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# PIETISM AND METHODISM



# PIETISM AND METHODISM

OR

The Significance of German  
Pietism in the Origin and  
Early Development  
of Methodism

By

ARTHUR WILFORD NAGLER

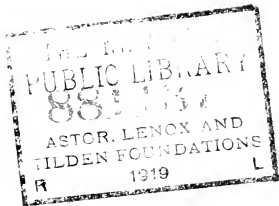
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*Intellectual Mentor and Friend  
This Volume Is Grate-  
fully Inscribed*





## PREFACE

THE seventeenth century was the age of Louis XIV. The eighteenth century was the age of the benevolent despots. The seventeenth century was the age of the devastations of the Thirty Years' War and of the hard-and-dry scholasticism into which the Protestant movement hardened. The eighteenth century was the age of the tremendous struggle between England and France for colonial power in the Old World and the New and of that belief in an absent God and a self-sufficient man which we call Deism. The cool logic and the hard externalism of each age felt the quickening power of a vital religious movement. The seventeenth century saw Pietism in Germany. The eighteenth century saw Methodism in England.

The comparative study of these two movements suggests fascinating possibilities to the trained historical investigator. There are technical questions which bristle with interest and sometimes with difficulty. And the practical result of such a study should be a profounder knowledge of each movement as seen in the light of the other and a fuller

appreciation of the place of vital piety in the life of the world.

Dr. A. W. Nagler has made a careful and adequate analysis of the sources, he has classified his material with skill, and he has drawn his conclusions with caution and insight. Of course in an investigation covering so many details of historical scholarship there are sure to be differences of opinion among those best qualified to judge. Even at such points Dr. Nagler's patient research and the care with which he marshals his evidence will command the respect of those who do not agree with him. It is not too much to say that his book is a definite contribution to our knowledge of the connections between the two movements.

LYNN HAROLD HOUGH.

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# Pietism and Methodism

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

THE present treatise is an attempt to furnish additional data to a better appreciation of the position of Methodism in the history of Christian thought and life by viewing it from the standpoint of another movement to which it presents the most similarities. The significance of Pietism in the origin and development of Methodism may be viewed, in the first place, from the standpoint of these resemblances. This will present the problem to what extent they were due to mere coincidence and to what extent due to influence exerted by the earlier upon the later movement. Each movement has been exhaustively treated by hostile and by sympathetic historians, but little has been written about the bearing of one upon the other. A few scattered statements comprise the extent of the discussion.<sup>1</sup> A study of

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<sup>1</sup>Compare Loofs's article in *Realency*, XII., p. 750f.; McGiffert, *Prot. Thought before Kant*, chapter on Pietism; same author, *Rise of Modern Religious Ideas*, p. 150ff.; Overton, *Evangelical Revival*, last pages; Allen, *Continuity of Christian Thought*; Dorner, *Prot. Theol.*, parts dealing with Pietism and Methodism.

one movement in the light of the other is, therefore, justified, a view which the following considerations will serve to corroborate.

The numerous revivals and reformations in Christianity afford one proof for the continuity of Christian thought and life. In every age there have lived those who have sought for something better in religion, something deeper and truer to life, than the official organs of the Church commonly offered. This was nothing more than the longing to get back of the external and the stereotyped into the inner source of truth and life. The externals—symbols, formulas, rites, and ceremonies—originated in the noble purpose adequately to express and visualize Christian truth and life, and in this capacity they served as means to an end. But the danger has always been to transmute the means into an end. When Christianity is viewed as the correct statement of truth, or when identified with the Church, with the Bible, or with the creeds, it may be separated from the life which it seeks to express and so become lifeless. A means which is useful when properly employed thus stifles what it was originally created to express. Instead of man's being brought into direct relations with God, he is told that his salvation depends upon his right relations to external media. A protest invariably arises among those who are seeking something more vital and personal in religion, and this fact offers a partial explanation for the rise of such movements as Montanism, Mys-

ticism, Protestantism, Puritanism, Pietism, and Methodism. A study of any one of these in the light of one or more of the others will undoubtedly furnish a truer perspective of its historical setting than could be obtained by studying it entirely alone.

On the other hand, an extensive investigation of only one of these great movements is apt to produce an exaggerated idea of its importance. It would be easy to conceive an enthusiastic devotee of Hasidism proclaiming that the most important movement in modern religious life was the great Jewish revival of the eighteenth century in Poland. An overestimation of the relative importance of movements in the general history of religion often leads to the erroneous assumption that such movements were quite unique and unlike anything which happened elsewhere. As a knowledge of non-Christian religions is conducive to a better understanding of Christianity, so a knowledge of the various movements within the Church itself affords the investigator a more just appreciation of each.

An investigation of this kind will also cast light upon elements otherwise uncertain. Doubtful questions might receive their solution as a result of simple comparison. Some so-called original contributions might find themselves relegated to the rubbish heap, a loss to some interests, perhaps, but with corresponding gains to historical truth. Moreover, a historical criticism will be less apt to degenerate into

dogmatism.<sup>1</sup> It is difficult for the investigator to be both impartial and sympathetic, and the danger grows when the interest is centered in a narrow field to the exclusion of all else. A student of one phase of religious life will thus find it practicable and profitable to relate his results to one or more similar or dissimilar tendencies, or, in other words, to study one upon the background of another.

To keep the present subject within a definite compass certain restrictions are necessary. Methodism is by no means a historical magnitude concerning the meaning of which all agree. High churchmen who stand on the ground of the apostolic succession generally deny it the right of being called a Church.<sup>2</sup> W. H. Frere finds the essential mission of the evangelical revival in its work as a pioneer for the Catholic revival of the following century, designating the whole "Catholic-Evangelicalism."<sup>3</sup> The word "Methodistic" is sometimes applied to certain characteristics of sects which had their origin in the Methodist revival or were merely allied to it in prin-

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<sup>1</sup>Ritschl's masterly work on Pietism has been objected to because of its alleged faulty interpretation of facts in the interest of dogmatism; and one is inclined to suggest that if he had investigated Methodism exhaustively, as Loofs has done, there would have been less cause for adverse criticism. On the other hand, some writers on Methodism dogmatically exaggerate the importance of that great revival, while others correspondingly minimize it, an error which might have been avoided had other similar movements been considered.

<sup>2</sup>I. Taylor, *Wes. and Meth.*, 285ff. <sup>3</sup>Eng. Ch. Ways, 79ff.



ple. In this treatise the term "Methodism" will serve as the designation of that religious revival in England which justly claims John Wesley as its founder and which eventually developed into a separate Church. The Evangelical party in the Anglican Church, the Welsh revival and kindred phenomena, and so-called Calvinistic Methodism will not be considered, or, at most, will receive only brief mention.

Just what constitutes Pietism is still a matter of dispute and will probably always remain so. The term is used in a narrow and in a broad sense. Sometimes it is applied to specific historical movements, at other times to all those tendencies which exalt feeling in religion and its practical phase to the depreciation of its intellectual content and its expression in ecclesiasticism. But differences of opinion arise when the narrow sense of the term alone is meant. This is due to a threefold cause: (1) The lack of any official pronouncements upon its doctrine and practice;<sup>1</sup> (2) the differences in Pietism itself at various stages of its development; and (3) the subjectivism which each writer brings to bear upon the subject. Under the general term Pietism, McGiffert<sup>2</sup> treats German Pietism, English Evangelicalism, and the New England Theology.

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<sup>1</sup>In 1683, however, some Pietist theologians published a confession of nine articles. Cf. Ritschl, II., 190f.

<sup>2</sup>Prot. Thought before Kant, Ch. IX.

Loofs<sup>1</sup> contends that it is an international phenomenon. Troeltsch<sup>2</sup> applies the common designation "Pietism" to all modern movements and sects which emphasize a personal religious experience and which generally go under the name "evangelical." He even refers to Methodism as a wave of Pietism;<sup>3</sup> although he, with Mirbt, Gruenberg, and others, also limits the term historically to that movement which is essentially German and Protestant.<sup>4</sup> Generalizations can only roughly approximate the truth; but if a general term is sought to include all the religious revivals of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Pietism may serve as well as any. Even the word Hasidism, literally translated, means Pietism;<sup>5</sup> and the Roman Catholic Church had its own form of Pietism in the Jansenist and Quietist propagandas. A reform wave under Ricci and Liguori deeply affected Italy. Even Spain reported ecclesiastical purification.<sup>6</sup>

In this book the term "Pietism" will be used in its narrower sense to preserve its strict historical import and will be confined to that reaction against the orthodoxy of the Lutheran Church which is generally connected with the work of Spener and

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<sup>1</sup>Grundl. d. Kirchenges., p. 210. He also asserts that German Pietism was genetically connected with the Puritan and Independent movement of England.

<sup>2</sup>Prot. Christentum und Kirche d. Neuzeit. <sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 416.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Gruenberg, Spener, III., p. 159.

<sup>5</sup>The Jewish Ency., Vol. VI., article Hasidism.

<sup>6</sup>W. H. Hutton, *The Age of Revolution*, p. 102.

his coadjutors.<sup>1</sup> The nature of that work has been variously estimated. Some contend that Pietism was nothing more than an attempted "Calvinizing" of the Lutheran Church by the introduction of a spirit of monkish piety.<sup>2</sup> This view, grounded in an attitude of hostility to Mysticism in general, obviously rests upon the dogmatic assumption that Mysticism, as well as Pietism, is alien to true Lutheranism. This position is also influenced by the notion that the piety of Protestantism must be diametrically opposed to the piety found in the Catholic Church, as if it were impossible to find a common foundation for both in human nature.<sup>3</sup> It is possible to find *praxis pietatis* wherever there is a zeal for subjective piety. Our interest lies with the form which that zeal took in the Lutheran Church in the latter part of the seventeenth and the first part of the eighteenth century, commonly called the Pietism of Spener and of Halle. The reaction in Dutch Calvinism and in the Calvinistic Churches of Germany will not fall within the scope of the present discussion. Neither will the Württemberg phase of the Pietistic protest be included, however important it was as possibly the sanest expression of the

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<sup>1</sup>Thus Sachsse, *Urspr. u. Wesen d. Piet.*, Gruenberg, I., 122.

