who have been brought up in the Church, constantly to attend the service of the Church, at least every Lord's day."

This is a remarkable utterance—Wesley's own. Methodists are urged to attend the service of the Church of England. Why? Because Methodist service was defective. But why was it defective? Not by accident, but of set purpose. It was meant to be a mere supplement to the more perfect devotional service of the church. Was this right? We doubt it. Wesley was no advocate for short prayers, resembling collects, except upon the ground that they were understood to be a sort of supplementary prayers following the more elaborated prayers of the Church of England. Those who quote Wesley, as recommending short prayers in all public worship, mistake his meaning. Wesley might be wrong,—we think he was,—in advising and sanctioning such abbreviated and imperfect devotion as was evidently practised in the public worship of the early Methodists; but he adduced a reason,—an inadequate reason,—for it; and, under the altered circumstances of the present age, would have been the last to approve of many of the *short prayers* which some ill instructed Methodists are now so fond of praising.

The second point on which Wesley expressed himself was one of vast importance. He was the autocrat of Methodists. As was natural, some of his preachers, and probably not a few of the people, reasonably or unreasonably, objected to this, and wished to share in Methodist legislation and politics. Hence it was, that Wesley found it desirable to defend his authority, as he did, at the conference in Leeds. He writes:

> "But what *power* is this, which *you* exercise over all the Methodists in Great Britain and Ireland? Answer. 1.

In November, 1738, several persons came to me in London, and desired me to advise and pray with them. I said, 'If you will meet on Thursday night, I will help you as well as I can.' More and more then desired to meet with them, till they were increased to many hundreds. The case was afterwards the same at Bristol, Kingswood, Newcastle, and many other parts of England, Scotland, and Ireland. It may be observed, the desire was on *their* part, not *mine.* My desire was to live and die in retirement. But I did not see that I could refuse them my help, and be guiltless before God.

"Here commenced my power; namely, a power to appoint when, and where, and how they should meet; and to remove those, whose life showed they had no desire to flee from the wrath to come. And this power remained the same, whether the people meeting together were twelve, twelve hundred, or twelve thousand.

"In a few days, some of them said, 'Sir, we will not *sit under you* for nothing. We will subscribe quarterly.' I said, 'I will have nothing, for I want nothing. My fellowship supplies me with all, and more than I want.' One replied, 'Nay, but you want £115 to pay for the lease of the Foundery; and likewise a large sum of money will be wanting, to put it into repair.' On this consideration, I suffered them to subscribe; and, when the society met, I asked, 'Who will take the trouble of receiving this money, and paying it where it is needful?' One said, 'I will do it, and keep the account for you.' So

here was the first *steward.* Afterwards I desired one or two more to help me as stewards, and, in process of time, a greater number. Let it be remarked, it was I myself, not the people, who chose these stewards, and appointed to each the distinct work wherein he was to help me, as long as I desired. And, herein, I began to exercise another sort of *power;* namely, that of appointing and removing stewards.

"After a time, T. Maxfield, T. Richards, and T. Westall severally desired to serve me as sons, and to labour when and where I should direct. Observe, these likewise desired *me,* not I *them.* But I durst not refuse their assistance. And here commenced my *power,* to appoint each of these, when, where, and how to labour; that is, while he chose to continue with me; for each had a power to go away when he pleased; as I had, also, to go away from them, or any of them, if I saw sufficient cause. The case continued the same when the number of preachers increased. I had just the same power still, to appoint when, and where, and how each should help me, and to tell any, if I saw cause, 'I do not desire your help any longer.' On these terms, and no other, we joined at first; and on these we continue joined. But they do me no favour, in being directed by me. I have nothing from it but trouble and care, and often a burden I scarce know how to bear.

"In 1744, I wrote to several clergymen, and to all who then served me as sons in the gospel, desiring them

to meet me in London, to give me their advice, concerning the best method of carrying on the work of God. *They* did not desire this meeting, but *I* did. And when their number increased, so that it was neither needful nor convenient to invite them all, for several years, I wrote to those with whom I desired to confer, and these only met me at the place appointed; till, at length, I gave a general permission, that all who desired it might come. Observe, I myself sent for these, of my own free choice; and I sent for them to *advise*, not *govern* me. Neither did I, at any of those times, divest myself of any part of that *power* above described, which the providence of God had cast upon me, without any design or choice of mine.

"What is that power? It is a power of admitting into, and excluding from, the societies under my care; of choosing and removing stewards; of receiving or not receiving helpers; of appointing them when, where, and how to help me; and of desiring any of them to meet me, when I see good. And as it was merely in obedience to the providence of God, and for the good of the people, that I at first accepted this power, so it is on the same considerations, not for profit, honour, or pleasure, that I use it at this day.

"But several gentlemen are much offended at my having so *much* power. My answer to them is this: I did not seek any part of this power. It came upon me unawares. But when it was come, not daring to bury that

talent, I used it to the best of my judgment. Yet, I never was fond of it. I always did, and do now, bear it as my burden; the burden which God lays upon me; but if you can tell me any one, or any five men, to whom I may transfer this burden, who *can* and *will* do just what I do now, I will heartily thank both them and you.

"But some of your helpers say, 'This is *shackling free born Englishmen,'* and demand a *free conference;* that is, a meeting of all the preachers, wherein all things shall be determined by most votes. I answer, it is possible, after my death, something of this kind may take place; but not while I live. To *me* the preachers have engaged themselves to submit, to serve me as sons in the gospel. But they are not thus engaged to any man, or number of men, besides. To *me* the people in general will submit; but they will not yet submit to any other. It is nonsense then to call my using *this power,* 'shackling free born Englishmen.' None needs to submit to it, unless he will; so there is no shackling in the case. Every preacher and every member may leave me when he pleases; but, while he chooses to stay, it is on the same terms that he joined me at first,

"'But this is *arbitrary power:* this is no less than *making yourself a pope.'* If by arbitrary power you mean a power which I exercise *singly,* without any colleagues therein, this is certainly true; but I see no hurt in it. *Arbitrary,* in this sense, is a very harmless word. If you

mean *unjust, unreasonable,* or *tyrannical,* then it is not true.

"As to the other branch of the charge, it carries no face of truth. The pope affirms, that every Christian must do all he bids, and believe all he says, under pain of damnation. I never affirmed anything that bears the most distant resemblance to this. Therefore, all talk of this kind is highly injurious to *me,* who bear this burden merely for *your* sakes. And it is exceedingly mischievous to the people, tending to confound their understandings, and to fill their hearts with evil surmisings, and unkind tempers towards *me;* to whom they really owe more, for exercising this very *power,* than for all my preaching put together. Because, preaching twice or thrice a day is no burden to me at all; but the care of all the preachers, and all the people, is a burden indeed!"

This was bold speaking. Hampson and others have accused Wesley of being "fond of power." They say, "his temper was despotic, and that, during the last ten or fifteen years of his supremacy, he was the most absolute of monarchs. His will was the law. He never thought his authority secure, but when exerted to the utmost. The love of power was the chief misery of his life; the source of infinite disgusts; and the most frequent cause of the defections of his friends."[36] Perhaps John Hampson was scarcely an impartial witness, inasmuch as Wesley's power had checked his own ambition; but, at all events, the reader has, in the above lengthened extract,

Wesley's vindication of himself. No doubt his power was great,—almost unexampled among protestants; but he assigns reasons for it, and, unless he is suspected of insincerity,—a thing of which he was almost incapable,—all must give him credit for being actuated by high and conscientious motives. The wisdom of acting as he did is a fair subject for discussion; but the purity of his intentions can hardly be disputed.

Before passing to the third matter, "a thorough reform of the preachers," it is desirable to know Wesley's opinion of the people. He adds:

> "I cannot but know more of the state of the Methodist preachers and people than any other person. The world says, 'The Methodists are no better than other people.' This is not true. Yet it is nearer the truth than we are willing to imagine. Personal religion is amazingly superficial amongst us. How little faith there is amongst us, how little communion with God! How little living in heaven, walking in eternity, deadness to every creature! How much love of the world! desire of pleasure, of ease, of praise, of getting money! How little brotherly love! What continual judging one another! What gossiping, evil speaking, talebearing! What want of moral honesty! What servants, journeymen, labourers, carpenters, bricklayers do as they would be done by? Which of them does as much work as he can? Set him down for a knave that does not. Who does as he would be done by, in buying and selling, particularly in selling

horses? Write him knave that does not; and the Methodist knave is the worst of all knaves. Family religion is shamefully wanting, and almost in every branch. And the Methodists in general will be little better, till we take quite another course with them; for what avails *preaching alone,* though we could preach like angels!"

This is not a flattering picture of the first Methodists; but it is drawn by the man who knew them, and who, as he himself says, "was not prejudiced against them." In such facts, Wesley found a reason for the castigation which he now administered to the preachers. The preachers preached; but he tells them plainly, they must do something more than this, otherwise "the Methodists will be little better 'than other people." He continues: "We must instruct them *from house to house";* and then follows an extract, from Baxter's "Reformed Pastor," on private instruction.

"Great as this labour is," says Wesley, "it is absolutely necessary; for, after all our preaching, many of our people are almost as ignorant as if they had never heard the gospel. I study to speak as plainly as I can; yet, I frequently meet with those who have been my hearers for many years, who know not whether Christ be God or man; or that infants have any original sin. And how few are there, that know the nature of repentance, faith, and holiness! Most of them have a sort of confidence, that Christ will justify and save them, while the world has their hearts, and they live to

themselves. And I have found, by experience, that one of these has learned more from an hour's close discourse, than from ten years' public preaching. O brethren, if we would generally set this work on foot in all our societies, and prosecute it skilfully and zealously, what glory would redound to God thereby! If the common ignorance were thus banished, and our vanity and idleness turned into the study of the way of life, and every shop and every house busied in speaking of the word and works of God, surely God would dwell in our habitations, and make them His delight. And this is necessary to the welfare of our people; many of whom neither believe nor repent to this day. Look round about, and see how many of them are still in apparent danger of damnation! And how can you walk, and talk, and be merry with such people, when you know their case? What cause have we to bleed before the Lord this day, that have so long neglected this great and good work! that have been preachers so many years, and have done so little, by personal instructions, for the saving of men's souls! If we had but set on this work sooner, how many more might have been brought to Christ! And how much holier and happier might we have made our societies before now! And why might we not have done it sooner? There were many hindrances in the way; and so there are still, and always will be. But the greatest hindrance was in ourselves, in our dulness, and littleness of faith and love.

