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

Written from a Spiritual Standpoint.

WITH FIVE ILLUSTRATIONS.

BY

REV. EDWARD DAVIES,

AUTHOR OF "THE LIVES OF BISHOP TAYLOR, REV. THOMAS HARRISON,
HESTER ANN ROGERS, AND FRANCIS RIDLEY HAVERGAL,"

"THE LAW OF HOLINESS," "CONTRAST BETWEEN
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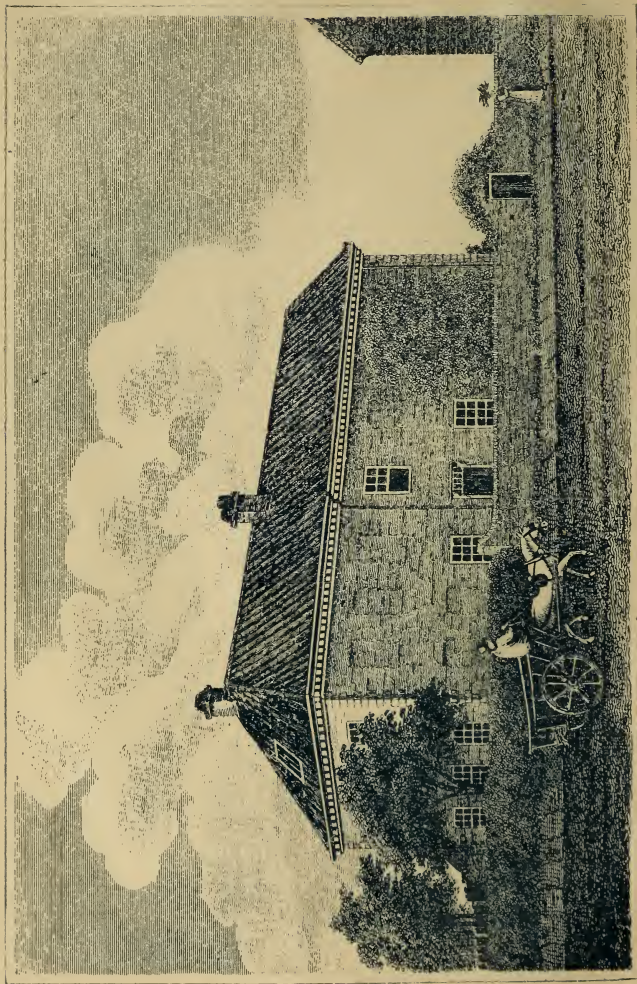
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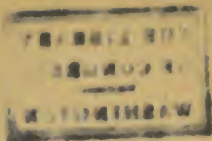
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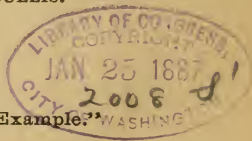
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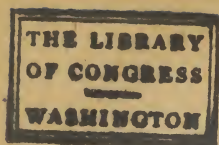
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To the
MINISTRY AND MEMBERSHIP
of the
VARIOUS BRANCHES OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH,
and to
ALL LOVERS OF A PURE LITERATURE
THIS VOLUME
IS MOST RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.

INTRODUCTION.

NOT long since a company of ministers, of different denominations, were seated together at dinner. One of the number (a Methodist) began to relate an incident in the life of Wesley. Just as he commenced, and mentioned the name, one asked, "Who was John Wesley?" The minister began to explain, to describe John Wesley, at which there was a general laugh. He found he was casting pearls before—clergymen, who knew nearly as much about John Wesley as he did. And so, when Rev. E. Davies asked me to write an introduction (as I had suggested the preparation of a Life of John Wesley that would be within the reach of all classes), it seemed almost as needless as for the Methodist preacher to explain who John Wesley was. For, in the life and times of this torch-bearer of truth, was enkindled a blaze whose light and glory has not been extinguished, nor, indeed, can ever be while revelation declares the fulness of salvation in Christ, and the great heart of mankind yearns for the glorious reality.

It is only for us to add, thanks be unto God for giving John Wesley to the world, while we leave our request with Him, that "speaking the truth in love, we may grow up into Him, in all things, which is the head, even Christ."

Yours in Him,

CHARLES CULLIS.

PREFACE.

REASONS FOR ANOTHER LIFE OF JOHN WESLEY.

1. To refresh the memory of the fathers in Israel, who read his life many years ago. 2. To furnish the young of the present generation with a live, condensed, and deeply interesting life of this man of God. 3. To place this life within the reach of the toiling millions, at a small price, and in an attractive form. 4. To bring out the spiritual part of this remarkable life, thus furnishing a rich feast for the Christian reader. 5. Because Mr. Tyermen, in his elaborate "Life of John Wesley," is so severe on the faults — or the appearance of faults — in Wesley's life.

There seems to be a prevailing disposition to spread out any defects in the character of this most excellent man. This is clearly shown in the following criticism from Dr. Rigg, in his "Living Wesley :—" "In my judgment, Mr. Tyerman has over-done his fidelity. He seems to have acted the part, almost whenever possible of *Advocatus diaboli* — to have chosen, as a rule, the worst construction which, with anything like probability, could be put upon Wesley's life and character. He never gives the benefit of the doubt, as it seems to us, to the accused, but always to the accuser. Considering who and what Wesley was, and what his antecedents and independent character must be admitted to have been, this appears not to be judicially fair. Besides this, there is a tone in his dealings with Wesley which fairly astonishes one, at times; he

censures, he pronounces, he condemns; and this too, in a tone of harshness, in some instances, and of lofty decision, as if he were Wesley's superior and judge. I believe that Macaulay—it is quite certain that Southey—would never have ventured, in so absolute, unceremonious, dictatorial a style, to pronounce censure on John Wesley. They would have felt their own inferiority to him; that if he sometimes erred, he was at least a great and good man, a venerable saint, as to whom they would not venture to pronounce an unfavorable judgment, even in individual acts of his life, without modesty and self-restraint—without what the Romans would have called *verecundia*. Mr. Tyerman has not been restrained by any such feelings."

6. I have written this book at the request of a man of God, whose judgment I revere more than my own, who has kindly consented to write the Introduction.

7. In writing this book, I have consulted every book I could find on John Wesley, in the public and private libraries within my reach; and have searched as for hid treasures, to find the striking facts of this man's wonderful life. I have spared no expense of time or money to make this an invaluable book to the Christian public; yea, to all who are concerned to know the life and times of this heroic and God-honored man.

8. It has seemed to me that no one author has given Mr. Wesley credit for the deep-toned spirituality that he possessed. Many writers have been so taken up with his great success in founding Methodism, and confounding Calvinism, that they have only looked

occasionally to the secret spring of all his success; namely, his close and *constant communion with God*, and his utter consecration to God, to do all his will, and to do it all the time, and to do it with an alacrity and delight that resembles the angels in heaven, who “run and return like a flash of lightning,” and who were, no doubt, constantly attending his steps, and protecting his life. So far as I know my own heart, I have written this book in an atmosphere of perfect love, and have sought to bring out those heavenly traits of character which John Wesley undoubtedly possessed.

9. The careful reader will find, not only the life of John Wesley, but also sketches of some of his fellow-laborers, as George Whitefield, John Fletcher, Thomas Walsh, and others.

10. I lay no claim to originality, unless it be in the selection and the arrangement of the materials of which this book is composed.

11. I ask, and expect, the kindly forbearance of my superiors in learning, and in writing, who will, no doubt, discover many imperfections. I have simply done what I could to embalm the memory, and hold up the example of that eminent apostle of the eighteenth century, whose name is as “ointment poured forth,” and whose memory will become increasingly precious as time and eternity roll on. It is all laid at the feet of Jesus, who is indeed the Lord of all, by

EDWARD DAVIES.

READING, MASS., Dec. 25, 1836.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

Prevailing Wickedness of the Times—Importance of Biography—Wesley's Birth and Surroundings—Samuel Wesley—Fire at Epworth Parsonage—Wesley's Home Education—Early Admitted to the Sacrament—Mother's Consecration—Charter House School—Ambition—Confessions of Sin—Unnatural Noises at Epworth—Westminster School—Oxford College—Parents Poor—Reads "Christian Pattern"—Begins to Write His Journals—Discussion on Predestination.

CHAPTER II.

Ordained Deacon—Elected Fellow of Lincoln College—Master of Arts—Ordained Priest—Preaching without Power—Seeking Holiness—Careful of His Company—Curate for His Father—Rigid Economy—Closet Devotions—Reading on Horseback—Father Dies—Moderator of the Classes—Preached at St. Mary's—Is Not Born of the Spirit—Defines Holiness—Begins to Publish Books—John and Charles Go Out Into the World as Reformers.

CHAPTER III.

Urged to Become a Missionary—Decides to Leave All—Starts for America—Hopes to be Converted—Moravian Brethren on Board—Oglethorpe's Rage Subdued—Rough Voyage—Wesley Afraid—Arrives at Savannah—Meets Moravian Elder—Confesses His Need of True Religion—Multiplied Religious Services—Opposition—Suffers by Missing His Way—A Woman Cuts Off His Hair—Lacks Spiritual Power—Miss Hopkey—Thinks of Marriage—Moravians Discourage Him—Complaints Against Wesley—Advised to Return to England—Suffers Much in Reaching a Seaport—Sails for England—Self-Examination—Fearful Storms at Sea—Lessons Learned—Arrives in England—George Whitefield's Testimony.

CHAPTER IV.

Oxford Learning and Moravian Teaching—Peter Bohler Convinced of Unbelief—Living Faith—Last Retreat—Preaches Faith Before He Has It—Charles Wesley Converted—John Wesley Converted—Fear Turned into Love—Buffeted—Mother's Joy—

Visits Hernhutt, Germany—Greatly Edified—Returned to England—Began to Preach with Power—Many Churches Closed—Fiery Zeal—Preached at Oxford—Life of Halyburton—Character of a Methodist—Love Feast in Fetter Lane—Persecutions—Wales—Building Chapels—Blasphemers Smitten—Class Meetings Organized—Differs from Moravianism—Horrible Decree of Predestination.

CHAPTER V.

Band Meetings—Lay Preachers—Wesley in Newcastle—Preached on His Father's Tombstone—General Rules—Holy Triumph—Rabble and Riot—Evil Spirits—Itinerant Labors—Seeking Holiness—His Life Testimony—Christian Perfection Defined—Set Against Fanaticism.

CHAPTER VI.

Mockers Converted—Labors at Oxford—Nigh Unto Death—Prayer Prevails—Poetic Spirit—Great Itinerant—Crossing the Trent—Quarterly Class Tickets—Awful Convictions—Quaker's Dream—Fearful Riots in "the Black Country"—Power Over Enemies—Divine Peace—Charles Wesley's Courage—Prayer Book in a Tavern—Conquering Cornwall—Feeding on Berries—More Chapel Room Wanted—Sick Visitors—Satan Opposes—His Publications Multiply—Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion—Content with His Lot.

CHAPTER VII.

John Nelson Pressed for a Soldier—First Conference—Doctrines Discussed—Questions of Discipline—Seminary for Workers—Cornwall—Great Power in Preaching—Sick of Sublime Divinity—Healed by the Prayer of Faith—Law Taking Its Course—Labors in Wales—Bristol—Oxford's Spiritual Christianity—Resigned His Fellowship—Hard Winter Travels—Taken In to Custody—Still Preaching—Methodists in Battle—Scotland—Christian Perfection, Testimonies Thereon—Writing and Publishing—Rules for Bands—Prayer of Entire Consecration—Jonathan Edwards—Revival Extravagances.

CHAPTER VIII.

Various Controversies—Antinomianism—Offender Humbled—Rules for Stewards—Abridging Useful Books—"I am John Wesley Himself"—Dread of Popularity—Charles Stuart's Invasion—Mighty Prayers for Deliverance—Sick of Opinions—John Nelson—His Fearful Persecutions—Wesley Preaching to Great Crowds—Rev. Vincent Perronet—Methodism Established—

Sudden Conversions—Constantly Reading and Writing—Great Self-Possession — Great Benevolence — Methodist Singing—Watch-Nights—Ordination for His Preachers—Gifts, Graces, Fruits—Prudent Trèatment of Entire Sanctification—No Formal Separation from the Church—Methodism a Permanent Organization—Macaulay's Estimate of Wesley—His Approach to Death—Writes His Epitaph—Raised in Answer to Prayer—Writing Books when Too Weak to Preach.

CHAPTER IX.

Preachers in Morpeth—Many Electrified in London—Extensive Travels—Grace Murray—John Bennet—Fiery Trials—Keeps on Preaching—Is Married to Mrs. Vazel—Leaves His Bride, and Goes on Preaching—Character of Mrs. Wesley—She Travels with Wesley—They Begin a Suffering Life—Packet of Letters—Watched over for Evil—She Leaves Him—Interpolated Letters—Lays Violent Hands on His Person—His Kind Letter—Thirty Years Married Misery—Her Death—His Sublime Career.

CHAPTER X.

Wesley's Preaching—Great Variety of Sermons—His Style—Dr. Southey—Dr. Riggs' Estimate—Great Power over the People—Thomas Jackson—Preaching at Epworth—His Figure in the Pulpit—Fearless and Faithful—Examples—Preaching before the University—Cowper on Wesley—Dr. Riggs' Testimony—Preaching at Billingsgate—Dr. Stevens' Testimony.

CHAPTER XI.

George Whitefield in Scotland—His Power in Preaching and in Self-Command—People of Rank Coming to Christ—David Hume—Slaying Power—Wesley in Scotland—Christopher Hopper—Great Indifference—Edinburgh—Plain Preaching—No Great Success—Scotland Not Favorable to Methodism—Whitefield's Opinion.

CHAPTER XII.

Methodism in Ireland—Dublin Society—Early Impressions not lasting—Excessive Cordiality—Charles Wesley in Ireland—Fearful Persecutions—Converts Multiplied—Catholic Opposition—Wesley's Hearty Welcome—Great Crowds—Preaches on the Terrors of the Law—A Loving People, of Great Simplicity—Three Months of Mob Rule at Cork—Charles Wesley in Court—Charges Against Him—All the Preachers in Court—Chapels Built—John Smith and Wm. Hunter Preaching Among the

Mountains—The Saintly Thomas Walsh, a Converted Papist—He Preaches with Power to the Catholics—His Memory a Concordance of the Bible—Wesley Spends Six Years in Ireland—John Fletcher and Thomas Walsh—Walsh's Death, after a Mighty Conflict—Duncan Wright and His Career—Advice to an Irish Worker—Great Liberality.

CHAPTER XIII.

Christian Perfection in Its Relation to John Wesley—Its History Among the Methodists—Wesley in 1733—Revival of Sanctification in 1760—Methodist day of Pentecost—Wesley's Critical Examination of Witnesses—Sermons on Christian Perfection—Summing up the Whole Matter—Warnings—Bishop Gibson—Obtained by Faith—Description of a Methodist—Wesley Must Have Professed Perfect Love—Wesley's Profession of Perfect Love—He Lived a Life of Holiness—Expressly Professed It—Dr. Coke's Delineation of Wesley—God's Chosen Leader—Admission of Ministers to Conference—Tyerman's Testimony Doubted—Dr. Whitehead's Estimate—Turning the Other Cheek—Letter to Bishop Asbury--Dr. Buckley's Answer.

CHAPTER XIV.

John Wesley and John Fletcher—John Wesley and Martin Luther—Fletcher on Wesley—Their First Meeting—Lady Huntingdon—Calvinistic Controversy—God Overruling It All—Fletcher's Checks—Lady Huntingdon Displeased—Six Years' Controversy—Its Influence on the World—Wesley's Estimate of Fletcher—Fletcher's Estimate of Himself.

CHAPTER XV.

Wesley in Advanced Life—Fruitful in Old Age—Abstemious—Marvellous Old Man—Great Student—A Wonder to Himself—Well Preserved in Body and Soul, Reasons—Begins to Falter—Still Preaching—Benevolence—Desiring Rest—Last Out-door Service—No Universalist—Letter to Adam Clarke—Relation to the Church—Last Sermon—Worn Out in Body—Cheerful in Spirit—Last Sickness—No Conflict—Triumphant Death—Burial.

CHAPTER XVI.

Estimates of His Character—Wilberforce—Dr. Punshon's Testimony—Alexander Knox—Dr. Thomas Coke's Eulogy—Dr. Riggs—Dr. Abel Stevens—Wesley and Bradford—Wesley in Westminster Abbey—Dean Stanley—Wesley's Travels—Dr. Whitehead's Testimony.

LIFE OF REV. JOHN WESLEY.

CHAPTER I.

HIS BIRTH AND EARLY LIFE.

The early part of the eighteenth century was a very important portion of British history. The English army under the Duke of Marlborough had gained many victories on the continent of Europe. It is said that philosophy and polite learning flourished beyond any former period. Sir Isaac Newton had just astonished the civilized world with his wonderful discoveries in science. Indeed, this was called the Augustan age of English literature.

At this very time in the quiet home of the Epworth rectory, in obscurity and poverty, in sorrow and in many prayers, Mrs. Susanna Wesley and her faithful husband, Samuel Wesley, were training up a worthy family of noble children, two of whom were to be the means of reviving the

spirit of Christianity in its primitive simplicity and power, not only in Great Britain but all over the civilized world.

Infidelity was rampant and manifested itself not only in downright blasphemy, but also in philosophical speculation. The writings of the leading skeptics of the age were scattered among the people; Hobbes, Toland, Collins, Bolingbroke and others. Bishop Burnet, then in his seventieth year, said, "I cannot look on without the deepest concern, when I see the eminent ruin hanging over the church, and, by consequence, over the whole Reformation. The outward state of things is black enough, God knows, but that which heightens my fears arises chiefly from the inward state into which we are fallen." Bishop Gibson says, "Profaneness and iniquity are grown bold and open." Bishop Butler wrote, "It is come to be taken for granted by many persons that Christianity is not so much a subject of inquiry; but that it is now at length discovered to be fictitious. Accordingly they treat it as if this were an agreed point among all people of discernment, and nothing remained only to set it up as a principle subject of mirth and ridicule." Dr. Isaac Watts accounted for this state of things as follows: "I am well satisfied that the great and general reason of this is the decay of vital religion in the

hearts and lives of men, and the little success that the ministrations of the *gospel have had of late in the conversion of sinners to holiness." Indeed it seemed as though England had well nigh filled up the measure of her iniquity, and that the judgments of God might have fallen upon the nation if some great evangelizing power had not been raised up to stem this tide of moral and spiritual death. It was in just such a time that the founder of Methodism was born, and Methodism began to prevail, which was a revival Church in its spirit, and a missionary Church in its organization; a resuscitation of the spiritual life and practical aims of primitive Christianity."

As time rolls on the illustrious dead increase in the admiration of men and of angels. He who writes the biography of another is holding a contest with time and with oblivion, to preserve the names and the achievements of those who have gone before. He is holding them in everlasting remembrance. The Holy Bible is full of biographies, both of the righteous and of the wicked, "Who being dead, yet speak." Some one has wisely said that, "Of all species of literary composition, perhaps, biography is the most delightful. The attention concentrated on one individual gives a unity to the materials of which it is composed, which is wanting in general history.

The train of incidents through which it conducts the reader, suggests to his imagination a multitude of analogies and comparisons; and while he is following the course of events which mark the life of him who is the subject of the narrative, he is insensibly compelled to take a retrospect of his own. In no other species of writing are we permitted to scrutinize the character so exactly, or form so just and accurate an estimate of the excellencies and defects, the lights and shades, the blemishes and beauties, of an individual mind."

John Wesley was one of the nineteen children of Mrs. Susanna Wesley and of his father, Samuel Wesley. Nine of these children died in infancy. John Wesley was born at Epworth, England, on the seventeenth day of the beautiful month of June, 1703.

His father was both a learned and a laborious minister of the Episcopal Church, and rector of the parish of Epworth for thirty-nine years, from 1696 to 1735.

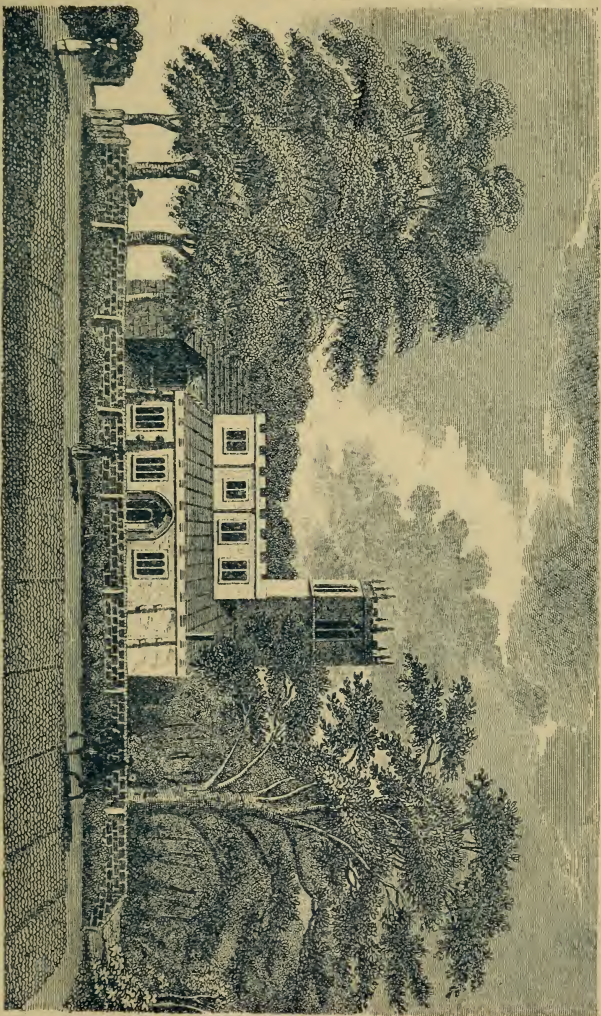
When John Wesley was born, Queen Anne had just taken the throne of England. Immorality was predominant, and spiritual darkness prevailed. The Bishop of Litchfield said in a sermon, "The Lord's day is now the devil's market day. More lewdness, more drunkenness, more quarrels and murders, more sin is contrived and committed

than on all the other days of the week. Strong drinks have become the epidemic distemper of the city of London. Sin in general has become so hardened and rampant, as that immoralities are defended, yes, justified on principle. Every kind of sin has found a writer to teach and vindicate it.

Gin drinking had become a mania, on the signs of some of these gin palaces it was advertised that they would make a man drunk for a penny, and find him straw to lie upon till he was sober. The licentiousness of the Court of Charles II still festered among the higher classes, and laziness and dishonesty among the lower classes. Superstition flourished till they imagined every old mansion in England was haunted by a ghost. Extravagance prevailed among the rich and the poor. Never has a century risen on Christian England so void of soul and faith as that which opened with Queen Anne, and which reached its misty noon beneath the Second George, a dewless night succeeded by a sunless dawn. There was no freshness in the past and no promise in the future. The Puritans were perished and the Methodists were not born. The philosopher of the age was Bolingbroke. The moralist was Addison, the minstrel was Pope, and the preacher was Atterbury. The world had the idle, discontented look of the morning after some mad holiday."

At the time John Wesley was born his brother Samuel was thirteen years of age, who soon after was sent to the Westminster School, where he became a noted scholar, and he became also acquainted with a host of literary friends.

At this time his father was writing the history of the Old and New Testament in verse. Before John Wesley was three years old his father was put in goal for debt, and before he was six the parsonage was destroyed by fire. At the time of the fire Charles Wesley was less than two months old, and he, with John, three of their sisters and their nurse, were all in the same room and fast asleep. Being aroused, the nurse seized Charles and told the rest to follow, they all followed the nurse except John, who was still asleep. In the midst of the hurry, the venerable father counted his children, and soon found that John was not there, but meanwhile John awoke and climbed on to a chair and stood looking out of the window. Immediately the father tried to ascend the flaming stairs but found it impossible. He dropped on his knees in the blazing hall and commended him to God. But, quick as thought, one man stood upon the shoulders of another and took the dear boy out of the window just before the roof fell in. Thus the future benefactor of his race and the founder of Methodism was snatched "as a brand from the burning."



EPWORTH CHURCH.

Mrs. Wesley was unique in the principles on which she acted. The one year old children were taught to fear the rod, and were only to cry in softened tones. They were all taught the Lord's prayer, and rudeness was never seen among them. Six hours a day were spent in school and loud talking or running in the yard was strictly forbidden. Psalms were sung every morning when school was opened, and also at night. Mr. Wesley helped his wife in educating the children.

John was of a remarkably studious disposition from the beginning and was led in all he did by his conscience or his reason, or both. When asked to do anything out of the usual way he would reply, "I thank you—I will think about it." So much did this feature prevail that his father said, "Child, you think to carry everything by dint of argument, but you will find how little is done in the world by close reasoning." To Mrs. Wesley he said, "I profess, sweetheart, I think our Jack would not attend to the most pressing necessities of nature unless he could give a reason for it." There was such a spirit of devotion in his reasoning son, that the father permitted him to come to the Lord's Supper at the age of eight years. When he was ten years of age his father said that he had not sinned away the washing of the Holy Ghost which he

received at baptism. What this particular washing was we are not told. There is a washing of regeneration, and a renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he did at length receive, which turned the whole current of his life. No doubt the grace of God was at work in that young heart. He had the small pox about this time and bore it with a manly fortitude. His mother writes “Jack has borne his disease bravely like a man, and indeed like a Christian, without complaint.”

When John Wesley was 8 years of age his mother dedicated herself and her son to God in the following language, which shows that she had a special regard for him, and perhaps, some idea of his future greatness: “May 17, 1711. Son John:—What shall I render unto the Lord for all his mercies? The little unworthy praise that I can offer is so mean and contemptible an offering, that I am even ashamed to tender it. But Lord accept it for the sake of Christ, and pardon the deficiency of this sacrifice, I would offer thee myself and all that thou hast given me, and I would resolve—O, give me grace to do it—that the residue of my life shall be devoted to thy service, and I do intend to be more particularly careful of the soul of this child, that thou hast so mercifully provided for, than ever I have been; that I may do my endeavor to instill into his mind the prin-

ciple of true religion and virtue. Lord, give me grace to do it sincerely and prudently, and bless my attempts with good success." Who can tell the power of such a prayer and consecration?

THE CHARTER HOUSE SCHOOL.

After five years tuition at his home, at the age of eleven years, John Wesley became a student of the Charter House School, in London. This was a special favor as the annual allowance from the endowment for each scholar was forty pounds a year, or two hundred dollars. This scholarship was secured by the favor of the Duke of Buckingham. Many hardships and trials awaited him in this famous school, but he bore them bravely. The older boys were in the habit of taking the animal food from the younger, forcing them to become vegetarians against their will. But he prospered in spite of his tormentors. He ran every morning three times, around the large playground, as his father had directed. His trials and triumphs for five years in this school gave him an energy of character and an unconquerable patience, which helped to give him a mastery of himself in time to come, and to prepare him for his great life work. He gained a commanding position among the students, by a vigorous assiduity in his studies.

He was often in a discussion with the younger scholars. Rev. A. Tooke, the master, noticing this from time to time, invited him into his private study and inquired :

“How is it that you are so often found among the boys of small size, and of inferior talents, and seek not the company of your equals.” To which he replied in his characteristic way ; “Better to rule in hell, than to serve in Heaven.” Some have doubted the truthfulness of this.

Surely our hero had an ambition which is common to men, who make their mark in the church, or in the world. Dr. Johnson says : “Providence seldom sends any into the world with an inclination to attempt great things, who have not abilities likewise to perform them.” Addison says : “Men of the greatest abilities are most fired with ambition ; and on the contrary, mean and narrow minds are the least actuated by it.”

John Wesley manifests much of the weakness of human nature, and writes of himself while at school as follows : “Outward restraints being removed. I was much more negligent than before, even of outward duties, and almost continually guilty of outward sin, which I knew to be such. Though they were not scandalous in the eyes of the world ; however, I still read the Scriptures, and said my prayers morning and evening. And

what I now hoped to be saved by, was : 1 Not being as bad as other people. 2 Having still a kindness for religion. And 3 Reading the Bible, going to church, and saying my prayers." A very slender foundation for a hope of heaven.

Noises in the Epworth parsonage.—While John was at school strange noises were heard at the parsonage at Epworth. Sometimes there were dismal groans as of one dying. Then loud rumblings, footsteps of some one day and night, most frequent knockings about the beds at night. Mrs. Wesley was satisfied there was something supernatural in the noises. Mr. Wesley called it a deaf and dumb devil, and forbid him disturbing his children. The door was violently pushed against Emily when there was no one on the other side. These noises were so distinctly and repeatedly heard, that they served to deepen the conviction of a spiritual and an invisible world, and "exercised an important influence on the mind of John Wesley through his future life."

After leaving the Charter house school, he went to the Westminster school. His brother Samuel wrote to his father, "My brother Jack, I can faithfully assure you, gives you no manner of discouragement from believing your third son a scholar. Jack is a brave boy, learning Hebrew as fast as he can." Soon after this, in 1720, he became a

scholar in Christ's Church college, Oxford. This was one of the finest colleges to be found at that ancient seat of learning. He was now seventeen years of age, just blooming into early manhood.

His religious life was at a low ebb, still he writes, "I said my prayers both in public, and in private, and read, with the Scriptures, several other books of religion, especially comments on the New Testament; yet I had not all this while, so much as a notion of inward holiness; nay, I went on habitually, and for the most part, very contentedly, in some or other known sin; though with some intermissions, and short struggles, especially before and after the holy communion, which I was obliged to review twice a year."

His health was not good, and he wrote to his mother that he was frequently troubled with bleeding of the nose, sometimes he was almost choked. Sometimes he could not stop the hemorrhage till he stripped himself and jumped into the river. His scholarship yielded him £40 a year, hardly enough to meet his necessities. His parents could help him but little, so that he had a good opportunity to learn the right use of money. His tutors were both considerate and generous.

He wrote to his father as follows: Nov. 1, 1724, at the age of twenty-one, from Oxford: "I would be exceeding glad to keep up a corres-

pondence with my sister Emily, if she were willing. I have written once or twice, to my sister Sukey too, but have not had an answer, either from her, or from my sister Kitty. I should be glad to hear how things go on at Wroote (where his father now lived), which I now remember with more pleasure than Epworth. So true is it, at least in me, that the persons not the place make home so pleasant." Mr. Babcock, in the Westminister Magazine writes of John Wesley as he was in Oxford, in 1724. "He appeared like a very sensible and acute collegian, a young fellow of the finest classical taste, and most liberal to manly sentiments."

Nov. 24, 1724, his mother wrote to John "I wish you would save all the money you can conveniently spare, not to spend on a visit, but for a wiser and better purpose,—to pay debts, and make yourself easy,—I am not without hope of seeing you next summer, if it please God to prolong my mortal life. If you then be willing, and have time allowed you to accompany me to Wroote I will leave you charges as God shall enable me. I hope at your leisure you will oblige me with some of your verses, on any, but rather on religious subjects. Dear Jack, I beseech Almighty God to bless you."

About this time John Wesley was greatly blessed in reading "The Christian Pattern," by Thomas a Kempis which was one of the first books that Wesley afterwards published. The works of Jeremy Taylor, and of William Law, also had a good influence upon him; yea, they were his chief religious instructors for a time, and helped to mould his character. Dr. Rigg says, "He became eventually an ascetic somewhat like Kempis, with a mystical bias (due partly to Law), and also an overpowering ritualistic tendency, but at all times free from sombreness of coloring or moroseness of temperament. He revolted from the morbid teaching of Jeremy Taylor."

He wrote to his mother in 1725, "If we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us (which we will not do unless we are regenerate), certainly we must be sensible of it. If we can never have any certainty of being in a state of salvation, good reason it is that every moment should be spent not in joy, but in fear and trembling, and then undoubtedly we are in this life, of all men most miserable. God deliver us from such a miserable expectation as this."

This shows that he believed in a conscious state of present salvation from guilt and fear, that may be obtained by faith in Christ. This, we shall find, was one of the leading doctrines of Method-

ism that was thus early planted in his mind, Yet it was not till thirteen years afterwards that he obtained the assurance of salvation by a living faith in Christ.

It was about this time that he began to write in his journal a more exact account of his religious experience, and of how he spent every hour. Thus he continued to do to the end of his eventful life. And his journals are among the most interesting works in the English language. "A work not only containing the best history of the great Reformer, and of the rise, and growth of Methodism, but sparkling with the most racy remarks respecting men, books, places, science and almost everything with which the writer came in contact."

From those journals we may learn the work of grace that was going on in his heart at this time, and from time to time.