<sup>2</sup>Kliefoth; and Ritschl, I., 192, II., 417. Though R. admits that Pietism acquired a right to a place in the Lutheran Church because of its insistence upon the Reformation principle that faith could be grounded only in personal experience.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Gruenberg, III., 140ff.

whole reaction against externalized Churchism. The Moravian Church cannot be omitted, because it served as the main channel by which some elements of Pietism were carried over into Methodism.

Emerson says somewhere that an institution may be regarded as the lengthened shadow of one man, as the Reformation of Luther, the Quakerism of Fox, the Methodism of Wesley, and, we might add, the Pietism of Spener. Our chief interest will center in two outstanding personalities—Spener, the protagonist of the German movement, and John Wesley, the author of the British revival. Their voluminous works will form the basis for the greater part of the thesis. These remarks are grounded in the assumption that Spener was a Pietist;<sup>1</sup> not so much the originator or the founder as the exponent of the movement. For later Pietism in the main followed the suggestions originally given by Spener<sup>2</sup> after he himself had gathered the scattered threads of a widely extending protest and had given this unified product new life and momentum.<sup>3</sup> Wesley may

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<sup>1</sup>Against Ritschl, II., 163, who asserts that in his own person Spener cannot be regarded as a Pietist according to the meaning which that term afterwards received.

<sup>2</sup>In some respects later Pietism was more extreme.

<sup>3</sup>Pietism was not the arbitrary creation of one man nor even of a group of them, for innumerable agencies were at work as before the Reformation. But it is also true that at the psychological moment a prophet was needed to breathe life into it.

well be regarded as the founder of Methodism, for that movement was largely the result of his theological ideas, practical suggestions, and organizing ability. To say that the conditions in England would have brought forth a similar revival even if Wesley had never appeared on the scene is an assertion easily made and of plausible sound when pre-Methodistic conditions are considered,<sup>1</sup> but historically beyond the possibility of proof.

While the main current of Methodism had the impress of one commanding personality indelibly stamped upon it, Pietism had two prominent leaders, without whom it would be difficult to conceive the movement to have developed as it did. Spener was the prophet, the "father-confessor" of the movement, but he lacked those qualities which Wesley possessed in a preëminent degree—energy, aggressiveness, and administrative talent. These deficiencies in Spener's character found extraordinary expression in the personality of Francke. With certain reservations in mind pertaining to differences incident to the personal character of the men themselves and to their respective environments, the conclusion may justly be drawn that Spener and Francke together were to Pietism what Wesley was to Methodism.

The radical tendencies and outgrowths generally connected with new movements and from which

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<sup>1</sup>See below, Chapter XI.

neither Pietism nor Methodism was free, need not concern us.<sup>1</sup> A great movement ought to be judged mainly by its success in accomplishing that which it sets out to do. The accessories of a more or less visionary and fanatical character which strive to affiliate themselves with the main current or even to supplant it must be judged on their own merits. Whatever judgment is passed upon the ecstatical accompaniments of Pietism and Methodism, they must in any case be regarded as mere by-products. Radical spirits are always present and take the first opportunity presented to join any new movement which seems to strike out in the general direction in which they are going. Such phenomena, though important in a general treatment, will not be included here, for that would carry us too far afield. The aim is not to give a detailed chronological account of the rise and growth of each movement, but to group and relate those factors—background, personalities, events, doctrines, and practices—which seem to have a bearing upon the thesis as stated. Elements otherwise important will, therefore, be merely touched upon or entirely omitted.

Some interesting phenomena connected with revivals in general and with Pietism and Methodism in particular would present a mass of material for

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Abbey and Overton, *Eng. Ch. in Eighteenth Cent.*, II., 602: "Any form of religion once eagerly accepted by the multitude is sure to contract some grosser properties, although they may not impair to any extent its vital essence."

psychological investigation and interpretation; but since this lies wholly outside our purpose, the religious experiences will be accepted simply as historical facts, however they may be explained. Sachsse<sup>1</sup> goes into the precise meaning of the new-birth experience and offers an explanation of the phenomenon. Similar attempts have been made by historians of Methodism. Recent books on the psychology of religious experience will be found helpful.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ursprung u. Wesen d. Pietismus, pp. 125ff.

<sup>2</sup>H. C. McComas, *The Psychology of Religious Sects*, offers interesting suggestions in his attempt to explain the rise of sects. Cf. James, *Varieties of Rel. Exper.*; Starbuck, *The Psy. of Religion*; Ames, *The Psy. of Rel. Exper.*; Coe, *The Spiritual Life, The Psychology of Religion*; Bowne, *The Christian Life*, etc.

## CHAPTER II

### THE BACKGROUND OF PIETISM

SPENER based the justification of his efforts for reform on the plea that the Reformation had not been completed; that many evils had consequently crept into the Church; that the emphasis had been placed too much upon purity of doctrine and not sufficiently upon purity of life, which had led many people who were living in conscious sin to depend upon the merits of Christ for salvation.<sup>1</sup> His work can thus be understood only upon the background of the Lutheran orthodoxy of the seventeenth century in connection with the social, economic, and political conditions of the times.

In times past the Reformation generally has been represented as a great break between the medieval and the modern world. To-day the pendulum has swung to the opposite extreme, the tendency being to regard it as merely a crisis, the new conception of religion not having been ushered in till the *Aufklaerung* in connection with the Anabaptist and spiritualistic contributions.<sup>2</sup> Much of Medievalism was undoubtedly brought over into the Prot-

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<sup>1</sup>Spener, *Bed.*, 2, 668.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Troeltsch, *Prot. Christentum u. Kirche*, pp. 254f., 265ff. Also McGiffert, *Prot. Thought*, pp. 186ff.



estant Church; but it is also true that the Protestant life principle was present in the beginning, only to find its fuller expression in a later age, after the new scholasticism had suffered shipwreck upon the rocks of Pietism and the *Aufklaerung*.<sup>1</sup>

Whatever the essence of the Reformation may have been, the verdict of historians upon the character of the following periods has been practically unanimous. As an inheritance from Melanchthon the Church was regarded as a school where pure

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<sup>1</sup>When Hastie (*The Theol. of the Ref. Ch.*, pp. 26ff.) declares that the Reformation was not the assertion of private judgment, not subjectivity in religion, not the assertion of the practical reason or conscience, etc., on the ground that these elements had found expression in certain men previous to the Reformation, he forgets that no new movement is the expression of that which before has never been thought of, but that it simply makes predominant what formerly had been merely the opinion of isolated individuals. Hastie's conclusion emphasizes only one phase of the Reformation—namely, that it was a "Church-reforming principle exercising its function within the historical development of the Christian Church." Protestantism makes the relation of the individual to the Church depend upon his relation to Christ and emphasizes the immediacy of the religious relation between God and the soul, thus leading to the emancipation from human authority and human mediation in religion. With Luther faith was a personal experience by which the soul discovered God through Christ. Though we find mystical elements here, Luther's later development was more nonmystical, in which the Scriptures played a greater rôle. Harnack (in *D. G.*, III., 861) concludes that Luther's main work was the setting up of faith and the destruction of dogma, while Pfeiderer (in *Phil. of Religion*, pp. 10ff.) states that the greatest contribution of Luther to the Reformation was the mystical.

doctrine was taught, and a correct attitude toward this doctrine soon came to be regarded as the essence of Christianity. Because Luther's teaching concerning good works had been ambiguous, the impractical distinctions made in order to keep clear of the Catholic principle had resulted in a loss of the practical values in religion.<sup>1</sup> Feeling in religion was practically ignored after Luther's day.<sup>2</sup> The attempt to renew the Church so that it might become a free religious institution, the insistence upon a living faith grounded in personal conviction, the right of the people to regulate their own Church affairs, was all gradually displaced by the theory of the Church as a sort of external police force, while the people received recognition as Christians by their outward adherence to pure doctrine and their observance of the true sacraments.

Assurance of the truth of doctrine took the place of the assurance of personal salvation. Man was in a period of probation,<sup>3</sup> for his eternal fate was not decided till the judgment day. This led to an arbitrary separation of religion from the affairs of the present life. The extreme transcendental idea of God accentuated the evil; for he was regarded as having no direct vital relationship with man, his power and grace having been deposited once for all in the means of grace. The Church had received

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<sup>1</sup>O. Ritschl, *D. G. d. Prot.*, II., p. 5.      <sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, I., p. 92.

<sup>3</sup>This was similar to the medieval conception, "*conjectura moralis*," Allen, *Cont. of C. Th.*, 277f.

her final form, theology was completed, and both were to be kept intact and defended against all enemies.<sup>1</sup> With this mechanical intellectualistic comprehension of doctrine reaching its height in the demand that no deviation be made even "in phrasibus" from the accepted teaching as presented in the Concordiæ Formula, there arose a new scholasticism within the Lutheran Church.<sup>2</sup>

In place of the infallible Church was placed the infallible Scripture. The "Scripture priest" took the place of the "sacrament priest."<sup>3</sup> The symbolical books threatened to usurp the throne upon which the Bible had been placed, for it was asserted that they contained all that was necessary to salvation. In this atmosphere of an objective dogmatism hair-splitting controversies arose, syllogisms were fought with syllogisms, and preaching itself became infected with the polemic virus. It is needless to enter upon a discussion of the controversies. Suffice it to say that the spiritual life of the Church suffered in the rise of a separate order of teachers (*ecclesia representativa*), the members of which regarded themselves as being on a higher plane than the common people and possessed of a certain lawful authority in spiritual and ecclesiastical matters.<sup>4</sup> The gulf between the clergy and the laity was con-

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<sup>1</sup>Especially the Jesuits and the Calvinists.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Baur, *Ges. d. Chr. Kirche*, IV., 345.

<sup>3</sup>Troeltsch, *Prot. Christentum*, p. 320.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Dorner, *Prot. Th.*, II., 166; Baur, *Ges. d. Chr. K.*, 346.

stantly becoming wider, and the congregation took practically no active part in Church government and in public worship.