"But it is objected, 'This course will take up so much time, that we shall have no time to follow our studies.' I answer: (1) Gaining knowledge is a good thing; but saving souls is a better. (2) By this very thing, you will gain the most excellent knowledge of God and eternity. (3) You will have abundant time for gaining other knowledge too, if you spend all your mornings therein. Only sleep not more than you need; talk not more than you need; and never be idle, nor triflingly employed. (4) If you can do but one, either follow your studies, or instruct the ignorant, let your studies alone. I would throw by all the libraries in the world, rather than be guilty of the perdition of one soul.

"1. Let every preacher take an exact catalogue of those in society, from one end of each town to the other. 2. Go to each house, and give, with suitable exhortation and direction, the 'Instructions for Children.' 3. Be sure to deal gently with them, and take off all discouragements as effectually as you can. 4. Let your dealing with those you begin with be so gentle, winning, and convincing, that the report of it may move others to desire your coming.

"Perhaps in doing this it may be well, (1) After a few loving words spoken to all in the house, to take each person single into another room, where you may deal closely with them, about their sin, and misery, and duty. (2) Hear what the children have learned by heart. (3) Choose some of the weightiest points, and try, by

further questions, how far they understand them. (4) Often, with the question, suggest the answer. (5) Before you leave them, engage the head of each family to call all his family every Sunday, before they go to bed, and hear what they can rehearse, and so continue until they have learned all '*The Instructions'* perfectly.

"Let us, in every town, and wherever it is practicable, set upon this method in good earnest, and we shall soon find why *the people* are not better, namely, because *we* are not more *knowing* and more *holy."*

Such was Wesley's great remedy for removing evil from among the Methodists,—not only *visiting,* but privately and personally *instructing,* the people, and especially their children; and such, in his estimation, were the two great causes of the evil existing. The people were far from perfect; *because* preachers were defective in knowledge and in holiness. He proceeds to ask:

"Why are we not more knowing? Because we are idle. We forget the very first rule, 'Be diligent; never be unemployed a moment. Never be triflingly employed. Never while away time, neither spend any more time at any place than is strictly necessary.' I fear there is altogether a fault in this matter; and, that few of us are clear. Which of you spends as many hours a day in *God's work,* as you did formerly in *man's work?* We talk, talk,—or read history, or what comes next to hand. We must, absolutely must, cure this evil, or give up the

whole work. But how? (1) Spend all the morning, or at least five hours in twenty-four, in reading the *most useful* books, and that regularly and constantly. 'But I read only the Bible.' Then you ought to teach others to read only the Bible, and, by parity of reason, to *hear only* the Bible. But if so, you need preach no more. Just so said George Bell; and what is the fruit? Why now he neither reads the Bible, nor anything else. This is rank enthusiasm. If you need no book but the Bible, you are got above St. Paul. He wanted others too. 'But I have *no taste* for reading.' Contract a taste for it by use, or return to your trade. 'But different men have different tastes.' Therefore some may read less than others; but none should read less than this. 'But I have no books.' I will give each of you, as fast as you will read them, books to the value of £5; and I desire the assistants will take care, that all the large societies provide the Christian Library for the use of the preachers. (2) In the afternoon, follow Mr. Baxter's plan. Then you will have no time to spare; none for learning Latin, or Greek, or Hebrew: you will have work enough for all your time. Then, likewise, no preacher will stay with us, who is as salt that has lost its savour; for, to such, this employment would be mere drudgery. The sum is, go into *every house*, in course, and teach *every one* therein, young and old, if they belong to us, to be Christians inwardly and outwardly. Make every particular plain to their understanding. Fix it in their memory. Write it on their heart. Read, explain, and enforce the rules of the society; the 'Instructions for Children'; the fourth volume of

sermons; and Philip Henry's method of family prayer. Over and above, where there are ten children in a society, spend, at least, an hour with them twice a week; and do this, not in a dull, dry, formal manner, but in earnest, with your might. 'But I have no gift for this.' Gift or no gift, you are to do it, else you are not called to be a Methodist preacher. Do it as you can, till you can do it as you would. Pray earnestly for the gift; particularly studying the children's tracts."

Such was Wesley's plan to increase the preachers' knowledge: at least five hours a day spent in reading the most useful books; and every afternoon devoted to private intercourse with the people and their children.

His next aim was to increase their holiness; hence the question,—

"Why are not *we* more holy? breathing the whole spirit of *missionaries?* Answer.—Because we are enthusiasts; looking for the end, without using the means. In order to be thoroughly convinced of this, we need only consider the first minutes, and each examine himself upon each article. To touch only upon two or three instances. Do you rise at four? or even at five, when you do not preach? Do you fast once a week? once a month? Do you know the obligation or benefit of it? Do you recommend the five o'clock hour for private prayer? Do you observe it? Do not you find that *any time* is no time?"

None but a man like Wesley would have dared to use faithful dealing like this; and none but men like Wesley's itinerants would have quietly submitted to such a castigation. He was evidently determined to kill or to cure; or, to employ his own expression, to "have a thorough reform of the preachers." For the first time, we have a list of the questions proposed to every preacher on probation before his being received into full connexion.

> "Have you faith in Christ? Are you *going on to perfection?* Do you expect to be *perfected in love,* in this life? Are you groaning after it? Are you resolved to devote yourself *wholly* to God. and His work? Do you know the *Methodist doctrine?* Have you read *the sermons,* and *the Notes* on the New Testament? Do you know the *Methodist plan?* Have you read the *Plain Account,* and *the Appeals?* Do you know the *rules* of the society, and of the bands? and do you keep them? Do you take no snuff? Tobacco? Drams? Do you constantly attend the church and sacrament? Have you read the Minutes, and are you willing to conform to them? Have you considered the twelve rules of a helper; especially the first, tenth, and twelfth; and will you keep them for conscience sake? Are you determined to employ *all* your time in the work of God? Will you preach every morning and evening; endeavouring not to speak too, loud, or too long; not lolling with your elbows? Have you read the 'Rules of Action and Utterance'? Will you meet the society, the bands, the select society, and the leaders of bands and classes in

every place? Will you diligently and earnestly instruct the children, and visit from house to house? Will you recommend fasting, both by precept and example?"

These questions,—with the exception of those concerning attendance at church and sacrament, the reading of the "Rules of Action and Utterance," the meeting of the societies, etc., and an important modification of that concerning preaching every morning and every night,—are still put to all candidates for the Methodist ministry, and are expected to be answered affirmatively before such candidates are admitted to ordination. If answered sincerely and truly, the Methodist ministry, in diligence, in piety, and in success, would have no superiors.

Much space has been occupied with the proceedings of the conference of 1766, but they were far too important to be omitted, or materially abridged. Other matters claimed attention at that conference, though inferior to the foregoing. For instance, it was ascertained, that the debts on the Methodist chapels, throughout the kingdom, amounted to £11,383. "We shall be ruined," writes Wesley, "if we go on thus." It was resolved, that the obnoxious trust deed at Liverpool, which has been already mentioned, should be substituted by another; that no classes should meet in chapels; that the rules of the society should be given to every one when taken on trial; that the rules relating to ruffles, lace, snuff, and tobacco, should be calmly but vigorously enforced; and, that the sermons on wandering thoughts, indwelling sin, the Lord our Righteousness; and the Scripture way of salvation, should

be carefully distributed.[37] This was one of the most important conferences that Wesley ever held. Considering the plain dealing that had been employed, it is as gratifying as it is a matter of surprise, to find Wesley saying: "Tuesday, August 12—Our conference began, and ended on Friday evening. A happier conference we never had, nor a more profitable one. It was both begun and ended in love, and with a solemn sense of the presence of God."

On the day that Wesley opened his conference at Leeds, his house at Windmill Hill, London, was entered by burglars, and a quantity of linen and wearing apparel stolen.[38] On the 20th of August, he reached London himself; and, on the 25th, set out for Bath, Bristol, and Cornwall.

On his way to the west of England, Wesley opened the new chapel at Shaftesbury. He says: "August 29, 1766—I preached in the new house, filled within and without, to the no small astonishment, it seemed, of most of the hearers."[39]

The next day, August 30, he writes: "We rode to Stallbridge, long the seat of war, by a senseless, insolent mob, encouraged by their betters, so called, to outrage their quiet neighbours. For what? Why, they were mad; they were Methodists. So, to bring them to their senses, they would beat their brains out. They broke their windows, leaving not one whole pane of glass, spoiled their goods, and assaulted their persons with dirt, and rotten eggs, and stones, whenever they appeared in the street. But no magistrate, though they applied to several, would show them either mercy or justice. At length

they wrote to me. I ordered a lawyer to write to the rioters. He did so; but they set him at nought. We then moved the court of King's Bench. By various artifices they got the trial put off, from one assizes to another, for eighteen months. But it fell so much the heavier on themselves, when they were found guilty; and, from that time, finding there is law for Methodists, they have suffered them to be at peace. I preached near the main street without the least disturbance, to a large and attentive congregation."

At Ashburton, many of Wesley's congregation "behaved with decency; but the rest with such stupid rudeness as he had not seen, for a long time, in any part of England."

At Plymouth, "at the close of his sermon, a large stone was thrown in at one of the windows, and fell at his feet."

At Truro, he says: "I was in hopes, when Mr. Walker died, the enmity in those who were called his people would have died also; but it is not so; they still look upon us as rank heretics, and will have no fellowship with us."

At Helstone, he "preached to an exceeding large and serious congregation." He writes: "What a surprising change is wrought here, within a few years, where a Methodist preacher could hardly go through the street without a shower of stones!"

Methodism was introduced into Helstone by Mr. Hitchens, one of Wesley's first preachers; and the first class was led by

Mrs. Triggs, the daughter of a clergyman, and a woman of superior mind and character.[40] Once, while the Helstone Methodists were assembled in their preaching room, one of them unaccountably observed, "We will not hold our meeting here to-night, but at the house of ——." For a time, the others objected; but, at last, yielded, and went to the house which had been mentioned. Strangely enough, before the adjourned meeting was concluded, a fire broke out, and, in its progress, seized on a large quantity of gunpowder, by the explosion of which the old Methodist meeting room was blown to atoms.[41]

Another anecdote, relating to Helstone, deserves notice. "I was born," said old Peter Martin, "at Helstone in 1742. My wife is ninety-four years old, and our united ages amount to one hundred and ninety-one years. I have been sexton of Helstone parish sixty-five years. I first heard Mr. Wesley preach in the street, near our market house, seventy-four years ago. I had an adventure with him while I was ostler at the London Inn. One day, he came, and obtained my master's leave for me to drive him to St. Ives. On arriving at Hayle, we found the sands, between that place and St. Ives, overflown by the rising tide. Mr. Wesley was resolved to go on; for he said he had to preach at St. Ives at a certain hour, and must be there. Looking out of the carriage window, he called, 'Take the sea! take the sea!' In a moment, I dashed into the waves, and was quickly involved in a world of waters. The horses were swimming, and the wheels of the carriage not unfrequently sunk into deep hollows in the sands. I expected every moment to be drowned, but heard Mr. Wesley's voice,

and saw his long white hair dripping with salt water. 'What is your name, driver?' he calmly asked. I answered, 'Peter.' 'Peter,' said he, 'Peter, fear not; thou shalt not sink.' With vigorous whipping I again urged on the flagging horses, and at last got safely over. Mr. Wesley's first care was to see me comfortably lodged at the tavern; and then, totally unmindful of himself, and drenched as he was with the dashing waves, he proceeded to the chapel, and preached according to his appointment."[42]

Having spent a fortnight among the Cornish Methodists, everywhere preaching to large and attentive congregations, Wesley returned, on September 23, to Bristol. Here, and at Bath, and in the surrounding country, he employed the next four weeks; and, on October 25, came to London, and wrote: "How pleasing would it be to play between London and Bristol, and preach always to such congregations as these! But what account then should I give of my stewardship when I can 'be no longer steward'?"