He writes concerning Kempis "Pattern." When I met with this book in 1726, the nature and extent of inward religion, the religion of the heart, now appeared to me in a stronger light than ever it had done before. I saw that giving even all my life to God, (supposing it was possible to do this and go no further), would profit me nothing, unless I gave my heart, yea, all my heart to him. I saw that simplicity of intention, and purity of

affection, and design in all we speak, and do, and one desire ruling all our tempers, are indeed the wings of the soul, without which we can never ascend to God. I sought after this from that hour." This was quite clear and decided, and showed the workings of the Holy Spirit, on his heart.

In reference to Taylor's "Holy Living and Dying" he writes. "In reading several parts of this book I was exceedingly affected; that part in particular that related to purity of intention; instantly I resolved to dedicate all my life to God, all my thoughts, and words, and actions,—being thoroughly convinced there was no medium; but that every part of my life—not some only—must either be a sacrifice to God, or myself, that is, to the devil." All this time his aim was to serve God, and his fellow-men. "No man could be more sincere, earnest, devout, diligent, and self-denying; and no doubt God smiled on this earnest and humble endeavor to please him."

When Wesley contemplated being ordained a deacon in the Episcopal church, he had quite a conflict in his mind on the subject of predestination, and of his acceptance with God. To assist him in his preparation, his mother wrote him a kindly letter, but it is evident, that she was in a state of uncertainty herself, as to the possibility of our

knowledge of salvation, for she speaks about having only "a reasonable persuasion of the forgiveness of our sins," and says that "such a certainty of pardon, as cannot possibly admit of the least doubt or scruple, we can never have till we come to Heaven."

The following advice is more hopeful, and more evangelical, which she wrote to John about this time, "If you would be free from fears and doubts concerning your future happiness, every morning and evening commit your soul to Jesus Christ in a full faith in His power, and he will save you. If you do this seriously and constantly, He will take you under His conduct. He will guide you by His Holy Spirit into the way of truth, and give you strength to walk in it."

It was in this same year, 1725, that Wesley and his mother settled between themselves the question of predestination in the sense in which Wesley always taught it in after life. Still he had but little idea of the saving faith that is of the *heart* and not of the *head*, and which is indeed "of the operation of the Holy Ghost," which "is a moral and a spiritual affection, and act, or habit of acting, of the highest significance and potency, rooting the soul in Christ and God."

Wesley's testimony: "I distinctly remember that even in my childhood, even when I was at

school, I have often said "They say the life of a school boy is the happiest in the world," but I am sure I am not happy, for I am not content and so cannot be happy. When I had lived a few years longer, being in the vigor of youth, a stranger to pain and sickness and particularly to lowness of spirits (which I do not remember to have felt one quarter of an hour ever since I was born) having plenty of all things, in the midst of sensible and amiable friends who loved me and I loved them, and being in the way of life which of all others suited my inclinations; still I was not happy. I wondered why I was not, and could not imagine what the reason was. Upon the coolest reflection there was not one week which I would not have thought it worth while to have lived over again, taking it with every inward and outward sensation, without any variation at all. The reason certainly was that I did not know God, the source of present as well as eternal happiness."

CHAPTER II.

HIS ORDINATION AND LABORS AT OXFORD.

We now approach an important period in the life of Wesley. He had long had it upon his heart to become a minister, and after due consideration, and careful preparation, he was ordained a deacon, Sept. 19, 1725, by Bishop Potter. He preached his first sermon in South Leigh, near Witney. In March, 1726, he was elected Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford. This was a great event in his life, as it gave him a wider sphere of usefulness, and afforded him a good temporal support; with financial ability to help his parents.

He writes: "I am shortly to take my Masters' degree. I shall therefore be less interrupted by business not of my own choosing. I have drawn up for myself a scheme of studies from which I do not intend, for some years at least, to vary."

Before receiving the above Degree, he delivered three lectures, one on natural philosophy, one on moral philosophy, and another on religion. It is a pity they were not preserved. He was made Master of Arts, Feb. 14, 1727. Tyerman says, "In disputation for this, he acquired considerable

reputation." He had made himself master of oriental languages, oratory and poetry, metaphysics, logic and ethics, as well as divinity. Eight months after his election as a Fellow in Lincoln College, he was appointed Greek lecturer in his college, and Moderator of the classes. This gave him great power and facility, and very much helped to prepare him for his future work of life.

Sept. 22, 1728, he was ordained a priest by the same Dr. Potter who ordained him deacon. A few days after this he returned to Wroote, to assist his father in preaching, and fulfilling ministerial duties, till Nov. 22, 1729. He writes, about this time, "I preached much, but saw but little fruit of my labors. Indeed, it could not be that I should, for I neither laid the foundation of repentance, nor of believing the gospel; taking it for granted that all to whom I preached were believers, and that many of them needed no repentance." Alas! that so many ministers fall into the same snare of the devil, while their people slide quietly down to hell, for want of some John the Baptist to cry out "Repent ye! for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!"

About this time Wesley writes in his journal: "I set apart an hour or two a day for religious retirement. I watched against all sin, whether in

word or deed. I began to aim at, and to pray for, inward holiness. So that now, doing so much, and living so good a life, I doubted not but I was a good Christian."

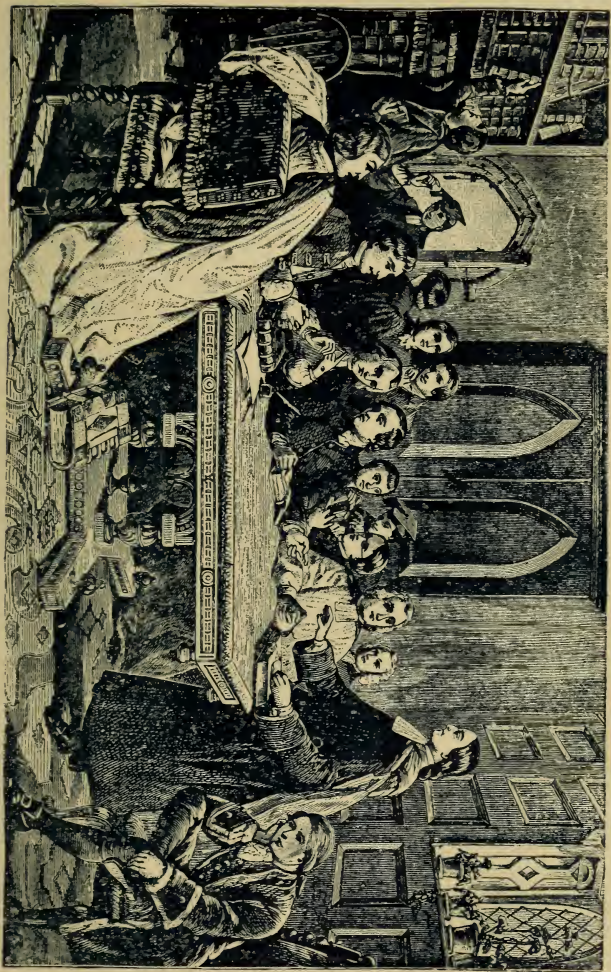
See how plainly salvation by works comes out! What an utter want of self-renunciation, and of simple faith in *Christ alone* for salvation. At another time he writes, "The light flows in so mightily upon my soul that everything appears in a new light. I cried to God for help, and resolved not to prolong the time of obeying him; and by my continued endeavor to keep his whole law, inward and outward, to the utmost of my power, I was persuaded that it should be acceptable to Him, and that I was even then in a state of salvation." But all those dead works brought no true rest and comfort to his weary soul. He was, indeed, a faithful *servant* of the Lord, but he was not an adopted son. Hear his own testimony as he writes, years afterward: "I believe that neither our holiness nor good works are any part of the cause of our justification, but the death and righteousness of Christ are the whole and sole cause of it. I believe that no good works can be previous to justification."

He was very careful in the selection of his company. He writes: "I resolved to have no company by *chance*, but by *choice*; and to choose

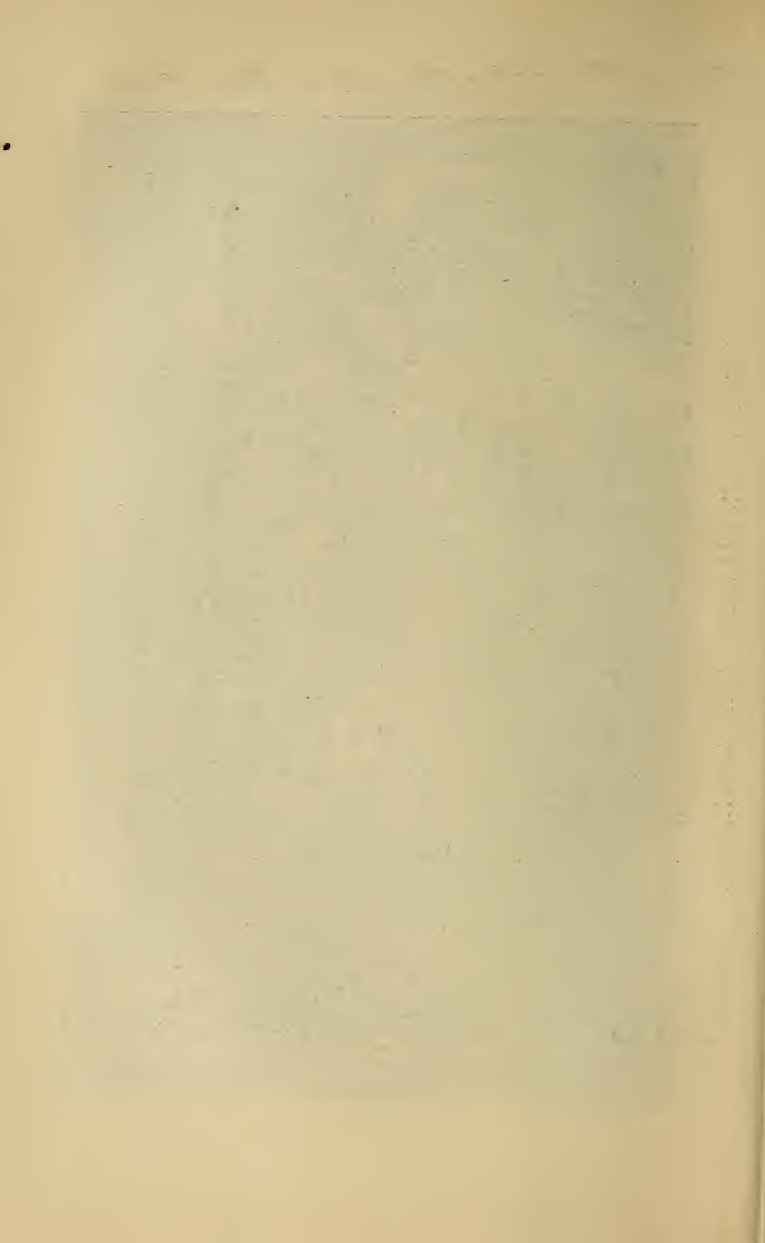
such only as would help me on my way to heaven. I prefer such a retirement as would exclude me from all the world, for a time, that I might fill the station I am now in. Not that this is by any means unpleasant to me, to be in a place where I might confirm or implant in my mind what habits I could without interruption, before the flexibility of youth is over. I am full of business, but have found a time to write, without taking any time from that. It is by rising an hour sooner in the morning, and going into company an hour later at night."

His plan of studies was as follows: Monday and Tuesday were devoted to Greek and Roman classics, historians and poets. Wednesday to logic and ethics. Thursday to Hebrew and Arabic. Friday to metaphysics and natural philosophy. Saturdays to oratory and poetry, chiefly composing. Sundays to divinity. In the intermediate hours between these fixed studies, he perfected himself in the French language.

Sometimes he amused himself with experiments with optics, and in mathematics studied Euclid, Keil, and Sir Isaac Newton. "First he read an author regularly through, and then transcribed into a commonplace book, such passages as he thought important or beautiful. In this way he greatly increased his stock of knowledge, and inured himself to hard work."



WESLEY AND HIS ASSOCIATES AT OXFORD.



His father was now sixty-five years of age, and was already palsied; therefore a part of the time Wesley was assisting his father in both parts of his parish, at Epworth and at Wroote, and here he remained, as we have said, till Nov. 22, 1729.

After having spent two years with his father, as curate, and preaching much by invitation of the rector of his college, he returned to Oxford, and took pupils, and remained there for the six years following.

It was during this stay at Oxford that he united with his brother Charles, and Mr. Morgan, and Mr. Kirkman, for mutual and personal improvement and edification. "They agreed to spend three or four evenings in the week together, in reading the Greek Testament, with the Greek and Latin classics. On Sunday evenings they read divinity."

Soon they began to labor directly for the good of others. In the summer of 1730, a man was lodged in the goal that was condemned to die for killing his wife. So they began to labor for this man's salvation, and after a while, to visit the prisoners twice a week.

Soon they extended their labors to the sick and and poor of the town. This practice soon attracted attention, and the people began to talk about them. But they steadily pursued their way,

and became so zealous in this, and in other labors of love, and were so *Methodical* about it, that at length they received the title of "*Methodists*," which title has followed them and their successors ever since.

Their numbers steadily increased. The pupils of both John and Charles Wesley desired to join them; also Benjamin Ingham of Queen's College, and T. Broughton of Exeter; also James Hervey, author of the "*Meditations*." And, at length, George Whitefield of Pembroke. This company was called "*The Holy Club*."

We may judge of the state of John Wesley's mind at this time by the following letter to his Mother: "You say you have renounced the world. And what have I been doing all this time? What have I done ever since I was born? Why, I have been plunging myself into it more and more. It is enough. Awake thou that sleepest. Is there not one Lord, one spirit, one hope of our calling; one way of attaining that hope? Then I am to renounce the world as well as you. That is the very thing that I want to do—to draw off my affections from this world and fix them on a better. But how? What is the surest and shortest way? Is it not to be humble? Surely this is a large step in the way. But the question recurs — how I am to do this? To own the necessity is not to be humble.

When I observe how fast time flies away, and how slow improvement comes, I think one cannot be too much afraid of dying before one has learned to live. I mean even in the course of nature. For were I sure the ‘silver cord’ should be violently loosed—till it was quite worn away by its own motion, yet what time would this give me for such a work—a moment to transact the business of eternity! So that were I sure, how little would it alter the case! How justly still might I cry out:

‘Downward I hasten to my destined place,
There none obtain Thy aid, none sing Thy praise;
Soon shall I lie in Death’s deep ocean drowned.
Is mercy there? Is sweet forgiveness found?
O, save me yet, while on the brink I stand;
Rebuke those storms, and set me safe on land!
O, make my longings and Thy mercy sure.
Thou art the God of power.’”

This shows how far he was yet from the joyful assurance of an adopted child of God.

He had the more reason to think of eternity, for his unceasing labors tended to destroy his health, and he began to expectorate so much blood that his body was quite weak, and sometimes his life was despaired of. Some of the so-called “holy club” left it, but the others stood firmly to their purpose and the good work went on.

As his father's health was constantly failing, he desired John to leave Oxford and return home and assist him again in the work of his parish at Epworth and at Wroote, especially as John was ordained to the work of the ministry, and the work that he was doing at Oxford was not strictly ministerial. John referred the matter to the Bishop, who replied, "It doth not seem to me, that at your ordination you engaged yourself to undertake the care of any parish, providing you can, as a clergyman, better serve God and His Church in your present or some other station." John at once replied, "That I can as a clergyman, better serve God and His Church in my present status, I have all reasonable evidence." So he continued his studies and labors at that favorite seat of learning. He began to observe Wednesdays and Fridays as days of fasting and prayer, tasting no food till 3 o'clock in the afternoon, and denied himself of all superfluities and even of some of the necessities of life, that he may have money to give away. Having £30 a year he lived on £28, and gave away £2. The next year he received £60 ; he still lived on £28, and gave away £32. The following year out of £90, he gave away £62, and the next year £92 out of £120. He commenced to rise at 4 o'clock in the morning, and continued the practice for sixty years. He studied the Bible

as the only standard of truth and the only model of pure religion. Gambold says of Wesley at this time: "He was always cheerful and never arrogant. By strict watchfulness, beating down his impetuosity until it became a childlike simplicity. His piety was nourished by continual communion with God, for he thought prayer to be his greatest duty. I have often seen him come out of his closet of devotion *with a serenity of countenance that was next to shining.*"

Who can tell what blessed fellowship he had with God in those hallowed seasons? He writes of himself: "In this refined way of trusting to my own righteousness, I dragged on heavily, finding no comfort to help therein, till the time of my leaving England." Rev. R. Green says: "He was in his own eyes a sinner, in the eyes of others a saint. He was now an ascetic of the severest kind, having schooled his body into unhesitating submission to the spirit."

In 1730 he accepted a curacy near Oxford, which enabled him to keep a horse and extended his sphere of usefulness. His father after visiting his sons at Oxford, wrote: "I am well paid both for the expense and labor by the shining piety of my two sons." John and Charles walked to Epworth and back about this time, reading Latin as they passed along. In 1733 Wesley rode on

horseback to Epworth to see his father, whose health was failing. In this journey he began the habit of reading on horseback, which he continued for forty years, till advanced years compelled him to ride in a carriage. In this year he issued one of his first publications, "Forms of Prayer," and preached constantly on the Lord's day. Thus by arduous study and constant prayer and in visiting the sick and poor, and preaching every Sabbath, he was preparing himself for the work of his most eventful life. He was disciplining himself in soul and body for future service for God and man. This variety of earnest labor continued till the year 1735, when his father died, and the Epworth home was broken up and the family dispersed. Wesley left Oxford and came to London to await the openings of divine providence.

He was better prepared for his life's work from the fact that while at Oxford, as we have seen, he was appointed Moderator and presided at all the disputations of the students, and thus he became expert in all manner of reasoning and "in discerning and pointing out the well-covered and plausible fallacies." He writes, "I have since found abundant reasons 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 to pieces; in spite

of all its covers, to touch the very point where the fallacy lay and it flew open in a moment." Presiding six times a week over the disputes of his students prepared him to preside so successfully over his ministers in Annual Conferences for so many years.

While at Oxford he preached at St. Mary's, before the university, on "The circumcision of the heart," from Romans 2:29. In this sermon he explains very clearly and with energy of language his views of Salvation to be attained in this life, from which he never varied to the day of his death. Still he greatly lacked light on how to attain this Salvation, though he sought it with all his heart. He was an honest inquirer after gospel light. Henry Moore says, "The truth is, he was like Saul of Tarsus, '*alive without the law,*' he was not yet '*slain by the commandment,*' and therefore did not come to God in his true character. He who *justifieth only the ungodly* could not, therefore, justify him; the faith which he had at that time could not be imputed to him for righteousness and hence he had not peace and joy in believing."

This is undoubtedly the true state of Wesley's mind and heart at this time, and it will serve to show the state of tens of thousands in the Church of Christ and of some in the ministry of the Church of the present day, who are constantly going about

to establish their own righteousness and have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God which is by the faith of Jesus Christ.

In this state of mind no wonder the fear of death was not taken away, for when he was greatly reduced in body by frequent returns of spitting blood and when in the night he was so suddenly and violently attacked that he thought he should die, he cried out, "O God ! prepare me for thy coming and come when thou wilt."

Let no one think me severe in this view of Wesley's spiritual condition, for in a letter to Wm. Law, May 14, 1738, Wesley writes, "Verily you know nothing of me, you discern not my spirit at all. I know that I have not faith, unless the faith of a devil, the faith of Judas, that speculative, national, airy shadow, that lives in the head, not in the heart. But what is this to faith in the heart? But what is this to living, justifying faith in the blood of Jesus? The faith that cleanseth from sin. That gives us free access to the Father. *To rejoice in hope of the glory of God; to have the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, which dwelleth in us, and the Spirit itself bearing witness with our spirits that we are the children of God.*"

He had quite clear views of religious things, for he writes to his father, "By holiness I mean

not fastings or bodily austerity, or any other means of improvement; but the inward temper, toward which all things are subservient, a renewal of the soul in the image of God. I mean a complex habit of lowliness, meekness, purity, faith, hope, and the love of God and man." All this embraces the experience of regeneration whether he was now regenerated or not.

In 1735, he published a sermon in which he says, "Perfect holiness is not found on earth, but death will destroy at once the whole body of sin and therewith its companion, pain." How contrary this to his doctrine in his "Plain account of Christian Perfection."

In the same sermon he was very severe on the persecutors of "the Methodists." For six years he and his associates of "The Holy Club" had been subject to butt and scorn, and now as he was about to leave Oxford, he finds it convenient to rebuke his enemies.

He published also a book written by his father, entitled "Advice to Young Clergymen."

Having spent, with his brother Charles, six years at this ancient seat of learning, they finish their labors and go out into the world. "Two young men, without a name, without friends, without either home or fortune, set out from college with principles totally different from those of the

common people, to oppose all the world, learned and unlearned, and to combat popular prejudices of every kind. Their first principle directly attacked all the wickedness ; their second all the bigotry in the world. Thus they attempted a reformation, not of opinions, features, trifles not worth naming, but of men's tempers and lives ; of vice of every kind ; of everything contrary to justice, mercy, or truth. And for this it was that they carried their lives in their hands, and that both the great and the small looked upon them as mad dogs and treated them as such."

But they were chosen vessels of the Lord, ordained to do his pleasure and bless their own and all succeeding generations.

CHAPTER III.

WESLEY'S MISSION TO AMERICA.

John Wesley has now left his retirement at Oxford and gone out into the world and we must not be surprised if we find that the world treats him roughly, as it did the Son of God. And as Jesus, when he began his ministry, was led into the wilderness and tempted of the devil, forty days and forty nights, we must not think it strange if Mr. Wesley has some of the same experience.

Having left Oxford, and having no particular work before him, he was waiting for the openings of providence. Just then Dr. John Burton, of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, met Wesley in London and introduced him to Mr. Oglethorpe, who urged Mr. Wesley to become a missionary to the English colony in Georgia, America. He took counsel of his brother Samuel, and of William Law and others. Then he went to Epworth and consulted his widowed mother, who said "Had I twenty sons, I should rejoice if they were all so employed."

Soon after Wesley decided to leave all and go to the wilds of America and labor to convert the

Indians, with the fond but delusive hope, that if he went and denied himself to convert the Indians, of course, God would convert him. Salvation by works again, but salvation never came in that way.

Wesley writes, "My chief motive is the hope of saving my own soul. I hope to learn the true sense of the gospel of Christ by preaching it to the heathen. They have no party, no interest to serve, and are therefore fit to receive the gospel in its simplicity. They are as little children, humble, willing to learn and eager to do the will of God. I have been a grievous sinner from my youth up, and yet am laden with foolish and hurtful desires; but I am assured, if I be once converted myself, God will then employ me both to strengthen my brethren and to preach his name to the Gentiles. I cannot attain the same degree of holiness here as I can there."

Alas! many of his fond expectations were cut off, as we shall see. Just before he sailed on the "Simmonds" off Gravesend, he wrote to his brother Samuel, "Elegance of style is not to be set against purity of heart; therefore, whatever has any tendency to impair that purity is not to be tolerated, much less recommended for the sake of that elegance. But of this sort are most of the classics read in large schools, many of them tending to inflame the lusts of the flesh, and

move the lusts of the eyes, and the pride of life. I beseech you therefore, by the mercies of God, who would have us holy as he is holy, that you banish all such poison from your school."

He went on board Oct. 14, 1735. He began to learn the German language, so that he could talk with the passengers, and in self denial, that he might promote his own piety. He left off the use of flesh and wine, and confined himself to a vegetable diet. On the same vessel were twenty-six Moravians, from Herrnhut, who were going out to join their brethren in America. From various delays, they did not fairly set sail till Dec. 10th. They waited for a man-of-war which was to be their convoy. They had a fine company on board including Charles Wesley, Benjamin Ingham, James E. Oglethorpe, Charles Delmotte and David Nitschman, a German. From four to five in the morning they were employed in private prayer. From five to seven they read the Bible together, carefully comparing what they read. At seven they had breakfast; at eight, public prayers; from nine to twelve for various studies; so they filled up the day

"Berwixt the mount and multitude
Doing and receiving good."

Ingham wrote of the Moravians on board, "They are a good, devout, peaceable and heavenly

mind people, and almost the only time you know they are in the ship is when they are harmoniously singing the praises of their Creator. Their example is very edifying; they are more like the primitive Christians than any church now existing. They all submit themselves to their pastor, in everything.

Wesley, hearing a loud noise in Mr. Oglethorpe's state-room, went to enquire the cause. "Excuse me, Mr. Wesley," said Mr. Oglethorpe, "I have met with a provocation too great to bear. This Italian servant has drunk nearly the whole of my Cyprus wine. He shall be tied hand and foot, and carried to the man-of-war; for I never forgive." "Then," said Wesley, with great calmness, "Then I hope, sir, you never sin." He was confounded, his vengeance was gone, he put his hand into his pocket, pulled out a bunch of keys, and threw them at his servant, saying, "There, William! take my keys, and behave better in the future."

They had a rough passage to America. Sometimes they were in great danger. The sea broke over the ship and shook it from stem to stern, and brought down the main-yard upon the decks and dashed through the cabin windows. One wave broke over Wesley's head and drenched him to the skin. Sometimes the sea sparkled

and smoked as if on fire, and the air blazed with lightning. The Moravians were engaged in divine service and kept quite calm, but the English began to scream. Wesley was afraid, for he was neither *fit* to die nor *willing* to die. He was greatly astonished at the calmness of the Germans, for even their women and children were kept in perfect peace. He could not understand this, for he had not the perfect love that casteth out fear.

February 5, 1736, they anchored in the Savannah river, and were welcomed by the firing of cannon, and the presenting of arms by the freeholders of this new Commonwealth. Orders were immediately given by Oglethorpe to build a church, who also provided the materials. Savannah had only forty houses; the principal buildings were a court house, log-built prison, storehouse, a grist mill, and a residence for the trustee's steward. There was an Indian town not far off. The climate was exceedingly salubrious, good land and excellent water. Each male emigrant was allowed a musket, bayonet, hatchet, hammer, shovel and hoe, and during the first year for support, each one had 312 lbs. of beef or pork, 104 of rice, 104 of Indian corn or peas, 104 of meal, etc. Proportionate allowances were made for women and children.

The Indians had no literature, no religion, and no civil government. Many of them were gluttons, drunkards, thieves, and liars, and many of them were murderers.

Wesley soon found himself face to face with A. G. Spangenberg, the Moravian Elder, of whom he asked advice how to proceed in this new world. The former replied, "My brother, I must first ask you one or two questions. Have you the witness within yourself? Does the Spirit of God bear witness that you are a child of God?" This was quite a surprise; he could not answer. "Do you know Jesus Christ?" asked Spangenberg. "I know he is the Saviour of the world." "But does he save you?" "I hope he has died to save me." "Do you know yourself?" Wesley replied, "I do."

It was worth a rough passage to America to come into contact with this man of God. It was, no doubt, in the providence of God that the future founder of Methodism should be separated three thousand miles from his home, and subjected to a series of severe trials, that he might know his own weakness, and then, at the same time, that he should learn the simple way of salvation by faith, and that he might teach it to millions of others in all time to come. Surely

"God moves in a mysterious way."

In a few days the Indian chiefs were introduced to Wesley and his company. The Indians brought them a jar of milk, hoping that they would feed—that is, instruct—their children, and also a pot of honey, in hope that they would be sweet to them.

Having no home, Wesley lived with the Moravians for a time. This was a great blessing, for it taught him the true spirit of the gospel. He says: “The Moravians were always employed, always cheerful themselves and in good humor with one another. They adorned the gospel in all things.”

In March, Wesley took possession of the rectory and preached his first sermon from 1 Cor. 13 : 3, in which he introduced two death-bed scenes—that of his father, and one in Savannah—“a spectacle worthy to be seen of God and angels and men. He held three services on the Sabbath and administered the sacrament weekly.”

Charles Wesley went with Oglethorpe to lay out the town of Frederica, and became his secretary. John Wesley wrote: “We are likely to stay here some months. It is pleasant beyond imagination and exceedingly healthy.” The Indians were determined not to hear the white men’s gospel, and as the English in Savannah were without a pastor, Wesley decided to labor among them. He was surprised to find himself surrounded by nothing but “respect and commendation.” In

three weeks he established morning and evening public prayers, a weekly communion, and services on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday nights. Charles was trying to reconcile scolding women, by which he secured the hatred of them all, and baptizing children by triune, or three-fold, immersion. But he was soon treated with coldness and charged with mutiny.

There was too much praying and too many services for Oglethorpe. Complaints began to multiply. Wesley's soul was soon tested as by fire. One of his congregation said: "I like nothing you do; all your sermons are satires upon some particular persons. We never heard of such a religion before, we know not what to make of it. All the quarrels since your arrival have been on your account. There is neither man or woman in this town that minds a word you say." This was in Frederica, where Wesley preached for four weeks.

Charles Wesley returned to England after spending five months in Georgia. He was completely discouraged.

Wesley went again to Frederica, which was a settlement on the west side of the island of St. Simon's, and spent twelve weeks in hard labor to do the people good. But the prospects for good grew less and less. So he returned to Savannah, where he continued to labor till October 31, 1737,

In 1736, Wesley and Delmotte started to walk to Cowper, missed their way, walked through a cypress swamp with the water breast high, slept on the ground in their wet clothes, which during the night were frozen and in the morning were as white as snow; they fell short of provisions and were glad to use bear's meat, and found it wholesome. Again he found the people cold and heartless. He catechised the children every Saturday and Sunday; held three meetings a day on Sunday. He labored without wages other than food and raiment—with this he was content if he could have seen more success in his labors.

Oglethorpe came into mistrust in England, but Wesley said all he could in his favor. Some thought Wesley was sour and morose, others declared that he was cheerful and pleasant. Thus he had evil report and good report. A wicked woman whom he had offended, decoyed him into her house, threw him down, and cut off those lovely curls that he had tried to keep so well, so that he looked very singular with long hair on one side and short hair on the other. He greatly desired to do the people good, and no doubt he did do much good. But he lacked *spiritual power* because he was not converted.

About this time Wesley was introduced to Miss Hopkey who was said to be a lady of good sense,

elegant in person and manners. She was introduced as an enquirer after salvation. She tried to gain influence over him by constantly seeking his company. After a time Wesley consulted the Moravian bishop as to the propriety of marriage, who replied, "Marriage is not unlawful, but whether it is expedient for you, and whether this lady is a proper wife for you, ought to be maturely weighed." After submitting the matter to the Moravian elders and promising to abide their decision, they advised him to proceed no further in the matter. He replied, "The will of the Lord be done." She was afterwards married to Mr. Williamson. If he had been married and settled at Savannah, it might have turned the whole current of his wonderful life. No doubt he was providentially led and delivered.

At length a list of grievances were brought up against Wesley, mainly in relation to his peculiar manner of church work and ordinances which were supposed to differ from the regular Episcopal service. These he refused to answer, as they did not belong to the civil court, but to the ecclesiastical. The fact was, his enemies were determined to drive him out of the colony, and took these measures to accomplish it.

After a vast variety of trials, that I have not time nor space to mention, he decided, upon the

recommendation of his friends, that it was his duty to return to England. His enemies were bent on his destruction—but he escaped, as a bird out of the snare of the fowler. He and his companions went by boat twenty miles to Purrysburg, then on foot to Port Royal. Tramping through trackless forests they wandered for three hours around a dismal swamp, forced their way through a difficult thicket; they tramped from an hour before sunrise till after sunset without food, except a gingerbread cake which Wesley happened to have in his pocket. After digging about three feet they found water. They thanked God and took courage, lay down on the ground and slept that winter night in December. In three more days they reached Port Royal. Then they sailed for Charleston in a small craft impelled by oars. Cold and hungry they arrived in safety after four weary days in an open boat and in cold weather.

December 22, 1737, Wesley and Delmotte set sail for England. Wesley could not be idle, so he began to instruct two negro lads and the cabin boy in the principles of the Christian religion. On Sunday he had morning and evening prayers. They were struck by a fearful storm in the middle of the Atlantic. This opened the way for Wesley to speak to the people on eternal things. He also closely examined himself, and wrote, in the ful-

ness of his heart, January 8, “By the most infallible proof, inward feeling, I am convinced, 1. Of *unbelief*; having no such faith in Christ as will prevent my heart from being troubled. 2. Of *pride*, throughout my life past; inasmuch as I thought I had what I find I have not. 3. Of *gross irrecollection*; inasmuch as in a storm I cry to God every moment—in a calm, not. 4. Of *levity* and luxuriancy of spirit—appearing by my speaking words not tending to edify; but most, by my manner of speaking of my enemies.—Lord, save, or I perish! Save me. 1. By such a faith as implies peace in life and death. 2. By such humility as may fill my heart from this hour forever with a piercing uninterrupted sense that hitherto I have done nothing. 3. By such a recollection as will enable me to cry to Thee every moment. 4. By steadiness, seriousness, sobriety of spirit, avoiding, as fire, every word that tendeth not to edify, and never speaking of any who oppose me or sin against God, without all my own sins set in array before my face.”