The economy of the Church was bound up with the doctrine that the Holy Spirit worked only in and through the Church and the means of grace. The Roman Catholic theory of an official grace inherent in the ministry and the ministrations of the Church thus came back to full power, and this was followed by a superstitious dependence upon the "accomplished work." With the increase of an external Churchism came a corresponding decrease in the emphasis upon the inner elements of religion. Although the Lord's Supper was attended and baptism was highly esteemed, the common people looked for a secret magical influence from the outward performance of the rites.<sup>1</sup> The practice of exorcism in the baptismal ceremony was retained.<sup>2</sup> The retention of the confessional, with its attendant evils, led many to think more of the disciplinary act of the Church than of any real inward repentance. Exclusion from holy communion as a form of discipline not only degraded the service, but worked harm by bestowing upon those who were allowed to partake a recognition of civil and ecclesiastical good standing irrespective of inner heart attitude.

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Spener, *L. Bed.*, 3, 724.

<sup>2</sup>Gruenberg (*I.*, 31, *Spener's Life*) states that the common man probably believed that the devil in the child's nature was driven out through baptism.

The appeal of Luther to the secular powers had introduced into Lutheranism a "Cæsareopapie" (secular domination) hardly less odious than the former papal domination. The government of the numerous "Landeskirchen" (territorial Churches) was virtually in the hands of the territorial lords, who often interfered arbitrarily in the affairs of the Church, setting up and deposing clergy almost at will and censoring the religious press. In the consistories secular power united with clerical influence in wielding a sort of despotism, which left the third class entirely unrepresented. The presence of numerous territorial Churches prevented harmonious action and allowed the princes greater freedom of action. Absolutism was in the air and applied to Church government, drowning any expression for greater liberty which the people might have had. Protests were of little avail.<sup>1</sup>

The onward march of democracy had begun in England; but the common people of Germany knew little, if anything, about it. They were kept in a state of servitude by both upper classes. They lived in the State in order to obey and in the Church in order to be instructed. The clergy must be held partly responsible for the low condition of morals.<sup>2</sup> Pastoral duties, catechetical instruction, and Church discipline were neglected.<sup>3</sup> The school system must

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Hoszbach, Andrea, p. 202f.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, Andrea in Menippus, Gespraech, 82, declares that the clergy were guilty of the common vices. <sup>3</sup>Sachsse, 141.

also receive its share of condemnation; for character-training was disregarded, and life at the universities was of such a nature that ennobling influences were the exception. Belief in witchcraft was quite prevalent among all classes and was responsible for cruel persecutions.<sup>1</sup> The awful Thirty Years' War simply made matters worse.<sup>2</sup> Many of the clergy suffered moral shipwreck, and the brutalizing effect of the war upon the people can hardly be exaggerated.<sup>3</sup> Tholuck gives many examples which go to prove that exceptionally large numbers lived to satisfy their lowest passions. The Sabbath was generally employed for the greatest license.<sup>4</sup> Among the prominent characteristics of the age were lawlessness, luxury, drinking, and a pleasure-madness which knew no bounds. Vicious influences emanating from the court of the grand monarch cast a blight upon the petty German courts.<sup>5</sup> As a result, skeptical and atheistic tendencies became more pronounced.<sup>6</sup>

It is not difficult to imagine what the economic situation must have been. Countless numbers lost

<sup>1</sup>Janssen, *Hist. of Ger. People*, XVI., pp. 477ff.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Freytag, *Bilder aus d. deut. Verg.*, III., ch. 3. From two-thirds to three-fourths of the people perished during the war.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, ch. 2, tells about the life of the soldiers and the manner in which they spread misery, disease, famine, and death (pp. 230ff.).

<sup>4</sup>Kir. *Leben d.*, 17 Jahrh., I., 218ff.; II., 108; I., 120f.

<sup>5</sup>Gruenberg, *Spener*, I., 35. <sup>6</sup>Spener, *L. Bed.*, I., 209, 336.

everything they had. With the disappearance of many villages went also a decrease in the independence of the small farmer and the tenant. Feudal conditions still remained, and various forms of tribute were demanded by the sovereign lords.<sup>1</sup> The economic hardships produced in the hearts of the people a soil favorable to an intense religious appeal.

Long before the time of Spener, and even before the devastation wrought by the religious war had cast its blight upon the land, isolated trumpet calls had summoned the people to a more spiritual life and had warned the Church of the dangers to which manifold abuses were leading her. The strict orthodox party felt that the possession of a pure doctrine would insure safety and that the forces within the Church would always provide adequate remedies when they were needed. Some of these men saw the need of reform, but deemed the stated agencies of the Church sufficient to meet all emergencies. Others approached the great problem from different standpoints, feeling that the Church as then constituted was unable to save the situation. Arndt may be taken as the representative of the mystical reaction, Andrea of the practical, and Calixtus of the theological protest.

The latter based his hopes upon the reshaping of theology, the primitive Church to serve as model.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Freytag, *Bilder*, . . . 429ff.    <sup>2</sup>Gruenberg, *Spener*, I., 99ff.

His aim was similar to that of the Latitudinarians of England in his attempt to pare down the essentials to the smallest compass after all nonessentials had been discarded. However, his syncretistical plans to simplify and remedy the dogmatic system came to naught.

The mystical reaction included speculative and practical elements; the former advocated by Weigel, Boehme, and others, the latter mainly by Arndt. Pretorius, who had anticipated Spener's doctrine of present salvation, held to the historical importance of mediation through Christ; but Weigel, disregarding the latter element, emphasized immediate union with God. The Mystics in general protested against the prevailing externalism in their assertion that faith implied the indwelling of Christ. This produced a total change in the soul. The most influential practical contribution was Arndt's book, "True Christianity," in which he emphasized union with God through Christ, the necessity of the new birth, and the need of combining religious mysticism with practical ethical elements.<sup>1</sup> God reveals himself in four "books": (1) Holy Scriptures; (2) the living example of Jesus Christ; (3) in man himself, in his own heart and conscience; (4) in the great world book of nature.<sup>2</sup> Although he strongly asserted his agreement with orthodoxy, he differed

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<sup>1</sup>Spener's *Predigten ueber*. Arndt, pp. 5ff.

<sup>2</sup>Arndt's *True Christianity*.



radically from it in his accentuation of mystical piety.<sup>1</sup> Before the great war there was present, therefore, the peculiar form of piety found in Pietism itself;<sup>2</sup> and though temporarily interrupted, it sprang forth again in him who claimed that he was simply following in the footsteps of Luther and Arndt.

Before leaving this phase of the subject a word ought to be said about the influence of Bernard's "Jesus Mysticism" and its relation to the poetical productions of the time.<sup>3</sup> Emphasis was placed upon the love of the individual for Jesus. Union with him, often of an ecstatic nature, was the deepest experience that the soul could seek. Relationship with him was frequently expressed in terms of bridegroom and bride, as in Arndt's book, "Paradies Gaertlein." The poet, Paul Gerhardt, gave expression to these mystical elements in numerous hymns.

In general, the mystical tendency led toward individualism and anti-ecclesiasticism. In some it produced a monasticism of the heart which was

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Ritschl, *Piet.*, II., 42: "Arndt was the first among Lutherans to represent this specific element of medieval devotion as the mainspring of living faith."

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Koepp, *Arndt*, p. 9. It seems that Ritschl did not sufficiently recognize the close relationship which existed between these two expressions of piety within Lutheranism and was consequently led to seek the beginning of German Pietism in the Dutch Calvinistic movement.

<sup>3</sup>Ritschl, *Piet.*, II., Art. 29, *Jesus-liebe in Poesie u. Prosa.*

based upon a negative ethics, a renunciation of the world and its pleasures.

The representative of the second group of reformers, Andrea, placed the emphasis upon constructive religious work, probably influenced by the Geneva plan of Calvin.<sup>1</sup> Besides deploring the prevailing decay in religion and the barrenness of scholastic theology,<sup>2</sup> he tried to remedy conditions by uniting with purity of faith a religion of feeling and practical piety.<sup>3</sup> People were brought into associations, children were educated, poor students helped, plans made for the benefit of the working classes, and relief measures attempted for the poor and the sick. In the matter of Church discipline, he suggested that judges be appointed to oversee the morals of the people.<sup>4</sup> After the clergy had experienced regeneration in their own hearts, they were to lead the reform propaganda.<sup>5</sup>

For various reasons all these attempts failed. They were, however, of the greatest importance in preparing the ground for the time when circumstances were more opportune. Pietism thus sprang out of the religious needs of the people, which in turn were intensified by the social, economic, and political conditions of the age.

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<sup>1</sup>Ritschl, *Piet.*, II., 131.

<sup>2</sup>Menippus, *Gespraech*, 33, in Hoszbach.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Hoszbach, *Andrea*, p. 129. <sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, 224.

<sup>5</sup>From excerpts, *Andrea*, Appendix, Hoszbach, 239-295. Other men interested in these reforms were Gesenius, Grossgebaur, Count August, Ernst the Pious, etc.

## CHAPTER III

### THE DOCTRINAL POSITION OF SPENER

SPENER repeatedly affirmed that his theological position was identical with Luther's and with that of the primitive Church.<sup>1</sup> He assumed that these were in perfect agreement, because true doctrine could not be changed. It was the truth and in harmony with Scripture.<sup>2</sup> The traditional doctrines of the Church—trinity, divinity of Christ and his vicarious sacrifice, the fall, and original sin—were accepted by him without reserve.<sup>3</sup> The doctrine of God's immanence stood forth more clearly in his system, while the incarnation seemed to him a recognition of the worth of human nature.<sup>4</sup> As regards the importance of the means of grace, Spener did not wish to deviate from the strict orthodox teaching, although he allows that God could save without them,<sup>5</sup> as in the case of unbaptized children dying in infancy. We shall see, however, that baptism lost its significance in the emphasis which he

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<sup>1</sup>Bed., 3, 952ff. Prel., Art. VI., 100-126, in Auf. Ueb. Aug. Conf.

<sup>2</sup>Bed., 4, 148f

<sup>3</sup>Bed., 1, 78; Gl. L., 1108ff.; E. G. S., I., 32, 83.