In the autumn of this year, he received two letters from Captain Scott, who was stationed with his regiment at Northampton.[43] Here Mr. Blackwell and Mr. Glasbrook had been preaching, the regimental riding house serving as the place of meeting. Large crowds flocked to hear, and numbers were converted. Captain Scott urged Wesley to send an additional preacher to the Bedford circuit, who might take Northampton and the surrounding villages. "The Lord," says he, "has opened you a door in Northampton at last, and will perhaps condescend to make us, unworthy creatures,

instruments of assisting you. I therefore wish you were well established there before we leave. As persons of all ranks go to hear, I hope you will send a preacher that will be acceptable to them; for the work, being in its infancy, might be injured, if one was sent they did not like." Wesley was not the man to neglect an opening like this; and, accordingly, on November 10, set out. On his way, however, he found that James Glasbrook had made arrangements for his preaching every day in Bedfordshire, and, hence, he was obliged to send Richard Blackwell to Northampton to supply his place. In this way, principally by means of soldiers, Methodism was, planted in this important town, and here, as elsewhere, began to fulfil its mission.

With the exception of his usual Kentish tour, the rest of the year was spent in London. Here he preached on family religion, which he calls "the grand desideratum among the Methodists." He also delivered one or more discourses, as he had previously done in Bristol, on the education of children, "wherein," says he, "we are shamefully wanting." Some of the Bristol people answered, by saying, "Oh, he has no children of his own!" But the London Methodists were convinced of their defects. He also commenced a course of sermons on Christian perfection, "if haply," says he, "that thirst after it might return, which was so general a few years ago. Since that time, how deeply have we grieved the Holy Spirit of God! Yet two or three have lately received His pure love; and a few more are brought to the birth."

Every one must be struck with Wesley's almost unequalled labours,—labours prosecuted, not for honour, inasmuch as, for the present, at all events, they only brought him contempt and ridicule; nor for fortune, inasmuch as he took nothing from the people among whom he laboured, except, occasionally when his purse was empty, a few pence or shillings to pay his turnpike gates or his ostler's bill. Indeed, money, like all his other talents, he devoted entirely to the work of God. He sometimes had it; but he never kept it. "Hundreds and thousands," says Thomas Olivers, "are for ever draining Mr. Wesley's pocket to the last shilling, as those about him are eye witnesses."[44]

A remarkable instance of this occurred in the year 1766. Two years before, when at Durham, he met with Miss Lewen, a young lady of about two-and-twenty, with a yearly income of £600, at her own disposal. Some months previously, she had found peace with God, and had joined the Methodists. A friendship sprung up. Her father treated Wesley with the utmost civility, and said, he had done his daughter more good than all the physicians had; and wished her to go to London, where she might have the benefit of his advice, and also communion with his people. She went, and made her abode with Miss Bosanquet, Sarah Crosby, and Sarah Ryan, at their orphanage at Leytonstone. Her health was exceedingly infirm, suffering as she did from a heart disease. In October, 1766, after a few days' illness, she expired; some of her last words being, "Oh now I know I shall be with Christ for ever! Yes, I shall be with Thee, O Lord, for ever! Oh for ever! for ever! for ever! Yes! I shall be with Thee for ever!"[45] Wesley went

to visit her, but found her dead; and, after describing her last moments, writes: "So died Margaret Lewen! a pattern to all young women of fortune in England: a real Bible Christian."

Wesley's serious accident, by the falling of his horse in Southwark, at the end of 1765, has been already mentioned. A few months after, Miss Lewen gave him a chaise and a pair of horses,[46] which, as occasion required, he began to use. She also left him a legacy of £1000, and "a sum of money," says *Lloyd's Evening Post*, "to build a chapel, under his direction." The latter statement is a doubtful one; but it is a fact that, in a codicil, she bequeathed to Miss Bosanquet's orphanage £2000, and wished to make it ten or twelve; but Miss Bosanquet prevailed upon her to let her take the codicil and burn it.[47] Considerable unpleasantness ensued; but, on August 11, 1767, Wesley writes: "I came to a friendly conclusion with Mr. Lewen. He agreed to pay the legacies on the 2nd of November, and we relinquished the residue of the estate. So the harpy lawyers are happily disappointed, and the design of the dying saint, in some measure, answered."

By Miss Lewen's will Wesley became the owner of £1000, probably the largest sum that he ever had in his possession. The money, however, was soon gone. In reference to it, Wesley says: "I am God's steward for the poor;"[48] and among the poor it was speedily distributed. His own sister, Mrs. Hall, deserted by her worthless husband, applied for a portion, but applied too late. Hence the following characteristic letter, written within two years after Miss Lewen's death.

"KINGSWOOD, *October* 6, 1768.

"DEAR PATTY,—You do not consider, money never stays with *me:* it would burn me if it did. I throw it out of my hands as soon as possible, lest it should find a way into my heart. Therefore, you should have spoken to me while I was in London, and before Miss Lewen's money flew away. However, I know not, but I may still spare you £5, provided you will not say, 'I will never ask you again,' because this is more than you can tell; and you must not promise more than you can perform.

"Oh how busy are mankind! and about what trifles! Things that pass away as a dream! Vanity of vanities, all is vanity, but to love and serve God.

"I am, dear Patty, your ever affectionate,

"JOHN WESLEY."[49]

It is pleasant to be loved; it is painful to be hated and despised. Wesley had as great a share of both hatred and affection as most who have ever lived. For more than thirty years, he had been the butt of malice, as well as the object of Christian sympathy and love. He was the cynosure towards which both loving and malignant eyes were turned. This state of things still continued. Much has been already said concerning Methodist persecution; much yet remains unsaid.

In 1766, a translation of Formey's Ecclesiastical History, in two volumes, was given to the public, and had attached to it an appendix, containing "an account of Mr. Wesley and his sect." The translator tries to write fairly, but still speaks of

Wesley's doctrines as issuing "in spiritual pride," and as having a dangerous influence on "virtuous practice."

The *Gospel Magazine*, also, deemed it its pious duty to publish "A Dialogue between the Foundery and the Tabernacle, occasioned by the late publication of the Rev. Mr. John Wesley's sermon upon 'Imputed Righteousness.'" The Tabernacle, of course, bombards the Foundery, and thinks that it wins a glorious victory. Wesley "writes neither with the wisdom of the scholar, the judgment of the divine, the ability of the critic, nor with a becoming mildness and moderation. His principles also are very erroneous."

Laurence Sterne, clever but self conceited, pretentiously generous, but sensually selfish, published his "Yorick's Sermons and Meditations," and adorned them by describing Methodist preachers as "illiterate mechanics, much fitter to make a pulpit than to get into one."

The Rev. John Tottie, D.D., archdeacon of Worcester, and chaplain in ordinary to his majesty, at the request of the clergy, issued "Two Charges, delivered in the diocese of Worcester, in the years; 1763 and 1766: one against the Papists, and the other against the Methodists"; the reverend archdeacon advancing the postulatum, that "the tenets and practices of the Methodist teachers are conformable to those of the papists, and have a direct tendency to lead men into popery."

Not only Churchmen, but Dissenters, mustered to the battle. A shilling pamphlet was published, with the title, "The Causes and Reasons of the present Declension among the Congregational Churches in London and the Country; interspersed with reflections on Methodism and Sandemanianism." Methodism was growing; congregationalism was declining. Why? The writer attributes the declension to "the encroachments of the Methodists and the Sandemanians"; and strongly censures the congregationalists for their "departure from the Bible, for the sake of following the inventions of men, the cant of fanatics, and the nostrums of systematic divines."

Poetry likes to live among flowers, and in scenes of sublimity and beauty; in 1766, it found a fresh well of inspiration, and made the old Foundery its Helicon. The newspapers were enriched with poetical effusions, like "A Modern Summer's Evening," in which

"Methodists to church repair,
Porters, tinkers, crowds, in shoals,
Pious cobblers mend, with prayer,
More their own than neighbours' souls."[50]

Besides these, the public were amused by the publication of "The Methodist and Mimic," a tale in Hudibrastic verse; by Peter Paragraph; inscribed to Samuel Foote, Esq., who doubtless nursed the bantling with natural affection.

There was also "The New Bath Guide; or, Memoirs of the B—r—d Family, in a series of poetical Epistles;" the whole of which are rakish, vile productions, and that on Methodism so pollutingly obscene, that it would be criminal to quote it.

And then, to crown the whole, there was "The Methodist. A poem. By the author of the 'Powers of the Pen,' and the 'Curate.'" Two extracts may be given as fair specimens of the whole. After portraying Whitefield, the illustrious poet describes Wesley thus.

"A second agent, like the first,
Who on demoniac milk was nursed,
Had Moorfields trusted to his care,
For Satan keeps an office there.

Lean is the saint, and lank, to show
That flesh and blood to heaven can't go;
His hair, like candles, hangs—a sign
How bright his inward candles shine."

Wesley's itinerants afford the poetic author wondrous amusement. A very few of his sketchy couplets must suffice.

"Salvation now is all the cant;
Salvation is the only want:
Of the new birth they prate, and prate,
While midwifery is out of date.
Every mechanic will commence
Orator, without mood or tense.