Not far from Land’s End they had another storm, which filled his mind with solemn thought, when he wrote: “I went to America to convert the Indians; but Oh! who shall convert me? Who is he who will deliver me from this evil heart of unbelief? I have a fair summer religion;

I can talk well, nay, I believe myself while no danger is near. But let death look me in the face and my spirit is troubled; nor can I say, ‘To die is gain.’ ”

The next day he writes: “For many years I have been tossed about by various winds of doctrine. I asked long ago, ‘What must I do to be saved?’ The Scripture answered, ‘Keep the commandments, believe, hope, love: follow after these tempers till thou hast fully attained, that is, till death; by all those outward works and means which God has appointed; by walking as Christ walked.’ ”

Again he wrote: “It is upward of two years since I left my native country, in order to teach the Georgia Indians Christianity; but I have learned in the meantime—what I least expected—that I, who went to America to convert others, was never converted myself. ‘*I am not mad,*’ though I thus speak, but ‘*speak the words of truth and soberness;*’ if haply some of those who still dream may awake and see, that as I am, so are they.

Are they read in philosophy? So am I. In ancient or modern tongues? So was I also. Are they versed in the science of divinity? I too have studied it many years. Can they talk fluently on spiritual things? The very same I could do. Are

they plentiful in alms ! Behold, I give all my goods to feed the poor. Do they give of their labor as well as of their substance ? I have labored more abundantly than they all. Are they willing to suffer for their brethren ? I have thrown off my friends, reputation, ease, country. I have put my life in my hands, wandered in strange lands. I have given my body to be devoured by the deep, parched up with heat, consumed by toil and weariness, or whatsoever God shall please to bring upon me. But does all this, be it more or less, it matters not, make me acceptable to God ? This then I have learned in the ends of the earth, that I am fallen short of the glory of God ; that my whole heart is altogether corrupt and abominable, and consequently my whole life. Seeing that it cannot be that an evil tree should bring forth good fruit, that my own works, my own sufferings, my own righteousness, are so far from reconciling me to an offended God, so far from making any atonement for the least of those sins, which *are more than the hairs of my head*, that the most specious of them need an atonement themselves or they cannot abide the righteous judgment of God.

If it be said I have faith, I answer, so have the devils, a *sort* of faith, still they are strangers to the covenant of promise. The faith I want is a *sure trust and confidence in God, that through the merits*

of Christ, my sins are forgiven, and I reconciled to the favor of God. God has humbled me and proved me, and showed me what was in my heart."

I have thus let Mr. Wesley speak for himself on these vital matters, that others may see their own features in this looking-glass, and also that Mr. Wesley may be fully understood, and that his future and glorious Christian experience may appear in its true light and thus shall God be glorified. While Wesley was in America, Whitefield was laboring with great power in England. Certain men said "He preached like a lion." He did surely preach with great vehemence and God owned his labors. He felt that he was commissioned of God to call sinners to repentance. Southey says, "It is apparent that though the Wesleys should never have existed, Whitefield would have given birth to Methodism." Some will be disposed to doubt this. Whitefield had produced a profound impression in Bristol and in London, but Providence opened his way to sail for Georgia just before Wesley landed in England.

Whitefield was above the middle stature, well proportioned, very graceful in manner, complexion fair, features regular, eyes small and lively. His voice excelled in melody and compass, having a great variety of modulations. Long before day the streets were filled with people going to hear

him, with lanterns in their hands. Some were jealous but others were glad.

Let none suppose that the labors of Wesley in Georgia were a failure, for when Whitefield arrived in America he wrote, “The good Mr. Wesley has done in America is inexpressible. His name is very precious among the people; he has laid a foundation that I hope neither men nor devils will ever be able to shake.”

Wesley himself wrote, “After steps have been taken towards publishing the glad tidings both to the African and American heathens, many children have learned how they ought to serve God, and to be useful to their neighbors.”

CHAPTER IV.

HIS CONVERSION AND WONDERFUL SUCCESS.

Neither time, nor hardly eternity will tell the benefits that John Wesley, and the world through him, obtained by the teachings of the Moravian Brethren. After all his learning in the Oxford college and from his saintly and talented mother, yet he had to enter the school of Christ as a little child, and learn the simple way to obtain justification and eternal life *by faith alone*.

Whitefield had mightily stirred the people in London, and on the second day after the arrival of John Wesley in London, he preached on "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature." He was determined to preach the truth whether he enjoyed its fullness or not. Southey says of this sermon, "It was so high-strained that he was informed he was not to preach in that pulpit again." Two days after he met three Moravian brethren, Wenceslaus, Neisser, George Schullius and Peter Bohler. It was a memorable day in his history. He conversed much with the Moravians, but says, "I understood them not," but God appointed them as his teachers

and also of his brother, Charles. Wesley says, "I was clearly convinced of unbelief, of the want of that faith whereby alone we are saved." When he asked Bohler if he should preach faith when he did not have it, he was told, "By all means." "But what can I preach?" "Preach faith *till* you have it, and then preach it *because* you have it." So he began to preach the doctrine though his soul drew back. He not only preached in the pulpit but everywhere, on the road, in the taverns, to the learned or the unlearned. "A man who sat with his hat on while Wesley said grace, turned pale, confessed his sins and promised to seek the Lord."

He was amazed at the account the Moravians gave of the fruits of living faith and the holiness and happiness that accompanied it. At length he assented to the teachings of Bohler on faith, but denied that it could be instantaneous, "For hitherto he had no conception of that perpetual and individual revelation which is now the doctrine of his sect. He could not understand how a man could *at once* be thus turned from darkness to light, from sin and misery to righteousness and joy in the Holy Ghost." He searched the Scriptures, and was amazed to find how many were *instantly* saved who came to Christ. But he said the times were now changed and we could not look for the same

now. But Bohler brought him living witnesses, time after time, who had been thus *immediately* saved from all their sins. Who in a moment had exercised such a faith in Christ as translated them out of darkness into the marvellous light of God. So he was driven out of this last retreat. He wrote, "Here ended my disputings. Lord help my unbelief! I resolved to seek this faith to the end. 1. By absolutely renouncing all dependence upon my own works of righteousness, *on which I had really grounded my hope of salvation, though I knew it not, from my youth up.* 2. By adding to the constant use of all the other means of grace, continual prayer for this very thing, justifying, saving faith and full reliance on the blood of Christ shed for me: a trust in him as my Christ, as my sole justification, sanctification and redemption."

He began to publish these mighty facts of the gospel. He spoke of them freely in the Delmotte family at Blendon. Mr. Boughton objected, and Charles Wesley left the room in anger, declaring that these new doctrines were mischievous.

From Feb. 7, 1738, to May 4, when Bohler left England, Wesley sought opportunity to converse with him. He sat at his feet as a little child, content to be counted a fool that he might learn the heavenly wisdom.

Notwithstanding Charles opposed so earnestly,

he was the first of the two brothers to be converted. While sick with pleurisy, christian friends visited him and sang a hymn of praise to the Holy Ghost. When they were gone he was enabled to exercise that faith in Christ that brought salvation, and was filled with love and peace. He heard a voice saying, "Believe, and thou shalt be saved." "He that believeth is passed from death unto life." This was May 21, 1738.

John Wesley had to endure anguish three days more. May 24, he opened his Bible to "There are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we might be made partakers of the divine nature." On leaving home he opened to the text, "Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God." In the afternoon he went to St. Paul's Cathedral, where the anthem was full of comfort. At night he was at the society meeting at Aldersgate street, where a person read Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans, in which Luther teaches what faith is, and also that faith alone justifies, possessed of it the heart is "cheered, elevated, excited and transported with sweet affections toward God." Receiving the Holy Ghost, through faith, the soul is renewed and made spiritual, he is impelled to fulfill the Law by the vital energy in himself." While this preface was being read, the Holy Ghost flashed the light into the mind and

heart of Wesley and *he was born of God*. He writes, “I felt my heart *strangely warmed*. I felt I did trust in Christ, *Christ alone*, for salvation; and an assurance was given me, that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death. And I then testified openly to all there, what I now *first* felt in my heart.”

This was wonderful, glorious, a bright morning after a long, dark night, a translation from “the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God’s dear Son.” His friends gathered around him and took him at about ten o’clock, to see his brother. They rejoiced in Christ greatly and sang and prayed with joy unspeakable. We might say that Methodism was born that very night. A form of Christianity which was soon established and which shall run on till it emerges into the glories of the millenium.

We have seen how intensely pious and devoted to God he was before this; how hard he worked in the *fear* of God; now he worked from the principle of *love*, for he had the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost given unto him.

Soon the enemy suggested “This cannot be faith, for where is your joy.” He was much buffeted with temptations, but he cried to God and

they fled away. He writes, "Herein I found the difference between this and my former state chiefly consisted. I was striving, yea, fighting with all my might under the law as well as under grace. But *then* I was sometimes, if not often conquered; and *now* I was always conqueror." Before, he worked *for* salvation; now he worked *from* it.—Before, he worked to save himself, now he worked to save others." When he related all this to his mother, who was then living in London, and was still his guide and counsellor, she strongly approved it; she heartily blessed God who had brought him to so just a way of thinking. It seems strange that he should have lived till he was thirty-five years of age without having gained a clear apprehension of the doctrine and experience of justification by faith in Jesus and of regeneration by the power of the Holy Ghost, yea, and he had also the witness of the Spirit that he was a child of God. He now received the Spirit of adoption whereby he could cry out "Abba, Father."

Wesley was so indebted to the Moravians for his spiritual enlightenment that he was led to visit Herrnhut, Germany, with Ingham and six others. At Marienborn, where he stayed two weeks, he met Zinzendorf, who had there organized a brotherhood of about fifty disciples from various countries.



PETER BOHLER.

Wesley writes, "I continually met with what I sought for, *living proofs of the power of faith*; persons saved from inward as well as outward sin, by the love of God shed abroad in their hearts; and from all doubt and fear, by the abiding witness of the Holy Ghost given unto them." Zinzendorf taught him 1. That justification is the forgiveness of sins; 2. The moment a man flies to Christ he is justified; 3. And has peace with God, but not always joy; 4. Nor, perhaps he may not know that he is justified till long after; 5. For the assurance of it is distinct from justification; 6. But others may know he is justified by his power over sin, by his seriousness, by his love of the brethren and his hunger and thirst after righteousness which alone prove the spiritual life to be begun.

He reached Herrnhut August 1, 1738. After making his observations he writes, "God has given me at length the desire of my heart. I am with a church whose conversation is in Heaven, in whom is the mind that was in Christ and who walk as he walked. As they have all one Lord and one faith, so they are all partakers of one spirit, the spirit of meekness and love, which uniformly and continually animates all their conversation. O, how high and how holy a thing christianity is, and how widely distant from that which

is so called though it neither purifies the heart nor renews the life, after the image of our blessed Redeemer."

The young men marched around the town in the evening, according to their custom, singing praise with instruments of music, and gathering in a circle on a neighboring hill to join in prayer. They returned with songs and made their mutual adieus by commending one another to God in the great square.

They called their graveyard "God's acre" and buried their dead with hymns. Wesley was so delighted that he would gladly have spent his days with them, but God called him to other fields of labor. He returned to England with many rich lessons that he never forgot. Who can tell how much Methodism owes to this visit to the Moravians? He reached England in Sept., 1738.

Peter Bohler wrote to Zinzendorf, "I travelled with John and Charles Wesley from London to Oxford. John is a good natured man, he knew he did not properly believe in the Saviour, and was willing to be taught. His brother is much disturbed in his mind, but does not know how he shall begin to be acquainted with the Saviour. Our mode of believing in the Saviour is so easy to Englishmen that they cannot reconcile themselves to it; if it were a little more artful they

would much sooner find their way into it. Of faith in Jesus they have no other idea than the people in general have. They justify themselves, and therefore they always take it for granted that they believe already, and try to prove their faith by their works, and thus so plague and torment themselves that they are at heart very miserable." These wise and mighty words will serve to show why these Wesleys were so long in obtaining salvation, and may throw some light upon the paths of those who may be stumbling along the same rugged path.

When John Wesley returned to England he found that his brother Charles had been preaching with so much power, that many had believed and entered into the same rest of faith, including some ministers, but many of the churches were closed against him. John Wesley began at once to preach this great salvation. He preached three times on Sunday besides expounding to the Minorities. On Monday he began to meet the society, which was composed of thirty-two persons. He preached on Monday at Bear Yard, and on Tuesday at Aldersgate street, where he was converted. On Thursday he preached at Fetter Lane, and on Saturday at Newgate. On Sunday he preached three times.

Thus the zeal of God's work devoured him up. It was more than his meat and drink to glorify God and see sinners saved, but soon one church after another was closed against him because he applied the truth with such power to the consciences of the people that they would not endure it. But when one door closed another door was opened. Many prisoners were glad to hear the good news of salvation, some of these prisoners were really converted to God. One of them when about to die, said, "I feel a peace which I could not have believed possible, and I know it is the peace of God which passeth all understanding." Wesley went to Oxford and preached a memorable sermon on "By grace are ye saved through faith," which was afterwards published. In it he showed: 1. That the faith through which we are saved is not barely the faith of the heathen, who believes that God is, and that he is a rewarder of all those who diligently seek him; 2. Nor is it the faith of a devil who, in addition to the faith of the heathen, believes that Jesus is the Son of God, the Christ, the Saviour of the world; 3. Nor is it barely the faith which the apostles had in Christ, but it is the full reliance on the blood of Christ—a trust in the merits of his life, death and resurrection, a recumbency upon him as our atonement and our life, as given for us and living in us, and, in

consequence thereof, a closing with him and cleaving to him as our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, or, in a word, our salvation.

The salvation that such a faith brings is : 1. From the guilt of sin ; 2. From servile fear ; 3. From the power of sin. He is pardoned and regenerated, has the witness of the spirit and lives without sin ; surely this is a state of salvation. To preach salvation by faith was not to preach against holiness or good works. This faith procures holiness and enables us to perform good works.

He preached another sermon on “ God’s free grace,” in which he taught that the grace or love of God, whence cometh our salvation, is *free in all, and free for all*. Then to convince all that he was a good churchman he published a pamphlet on “ The doctrine of salvation, faith and good works, extracted from the homilies of the Church of England.” This is a strong and forcible defence, showing that the very doctrines that he is teaching are plainly taught in the homilies of the church he had loved so long. The plain teaching of these doctrines started a system of religion that has led to the greatest revival of modern or of ancient times. Wesley defined the witness of the Spirit as “ the love of God shed abroad in the heart, producing joy which no man taketh away, joy unspeakable and full of glory.” Again, “ I believe

every Christian who has not received it should pray for the witness of God's Spirit that he is a child of God. This witness I believe is necessary to my salvation." He testifies that he had seen many persons changed in a *moment* from the spirit of horror, fear and despair, to a spirit of hope, joy and peace, and from sinful desires, till then reigning over them, to a pure desire of doing the will of God. Ponder well the following: Sept. 3, he writes, "I talked largely with my mother, who told me that till a short time since she had scarce heard such a thing mentioned as the having God's Spirit bearing witness with our spirit, much less did she imagine that this was the common privilege of all true believers, "therefore," she said, "I never durst ask for it myself, but two or three weeks ago, while my son Hall was pronouncing these words, in delivering the cup to me, 'The blood of Jesus Christ which was given for thee,' the words struck through my heart, and I knew that God, for Christ's sake, had forgiven me all my sins." So it seems that the mother of the Wesleys was greatly blessed by the spiritual light that God revealed to her sons, indeed it is a serious question whether, up to this time, she had ever known her sins forgiven.

She was greatly comforted with the presence and teachings of her sons, and says, "I am be-

come as a little child and need continual succour."

Wesley wrote an abstract of the life of Thomas Halyburton, a Scotchman, which was published in London. Tyerman says, "It is beautifully written, and is a most edifying book." He published also "Nicodemus : or a treatise on the fear of man ;" also, " A treatise on justification by faith only ;" also, a tract entitled " *The character of a Methodist.*" " A Methodist is one who has the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost given unto him ; one who loves the Lord his God with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his mind, and with all his strength, rejoices evermore, prays without ceasing, and in everything gives thanks. His heart is full of love to all mankind and is purified from envy, malice, wrath and every unkind or malign affection. His one desire and the one design of his life is not to do his own will, but the will of Him that sent him. He keeps not only some or most of God's commandments, but all, from the least unto the greatest. He follows not the customs of the world ; for vice does not lose its nature by becoming fashionable. He cannot lay up treasure upon earth any more than he can take fire in his bosom. He cannot adorn himself on any pretense with gold or costly apparel. He cannot join in any diversion that has the least tendency to vice. He can-

not speak evil of his neighbor any more than he can tell a lie. He cannot utter unkind or idle words. No corrupt communication ever comes out of his mouth. He does good unto all men." If only those who measure up to this full grown manhood are Methodists, then there are many among the millions of Methodists of this day who are not worthy of the name. The standard is good, let us measure up to it." Wesley published also this year, a volume of hymns and sacred poems.

The two Wesleys with Messrs. Hall, Kinchin, Ingham and Whitefield and about sixty of their brethren held a love feast in Fetter Lane. About three o'clock in the morning as they continued instant in prayer, the power of God came mightily upon them, insomuch that many cried out for exceeding joy, and many fell to the ground. As soon as they had recovered a little from the awe and amazement, which the presence of the Divine Majesty had inspired. They broke out with one voice "We praise thee O God; we acknowledge thee to be the Lord." It was a pentecostal season indeed. God often manifested himself in these society meetings and filled them with his glory. A conference of seven ministers was held at Islington to consider important matters. They continued in fasting till three o'clock in the after-

noon, then parted with a conviction that *God was about to do mighty things among them*. The kingdom of Christ upon earth can only be established by such seasons of continued waiting before the Lord. When it pleases God to bestow the pentecostal baptism upon his chosen few, who thereby become mighty to the pulling down of strongholds, and set the kingdom on a blaze. *Every Christian frequently needs a personal pentecost.*

During these days Whitefield having returned from America was preaching to vast multitudes, sometimes to twenty thousand, who at times were "all affected and drenched in tears together." He had a special adaptation to out-door preaching and helped to open the way for the Wesleys to reach the masses, as they gathered in nature's temple, under the canopy of heaven.

Persecutions were in perfect order. Satan always rages when his kingdom is in danger. When John Wesley was preaching in Bristol the mob filled the court, and street, and alleys around the place, and shouted, and cried, and swore fearfully. A number of the rioters were arrested and within a fortnight one of them had hanged himself. Another was seriously sick and sent to Mr. Wesley a request for prayers, and a third came to him and confessed that he had been hired and made drunk, but, on coming to the place, found himself deprived of speech and power.

Methodism found its way into Wales, for England could not hold it. Wesley and Whitefield proclaimed the truth to the candid people of this province and great was the fruit. Howell Harris having studied at Oxford for the church, was so disgusted at the immorality and infidelity that prevailed, that he returned to Wales and began to preach publicly and from house to house, and soon formed several societies, and thirty of them were organized before Whitefield went to Wales, and in three years more they numbered three hundred. Harris was only a lay preacher, for they refused to ordain him because of his irregularities. He was a good man, full of the Holy Ghost and faith, and much people were added to the Lord."

While Whitefield was preaching from "God willeth all men to be saved," at Newgate prison, and praying that God would bear witness to his words, "One and another and another sank to the earth as though they were thunderstruck. All Newgate rang with the cries of those whom the work of God had cut to the heart."

Methodism prevailed so rapidly in Bristol that they found it both necessary and convenient to build the first Methodist chapel in the world in that city. Wesley appointed "eleven feoffers" or trustees, who were to take the financial

responsibility. But Whitefield and others wrote him that they could not help him to build this house unless he held it in his own name, for otherwise the "feoffers would control him and dismiss him from the premises whenever he did not please them. He followed this good advice, and thereafter all his church property was held in his own name until near his death, when he gave a "deed of declaration" to his legal conference, "Decisions in the Court of Chancery, made under this document, have given security to the property and stability to the whole economy of Wesleyan Methodism down to our day."

It was marvellous in the eyes of all, that under the quiet preaching of John Wesley so many should be slain by the power of God. While preaching at Bristol, a young woman sank down in violent agony, as did five or six in another meeting in the evening. The mother of this daughter was greatly offended, but she too fell down slain before the Lord. A bold blasphemer was smitten before the Lord, and cried out in agony. Sometimes scores were smitten at once and fell as dead men, including a traveller who had paused but a few minutes to hear the word of the Lord. Somebody lent one of Wesley's sermons to a man who opposed this strange power,

and while he was reading that sermon, he suddenly turned pale, fell to the floor and cried mightily to God for mercy.

Wesley still remained a minister of the Episcopal church and had a profound regard for that organization. But he was providentially led to organize the Methodist church in the following manner. He writes, "In the latter part of the year 1739, eight or ten persons came to me in London and desired that I should spend some time in prayer with them and advise them how to flee from the wrath to come; this was the rise of the *United Society*. Twelve came the first night, forty the next and soon after a hundred." Little did John Wesley think to what this small beginning would grow.

"See how great a flame aspires,
Kindled by a spark of grace."

Soon after this, Whitefield came again to America and extended his labors even to Philadelphia and Boston, and his words were in the demonstration of the Spirit and of power. About this time Whitefield took decided ground in favor of Calvinism, while Wesley was forever firmly fixed on Arminianism. Thus those true and good men were led to differ in opinion, but they still were one in heart, and labored on with unabated zeal till the Master called them to their heavenly rest.

There were also differences of opinion with Wesley and the Moravian brethren, which it is not necessary to detail. No doubt the providence of God would have Methodism stand out alone before the world, therefore he disentangled it from its former surroundings, that it may stand out boldly and alone, and work out its own destiny in the Christian world. Wesley had a reason for his conduct.

On the question of predestination he writes in his sermon on Free grace : “ According to predestination, free grace is not free for all, but only for those whom God hath ordained to life. The greater part of mankind hath God ordained to death and it is not free for them ; them hath God hated, and therefore, before they were born, decreed that they should die eternally, and this He absolutely decreed because it was His sovereign will. Accordingly, they are born for this : to be destroyed body and soul in hell. And they grew up under the irrevocable curse of God, without any possibility of redemption.” He objects to this doctrine, 1. Because it renders all preaching vain ; 2. It tends to destroy that holiness which is the end of all the ordinances of God, and for many other reasons ; lastly, “ It is full of blasphemy, for it represents our blessed Lord as a hypocrite and dissembler, in saying one thing and

meaning another,—in pretending a love which He has not; it also represents the most holy God as more false, more cruel and more unjust than the devil, for in point of fact, it says God has condemned millions of souls to everlasting fire for continuing in sin which, for want of grace he gives them not, they are unable to avoid. This is the blasphemy clearly contained in *this horrible decree* of predestination, and here I fix my foot. On this I join issue with every assertor of it. You represent God as worse than the devil. You say you will prove it from scripture. Hold—what will you prove from scripture? that God is worse than the devil? It cannot be.”

I have neither time nor inclination to enter into this controversy. The battle has been fought and the victory won—posterity will tell how much has been gained by the labors of the well-trained and logical mind of John Wesley.

It is almost too early to speak of the controversy between John Fletcher and the Calvinists, which discussion has done so much to influence the Methodists of all coming ages.

CHAPTER V.

METHODISM CONSOLIDATING, AND PREVAILING.

We have seen how the class-meetings were organized, which led to the organization of the Methodist societies, and then of the church. It may be well to notice how the Band meetings commenced. They were first adopted by the Moravians. "Our band meetings are small companies of serious people of the same sex, and in the same condition of life, whether married or single, who meet occasionally to converse with each other on their religious state, and to engage in mutual prayer. They were grounded on, 'confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed.' They met weekly to confess their faults one to another, and for mutual edification. The homily on repentance, said: 'We ought to confess our weaknesses, and infirmities one to another to the end, that knowing each other's frailties, we may the more earnestly pray together unto Almighty God our Heavenly Father.'" Jeremy Taylor has well said, "He who would preserve

his humility should choose some spiritual person to whom he shall oblige himself to discover his very thoughts and fancies, every act of his, and all his intercourse with others, in which there may be danger, that by such an openness of spirit he may expose every blast of vain glory, every idle thought to be chastened and lessened by the rod of spiritual discipline, and he shall find himself tied to confess every proud thought. Every vanity of his spirit will also perceive that they must not dwell with him, nor find any kindness from him. Every true Christian will see the necessity and blessedness of such an organization in all ages." Next to the class-meetings perhaps, nothing contributed so much to the success of Methodism as the "Lay ministry." It seems to have been no part of the original plan of Wesley to employ laymen in preaching the gospel, but God raised up such lay preachers as Thomas Maxfield, and thrust them out, and gave them great success. They at last overcome all his prejudice for Church orders, and compelled Mr. Wesley to give them a license, not only to exhort, but also to preach the gospel. This victory was not gained without the help of his mother, who when she found that he was going to prevent Maxfield from preaching, she told him plainly that she believed Mr Maxfield was as much

called of God to preach the gospel, as was John Wesley. This turned the scale, and settled the question. Wesley would not fight against God. Henceforth Thomas Maxfield, and then Thomas Richards, and others, were acknowledged "as sons in the gospel."

In the seventy-third year of her age Mrs. Wesley departed in peace, July 3, 1742, while Wesley and five of his sisters stood around and sung at her request, a hymn of praise. She was buried among the illustrious dead of Bunhill fields, City road, London.

Wesley's Societies increased, and so did his lay ministers; during this year he had twenty-three itinerants besides several local preachers among his laymen, who travelled and preached, continually. They had great success in Wales, and societies multiplied, notwithstanding the mobs assailed them. Heaven favored them, though hell frowned upon them.

Under Wesley's first sermon at Moorfields, John Nelson was converted, who was an honest Yorkshire mason, who became both a zealous and faithful preacher of the gospel. When requested to work on Sunday, he said, "I would rather starve than offend God." He fasted once a week, and gave the food to feed the poor. He was one of the apostles of early Methodism. Born in York-

shire, he became one of the chief founders of Methodism in that county. Many of the profligates were converted, drunkards became sober. Ale houses were closed up, and the word of God sounded forth to Leeds, Wakefield, Halifax, and all the west of Yorkshire. While Nelson was thus sweeping through Yorkshire, Wesley went to Newcastle, a degraded mining region. He walked down town, where he found drunkenness, cursing and swearing, abounding from both children and parents. At seven o'clock on Sunday morning, he and a friend began to sing; a few gathered, and before he finished, there were from twelve to fifteen hundred listening to the truth. "He was wounded for our transgressions," was the text. The people were amazed at his offer of mercy, and stood "gaping and staring." At 5 P. M. he preached again, but the hill was covered from top to bottom. He never saw such a multitude. Again he proclaimed mercy by preaching from "I will heal their backsliding." They were ready to tread him under foot out of pure love and kindness. He had to leave them and go and join Nelson, still they clamored for the bread of life. Soon Charles Wesley preached to them, and then John came again among them. A society was formed and a church was built, and this became one of the strongholds of Methodism. He writes,

“I never saw a work of God in any other place go on so evenly and gradually, continually rising step by step.”

On his return he stopped at Epworth, but the drunken rector refused to let him in the church, so he stood upon his father's tombstone and preached with power to the masses that thronged to hear the word of life. For a week he daily took his stand above the ashes of his father and proclaimed the glorious gospel of the blessed God. Some of the converts were carried before a justice of the peace, who enquired what they had done. “Why, they pretend to be better than other people, and pray from morning till night.” “But have they done nothing else?” “Yes,” said one man, “they have converted my wife; before this she was an awful scold, but now she is as quiet as a lamb.” “Then take them home and let them convert all the scolds in the town.”

Societies were forming on every side, and chapels were already built in Bristol, London, Kingswood and Newcastle. After consulting with his brethren, they formed the General Rules of the United Societies, which has been incorporated into the constitutional law of the Methodist Episcopal Church of America. It is a wonderful setting forth of the duties of those who would be true followers of the Lamb of God among the people

called Methodists. For the good of the common reader, and for all, I transcribe the whole. It shows the wisdom of those who made it, and of all who make it the rule of their lives.

“This was the rise of the “United Society,” first in Europe and then in America. Such a society is no other than “a company of men having the form and seeking the power of godliness, united in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love, that they may help each other to work out their salvation.” That it may the more easily be discerned whether they are indeed working out their own salvation, each society is divided into smaller companies, called classes, according to their respective places of abode. There are about twelve persons in a class, one of whom is styled the “leader.” It is his duty to see each person in his class once a week at least, in order to inquire how their souls prosper; to advise, reprove, comfort or exhort, as occasion may require; to receive what they are willing to give toward the relief of the preachers, church and poor; to meet the ministers and the stewards of the society once a week, in order to inform the minister of any that are sick, or of any that walk disorderly and will not be reproved; to pay the stewards what they have received of their several classes in the week pre-

ceding. There is only one condition previously required of those who desire admission into these societies — “a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins.” But wherever this is really fixed in the soul, it will be shown by its fruits. It is therefore expected of all who continue therein, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation. First, by doing no harm, by avoiding evil of every kind, especially that which is most generally practiced, such as the taking of the name of God in vain; the profaning the day of the Lord, either by doing ordinary work therein, or by buying or selling; drunkenness, buying or selling spirituous liquors, or drinking them, unless in cases of extreme necessity; slaveholding, buying or selling slaves; fighting, quarreling, brawling, brother going to law with brother; returning evil for evil, or railing for railing; the using many words in buying or selling; the buying or selling goods that have not paid the duty; the giving or taking things on usury, that is, unlawful interest; uncharitable or unprofitable conversation, particularly speaking evil of magistrates or of ministers; doing to others as we would not they should do unto us; doing what we know is not for the glory of God, as the putting on of gold and costly apparel; the taking such diversions as cannot be used in the name of

the Lord Jesus ; the singing those songs, or reading those books, which do not tend to the knowledge or love of God ; softness and needless self-indulgence ; laying up treasure upon earth ; borrowing without a probability of paying, or taking up goods without a probability of paying for them.

It is expected of all who continue in these societies, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation.

Secondly, by doing good ; by being in every kind merciful after their power, as they have opportunity, doing good of every possible sort, and, as far as possible, to all men. To their bodies, of the ability which God giveth, by giving food to the hungry, by clothing the naked, by visiting or helping them that are sick or in prison. To their souls, by instructing, reproving, or exhorting all we have any intercourse with ; trampling under foot that enthusiastic doctrine, that “ we are not to do good unless our hearts be free to it.” By doing good, especially to them that are of the household of faith, or groaning so to be ; employing them preferably to others ; buying one of another ; helping each other in business ; and so much the more because the world will love its own, and them *only*. By all possible diligence and frugality, that the Gospel be not blamed. By

running with patience the race which is set before them, denying themselves and taking up their cross daily; submitting to bear the reproach of Christ, to be as the filth and offscouring of the world; and looking that men should say all manner of evil of them falsely for the Lord's sake.

It is expected of all who desire to continue in these societies, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation.

Thirdly, by attending upon all the ordinances of God, such as the public worship of God; the ministry of the word, either read or expounded; the Supper of the Lord; family and private prayer; searching the Scriptures, and fasting or abstinence.

These are the general rules of our societies, all of which we are taught of God to observe, even in his written word, which is the only rule, and the sufficient rule, both of our faith and practice. And all these we know His Spirit writes on truly awakened hearts. If there be any among us who observe them not, who habitually break any of them, let it be known unto them who watch over that soul as they who must give an account. We will admonish him of the error of his ways. We will bear with him for a season. But if then he repent not, he hath no more place among us. We have delivered our own souls."

Thus the founder of Methodism laid down these Scriptural rules, which are remarkable for their general outline of Christian duty, and also for the particular manner in which they specify the various duties of the followers of Christ. No doubt the success or defeat of the whole church has been in proportion to their fidelity or want of fidelity to these "General Rules." Wesley exclaimed, "Oh that we may never make anything more or less the term of union with us, but the having the mind of Christ and the walking as he walked."

It would naturally be expected that people who lived by these rules would die in holy triumph, and so it was. We have their dying testimonies before us. Anne Cole, being asked by Wesley whether she chose to live or die, answered, "I choose neither, I choose nothing; I am in my Saviour's hands and I have no will but his." Another member said, "I am very ill, but I am very well; oh, I am happy, happy, happy! My spirit continually rejoices in God my Saviour. Life or death is all one to me. I have no darkness, no cloud. My body indeed is weak and in pain, but my soul is all joy and praise." Jane Muncy exclaimed, "I faint not, I murmur not, I rejoice evermore and in everything give thanks. God is ever with me, and I have nothing to do but praise him." Another woman cried out in her

dying agonies, "Oh, how loving God is to me ! but he is loving to every man, and loves every soul as well as he loves mine." Another testifies, "Death stares me in the face, but I fear him not." Hannah Richardson said, "I have no fear, no doubt, no trouble. Heaven is open. I see Jesus Christ with all his angels and saints in white. I see what I cannot utter or express." Sister Hooper exclaimed, "I am in great pain, but in greater joy." Another said, "I never felt such love before ; I love every soul ; I am all love, and so is God." Rachel Peacock sang hymns incessantly, and was so filled with joy that she shouted, "Though I groan I feel no pain at all, Christ so rejoices and fills my heart."