<sup>4</sup>Gl. L., 417, 1132f.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, 325.

placed upon the new birth.<sup>1</sup> In the eucharist (more than a mere memorial or a spiritual participation)<sup>2</sup> the whole body of Christ is partaken of by each communicant.<sup>3</sup> The preaching of the Word is also essential, because it is God's means of bringing the knowledge of saving faith to the people; and since children were incapable of receiving it, infant baptism was regarded as essential.<sup>4</sup> The confessional caused Spener a good deal of trouble. If it had not been for his fear of the consequences, he would have discarded it.<sup>5</sup> The distinction between the visible and the invisible Church is retained. The purity of the former is made dependent upon the relative number of "invisible Church" members it contained<sup>6</sup> and membership in the latter rather than in the former regarded as essential to salvation. In harmony with the Arminians, Spener taught the universality and resistibility of grace.<sup>7</sup> Eschatological doctrines occupied a prominent place in his system. Interesting in this connection was his admission that it was natural to have doubts about the eternity of hell.<sup>8</sup>

Whether Spener succeeded in his desire to remain orthodox may be an open question; but that he de-

<sup>1</sup>See below pp. 29f. In *Pia des.* 37 Spener calls baptism "the actual bath of the new birth and regeneration of the Holy Ghost."

<sup>2</sup>*Gl. L.*, 430f.; *Cons.*, 3, 139.

<sup>3</sup>*Bed.*, 4, 494f.; cf. *Bed.*, 4, 720f.

<sup>4</sup>*Bed.*, 1b, 125ff.

<sup>5</sup>*Gl. L.*, 516.

<sup>6</sup>*Bed.*, 4, 688ff.; *Gl. L.*, 1261.

<sup>7</sup>*Gl. L.*, 111, 134, 327.

<sup>8</sup>*L. Bed.*, 1, 75.

viated from the Lutheran position in his general attitude toward doctrine will be made clear, we hope, in the following discussion.

In the first place, he distinguished between esoteric and exoteric theology, asserting his right to private opinions which might not be quite in harmony with the traditional faith,<sup>1</sup> though he constantly strove to accommodate himself to orthodox belief for the good of the Church.<sup>2</sup> In the second place, his recommendation that doctrine be simplified carried with it a demand that essentials be separated from nonessentials, the former alone to be emphasized.<sup>3</sup> He strenuously opposed superfluous scholasticism, with its "hair-splitting sophistries."<sup>4</sup> Thirdly, the very citadel of orthodoxy was attacked in the assertion that correctness of belief was not so essential as was generally maintained. For it was absurd to believe, he declared, that every error in which a man might become involved would result in his damnation.<sup>5</sup> And, finally, Spener contended that all parts of the doctrinal system were not of equal value, for the articles of faith were to be judged according to their close or remote relationship with the central fact of salvation. Those articles, therefore, which could be grounded in experi-

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<sup>1</sup>Cons., 2, 15f.    <sup>2</sup>Bed., 1, 198, 692.

<sup>3</sup>Bed., 3, 181f. Some things must be left in the dark—conditions in heaven, etc.

<sup>4</sup>Pia des., 25ff.

<sup>5</sup>L. Bed., 3, 407.

ence—as justification, new birth, and sanctification—were the most important.<sup>1</sup>

Spener's radical attitude toward doctrine thus brought about a real transformation in its meaning and an emphasis upon the relative importance of its component parts. And the accusation of his enemies that he cast aside the *systemata et compendia theologica* was not altogether unjust.<sup>2</sup> It will now be necessary to dwell more at length upon some of the more important doctrines which, in the hands of Spener, received the significance of new doctrines because of the supreme importance he attached to them.

Over against orthodoxy Spener maintained that the Bible alone was supremely authoritative, the symbolical books being authoritative only so far as they were in harmony with the Scriptures and as the individual conscience approved. And calling forth a doubt as to their perfect agreement with Scripture was in reality dealing them a death blow.<sup>3</sup> Although inspired, the Bible was not to be regarded as a product of mechanical dictation. But since the translations were somewhat imperfect, the original alone was God's Word.<sup>4</sup> We notice the beginnings of the historical view in Spener's statement that the New Testament contained a higher revelation than

<sup>1</sup>Bed., 2, 897ff.    <sup>2</sup>Gruenberg, Spener, I., 401.

<sup>3</sup>Gruenberg, Spener, I., 434; Bed., 1a, 369f.; Auf. Ueb., 67f.; Gl. L., 493f.

<sup>4</sup>Bed., 3, 753f.

the Old Testament.<sup>1</sup> The Bible did not act mechanically when applied, as a medicine would act, but only when the Spirit worked through it and, in fact, could be truly understood only by the Spirit.<sup>2</sup> The ultimate authority of Scripture was thus grounded in the inner testimony of the Spirit.<sup>3</sup> This fact is very important, because it shows that Spener, although a literalist, was unwilling to place himself under the bondage of the "dead letter" of Scripture.

But Spener's most important contribution was his insistence upon the importance of those doctrines which were grounded in experience and, as a consequence, were of vital concern to the individual.<sup>4</sup> Here we deal with such terms as repentance, justification, conversion, illumination, sanctification, assurance, and perfection.<sup>5</sup>

Repentance is the first step on the way of salvation;<sup>6</sup> and though frequently accompanied by pain and anguish, feeling was not really essential to the experience.<sup>7</sup> The *Buszkampf* (penitential conflict), so important in later Pietism, thus finds little sup-

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<sup>1</sup>Bed., 4, 23f.; cf. Bed., 1, 331.      <sup>2</sup>E. G. S., 2, 122, 410.

<sup>3</sup>Allg. Gottesgelehrtheit, 2, 64ff.

<sup>4</sup>See above, p. 27; cf. Bed., 2, 897ff.

<sup>5</sup>The order given has no significance, except that repentance and justification may be thought of as having priority in the mind.

<sup>6</sup>Gl. L., 981ff., presents the following elements: *Meditatio peccati*; *agnitio irae divinae*; *dolor de peccatis*; *odium peccatis*; *deprecatio*; *propositum non amplius peccandi*.

<sup>7</sup>Bed., 3, 588; 1a, 195.

port in Spener.<sup>1</sup> He would not, however, deny the reality and worth of certain experiences to which he lay no claim himself, such as visions, special revelations, and extraordinary states of emotion.<sup>2</sup>

After faith is produced in the repentant heart through the Spirit, and the grace of God in Christ is received, justification and adoption result. Man is born a new creature.<sup>3</sup> Spener, like Wesley, distinguished between the momentary change in the beginning and the development of the life process.<sup>4</sup> In the first spark of divine life there was contained everything that developed later.<sup>5</sup> Although this conversion experience was not necessary for the individual who remained steadfast in baptismal grace, Spener inferred that practically all fell from that grace during life, and consequently he felt justified in sharply dividing people into twice-born and once-born.<sup>6</sup> The former experienced a change in body and soul, in mind and will, and in the affections, and in this respect the new birth might be called perfect.<sup>7</sup> Its imperfection was implied in the process of growth which followed.<sup>8</sup> In the emphasis which Spener placed upon this sanctification as an essential element in faith he diverged widely from

<sup>1</sup>A few statements seem to favor it—*Bed.*, 1a, 162f.; 2, 681f.

<sup>2</sup>*Bed.*, 1, 319f.; 2, 634ff.

<sup>3</sup>*Gl. L.*, 707ff.; *E. G. S.*, 1, 1017ff.

<sup>4</sup>*Bed.*, 1, 209. Not necessary to know exact time. *Bed.*, 1, 197.

<sup>5</sup>*L. Bed.*, 1, 130f.

<sup>7</sup>*Bed.*, 3, 230f.

<sup>6</sup>*Gl. L.*, 705f.; *L. Bed.*, 1, 130.

<sup>8</sup>*Gl. L.*, 712.



the strict orthodox standpoint.<sup>1</sup> He even went so far as to declare that justification received its guarantee only when followed by sanctification,<sup>2</sup> inasmuch as faith was more than mere intellectual assent. Also it included personal conviction issuing in a desire to crucify the flesh and lead a righteous life.<sup>3</sup> The latter elements were vitally connected with the doctrine of good works and the doctrine of perfection. The former doctrine he placed next to faith,<sup>4</sup> contending that they were really phases of the same thing. Works were not, however, instrumental in our salvation and had no merit in themselves.<sup>5</sup>

The doctrine of perfection, enunciated in connection with holiness of life, separated Spener still more widely from orthodoxy. He had a logical place for it in his system and refused to allow that it was significant only for the future world. This perfection is not "absolute," for we are still in the flesh; and even when we have accomplished as much as possible, we have not attained to the real perfection.<sup>6</sup> But in a relative sense some people have attained to perfection because they do not sin inten-

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<sup>1</sup>Bed., I, 692.

<sup>2</sup>Bed., I, 693; 3, 355ff.; E. G. S., I, 143.

<sup>3</sup>Bed., I, 692f.

<sup>4</sup>Auf. Ueb, 302.

<sup>5</sup>Gl. L., 829, 1043. Spener declared that in his doctrine of good works he was in closer agreement with Luther than his opponents were. (Wittenberg theo.) Auf. Ueb., 209.

<sup>6</sup>Bed., Ia, 305f.; L. Bed., 3, 335.

tionally and do keep God's commandments.<sup>1</sup> He felt that moral laxity was promoted by giving countenance to the doctrine that perfection was unattainable and consequently that it was useless to make any efforts at all. Spener does not seem to have clear ideas in his own mind about the Scriptural statements concerning a perfection to be attained and an imperfection in which we live. He therefore argues that we have sin because of sinful flesh. Pecadillos ("Schwachheitssuenden") may be present; but because they are not sins unto death, saving faith remains.<sup>2</sup> Perfection cannot be ascribed to deeds, to knowledge, but to good will and honest striving and to a whole-hearted seeking after God. It is, therefore, a gradual process,<sup>3</sup> the completion of which occurs in the next world.<sup>4</sup>

Spener attempted to rehabilitate Luther's doctrine of assurance in the emphasis he placed upon present salvation. The conversion experience produced an immediate feeling in the heart of the sealing of the Spirit, and this meant that God did not leave himself without witness in those who loved

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<sup>1</sup>Bed., 4, 13. After being sanctified it is possible in a measure perfectly to obey the law. Gl. L., 788, 1070.