The bricklayer throws his trowel by,
And now builds mansions in the sky.
The cobbler, touched with holy pride,
Flings his old shoes and lasts aside,
And now devoutly sets about
Cobbling of souls that ne'er wear out.
The baker, now a preacher grown,
Finds man lives not by bread alone,
And now his customers he feeds
With prayers, with sermons, groans, and creeds.
Weavers, inspired, their shuttles leave,
Sermons and flimsy hymns to weave.
Barbers unreaped will leave the chin,
To trim and shave the man within.
The gardener, weary of his trade,
Tired of the mattock and the spade,
Changed to Apollo in a trice,
Waters the plants of paradise.
The fishermen no longer set
For fish the meshes of their net;
But catch, like Peter, men of sin,
For catching is to take them in."

All the rest is in keeping with this, except that some of the lines are not only ribald, but obscene.

This was the sort of jeering which Wesley had to meet,—jeering which he was often powerless to prosecute, and which it was beneath his dignity to answer. Besides this, he was too much occupied with his own great work to turn

aside to chastise all the curs that availed themselves of the liberty to snarl and bark at him. His societies were now so numerous and important, that it was a gigantic task to visit them, and regulate their multifarious affairs once a year. In addition, he was bringing out his Notes on the Old Testament, a work, in itself, quite sufficient for the time and energies of any ordinary man; and, further, he had to enforce and to defend his doctrine of Christian perfection, a doctrine imperfectly understood, and bitterly assailed. Hence the publication of a small 12mo volume of 162 pages, entitled, "A Plain Account of Christian Perfection, as believed and taught by the. Rev. Mr. John Wesley, from the year 1725, to the year 1765." "What I purpose," says he, "is to give a plain and distinct account of the steps by which I was led, during a course of many years, to embrace the doctrine of Christian perfection." The book is really historical, rather than doctrinal, and is intended to show, that Wesley's present views were substantially the views which he had held for the last forty years. This was unquestionably true, with the one exception of his now teaching, that Christian perfection is attainable in *an instant,* and by *faith only.* When did Wesley begin to teach this? He says, in 1741; but the only evidence he adduces, in support of his affirmation, is the hymn, then published, beginning with the line,

"Lord, I believe a rest remains;"

and containing the following stanzas.

"Oh that I now the rest might know,
Believe and enter in!
Now, Saviour, *now*, the power bestow,
And let me cease from sin!

Remove this hardness from my heart,
This *unbelief* remove;
To me the rest of *faith* impart,
The sabbath of Thy love!"

The question here raised is not whether Wesley's doctrine be true, or whether it be false; but simply when he *began* to preach it. He says, from the beginning; Dr. Whitehead says otherwise. He writes: "Though Mr. Wesley had so long held the doctrine of Christian perfection, he had *not always* held, that this state of mind might be attained *in one moment;* much less, that a person might attain it in his *novitiate;* nor do I know, that there were any professors of it *before* 1760, except when death was approaching."[51]

Who will decide this question? It is full of interest, and is not without importance.

ENDNOTES

[1] Whitefield's Works, vol. iii., pp. 335, 336.
[2] *Methodist Magazine,* 1846, p. 43.
[3] C. Wesley's Journal, vol. ii., p. 247.
[4] *Methodist Magazine,* 1797, p. 304.
[5] Walpole's Letters, vol. v., p. 16.
[6] *Methodist Magazine,* 1825, p. 653.
[7] *Methodist Magazine,* 1785, p. 435.
[8] Ibid. 1786, p. 171.
[9] Taft's "Memoirs of Holy Women."
[10] *Methodist Magazine,* 1834, p. 902.
[11] Memoir of Entwisle, p. 306.
[12] *Methodist Magazine,* 1780, p. 547.
[13] Everett's "Methodism in Sheffield."
[14] Whitefield's Works, vol. iii., p. 337.
[15] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 122.
[16] *Methodist Magazine,* 1798, p. 494.
[17] Unpublished manuscript letter.
[18] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 331.
[19] *Methodist Magazine,* 1826, p. 464.
[20] Gilbert's Journal.
[21] *Methodist Magazine,* 1824, p. 721.
[22] *Methodist Magazine,* 1833, p. 750.
[23] Lady Maxwell's Life, p. 24.
[24] "Lives of Early Methodist Preachers," vol. i., p. 460.
[25] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 250.
[26] *Methodist Magazine,* 1782, p. 104.
[27] *Methodist Magazine,* 1827, p. 458.
[28] *Watchman* newspaper, March 27, 1861.

[29] "Methodism in Bradford," by Stamp.
[30] Manuscript.
[31] *Methodist Magazine,* 1829, p. 32.
[32] *Gentleman's Magazine,* 1791, p. 489.
[33] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 121.
[34] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 122.
[35] C. Wesley's Life, vol. ii., p. 227.
[36] Hampson's Life of Wesley.
[37] Minutes of Conference, 1766.
[38] *Lloyd's Evening Post,* Aug. 15, 1766.
[39] As a specimen of Methodist learning and expenditure in early times, the following items are taken from the Shaftesbury society book, extending from September 3, 1762, to July 11, 1821.
"1766. Nov. 2.—Paid for *shouling* dirt . . . . . £ 0 0 6
1767. Dec. 24.—Paid Mr. Mather's *Quarteridgre* 1 4 0"
[40] *Christian Miscellany,* 1854, p. 51.
[41] *Methodist Magazine,* 1820, p. 542.
[42] Memoirs of Trewavas, p. 174.
[43] *Methodist Magazine,* 1783, pp. 387, 441.
[44] Olivers' "Rod for a Reviler."
[45] Mrs. Fletcher's Life; p. 54.
[46] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 122.
[47] Mrs. Fletcher's Life, p. 53.
[48] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 288.
[49] *Methodist Magazine,* 1845, p. 1168.
[50] *Lloyd's Evening Post,* July 25, 1766.
[51] Life of Wesley, vol ii., p. 291.

1767.

CHARLES Wesley was still preaching, alternately, in London and in Bristol; and was writing and publishing his magnificent "Hymns on the Trinity," and his "Hymns for the Use of Families."[1]

Whitefield's health was better, and he was able to spend most of the year 1767 in itinerating throughout England and Wales, and in preaching to assembled thousands. At Rodborough, he writes: "I was regaled with the company of some simple hearted, first rate old Methodists, of near thirty years' standing."[2] At Haverfordwest, he says: "I am just come from my field throne. Thousands and thousands attended by eight in the morning. Life and light seemed to fly all around. Who knows but preaching may be our grand catholicon again? This is the good methodistical, thirty year old medicine."[3] Again: "Who knows but I may be strengthened to take a trip to Scotland? This itch after itinerating I hope will never be cured till we come to heaven."[4] At Newcastle, he writes: "I have a blessed Methodist field street preaching plan before me. You may venture to direct for me at Mr. William Shent's, peruke maker, at Leeds; but send me no bad news, unless absolutely necessary. Let me enjoy myself in my delightful itinerancy. It is good, both for my body and soul."[5] At Thirsk, in another letter, and in the same strain, he remarks: "My body feels much fatigue in travelling; comforts in my soul overbalance. Every stage, more and more, convinces me that old Methodism is the thing—Hallelujah!"[6] And, again, on his return to London, in October, he observes:

"I am just returned from my northern circuit, which has been pleasant, and I trust profitable. Everywhere the fields have been white unto harvest. I am become a downright street and field preacher. I wish the city, and want of riding, may not hurt me. No nestling, no nestling on this side Jordan. Heaven is the believer's only resting place. There we shall not be disturbed."[7]

Whitefield was again in his best beloved element. Alas! not for long!

With the exception of a short visit to Colchester, Norwich, and Yarmouth, Wesley spent the first two months of 1767 in London; and, on Ash Wednesday, March 4, "dined at a friend's with Mr. Whitefield, still breathing nothing but love." The two Wesleys and Whitefield, three old friends, were now "a threefold cord not quickly broken." Their opinions differed, but their hearts were one. Ever and anon, means were used to create division; but the efforts failed. In some things, Wesley and his brother held conflicting sentiments so strongly, that it was difficult to work in harmony; but love not only ruled their hearts, but their speech and lives. The following letter, addressed to Charles Wesley, is illustrative of this.

"LONDON, *February* 12, 1767.

"DEAR BROTHER,—What I mean is, Bishop Lowth is sometimes hypercritical, and finds fault where there is none. Yet, doubtless, his is the best English grammar that is extant. I never saw 'Hermes'; the author of it is a rooted deist.

"Pray take care that brother Henderson wants nothing. Sickness is an expensive thing.

"You are not yet (nor probably I) aware of pickthanks. Such were those who told you I did not pray for you by name in public; and they are liars into the bargain, unless, they are deaf.

"The voice of one, who truly loves God, surely is,—

'Tis worse than death my God to love,
And not my God alone.'

"Such an one is certainly 'as much athirst for sanctification as he was once for justification.' You remember, this used to be one of your constant questions. It is not now; therefore, you are altered in your sentiments: and, unless we come to an explanation, we shall inevitably contradict each other. But this ought not to be in any wise, if it can possibly be avoided.

"I still think, to disbelieve all the professors" [of sanctification] "amounts to a denial of the thing. For if there be no living witness of what we have preached for twenty years, I cannot, dare not, preach it any longer. The whole comes to one point: is there, or is there not, any instantaneous sanctification between justification and death? I say, yes. You often seem to say, no. What arguments brought you to think so? Perhaps they may convince me too.

"There is one question more, if you allow me there is such a thing; can one who has attained it fall? Formerly I thought not; but you, with Thomas Walsh and John Jones, convinced me of my mistake.

"On Monday I am to set out for Norwich. Divide the men and women at once: so we do in London. I shall not be in town again till this day fortnight.

'Oh for a heart to praise my God!'

"What is there beside? Παντα γελως και παντα κονις.

Adieu!

"JOHN WESLEY."[8]

At this period the versatile Dr. Dodd was a large contributor to the *Christian Magazine*, for which service he received £100 per annum. Eleven years previous to this, Wesley had condescended to enter into a long correspondence with him, on the subject of Christian perfection?[9] Dodd, under a fictitious name, now revived the subject; and Wesley says, "I at length obliged Dr. Dodd by entering into the lists with him." Wesley's letter was published in *Lloyd's Evening Post*, of April 3, 1767.

"March 26, 1767.

"SIR,—Many times, the publisher of the *Christian Magazine* has attacked me without fear or wit; and, hereby, he has convinced his impartial readers of one thing, at least, that (as the vulgar say), 'his fingers itch to be at me;' that he has a passionate desire to measure swords with me. But I have other work upon my hands:

I can employ the short remainder of my life to better purpose.