Still persecution prevailed, the enemies of God and man opposed. At Deptford, while Wesley was preaching, "many poor wretches were got together, utterly devoid of both common sense and common decency, who cried aloud as though just from 'among the tombs.'" In London, many men of the baser sort mixed themselves with the female part of the congregation, and behaved with great indecency. They knocked down the constable who ordered them to keep the peace. In Long Lane they pelted Wesley with stones ; one of great size passed near his head. In Marylabone Fields, in the midst of his sermon out of

doors, missiles fell thick and fast on every side. In Hoxton, the rabble brought an ox, which they tried to drive through the congregation. At Swindon, the mob surrounded the congregation, rang a bell, blew a horn, and used a fire engine in drenching them with water; guns were fired over the people's heads, and rotten eggs were plentiful. At Hampton, the mob beat a drum and fired squibs and crackers. "For an half hour, hogs'-wash and fetid water were poured upon him and his congregation, who all the while stood perfectly still in secret prayer, with their eyes and hands lifted up to heaven." At Stratton, cudgels were used unmercifully; some of the congregation had blood streaming down their faces, some were dragged away by the hair of their heads; the mob bellowed and roared like maniacs.

Still Methodism went on and prospered, and went on from conquering to conquer. Sometimes the powers of darkness were let loose and evil spirits seemed to have possessed some of the people.

Wesley tells of a young woman who was raving so that it took several persons to hold her. "Anguish, horror and despair were manifest in her countenance." She cried out, "I am damned! Lost forever! Six days ago you might have helped me; but it is passed. I am the devil's

now ; I have given myself to him ; his I am, him I must serve ; with him I must go to hell ; I will be his, I will serve him, I will go with him to hell ; I cannot be saved, I will not be saved ; I must, I will, I will be damned." She then began praying to the devil, and we began, " Arm of the Lord, awake, awake ! " She immediately sunk down as if asleep, but as soon as we left off broke out again with inexpressible vehemence, " Stony hearts break ! I am a warning unto you. Break, break, poor stony hearts ! Why will you not break ? What can be done more for stony hearts ? I am damned that you might be saved ! Now break, now break, poor stony hearts ! You need not be damned, though I must." She then fixed her eyes on the corner of the ceiling and said, " There he is ; aye, there he is ! Come, good devil, come. Take me away, I am yours, I will be yours, take me away ? " " We interrupted her again by calling upon God, on which she sunk down as before. And another young woman began to roar as loud as she had done. We continued in prayer till past eleven, when God, in a moment, spoke peace into the soul of the one first tormented, and then of the other, and they both joined in singing praise to him who had stilled the enemy and the avenger." If the devil possessed men and women in the days of the Son of God,

why may he not now? And if Christ cast out devils then, why not now? Sin and Satan, and God and holiness, are just the same.

Wesley continued his itinerant labors, and God made his preaching a great blessing to the people, and although he found himself coming short of the glory of God, still he proclaimed a free and full salvation to all. He, and two friends, rode to Bradford, where he preached to nearly a thousand persons, who seemed deeply affected. Four days after, he writes, “Having been provoked to speak unadvisedly with my lips, I preached on Bowling Green in great weakness on ‘Lazarus come forth.’ I was surprised that any good should be done, but God quickens others by those who are dead themselves. A man came to me and declared he had now received the Spirit of life, and so did a woman at the same time. We had great power among us while I displayed the believer’s privileges from the eighth chapter of Romans. The next day I met between thirty and forty colliers and their wives at Mr. Willis’, and administered the sacrament to them, but found no comfort myself from that or any other ordinance. I always find strength for the work of the ministry, but when my work is over, my bodily and spiritual strength both leave me. I can pray for others, not for myself. God, by me, strengthens the weak hands and con-

firms the feeble knees, yet am I as a man in whom is no strength. I am weary and faint in my mind, continually longing to be discharged."

Soon after this he had power to pray for himself, and confessed that it was good for him to be in desertion. He was greatly strengthened and comforted by opening his Bible to Ish. 54 : 7, 8 : " For a small moment have I forsaken thee : but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment ; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy upon thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer." He saw the hand of God was applying the rod, but he was in sweet submission to the divine will.

How truly could he adopt the following as the language of his heart.

" O, grant that nothing in my soul
May dwell, but thy pure love alone !
O, may thy love possess me whole,
My joy, my treasure and my crown !
Strange flames far from my heart remove,
My every act, word, thought, be love !

He writes : " Many years since, I saw that without holiness no man could see the Lord. I began by following after it, and inciting all with whom I had any intercourse, to do the same. Ten years after this God gave me a clearer view than I had before of the way to obtain it, namely, by faith

in the Son of God, and immediately I *declared* to all: 'We are saved from sin, we are made holy by faith.' This I testified in private, in public, in print, and God confirmed it by a thousand witnesses."—Vol. VII, p. 38.

Again he writes, "In the evening, while I was reading prayers at Snowsfield, I found such light and strength as I never remember to have had before. I saw every thought, as well as action or word just as it was rising in my heart, and whether it was right before God, or tainted with pride or selfishness. I awakened the next morning, by the grace of God, in the same spirit, and living with two or three that believed in Jesus, I felt such an awe and tender sense of the presence of God as *greatly confirmed me therein*, so that God was before me all day long. I sought and found him in every place. I could truly say, when I lay down at night, '*now I have lived a day.*'"

Who ever will search through the writings of John Wesley will find that he seldom mentions his experience of full salvation. It is not so much expressed as implied. The whole work of his devoted life testifies that he was entirely sanctified. Who, but such a saint, could write: "The circumcision of the heart is that habitual disposition of soul which, in the sacred writings, is termed holiness, and which directly implies the being

cleansed from sin, from all filthiness both of the flesh and of the spirit, and, by consequence, the being endowed with those virtues which were also in Christ Jesus; the being so renewed in the image of our mind as to be perfect, as our Father in Heaven is perfect. I believe it to be an inward thing, namely, the life of God in the soul of man, a participation of the Divine nature, the mind that was in Christ, or the renewal of our hearts after the image of Him that created us. What is then the perfection of which a man is capable while he dwells in a corruptible body? It is the complying with that kind command: 'My son, give me thy heart.' It is the loving God with all the heart, and with all the soul, and with all the mind. This is the sum of Christian perfection. It is all comprised in that one word, love." When Dr. Gibson, the Bishop of London, asked him what he meant by perfection, he told him without any disguise or reserve, who replied: "Mr. Wesley, if this be all you mean, publish it to all the world." He answered, "My Lord, I will."

At the first conference, in 1744, Christian perfection was defined, "A renewal in the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness. To be a *perfect Christian* is to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength — implying

the destruction of all inward sin, and faith in the condition and instrument by which such a state of grace is obtained."

No wonder that he could sing :

"Jesus, see my panting breast,
See, I pant in thee to rest,
Gladly would I now be clean,
Cleanse me now from every sin."

Then, in the language of his brother Charles, he could exclaim :

"Saviour, to thee my soul looks up,
My present Saviour thou;
With all the confidence of hope,
I claim the blessing now.

'Tis done! thou dost this moment save,
With full salvation bless;
Redemption through thy blood I have,
And spotless love and peace."

About this time he writes, "God keeps me in constant fear lest that, by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway. I spoke plainly to the women bands of their unadvisedness, their want of love, and not bearing one another's burdens. We found an immediate effect; some were convinced they had thought too highly of themselves, and that their first love, like their first joy, was only a foretaste of that temper which continually rules in a new heart — they had not been attentive to the command, 'go on to perfection'."

Mr. Wesley was fully set against fanaticism. He says, "The spirit of enthusiasm was breaking in upon many who charged their own imaginations on the word of God, and that not written, but impressed on their hearts. If these *impressions* be received as the rule of action, instead of the *written word*, I know nothing so wicked or absurd that we may fall into, and that without remedy."

Again, "They may likewise imagine themselves to be influenced or directed by the Spirit when they are not. How many will impute things to the Spirit without any rational or Scriptural ground? Such are they who imagine they either do or shall receive *particular* directions from God, not only in points of importance, but in things of no moment in the most trifling circumstances of life, whereas, in these cases, God has given us our own reason for a guide, though never excluding the secret assistance of his Spirit.—'To the law and the testimony!—this is the general method of knowing what is the holy and acceptable will of God.'"

CHAPTER VI.

ESTABLISHING METHODISM IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.

The power of God still attended the faithful preaching of the gospel. Many were struck under conviction, and hardly knew what struck them; but they were laden with a sense of their sins, and of "the wrath to come," so that they could not rest till they were truly converted. A man who had been an atheist for twenty years, came to the Foundry to make sport of Wesley's meeting, but God arrested him in his sins, and there was no peace in his soul till his sins were pardoned. At Bristol the power of God came down so mightily, that "some wept aloud, some clapped their hands, some shouted, and the rest sang praise." In London, while a violent storm was raging, "their hearts danced for joy, praising the glorious God that maketh the thunder."

Wesley spent three weeks in Oxford, in 1741. There were but few left of the Oxford Methodists. His friend Gambold told him that he need be under no fear respecting his sermon before the University, which he was come to preach, for the

authorities were utterly regardless of what he said. Here he met Richard Viney, an Oxford Moravian minister, whose person, delivery, and bearing prevented his sermons from being acceptable to many; yet he was elected president of the Society of Fetter Lane.

Wesley preached his sermon before the University at St. Mary's, to the largest congregation he had ever seen at Oxford. His text was, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." 1. What is implied in being *almost*, and 2. What in being *altogether* a Christian? To be almost a Christian implied: 1. Heathen honesty, not to defraud a fellow-man of his right, and, if possible, to owe no man anything. 2. It relates to truth, as well as justice, hence it pertained to slander, or to calling God to witness to a lie. A heathen hates a liar. 3. It relates to the love or assistance that heathens expect of one another. Heathen honesty extends to all this. The second thing implied in being almost a Christian, is having the form of godliness, doing nothing which the gospel forbids. Not only avoiding all actual sin, as murder, adultery, fornication, or theft, but also every word or look that, either directly or indirectly, tends thereto. He is no reviler, no brawler, no scoffer, either at the faults or infirmities of his neighbor. He labors and suffers to

promote the good of others. He uses all the means of grace, including family and private prayer. And he does all this in sincerity, having an inward principle of religion. In this he told his own experience, for he says, "I did go thus for many years, as many of this place can testify, using diligence to eschew all evil, and to have a conscience void of offence; redeeming the time; buying up every opportunity of doing good to all men; yet my own conscience beareth me witness in the Holy Ghost, that all this time I was but *almost* a Christian. What is implied in being altogether a Christian? First, the love of God. Such a love as engrosses the whole heart, as takes up the affections, as fills the entire capacity of the soul. Second, love to our neighbors. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. My neighbor is every man in the world, not excepting our enemies, or the enemies of God. Every Christian loveth these also as himself. This love is long suffering, kind, not puffed up. All this must be grounded in faith, and this must be a faith that works by love." I have given but an outline of this excellent sermon, which must have had a salutary effect upon that large and intelligent audience.

During the same year, while Wesley was in Wales, he was very sick; yea, nigh unto death.

A dangerous fever followed, but prayer was offered, and a day of fasting was appointed at Bristol. Yet for eight days he was near eternity. Prayer prevailed, and he entered again on his great itinerant labors. He says, "It was a strange thing for me, who have not kept my bed a day for five and thirty years. I was a prisoner for three weeks." While recovering from this, he read the life of Philip Henry, and of Mathew Henry, and other good books.

Tyerman has well said: "Great revivals of religion have generally been attended by copious productions of hymns of praise." Thus it was in the rise of Methodism. This was emphatically the great era of hymn writing in the English Church. Watts, Doddridge, and Erskine poured forth the joys of their converted hearts, and furnished lyric lines which have been used in sacred worship by millions. But of all the hymnists then living, the Wesleys were the most remarkable. A competent authority has estimated that during Wesley's life, there were published not less than six thousand six hundred hymns from the pen of Charles Wesley only. Having furnished their Societies with so many hymns, no wonder that they collected and furnished tunes. Their religion made them happy, and happiness always finds vent in song. The old Methodists were

remarkable for their singing, because their hearts throbbed with joy unspeakable. Naturally the Wesleys were full of poetry ; and religion, so far from extinguishing the fire, fanned it into a holy flame. Their taste in music may be gathered from Wesley's direction to his preachers : "Suit the tunes to the words. Avoid complex tunes, which it is scarcely possible to sing with devotion. Sing no anthems. Do not suffer the people to sing too slow. In every Society let them learn to sing. Let the women sing their parts alone. Exhort every one in the congregation to sing, not one in ten only."

Wesley was, indeed, a great itinerant preacher. In 1743, he spent about fourteen weeks in London, ten in Bristol and vicinity, thirteen in Newcastle, three in Cornwall, and twelve in the north of England. He travelled on horseback, reading as he rode along, always at home among the rich or the poor, in the city or in the country ; always about his Master's work. At Sandhutton, while baiting his horse, he found sitting in the chimney corner of the public house, a good-natured man, who was enjoying his grog with gusto. Wesley spoke to him about sacred things, having no suspicion that he was talking to the parish priest ; and yet, so it was ; but the reverend tippler did not boil over with offence, but begged his reprover to call upon him on his next visit.

When he and John Downes reached Darlington both their horses lay down and died. The next month, as he was leaving London, the saddle slipped over the horse's neck, Wesley was thrown over the horse's head, and the horse ran back to Smithfield. He went to church at Exeter, and says: "The sermon was quite innocent of meaning. The afternoon sermon was, I know not what, for I could not hear a single sentence." In leaving Epworth he had to cross the Trent in a ferry boat; a terrible storm was raging: the cargo consisted of three horses, and eight men and women. In the midst of the river, the side of the boat was under water, and the horses and men rolled one over another, while Wesley was laid in the bottom, pinned down with a large iron bar, and utterly unable to help himself. Presently the horses jumped into the water, and the boat was lightened, and came safe to land.

As many who joined the Societies were of a low order, no wonder if some of them proved unworthy characters, and had to be dismissed. Mr. Wesley devised a very quiet way of disposing of these undesirable members. He had a printed class ticket, with a passage of scripture printed upon it, with a blank space for the name of the member to whom it was given. These tickets were renewed quarterly, and are now in use in

the Wesleyan Society in England. The reception of this ticket was a token of Christian fellowship, and the showing of this ticket admitted the party to the love feasts of those days. But the failure to receive this ticket was a proof that the fellowship was withdrawn, and you had no right to membership in the church, or to a place in the love feast. Some of these members before conversion were noted for "savage ignorance and all kinds of wickedness." Alas! some fell back into sin.

At Newcastle the people were fearfully convicted of sin, some felt as though a sword was running through them. Others thought a great weight was upon them; others could hardly breathe; others felt that their bodies were being torn to pieces. Wesley says, "These symptoms I could no more impute to any natural causes, than to the Spirit of God. I can make no doubt but it was Satan tearing them, as they were coming to Christ, and hence proceeded these grievous cries, whereby he might design both to discredit the work of God and to affright fearful people from hearing that word whereby their souls might be saved. Charles Wesley said "I am more and more convinced it was a device of Satan to stop the course of the gospel." Many to whom they preached were fierce and threatening. They were

children of the wicked One, who were held fast in Satan's chains. It is impossible to tell what would have become of this class of sinners, all over England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales, or what would have become of society in general, if God had not raised up Wesley and Whitefield and their fellow workers, to go out and proclaim the gospel of Christ from one end of the land to the other.

Most of these people were poor and it was hard to raise money to build churches. Wesley had but very little when he began to build the church at Newcastle, but God raised up funds from time to time. A good Quaker friend sent him a £100, saying "I had a dream. I saw a shepherd with a great flock of sheep; so many that he could not get them into the fold. Then it came to my mind that it must be John Wesley who wants to build a chapel at Newcastle, and I must help him." So she sent the money just in time. Chapels were built in many places and became centres of moral and spiritual good.

It is astonishing how the powers of earth and hell were stirred in some places. Clergymen and people raved against God and his gospel, and the ministers that God had sent to proclaim it. For instance, at Walsal, while Charles Wesley was preaching on the steps of the market house, the

mob was roaring and shouting and throwing stones incessantly. Many struck him, but not to hurt him. In another place they began pelting them with stones and dirt and smashed in the windows of the Methodist houses in Wednesbury, Darlastan and West Bromwich. Sometimes money was extorted and furniture broken, and even the magistrate swung his hat in derision when asked to quiet the rabble. Wesley writes, "I received a full account of the terrible riots in Staffordshire; I was not surprised at all, after the advices they had received from the pulpit, as well as from the Episcopal chair; the zealous high churchmen had rose and cut all that were Methodists in pieces."

They went to Mary Turner's house at West Bromwich and hunted her and her two daughters with stones and stakes, threatened to knock them on the head and to bury them in a ditch. They came to John Bird's house, felled his daughter, snatched money from his wife, broke ten of his windows, besides destroying sash frames, shutters and chest of drawers. They took Humphrey Hands by the throat, swore they would be the death of him, gave him a great swing and hurled him on the ground. On rising, they struck him on the eye and again knocked him down; then they smashed his windows and goods. At this

very time, about Wednesbury, more than eighty houses had their windows damaged, in many of which not three panes were left unbroken.

John Wesley was at the house of Francis Wards. The mob beset the house, and cried: "Bring out the minister; we will have the minister!" At Wesley's request, three of the most furious came into the house, and after the interchange of a few sentences, were perfectly appeased. With these men to clear the way, Wesley went out, and standing in the midst of the surging mob, asked what they wanted with him. Some said, "We want you to go with us to the justice." He replied, "That I will, with all my heart;" and away they went. Before they had walked a mile, the night came on accompanied with heavy rain. The magistrate lived two miles away. Some pushed forward, and told Mr. Lane, the magistrate, that they were bringing John Wesley before his worship. "What have I to do with Wesley? take him back again."

But when they insisted upon offering their complaint, their spokesman said: "To be plain, sir, if I must speak the truth, all the fault that I find with Wesley is that he preaches better than our parsons." Another said: "Sir, it is a downright shame; he makes people rise at five o'clock in the morning to sing psalms. What advice would you give us?" "Go home, and be quiet," he replied.

Then they hurried Wesley to Walsal, to another magistrate, who refused to see them. Now they must trudge back. The Walsal mob met them, and they began to quarrel. Wesley was left alone in the hands of the victorious ruffians. One struck him with a club. Others tried to seize him by the collar, and pull him down. Another lifted his arm to strike, but on a sudden, let it fall, and only stroked his hair, saying, "What soft hair he has!" One man struck him on the breast, another on the mouth, so that the blood gushed out. He was dragged back to Walsal, and attempting to enter a house, the door of which was left open, he was seized by the hair of his head and hindered. He was then paraded through the street, from one end of Walsal to the other. Here he stood and asked, "What evil have I done? Which of you have I wronged in word or deed?" Again they cried, "Bring him away!" Wesley began to pray; and now a man who just before headed the mob, turned and said, "Sir, I will spend my life for you; follow me and no one shall hurt a hair of your head." Two or three of his companions joined him, the mob parted, and these brave ruffians—one of them a prize-fighter—took Wesley and carried him through the crowd. He writes in his journal: "A little before ten o'clock, God brought me

safe to Wednesbury, having lost only one flap of my waistcoat, and a little skin from one of my hands. From the beginning to the end I found the *same presence of mind as if I had been sitting in my own study*. But I took no thought for one moment before another. Only once it came into my mind that if they should throw me into the river, it would spoil the papers that were in my pocket. For myself, I did not doubt but I should swim across, having but a thin coat and a light pair of boots.”

Such was the beginning of Methodism in the “black country,” so called because there are so many coal mines and blast furnaces, and so much smoke from burning coal into coke for those furnaces. Now Methodism flourishes in all that region, for I was born in Dudley, very near there, and after being in this country thirty years, I returned and found Methodist chapels in all parts of this “black country.” There are Wesleyan Methodist, New Connection Methodist, and Primitive Methodist. They compose a great part of the spiritual power of that community.

In five days after Wesley received this rough treatment, Charles Wesley boldly bearded the lion in his den, by preaching there. He found the poor Methodists “standing fast in one mind and spirit, in nothing terrified by their adversaries.”

He writes : “ Never before was I in so primitive an assembly. We sang praises lustily, and with good courage ; and could all set our seal to the truth of the Lord’s saying : ‘ Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness sake.’ We assembled before day to sing hymns of praise to Christ, and as soon as it was light, I walked down the town, and preached boldly on Rev. 2 : 10. It was a glorious time, but souls were satisfied with marrow and fatness, and we longed for our Lord’s coming, to confess us before His Father and His holy angels.”

All were struck with the meek behaviour of John Wesley and his crowd. Even the leader of the mob was converted and joined the Methodists. When Charles asked him what he thought of John Wesley he replied, “ I think of him ! I thought he was a *mon* of God, and God was on his side, when so *mony* of us were not able to kill one *mon*.” He always delighted to tell how God stayed his hands when he wanted to kill Wesley. He died in Birmingham—only a few miles from where he was converted—in 1789, at the age of eighty-five years just two years before John Wesley—what a reunion in the glory-land !

But Satan was not satisfied ; worse violence broke out in this region, if possible, the next year, led on by the Vicar of Wednesbury, whose name

we will not write, as it ought to perish. He drew up a paper for the Methodists to sign or have their houses destroyed; they were to promise that they would never read, or sing, or pray together, or hear the Methodist parsons any more. A few signed, but the mass stood firm. In less than a month Charles Wesley came, but this godless violence went on. Homes and furniture were destroyed and some of the members were abused in manners too shameful to record, but they met together morning and evening in great peace and love and nothing terrified by their adversaries.

Cornwall is now a hot-bed of Methodism, but the time was when it was the hot-bed of sin and degradation; when drinking, cock-fighting, bull-fighting and wrestling were common. It is said that one village was literally without a Bible or religious book except the book of common prayer, kept at a public house. In a fearful storm when they thought the world was coming to an end, they fled to the tavern in great consternation, that the tapster might read them a prayer. Having fallen upon their knees he seized a book and began to read about storms and shipwrecks and rafts, until his mistress found out that there was a mistake, and cried out "Tom, that's Robinson Crusoe." "No," said Tom, "it is the prayer book, and on he went till he came to the descrip-

tion of man Friday, when his mistress cried out, "I am certain you are reading Robinson Crusoe." "Well, well," said Tom, "suppose I am, there are as good prayers in Robinson Crusoe as in any other book." So he read on till the storm abated.

Thank God! all were not as ignorant as this, but violence was the order of the day in Cornwall as in Staffordshire, when Methodism was finding its way in those parts. At St. Ives when Charles Wesley began to sing the mob beat a drum and shouted. At another time he had just named his text when they rushed upon his congregation and threatened to murder him. The windows and furniture were destroyed, yea, everything except the bare walls. Women were beaten and dragged about without mercy. They broke the town clerk's head and then quarrelled among themselves. Two days after, the mob *set on by the parish minister*, fell upon the congregation and *swore* most horribly that they would be revenged on them for taking their people from the church and making such disturbance on the Sabbath. The next day they broke up the service with eggs and stones. At Poole the church warden shouted and hallooed, and put his hat to Charles Wesley's mouth to stop him from preaching. At length the mayor of St. Ives told Mr. Hoblin, *the fire*

and fagot minister, that he would not be perjured to gratify any man's malice." He appointed twenty new constables to suppress the riot.

Soon after this John Wesley, John Nelson and John Downs went to Cornwall; the last two had but one horse, so they rode by turns. The Society of St. Ives increased to about one hundred and twenty. Nelson worked at his trade, as mason, part of the time and preached the other part. He and Wesley slept upon the floor; Wesley had Nelson's top coat for a pillow and Nelson used Burkitt's notes on the New Testament, for his. One morning about three o'clock, after using this hard bed for a fortnight, Wesley turned over and jocosely said: "Brother Nelson, let us be of good cheer, for the skin is off but one side yet."

They were continually preaching, yet it was seldom anyone asked them to eat or drink. Wesley said, "Brother Nelson, we ought to be thankful that there are plenty of blackberries, for this is the best country I ever saw for getting an appetite, but the worst for getting food."

It took much of Wesley's time to visit the Societies that were under his care, in London, Bristol, Newcastle, Kingswood, Staffordshire and Cornwall. In Bristol he spoke to every member of the Society and rejoiced in their spiritual prosperity. He did the same at Kingswood and said,

“I cannot understand how any minister can give up his account with joy unless, as Ignatius says, he knows all his flock by name; not overlooking the men servants and the maid servants. In London the two Wesleys examined the flock from morning till night, and also at Newcastle, till the work was completed. There was now in London 1950 members and before the year 1743 closed they numbered 2200, all gathered in four years.

There was a cry for more chapel room in London, when God provided them a chapel in West street, Sevendials, which was built sixty years ago by the French Protestants, being offered to Wesley, he opened it as a Methodist chapel, on Trinity Sunday. The first service lasted from ten o'clock till three. At five he preached at Great Gardens, then met the leaders, and then the bands. In London he and Charles officiated on Sunday mornings and evenings, read the liturgy and administered the sacraments. The communion services sometimes lasted five hours.

Three months after, Wesley opened another chapel at Snowfields, where the people were very wicked. Wesley thought it a means of grace to visit the people, especially the poor and the sick. Then he appointed as district officers in his church, “visitors of the sick and poor.” Many lives were saved, and much suffering relieved

thereby. The members of the church were to pay, if able, a penny a week, and a shilling a quarter for the support of the cause. Stewards were appointed to receive it. In London, at this time, this money amounted to about £8 per week. In all the societies the income for the year was about £800, out of which all chapel expenses and debts were to be paid, as well as relieving the sick and poor.

Persecution showed itself again in various places. In Newcastle three parish ministers agreed to exclude from the communion all who would not cease to attend Wesley's services. In Cowbridge, when Wesley attempted to preach, the mob shouted, blasphemed, and threw showers of stones. At Bristol a clergyman preached against the *upstart* Methodists. When about to do the same in another church, he fell back against the pulpit door, and before long he expired. He committed the sin unto death. 1 John, 5 : 16. The people of Sheffield were ready to tear the Methodists in pieces. An officer presented his sword at the breast of Charles Wesley. The meeting-house was ruthlessly demolished, while the mob was encouraged by the constable. The press was very abusive, and as virulent as ever; but Jesus stood by his faithful few, and the good

work rolled on in increasing power on every side. God made "the wrath of his enemies to praise him."

It is marvellous how such a busy man should find time to write. The fact is, his publications multiplied all the time. He abridged Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," he wrote "Instructions for Children," "Thoughts on Marriage and Celibacy," "Practical Treatise on Christian Perfection," an abridgement of Wm. Law's book, and "An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion." In this he addressed the clergy as follows: "For what price will you preach eighteen or nineteen times a week, and this throughout the year? What shall I give you to travel seven or eight hundred miles, in all weathers, every two or three months? For what salary will you abstain from all other diversions than the doing good and praising God? I am mistaken if you would not prefer strangling to such a life, even with thousands of gold and silver.

I will now tell you my sense of these matters, whether you will hear or whether you will forbear, food and raiment I have; such food as I choose to eat, and such raiment as I choose to put on; I have a place where to lay my head. I have what is needful for life and godliness. I apprehend this is all the world can afford. The kings of the

earth can give me no more, for as to gold and silver I count it but dross ; I trample it under my feet ; I esteem it just as the mire of the streets ; I desire it not ; I seek it not ; I only fear lest any of it should cleave to me and I should not be able to shake it off before my spirit returns to God. I will take care, God being my helper, that none of the accursed thing shall be found in my tents when the Lord calleth me hence. Hear ye this all ye that have discovered the treasures which I am to leave behind me. If I leave behind me £10 above my debts and my books, or what may happen to be due on account of them, you and all mankind bear witness against me, that I lived and died a thief and a robber."

Within twelve months of his death, he closed his cash book with the following words, written with a tremulous hand : "For eighty-six years I have kept my accounts exactly ; I will not attempt it any longer, being satisfied with the continual conviction that I save all I can, and give all I can ; that is, all I have." Blessed man of God ! would that his followers were more like him ! Dead to the world, and alive unto God.

CHAPTER VII.

THE FIRST CONFERENCE AND WHAT FOLLOWED.

John Nelson was pressed for a soldier, and afterwards put in prison for reproving the profanity of one of the officers. He was released by the influence of Lady Huntingdon, after having been marched about the country for three months. Wesley revolted from such scenes, and writes, "I found a natural wish, O for ease and a resting place! Not yet, but eternity is at hand." Still he plans for more extended labors by writing letters to several clergymen and to his lay preachers to meet him in London and give him "their advice respecting the best method of carrying on the work of God." This was the *first Methodist Conference*. It met in London, June 25, 1744, and was held in the Foundry. Charles Wesley preached the first sermon. This conference was composed of the Wesleys; John Hodges, rector of Wenvo, Wales; Henry Piers, vicar of Buxley, a convert of Charles Wesley; Samuel Taylor, vicar of Quinton; John Meriton, a clergyman of the Isle of

Man ; also of the following laymen, Thomas Maxfield, Thomas Richards, John Bennet and John Downes.

These godly men said, “It is desired that everything be considered as in the presence of God.” The following question was formally proposed : “How far does each agree to submit to the unanimous judgment of the rest?” Mark well the answer, “In speculative things, each can only submit as far as his judgment shall be convinced ; in every practical point, so far as we can without wounding our several consciences.”

Having settled their rules and regulations, the conference adjourned for a season of prayer. After this they considered the great doctrines of *Repentance, Faith, Justification, Sanctification, and the Witness of the Spirit*. These were defined with great precision. No other tenets were discussed only as they related to these. These were the vital doctrines that those early ministers delighted to dwell upon ; they formed *the staple of their preaching*, and were one of the main causes of their success. Questions of discipline were then considered. They decided to obey the bishops of the Episcopal church in all things indifferent, and observe the canons of the church as far as they could with a safe conscience. The lay preachers were to preach so as, 1, To invite ; 2, To con-

vince; 3, To offer Christ; 4, To build up; and do this in some measure in every sermon. In relation to the Episcopal church, they decided as their opinion, "We believe that the Methodists will either be thrust out, or will leaven the whole church." During the session the conference was received at the mansion of Lady Huntingdon. Wesley preached in this mansion from "What hath God wrought?" After this Whitefield preached there, and thus that home became a house of God.

"Can we have a seminary for laborers?" was among the questions considered at this conference, showing that this was deemed important, when possible. "If God spare us till another conference," was the answer. At the next conference they said, "Not till God gives us a tutor." At length the seminary was begun, and now they have three theological institutions in England. And we have three in America, besides about 100 colleges and seminaries. They dispersed on Friday without making any provision for a future session.

Methodism spread with great power in Cornwall. Wesley writes from Gwennap, "Here the little one has become a thousand; what an amazing work has God wrought in one year! The whole country is alarmed and gone after the sound

of the gospel. In vain do the pulpits ring of popery and enthusiasm, but preachers are daily pressed to new places and enabled to preach five or six times a day. Persecution is kept off till the seed takes root. Societies are springing up everywhere. The whole country is sensible of the change." The populace of the town followed Wesley for field preaching, covering all the green plain and hills of the natural amphitheatre of Gwennap. He spoke for three hours, and knew not when to stop. He could hardly get away from them, they were so hungry for the word of life. "The poor people were ready to eat them up, and sent them away with many hearty blessings. Our Lord rides on in triumph through this place."

It is perfectly wonderful what power attended the preaching of the word in these times. Wesley's journals blaze out with flaming records of the lightning power that smote the sinners and made them cry out as though they were dropping into hell. Such cries for mercy and bewailing their sins has seldom been seen among men. Indeed, as I have said elsewhere, I believe the powers of hell were mightily disturbed, yea, that Satan himself possessed some of these sinners, and had to be cast out by the power of the Lord Jesus. Near Bristol, after preaching, a woman came to him saying very abruptly, "I must speak with you,

and will. I have sinned against light and love. I have sinned beyond forgiving. I have been cursing you in my heart, and blaspheming God ever since I came here. I am damned; I know it; I feel it; I am in hell; I have hell in my heart." Wesley invited two or three that had faith in God to join in prayer for her. Immediately that horrid dread was taken away, and she began to see some dawnings of hope.

While Wesley was preaching at Rose Green, a young woman sank down in a violent agony both of body and mind, as did five or six others, in the evening, at whose cries some were greatly offended. The same offence was given in Weaver's Hall by eight or nine others.