<sup>2</sup>Bed., 1a, 156, 158f.; cf. Bed., 3, 49. This is holiness in which sin's domination has ended. Erkl. d. kl. Katechismus, p. 235.

<sup>3</sup>Gl. L., 1071; S. Pred. ueb. Arndt, II., 49. The phrase "more and more" ("mehr und mehr") is frequently used.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, II., 36; cf. Pia des., 53.

him.<sup>1</sup> Fuller treatment will be reserved for the section dealing with Spener's Mysticism.<sup>2</sup>

The doctrine of the new birth caused Spener to distinguish between *theologia naturalis* and *theologia revelata*, for he believed that only the twice-born could understand spiritual things.<sup>3</sup> His appellation, "theology of the regenerated," implied that it could be understood only in the light of God, because it dealt with things which were above natural human reason.<sup>4</sup> He often stated that those of the clergy and theologians who lived in willful sin could discern the letter only and not the spirit, because they lacked divine illumination.<sup>5</sup> Through this theory of divine illumination Spener was led to state that there were two senses in Scripture—the one apprehended in the natural way; the other, the deep and mysterious meaning, only by the aid of the Spirit, which enlightens the mind.<sup>6</sup>

A final consideration to be noted in connection with the new birth is Spener's peculiar doctrine, *terminus gratiae*.<sup>7</sup> To each man is allotted a certain time of grace, which may even be limited in this life, and a failure to respond in the allotted time meant spiritual death.<sup>8</sup> This did not imply

<sup>1</sup>Bed., I, 324, 36; 3, 579.

<sup>2</sup>See below, pp. 34ff.

<sup>3</sup>Bed., I, 32f.; Allg. Gottesgelehrtheit, I., 185ff.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, I., 14ff.; Bed., Ia, 422.

<sup>5</sup>Allg. Gottesg., I., 138ff., 151ff.

<sup>6</sup>Bed., Ia, 159f.; Allg. Gottesg., 298ff.

<sup>7</sup>L. Bed., 3, 388f.   <sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, 374ff.

that one who had fallen from his spiritual estate was hopelessly lost; for due repentance<sup>1</sup> would again lead to conversion,<sup>2</sup> provided the *terminus gratiae* had not been passed.

Pietism cannot be understood without a recognition of its relation to Mysticism.<sup>3</sup> Although mystical elements do not assume a primary position in Spener's system, they are important in our study, because their presence in Methodism reveals at least one source common to both movements. Spener's Mysticism also sets him off sharply from orthodoxy. Without mentioning the numerous influences which were exerted upon him by Boehme,<sup>4</sup> Jane Leade,<sup>5</sup> the Anabaptists,<sup>6</sup> the Quietists,<sup>7</sup> the Quakers,<sup>8</sup> Weigel, and others,<sup>9</sup> we shall present in

<sup>1</sup>Bed., 2, 720. Deathbed repentance, he feared, was seldom of the right kind.

<sup>2</sup>Bed., 3, 139f.

<sup>3</sup>See "Appendix" for an extended discussion on Mysticism.

<sup>4</sup>Bed., 3, 234f., 184ff. Spener does not deny that Boehme had visions or that God gave him special revelations. Bed., 3, 944f.

<sup>5</sup>Spener read some of Jane Leade, who in 1696 founded a Philadelphian Society in London. Gruenberg, I., 272.

<sup>6</sup>Bed., 1a, 309. Spener claimed to know little about them.

<sup>7</sup>He was attracted to the French Quietists and to Molinos. Cf. Bed., 1a, 302ff.

<sup>8</sup>Quakers came to Germany, and Spener opposed them because they identified Christ and the Word and because they made the inner light natural to man. Allg. Gottesg., I., 361ff. (The inner light was not natural to man, according to Fox, Journal, 167, 241.) Spener deprecated the tendency which

brief compass the mystical part of his system. As the avowed successor of Arndt, we find him employing mystical phraseology, emphasizing Christ *in* us as well as Christ *for* us, the supernaturally wrought inner light, and the mystical union with God.<sup>1</sup> His sermon on "The Spiritual Union with God"<sup>2</sup> dwells upon the mystical union, the union of God's nature through Christ with our nature. He admits, however, that he himself had not attained to that supreme union with God referred to in John xvii. 23, not denying, but that others might experience the celestial sweetness of it.<sup>3</sup> After the proper means had been employed, Christ unites himself, not in essence, but in fact "mystice and mysteriously" with the believer.<sup>4</sup> Spener was rather noncommittal in regard to personal revelations when he saw instances where strong human suggestions were identified with divine inspirations.<sup>5</sup> Some might be

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scented heresy in all statements about enlightenment, inward Spirit. Allg. Gottesg., 101.

<sup>1</sup>Allg. Gottesg., 357ff. Here also Spener opposed the doctrine of a natural inner light. He reproves the teaching of the inner light, silent Sabbath, and passiveness, as presented by the spiritualists, Schwenkfelder, and others.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, 364ff.; Gl. L., 1199f.; Bed., 1a, 191; S. Pred. Ueb. Arndt, 1, 2.

<sup>3</sup>Gl. L., 657ff. Union is called indwelling of God or Christ, marriage with Christ. Man is permeated with God. P. 670.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Allg. Gottesg., 353. This union does not make God man nor man God; two distinct persons in the union.

<sup>5</sup>Allg. Gottesg., 350f.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, 338; Bed., 1a, 216. False light, perhaps. L. Bed., 3, 489.

due to Satanic impression or to psychological principles not clearly known.<sup>1</sup> The possibility of God revealing himself in dreams seemed certain, in view of an experience which he had.<sup>2</sup> His general attitude was well expressed in the statement that if he did not receive satisfaction sufficient to convince the conscience he would at least suspend judgment.<sup>3</sup>

According to Spener's dictum, Chiliasm had nothing to do with Pietism, but there are indications that he believed in the immediate approach of the millennium.<sup>4</sup> He was influenced by certain passages in Revelation and Romans xi. which led him to believe in the conversion of the Jews and in the final downfall of papal Rome<sup>5</sup> before the end of the world. This doctrine, he thought, would incite Christians to work toward the conversion of the Jews, the spiritual weakening of Rome, and the reformation of their own Church.<sup>6</sup>

Spener was more tolerant than most of his contemporaries, insisting that those who were born of God were brothers. It was a higher honor to be a Christian than a Lutheran.<sup>7</sup> He was more liberal toward Calvinism than his orthodox opponents

<sup>1</sup>L. Bed., 3, 591; I., 115ff.; Gl. L., 342f. The imagination might be responsible. Bed., 2, 775.

<sup>2</sup>Bed., 1a, 236f. A double dream while sick vouched for his recovery.

<sup>3</sup>Bed., 1a, 320.

<sup>4</sup>Pia des., Ch. VI. He did not condemn Chiliasm. Bed., 3, 939.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 49f.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, 50ff.

<sup>7</sup>Auf. Ueb., 101ff., 225.

thought wise and shocked many of them by affirming that true believers were to be found in the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>1</sup> His demand for greater liberty of thought in theological questions and his plea for peace among theologians were grounded upon the maxim, "*In necessariis veritas (unitas), in non necessariis libertas, in omnibus charitas*" ("In things essential, truth [unity]; in nonessentials, liberty; in all things, charity").<sup>2</sup> This broadmindedness led him to place the mantle of charity over those who could not accept the doctrine of the Trinity.<sup>3</sup> In the main, he sought to find a golden mean between dogmatic indifferentism and fanaticism.<sup>4</sup>

When passing judgment upon Spener it must not be forgotten that he was a man of his times. Although he asserted that miracles were not a proof of faith, decried superstitions connected with the appearance of comets,<sup>5</sup> and deplored the current tendency of placing so much faith in signs and omens,<sup>6</sup> he was guilty of certain superstitions.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Bed., 4, 67, 494f. Though Labadie's act was condemned, Spener found good devotional material in his works. Bed., 1a, 274.

<sup>2</sup>Cons., 3, 794; I, 90f. Gruenberg, Spener, I, 80, N. 1, states that Spener substituted *veritas* for *unitas*, originally used by Melden in the seventeenth century.

<sup>3</sup>L. Bed., 3, 334; cf. Bed., 4, 114.

<sup>4</sup>Bed., 3, 201; cf. Allg. Gottesg., II., 64.

<sup>5</sup>Bed., 4, 83f.

<sup>6</sup>Cons., I, 11. He felt that atheists could not be convinced with this proof.

<sup>7</sup>Such as bibliomancy, Bed., 3, 682; dreams, Bed., 3, 609ff.

A brief summary of Spener's doctrinal position might be stated as follows: Over against orthodoxy he emphasized sanctification rather than justification, communion with God rather than reconciliation with him, Christ in us rather than Christ for us.<sup>1</sup> He regarded religion as natural to man, not foreign to his nature, coming to him from without. It is true that Spener kept some of the old phrases which tended to keep this thought in the background, but the trend of his teaching pointed perceptibly in the opposite direction.

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Gruenberg, Spener, I., p. 469. On p. 513f. he states that orthodoxy emphasized the deductive process, in having faith, as something completed, come down from without and from above through the mediation of the Church and theology, into a man's heart, where it would find more or less vital expression; while Spener, more inductively, had the individual ascend to a true knowledge of God after the initial impulse and strength had been imparted by the grace of God.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE PRACTICAL RELIGIOUS REFORMS OF SPENER

THE significance of Spener's work lies primarily in the realm of practical religion. Although he realized his own limitations, denying that he possessed the qualities necessary in a reformer, he, nevertheless, felt in duty bound to start some much-needed reforms in the Church.<sup>1</sup> He not only protested against obvious evils in Church and State, but offered a positive contribution by suggesting numerous constructive plans.