"The occasion of his late attack is this: five or six and thirty years ago, I much admired the character of a perfect Christian drawn by Clemens Alexandrinus. Five or six and twenty years ago, a thought came into my mind, of drawing such a character myself, only in a more scriptural manner, and mostly in the very words of Scripture. This I entitled the 'Character of a Methodist,' believing, that curiosity would incite more people to read it, and, also, that some prejudice might thereby be removed from candid men. But, that none might imagine I intended a panegyric either upon myself or my friends, I guarded against this in the very title page, saying, in the name of both myself and them, 'Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect.' To the same effect, I speak in the conclusion: 'These are the principles and practices of our sect; these are the marks of a true Methodist' (that is, a true Christian as I immediately after explain myself). 'By these alone, do those, who are in derision so called, *desire* to be distinguished from other men. By these marks, do we *labour* to distinguish ourselves from those whose minds or lives are not according to the gospel of Christ.'

"Upon this, 'Rusticulus,' or Dr. Dodd, says: 'A Methodist, according to Mr. Wesley, is one who is perfect, and sinneth not in thought, word, or deed.'

"Sir, have me excused. This is not *according* to Mr. Wesley. I have told all the world, *I am not; perfect;* and yet, you allow me to be a *Methodist.* I tell you flat, *I have not attained* the character I draw. Will you pin it upon me in spite of my teeth?

"'But Mr. Wesley says, the other Methodists have.' I say no such thing. What I say, after having given a scriptural account of a perfect Christian, is this: 'By these marks the Methodists *desire* to be distinguished from other men; by these we *labour* to distinguish ourselves.' And do not you yourself *desire* and *labour* after the very same thing?

"But you insist: 'Mr. Wesley affirms the Methodists, that is, all Methodists, to be perfectly holy and righteous.' Where do I affirm this? Not in the tract before us. In the front of this, I affirm just the contrary; and that I affirm it anywhere else is more than I know. Be pleased, sir, to point out the place; till this is done, all you add, bitterly enough, is *brutum fulmen;* and the Methodists, so called, may still 'declare,' without any impeachment of their sincerity, that they *'do not come to the holy table trusting in their own righteousness, but in God's manifold and great mercies.'*

"I am, sir, yours, etc.,

"JOHN WESLEY."

The above is an important letter, were it for nothing else than showing that Wesley preached a doctrine he himself did

not experience. For above thirty years, he had taught the doctrine of Christian perfection; but he here flatly declares, that, as yet, he had not attained to it: he taught it, not because he felt it, but because he believed the Bible taught it.

Wesley was anxious to visit his societies in the sister island. Ireland sorely needed his societies, and his societies needed him. As an instance illustrative of Ireland's ignorance and superstition, at this period of Wesley's history, it may be stated, that there was then a lake, in the county of Donegal, visited by about four thousand pilgrims, from all parts of Ireland, every year, many of them being the proxies of wealthier people, who, at a small expense of cash, discharged their sins, by employing the feet and knees of their poorer neighbours. The lake was about a mile and a half square, and had, in the centre of it, a small island, on which were built two chapels, and fifteen thatched dwellings for the accommodation of priests and penitents. The stay of each pilgrim in the holy island was from three to nine days, and his diet, during his visit, oatmeal and water. His penance was, to walk, without shoes and stockings, on a path of sharp and rough stones, not daring to pick his steps, for this would prevent the remission of his sins at the soles of his feet, the proper outlet; and would also divert his attention from the ave marias and pater nosters which he had to mumble in his piercing, pilgrimage. Besides this pedestrian penance, he had to make the same sort of journey on his uncovered knees; and then to take his position in a narrow vault, and there sit with his head bowed down, for the space of four-and-twenty hours, without eating, drinking, or sleeping, and all the while

repeating the prayers prescribed by his father confessor. To prevent the danger of a nap, each pilgrim penitent was furnished with a pin, to be suddenly inserted into his neighbour's elbow, at the first approach of a drowsy nod; and, to complete the whole, each one was taken to a flat stone in the lake to undergo a scouring; after which, the priest bored a hole through the top of the pilgrim's staff, in which he fastened a cross peg; and gave him as many holy pebbles from the lake as the poor dupe cared to carry for amulets among his friends. Thus scoured and fitted out, the man, with priestly and pious pomp, was then dismissed; and, with his shillalah converted into a pilgrim's cross, became an object of veneration to all who met him.[10]

A journey to Ireland now is thought a trifle; but in Wesley's days it was otherwise. Wesley's purpose was to embark from Bristol; but, on arriving there, he found that there was no ship large enough to take his horses. Accordingly, he had to hurry from Bristol to Liverpool, where the same disappointment awaited him that he had met at Bristol. A third time he started, and now hastened from Liverpool to Portpatrick in Scotland; and here, on March 29, he was fortunate enough to find a vessel of sufficient size to carry him and his equine friends across the channel. Three weeks elapsed, however, from the time he left London to the time he left Portpatrick. Of course the interval was not spent without preaching. At Wednesbury, where, six months before, he had left one of his wearied nags to enjoy a rest, he found the poor beast, to the disgrace of the Wednesbury Methodists, had been ridden "all the winter, and was now galled, jaded, and worn to skin and

bones." At Liverpool, where he spent a sabbath, he made a public collection, which, to the honour of the Liverpool Methodists, amounted to the munificent sum of £1 4*s*. 9*d*.[11] From Kendal to Portpatrick, he had to struggle against wind, and rain, and snow, and sleet, through the most miserable roads, and, at one point, Solway frith, through water reaching to his horse's belly. What but the love of Christ could constrain a man to brave difficulties and dangers such as these?

Wesley spent four months in Ireland, from March 30 to July 29. A few jottings of his journeyings may be useful.

On March 31, he met the society at Belfast, where the Methodist preaching place was a slaughterhouse, and the circuit of which it formed a part consisted of the whole of the territory now included in the Portadown and Belfast districts; a circuit whose quarterly meeting a year afterwards passed the magnanimous resolution, that every member should "pay *a penny every quarter* towards defraying the expenses of the *round.*"[12]

At Newry, when he began to preach in the market house, his congregation consisted of four persons besides himself. He writes, however: "A good number assembled before I had done, only none of the gentry; they were hindered by a business of more importance,—dressing for the assembly!" It was about this period, that the following expensive item was, with conscientious solemnity, entered in the Newry circuit stewards' book: "A lash for Mr. Wesley's whip, 3*d*."[13]

On April 10, he writes: "I preached at Portadown, a place not troubled with any kind of religion. I stood in the street; the people gathered from all sides; and, when I prayed, kneeled down upon the stones, rich and poor, all around me."

"April 15.—I rode to Armagh. Half an hour before the time of preaching, an officer came, and said, 'Sir, the sovereign' (or mayor) 'orders me to inform you, you shall not preach in this town.' In order to make the trial, I walked to the market house at six. I had just begun when the sovereign came. He was talking very loud, and tolerably fast, when a gentleman said: 'Sir, if you are not allowed to preach here, you are welcome to preach in Mr. M'Gough's avenue.' Mr. M'Gough, one of the chief merchants in the town, himself showed us the way. I suppose thrice as many people flocked there, as would have heard me in the market house. So did the wise providence of God draw good out of evil!"

Soon after this, the archiepiscopal city of Ireland had not only a Methodist society, but a Methodist meeting-house, measuring fourteen feet by twelve, unceiled, and with a thatched roof,—a contrast to Armagh's cathedral.[14]

At Swadlingbar, Wesley found a lively congregation of plain country people, "as simple and artless as if they had lived upon the Welsh mountains." As soon as he begun preaching, a papist commenced "blowing a horn"; but "a gentleman," says Wesley, "stepping up, snatched his horn away, and, without ceremony, knocked him down."

A similar fisticuff scene occurred at Kilfinnan. When Wesley commenced preaching, a young man, "a kind of gentleman, took great pains to make a disturbance. Mr. Dancer," Wesley's travelling companion, "mildly desired him to desist; but was answered with a volley of oaths and a blow: one of the town then encountered him," says Wesley, "and beat him well."

At Athlone, Wesley opened a new chapel, which had been built by Mr. Simpson, a magistrate, in his own garden, and at his own expense, with a chamber over the end of it, for the accommodation of the preachers.[15] "Here," he says, "I rested for four days, only preaching morning and evening. I would willingly have gone to church, but was informed, there had been no service for near two years, and would be none for a year or two longer, the inside of the church wanting to be repaired!"

Upon the whole, Wesley was not satisfied with the state of his societies in Ireland. "There is," says he, "a considerable increase of the work of God throughout the province of Ulster. There is some increase in Connaught. In some parts of Leinster there is an increase. But in Munster, a land flowing with milk and honey, how amazing a change is there, for the worse, within a year or two."[16]

The following letter to his brother refers to the same subject, and also to the societies in England.

"ATHLONE, *June* 21, 1767.

"DEAR BROTHER,—For some time, I have had many thoughts concerning the work of God in these kingdoms. I have been surprised, that it has spread so far; and that it has spread no farther. And what hindered? Surely the design of God was, to bow a nation to His sway; instead of which, there is still only a Christian here and there; and the rest are yet in the shadow of death; although those, who would profit by us, have need to make haste, as we are not likely to serve them long.

"What, indeed, has hindered? I want to consider this. And must we not first say, *Nos consules?* If we were more holy in heart and life, thoroughly devoted to God, would not all the preachers catch our fire, and carry it with them throughout the land?

"Is not the next hindrance the littleness of grace, rather than of gifts, in a considerable part of our preachers? They have not the whole mind that was in Christ; they do not steadily walk as He walked. And, therefore, the hand of the Lord is stayed; though not altogether. Though He does work still, it is not in such a degree as He surely would, were they holy as He that hath sent them is holy.

"Is not the third hindrance the littleness of grace in the generality of the people? Therefore, they pray little, and with little fervency, for a general blessing; and,

therefore, their prayer has little power with God. It does not, as once, shut and open heaven. Add to this, that, as there is much of the spirit of the world in their hearts, so there is much conformity to the world in their lives. They ought to be both burning and shining lights; but they neither burn nor shine. They are not true to the rules they profess to observe; they are not holy in all manner of conversation. Nay, many of them are salt that has lost its savour, the little savour they once had. Wherewith then shall the rest of the land be seasoned? What wonder, that their neighbours are as unholy as ever?

"But what can we do to remedy this? I wish you would give an attentive reading to the minutes of the last conference, and see if it will not be worth our while to enforce them with all our might. We have weight enough, and can enforce them. I know not who can and will when we are gone. Let us now fix things on as firm a foundation as possible, and not depend upon seeing another conference.

"Richard Bourke, John Dillon, and one or two more in this kingdom, are truly devoted men; and so are a few of the preachers in England. *Si sic omnes!* What would be able to stand before them?