All manner of characters came to Wesley. He tells of one as follows: "One came to me by whom I used to profit much. But her conversation was now too high for me; it was far above, out of my sight. My soul is sick of this sublime divinity. Let *me* think and speak as a little child. Let *my* religion be plain, artless, simple. Meekness, temperance, patience, faith and love, be these my highest gifts; and let the highest words wherein I teach them, be those I learn from the book of God!"

At Long Lane, many came to disturb the meeting, and procured a woman to lead the way. The

instant she broke out, Wesley says, "I turned upon her, and declared the love our Lord had for her soul. We then prayed that he would confirm the word of His grace. She was pricked to the heart, and shame covered her face. From her I turned to the rest, who melted away like water, and were as men who had no strength. But surely some of them shall find who is their Rock and their strong salvation."

At another time he treated his opposers with silent contempt. When a company came in to disturb, he went on with his service. No one spoke to them and they soon went away in shame. After preaching at Kennington, where some opposed, he writes, "When I came home I found an innumerable mob round the door, who opened all their throats the moment they saw me. I desired my friends to go into the house, and then walking into the midst of the people, proclaimed 'the name of the Lord, gracious and merciful, and repenting him of the evil.' I told them they could not flee from the face of that great God, and therefore besought them that we might all join together in crying to him for mercy. To this they readily agreed. I then commended them to his grace, and went undisturbed to the little company within."

Wesley makes repeated reference to being healed in body by the prayer of faith, for he evidently

had faith in God for his body as well as his soul. Hear him, "In the evening I explained the 33d chapter of Ezekiel, in applying which I was suddenly seized with such a pain in my side that I could not speak. I knew my remedy, and immediately kneeled down. In a moment the pain was gone, and the voice of the Lord cried aloud to the sinners, 'Why will you die, O house of Israel?'"

At another time he writes, "I was obliged to lie down most of the day, my bodily strength entirely failed; yet in the evening my weakness was suspended, while I was calling sinners to repentance. But at our love feast that followed, beside the pain in my back and head and the fever which still continued upon me, just as I began to pray I was seized with a cough that I could hardly speak. At the same time came strongly into my mind, 'These signs shall follow them that believe.' I called on Jesus aloud to increase my faith and to confirm 'the word of his grace.' While I was speaking, my pain vanished away, the fever left me, my bodily strength returned, and for many weeks I felt neither weakness nor pain; unto thee, O Lord, do I give thanks."

Yet he did not think that all could be healed, for he called on one of his members who was in great pain and drawing near to death. He said

nothing about faith healing, but asked, "Do you faint now you are chastened of him?" She said, "Oh, no, no, no; I faint not, I murmur not; I rejoice evermore." "But can you in everything give thanks?" "Yes, I do, I do." "God will make all your bed in your sickness." She cried out, "He does, he does! I have nothing to desire; he is ever with me, and I have nothing to do but to praise him." She breathed the same spirit of praise and soon after died in peace.

While Wesley loved his enemies and often submitted to many abuses from them, yet, at times, he felt that he must avail himself of the law of the land for his protection. So, when preaching at Long Lane, and the mob were breaking down the house over his head, having spoken to them and they became more violent, he said, "Let three or four calm men take hold of the foremost and charge a constable with him, that the law may take its course." They did so, and brought him into the house, cursing and blaspheming in a dreadful manner. I desired five or six to go with him to Justice Copeland, to whom they nakedly related the fact. He was immediately bound over for trial." Meanwhile Richard Smith, one of their ringleaders, was arrested by the power of the Holy Ghost. God struck him to the heart, also a woman who was speaking words not fit to be

heard or repeated. They both came into the house and fell down before God. Disturbance ceased, and the prosecution was withdrawn.

The work of God rolled on in various parts of Cornwall; in Crowan, Wesley preached to two or three thousand miners who seemed to spring out of the earth. The storm of persecution lulled. Even at St. Ives, where they tore down the church, the saints were at rest and in prosperity, and welcomed him with grateful tears. At Morvah, he found 150 in the Society, and a chapel commenced. Hosts of rioters had become Methodists. He left Cornwall for Wales, where he preached several days. Returning by way of Bristol and Kingswood, and proclaiming the word daily, he came to Oxford, where he preached a profound sermon before the University, as Fellow of the College, upon "Scriptural Christianity." He concluded with a powerful appeal to the University dignitaries. He writes, "I preached, I suppose, for the last time at St. Mary's. Be it so. I am now clear of the blood of these men. I have fully delivered my soul." After this they refused him the right to preach, and paid another to do it. At length he resigned his Fellowship. "Such was the treatment received from the University to which he has given more historical importance than any other graduate of his own or subsequent times."

Now he was fully free to preach the gospel among the poor and build up his Societies that now reached from Land's End to Newcastle. The latter part of the year he spent in the north, amid the trials of an unusual winter—turnpikes unknown and snows deep. He writes, "Many a rough journey have I had before, but one like this I never had, between wind and hail, and ice and snow, and driving sleet and piercing cold; but it is past, those days will return no more, and therefore are as though they had never been."

Mobs broke out in some places. Some of the lay preachers were driven from the field. One was pressed into the army. Another only escaped by running from street to street, and, entering a private house, was locked up in a closet till midnight, and then passed the sentinels and escaped in a female dress. A warrant was got out for John Wesley himself, in Cornwall. He was taken into custody, but they were surprised to find him a regular clergyman and a finished gentleman. They escorted him to his inn, and never called for him again. That night he preached in his favorite place at Gwennap. Three gentlemen rode into the congregation, saying, "Seize him! Seize him for the magistrates!" The people refused, but sang a hymn. One of the horsemen seized Wesley and dragged him away. Finding he was not

dealing with a fanatic, but a gentleman, he carried him back to the congregation.

The next day, at Falmouth, the mob assailed the house where he was. The family escaped, leaving Wesley and a maid to brave the storm. Only a thin partition separated them. Wesley very coolly took down a large looking-glass which hung on the wall. The maid advised him to hide in a closet. But he stood just where he was. When the door was smashed in, Wesley stepped forth among them bareheaded and said, "Here I am. Which of you has anything to say to me? To which of you have I done any wrong? To you? or you? or you? He continued speaking till he reached the middle of the street; there he took his stand and addressed them as his neighbors and fellow-countrymen. Several of the crowd stepped out and said, "He shall speak; yes! yes!" He was conducted to a house, and left the town in a boat.

On and on he travelled and preached amid vile persecution and great trials, through Cornwall and back again into Wales, where he had so much prosperity that he writes, "We are here in a new world, as it were, in peace and honor and abundance; how soon should I melt away in such a sunshine, but the goodness of God suffers it not."

John Nelson had been released from impressment and went forth everywhere preaching the

word, with "a courage and natural adroitness which seldom failed to excite the admiration of the rabble." Some of his hearers fell to the ground and cried out, "Lord save or I perish!" He restored the society at Bristol. He was welcomed to York by converts and friends. His eloquence subdued the crowd at Nottingham Cross. At the close of his sermon, a military man came and begged for mercy. At another place a man rushed into the house where he was preaching and filled his mouth with dirt. He came near choking, but after cleaning his mouth he went on with his sermon.

In the battle of Fontenoy, May 1, 1745, between the French and the English, Clement, one of the Methodist preachers, had his arm broken by a musket ball. They offered to carry him out of battle, but he said "No, I have an arm left to hold my sword; I will not go yet." When another ball broke his other arm, he said, "I am as happy as I can be out of paradise." John Evans, another preacher, having both his legs shot off, was laid across a cannon to die, where, as long as he could speak, he was praising God and exhorting all around him. Haime, another preacher, believed that he should not die that day. After seven hours' hard fighting his horse was killed. An officer cried, "Where is your God now?" "Sir,

he is here with me, and will bring me out of this battle." Presently a cannon ball took off this officer's head. Soon Haime's horse fell upon him. Some one said, "Haime is gone now." He replied, "He is not gone yet." He still walked on, praising God, and was delivered. He says, "Surely I was in the fiery furnace, but it did not singe a hair of my head. The hotter the battle grew the more strength was given me; I was as full of joy as I could contain." He met a fellow-Christian seeking water, and covered with blood, who said, "Brother Haime, I have got a sore wound." "Have you got Christ in your heart?" "I have, and have had him all this day. I have seen many good and glorious days, with much of God, but I never saw more of it than this day. Glory be to God for all his mercies!"

Methodism was introduced into Scotland by some of these pious soldiers. Whitefield met some of them in Scotland three years after this battle, and formed them into a society. Thomas Rankin, one of Wesley's early missionaries to America, formed a society of them at Dunbar, his native town in Scotland. At Musselborough also a society was formed. Wesley found them prospering twelve years after.

During this year, 1744, some of Wesley's people began to profess Christian perfection. He

listened to them with much caution, and wrote, "I was with two persons who believe they are saved from all sin. Be it so or not, why should we not rejoice in the work of God so far as it is unquestionably wrought in them? For instance, I asked John C——, 'Do you always pray? Do you rejoice evermore? Do you in everything give thanks; in loss, in pain, in sickness, weariness, disappointments? Do you desire nothing? Do you fear nothing? Do you feel the love of God continually in your heart? Have you a witness in whatever you speak or do, that it is pleasing to God?' If he can solemnly and deliberately answer in the affirmative, why do I not rejoice and praise God on his behalf? Perhaps, because I have an exceedingly complex idea of sanctification, or a sanctified man. And so, for fear he should not have attained all I include in that idea, I cannot rejoice in what he has attained."

Just before Wesley died he wrote, "Four or five and forty years ago I had no distinct views of what the apostle meant by exhorting us to 'go on to perfection,' but several persons in London that I knew to be truly sincere desired to give me an account of their experience. It appeared exceedingly strange, being different from anything that I had heard before. The next year two or three more persons at Bristol, and several at Kingswood,

gave me exactly the same account of their experience. A few years after, I desired all in London who made the same profession to come to me altogether at the Foundry. I desired that man of God, Thomas Walsh, to give us the meeting there. When we met, first one of us and then another asked them the most searching questions we could devise. They answered every one without hesitation and with the utmost simplicity, so that we were fully persuaded they did not deceive themselves. From 1757 to 1759 their numbers multiplied exceedingly. In London, Bristol, and in various parts of England and of Ireland, I carefully examined most of these myself. In London alone I found 652 members of our society who were exceedingly clear in their experience, and of whose testimony I could see no reason to doubt. I believe no year has passed since that time, wherein God has not wrought the same work in many others, and every one of these, without a single exception, has declared that this deliverance from sin was *instantaneous*; that the change was wrought in a moment. Had half of these, or two-thirds, or one in twenty, declared it was *gradually* wrought in *them*, I should have believed this with regard to *them*, and thought that *some* were gradually sanctified and some instantaneously. But as I have not found in so large a space of

time a single person speaking thus, I cannot but believe that sanctification is commonly, if not always, an *instantaneous* work."

This is very candid, and ought to have weight with all sincere people. The same topic will come up again in these pages.

Wesley was very busy with his pen this year. He published the sermon he preached at Oxford; also an extract from his journal from 1739 to 1741; also rules of the Band Societies. Before joining these bands they must answer affirmatively the following questions: "Have you the forgiveness of sin? Peace with God? The witness of the Spirit? Is the love of God shed abroad in your heart? Has no sin dominion over you? Do you desire to be told your faults? Do you desire we should tell you whatsoever we think, fear, or hear concerning you? Is it your desire and design on this and all other occasions to speak everything that is in your heart without exception, without disguise, and without reserve?"

It seems to me that all will agree in these days a number of these rules were neither wise nor profitable. No wonder they have passed out of use, for while we should watch over one another for our good, we should hardly find time to stop and tell all our thoughts or fears, or hearsays concerning each other. Yet, no doubt, these bands

accomplished much good. Another of Wesley's publications was "Modern Christianity Exemplified at Wednesbury and other adjacent places." It closes with the following remarkable prayer:—

"Lo, I come, if this soul and body may be useful to anything, to do thy will, O God. If it please thee to use the power thou hast over dust and ashes, here they are to suffer thy good pleasure. If thou pleasest to visit me with pain or dishonor, I will humble myself under it, and through thy grace be obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Hereafter no man can take anything away from me; no life, no honor, no estate; since I am ready to lay them down so soon as I perceive thou requirest them at my hands. Nevertheless, O Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me; but if not, thy will be done."

This is, indeed, the prayer of entire consecration of body, soul, spirit, estate and all to God for his service and for his glory. Such a consecration as this makes faith the easiest act of the soul. It leads to the very faith that brings the fulness of God into the soul of man. Who would say that Mr. Wesley lacked entire consecration or entire sanctification?

Wesley wrote or published many other books this year that I have not time or space to mention,

except "The Distinguishing Marks of a Work of the Spirit of God. Extracted from Rev. Jonathan Edwards' book, of Northampton in New England."

Tyreman justly observes, "By publishing this calm, pointed, argumentive treatise, Wesley made its sentiments his own, and from it the reader may easily infer what were Mr. Wesley's opinions respecting the religious revival with which he and his cotemporaries were connected.

This marvellous revival, that spread all over the greater part of the colony of Massachusetts, commenced under the labors of Jonathan Edwards, in Northampton, a few months before John Wesley set sail for Georgia. Men literally cried for mercy. There were groanings and faintings; transports and ecstasies; zeal often more fervid than discreet. "Oft-times the people were wrought up into the highest transports of love, joy and admiration, and had such views of the divine perfections and the excellences of Christ, that for five or six hours together their souls reposed in a kind of heavenly elysium, until the body seemed to sink beneath the weight of divine discoveries and nature was deprived of all ability to stand or speak." Dr. Edwards said, "The New Jerusalem, in this respect, had begun to come down from heaven, and perhaps never were more of the predilections of heaven's glory given upon earth."

John Wesley observes wisely, "It is no sign that the work is not divine because it is carried on in a very unusual and extraordinary manner. The Holy Spirit is sovereign in his operations. We ought not to limit God when he has not limited himself. Neither is a work to be judged by any effects on the bodies of men, such as tears, trembling, groans, outcries, agonies or faintings; for there is reason to believe that great outpourings of the Spirit, both in the prophetic and apostolic ages, were not wholly without these extraordinary effects. The same is true respecting religious commotion among the people, for this is the natural result of such a work. Further, though many of the converts may be guilty of many imprudencies and irregularities, neither is this the sign that the work is not of God. It was so in the apostolic churches, and this is not likely to cease while weakness is one of the elements of human character. There may be errors of judgment and some delusions of Satan intermixed with the revival, but that is not conclusive evidence that the work in general is not the work of the Holy Spirit. The work may be promoted by ministers strongly preaching the terrors of the law, but what of that? If there really be a hell of dreadful and never-ending torments, ought not those exposed to it to be earnestly warned of their fearful danger? For

ministers to preach of hell, and warn sinners to avoid it in a cold, careless, hesitating manner, is to contradict themselves and to defeat their own purposes. The manner in which the thing is said is, in such a case, more effectual than the words employed. It may be unreasonable to think of frightening a man to heaven, but it is not unreasonable to endeavor to frighten him away from hell."

Wesley in his "Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion," who were in doubt whether this revival in England was of God, said, "You have all the proof of this you can reasonably expect or desire. That, in many places, abundance of notorious sinners are totally reformed. What would you have more? What pretence can you have for doubting any longer?"

CHAPTER VIII.

WESLEY IN HIS VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR
AND SUCCESS.

All manner of controversies sprang up among the people, but John Wesley held on his way and contended earnestly for the truth as it is in Jesus. Mr. Church said he was an enthusiast in the highest degree. He replied, "I am no more like Mr. Church's picture of an enthusiast than he is like a centaur. I make the word of God the rule of my life, and no more follow any secret impulse instead thereof, than I follow Mohammed or Confucius. I rest not on ecstasies at all, for I never feel them. I judge of my spiritual state by the improvement of my heart and the tenor of my life conjointly. I desire neither my dreams or my waking thoughts to be at all regarded, unless so far as they agree with the oracles of God."

To his antinomian friend he wrote, "All that is really uncommon in your doctrine is a heap of absurdities, in most of which you grossly contradict yourselves as well as Scripture and common sense. In the meantime you boast and vapor as

if you were the men and wisdom should die with you. I pray God to humble you and show you all that is in your hearts." With the antinomians, preaching the law was an abomination. They would preach Christ in their peculiar way, but without one word either of holiness or good works.

Wesley drafted rules for the stewards of his Societies as follows: "You are to be men full of the Holy Ghost and of wisdom, that you may do all things in a manner acceptable to God. You are continually to pray and endeavor that a holy harmony of soul may in all things subsist among you, that in every stage you may keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace."

Wesley did a vast amount of good for the world by abridging many useful books so that the masses may read them. If he had copied all these books it would have taken much time, but he had a faculty of condensing them by drawing his pen across whatever he would have left out, and the rest was printed.

One day as Wesley was riding along he overtook a serious-minded man with whom he conversed, who soon told him what his opinions were, therefore he said nothing to contradict. Wesley avoided stating his own opinions, but at length was drawn into a controversy. The man raved and said, "You are rotten at heart. I expect you

are one of John Wesley's followers." He replied, "No, I am not one of his followers, I am John Wesley himself." The poor man seemed like a man who had trodden upon a snake, and would have run away, but Wesley being on the best horse kept up with him and tried to show him his heart.

These were days of trouble in England. Charles Stuart attempted to regain the throne of England for his family. He had taken Edinburg and threatened England with invasion. The liberties of England and the Protestant faith were in danger. Day after day the news was alarming. Newcastle was in danger; the people were placed under arms; the walls were fortified and the gates blocked up. Many were alarmed for the Methodist chapel and society. But God was a wall of fire to them. Wesley preached day and night, and encouraged the loyalty of the people. He preached on wrestling Jacob, and the power of God fell upon the people. The people were greatly moved and cried mightily to God to deliver his majesty King George and spare a sinful land a little longer.

Of the general effect of the Methodist labors, Wesley wrote, "The grace of God that bringeth salvation, present salvation, from inward and outward sin, hath abounded of late years in such a

degree as neither we nor our fathers had known. How extensive is this change which has been wrought in the minds and lives of the people! Know ye not that the sound is gone forth into all the land; that there is scarcely a city or considerable town to be found where some have not been roused out of the sleep of death. No stress has been laid upon anything as necessary to salvation but what is undeniably contained in the word of God. They contend for nothing trifling as if it was important, for nothing indifferent as if it were necessary, but for everything in its own order."

This shows the genius of Methodism, and that none may say that Wesley was illiberal, he added, "If you say 'Because you hold opinions which I cannot believe are true,' I answer, believe them true or false, I will not quarrel with you about any opinion, only see that your heart be right toward God. Give me an humble, gentle love of God and man, a man full of mercy and good fruits."

None of the lay preachers had a purer spirit or a stronger body than John Nelson. He was a kind of a king among them, and was intensely hated and violently persecuted. He was a stonemason by trade, as we have said. He labored with good success in Bristol, and in Somersetshire and Wiltshire. No man had such success in mas-

tering hostilities. At Harborough he was assailed by nearly the whole town, men, women and children, who had determined to hang the first Methodist minister that came to their town. A son of a parish clergyman was the leader of the mob. A partially insane man was to put the rope round Nelson's neck, and a butcher stood ready to drag him to the river to drown. But while Nelson continued to preach they could not break the spell of his eloquence. So they took six large hand-bells to drown his voice. When the madman came up to put on the rope, Nelson pushed it aside, and the maniac fell as though he had been knocked down with an axe. The butcher stood trembling with awe, and dared not touch him. A constable turned pale and led the minister away and helped him to mount his horse, and bade him go in the name of the Lord. Nelson exclaimed, "Oh, my God, hitherto thou hast helped me!"

Wesley and Nelson took sweet counsel together, reviewing the mercies of God and preparing for new labors, trials and triumphs. Wesley went on preaching to an immense crowd at Bristol, Nelson's home, also at Manchester, where Nelson preached with power the first Methodist sermon about two years before. Then he went to Plymouth, where the mob assailed him again. The soldiers and rabble greeted him with huzzas. He

rode into the midst of them, and conquered them as usual. He took the lieutenant by the hand and subdued him by a few words. "Sir," exclaimed the soldier, "no man shall touch you; I will see you safe home. Stand off! Give back! I will knock the first man down that touches him," and led him safe to his lodgings. The next day he preached on the common to a well-behaved congregation.

Wesley continued his labors in Cornwall, Bristol and Wales, and then in Ireland. The word of God had free course and prevailed. Even in Wednesbury, in the "Black Country," he preached to vast congregations. At Epworth, the crowd was so great that Wesley had to preach in the open air at the Cross; "almost the whole town was there."

Wesley barely escaped with his life from Barrowford, and in many places he was shamefully treated; but the word of the Lord was not bound. The Holy Ghost accompanied the word, and "signs and wonders were wrought in the name of the Holy Child Jesus." Amid all the strife and labor, Wesley and his fellow-laborers had many sources of consolation. They had established their cause throughout the land. God, through their preaching, had changed the face of the communities in many places. Yea, the moral aspect of the nation

was changed, for multitudes of the degraded population had been raised into *civilized and religious life*. “Tens of thousands had been rescued from virtual heathenism.” Many marvelled at the *instantaneous* changes that were wrought upon the hearts and lives of the people. Southey is quite in earnest to criticise the suddenness of the wonders. But he seemed to forget that “one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.” “He that believeth shall be saved,” and “He that believeth hath the witness in himself.” “O ye of little faith,” God’s arm is not shortened. “Only believe.” “All things are possible to him that believeth.” And are possible *the moment* he believes.

Still these evangelists went on and made good their apostolic boast, for “the hand of the Lord was with them.” They often began their services at five o’clock in the morning in winter or summer, and travelled, mostly on horseback, at a rate that would more than circumnavigate the earth every five years. Charles Wesley was constantly composing those spiritual hymns that delight the Christian world to-day. He published several volumes of poems. John Wesley, though almost always on a journey, yet declared that few men enjoyed more solitude than he. He was constantly reading as he journeyed, not only books

on theology, but also of history, antiquities, and the classic poets. He was also exceedingly fruitful with his pen. He wrote books enough to keep some men busy for a lifetime. He assures us that ten thousand cares were no more inconvenience to him than so many hairs on his head, and his continual changing intercourse with families on his route have become to them a welcome occasion, not only of religious instruction but of religious cheerfulness. A cotemporary of twenty years testifies that "Wesley's countenance as well as conversation expressed an habitual gayety of heart, which nothing but conscious virtue and innocence could have bestowed; that he was in truth the most perfect specimen of moral happiness he had ever seen, and that his acquaintance with him taught him better than anything else he had seen, or heard, or read, except in the sacred volume, what a heaven upon earth is implied in the maturity of Christian piety. He was the presiding mind of dinner parties, as well by the good humor as the good sense of his conversation."

The tens of thousands of converts, many of them from the lowly walks of life, would naturally seek for religious reading, and this felt want opened the way for Methodism to start and foster the publication of a variety of religious books. Indeed there was an indefinite market for the writings of John Wesley.

Wesley gave away \$150,000 in the course of his life. At the same time he cut down his expenses to the lowest point, and when the commissioners of excise sent out circulars demanding the families to give an account of their taxable plate, and addressed him a letter saying, "We cannot doubt but you have plate for which you have hitherto neglected to make an entry," he simply replied, "I have two silver spoons at London, and two at Bristol; this is all the plate I have at present, and I shall not buy any more while so many around me want bread."

He was a good example of systematic benevolence. He remarked in early life that he had known but four men who had not declined in religion by becoming wealthy. Later in life he corrected the remark and made no exception. Therefore he guarded scrupulously against this danger by giving away all he had except enough to carry on his business and meet his actual necessities.

Watch-nights became common in these days. They began with some Kingswood colliers who had been used to spend their Saturday nights in sin. When they were converted they left the taverns and spent their time at the chapels, even to the midnight hour. Wesley was advised to put an end to this, but upon consideration he could see no reason for doing so. After years of expe-

rience he wrote, "Exceeding great are the blessings we have found therein. It has generally been an exceedingly solemn season." For a time watch-nights were held monthly.

As the Societies increased, the lay preachers were more and more called for, and questions came up time after time in the conferences respecting them. "How shall we try those who trust they are moved by the Holy Ghost and called of God to preach? First, do they know God as a pardoning God? Have they the love of God abiding in them? Do they desire and seek nothing but God? Are they holy in all manner of conversation? Second, have they gifts as well as grace for the work? Have they, in some tolerable degree, a clear, sound understanding? Have they a just conception of salvation by faith? and has God given them any degree of utterance? Do they speak justly, readily, clearly? Third, have they fruit? Are any truly convinced of sin, and converted to God by their preaching?" "As long as these three marks concur in any one, we believe" affirmed the conference, "that he is called of God to preach. These we receive as a sufficient proof that he is moved thereto by the Holy Ghost."

When Wesley met his ministers in conference it was their first question how they should render

the conference eminently an occasion of prayer, watching and self-denial ; always to set God before them, and spend the time between the sessions in devotions and in visiting the sick.

The doctrine of entire sanctification they asserted without reserve, but with important cautions against its imprudent treatment in the pulpit or out. Would it be wise to testify of this great grace if we had it? “Not to them that know not God ; it would only provoke them to contradict or blaspheme ; nor to any without some particular reason, then they should avoid all appearance of boasting, and to speak more loudly and convincingly by their lives than by their tongues.”

The whole country was mapped out into seven itinerant districts. Wales and Cornwall each constituted one. This was the first intimation of definite circuits, though some suppose that they existed before. This work went on till John Wesley claimed the whole world as his parish. The conference agreed to obey the rules and governors of the Church whenever they could consistently, with the will of God, when ever they could not they would quietly obey God. For a long time Wesley was careful to avoid anything like a separation from the Church. His members, in general, went there for the sacrament.

Already Methodism had accomplished wonders in the world. Wonderful revivals had spread all over the United Kingdom, and along the Atlantic coast of America; the latter, mainly through the labors of George Whitefield. The Churches in both countries had been greatly quickened. Lay preaching had been established, and hundreds of Societies had been formed.

England, Wales and Ireland, were divided into circuits and supplied with systematic preaching by a ministerial force of about seventy men. It had fought its way through the bitterest opposition of earth and hell. It had chapels, and meeting-houses, and parsonages. It had brought to the front in preaching and in experience the leading doctrines of the Bible, Repentance, Conversion, the witness of the Spirit, and entire sanctification.

“It had provided the first of a series of Academic institutions, which has since extended with its progress, and was contemplating a place of ministerial education, which has since been accomplished.”

All this great work was accomplished under the leadership of John Wesley, who stands before the ages as one of the mighty men of God, of whom Macauley writes, “John Wesley was a man whose eloquence and logical acuteness might have rendered him eminent in literature; whose genius for

government was not inferior to Richeleiu, who devoted all his powers to the highest good of his species." And whom Burkle styles, "The first of theological statesman."

The modern apostle could not endure all the hardships and exposures without feeling their effect upon his body. In Nov. 1753, he was near the gates of death with consumption, in the fifty-first year of his age. He had taken one cold after another, and had labored when he was extremely weak. He had a settled pain in his left breast, a violent cough and a slow fever. In the night he was obliged to jump out of bed with cramp, and continued walking up and down the room, though it was a sharp frost. Still he preached the next day. The doctor ordered him to seek the country air, rest, drink asses' milk, and ride every day. Not knowing but he may die, he says, "to prevent a 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 were paid,
ten pounds behind him.

Praying:

'God be merciful to me a sinner.'"

If he died, this inscription was to be placed upon his tombstone. Two days afterwards he writes, "I found no change for the better. The medicines that had helped me before now took no effect. About noon, the time that some of our brethren had set apart to join in prayer, a thought came into my mind to make an experiment. So I ordered some stone brimstone to be powdered, mixed with the white of an egg, and spread on brown paper, which I applied to my side. The pain ceased in five minutes, the fever left in half an hour, and from this hour I began to recover strength. The next day I was able to ride, which I continued to do every day till January 1. Nor did the weather hinder me once."

January 4, he was at Bristol, drinking the water of the Hot well and lodging near by. In two days he began to write "Notes on the New Testament," "A work," he says, "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. I went on in a regular method, rising at my hour, and writing from five to nine at night, except the time of riding, half an hour for each meal, and the hour between five and six in the evening."

So that God who added fifteen years to the life of Hezekiah, in answer to prayer, added thirty-

seven years to the life of John Wesley, years that were full of intense usefulness to that and to all succeeding generations. And, please observe, that when he was too weak to travel and preach, he filled up his life in writing books.

CHAPTER IX.

WESLEY IN HIS MARRIED LIFE.

Wesley was intensely active, ever on the wing, instant in season and out of season. Speaking to all he met about eternal things. On the land or on the sea, determined not to miss an appointment. Pushing on through storm and flood, even when the roads were washed out and travelling was dangerous. Sometimes on horseback, sometimes on foot, sometimes on horseback behind another man. He felt that he must go, and continue to go all seasons of the year, and to all the ends of his great parish, even when he married a wife he was true to his conviction of duty, namely, "That a minister could not give an account to God who failed to preach just as many sermons after he was married as before."

And now we must consider the life of Wesley under the most severe trials that men are called to endure. For more than forty years he was unmarried. Charles advised him not to marry, because he thought his brother was able to do more good in a single life. For a long time John

Wesley was in great sympathy with Grace Murray. She had travelled and labored with him, and was in some respects worthy of his hand and heart. But after she had promised to marry him, in his absence, she was persuaded by Charles Wesley to marry John Bennet, who was one of Wesley's workers. John Wesley was *severely tried*, but, with the patience of a saint, and with the coolness of a philosopher, he bore up under his great disappointment, and went on with his great life work.

The true piety and manhood of John Wesley are manifest in this trial, when, after this great disappointment, he was introduced to Mr. Bennet he did not upbraid him, but kissed him. Still he was deeply afflicted, as the following letter shows, written to Mr. Bigg. "MY DEAR BROTHER:— Since I was six years old I never met with so severe a trial as for the past few days. For ten years God has been preparing a fellow-laborer for me, by a wonderful train of providences. Last year I was convinced of it, therefore, I delayed not, but, thought I had 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 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 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 irrevocable 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."

Tyerman gives an elaborate account and sums up his judgment as follows: "John Wesley was a dupe, Grace Murray was a flirt, John Bennet was a cheat, and Charles Wesley was a sincere but irritated and impetuous and officious friend." It seems to me that this was one of the greatest deliverances that God wrought out for John Wesley. It is a wonder unto many what would have been the consequences upon Wesley, his ministers and his societies, if he had married this woman, toward whom many were prejudiced, and others considered her unfit for Wesley's wife; and some blame him for letting her travel with him.

We would naturally suppose that after such a *fiery trial* Wesley would have to take a week or

two to rest. But he showed that his fortitude was one of his greatest virtues, for the very next day he preached once at Bristol and twice at Leeds. Then he spent eight days at Newcastle, when there was a glorious outpouring of the Holy Spirit. He writes, "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." Surely this is perfect love. It is the charity that "suffereth long and is kind."

Some would suppose that Wesley would not try to marry again after this, but this is not so, for Feb. 18, 1751, about sixteen months after this trial, Wesley was married to Mrs. Vazel, a widow lady of great fortune, consisting of £10,000 wholly secured to herself and four children.

Two weeks before, he told Charles that he resolved to marry. Charles was thunderstruck. Wesley writes to his friend Mr. Perronet, "I am clearly persuaded that I ought to marry. For many years I remained single, because I believed I could be more useful in that state. And I praise God who enabled me to do so. I now as fully believe that, in my present circumstances, I might be more useful in a married state." Four days after this he met the single men of the London soci-

ety and showed them how, on 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."

He was intending to journey to the north, but slipped on London bridge and lamed himself. He then went to Mrs. Vazel's, on Threadneedle street, and spent seven days in prayer, reading and *conversation*, and writing a Hebrew grammar and Lessons for children. The next Sunday he was carried to the Foundry and preached while kneeling. The next day, lame as he was, he led Mrs. Vazel, a widow, seven years younger than himself, to the hymeneal altar, still unable to put his foot to the ground, but he preached the next evening, and also the next morning.

In two weeks, while still unable to walk, he started to Bristol, leaving his bride at home. After holding his conference in that city, he returned to London, and six days after set out for Scotland.

Many estimates are put upon the character of Mrs. Wesley. Henry Moore says, "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 address-

ing them concerning their true interests." Richard Watson says, "she was a woman of cultivated understanding, and she appeared to Mr. Wesley to possess every other qualification, which promised to increase both his usefulness and his happiness." Thomas Jackson says, "Neither in understanding nor in education was she worthy of the eminent man to whom she was united." Hampson says, "The connection was unfortunate, there never was a more preposterous union." Tyerman says "It was one of the greatest blunders he ever made. His marriage was ill-advised and ill-assorted. They married in haste and had leisure to repent. To the end of life both of them suffered a serious penalty."