Spener differed from the ordinary "calamity howlers" by his moderation and balance and in his constant practice of offering some remedy for the evils he castigated.<sup>2</sup> Caustic protests issued from his pen against all manner of evils. He was one of the first to fight the traffic in intoxicating liquors. Neither the rich nor the great were spared, for he saw corruption in all professions.<sup>3</sup> He complains<sup>4</sup> that the Church and State abuses were becoming unbearable and that the corruptions existing in the two upper classes (*Staende*) had a baneful influence upon the masses. He thundered against the

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<sup>1</sup>Bed., 4, 204f.; Pia des., 6of.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, 33ff.

<sup>2</sup>Pia des., Part II.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, Ch. 2 and 3.

*Caesareo-papatus*,<sup>1</sup> which he considered as harmful to the Church as the former *Papo-Caesareatus*<sup>2</sup> (priestly domination). Through the domination of the first estate the clergy were hindered in their work, and the third estate was entirely ignored, while the result could be nothing less than the promotion of a worldly Christianity.<sup>3</sup> A free, spontaneous religious life was out of the question; since so many ministers were corrupt, worldly-minded, and selfish,<sup>4</sup> and so many people were taught to seek religion in the *opus operatum* (accomplish work) of an external worship and in civic respectability.<sup>5</sup> Because of the general decadence of religion, Spener declared that some efficient remedy was to be sought.<sup>6</sup> This leads us to the constructive part of his work.

He considered the Reformation to have been a purification of doctrine and a salvation from the yoke of the Antichrist, Rome; and though he allowed that much good had been accomplished, he also felt that it had never been sufficiently completed.<sup>7</sup> Although he respected Luther, he did not regard him as the thirteenth apostle, as some of his opponents were inclined to do.<sup>8</sup> He sought his model

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<sup>1</sup>This was secular domination in ecclesiastical affairs. It had taken the place of *dominatus cleri*. Pia des., Ch. 2.

<sup>2</sup>Bed., 4, 417. In Cons., 2, 95f., Spener states that this Caesareopapie was a "monster which could be vanquished by no one but God alone."

<sup>3</sup>Bed., 3, 411f.

<sup>4</sup>Pia des., Ch. 3 and 4.

<sup>5</sup>L. Bed., 1, 478.

<sup>6</sup>Pia des., 47f.

<sup>7</sup>Gl. L., 1403f. Bed., 3, 179f.

<sup>8</sup>Gruenberg, Spener, I., 522f.

in the primitive Church,<sup>1</sup> while his inspiration came from the hope that the Church faced a brighter future.<sup>2</sup>

The means by which Spener sought to realize the main ambition of his life included, in the first place, a radical reformation of the three estates. Notwithstanding his opposition to the "monster" Caesarpapie and his deprecation of the arbitrary interference of the secular powers in the Church, he made frequent use of these authorities. Inconsistency here found its justification in the plea that it was done for the good of the cause.<sup>3</sup> Important in this connection is his assertion that rulers were to govern for the benefit of the governed.<sup>4</sup> His main recommendation<sup>5</sup> was to the effect that an increase in the authority of the common people in the governing bodies of the Church was to be made at the expense of the secular authorities. Spener presented an elaborate program for the reformation of the clergy, because he deemed that phase of his work of vital importance. Though the Word did not receive its divine power from the character of the person who preached it, a godless ministry surely could not lead the people into the way of salvation.<sup>6</sup> A thoroughly converted clergy was, therefore, the first prerequisite.<sup>7</sup> But Spener did not wish to be

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<sup>1</sup>Gl. L., 516.

<sup>3</sup>L. Bed., 3, 91f.; Bed., 4, 202.

<sup>6</sup>Bed., 1, 642f.

<sup>7</sup>Pia des., 20.

<sup>2</sup>Pia des., VI.

<sup>4</sup>Gl. L., 1316ff.

<sup>6</sup>Allg. Gottesg., I., 132, 366ff.

numbered among those who set erudition over against piety. Both were necessary.<sup>1</sup> The study of *compendia theologica systemata* was helpful; but true theology had its foundation in Scripture,<sup>2</sup> and experimental knowledge took precedence of mere speculation.<sup>3</sup> Because theology dealt with revelation it stood at the head of all the sciences.<sup>4</sup> All this necessitated greater emphasis upon practical training, whereby the student might acquire definite knowledge about his future life work. The details of this incipient laboratory included training in teaching, preaching, visiting and comforting the sick, etc., all under the critical oversight of competent instructors.<sup>5</sup> Besides, he advocated that greater heed be given to the cultivation of piety by means of profitable table talk, religious conversation, and the reading of devotional literature.<sup>6</sup>

Numerous suggestions given to the clergy dealt with all phases of their work. They were urged to adopt a plain and simple style of preaching, to speak as they felt, with varying emotions and in harmony with Scripture and with the practical application of the sermon always in view. Controversy, artificiality, and the display of oratorical powers

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<sup>1</sup>But in *Pia des.*, p. 91, he avers that an ordinary individual, with a heart full of love and God's honor in view, will accomplish more for the Church than "a double-doctored, vainglorious fool of the world, full of scientific knowledge, perchance, but totally ignorant of God."

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, 1a, 403, 406. <sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, 1, 232f. <sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 235.

<sup>5</sup>*Pia des.*, 98f. <sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, 95f.

and book learning were to be avoided.<sup>1</sup> Efficient pastoral work he deemed a great desideratum; and consequently he recommended house visitation, despite the opposition of the authorities.<sup>2</sup>

Spener's interest was primarily with the individual, with the personal rather than the institutional. He did not conceive the visible Church as a separate magnitude through whose purification the individual members were to be purified, but sought the reformation of the institution through the united efforts of those who belonged to the "righteous nucleus." This insistence upon the personal, individualistic, subjective elements in religion constitutes the only just criterion by which to judge Spener's work. At times he lingered on by-paths; but invariably he returned to take up the main issue, the reinvigorator of personal piety. His efforts centered about one book, the Bible, and about one main form of organization, the *collegia pietatis* (pietistic society).

The Bible was held in high esteem by the religious leaders of the time, but Spener gave it a significance in the general life of the people which it did not have before. He regarded it not only as the standard of correct doctrine, but also as the norm of correct life.<sup>3</sup> Naturally, the first recom-

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<sup>1</sup>Bed., 1a, 412, 738ff.; Pia des., 99ff.

<sup>2</sup>Bed., 1b, 70f.; 4, 225ff., 305.

<sup>3</sup>Gl. L., 487ff., 496f. Spener opposed the proof-text method, though see N. 7, p. 38.

mendation in the *Pia Desideria* dwelt upon the necessity of bringing the Bible closer to the people. Mere preaching of the word was insufficient; consequently daily Scripture readings were to be included in family prayers. Bible readings without explanations were also to be given in public for devotional purposes, likewise in other meetings, where those with gifts (1 Corinthians xiv.) had an opportunity to take part.<sup>1</sup>

Spener undoubtedly aimed to stimulate the general Church services. The confessional was retained, in spite of abuses, to be used as a means of teaching, disciplining, and comforting.<sup>2</sup> Baptism and the eucharist were both essential.<sup>3</sup> As edification was the main purpose of the Church service, a change in the ceremony was occasionally permissible to retain its flexibility and to meet changing demands.<sup>4</sup> Because of its social character, Spener regarded congregational singing as helpful.<sup>5</sup> He was one of the first to emphasize extemporaneous prayer.<sup>6</sup> The æsthetic in worship and the artistic in decoration received scant notice, because they did not seem to be in harmony with true simplicity.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Pia des.*, 63, 66ff.

<sup>2</sup>In *Bed.*, 2, 161ff., he asserts that the confessional was unknown to the primitive Church.

<sup>3</sup>*Gl. L.*, 437; cf. *Bed.*, 1, 601.      <sup>4</sup>*Bed.*, 1a, 654ff.

<sup>5</sup>*Bed.*, 4, 320.

<sup>6</sup>*Gl. L.*, 610.

<sup>7</sup>*Bed.*, 1a, 109. In *Bed.*, 2, 178ff., he states that a private house, a cave, the forest might be as useful for worship as a Church edifice.

With the establishment and practice of the spiritual priesthood, we come to the most distinctive phase of Spener's work. Luther's idea of the priesthood of all believers signified that the individual had free access to God without priestly or Church mediation; but with Spener it included the privilege of each Christian to help, serve, and edify his neighbor.<sup>1</sup> A special call to the ministry was not excluded by this doctrine, although it gave the laymen an opportunity to assert their spiritual independence and their right to all spiritual offices.<sup>2</sup> But where there was no regular ministry the call of love and service might take the place of the call of the Church. In cases of necessity a layman might even baptize and declare absolution.<sup>3</sup> In harmony with the spirit of his age, the reformer refused woman the right of active participation in Church affairs.<sup>4</sup>

Pietism did not favor the strict congregational Church system, though the following statements seem to imply it: That the congregation had the right to choose and call its minister;<sup>5</sup> that it had the privilege to make certain changes in the ceremony;<sup>6</sup> that it ought to have more authority in matters of discipline.<sup>7</sup> Each Church was to have a board of presbyters, the members of which constituted a sort

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<sup>1</sup>Bed., 1a, 595f.    <sup>2</sup>Pia des., 71ff.    <sup>3</sup>Gl. L., 527, 511.

<sup>4</sup>Among themselves, however, some might teach. L. Bed., 3, 147.

<sup>5</sup>Gl. L., 528f.; L. Bed., 1, 601.    <sup>6</sup>Bed., 3, 378.    <sup>7</sup>Bed., 2, 496ff.

of tribunal to which the pastor might appeal in doubtful cases.<sup>1</sup> Through this part of Spener's teaching the value of lay assistance received a recognition it had practically lost after the time of Luther.

The establishment of the spiritual priesthood found its best expression in the famous *collegia pietatis*.<sup>2</sup> Because the much-needed reform of the Lutheran Church could not issue from those in authority,<sup>3</sup> because the great majority in the Church were unconverted while the converted easily went astray, and because conditions in general were so bad that something radical had to be done, Spener recommended that the clergy form *ecclesiolas* (little Churches) of those who were in earnest about their souls' salvation.<sup>4</sup> These were to be established wherever possible, and from the more spiritual fields he hoped the good leaven would gradually spread throughout the Church.<sup>5</sup> Eschatological hopes made him place his faith in the saving power of these spiritual nuclei in the general destruction which seemed imminent.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Bed., 1, 85; Bed., 4, 309.