"How go you on in London? How is Mr. Whitefield, and my lady, and Mr. Madan, and Romaine, and Berridge? Do you converse with those that are most

alive, and sparingly and warily with them that are dead while they live?

"I hope Sally and your young ones are well. Oh what a work it is to train up children for heaven! Peace be with you and yours! Ερρωσο!

"JOHN WESLEY."[17]

This is far from being a bright and cheering letter; but there can be little doubt of its being true. Wesley was always manly enough to look even the darkest facts fairly in the face. He had no notion of crying "Peace, Peace!" when it was salutary to sound the trumpet of alarm. Neither the Methodists nor their preachers, in his judgment, were so pious as they once had been, and as they ought to be; and to this,—not to the want of talent, or of learning, or of chapels, or of money, or of patronage,—but to this, he attributed the want of such success as they ought to have.

Let modern Methodists learn a lesson here. Notwithstanding all their financial and outward prosperity, without holiness they will fail in converting sinners; and, without this success, all the rest is frivolous.

An extract from another letter, written whilst in Ireland, may be inserted here. It was addressed to Lady Maxwell, who was out of health, and gives us a glimpse of Wesley's carriage, his wife, and some of his Newcastle friends.

"CORK, *June* 4, 1767.

"MY DEAR LADY,—My belief is, that a journey to England might be of great service to your health; and it is not improbable, you might receive much benefit from the water of the Hotwells near Bristol. In August, I hope to be at Bristol; and again in the latter end of September. My chaise and horses are at Bristol, which, you would oblige me much, if you would please to use as your own during your stay there; for you should, if possible, ride out daily. My wife, who is at Newcastle, will be exceeding glad to wait upon you there; and, if you choose to rest a few days, I should be happy if you would make use of the Orphan House. You would be pleased with the Miss Dales, and they with you. You and they have drank into one Spirit. Miss Peggy is one of the holiest young women that I have any knowledge of. You will be so kind as to let me know when you expect to be at Newcastle, and, possibly, I may meet you there.

"I am, my dear lady, your most affectionate friend,

"JOHN WESLEY."[18]

Another letter deserves attention; for, though it does not contradict, yet, to some extent, it qualifies the letter to his brother, which has just been given. It also concerns the Edinburgh society; of which Lady Maxwell was a member, and animadverts on the behaviour of one of the ministers of her friend, Lady Glenorchy.

The Rev. Joseph Townsend, fellow of Clare hall, Cambridge, and rector of Pewsey, in Wiltshire, had been sent, by the Countess of Huntingdon, to Scotland, and, for a time, had preached, alternately with Wesley's preachers, in Lady Glenorchy's chapel, Edinburgh.[19] He had now removed to Pewsey, where Wesley addressed to him the following.

"EDINBURGH, *August*, 1767.

"DEAR SIR,—When I saw you here some years since, I could not but admire you; such was your simplicity and godly sincerity. You knew the poor little flock, though a proverb of reproach, were a living people of God. You knew their preachers were messengers of Christ; and you espoused their cause in the face of the sun. You returned to London. You conversed with Mr. Madan and others, most of whom owe the Methodists their own souls also. You came to Edinburgh again. But you *did not know* the Methodists, unless one or two honourable ones. You had *no fellowship* with them; you neither joined with them in public, nor strengthened their hands in private. You stood aloof from them, as though they would have infected you. Nay, you preached just by them, at the very hour of their preaching. You lessened their congregations; you threw many of the society into vain reasonings; you opened many mouths against them; you exceedingly grieved the spirit of the preachers, and caused their hands to hang down. Was this well done? Was it of a piece with your former conduct? Did it do any honour to the gospel? Did it do any real good? Did it cherish any Christian

temper in Mr. Walker or Dr. Erskine? Was it a proof of love to *me?* Was it a means of increasing the knowledge or love of God in your own soul? Alas, my brother! I know you would do well; but, surely, herein you have mistaken your way.

"Do you say, 'Nay, but I have acted right; for the Methodist people are a fallen people, and the preachers preach only dry morality. They are in grievous error, denying election, perseverance, and the righteousness of Christ. Therefore, their work is at an end, and the work of God, which is now wrought, is wrought by the awakened clergy. If I had preached in their chapels, I should thereby have abetted all their errors.'

"This is home to the point. Convince me of this, and I have done with the Methodists, and with preaching. But is it the true state of the case? Let us consider it, point by point.

"1. Are the Methodists a *fallen people?* Blessed be God, they are not: there never were more, there never were so many of them, either in England, Scotland, or Ireland, standing fast in loving, holy faith, as at this day.

"2. 'But the preachers preach only dry morality.' With what ears must *they* hear who think so? With the same as the honest predestinarian at Witney, who, when I had been enforcing Galatians vi. 14 (and indeed with uncommon freedom of spirit), said, 'It was a pretty

moral discourse.' My brother, distrust yourself; you may possibly mistake. I think we likewise have the Spirit of God. I think even I, to speak as a fool, can judge a little of preaching the gospel, perhaps as well as either Mr. Madan or Romaine.

"3. 'But they deny election and perseverance, and the righteousness of Christ.' They are not Calvinists; but they no more deny the righteousness of Christ than they do the Godhead of Christ. Let this never be said more; it is a shameless slander. They deny only the vile abuse of that precious truth.

"4. 'But they teach perfection.' They do exhort believers to *go on unto perfection;* and so do you, if you speak as the oracles of God.

"5. 'Their work is at an end.' Far from it; sinners are still convinced and converted throughout the land.

"6. 'The work of God is now wrought by the clergy.' The more the better; but where, and by whom? How many has any one of them convinced or converted since Whitsuntide? I fear, when we come to particulars, there will be small room to boast. If you put things on this issue, 'Whose word does God now bless?' the matter will soon be determined.

"7. 'My preaching in your chapel would have been in effect to tell the people of Edinburgh, that the

Methodists did not deny the Calvinist doctrines? Amazing! Did Mr. Gillies tell them so, when he preached in our house? Just the contrary. He told them: 'In some opinions, *I do not agree* with the Methodists; but I know they are a people of God: therefore, I wish them good luck in the name of the Lord.' Might not you have done the very same? May you not still? Can you be clear before God without doing it?

"I have now told you all that lay upon my mind. If you can receive it, I shall rejoice, for your sake, and for the people's. If not, I have delivered my own soul. For many years, I have been labouring for peace, though I have had little thanks for my pains. However, my record is above, and my reward with the Most High. It is but a little while that I have to endure the contradiction either of sinners or good men. May God enable you, that stand up in my stead, to labour more successfully! So prays, dear sir, your affectionate brother and servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."[20]

We left Wesley in Ireland. On July 29, he embarked, at Donaghadee, for Scotland; and, on August 6, reached Newcastle, having preached at Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Dunbar, as he proceeded. He spent nearly a week at Newcastle and in its neighbourhood, preaching, among other places, in Mr. Goodday's church, in Sunderland, and making arrangements with Mr. Lewen, of Durham, for the payment of his daughter's legacies. One entry in his Journal, while at

Newcastle, is memorable, and worth pondering by all the Methodists and missionary societies of the present day.

> "Saturday, August 8.—At the request of Mr. Whitaker, of New England, I preached, and afterwards made a collection for the Indian schools in America. A large sum of money is now collected; but will money convert heathens? Find preachers of David Brainerd's spirit, and nothing can stand before them; but without this, what will gold or silver do? No more than lead or iron. They have indeed sent thousands to hell; but never yet brought a soul to heaven."

Wesley was right. It is doubtless a cause of joyous thanksgiving, that the incomes of missionary societies have grown to so high a figure; but money without men is worthless. Half-a-dozen men of the same stamp as Brainerd, Hunt, and others who might be mentioned, would be of infinitely greater value than all the money raised, in a single year, by all the missionary associations of the present somewhat boastful generation. Men like these, however, cannot be procured by money, nor be made by professors; they are the gift of God; and, to get them, the church must pray for them.

It has generally been stated, that the first Methodist missionary collection was made at the conference in Leeds, in 1769; but this is obviously incorrect. The first collection of the kind was made, by Wesley himself, at Newcastle, on Saturday, the 8th of August, 1767; but was made with some

misgiving. Wesley evidently had more faith in the gospel plan of missionaries going forth, at the hazard of their lives, without purse and without scrip, than he had in making large collections to furnish them with both. And, perhaps, he was not so far from being right as some imagine. At all events, it was thus the first Christian missionaries began their work; and, though no one can exonerate the church from her present missionary givings, all will admit, that missionaries' going out as the first missionaries went, and as George Piercy went to China in modern times, would place them beyond the reach of mean, mercenary suspicion. Let the young men of the Christian church become filled with zeal for God, love for souls, and faith in the power of prayer, as Wesley was, and they will refrain from hastily condemning an idea which Wesley seemed to have. The best agents the church has ever had have been profoundly religious volunteers, rushing to the work, not because they wished or hoped for riches and for rank, but because of an inward impulse which they felt to be irresistible, and which made them willing to endure not only hunger, cold, and privation, but even death itself, for the sake of the Saviour whom they rejoiced to serve.

It is a curious coincidence that, in the very year when Wesley made the first Methodist missionary collection, the first Methodist missionary place of worship was opened in New York. "They write," says *Lloyd's Evening Post*, of September 11, 1767,—"They write from New York, that a large chapel has lately been built there for a congregation of Methodists, who already exceed two thousand persons." The "large chapel," somewhat erroneously said to have been *built*

for the Methodists, was "a rigging house," sixty feet in length, and eighteen in breadth, which was taken by Philip Embury, Captain Webb, and their Methodist companions, for Methodist services. Embury, Barbara Heck, and other Palatine Methodists from Ireland, had begun to hold meetings; Captain Webb became their regimental preacher; a large congregation was gathered; a society was formed; and the result was the opening of the *sail loft,* which the London newspaper describes as "a large chapel." But more about this anon.

On the 12th of August, Wesley took coach at Newcastle, and in two days arrived in London, for the purpose of holding his annual conference. He writes: "Tuesday, August 18.—I met in conference with our assistants and a select number of preachers. To these were added, on Thursday and Friday, Mr. Whitefield, Howel Harris, and many stewards and local preachers. Love and harmony reigned from the beginning to the end: but we have all need of more love and holiness; and, in order thereto, of crying continually, 'Lord, increase our faith!'"

As this was the first year in which a complete list of the numbers in society was given, we subjoin the statement as it stands. By this means, the reader will learn the names of all the Methodist circuits then in existence, except the Irish ones, and will see the relative proportions of each.