Mrs. Wesley's money soon became a trouble. Wesley writes, "She has many trials, but not one more than God knows to be profitable to her." She went with her husband, and she and her daughter endured the trials of a long journey to the north, yea, for about four years she was, in general, his travelling companion. But in the fall of that year there was a change. In Nov., 1752, Vincent Perronit 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."

Adam Clarke advised the ministers to marry women of *good natural disposition*, so that if they ever get low in religion they would have this good nature to fall back upon. Alas, Mrs. Wesley was not of this kind, for she had been petted by her former husband, and manifested a most unholy temper toward Mr. Wesley.

In the latter part of the year 1755, Wesley went to Cornwall without her, and while there sent a packet of letters to Charles Perronit, which came into the hands of a jealous wife. She opened the packet and found a few lines directed to Mrs. Lefevre. She fell into a furious passion which led to many future storms.

Wesley refers to his trials in the following to Sarah Ryan : "Your last letter was seasonable indeed. I was growing faint in mind. The being continually watched over for evil, the having every word I spoke, every action I did, 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.’”

If, after months or years of such unkind treatment, he would return the kindest words that he could devise, he must have had Christian Perfection, and was a noble exponent of it.

She left him for awhile, but they were again united; but in heart she seemed to hate him, for at one time she seized his letters and other papers, and put them into the hands of his enemies, that they might be printed as presumptive proofs of illicit connections. Then she interpolated letters that 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. Frequently she would drive a hundred miles to observe who was in the carriage with her husband when he drove into a town. More than once she laid violent hands upon his person, and tore his hair. John Hampson says, “Once when I was in the north of Ireland, I went into a room, and found Mrs. Wesley foaming with rage. 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 out by the roots. I felt as though I could have knocked the soul out of her."

Southey says, "Fain would she have made him, like Marc Anthony, 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."

In the midst of all this, Wesley 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 will probably be. He has suffered you to be defrauded of much money. He has chastened you with strong pain. Are you more humble, more gentle, more patient, more placable than you were? I fear quite the reverse. Oh! 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* to do so, under the poor pretense of vindicating your own character, who, I say, after all these provocations, is still willing to forgive you all, to overlook what is passed, 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 for my money, that, being disappointed, you were almost always out of humor, 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 by gentle sway, and show that I do indeed love you, even as Christ the Church."

A man who could write such a loving, manly, noble letter to such an abusive and unworthy wife, surely was in possession of perfect love. Yet this letter failed to do her good, for he wrote Jan. 3, 1771, "For what cause I know not, my wife set out for Newcastle purposing 'never to return.' *Non eam; non dimisi; non revocabo;*" which means, I did not forsake her; I did not dismiss her; I will not recall her.

In May of the next year she returned with him to Bristol, but did not remain. After tingeing and damaging the life of John Wesley for thirty years, she died at the age of seventy-one, Oct. 8, 1781. Wesley was in the west of England at the time. She left her reduced fortune to her

son ; to her husband she left only a ring. Wesley was not informed of her burial till a day or two afterward.

Charles Wesley was intimate with the family, and he declares that nothing could surpass his brother's patience in bearing with his perverse and peevish spouse. Tyerman says, "She was evidently a woman of no education, beyond the ability to read and write ;" he adds, "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 seems to be a charitable way to excuse, in a measure, the madness that came from an unholy and frequently indulged evil temper. No doubt God watched over the whole, for Wesley repeatedly told 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 sought too much to please her according to her own views. Let the dead bury the dead, we must go on with the history of one of the greatest men of his age, who was so great that even thirty years of married misery could not swerve him from his

life's great work. Some one has well said, "It is no mean proof of the genuine greatness of his character, that during the thirty years of this domestic wretchedness his public career never wavered, nor appeared to lose one jot of its amazing energy."

Wesley demonstrated his faith in God under these trials, when Charles Wesley urged him to stop the circulation of Mrs. Wesley's forged or interpolated letters and defend his character as a minister before the world. He replied: "Brother, when I devoted to God my ease, my time, my life, did I except my reputation? No! Tell Sally I will take her to Canterbury to-morrow." Wesley went on his way, and God took care of his reputation and of those who tried to destroy it.

CHAPTER X.

WESLEY AS A PREACHER.

John Wesley was pre-eminently a preacher. For more than sixty years he preached the gospel. He is supposed to have travelled 225,000 miles, and to have preached twice a day for about sixty years; and, if so, he must have preached more than 43,000 times. Of course, all these sermons were not elaborate or profound, but many of them were both elaborate and profound. Many of them were preached to small congregations, at five o'clock in the morning, but many of them were preached to large congregations as at Gwen-
nap, where he sometimes preached to fifteen thousand people. Some of them were short sermons, but some of them were long sermons. There were times when he had such a hold on the congregations that he held them spellbound for two or three hours. Hampson, who often heard him preach, says, "His attitude in the pulpit was graceful and easy; his action calm and natural, yet pleasing and expressive; his voice not loud,

but clear and manly; his style neat, simple, perspicuous, and admirably adapted to the capacity of his hearers. His discourses, in point of composition, were extremely different on different occasions. We have frequently heard him when he was excellent, acute and ingenious in his observations, accurate in his descriptions, and clear and pointed in his expositions. Not seldom have we found him the reverse. He preached too frequently, and the consequence was inevitable. On some occasions the man of sense and learning was totally obscured. He became flat and insipid. He often appeared in the pulpit when totally exhausted with labor and want of rest; for, wherever he was, he made it a point to preach if he could stand upon his legs. He was often logical and convincing, and sometimes descriptive; but he never soared in sublimity, or descended into the pathetic. His style was the calm, easy flow of the placid stream, gliding gently within its banks, without the least ruffle or agitation upon its surface."

Whitehead says, "Wesley's style was marked with brevity and perspicuity. He never lost sight of the rule laid down by Horace —

'Concise your diction, let your sense be clear,
Not with a weight of words fatigue the ear.'

His words were pure, proper to the subject, and precise in their meaning."

Dr. Rigg, in his "Living Wesley," says, "He was, in simple truth, the most awakening and spiritually penetrative and powerful preacher of his age. Whitefield was more dramatic, but less intense; more pictorial, but less close and forcible; less incisive and conclusive. In Wesley's calmer discourses, lucid and engaging exposition laid the basis for close and searching application. In his more intense utterances, logic and passion were fused into a white heat of mingled argument, denunciation and appeal, often of the most personal searchingness, often overwhelming in its vehement home-thrusts. Some idea of his most earnest preaching may be gained from his 'Appeals to Men of Reason and Religion,' especially the latter portion of the first of these, and from his celebrated sermon on 'Free Grace.'"

A careful reader of Wesley's journals will not fail to find many examples of the great power that God gave John Wesley over the hearts and minds of the masses to whom he preached from time to time. Oct. 7, 1739, he writes, "Between five and six I called upon all that were present, about three thousand, at Stemley, on a little green near the town, to accept Christ as their only 'wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption.' I was strengthened to speak as I never did before, and continued speaking nearly two hours, the

darkness of the night and the little lightning not lessening the number, but increasing the seriousness of the hearers." Yet this was the fourth sermon that he preached that day. Even after this long sermon he held another service, in which he expounded Christ's Sermon on the Mount to a small, serious company at Ebley. Again, at Cardiff, his heart was so enlarged while preaching that he knew not how to give over, so that they continued the service for three hours. He preached on his father's tombstone for nearly three hours. At Bristol, on the anniversary of his conversion, he says, "I was constrained to continue the discourse *near an hour longer than usual*. God poured out such a blessing that he knew not how to leave off. At Limerick, he began to preach at five, and kept the congregation till near seven, "hardly knowing how the time went."

The venerable Rev. Thomas Jackson says, "No man was accustomed to address larger multitudes or with greater success, and it may be fairly questioned whether any minister in modern ages has been instrumental in effecting a greater number of conversions. He possessed all the essential elements of a great preacher, and in nothing was he inferior to his eminent friend and cotemporary, George Whitefield, except in voice and manner. In respect of matter, language and arrangement,

his sermons were vastly superior to those of Mr. Whitefield. Those who judge Wesley's ministry from the sermons which he preached and published in the decline of life, greatly mistake his real character. Till he was enfeebled by age, his discourses were not at all remarkable for their brevity. They were often extended to a considerable length. Wesley, the preacher, was tethered by no lines of written preparation and verbal recollection; he spoke with extraordinary power of utterance out of the fulness of his heart."

The eternal God who raised him up for this great work gave him a power in preaching that ordinary preachers do not possess. In the midst of a mob he called "for a chair;" the winds were hushed and all was calm and still; my heart was filled with love, my eyes with tears and my mouth with arguments. They were amazed; they were ashamed; they were melted down; they devoured every word.

This shows that he had a wonderful power over the people. "His words flowed in a direct, steady, powerful, sometimes a rapid stream, and every word told, because every word had its proper meaning. With all the fulness of utterance, the genuine eloquence, there was no tautology, no diffuseness of style, no dilution, close, logical, high verbal, adequate, philosophic culture had in

the case of Wesley, laid the basis of clear, vivid, direct and copious extempore powers of speech, culture and discipline, such as had prepared Cicero for his oratorical successes, helped to make Wesley the powerful, persuasive, and, at times, the thrilling and electrifying preacher which he undoubtedly was.

Think of this powerful preacher proclaiming the truth for eight evenings in succession, to vast multitudes, at Epworth, having been shut out of his father's church, he took his stand on his father's tomb, and with the inspiration of the Almighty, he proclaimed the gospel of Christ. The power of God attended the word, the Holy Ghost fell upon the people. He writes, "While I was speaking, several dropped down as dead; and among the rest such a cry was heard, of sinners groaning for the righteousness of faith, as almost drowned my voice. I observed a gentleman there who was remarkable for not pretending to be of any religion at all. I was informed that he had not been at public worship for upward of thirty years. Seeing him stand as motionless as a statue, I asked him abruptly, 'Sir, are you a sinner?' He replied with deep and broken voice, 'Sinner enough;' and continued staring upward till his wife and a servant or two, *who were all in tears*, put him into the chaise and carried him home." Here the power of God and of man was displayed.

Let us take a look at the person of this distinguished preacher as he stood in the pulpit. Mr. Hampson, an eye witness, says, "The figure of Mr. Wesley was remarkable. His stature was of the lowest; his habit of body in every period of life, the reverse of corpulent, and expressive of strict temperance and continued exercise; his step was firm, and his appearance till within a few years of his death, vigorous and muscular. His face, for an old man, was one of the finest we have seen. A clear smooth forehead, an aquiline nose, an eye the brightest and the most piercing that can be conceived, and a freshness of complexion scarcely ever to be found at his years, and impressive of most perfect health, conspired to render him a venerable and interesting figure. In his countenance and demeanor, there was a cheerfulness mingled with gravity; and a sprightliness which was the natural result of an unusual flow of spirits, and yet was accompanied with every mark of the most serene tranquility. His aspect, particularly in profile, had a strong character of acuteness of penetration.

In dress he was a pattern of neatness and simplicity. A narrow plaited stock or necktie, a coat with small upright collar, no buckles at the knees, no silk or velvet on any part of his apparel, and a head as white as snow gave an idea of something

primitive and apostolical ; while an air of neatness and cleanliness was diffused over his whole person."

Wesley was both a fearless and a faithful preacher. He was not afraid to declare the whole council of God whether men would bear or whether they would forbear. He could stand up and say "I call heaven and earth to witness this day. The trumpet has not given an uncertain sound for nearly fifty years last past. O God, thou knowest I have borne a clear and a faithful testimony ! In print, in preaching, in meeting the society, I have not shunned to declare the whole council of God ; I am therefore clear of the blood of those who will not hear. It lies upon their own heads."

He was not afraid to preach as plainly as the Lord Jesus, and warn men to flee from the wrath to come. He just as firmly believed in hell as in heaven, and was quite sure that his hearers must spend their eternity in heaven or in hell. He declared at one time "Mine and your desert is hell, and it is mercy, free, undeserved mercy, that we are not now in unquenchable fire." The natural man lies in the valley of the shadow of death. He sees not that he stands on the edge of the pit, therefore he fears it not ; he has not understanding enough to fear." At another time he said, "Art *thou* thoroughly convinced that thou deservest everlasting damnation ? Would God do thee any

wrong if he commanded the earth to open and swallow thee up?—if thou wert to go down into the pit, into the fire that never shall be quenched.” At another time he said, “To say that ye cannot be born again, that there is no new birth but in baptism, is to seal your own damnation, to consign you to hell, without help, without hope. Thousands do really believe that they have found *a broad way which leadeth not to destruction.*” He preached as though he saw men on the brink of ruin. He sought to tear away the false hopes of his hearers as follows: “If you had done no harm to any man, if you had abstained from all wilful sin; if you had done all the good you could to all men, and constantly attended all the ordinances of God, all this will not keep you from hell, except ye be born again.”

Mr. Hampson has told us of Wesley’s head being “white as snow;” this was in the later part of his life. The celebrated Kinnicutt heard Wesley preach his last sermon before his University, in 1744, when Wesley was thirty-seven years of age. He says “His black hair, quite smooth and parted very exactly, added to a peculiar composure in his countenance, showed him to be an uncommon man. I think his discourse as to style and delivery, would have been uncommonly pleasing to others as well as to myself. He is allowed to be a man of great parts.”

The poet Cowper writes of Wesley in language that cannot be mistaken, as follows :—

“ Who, when occasion justified its use,
Had wit as bright, as ready to produce.
Could fetch the records from earlier age,
Or from philosophy’s enlightened page,
His rich materials, and regale your ear
With strains it was a privilege to hear.
Yet, above all, his luxury supreme,
And his chief glory was the gospel theme :
There he was copious as old Greece or Rome,
His happy eloquence seemed there at home ;
Ambitious not to shine or to excel,
But to treat justly what he loved so well.”

Dr. Rigg says, “In regard to Wesley in his early Oxford days, calm, serene, methodical as Wesley was, there was a deep, steadfast fire of earnest purpose about him ; and notwithstanding the smallness of his stature, there was an elevation of character and of bearing visible to all with whom he had intercourse, which gave him a wonderful power of command, however quiet were his words, and however placid his deportment. But the extraordinary power of his preaching, while it owed something, no doubt, to this tone and presence of calm, unconscious authority, was due mainly, essentially, to the searching and *importunate closeness and fidelity with which he dealt with the consciences of his hearers*, and the passionate vehemence with which he urged and

entreated them to turn to Christ and be saved. His words went with a sudden and startling shock straight home into the core of the guilty sinner's consciousness and heart."

No wonder they often fell down before God, smitten by the sword of the Spirit, crying out in the bitterness of their soul, "God be merciful to us sinners!" I respectfully commend all John Wesley's published sermons to my readers, especially the one on "The Original Nature, Property and Use of Law," his sermon on "Free Grace," and that on "Christian Perfection." By the time you have read these, you will want to read the rest.

Rev. John M. Pike writes :—

"Wesley's preaching had the accuracy of a scholar, the authority of an ambassador, the unction of a saint, the power of God. It was always searching, but often terrible and severe — except when addressed to congregations rich, respectable and polite."

A friend said to him, after he had preached to a genteel audience from the words, "ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell;" "such a sermon would have been suitable at Billingsgate, but it was highly improper here." Quaintly and significantly Wesley replied, "If I had been in Billingsgate, my

text would have been, ‘Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.’”

One day Wesley was passing Billingsgate market, whilst two of the women were quarrelling furiously. His companion wanted to pass on, but Wesley replied : “ Stay, Sammy, stay and learn how to preach.”

Dr. Abel Stevens says : “ As a preacher he remains a problem to us. It is at least difficult to explain, at this late day, the secret of his great power in the pulpit, aside from the divine influence which is pledged to all faithful ministers, there must have been some peculiar power in his address which the records of the times have failed to describe ; his action was calm and natural, yet pleasing and expressive ; his voice not loud, but clear, agreeable, and masculine ; his style neat and perspicuous.”

CHAPTER XI.

METHODISM IN SCOTLAND.

George Whitefield did much to introduce Methodism into Scotland. He was invited there by Ralph and Ebenezer Erskine, those remarkable men who had made a secession in the Scotch church. He made his first visit in 1741, and preached his first sermon in the seceding meeting-house at Dunfermline.

His success in Scotland was greater than it had been in England. He writes, "Glory to God! he is doing great things here. I walk in the continual sunshine of his countenance. Congregations consist of many thousands. Never did I see so many Bibles, nor people looking into them, when I am expounding, with such attention. Plenty of tears flow from the hearers' eyes. I preach twice daily, and expound at private houses at night. I am employed in speaking to souls in distress great part of the day. Every morning I have a constant levee of wounded souls, many of whom are quite slain by the law. At seven in

the morning (this was at Edinburg) we have a lecture in the fields, attended not only by the common people but also by persons of great rank. I have reason to believe that several of the latter are coming to Christ. I am only afraid lest the people should idolize the instrument, and not look enough at the glorious Jesus in whom alone I desire to glory. I walk continually in the comforts of the Holy Ghost ; the love of Christ quite strikes me dumb. O grace, grace ! let that be my song."

Again he writes, " Yesterday I preached three times and lectured at night. This day Jesus has enabled me to preach seven times, once in the Church, twice in the girls' hospital, once in the park, once at the old people's hospital, and twice at a private house ; notwithstanding, I am now as fresh as when I rose this morning. It would delight you to see the effects of the power of God. Both in the Church and park, the Lord is with us. The girls in the hospital were greatly affected, and so were the standers-by. The Holy Ghost seemed to come down like a rushing, mighty wind. The mourning of the people was like the weeping in the valley of Hadad-Rimmon. They appear more and more hungry. Every day I hear of some fresh good wrought by the power of God. I scarce know how to leave Scotland."

Dr. Franklin says of George Whitefield, " It would have been fortunate for his reputation if he

had left no written works, as his talents then would have been estimated by the effects which they are known to have produced. By hearing him often I came to distinguish easily between sermons newly composed and those which had often been preached. His delivery of the latter was so improved by repetition, that every accent, every emphasis, every modulation of voice, was so perfectly well turned and well placed that, without being interested in the subject, one could not help being pleased with the discourse; a pleasure of much the same kind with that received from an excellent piece of music. His elocution was perfect; he never stumbled at a word, or hesitated for want of one. Sometimes he would weep as though his heart would break, and say, 'You blame me for weeping, but how can I help it when you will not weep for yourselves, though your immortal souls are on the brink of destruction and you may never have another opportunity to be saved?' Sometimes he would depict the agonies of Christ: 'Look yonder! What is it I see? It is my agonizing Lord! Hark! hark! do you not hear? Oh, my Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me! nevertheless, not my will but thine be done.'"

David Hume said he was the most ingenious preacher he had ever heard. When he made his

second visit to Scotland, he was met on the shore at Leith by multitudes, weeping and blessing him. They followed his coach to Edinburg, pressing to welcome him when he alighted and to hold him in their arms. His preaching was wonderful. God did marvellous things by his labors. He writes, "I preached at two to a vast multitude, and at six and at nine. Such a commotion, surely, was never heard of, especially at eleven at night. For about an hour and a half there was such weeping, so many falling into deep distress and expressing it in various ways, as is inexpressible. The people seem to be slain by scores. They are carried off and come into the houses like soldiers wounded in battle. Scarce ever was such a sight in Scotland. There were, undoubtedly, upwards of 20,000 persons. Two tents were set up, and the holy sacrament was administered in the fields. When I began to serve a table, the power of God was felt by numbers; but the people crowded so upon me that I was obliged to desist and go to preach at one of the tents, whilst the ministers served the rest of the tables. On Monday morning, I preached again to near as many, but such a universal stir I never saw before. The motion fled as swift as lightning from end to end of the auditorium. You might have seen thousands bathed in tears, some at the same time wringing

their hands, others almost swooning, others crying out for mercy."

Whitefield made many other visits to Scotland, but formed no Societies, and while he was gone much of the good seed was scattered and lost.

Wesley made his first visit to Scotland in April, 1751, in company with Christopher Hopper who had returned with him from Ireland. We have already noticed that the Methodist dragoons from the regiment of John Haime, in Flanders, had formed Societies in Dunbar and Musselborough. Wesley was welcomed at the latter place. He preached while the people stood around him as statues, respectful but too cold for the ardor of Methodists. "Nevertheless," Wesley says, "the prejudice which the devil had been several years in planting was plucked up in an hour." He was invited to stay some time, with an offer of a larger place to preach in. Wesley had to leave, but Hopper returned and preached, and thus began a good work in Scotland. This lay evangelist afterwards preached with power at Edinburg, Dunbar, Leith, Dundee and Aberdeen. He wrote, "God blessed our work and raised up witnesses that he had sent us to the North Britons also."

In the spring of 1753, Wesley went again to Scotland. He was courteously received by Mr. Gillies at Glasgow. He preached outside the town in

the early morn, but the Scotch were not used to so early meetings; but few were there; but six times as many came to hear him in a tent in the afternoon. The power of God touched their hearts. The next day he preached in the kirk, by the courtesy of Mr. Gillies. The church would not hold the vast congregation, so he preached out of doors. More than a thousand listened to him in a shower of rain. The last sermon was heard by so great a crowd that they filled the field from side to side. But he found the apparent respect mostly indifference. They did not persecute and they would not follow. He said afterward, “They *know* everything but they *feel* nothing.” He was perplexed to know “why the hand of the Lord, who does nothing without a cause, was almost entirely stayed in Scotland.”

He went again in 1757, and the kirk could not hold the people. Some brought their children to be baptized. At one time 2000 retired unable to hear. He formed the dragoon Methodists at Musselburg and Dunbar, and was encouraged to find them strong in faith. The men whose piety had been tried by the fires of the battle of Fontenoy, had introduced a living faith in both these places.

Wesley writes, “We rode to Edinburg, one of the dirtiest cities I ever saw, not excepting Colen in Germany. We returned to Musselburg to din-

ner, where we were followed by a party of gentlemen from Edinburg. I used great plainness of speech toward them, and they all received it in love."

At another time he writes, "I found myself much out of order, till the flux stopped at once without any medicine. I was afraid I could not go round by Kelso. Vain fear! God took care for this also. The wind that had been full east for several days, turned this morning full west, and blew just in our face, and about ten the clouds rose and kept us cool till we reached Kelso. When I preached I spared neither rich nor poor. I almost wondered at myself, not being usual with me to use so keen and cutting expressions. I believe many felt that, for all their form, they were but heathens still. Near as many were present the next day, to whom I spoke full as plain as before. Many looked at us as if they would look us through, but the shyness peculiar to this nation prevented them saying anything to me, good or bad, while I walked through them to our Inn. In the afternoon I came to Alnwick, and at six I preached in the court-house to a congregation of another spirit."

The next day he writes, "At seven they gathered from all parts, and I was greatly refreshed among them. At five I was obliged to go into

the market-place. Oh, what a difference there is between these living stones and the dead, unfeeling multitudes in Scotland!

In 1779, Wesley wrote of one place in Scotland: "In five years I found five members had been gained. What, then, have our preachers been doing all this time? They have taken great care not to speak too plain lest they should give offence." Hear that, ye ministers who have no success in your preaching; are you afraid of the face of clay, and therefore barren and unfruitful? He goes on to tell of another reason: "When Mr. Brackenbury preached the old Methodist doctrine, one of them said, 'You must not preach such doctrine here. The doctrine of perfection is not calculated for the meridian of Edinburg.' Waving, then, all other hinderances, is it any wonder that the work of God has not prospered here?"

Alas, that there are so many meridians in our day where the distinctive doctrine of Methodism, Holiness, is neither preached nor practiced; no wonder there is no prosperity, for human nature and the grace of God are just the same now as then. But these preachers had preached four evenings in a week and on Sunday morning, yet there was no success because they feared the people and failed to preach on Christian Perfection.

Dr. Adam Clarke, in 1826, said, “I consider Methodism as having no hold of Scotland but in Glasgow and Edinburg.”

Whitefield said to Wesley, “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 dispute with one and another from morning to night.”

CHAPTER XII.

WESLEY IN IRELAND.

Some of the greatest victories of Methodism have been achieved in Ireland. Ireland refused the Reformation, and stubbornly adhered to the Church of Rome. This reacted against her both in civil, religious and in political life and tended to her continual degradation.

August 9, 1747, Wesley reached Dublin. He went immediately to St. Mary's Church, and in the afternoon, by invitation he preached to "as gay and careless a congregation" as he had ever seen. Thomas Williams had already formed a Society in Dublin of nearly 300 members. Wesley examined them personally and found them strong in the faith, and docile and cordial in spirit. He pronounced the Irish people "the politest people I ever saw." He exclaimed, "What a nation is this! every man, woman and child, except a few of the vulgar, not only patiently, but gladly suffers the word of exhortation." First impressions are

said to last the longest. Not so in this case, for he found some of the most bitter opposition on this "Green Isle." He had a fine bearing as he preached to crowds at the Society's chapel. Many wealthy citizens were present. He thought he might have had a larger church in Dublin than in London if he could have stayed there long enough. He soon found out that the Irish need double care because their excessive cordiality exposed them to *evil* as well as to *good* impressions. After spending fourteen days among them, he sailed for England. Charles arrived in Ireland in two weeks and spent about six months in that country. He found already, that a Papist mob had broken into the chapel and had stolen goods from a store-house which appertained thereto, and had made a bonfire of them and of the seats, window cases and pulpit, besides wounding the members of the Society, and threatened to murder all who met with them. A regular *Irish riot* which left the Mayor powerless. Wesley met the Society privately, but the rabble followed him through the streets with shouts of derision.

John Cenwick, after preaching a week in Dublin and breasting the fearful persecution, writes, "Woe is me now, for my soul is wearied because of the murderers which the city is full of. The mob seldom parts without killing some one." A

Methodist was knocked down, cut in several places and then thrown into a cellar, where stones were cast upon him. Another was so abused and stamped upon that he died. The murderers were tried and acquitted, as usual. A woman was beaten to death, and a constable, who was protecting Wesley, was knocked down and dragged on the earth till he died. Charles Wesley escaped without a wound, but he was chased through the streets; but their firmness at last discouraged the Irish mob so that Wesley preached on the green to as fine a congregation as at the Foundry in London. The Holy Ghost was in the word for the prayers and sobs of the people often drowned his voice. Converts multiplied. Money was raised and a better place of worship was built. Wesley sometimes preached five times a day.

At Athlone, Wesley was mobbed and struck with a stone. One of his companions was severely wounded. The mob was aroused by a Catholic priest. Many Protestants stood by Wesley. At Phillipstown he was welcomed by a party of dragoons, who were all turned from darkness to light and then formed into a Methodist Society. He returned to Dublin and found the Society increasing. On the arrival of John Wesley, Charles returned to England with the blessing of hundreds if not thousands who had been blessed by his

preaching. Methodism had found a footing in Ireland which she will never relinquish.

John Wesley had a hearty welcome on his return. His voice could hardly be heard for the praises of the people. He found nearly 400 in the Societies. He preached daily, beginning at 5 o'clock in the morning. The mob had been conquered and peace prevailed. He went on from town to town confirming the souls of the disciples. Sometimes most of the people were in tears; but he adds, "The water spread too wide to be deep," for he found not one of them under very deep conviction. He asked one man how he had lived in times past. He spread abroad his hands and said with many tears, "Here I stand a gray-headed monster of all manner of wickedness."

A vast crowd came to hear him at Athlone, but the priest came and drove them away before him like a flock of sheep. Failing to deeply impress them in ordinary preaching Wesley preached in the evening on a threatening text, which he seldom did. He writes "I preached on the terrors of the law in the strongest manner I was able; still those who were ready to eat every word, do not appear to digest any part of it." Yet, soon a Society was formed. He says they were immeasurably loving people; his heart was touched with their affectionate simplicity. At Tullamore the people

would not cover their heads in a hail-storm, while he preached, though he requested them to do so. After three months hard work in Ireland he returned to England.

The saintly and sainted Thomas Walsh was converted in Limerick, under the labors of Robert Swindells, while preaching from "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." Twenty years afterward, John Wesley wrote of his Irish convert, "I know a young man who is so thoroughly acquainted with the Bible that if he was questioned concerning any Hebrew word in the Old, or any Greek word in the New Testament, he would tell, after a brief pause, not only how often the one or the other occurred in the Bible, but also what it meant in every place. Such a master of Biblical knowledge I never saw before and I never expect to see again."

"He lived as in another world from this time. A more saintly life than he exemplified from this time down to his death cannot be found in the records of Papal or Protestant piety." Southey justly says, "The Life of Thomas Walsh might indeed almost convince a Catholic that saints are to be found in other communions as well as in the Church of Rome." "He saw in Methodism a genuine reproduction of the apostolic Church and gave himself to study, that he might the better

promote its marvellous mission. Besides his native Irish tongue he mastered the English, Latin, Greek and Hebrew; the latter was especially a sublime delight to him, as the tongue in which God himself had originally spoken to man. He rose at four in the morning for the remainder of his life, to study it and to read it, often upon his knees. He exclaims "O truly laudable and worthy study! whereby a man is enabled to converse with God, with holy angels, with patriarchs and prophets and clearly unfold to men the mind of God from the language of God." He believed that a divine inspiration helped him about these sacred studies. Probably no man ever excelled him in the knowledge of the word of God. His memory was a concordance to the entire Bible."

His studies were mixed with ejaculations of praise and supplication. "Turning his face to the wall, and lifting up his heart and countenance to heaven, with his arms clasped about his breast, he would stand some time before the Lord in solemn recollection, and again return to his work." His prayer was, "I fain would rest in Thee! I thirst for the divine life; I pray for the Spirit of illumination; I cast my soul upon Jesus Christ, the God of glory, and the Redeemer of the world. I desire to be conformable unto him, his friend, servant, disciple, and sacrifice."

He walked thirty miles to his first appointment, which was in a barn, where he spoke with power, amid tears and contradictions. He went like a flame through Leinster and Connaught, preaching twice or thrice a day. His command of the Irish tongue gave him power over the Papists.

Thomas Walsh continued to preach and flame like a seraph. He fasted and denied himself excessively. At twenty-five he looked like a man of forty, and would preach when he was not able. He wrote, "Thou knowest my desire, thou knowest there has never been a saint upon earth whom I do not desire to resemble in doing and suffering thy will." It is said that his public prayers were so fervent and arduous that it seemed as though the heavens were burst open, and God himself appeared in the congregation.

Two years afterward Walsh died, after struggling for months with doubts and agonies that few ever suffer. He came almost to the extremity of mental anguish, if not despair of his salvation. "His great soul lay thus, as it were, in ruins, and poured out many a heavy groan and speechless tear from an oppressed heart and dying body." Prayers were offered for him in many places, and God gave him the victory. Just before he died he requested to be left alone for a few minutes "to meditate a little." He remained in profound

prayer, and self-recollection for some time, and then broke out in exclamation: “*He is come! he is come! My beloved is mine and I am his—his forever!*” and thus he departed to his eternal triumph.

Duncan Wright was a Scotchman, but belonged to the army in Ireland. He was early convicted of his need of religion, but failing to find grace, he plunged into sin, and enlisted at the age of eighteen. His religious convictions followed him. He went with the soldiers to the Methodist meetings in Limerick. He spent nights in weeping, till the Lord brought him, in an instant, out of darkness into his marvellous light. For two years he had great trials, he felt that he must preach the gospel, but he resisted. But after a while Wesley sent him out as a traveling preacher. He traveled much in Ireland, and sometimes in company with Wesley. He also preached in Scotland, and occupied important circuits in England. He died at his post after thirty years of labor for Christ.

Wesley gives the following advice to one of his Irish workers: “Dear Brother,—I shall now tell you the things that have been more or less on my mind: *Be steadily serious.* There is no country upon earth where this is more necessary than in Ireland, as you are generally encompassed

with those who, with a little encouragement, would laugh and trifle from morning till night. In every town visit all you can from house to house ; but on this and every other occasion, *avoid all familiarity with women* ; this is deadly poison, both to *them* and *you*. You cannot be *too* wary in this respect. Be active, be diligent ; avoid all laziness, sloth, indolence ; fly from every danger, every appearance of it, else you will never be more than half a Christian."

Wesley found the Irish more generous than the English. One gentleman gave the land and meeting house at Athlone. Thomas Jones gave between three and four hundred pounds toward the chapel at Cork. Mr. Lunell gave four hundred pounds toward the chapel at Dublin. Wesley writes, "I know no such benefactions among the Methodists in England."

CHAPTER XIII.

WESLEY ON CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

God had indeed wrought wonders among the people both in England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. Vast multitudes had been truly converted, and this great work, with many of them, had been wrought suddenly; they had been justified freely from all their transgressions. They obtained the regeneration of their hearts by the power of the Holy Ghost; they had the Spirit itself witnessing with their spirits that they were the children of God. They were heirs of God, joint heirs with Jesus Christ.