<sup>2</sup>Where Spener got the idea is immaterial, whether from friends (Bed., 3, 107; Cons., 3, 543f.), from Holland (Bed., 3, 162), or original (Bed., 4, 326f.). As early as 1600 there were house meetings in Goerlitz, in which Boehme participated. Rit., II, 137.

<sup>3</sup>See p. 39f. for Spener's reasons.

<sup>4</sup>Bed., 3, 218f.; 4, 489; 1b, 122; Cf. Wesley's band meeting.

<sup>5</sup>Bed., 3, 514f. <sup>6</sup>Bed., 3, 485f.



These private meetings for mutual edification and spiritual communication were to avoid all appearance of false teaching and extravagance. They were to be instituted to supplement, not to supplant, the regular Church service.<sup>1</sup> Spener opposed the celebration of the Lord's Supper in these meetings.<sup>2</sup> The main exercises consisted of discussions on Scripture passages—exegetical, critical, and hortatory—in which all present took part.<sup>3</sup> Because this was done under the direction of the pastor (provided he was sympathetic), it was hoped that he would be brought into closer touch with his members and learn to understand and appreciate their needs better. It is quite needless to say that the clergy generally opposed these meetings springing up spontaneously in their parishes. Spener himself admitted that the *collegia* was not really essential to the exercise of the spiritual priesthood<sup>4</sup> and later in life became more skeptical about its usefulness.<sup>5</sup> He, however, always adhered to his original program in seeking the salvation of the Church by means of the *ecclesiolæ in ecclesia*,<sup>6</sup> the righteous nucleus within the Church.

Spener, as well as contemporary writers, complained of the separatistical tendencies promoted by these conventicles.<sup>7</sup> Whatever his private opinions

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<sup>1</sup>Bed., 1a, 741f. Spener contended that in this respect his conventicles differed from those of Labadie, Bed., 3, 293.

<sup>2</sup>Bed., 2, 67ff.      <sup>3</sup>Pia Des., 66ff.

<sup>4</sup>Bed., 3, 546f.      <sup>5</sup>Bed., 1b, 73ff.

<sup>6</sup>L. Bed., 3, 588, written in 1701.

<sup>7</sup>Cf. Bed., 1a, 73ff.

may have been in regard to the justification of separation, the reformer publicly deplored it as a misfortune, claiming that it acted like a medicine which was more dangerous than the disease it was supposed to cure.<sup>1</sup> The policy of wisdom demanded constructive, not destructive, work within the Church.<sup>2</sup> Spener exhibits noble qualities of heart and mind when he demands that no one who still had a desire to remain be expelled for entertaining scruples regarding certain doctrines.<sup>3</sup>

Through the *Pia Desideria* the conventicles became known far and wide and seem partly to have accomplished the immediate result for which they were instituted. Much of the evil reported against them must be ascribed to conventional accusation against all innovation.<sup>4</sup> Catechetical instruction was again brought back to life and a deeply felt want supplied. Although Spener saw the value of employing those methods in the education of children which corresponded to their temperaments, he failed to understand the imagination of the child.<sup>5</sup> He taught that they were to be led into a state of repentance, into a recognition of their depravity,<sup>6</sup> and

<sup>1</sup>Bed., 2, 46; 1b, 137; Preface to Bed., 3.

<sup>2</sup>Bed., 1, 353ff; Bed., 2, 61.   <sup>3</sup>Bed., 4, 661; 2, 49f.

<sup>4</sup>Ritschl, II., Art. 32, goes too far when he declares the following three factors essential to the *collegia*: Striving for blissful emotions, quietistic; precise self-testing of the moral life, legalistic; tendency toward separation.

<sup>5</sup>Bed., 1b, 30f; Gl. L., 103.   <sup>6</sup>Bed., 4, 266.

mentions with approval that certain girls, eleven to thirteen years old, were able to pray fifteen minutes at a time.<sup>1</sup> This religious educator of the seventeenth century did not have a knowledge of modern psychology in its newest phases appertaining to the child and to religious experience, but in spite of this lack we must give him credit for having been a forerunner of Pestalozzi in demanding more than mere acquisition of intellectual facts.<sup>2</sup> His whole educational program rested upon the demand that knowledge should become a part of the learner and influence his character.

In the sphere of asceticism we notice negative and quietistic elements. Although Spener recognized as sacred the performance of secular tasks, he feared that a man's social activities and life work would stand in the way of spiritual meditation and quiet religious contemplation.<sup>3</sup> A morbid tendency is noticeable in some of his requirements inasmuch as they promoted a constant feeling of the spiritual pulse.<sup>4</sup> He was moderate in his demands regarding fasting and self-denial; and though he inculcated in his followers hatred of the world and all its works, he did not teach, like later Pietism, that things ethically indifferent did not exist.<sup>5</sup> All play, for instance, was not from the devil, though allowable

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<sup>1</sup>L. Bed., 3, 392.      <sup>2</sup>Cf. Bed., 4, 602ff.; L. Bed., 1, 489.

<sup>3</sup>Bed., 2, 423ff.; 4, 386ff.      <sup>4</sup>Bed., 2, 692.

<sup>5</sup>Bed., 2, 12f., 472f.; Gl. L., 418.

only when conducive to health. Neither the dance nor the theater was indiscriminately condemned; the latter, indeed, might even be made into an instrument of good.<sup>1</sup> But he virtually advocated that these be eschewed because of the abuses connected with them. This attitude received additional support from his general principle that all appearance of evil be avoided, that nothing be done which would not tend to the glory of God.<sup>2</sup> His attitude toward dress and luxury was sane, and his æsthetical tastes received faint expression in the assertion that the beautiful in itself was not to be despised.<sup>3</sup> In his insistence upon a Puritanical observance of the Sabbath he approached the Calvinistic position. Though the whole Sabbath was meant for spiritual edification, its joys were not to be banished by making its observance into a burden.<sup>4</sup> Marriage was regarded as a normal relation, notwithstanding a few statements which implied the contrary.<sup>5</sup>

Spener was interested in social and political progress. He seemed to have been influenced by his regard for those in authority and consequently allowed them privileges which he would not accord the commons. The different classes were ordained

<sup>1</sup>Bed., 2, 392ff.; L. Bed., 3, 605f.; Cons., 2, 94, De Comoediis.

<sup>2</sup>Bed., 2, 496ff., 550. <sup>3</sup>Bed., 1a, 28f.; 2, 218f.; Gl. L., 1095f.

<sup>4</sup>Bed., 1, 682; L. Bed., 1, 476f.; Gl. L., 1171, 1179ff.

<sup>5</sup>Bed., 2, 313ff. In his own home Spener furnished the financial help and led daily prayers. His wife attended to everything else. Eleven children came to his home.

by God, and the authorities were to be obeyed so far as their demands were not obviously against God's commandments.<sup>1</sup> In matters of Church discipline Spener was willing to work with the authorities.<sup>2</sup> Dueling he regarded as an evil. War as such was not necessarily against God.<sup>3</sup> In the economic life of the nation Spener was not much at home and has comparatively little to say about avarice, unscrupulous methods in obtaining wealth, etc.<sup>4</sup> Although he expressed an active interest in the welfare and help of orphans, the poor, sick, and needy, he never went much farther than to offer suggestions, together with his support.<sup>5</sup>

His international interests included those questions only which involved projects for union. His plans did not include the Catholic Church, because he thought that the differences were too fundamental, besides feeling that the institution itself was rotten to the core.<sup>6</sup> Starting with the assumption that all true believers were brothers and that the majority of these were in the Protestant Churches, he proposed that England make the beginning in connection with the Scandinavian countries. He

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<sup>1</sup>Bed., 2, 81, 182ff.; 1a, 763ff.      <sup>2</sup>Bed., 3, 82ff.

<sup>3</sup>Bed., 1., 70ff., 727.      <sup>4</sup>Gruenberg, Spener, II., 219f.

<sup>5</sup>Bed., 4, 407ff.; P. Des., 35. Gruenberg, Sp., I., 196, states that as early as 1679 Spener was directly interested in and promoted the erection of homes for orphans, the poor, and the laboring classes. Francke translated these pious wishes into deeds.

<sup>6</sup>Bed., 4, 141, 351f., 366.

hoped that much might be done in a conference of theologians toward coming to some agreement and then promptly expressed his fears that nothing of a permanent nature would result.<sup>1</sup>

Eschatological considerations impelled Spener<sup>2</sup> to lay stress upon the conversion of the Jews, but his many personal attempts to reach them failed to make an abiding impression.<sup>3</sup> Foreign missions also claimed his attention. He had no definite ideas, however, about the prosecution of the work.<sup>4</sup> Although no immediate results came from his own efforts in this field, he was instrumental in keeping the missionary ideals before the Church and to that extent helped to lay the foundations upon which future efforts might build.

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<sup>1</sup>Bed., I, 288; L. Bed., I, 115, 605.

<sup>3</sup>Bed., 3, 440f.; 4, 87ff.

<sup>2</sup>See page 35.

<sup>4</sup>Bed., I, 585.

## CHAPTER V

### FRANCKE AND HALLE PIETISM

THE second great leader, the pedagogue of Pietism, must be included in this discussion on account of his important practical reforms, in which he far surpassed Spener. Besides, it was largely due to him that the movement did not develop into separatism and evaporate into mystical radicalism. Like Spener, he assumed that he, rather than the orthodox, stood upon Luther's platform, because they did not sympathize with the latter's teaching of an intimate personal communion with God.<sup>1</sup> To avoid needless repetition only that phase of his doctrinal standpoint wherein he differed from Spener will be presented.<sup>2</sup> This difference lay not so much in the originality of his contribution as in the emphasis which he placed upon certain doctrines. He was more radical than Spener and raised some of the latter's opinions to a position of fundamental importance. He has been called the prophet of the "Buszkampf"<sup>3</sup> (penitential struggle). This could

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Guericke, Francke, p. 134f.