London	2250	Grimsby	693
Sussex	176	Leeds	1120
Kent	147	Birstal	1491
Colchester	145	Haworth	1366
Norwich	293	York	1000
Bedford	208	Yarm	825
Oxfordshire	142	The Dales	833
Wilts	840	Newcastle	1837
Bristol	1064	Glasgow	64
Devon	413	Dunbar	40
Cornwall East	558	Edinburgh	150
Cornwall West	1602	Dundee	40
Staffordshire	906	Aberdeen	174
Cheshire	525	Wales	232
Lancashire	1875	Ireland	2801
Derbyshire	741		
Sheffield	591	Total	25,911
Epworth	769		

These are curious statistics. In nine instances, circuits are counties. London has the largest number of members, and Newcastle stands next to London. Bristol, one of the largest towns in the kingdom, and the oldest of Methodist stations, only ranks eighth in point of numbers. Six of the circuits are in Yorkshire; and in these were found a fourth part of all the Methodists in England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales.

A good beginning is a good thing. In 1767 one seventh of the Methodist circuits in the United Kingdom, and nearly one fourth of the members, were in Yorkshire. In 1870, the

proportions are scarcely different, namely, circuits a fraction over one eighth, and members nearly one fifth. The exact figures are as follows.

	1870.		1870.
Total number of Circuits . .	41	. . . . .	701
Yorkshire Circuits	6	. . . . .	88
Total number of Members .	25,911	. . . . .	368,434
Yorkshire Members	6,393	. . . . .	71,443

These Yorkshire statistics, however, for 1870, are those of the parent connexion *only*. The Methodist offshoots, in that large county, are, *relatively* speaking, quite as numerous as the original body; and, if their statistics be added to the above, it will be found that, from the beginning, Yorkshire has been the stronghold of English Methodism; and that, at the present day, it is probably more so than it was even a century ago.

There is another point which deserves attention. Methodism, in 1767, had existed eight-and-twenty years, and the result was the formation of forty-one circuits; the employment of 104 itinerants; and the gathering of 25,911 members of society. Considering the difficulties that had to be encountered, these are gigantic facts; but, in modern times, they have been surpassed. In 1810, what is miscalled "Primitive Methodism" was begun, in Staffordshire, by a few poor, uneducated, working men—William Clowes, James Crawfoot, Hugh Bourne, and his brother James. They also had difficulties, and persecutions neither few nor trivial; and yet, not merely in twenty-eight years, but in less than half that

time, their labours, privations, and sufferings had resulted in greater statistics than those which Wesley had to publish in 1767. The following are the figures.

	Circuits.	Itinerant Preachers	Members.
Wesley's conference in 1767, twenty-eight years after Methodism was founded	41	104	25,911
Clowes's conference in 1823, only thirteen years after he began his labours[21]	45	302	29,472

The conference of 1767, in several respects, deserves remark. 1. Besides the itinerant preachers, there were present "many stewards and local preachers," showing that Wesley was wise enough to avail himself of the counsels of laymen, as well as of those who were wholly devoted to the ministerial work. 2. Whitefield and Howel Harris were also present, showing the harmony that existed among the leaders of the three sections into which Methodism had been divided,—the Wesleys at the head of the largest body, Whitefield the chief of the Countess of Huntingdon's connexion, and Howel Harris the prince of the Calvinistic Methodists in Wales. 3. It was at this conference, that Francis Asbury, afterwards the renowned Methodist bishop in the United States, was received on trial. 4. It was decided that, in future, there should be a general fast in all the societies once a quarter. 5. Steps were to be taken to put an end to smuggling. 6. As many circuits had sustained serious loss by the absence of preachers during the

conference, it was resolved that, henceforth, it should be a rule, that not all the preachers in any circuit should come to conference; that those who did come should set out as late, and return as soon, as possible; and that none of those left in the circuits should go out of them while the conference lasted.

It was Wesley's intention to have it determined whether all the preachers or none should continually insist upon Christian perfection;[22] but, if this matter was discussed, the result is not recorded. Still practical religion and relative duties were the subject of conversation; and Wesley concludes his minutes with a sentence which all Methodist preachers to the end of time will do well to bear in mind: "Let us all be men of *one business.* We live only for this, to save our own souls, and them that hear us."

It has been previously stated, that the debt upon the Methodist meeting-houses throughout the kingdom was £11,383. The sum sounds small in modern days, when, in some instances, there has been more than that upon a single chapel; but, to Wesley, it was a burden heavy to be borne. He was no friend to chapel debts, and wished to be rid of them entirely. He asks his conference,—"Can we make a push toward paying the whole debt?" Answer. "I will state the case in writing, to the most substantial men of our society." According to Myles, there were, at this period, eighty-four chapels in England, one in Wales, two in Scotland, and thirteen in Ireland,—a total of exactly one hundred, which, when used as a divisor, gives an average of £113 debt upon each chapel of the connexion.

Wesley was determined to be freed from this encumbrance. For this purpose, he had instituted the yearly collection; but, hitherto, it had not been adequate. He now adopted a scheme, proposed to him, soon after the conference of 1767, by a friend who wrote as follows:—

"I suppose the societies in Great Britain and Ireland contain 24,000 members: one fourth part of these, if they subscribe according to the following scheme, will discharge the whole debt in two years.

1000	Subscribers	at two Guineas	in two years	£4,200
1000	"	at one and a half Guineas	"	3,150
1000	"	at one Guinea	"	2,100
1000	"	at three quarters	"	1,575
1000	"	at half	"	1,050
1000	"	at a quarter	"	525
			In all	£12,600

"This may be paid either yearly, quarterly, or in any such manner as the subscribers please. The grand objection is, there are not so many persons in our societies who are able to contribute so much. Perhaps so. But are there not some who are both able and willing to contribute more? Are there none who clear several hundreds a year? or who are two or three thousand beforehand? And will none of these give ten, twenty, perhaps fifty guineas, in such a case as this? a case of so general concern, and that can occur but once in their

lives? By this method, the poor will be quite excused, unless any of them choose to throw in their mite."

The circular, from which the above is extracted, was widely circulated, and was often accompanied by a short letter, in Wesley's own handwriting, like the following:—

"I think you love me, and the cause wherein I am engaged. You wish to ease me of any burden you can. You sincerely desire the salvation of souls and the prosperity of the work of God. Will you not then exert yourself on such an occasion as this? Surely you will not be straitened in your own bowels. Do according as God has prospered you; and do it willingly, not of necessity, knowing God loveth a cheerful giver."[23]

Again:—

"Go on, in the name of God! one year will suffice, if we have faith. Richard Pearce, of Bradford, writes, he will give £20; Mr. Iles, of Stroud, that he will give £50! Surely God's time is come. Set all your shoulders to the work, and it shall be done."[24]

Again:—

"I have wrote to T. Colbeck, James Greenwood, Jo. Greenwood, Sutcliffe, Southwell, Garforth, and Littledale. The rest, in your circuit, I leave to you. Leave no stone unturned. When you receive the printed letters,

seal, superscribe, and deliver them in my name to whom you please. Be active. Adieu!"[25]

Again:—

"I see no help for it. What must be, must be. You must go, point blank, to York, Leeds, and Bradford. Our rich men subscribe twenty shillings a year; and neither brother Boardman, Brisco, Bumstead, nor Oliver can move them. They want a hard mouthed man. Get you gone in a trice. Show them the difference. I beg you either *mend* them or *end* them. Let this lumber be removed from among us."[26]

Again, in a letter to Mr. Hopper:—

"I constitute *you*, Christopher Hopper by name, Lord President of the north. Enter upon your province, Northumberland, Cumberland, Westmoreland, Durham, Yorkshire, and Lincolnshire, without delay. Pray despatch letters to Jacob Rowell, Jo. Heslop, Richard Boardman, and your other deputies without loss of time; and quicken them to put forth all their strength, and make one push for all. But hold! John Fenwick writes to me, 'I will give £25!' Do not abate him the five! No drawing back! I think the time is come for rolling away this reproach from us. Your thought concerning the preachers is a noble one. If fifty of them set such an example, giving a little out of their little, such an instance would have an effect upon many. Let one stir

up another. Spare no pains. Write east, west, north, and south. You have a ready mind, and a ready pen; and it cannot be used in a better cause."[27]

Again, in a letter to Mr. Merryweather, of Yarm, dated "London, December 28, 1767."

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—I thank Mr. Waldy and you for your ready and generous assistance. It seems, the time is come; but John Fenwick writes from Newcastle, 'We are all here of opinion that what is done should be done at once; and we think the debt may be paid off in one year, only let us set about it in faith. I will give £25; Mr. Davison, £25; Jo. Morrison, £25; Miss Dales, £50.' Very well; this will not interfere. Some may give at once, some quarterly, some yearly. You will encourage your neighbours all you can.

"I am, etc.,

"JOHN WESLEY."[28]

Such were Wesley's efforts to obtain subscriptions for the first chapel relief fund that Methodism ever raised. This was a great connexional effort to collect £12,000, to defray all the connexional chapel debts. What was the result? This may be gathered from another circular, which Wesley issued two years afterwards.

"November 20, 1769.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—Two years ago, many of our brethren, who considered the number of the people

called Methodists, and the circumstances which a great part of them were in, believed we should pay off the debt at once. I myself was fully persuaded, that between twenty and thirty thousand people were well able to do this; but I was not at all persuaded they were willing. However, I said little upon that head; being unwilling to weaken the hands of those who were of another mind.

"It was a good step which was made the first year. Upwards of £5000 were contributed; by which means the most pressing debts were paid; and many of our brethren were firmly persuaded we should make an end of the whole the second year. I well knew the Methodists could do this, but I saw no reason to think they would. And when the collection was brought in, amounting to above £2000, it was full as much as I expected.

"But what can be done this third year? £5000 remain unpaid. Are the Methodists able to clear this in one year? Yes, as able as they are to clear £50. But are they willing? That I cannot tell. I am sure a few of them are, even of those who have a large measure of worldly goods; yea, and those who are lately increased in substance, who have twice, perhaps ten or twenty times, as much as when they saw me first. Are you one of them? Whether you are or not, whether your substance is less or more, are you willing to give what assistance you can? to do what you can without hurting your family? 'But if I do so, I cannot lay out so much, in such

and such things, as I intended.' That is true; but will this hurt you? What, if instead of enlarging, you should, for the present, contract, your expenses? spend less, that you may be able to give more? Would there be any harm in this? 'But neither can I lay up so much.' This, likewise, is most true; but is it ill husbandry to 'lay up treasure in heaven'? Is that lost which is given to God? 'But I thought we should have paid the debt in one year, and so need no further collections.' I never thought so; I knew it might be paid in one year, but never expected it would. There is more likelihood of its being paid this year. It will, if our brethren exert themselves, do you, for one; let nothing be wanting on your part. Yet do not imagine, 'We shall need no further collections.' Indeed, we shall, though we owed not one shilling. Do not you remember the original design of the yearly subscription? Paying our debts is but one branch of the design. It answers several other valuable ends, equally necessary. It enables us to carry the gospel through the three kingdoms; and, as long as we pursue that glorious design, this subscription will be necessary; though, it is true, when once this burden is removed, a far smaller contribution will suffice. However, 'let the morrow take thought for the things of itself'; to-day do what you can, for the love of God, of your brethren, of the cause of God, and of your affectionate brother,

"JOHN WESLEY."[29]

This appeal was responded to, by at further reduction of debt to the amount of £1700; but new debts were constantly

being created, and, for years afterwards, chapel debts were one of Wesley's sorrows.