All this was the natural result of the plain proclamation of God's eternal truth, which produced a conviction of sin, a hatred to sin, and a genuine turning from sin to God. As men and women became established in this grace of regeneration, they began to hunger and thirst after entire sanctification, after all the mind that was in Christ. Yet they "felt the flesh lusting

against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh." They felt that they must "put off the old man, with his deeds, and put on the new man, which is created in righteousness and true holiness."

Wesley had held the doctrine of Christian Perfection since 1733, when he preached that sermon on the Circumcision of the heart. He had declared that "Holiness is the grand *depositum* which God has given to the people called Methodists, and *chiefly to propagate this*, it appears God has raised them up."

In 1760 the Holy Spirit was poured out in great power, and multitudes were entirely sanctified. Wesley writes, "Here began that glorious work of sanctification which had been nearly at a stand for twenty years; from time to time it spread, first through Yorkshire, then in London, and in many parts of England, and through various places in Ireland. And wherever the work of sanctification increased, the whole work of God increased in all its branches."

Charles Wesley had been looking for a *Methodist day of Pentecost*, when it would be as common to hear that some one had been sanctified, as it was now to hear that they were converted. In 1762 John Wesley found about four hundred witnesses of sanctification in the London Societies. The revival was more remarkable in Dublin than

in London. "After a deep conviction of inbred sin, they had been so filled with faith and love that sin vanished, and they found from that time, no pride, no anger, nor unbelief. They could rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks. Whether we call this the destruction or the suspension of sin, it is a glorious work of God; such a work as, considering both the depth and extent, we never saw in these kingdoms before. The peculiar work of the season has been *the perfecting of the saints*." These saints testified that "They felt no inward sin, and committed no outward sin. That they saw and loved God every moment; and prayed, rejoiced and gave thanks evermore. That they had constantly as clear a witness from God of sanctification as they had of justification." Wesley says, "In this I do rejoice, and will rejoice, call it what you please. I would that thousands had experienced this much; let them after experience as much more as God pleases." Again he writes, "Whether they are saved from sin or not, they are certainly full of faith and love, and peculiarly helpful to my soul."

Newcastle was an exception to this revival of holiness, because they sought it by their works, and thought it was to come gradually, and never expected it to come in a moment, by simple faith,

in the very same manner as they received justification.

Wesley says, “I know many who love God with all the heart, mind, soul, and strength. He is their one desire, their one delight, and they are continually happy in him; they love their neighbor as themselves. They feel as sincere, fervent, constant desire for the happiness of every man, good or bad, friend or foe, as for their own. 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.”

Wesley went to London, and immediately began a course of sermons on Christian Perfection, and writes, “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, all love; no pride, no self-will, nor anger. I ascribe it to the Spirit of God.”

Wesley was very explicit in his teachings on this great doctrine and experience. He writes, “By perfection I mean the humble, gentle, patient love of God and man, ruling all our tempers, works, and actions, the whole heart and the whole life. It is such a love of God and our neighbors as implies deliverance from all sin.”

In speaking of those who were panting for purity, he writes, “Now they see all the hidden abominations of their hearts, the depths of pride, and self, and hell; yet having the witness in themselves that they are the children of God. So that it is possible to have pride, and self, and hell in a regenerate heart before it is wholly sanctified. Again he writes of the regenerate before they are sanctified: “He frequently finds his will more or less exalting itself against the will of God. He wills something because it is pleasing to nature, which is not pleasing to God.” This is *inbred* sin, which entire sanctification destroys. Wesley sums up the whole matter as follows:—

“1. There is such a thing as Christian Perfection, for it is taught in the Bible. 2. It is not as early as justification, for justified persons are to go on to perfection. 3. It is not as late as death, for St. Paul speaks of those who were ‘already perfect.’ 4. It is not *absolute*, for this perfection belongs neither to men nor to angels, but to God only. 5. It does not make a man *infallible*. No one is infallible while he remains in the body. 6. Perfect love, 1 John 4: 18, This is the essence of it. Its properties, or inseparable fruits are, rejoicing evermore, praying without ceasing, and in every thing giving thanks. 7. It is *improvable*. It is so far from lying in an indivisible

point, from being incapable of increase, that one perfected in love may grow in grace far swifter than he did before. 8. It is *amissible*—capable of being lost; but we were not thoroughly convinced of this for several years. 9. It is constantly preceded and followed by a *gradual* work. 10. But is it in itself instantaneous or not? Some have been instantly sanctified, no one can deny this; but in some, this change is not instantaneous; they did not perceive the instant when it was wrought. It is often difficult to perceive the instant in which life ceases. There must be a last moment of its existence, and the first moment of our deliverance from it. 11. Some say, ‘This doctrine has been much abused.’ So has the doctrine of justification.” He concludes as follows: “Therefore, all our preachers should make a point of preaching Christian Perfection to believers constantly, strongly and explicitly. And all believers should mind this one thing, and continually agonize for it.”

To one of his friends he wrote, “It is exceeding certain that God did give you the SECOND BLESSING, properly so called. He delivered you from the root of bitterness, from *inbred* as well as *actual* sin.” Again he writes, “By salvation I mean a present deliverance from sin, a restoration of the soul to its primitive health, its original

purity ; a recovery of the divine nature, a renewal of the soul after the image of God ; this implies all holy and heavenly tempers, and by consequence, all holy conversation." To a friend he writes, "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." Again, "A person may be cleansed from all *sinful tempers*, and yet need the atoning blood for negligences and ignorances ; for both words and actions, as well as omissions, which are, in a sense, transgressions of the perfect law. I believe no one is clear of these till he lays down this corruptible body."

Wesley advised the sanctified to watch against pride, fanaticism, antinomianism, the sins of omission, and against desiring anything but God. Against schism in the church. They must be exemplary in all things. He adds, "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."

This wonderful experience is obtained *by faith*, and faith is always in the present tense. Therefore we may expect it as we are. Wesley says, "It is important to observe that there is an inseparable connection between these three points :

expect it *by faith*, expect it *as you are*, and expect it *now*. To deny one of them is to deny them all." To expect it at death, or at some future time, is about the same as not expecting it at all. He observes that "We should never preach this perfection in a *harsh spirit*, but place it in the most amiable light, that it may excite hope, joy, and desire."

JOHN WESLEY'S PROFESSION OF ENTIRE
SANCTIFICATION.

1, In the early part of his career he wrote, "My brother and I read the Bible, saw inward and outward holiness therein, followed after it and incited others to do so. We saw that holiness comes by faith, and that we must be justified before we are sanctified; but holiness was our point—inward and outward holiness. God then thrust us out to raise up a holy people." Even before this he writes, "In 1725 I met with Bishop Taylor's 'Rules for holy living and dying.' I was struck particularly with the chapter on *intention* and felt a fixed intention to give myself to God. In this I was much confirmed soon after by the 'Christian pattern' and longed to give my heart to God. This is just what I mean by perfection now. I sought after it from that very hour."—*Journal*, May, 1765.

2. Two years afterward he read Law's Christian Perfection, and 'Serious Call,' when he resolved to be all devoted to God, in body, soul and spirit.

In 1730, he writes, "I then saw, in a stronger light than ever before, that only one thing is needful, even faith that worketh by the love of God and man, all inward and outward holiness; and I groaned to love God with all my heart and to serve Him with all my strength." Who will say that he did not obtain it?

3. Jan. 1, 1733, he preached his wonderful sermon on the Circumcision of the heart which he afterward declared contained all that he then taught concerning salvation from all sin, and loving God with an undivided heart. In 1735 he preached a sermon at Epworth in which he spoke with the utmost clearness, of having one design, one desire, one love and of pursuing the one end of life in all our words and actions. In 1738 he expressed his desires as follows :

"O grant that nothing in my soul
May dwell but thy pure love alone!
O may thy love possess me whole,
My joy, my treasure, and my crown!
Strange flames far from my heart remove,
My every act, word, thought belowe."

Rev. John M. Pike has truly said, "Any statement of Wesley's experience that did not refer to Christian Perfection, or perfect love, would be incomplete."

4. In the very nature of things, and in the natural order of events, John Wesley must have enjoyed entire sanctification. 1. Because he met the conditions on which it is obtained. 2. Because he never could have known so much about it, as to tell how to get it and how to keep it, and how to promote it in others. No man could teach it and preach it as he did for so many years unless he had the genuine experience himself. He writes, "It requires a great degree of watchfulness to retain the the perfect love of God, and one great means of retaining it is, frankly to declare what God has given you." How did he know this only by experience? 3. He must have had it or he could not have been so successful in preaching this fullness to others. 4. He bore the fruits of Christian perfection. He was "absolutely absorbed in the service of the Master for fifty or sixty years. He certainly had perfect love, and perfect self-denial for the good of others. He had an almost boundless benevolence and perfect self-control and patience. He seemed almost to have the meekness of Moses. In the midst of the fiercest mobs and riots he was kept in perfect peace.

5. Then he expressly professes this experience in the following hymn. It is the relation of his Christian experience in poetry and is exceedingly forcible.

How happy is the pilgrim's lot,
How free from every anxious thought,
From worldly hope and fear;
Confined to neither court nor cell,
His soul disdains on earth to dwell—
He only sojourns here.

This happiness in part is mine,
Already saved from low design,
From every creature love.
Blest with the scorn of finite good,
My soul is lighten'd of its load,
And seeks the things above.

The things eternal I pursue;
A happiness beyond the view
Of those that basely pant
For things by nature felt and seen;
Their honor, wealth, and pleasure mean
I neither have nor want.

I have no babes to hold me here;
But children more securely dear
For mine I humbly claim:
Better than daughters or than sons,
Temples divine of living stones,
Inscribed with Jesus' name.

No foot of land do I possess;
No cottage in this wilderness;
A poor, wayfaring man,
I lodge awhile in tents below,
Or gladly wander to and fro,
Till I my Canaan gain.

Nothing on earth I call my own;
A stranger to the world—unknown—
I all their goods despise;

I trample on their whole delight,
And seek a city out of sight,
A city in the skies.

There is my house and portion fair;
My treasure and my heart are there,
And my abiding home:
For me my elder brethren stay,
And angels beckon me away,
And Jesus bids me come."

A man saved from "every creature love" and "every low design," who "scorns finite good" and "seeks only the things above," who "neither *has* nor *wants* worldly honor, wealth or pleasure," who chooses to be a "poor wayfaring man without cottage or foot of land," who "tramples upon this world's delights" and who "has his heart and treasure and abiding home in heaven." Surely such a man has made the highest profession that a mortal can make this side of heaven itself.

6. If John Wesley was not a *possessor* and a *professor* of Christian perfection, of which he preached and wrote so much and so effectively, then he was one of the greatest deceivers of his times.

7. I will refer the reader to Dr. Coke's delineation of the character of John Wesley as given at the close of this book, and after a careful consideration of that estimate of this godly man, tell me, if you please, if the whole tenor of his

words and works and motives were not such as would naturally flow from the heart of a man who was wholly sanctified to God.

8. Who, but a man in the experience of perfect love could write as follows: "I am content with whatever entertainment I meet with, and my companions are always in good humor, 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 humor, it puts a burden upon me greater than all the rest put together. *By the grace of God I never fret. I repine at nothing.* I see God sitting upon his throne ruling all things well.'

9. At one time when in a large party of friends, the company was convulsed with laughter, in the momentary pause that followed, Wesley arose and lifting up his hand, in his peculiar manner, said,

"Still may I walk as in thy sight,
My strict observer see;
And thou by reverent love unite
My childlike heart to thee.
Still let me till my days are passed,
At Jesus' feet abide;
So shall he lift me up at last,
And seat me by his side."

The Holy Spirit rested upon the company in a moment, as this holy man thus lifted up his holy hands "without wrath or doubting."

10. Let the candid reader study carefully Wesley's journals and see how many *immediate answers to prayers* he obtained, for the recovery of his body, for the changing of the wind in a storm, for the cessation of rain, or the covering of the sun with a cloud to accommodate his outdoor preaching, and in many other emergencies. He must have been full of faith and the Holy Ghost, or he could not have touched the throne of God in a moment and obtained immediate deliverance.

11. It would almost be a reflection upon the Almighty to suppose that he raised up the people called Methodists; whose duty it was to *experience* and *proclaim* this Christian Perfection to all the world, and let John Wesley be the chief instrumentality; the leading spirit and great expounder and defender of this doctrine and experience, and yet not have the experience in his own soul. Nay, verily! it cannot be. His whole life and spirit and word and work declare to all the world that he was "dead indeed unto sin and alive unto God.

12. In April, 1764, Wesley writes about his preaching at Grimsby, "I explained at large the nature of Christian Perfection; many who had doubted of it before were fully satisfied." May we not reasonably conclude that he was simply telling his own *experience* at the time? Is not

this a fair inference that he spoke out of his own heart? It is, verily.

13. Wesley must have had the experience of entire sanctification or he could not have been consistent with his conduct towards his preachers, nor honest before God. In 1766 he became so urgent about his ministers enjoying perfect love, that he instituted a list of questions which were proposed to all his ministers before they were received into the conference, as follows: "Have you faith in God? Are you going on to perfection? Do you expect to be made perfect in love in this life? Are you groaning after it? Are you resolved to devote yourself *wholly* to God and his work?

Who but a hypocrite could stand at the door of the conference and urge these questions upon all the ministers if he were not made perfect in love himself?

14. Mr. Tyerman, in his excellent life of John Wesley, is very generous in his many and large references to Christian Perfection. But, it seems to me, he is not just or true to history when he says of this holy and venerable man of God, "He preached the doctrine (of Christian Perfection) most explicitly and strongly, especially after the period of which we are writing, but where is the proof that he ever experienced it." If Mr. Tyerman still lives, let him read what evidence I have

produced in this chapter. But he goes on to say, "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." Surely a certain minister is right when he says, "The life of John Wesley, by Mr. Tyerman, was written in an atmosphere quite distant from perfect love." Of course Mr. Tyerman means to say that Mr. Wesley did not profess Christian Perfection even to the day of his death. Then the Lord raised John Wesley and thrust him out to raise up a holy people, and kept him in the front of this holy work and enabled him to write and preach on this subject as no man ever did; yet he never had the experience himself. No, beloved, this cannot be!

15. We have shown that as early as 1730, Wesley was crying out for all inward and outward holiness, and he groaned to love God with all his heart, and to serve him with all his strength; and this was the drift and tenor of the sixty-one remaining years of his life. He walked with God in "the way of holiness," and of perfect love to God and man.

16. Wesley wrote to his father, "I conclude that when I am most holy myself, then I could most promote holiness in others." Then as he was always successfully promoting holiness in

others by his life and preaching, then he must have been holy himself.

17. Dr. Whitehead says, "He studied to be gentle, yet vigilant and faithful to all. He possessed himself in patience and preserved himself unprovoked, nay, even unruffled in the midst of persecution, reproach and all manner of abuse of his person and name." Then he did possess Christian Perfection and demonstrated it to the world.

18. I have just discovered that Mr. Tyerman quotes a part of the above hymn by John Wesley, and says, "The whole hymn is strikingly descriptive of Wesley's own condition and experience." Still he contends that Wesley never professed entire sanctification. How strange! It is strange also that Mr. Tyerman did not quote the whole hymn, but left out the three stanzas that are the most expressive of the fulness of God in the soul. namely, the three first stanzas that I have quoted, I am astonished at this, as Mr. Tyerman is the most elaborate writer of Mr. Wesley's life and as he claims in his Preface that "Nothing likely to be of general interest has been withheld. Whatever else the work may be, it is *honest*." We answer, it is certainly of general interest that the millions of Methodists of this, and of all coming generations, should know the height and depth of

the religious experience of their venerable founder and it would certainly have been honest to have quoted the hymn just as Wesley wrote it. Why this was not done it is not for me to say. I only state the facts. Charity would say, "It was for want of room." But there is no plea on this account when he fills so very many of his pages with what may be called "the love stories" connected with the life of Wesley, which, to me, are almost *sickening in their detail*; and this remark applies just as much to Dr. Riggs' book, "The Living Wesley," as to Mr. Tyerman's extensive works. It seems to me almost like catering to the corrupt taste of this generation and also like magnifying the weaknesses, rather than the excellences of this pre-eminently godly man. Dr. Riggs has produced a most excellent book from which I am delighted to quote in *this* book. But, in all candor I would ask why forty-two pages, one-sixth of that book, after the Introduction, should be given to the details of two love stories. In the language of Dr. Riggs to Mr. Tyerman I would say, "If he (Dr. Riggs) were, in future editions to spare us needless details of the sort we have indicated, he might save space for such statements, reflections and general views, here and there, as would more distinctly represent Wesley's character, position and motives, than has now been done even in these—this—volume."

19. See the *perfection of John Wesley's love and patience* in the following: At Dewsbury, a person full of rage, pressed through the throng, and struck him violently on the face. Wesley, with tears in his eyes, recollecting the precept of Jesus, turned to him the other cheek. His assailant was awed by this spirit of Christ, and slunk back into the crowd. Who but the possessor of Christian Perfection could act in this manner? Who?

The following question was submitted to Dr. James M. Buckley:—

“Have we any record of Mr. Wesley professing to be entirely sanctified; and if so, where may it be found?” Dr. Buckley answers, in the *Christian Advocate*: “This question reappears from time to time, as though of great importance. We know of *no record* of his explicitly professing, or saying in so many words, ‘I am entirely sanctified;’ no record of uttering words to that effect. But we have no more doubt that he habitually professed it than that he professed conversion. The relation John Wesley sustained to his followers, and to this doctrine, makes it certain that he professed it, and almost certain that there would be no special record of it.

1. All Wesley's followers assumed him to be what he urged them to be. Before they were in

a situation to make records, his position was so fixed that to record his descriptions of this state would have been unthought of.

2. He preached entire sanctification, and urged it upon his follows.

3. He defended its attainability in many public controversies.

4. He urged and defended the profession of it, under certain conditions and safeguards; made lists of professors; told men they had lost it because they did not profess; and said and did so many things, only to be explained upon the assumption that he professed to enjoy the blessing, that no other opinion can support it."

CHAPTER XIV.

JOHN WESLEY AND JOHN FLETCHER.

In carefully reading the lives of John Wesley and of John Fletcher, it seems to me that in no age since St. John the divine have lived two such men as these. Fletcher stood in the same relation to John Wesley as Melancthon did to Martin Luther, that of a defender. When Wesley renounced Calvinism, and showed up its awful horrors, his enemies came down upon him as though they would swallow him up. He made a bold defence himself and wielded a vigorous war, but it took the powerful, pungent pen of John Fletcher to disarm his enemies on the right and on the left. I have neither time nor space to enter largely into this discussion, but it is due to the reader that we consider these two illustrious men and their relation to one another.

They were closely attached to each other. Fletcher says, after travelling with Wesley through three counties, "I find it good to be with this ex-

traordinary servant of God. I think his diligence and wisdom are matchless. It is a good school for me, only I am too old a scholar to make any proficiency." Wesley in his many labors had preached so much, that at Snowfields, in 1757, his strength failed. He prayed for some one to come and help him. Just then, John Fletcher, who had just been ordained a priest, came to his assistance. Wesley wrote, "How wonderful are the ways of God! When my bodily strength failed, and no clergyman in England was 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?" Fletcher thus came as an angel of mercy, and never left Wesley till the angels came and carried him to Paradise, twenty-eight years afterward. During all this time this man of the deepest piety was of invaluable service to John Wesley in particular, and to Methodism in general. John Fletcher was born at Nyons, among the mountains of Switzerland, Sept. 12, 1729, so that he was twenty-six years younger than John Wesley. Fletcher refused to become a pastor of a rich Church at Dunham, because they paid too much money (£400 a year) and because they required too little labor. Noble example! He settled in the poor but populous

parish of Madeley, where poverty had its habitation, and piety soon began to abound. Here he lived at the feet of Jesus, a life of entire devotion. Here he wrote those immortal Checks to Antinomianism. Here he exhibited such a deadness to the world, and such a living unto God, as this world has seldom seen. I hope to live long enough to write his life and to enjoy more of the same fulness of God.

Fletcher was appointed president of the theological school of Lady Huntington at Trevecca. His frequent visits were received with great delight. Here he met Joseph Benson, and of one of these visits Benson writes, "The reader will pardon me if he thinks I exceed; my heart kindles while I write. Here it was that I saw, shall I say, an angel in human flesh? I should not far exceed the truth if I said so. But here I saw a descendant of fallen Adam so fully raised above the ruins of the fall, that though by the body he was tied down to the earth, yet was his whole *conversation in heaven*; yet was his life from day to day '*hid with Christ in God*.' Prayer, praise, love, zeal, all ardent; elevated above what one would think attainable in this state of frailty, were the elements in which he continually lived. I frequently thought while attending his heavenly discourse and divine spirit that he was so different

from and superior to the generality of mankind as to look more like Moses or Elijah, or some prophet or apostle come again from the dead, than a mortal man dwelling in a house of clay !”

The Calvinistic controversy began when Wesley definitely took the Arminian view of this question in his letters to his mother from Oxford. He could not accept even “the modern qualifications of Calvinism stated in the pious, compromising spirit of Baxter.” Some contending that in predestinating the elect to be saved, God had only passed by the reprobates, leaving them to their own natural wickedness and fate, Wesley replied that, “According to this, the foreknowledge of God created the reprobate in his wickedness and under his inevitable doom, and he would devolve upon them the formidable task of showing how then the unassisted offcast could be held responsible for his fate. He would require them also to reconcile with such a condition of perhaps nine-tenths of the human race, the divine beneficence, the scriptural warnings and invitations addressed to them.” If it was impossible for them to be saved, why should they be invited to come to Christ for salvation?

Fletcher often made preaching visits to London, Bath, Bristol, Wales and Yorkshire. Meanwhile, Wesley often visited Madeley ; it was one of his

favorite stopping-places. Antinomian Calvinism was one of the worst foes that Wesley had to face. It was both subtle and powerful. Fletcher said of the almost general Antinomianism of the congregations, "If the Lord does not put a stop to this growing evil, we shall soon see everywhere what we see in too many places, self-conceited, unhumbled men rising up against the truths and the ministers of God. We stand now as much in need of a reformation from Antinomianism as our ancestors did of a reformation from Popery."

The Lord sat in the heavens and overruled this whole controversy for his own glory and the furtherance of the truth as it is in Jesus. Wesley's conference adopted certain statements called a "Minute," which was calculated to guard against this terrible tendency to Antinomianism. Lady Huntington and her followers were alarmed, and determined to compel Wesley's conference to retract this "Minute" the next time they met. Mr. Shirley's Irish zeal was aroused; he demanded satisfaction. Meanwhile, John Fletcher had written Mr. Shirley a number of very able letters, which could not be gainsaid, and these formed what is called "Fletcher's First Check to Antinomianism," which were followed by other letters of defence that make three large volumes, written as with a pen of fire dipped in the oil of free

grace. Mr. Shirley, the "warm-hearted Irishman," showed more zeal than wisdom, but Fletcher showed more wisdom than zeal. And his defence of the doctrines of Methodism remains, and will remain to the end of time. Dr. Stevens says, "This discussion gave permanent character to the Arminian theology. It was a resurrection to the faith which the Synod of Dort had proscribed. It gave greater permanence to the doctrines of Arminius and Grotius; to spread evangelical Arminianism over England and over all the Protestant portion of the new world, and more or less round the whole world; to modify, to mollify it might rather be said, the theological tone of evangelical Christendom and probably of all coming time."

Fletcher's defence of Arminianism cost him the favor of Lady Huntington, and also his position as president in her seat of learning. But he "advanced through these discussions with a triumphant step, logically and morally triumphant; with a Christian temper that knows no disturbance, and logic that admits of no refutation." Some wrote him privately to discontinue the discussion, but he could not. For six years the controversy raged. Fletcher's health declined during this battle so that he wrote with one foot almost in heaven and the other in the grave.

Dr. Stevens says, "Fletcher's checks are read more to-day than during the heat of the controversy. They control the opinions of the largest and most effective body of clergymen on the earth. They have been more influential in the denomination than Wesley's own controvertial writings on the subject. This controversy has unquestionably influenced, if not directly through Fletcher's writings, yet indirectly through Methodism, the subsequent tone of theological thought in much of the Protestant world."

Fletcher maintained his integrity to God and the truth till he exchanged earth for heaven, Aug. 14, 1785, not quite six years before the death of Wesley. Mr. Wesley's estimate of Fletcher was as follows: "I would only observe that, for many years, I despaired of finding an inhabitant of Great Britain that could stand in any degree of comparison with Gregory Lopez or Mons. de Renty. But let any impartial person judge if Mr. Fletcher was at all inferior to them. Did he not experience deep communion with God, and as high a measure of inward holiness as was experienced by either one or the other of those burning and shining lights? And it is certain his outward light shone before men with full as bright a lustre as theirs. I was intimately acquainted with him for thirty years. I conversed with him morning,

noon and night, without the least reserve, during a journey of many hundred miles, and in all that time I never heard him speak an improper word or saw him do an improper action. To conclude, within four-score years I have known many excellent men, holy in heart and life, but one equal to him I have not known; one so uniformly and deeply devoted to God, so unblamable a man in every respect I have not found either in Europe or America. Nor do I expect to find another such on this side eternity."

Mark the following: Fletcher wrote to Charles Wesley, "I thank God I feel myself in a good degree dead to praise or dispraise; I hope, at least, that it is so, because I do not feel that one lifts me up, or that the other dejects me. I want to see a Penticostal Christian Church; and, if it is not to be seen at this time upon earth, I am willing to go and see this glorious wonder in heaven."

CHAPTER XV.

WESLEY IN ADVANCED LIFE AND IN DEATH.

This illustrious man of God was instant in season and out of season. He was fresh and flourishing and bringing forth abundant fruit, even in old age. He could truly say, "Leisure and I have taken leave of one another. I propose to be busy as long as I live, if my health is so long indulged to me." At another time he said, "Let me not live to be useless; a picture of human nature in disgrace, feeble in body and mind, slow of speech and understanding." This prayer was signally answered. In his sixty-eighth year he writes, "How marvellous are the ways of God! How has he kept me even from a child? From ten to thirteen or fourteen I had little but bread to eat. I believe that this was so far from hurting me that it laid the foundation of lasting health. When I grew up, in consequence of reading Dr. Cheyne, I chose to eat sparingly and drink water. This was another great means of continuing my health till I was about seven and twenty. I then

began spitting of blood, which continued several years. A warm climate cured this. I was afterward brought to the brink of death by a fever, but it left me healthier than before. Eleven years after, I was in the third stage of consumption. In three months it pleased God to remove this also. Since that time I have known neither pain nor sickness, and am now healthier than I was forty years ago. This hath God wrought !”

His whole manner of life was laid out and carried out as though it was devised for a long and vigorous life. He kept the sunshine of good nature shining upon him continually. He cast his numerous cares and burdens upon the Lord. He carried his bodily sickness to the Lord, and was repeatedly healed in answer to prayer. When advised to try certain prescriptions, he replied, “I am not inclined to try either of them ; I know a physician who has a shorter cure than either one or the other.” Yet, after two years, he yielded to an operation for a hydrocele that troubled him, and more than a pint of a thin, yellow, transparent water was extracted, and also a pearl of the size of a small shot.

July 28, 1774, Wesley writes, “This being my birthday, the first day of my seventy-second year, I was considering, how is this, that I find just the same strength as I did thirty years ago? That

my sight is considerable better now, and my nerves firmer, than they were then? That I have none of the infirmities of old age, and have lost several I had in my youth? The grand cause is, the good pleasure of God who doeth whatsoever pleaseth him. The chief means are: 1. My constantly rising at four for about fifty years. 2. My generally preaching at five in the morning; one of the most healthy exercises in the world. 3. My never travelling less, by sea or land, than 4500 miles in a year." Even in his seventy-eighth year he writes, "By the blessing of God I am just the same as when I was twenty-eight." In 1769 he weighed 122 pounds; in 1783 he weighed not a pound more or less.

Dr. Southey writes, "Mr. Wesley continued to be the same marvellous old man. No one who ever saw him, even casually, in his old age, can have forgotten his venerable appearance. His face was remarkably fine; his complexion fresh to the last week of his life; his eye quick and keen and active." He says, "I am never in a hurry because I never undertake any more work than I can go through with perfect calmness of spirit. It is true I travel four or five thousand miles in a year, but I generally travel alone in my carriage, and consequently am as retired ten hours in a day as if I were in a wilderness. On other days I

never spend less than three hours, and frequently ten or twelve, in a day, alone."

It was in this seclusion that he found time to read so extensively, and to write so many books and hold such sweet communion with God in prayer. When he had completed his eighty-second year, he says, "Is anything too hard for God? It is now eleven years since I have felt any such thing as weariness. Many times I speak till my voice fails and I can speak no longer. Frequently I walk till my strength fails and I can walk no farther; yet, even then, I feel no sensation of weariness, but I am perfectly easy from head to foot. I dare not impute this to natural causes; it is the will of God."

June, 1786, he writes, "I have entered the eighty-third year of my age. I am a wonder to myself. It is now twelve years since I felt any such sensation of weariness. I am never tired (such is the goodness of God) either with writing, preaching or travelling. One natural cause undoubtedly is my continual exercise and change of air. How the latter contributes to health I know not, but it certainly does." Feb. 25, 1788, he writes, "What difference do I feel by an increase of years? I find: 1. Less activity; I walk slower, particularly up-hill, 2. My memory is not so quick. 3. I cannot read so well by candle-light.

But I bless God all my other powers of body and mind remain just as they were."

Again he writes, "I this day enter upon my eighty-fifth year. What cause have I to praise God, as for a thousand spiritual blessings, so for bodily blessings also. How little have I suffered yet by the rush of time's numerous years? It is true I am not so agile as I was in time past. I do not run or walk as fast as I did; my sight is a little decayed, my left eye is grown dim and hardly serves me to read. I have daily some pain in the ball of my right eye, as also in my right temple, and in my right shoulder and arm. I find some decay in my memory, not in regard to what I have read or heard, twenty, forty or sixty years ago. Neither do I find any decay in my hearing, smell, taste or appetite, though I want but a third of the food I did once; nor do I feel any such thing as weariness, either in travelling or preaching. I am not conscious of any decay in writing sermons, which I do as readily and I believe as correctly as ever. To what cause can I impute this, that I am as I am? Doubtless to the power of God fitting me for the work to which I am called as long as he pleases to continue me therein; and next, subordinately to this, to the prayers of his children. May we not impute it to inferior means: 1. To my constant exercise and change

of air? 2. To my never having lost a night's sleep since I was born? 3. To my having sleep at command, so that whenever I feel myself almost worn out I call it and it comes, day or night? 4. To my constantly rising at four in the morning for above fifty years? 5. To my constant preaching at five in the morning for fifty years? 6. To my having had so little pain in my life, or so little sorrow or anxious care? Even now, although I find pain daily in my eye, or temple or arm, yet it is never violent and seldom lasts many minutes at a time. Whether or no this is sent to give me warning that I am shortly to quit this tabernacle, I do not know; but, be it one way or the other, I have only to say:—

My remnant of days
I spend to his praise,
Who died the whole world to redeem;
Be they many or few,
My days are his due,
And they all are devoted to him.”

Jan. 1, 1790, at the age of eighty-six years and seven months, he writes, “I am now an old man, decayed from head to foot. My eyes are dim, my right hand shakes much, my mouth is hot and dry every morning. I have a lingering fever almost every day; my motion is weak and slow. However, blessed be God, I do not slack my labor, I can preach and write still.”

June 26, 1790, he writes, "This day I enter my eighty-eighth year. For above eighty-six years I found none of the infirmities of old age; my eyes did not wax dim, neither was my natural strength abated; but last August I found almost a sudden change. My eyes were so dim that no glasses would help me. My strength quite forsook me; probably will not return in this world. But I feel no pain from head to foot, only it seems nature is exhausted, and, humanly speaking, will sink more and more till—

'The weary springs of life stand still at last.'"

Mark the wisdom of the following letter to the celebrated Ann Cutler: "MY DEAR SISTER.—There is something in the dealings of God with your soul which is out of the common way. But I have known several whom he has been pleased to lead in exactly the same way, and particularly in manifesting to them distinctly the three persons of the ever-blessed Trinity. You may tell all your experience to me any time, but will need to be cautious in speaking to others, for they would not understand what you say. Go on in the name of God, and in the power of his might. Pray for the whole spirit of humility, and I wish that you would write and speak without reserve to me."

Mr. Wesley is nearing his end. Mr. Atmore, from Darlington, writes concerning John Wesley,

“We heard him preach in the evening from ‘He is before all things, and by him all things consist.’ He appears very feeble ; and no wonder, he being nearly eighty-seven years of age. His sight has failed so much that he cannot see to give out a hymn, yet his voice is strong and his spirits remarkably lively. Surely this great man is the prodigy of the present age.” Yet he was up and off the next morning to Newcastle, where he preached the next evening.