The conference of 1767 being concluded, Wesley started, on August 24, for the west of England, preaching at Wycombe, Witney, and other places. He made a brief tour in Wales, and visited most of the societies in the county of Somerset. On September 26, hearing that his old friend, Mrs. Blackwell, was dying, he hurried to London, and found her better. Two days later, he went back to Bristol, where, he says, "I permitted all of Mr. Whitefield's society that pleased, to be present at the lovefeast. I hope we shall 'not know war any more,' unless with the world, the flesh, and the devil."

Having again wended his way, *viâ* Southampton and Portsmouth, to London, he set out, on October 20, to Colchester, and "spent three days very agreeably, among a quiet and loving people."

Returning again to London, he started, on October 26, on what he calls his "little tour through Northamptonshire and Bedfordshire," which occupied the next five days.

On November 1, he set out to visit the societies in Kent and Sussex, and, at the end of the week, returned to London, where he buried the remains of his clerical coadjutor, Benjamin Colley. Here, he says, he received the following letter.

"SIR,—I was yesterday led to hear what God would say to me by your mouth. You exhorted us 'to strive to enter in at the strait gate.' I am willing so to do; but I find, one chief part of my striving must be to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to instruct the ignorant, to visit the sick, and such as are in prison, bound in misery and iron.

"But if you purge out all who scorn such practices, or at least are not fond of them, how many will remain in your society? I fear, scarce enough to carry your body to the grave. Alas, how many, even among those who are called believers, have plenty of all the necessaries of life, and yet complain of poverty! How many have houses and lands, or bags of money, and yet cannot find in their hearts to spare now and then to God's poor a little piece of gold! How many have linen in plenty, with three or four suits of clothes, and can see the poor go naked! Pray sir, tell these, you cannot believe they are Christians, unless they imitate Christ in doing good to all men, and hate covetousness, which is idolatry."

Wesley adds: "I do tell them so, and I tell them it will be more tolerable in the day of judgment for Sodom and Gomorrah than for them. I tell them, the Methodists, that do not fulfil all righteousness, will have the hottest place in the lake of fire."

On November 30, Wesley started for Norwich, where he says: "Our friends, the mob, seem to have taken their leave; and so have triflers; all that remain seem deeply serious."

On December 7, he writes: "I went on to Yarmouth, and found confusion worse confounded. Not only Benjamin Worship's society was come to nothing, but ours seemed to be swiftly following. They had almost all left the Church again, being full of prejudice against the clergy and against one another." On December 12, he came back to London, where he continued the remainder of the year, with the exception of a visit to Sheerness. He writes, December 16: "The governor of the fort having given me the use of the chapel, I began reading prayers, and afterwards preached to a large and serious congregation. The next evening it was considerably increased, so that the chapel was hot as an oven. In the afternoon of the day after, the governor sent me word, I must preach in the chapel no more; but, a room being offered, we had a comfortable hour. Examining the society, consisting of four or five and thirty members, I had the comfort to find many of them knew in whom they had believed; and all of them seemed desirous to adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour. Such a town as many of these live in is scarce to be found again in England. In the dock, adjoining to the fort, there are six old men-of-war. These are divided into small tenements, forty, fifty, or sixty in a ship, with little chimneys and windows; and each of these contains a family."

The Whitefield section of the Methodists seem to have had a society in Sheerness previous to this. Cornelius Winter, now

a young man of about five-and-twenty, and acting as a sort of itinerant local preacher, in the county of Kent, tells us that, in 1766, Wesley's "people made an innovation upon the Calvinistic cause at Sheerness," upon which he walked over from Sittingbourne, on a severe winter's night, and preached from the words: "And Gideon said unto him, O my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all His miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt? but now the Lord hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites." No doubt, the young preacher intended his text to be a stunning one, and to put an end to Wesley's "Midianites" poaching on Calvinian preserves. He states that his sermon "had an amazing effect"; that he "became a frequent and acceptable visitor"; and that an "eminent old saint, by the name of Wadsworth, was so pleased with his services, that, when he died, he left him half-a-crown and his Bible," the first legacy that Cornelius ever had.[30] Young Winter thought he had extinguished Wesley's Methodism in Sheerness; but, like most young men, he proved himself to be liable to fall into mistakes.

It is a curious fact, that, in 1767, as in the year previous, Methodism was attacked chiefly by the muses. One of the principal poetic effusions was, "Methodism Triumphant; or, the decisive Battle between the Old Serpent and the Modern Saint," 4to, 139 pages. In Nichols' "Literary Anecdotes," it is stated, that this skittish, satirical production was written by Dr. Nathaniel Lancaster, rector of Stanford Rivers,—"a man of strong natural parts, great erudition, refined taste, and

master of a nervous and elegant style. He was a native of Cheshire, lived a recluse, and died deeply in debt, June 20, 1775."[31]

Of course, Wesley is Dr. Lancaster's "modern saint"; and the poem, which is not without literary merit, professes to sketch "the state of religion previous to Wesley's mission; his transcendent character and miraculous powers," and his subsequent history, till he is brought into "single combat with the old serpent. Satan accepts Wesley's challenge; leaves his dominions; and repairs to Moorfields, in Britannia." Then follows a description of the conflict; Wesley is blown up with gunpowder; a seraph heals him; the battle is renewed; with his "massive journals," Wesley shatters the devil's horns, batters his skull, squashes his igneous brains, and then, seizing a falchion sent from the armoury of heaven, lops off his cloven feet, and finally pulls off his tail, and suspends it over a fane,—

"a trophy of victorious faith,
And surest proof, that Methodism springs,
With all her tenets, from a heavenly source."

The whole poem is full of clever, but profane, banter of this description.

Another quarto poetical publication, of forty-seven pages, and, in style and spirit, bearing so strong a resemblance to the former one as almost to affiliate itself, was entitled, "The Troublers of Israel; in which the principles of those who turn

the world upside down are displayed. With a preface to the Rev. Dr. D——; to which is prefixed, a short introductory description of modern enthusiasts.

Besides the above, there was a shilling pamphlet published, with the title, "A Dialogue between the Rev. Mr. John Wesley and a member of the Church of England, concerning Predestination." The author is a most zealous Calvinist, and attacks Wesley's views with great violence; perhaps thinking that, though man might have reason to complain, God would commend and honour his heavy handed flagellation.

Wesley's publications, in 1767, were the following.

1. "A Word to a Smuggler," with this sentence printed on the title page,—"This tract is not to be sold, but given away:" 8vo, eight pages.

Smuggling was, at this period, one of England's crying evils; and, from the first, Wesley resolutely set his face against it. "A smuggler," said he, "is a thief of the first order, a highwayman or pickpocket of the worst sort. Let not any of those prate about reason or religion. It is an amazing instance of human folly, that every government in Europe does not drive these vermin away into lands not inhabited."[32] "Every smuggler is a thief general, who picks the pockets both of the king and all his fellow subjects. He wrongs them all; and, above all, the honest traders, many of whom he deprives of their maintenance."

So general was the evil in Wesley's day, that not a few, even of the members of his own societies, were tainted with it. At St. Ives, in 1753, he ascertained that nearly the whole society "bought or sold uncustomed goods." At Sunderland, in 1757, he had to tell the Methodists that, unless they would "part with all sin, particularly, robbing the king," he should be obliged to part with them. "Carefully disperse the 'Word to a Smuggler,'" said Wesley at the conference of 1767; "expel all who will not leave off smuggling; and silence every local preacher that defends it."

2. "An Extract of the Rev. Mr. John Wesley's Journal, from May 6, 1760, to October 28, 1762." 12mo, 141 pages.

3. "Christian Letters, by Joseph Alleine." 12mo, 88 pages.

4. "Extracts from the Letters of Mr. Samuel Rutherford." 12mo. "The same piety, zeal, and confidence in God," says Wesley, "shine through all the letters of Mr. Alleine that do in Mr. Samuel Rutherford's; so that, in this respect, he may well be styled the English Rutherford. In piety and fervour of spirit, they are the same; but the fervour of the one more resembles that of St. Paul,—of the other, that of St. John. They were both men of intrepid courage; but in love Mr. Alleine has the preeminence."

5. "The Repentance of Believers." 12mo. This was a sermon for the times, peculiarly adapted to settle the inquiries of the Methodists respecting the subject of Christian perfection, and other points connected with it.

ENDNOTES

[1] Jackson's "Life of Charles Wesley," vol. ii., p. 232.
[2] Whitefield's Works, vol. iii., p. 345.
[3] Ibid. p. 348.
[4] Ibid. p. 351.
[5] Ibid. p. 353.
[6] Ibid. p. 354.
[7] Whitefield's Works, vol. iii., p. 357.
[8] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 123.
[9] See p. 252 of this volume.
[10] *London Magazine*, 1766, p. 90.
[11] Liverpool society book.
[12] *Methodist Magazine,* 1868, p. 919.
[13] Ibid.
[14] *Irish Evangelist,* Jan. 1, 1861.
[15] Ibid. vol. i., No. 11.
[16] Wesley's Works, vol. xiii., p. 345.
[17] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 125.
[18] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 320.
[19] "Life and Times of Countess of Huntingdon," vol. ii., p. 159; vol. i., p. 411.
[20] *Methodist Magazine,* 1861, p. 985.
[21] "Life of Venerable W. Clowes," p. 159.
[22] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 374.
[23] *Methodist Magazine,* 1845, p. 577.
[24] *Methodist Magazine,* 1855, p. 227.
[25] Ibid. 1845, p. 577.
[26] Ibid. 1855, p. 227.
[27] Ibid. 1855, p. 227.

[28] Manuscript letter.
[29] *Methodist Magazine,* 1845, p. 579.
[30] "Memoirs of Cornelius Winter," by W. Jay, p. 63.
[31] "Literary Anecdotes," vol. ii., p. 380.
[32] Wesley's Works, vol. ix., p. 214.