Mr. Atmore writes again of John Wesley, “He was highly honored in his ministry ; particularly to one who had been in a state of great despair for many years. As soon as he arrived at the Orphan house, he inquired after this individual, and I accompanied him in visiting him. As soon as he entered the room where the poor man was, he went up to him and said, ‘Brother Reed, I have a word from God unto thee ; Jesus Christ maketh thee whole.’ He then knelt down to pray, and such a season I have seldom experienced. Hope instantly sprung up, and despair gave place ; and, although Reed had not been out of his bed for several years, he went that evening to hear Mr. Wesley preach, and God graciously confirmed the testimony of his servant in restoring him to ‘the light of his countenance.’”

In the last year of Wesley’s life, he travelled nearly eighty miles in a single day, and preached

in the evening without any pain. He writes, "The Lord does what pleaseth him. Peace be with your spirits."

To the end of time John Wesley's example in money matters will stand as a marble monument of his rigid economy and almost unbounded benevolence. He literally lived and labored for the good of others. His income was £30 a year from the London Circuit, and the profits of a Book Concern that yielded quite an income; but he gave it all to the extension of the work and to help his needy friends, except occasionally he would need a suit of clothes. He kept an exact account of his income and of his gifts and expenses, so that he could write, July 16, 1790, "N. B. For upwards of eighty-six years I have kept my accounts exactly. I will not attempt it any longer." In 1783, he and his stewards gave away by his orders £738. In the last year he kept account he gave away £826, and writes, "I can be accurate—. Not as I will, but as thou wilt." The first sentence was unfinished, which is a mark of the infirmity of his age. It is supposed that he gave away £30,000 during his life, and Henry Moore thinks that this was increased several thousand more.

In his will he gave his book business to the Methodist Conference in trust "for carrying on

the work of God by itinerant preachers." This was subject to a rent charge of £85 a year to the widow and children of his brother Charles. His furniture, books and whatever belonged to him in Kingswood, were given to Coke, Mather & Moore,, "in trust to be still used in teaching the children of poor travelling preachers." All his books and manuscripts were carefully given in his will. But, observe, there was no money put out at interest, and all his chapels were in the hands of trustees. So that he had nothing hoarded. "He died as he lived, without a purse. He set a good example in executing his own will as far as possible, and now had nothing to bequeath except what in his lifetime could not easily be turned into coin." Surely the grace of God triumphed over all selfishness, or love of ease, or worldly display. Blessed man, of blessed memory, who will be worthy to wear thy mantle? Who will tread in thy gracious steps?

He continued to preach on every possible occasion. He was so simple in his preaching that one woman exclaimed, "Is that the great Mr. Wesley? Why a child could understand him." A friend replied, "Yes, in this he displays his greatness, that while the most ignorant can understand him, the most learned are edified and can take no offence."

About this time he preached at Epworth market-place to such a congregation as was never seen at Epworth before. Six months before he died he wrote, "My body seems nearly to have done its work and is almost worn out. Last month my strength was nearly gone, and I would have sat almost still from morning to night. But blessed be God, I crept about a little and made shift to preach once a day. On Monday I ventured a little further, and after I had preached three times, once in the open air, I found my strength so restored that I could have preached again without inconvenience. I am glad Brother D—— has more light upon full sanctification. This doctrine is the grand *depositum* which God has lodged with the people called Methodists, and for the sake of propagating this chiefly he appeared to have raised them up."

The next Sunday he preached twice in the City Road chapel, and held a love-feast. Rev. James Rogers says, "Many souls were greatly comforted. Indeed, his preaching, during the whole winter, was attended with uncommon unction; he frequently spoke, both in his sermons and exhortations, as if each time were to be his last. His conversations in his family seemed to indicate a presentiment of death. He frequently spoke of the state of separate spirits and their particular employments."

He travelled sixty miles to Rye and preached to a serious congregation. The next day he preached at Winchelsea, beneath an ash tree in a church-yard. This was his last service in the open air. He returned to London for the services of the next Sabbath. Then he went to preach at Colchester. "He stood in a wide pulpit, and on each side of him stood a minister, and the two held him up, having their arms under his armpits. His feeble voice was hardly audible, but his reverent countenance, especially his long white locks, formed a picture never to be forgotten. There was a vast crowd of lovers and admirers."

In a letter he wisely says, "It cannot be that the people should grow in grace unless they give themselves to reading. A reading people will always be a knowing people. A people who talk much will know little." In another letter he says, "The danger of ruin to Methodism is, our preachers, many of them, are fallen. They are not spiritual. They are not alive to God. They are soft, enervated, fearful of shame, toil, hardship."

Some would have us believe that John Wesley was a Universalist because he favored the circulation of a tract that looked in that direction. But this cannot be, for he was always outspoken on the subjects of heaven and of hell, and of the eternal consequences of sin, as anyone will plainly

see that will search his writings. Dr. M. Buckley quotes the following :—

“In a sermon on Jer. viii, 22, written in Dublin, July 2, 1789, two years and three months after he republished this tract, Wesley says, ‘Then, if you have any desire to escape the damnation of hell, give all you can; otherwise I can have no more hope of your salvation than of that of Judas Iscariot. I call God to record upon my soul that I advise no more than I practice. * * * Still

‘I give up every plea beside,
Lord, I am damned! but Thou hast died.’”

“See his terrible sermon on ‘The Rich Fool,’ written at Balham, Feb. 19, 1790: ‘How replete with folly and madness is every part of this wonderful soliloquy! Eat and drink! Will thy spirit then eat and drink? Yea, but not of earthly food. Thou wilt soon eat livid flame, and drink of the lake of fire burning with brimstone. But wilt thou then drink and be merry? Nay, there will be no mirth in those horrid shades. Those caverns will resound with no music, but weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth!’”

In a letter to Adam Clarke, Nov. 26, 1790, he writes, “To retain the grace of God is much more than to gain it; hardly one in three does this. And this should be strongly and explicitly urged

upon all who have tasted of perfect love. If we can prove that any of our local preachers or leaders, either directly or indirectly, speak against it, let him be a local preacher or leader no longer. I doubt whether he should continue in the Society. Because he that could speak thus in our congregations, cannot be an honest man."

On the separation from the Church he writes, "I never had any design of separating from the Church. I have no such design now. I do not believe the Methodists in general design it when I am no more seen. I do, and will do, all that is in my power to prevent such an event. Nevertheless, in spite of all that I can do, many of them will separate from it. These will be so bold and injudicious as to form a separate party. I declare once more that I live and die a member of the Church of England, and that none who regard my judgment or advice will ever separate from it."

But while he did not separate from the Church, he decidedly *varied* from the order of her exercises in preaching in the open air, praying extempore, forming Societies, and employing lay preachers. On which account some said he was inconsistent; but he explains by calling attention to his two principles. 1. "That I dare not *separate* from the Church; that I believe it would be a sin so to do. 2. That I believe it would be a sin not

to *vary* from it in the points above mentioned. Put these points together and inconsistency vanishes away. I have been true to my profession from 1730 to this day."

The last sermon that Wesley wrote was upon faith. He was nearing the eternal world, and wrote, "How will this material universe appear to a disembodied spirit? Who can tell whether any of these objects that now surround us will appear the same as they do now? What astonishing scenes will then discover themselves to our newly-opening senses? How many orders of beings not discovered by organs of flesh and blood? Perhaps thrones, dominions, principalities and powers! And shall we not then, as far as angels ken, survey the bounds of creation and see every place where the Almighty

‘Stopped his rapid wheels, and said,
This be thy just circumference, O world.’

Yea, shall we not be able to move quick as thought through the wide realms of uncreated night? Above all, the moment we step into eternity, shall we not feel ourselves swallowed up of him, who is in this and every place, who filleth heaven and earth? It is only the thin veil of flesh and blood which now hinders us from perceiving that the great Creator cannot but fill the whole immensity of space. But then the veil will

disappear, and he will appear in unclouded majesty, God over all, blessed for ever."

He continued his labors and travels to the very last. About ten days before he died, he wrote, "I purpose, if God permit, to set out for Bristol on the 28th," which was two days before he died, "I hope to be in Worcester about the 22d of March."

But his end was near. He was utterly unfit for service the next Sabbath, and was obliged to lie down again and slept for three hours. He went to bed in the afternoon, but after two of his sermons had been read to him he came down to supper. The next Tuesday he preached at City Road chapel, and then met the leaders. The next day he went with James Rogers' eighteen miles and preached his last sermon at Leatherhead, in a dining-room, from "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found." The next day he wrote his last letter to Wilberforce upon the freedom of the slaves. The next day he returned to City Road, and requested to be left half an hour alone; when the time expired, Joseph Bradford found him so sick that he sent for Dr. Whitehead. The next day was passed in drowsiness and sleep. The next day, being Sunday, he seemed better, got up and looked cheerful. But his weakness increased the next day, and he spent it mostly in sleep. In

a low voice he said, "There is no way into the holiest but by the blood of Jesus." Notes were dispatched to the preachers for special prayer. But his work was done. The day before he died, when asked if he suffered pain, he said "No," and began singing,—

"All glory to God in the sky,
And peace upon earth be restored;
O, Jesus, exalted on high,
Appear our omnipotent Lord."

He desired to write, but was not able. When asked what he would write, he said, "Nothing but that the God is with us." While they were arranging his clothes for him to get up, he began singing,—

"I'll praise my maker while I've breath;
And, when my voice is lost in death,
Praise shall employ my nobler powers;
My days of praise shall ne'er be past,
While life, and thought, and being last,
Or immortality endures."

When seated in his chair he said, "Lord, thou givest strength to those that can speak, and to those who cannot. Speak, Lord, to all our hearts, and let them know that thou looseth tongues." He then sang his last song on earth,—

"To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
Who sweetly all agree—"

Full of happiness, but utterly exhausted, he was put to bed, where, after a short but quiet

JOHN WESLEY'S DEATH BED SCENE.



sleep, he opened his eyes, and, addressing the weeping watchers who stood around him, said, "Pray and praise." Which, of course, was done. To Joseph Bradford he said, "I would have everything ready for my executors. Let me be buried in nothing but what is woollen, and let my corpse be carried in my coffin into the chapel." Again he cried out, "Pray and praise." They fell upon their knees around the dying patriarch, and fervent prayers were offered, to which he responded as heartily as possible, especially when John Broadbent prayed that God would bless the system of doctrine and discipline which Wesley had been the means of establishing. With the utmost placidity he saluted each one present, shook hands and said, "Farewell ! farewell !"

Conflict there was none. It was the peaceful setting of a glorious sun undimmed by the smallest intervening cloud. With difficulty he requested them to scatter everywhere his sermon, "The love of God to fallen man." With great and well-nigh supernatural strength he said, "Best of all is, God is with us." Then, lifting his arm in grateful triumph, he emphatically reiterated, "The best of all is, God is with us." At another time he said, "The clouds drop fatness." And then, "The Lord of Hosts is with us ; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Pray and praise." And

again his friends bowed before God. Scores of times through the night he said, "I'll praise, I'll praise," but could add nothing more. Next morning, Wednesday, March 2, 1791, Joseph Bradford prayed with him. It was a few minutes before ten o'clock. Around the bed there knelt his niece, Miss Sarah Wesley; one of his executors, Mr. Horton; his medical attendant, Dr. Whitehead; his book steward, George Whitfield; the present occupiers of his house, James Rogers and Hester Ann Rogers and their little boy; and his friends and visitors, Robert Carr Brackenbury and Elizabeth Ritchie. Bradford was the mouth-piece of the other ten. Wesley's last word was "Farewell! farewell!" and then as Joseph Bradford was saying, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up ye everlasting doors, and this heir of glory shall come in," Wesley gathered up his feet in the presence of them all, and without a groan and without a sigh, was gone. Standing around that sacred spot they sang,—

"Waiting to receive thy spirit,
Lo! the Saviour stands above;
Shows the purchase of his merits,
Reaches out the crown of love."

Then they knelt again, and prayed that the mantle of this ascending Elijah may rest upon his followers. A heavenly smile rested upon his features. The room seemed filled with the Divine

presence. The excitement was so great that it was determined to have the funeral at five A. M. Short as the notice was, hundreds attended, and to each one was given a biscuit in an envelope, engraved with a beautiful portrait of the departed, dressed in canonicals, surmounted with a halo and a crown.

He was buried in the cemetery of the City Road Chapel. Six poor men carried him to his grave, for which they received twenty shillings each, this was according to Wesley's request; for the same reason there was no hearse, coach, escutcheon, or pomp, "except the tears of those that loved him."

Dean Stanley, when visiting the City Road Cemetery, asked an old man: "By whom was this cemetery consecrated?" He answered, "It was consecrated by the bones of that holy man, that holy servant of God, John Wesley."

Mr. Tyerman has well said of Wesley, "He stands alone, he has no successors, no one like him went before, no cotemporary was co-equal. There was a wholeness about the man, such as is rarely seen. His physique, his genius, his wit, his penetration, his judgment, his memory, his beneficence, his manners, his dress, make him as perfect as we ever expect man to be on this side of heaven."

Dr. Dobbin says: "A greater poet may arise than Homer or Milton, a greater theologian than Calvin, a greater philosopher than Bacon, a greater dramatist than any of ancient or modern fame; but a more distinguished revivalist of Churches than John Wesley, never!"

CHAPTER XVI.

THE CHARACTER OF JOHN WESLEY.

I am aware that much of what I have written already relates to the character of Mr. Wesley. Yet there are certain writers of notoriety that ought to have a special notice. Wilberforce said, "I consider Wesley as the most influential mind of the last century,—the man who will have produced the greatest effects centuries, or perhaps milleniums hence, if the present race of men should continue so long." Dr. Punshon says, "In general scholarship and knowledge he had few superiors; whilst such was his acquaintance with the New Testament that, when at a loss to repeat a text in the words of the authorized translation, he was never at a loss to quote it in the original Greek. In social life Wesley was a Christian gentleman, and with perfect care accommodated himself to both the high and the low, the rich and the poor. Placid, benevolent and full of anecdote, wit and wisdom, his conversation was not often

equalled. Though never trifling he was always cheerful ; sometimes saying, 'I dare no more *fret* than to *curse* or swear.' His industry was almost without a parallel. In many things he was gentle and easy to be entreated ; but in his earnestness in redeeming time he was decisive and inexorable. While waiting for his carriage he said, 'I have lost ten minutes forever.' His hands were always full, but his action was never fettered. He was always moving, and yet in the midst of his toils betraying no more haste than a planet in its course. His mission was too great to allow time for trifles. Outwardly calm while his heart was burning within him ; with an even temper held in almost perfect control, with a fine flow of animal spirits, which he says he never remembered to have been for a quarter of an hour below zero ; never unemployed, but never in a hurry.

And now to sum up the whole, look upon this character, at first 'like the young moon with a ragged edge, still in its imperfection beautiful, but waxing lovelier and larger until, full orb'd and calm, it shines in its completeness before men.' Think of the elements which you suppose necessary to moral greatness. Fervent piety, strong faith in God, a self-sacrificing purpose in life, manly daring, womanly tenderness, an industry which never tires, a benevolence which never says

‘It is enough ;’ an almost perfect control of passion, an almost perfect abnegation of selfishness, a catholic heart and wide spread sympathy, a gentleman’s courtesy and a scholar’s learning—if these things make up an artistic wholeness of character which the world should reverence, then look at that little old man with the band and cassock, walking at a brisk pace, neat in his dress and brisk in his manner, with aquiline nose and quick bright eye, silver hair and clear smooth forehead and color fresh as a boy’s. Go mark them well, for that wholeness of character is his and his name is John Wesley and in the apt words of one who has deeply studied him, ‘a greater, and by the grace of God, a better man the world has not known since the days of St. Paul.’”

Dr. Punshon gives also the following testimony of John Wesley especially upon the point of honor. “Neither can I do more than mention the gradual growth of honor which sat upon his forehead like a crown ; how prejudice changed into respect, and troops of friends gave reverence in his kindly age ; how John Howard blest his loving words, and under their inspiration, went forth to his prison journey with greater heart than ever. How Bishop Lowth sat at his feet and hoped that he might be found there in another world. How Samuel Johnson delighted in his conversation ; how

Alexander Knox kindled in rapture as he recalled the fine old man, with a child's heart and a seraph's faith; realizing his notion of angelic goodness, and finally, how, in perfect peace and leaving a reformed nation and a flourishing church as his monument, the good John Wesley died."

Mr. Alexander Knox said when Wesley was eighty-six years of age, "I was delighted to find his cheerfulness in no respect abated. It was too obvious that his bodily frame was sinking, but his spirit was as alert as ever, and he was little less the life of the company he happened to be in than he had been three and twenty years before, when I first knew him. Such unclouded sunshine in the deepest winter of age, and on the very verge of eternity, bespoke a mind whose recollections were as unsullied as its present sensations were serene. Dr. Conybeare said, "John Wesley will always be thought a man of sound sense, though an enthusiast."

Dr. Thomas Coke, LL. D., in a funeral sermon preached in Baltimore and in Philadelphia said, in describing the character of Wesley:

1. Notice *his communion with God*; very few alive have enjoyed more opportunities than I of observing his private walk with God. For months together we have resided under the same roof. For weeks I have been with him continually for

twenty-two or more hours of the day. The first hour in the morning he consecrated to solemn prayer and meditation ; and indeed all his employment was of such a nature, whether he was engaged in public or in private, in preaching or visiting the sick, in composition or in correspondence, as led him immediately to God. His mind seemed bent for God, except during the little time he daily allowed for his friends and his meals, and then, though most agreeable of companions, every anecdote that he related so illustrated his subject, and indeed the whole of his conversation, directly tended to the improvement of the mind. But sometimes on these occasions he would break forth with such an unction and such a power, as would devote the minds of the company to heavenly things, more perhaps than the most elegant sermons.

2. His crucifixion to the world no one can doubt that is the least acquainted with the tenor of his life. The employment he delighted in above every other, abstractedly from the will of God and the happiness of his fellow-creatures was

‘In academic groves to seek for truth,’

to search the records of antiquity, and converse with the mighty dead in the groves and gardens of Oxford. He had a handsome settlement as Fellow of a college ; and such authority as would

have enabled him to enjoy his philosophic pleasures to their utmost extent. His mind was exactly formed for the obtrusest studies, but he sacrificed the whole to the will of God and the insatiable desire of his soul for doing good.

3. His self-denial also kept equal pace with all the other fruits of true religion. For three years while in Georgia he lived on nothing but vegetables, milk and water. Sometimes, when the work demanded it, he would endure exquisite hardships for the want of food; even to the supporting himself and his fellow travellers on the very berries which grew upon the hedges of the field. His whole life was perfect order and regularity, so that, his friend said 'he moves like a clock.'

4. His boldness and fidelity in reproof have perhaps been equalled but by few. All that read his writings, or that attended his ministry, will know how he freed himself from the blood of all men, both rich and poor.

5. His singleness of eye throughout the whole, made one of the most shining traits of his life. No one could pass a full judgment on this, but those who were his most intimate acquaintances, and were enabled to take so minute a view of his proceedings as to connect whole series of actions, and draw their inference accordingly. And such

a view taken for many years, I can without hesitation declare that I never knew one, concerning whom I could form any mature judgment that sacrificed *ease, pleasure, profit, friends* to the welfare of the church of Christ with so much freedom as Mr. Wesley. Nay, those sacrifices were made with such perfect liberty as to be rendered on that very account quite hid from the inattentive observer; and yet, few, if any, could feel more sensibly than he; he was formed for friendship.

6. His benevolence was unbounded. Thousands of poor will remember him with grateful acknowledgements, while life continues. All that he gained by the circulation of his writings was laid out in this blessed channel. Sometimes, indeed, the love which believeth and hopeth all things, of which he had so large a share, laid him open to impositions; and wisdom then slept at the door of love; and if there was any fault in his public character, it was an excess of mercy.

7. But how shall I describe his labors. Follow him for two generations, for nearly sixty years, from country to country, from kingdom to kingdom, crying to hundreds of thousands: 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved!' And this was the burden of his discourse,—faith in Jesus Christ, the faith that works by love, while his congregation hung upon

his lips, and were delighted with the music of his voice.

Again, how shall I describe the labors of his pen ! How follow him through a hundred volumes and more of divinity, philosophy, history, physics, grammar—as an author, translator, abridger, compiler ! How was it possible that a man who traveled annually four or five thousand miles ; who preached regularly, till within a short time of his death, two or three times in a day ; who constantly kept up an extensive correspondence through England, Scotland, Ireland, America,—how was it possible that a man so engaged, should publish such an amazing library for the benefit of his people—for the benefit of mankind ? I answer, he husbanded every moment beyond any person I ever heard or read of. He gathered up all the fragments. In this point of view, I know not but we may challenge the benefactors of mankind in the present and past ages, without excepting St. Paul himself, that he was more abundant in labors than them all. For this end he allowed himself only six hours and a half in his bed, for about sixty years, rising every morning at four o'clock.

8. His success, under the blessing of God, was equal to all the rest. We learn from his journals that when he first stepped forth in the name of the Lord, to set his public seal to the truth of

that fundamental doctrine of the gospel, justification by faith, people daily fell down as dead, under the power of his word, through the force of divine conviction. In after years his grand talents seemed to be the establishing of believers, and the government of the church. In regard to the first, I know no one who was at all to be compared to him; such an unction accompanied his word, when he opened the heights and depths, lengths and breadths of the love of Christ. In regard to the latter,—his government and management of the vast connection under his care, was, I think I may say, the wonder of the world. That a single person should raise a Society of Christian professors, amounting, at his death, to 130,000, and should preserve union among them on the strictest principles of Christian discipline, is, as I believe, not to be paralleled in the history of the Church.”

The following beautiful picture of Mr. Wesley is found in Woodfall's Diary, June 17, 1791: “His indefatigable zeal in the discharge of his duty has been long witnessed by the world; but as mankind are not always inclined to put a generous construction upon the exertions of singular talents, his motives were imputed to love of popularity, ambition, and lucre. It now appears that he was actuated by a disinterested regard to the immortal interest of mankind. He observed

so rigid temperance, and allowed himself so little repose, that he seemed to be above the infirmities of nature, and to act independent of the earthly tabernacle he occupied. The recital of the occurrences of every day would be the highest encomium."

Dr. Riggs says, "No single man for centuries has moved the world as Wesley has moved it; since Luther, no man."

Dr. Stevens is very elaborate, and takes a sweeping view of the whole man and his sublime character. He says, "Wesley seemed to be conducting at once, the usual lives of three or four men,—if, indeed, the word usual can be applied to any department of his life. In either his literary labors or his travels, his functions as an ecclesiastical legislator and administrator, or his labors as an evangelist or preacher, he has seldom been surpassed; his travels, his studies, or his ministerial labors were each more than sufficient for any ordinary man. He possessed, in an eminent degree, one trait of a master mind,—the power of comprehending and managing at once, the outlines and details of plans. It is this power that forms the philosophical genius in science; it is essential to the successful commander and the great statesman. It is illustrated in the whole economical system of Methodism.

Like Luther, he knew the importance of the press; he kept it teeming with his publications. Unlike many men given to various exertions, and many plans, he was accurate and profound. He was an adept in classical literature and the use of the classical tongues; his writings are adorned with their finest passages. His temperament was warm, but not fiery. His intellect never inflamed, but always glowing—a serene radiance. His immense labors were accomplished, not by the impulses of restless enthusiasm, but by the cool calculation of his plans, and the steady self-possession with which he pursued them. He habitually exemplified his favorite maxim, ‘Always in haste, never in a hurry.’ He was as economical of his time as the miser could be of his money.”

Fletcher said of him, “Though pressed with the weight of near seventy years, and the care of near thirty thousand souls, he shames us still by his unabated zeal and immense labors, all the young ministers of England.”

“One of the finest spectacles in human life is the sight of an old man sustaining his career of action and endurance to the last, with an unwavering spirit. Such was Wesley. He sought no repose from his labors till death. Activity was the normal condition of happiness to him, as it must be to all healthful minds. After he was

eighty years of age he visited Holland twice. The calm ministerial authority which so characterized him was not assumed; it was the spontaneous effect of a true and natural courage.

A fine humor pervaded the nature of Wesley, and often gave a striking readiness and pertinency to his words. This humor enhanced the blandness of his piety and enabled him to convey reproof in a manner which could hardly be resisted with ill-temper."

He had a power of administering reproof which was exemplary. Bradford was his travelling companion. Wesley directed him to carry a packet of letters to the post. Bradford wanted to hear his sermon first, but Wesley was urgent. Bradford still refused. Wesley said "Then you and I must part." "Very good, sir," replied Bradford. They slept over it, but Bradford would not relent. Wesley said "Must we part?" "Please yourself" he replied. "Will you not ask my forgiveness." "No, sir." "Then I will ask yours." Thus this great man showed the superiority of his mind and the greatness of his soul.

He met a burly fellow on the street, who said "I never turn out for a fool." Wesley replied, pleasantly, "I do," and gave him the road.

It is sometimes asked whether he is entitled to rank in the highest class of great men. In view

of all that he did and said, let the reader decide for himself.

What greater honor could England confer on John Wesley than to place his memorial tablet among her great men in Westminster Abbey?

In the early spring of 1876, the late Dean Stanley unveiled in Westminster Abbey, London, the memorial tablet, in which was sunken in two medallion profiles the simple inscription,

JOHN WESLEY, M. A.

Born June 17, 1703: died March 2, 1791.

CHARLES WESLEY, M. A.

Born December 17, 1707: died March 29, 1788.

No words of eulogy are added, but there is a sculptured scene of historic interest which represents Wesley preaching on his father's gravestone.

The venerable Dean said, "John Wesley is represented as preaching on his father's tomb, and I have always thought that that is, as it were, a parable which represented his relation to National Institutions. He took his stand upon his father's tomb—on the venerable and ancestral traditions of the country and the church. That was the stand from which he addressed the world; it was not from the points of disagreement but from the

points of agreement with them in the Christian religion, that he produced those great effects which have never since died out in English Christendom. It is because of his having been in that age, which I am inclined to think has been unduly disparaged, the revival of religious fervor among our churches, that we all feel we owe him a debt of gratitude, and that he ought to have his monument placed among those of the benefactors of England." And he might have added, of the world. Three simple sentences of John and Charles Wesley are engraved upon the tablet beneath that sculptured scene. First, "I look upon all the world as my parish," which indicates the secret spring of Wesley's wide-spread activity. The second sentence is "Best of all, God is with us." This was the great truth that cheered him in his great toil, as well as comforted him in his dying hour. The third, "God buries his work, man but carries on his work," was the jubilant utterance of Charles Wesley. Dean Stanley concluded by saying, "Men take their places amongst the great by merit of great deeds. And by this rule, these men had a perfect right to this national and lasting honor."

"Thus the wheel turns round. One hundred and thirty years ago, Wesley was shut out of every church in England: now marble medallion

profiles of himself and his brother, accompanied with suitable inscriptions, are deemed worthy of a niche in England's grandest cathedral. The man who, a century ago, was the best abused man in the British isles, is now hardly ever mentioned but with affectionate respect. In the literature of the age; in its lectures and debates; in chapels and in churches; in synods, congresses, and all sorts of conferences; by the highest lords and most illustrious commoners, the once persecuted Methodist is now extolled."

It is said that Wesley travelled 225,000 miles after he became an itinerant. He is supposed to have preached 40,500 sermons in fifty years. Dr. Whitehead gives the following: "Now that Mr. Wesley is dead, I may be allowed to estimate his character, and the loss which the world has sustained by his death. Upon a fair account it seems to be such as not only annihilates all reproaches that have been cast upon him, but also as does honor to mankind; at the same time, it reproaches them. His natural and acquired abilities were both of the highest rank. His apprehension was lively and distinct. Though his temper was naturally warm, his manners were gentle, simple and uniform. His labors and studies were wonderful. He studied to be gentle, yet vigilant and faithful to all. He was free from being a

slave to any passion or pursuit that can fix a blemish upon his character."

He also gives the following: "Very lately, I had an opportunity, for some days together, of observing Mr. Wesley with attention. I endeavored to consider him not so much with the eye of a friend, as with the impartiality of a philosopher; and I must declare that every hour that I spent in his company afforded me fresh reasons for esteem and veneration. So fine an old man I never saw. The happiness of his mind issued forth in his countenance. Every look showed how fully he enjoyed 'the gay remembrance of a life well spent.' And wherever he went, he diffused a portion of his own felicity. Easy and affable in his demeanor, he accommodated himself to every sort of company, and showed how happily the most finished courtesy may be blended with the most perfect piety. In his conversation, we might be at a loss whether to admire most his fine classical taste, his extensive knowledge of men and things, or his overflowing goodness of heart. While the grave and serious were charmed with his wisdom, his sportive sallies of innocent mirth delighted even the young and thoughtless, and both saw in his uninterrupted cheerfulness the excellency of true religion. In him, even old age appeared delightful, like an evening without

a cloud. “His indefatigable zeal in the discharge of his duty, has long been witnessed by the world. Had he loved wealth, he might have accumulated without bound. Had he been fond of power, his influence would have been worth courting by any party. His zeal was not a transient blaze, but a constant flame.”

“See how great a flame aspires,
Kindled by a spark of grace!
Jesus’ love the nations fires,
Sets the kingdoms on a blaze.

Saw ye not the cloud arise,
Little as a human hand?
Now it spreads along the skies,
Hangs o’er all the thirsty land.

Lo! the promise of a shower
Drops already from above;
But the Lord will shortly pour
All the spirit of His love.”

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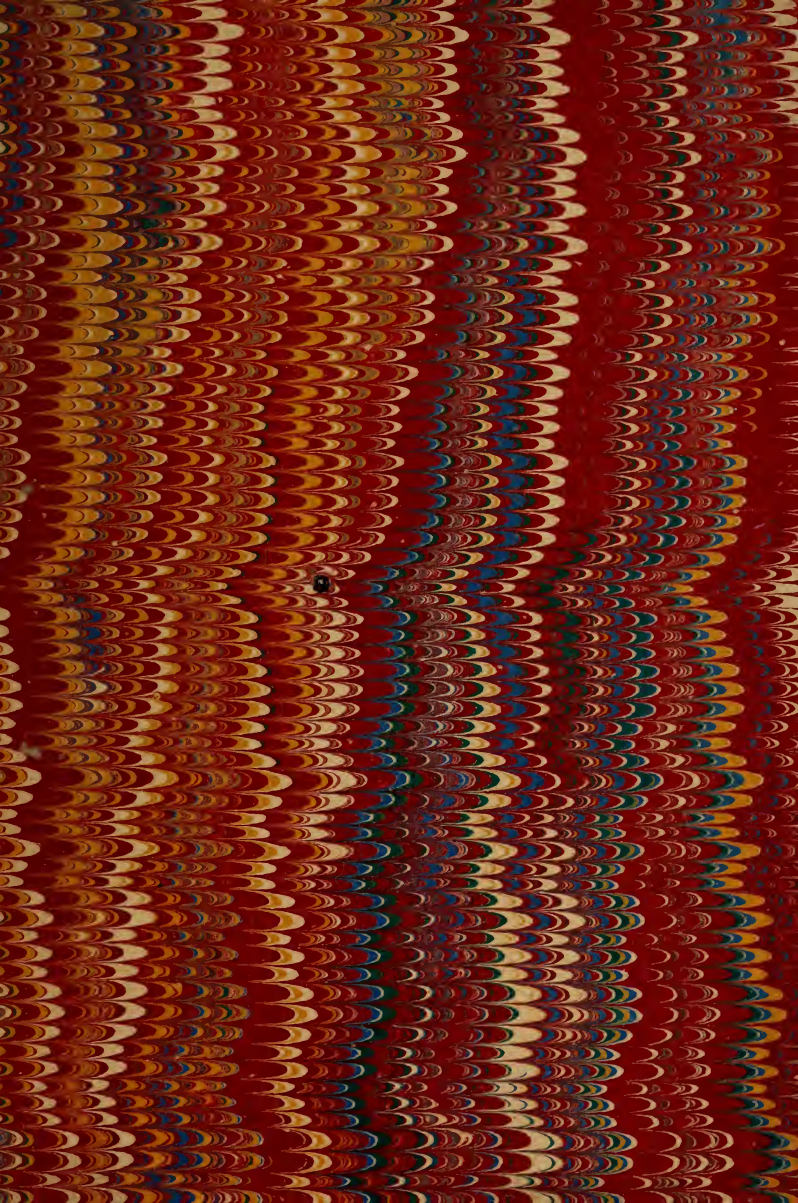
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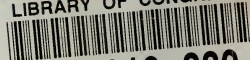
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