<sup>2</sup>Gratia et veritate shows substantial agreement with Spener. Also confession statements in Sancta et tuta via Fidei, pp. 121-126.

<sup>3</sup>Troeltsch.

never have been said of his forerunner. Because of the importance of this conversion experience, about which and upon which Francke organized Halle Pietism, it will be necessary to dwell upon it at some length. His own experience became the norm which made the penitential conflict (*Buszkampf*), preceding and necessary to a real conversion, of vital importance to the movement as it developed under his leadership.

In his own account of this inner revolution he states<sup>1</sup> that he knew of no external means which had influenced him, except, perchance, theological and Biblical studies. He complained<sup>2</sup> that for twenty-four years he had been an unfruitful tree. But one day while preparing a sermon on faith he suddenly realized that the faith which he was about to demand of his hearers was no possession of his. In his despair he appealed to God, in whose existence he scarcely believed, and after a season of conflict and misery God suddenly manifested himself to him. "At one time I was crying, at another pacing the floor in great unrest, then falling upon my knees, imploring Him whom I knew not. . . . In this deep despair and anguish" he prayed, and God heard and answered his prayer "suddenly."<sup>3</sup> From this account we see that the important elements were the two contrasting states, despair and doubt

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<sup>1</sup>Christian Biography, pp. 9ff. Richter, Francke, pp. 6ff.

<sup>2</sup>Richter, Francke, Intro.

<sup>3</sup>Guerike, p. 35f.



on the one hand, assurance and joy on the other, and a sudden transition from one to the other.<sup>1</sup> Francke makes this penitential conflict the beginning of the true Christian life, whereas Spener did not place it in such vital relationship with conversion, insisting that the new birth was already present when the test took place.<sup>2</sup> Francke was influenced by the doctrine of man's natural depravity, of the reality of which doubt, self-love, and love of the world were evidences.<sup>3</sup> Man was represented as being under the curse of the law and the judgment of death, at enmity against God, incapable of good, and sinking deeper and deeper into destruction. He is unclean and unholy, "not a child of God by nature."<sup>4</sup> The preparation for conversion consists in testing the heart affections and recognizing the utter depravity of the soul. Hunger for God must be accompanied by hatred of sin<sup>5</sup> and a recognition of its awfulness. The heart must become "broken and contrite"<sup>6</sup> before it is fit for the reception of the gospel.<sup>7</sup> But

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<sup>1</sup>Guerike, pp. 30ff.

<sup>2</sup>Breithaupt, an associate of Francke, taught that the believer received assurance after he had passed from "contritio ex lege" to "agnitio passiva." *Rit.*, II., p. 403.

<sup>3</sup>*Sancta et tuta via Fidei*, p. 121. Cf. *Ueber Moral u. Glauben*, Richter, 113f.

<sup>4</sup>*Philanthropia Dei*, Kramer, p. 96f.; *Philotheia*, *ibid.*, p. 100.

<sup>5</sup>"So long as no hatred of sin is present, hatred of Christ prevails." *Ritschl*, II., p. 257.

<sup>6</sup>Guerike, *Extracts*, p. 63.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 88.

Francke expressly denied that this experience would merit the grace of faith. He likewise deprecates the tendency to increase the intensity of this feeling by self-imposed means under the false impression that sufficient depth of despair had not been attained.<sup>1</sup> Although he taught that salvation was always near, that simple faith in Christ the Redeemer was alone necessary to obtain it, he was unable to see how naturally depraved man could be born into the new life without having first experienced the "Buszkampf"; for, as he said, true faith could spring only from a true sense of sin.<sup>2</sup> Faith is more than opinion about the merits of Christ. It is a heavenly light shining in the heart, transforming the inner affections and nature as well as justifying man before God.<sup>3</sup> In his tract, "Sie bekehren sich, aber nicht recht," which might be translated, "They become converted, but wrongly so," he included those who sought conversion in the performance of external things, who based it upon morality, who relied upon the amount of their religious talk, who repented because of temporary advantages or because of a fear of hell, who sought to grasp the grace of God without a contrite heart, who relied upon their own powers.<sup>4</sup>

Negative and positive effects resulted from the conversion experience—a denial of the world with

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<sup>1</sup>Sermon, Guericke, pp. 88, 68.

<sup>2</sup>Sermon, Saving Faith, *ibid.*, p. 74. He warns against making this an artificial, sinful self-torture (p. 88).

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 75ff.   <sup>4</sup>Guericke, p. 173f.

all its pleasures and an abiding, active love of God, comprising in its expression constant obedience to the demands of righteousness, together with resignation and patience in times of suffering. This, Francke demanded, ought to displace dependence upon "sweet emotions" which might be felt only at certain times.<sup>1</sup> In regard to good works, relative and "absolute" perfection, and assurances of present salvation he simply repeated Spener's doctrines.<sup>2</sup> Like the latter, he also indirectly encouraged Mysticism by regarding Arndt as a forerunner. He not only translated Molinos, but affirmed the intrinsic worth of the latter's book. And mystical tendencies are seen in his teaching that the believer became united with God so that God himself lived in him. Prayer brought man into the closest union with the Father, and one result of the new birth was the bliss which the convert might experience as the bride of the Lord Jesus.<sup>3</sup>

Francke made a rather sharp distinction between the converted and the unconverted, claiming that the latter were not Christians in the strict sense of the term.<sup>4</sup> This was the innovation which Pietism

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<sup>1</sup>Philothesis, Kramer, p. 104. There was the ever-present danger, as Ritschl, II., p. 262, observed, "that growth in holiness would consist principally in the ceremonial-legalistic discarding of pleasure."

<sup>2</sup>Sermon, Guericke, pp. 77f., 82f. <sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 80f.

<sup>4</sup>Sermon, Most Useful Way of Preaching, Piet. Hallensis, p. 70f.

brought into Lutheranism, due to Francke rather than to Spener; for what the latter advocated as a necessary means to an end the former made into the desired end. Theology, for instance, had conversion for its object, while the various meetings, collegia, and prayer services had their justification in the fact that they strengthened that experience.

Francke's chief claim to distinction lies, however, in the realm of practical religious activity. As this work was done primarily through the institutions at Halle, a short account of their origin will not be irrelevant. Francke could have wished for no better field for the application of his talents and for the expression of his superabundant zeal than the parish at Glaucha, near Halle. The Church affairs were in a chaotic condition, the Sabbath was habitually desecrated, and the people were depending upon the magical effect of absolution and the external performance of the sacraments.<sup>1</sup> Thirty-seven of the two hundred houses in the place were drinking dens. The people in general were coarse, brutal, and irreligious.<sup>2</sup> Francke met these needs with his characteristic energy. He did away with exorcism in baptism, but retained the confessional, refusing, however, to declare absolution until the penitent expressed his sincere willingness to forsake sin. He

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<sup>1</sup>Sachsse, *Pietismus*, p. 260f. Richter, *Francke*, p. 11f.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, Guericke, p. 63. Francke's predecessor had been deposed because of adultery.

preached frequently and with great effect, his own popular style even surpassing that of his forerunner. An innovation, which already had been recommended by Spener, was the introduction of systematic pastoral visitation. Notice of the intended visit having previously been given, the whole household was assembled, examined, and exhorted, the unique service concluding with prayer.<sup>1</sup> Another means continually employed was the social prayer service (*Erbauungsstunden*), in which prayer alternated with song, Scripture-reading and interpretation, and examination in the catechism.<sup>2</sup> The people received further training by reading the numerous tracts on a great variety of practical religious subjects which Francke wrote and published.<sup>3</sup>

But the greatest monument to his organizing genius was the establishment of the orphan home and its affiliated institutions.<sup>4</sup> The school had its humble origin in the attempt to relieve the temporal needs of the poor. Francke then conceived the idea of giving practical religious instruction to their children, who were gradually persuaded to remain for stated periods. Thus arose the large so-called "hospital," for the erection and maintenance of which Francke depended entirely upon voluntary subscrip-

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<sup>1</sup>Sachsse, p. 268.

<sup>2</sup>Guerike, pp. 130f, 136f.

<sup>3</sup>Excerpts of fifteen given in Guerike, pp. 148ff.

<sup>4</sup>The account here given will follow Francke's outline, *Pietas Hallensis*.

tions.<sup>1</sup> Much assistance was given to the deserving poor who otherwise would never have obtained an education nor received religious instruction.<sup>2</sup> This small school soon became the center of a vast undertaking which embraced many lines of activity.<sup>3</sup> In a letter to Cotton Mather,<sup>4</sup> Francke stated that scholars came from many foreign lands and that the influence of Halle was felt even in Siberia.<sup>5</sup> A very important part of the work was the publication of Bibles, which were sold everywhere at exceptionally low prices. Inspired by the accounts of Francke's marvelous success, similar undertakings sprang up in numerous places.<sup>6</sup>

It was largely due to Francke that the theology of Lutheranism was led from scholasticism and polemics into a closer dependence upon Scripture.<sup>7</sup> His pedagogical principles and practical educational regulations were, therefore, of great importance to Pietism. About the time that Locke emphasized the development of the natural powers of the child Francke placed his emphasis upon the principle that Christian education must be kept in the closest re-

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<sup>1</sup>Francke gives a truly wonderful account of these in *Pietas Hallensis*, Chapters I. and II.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 36ff.

<sup>3</sup>These are given in *Pietas Hallensis*, p. 41f., and in Kramer, *Anhang*, p. 446f., twenty-three departments being mentioned.

<sup>4</sup>In *Piet. Hal.*, written in 1714.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 35ff.

<sup>6</sup>Cf. *ibid.*, p. 45f.

<sup>7</sup>Cf. *Guerike, Francke*, p. 216.

lationship with God.<sup>1</sup> Because the will as well as the mind was to be trained, he saw the first step toward the development of the Christian life in the breaking of natural self-will. The three great virtues—love of truth, obedience, and diligence—could then be inculcated.<sup>2</sup> Prayer was considered of greater importance as a means than instruction and self-examination; for a true study of theology it was positively essential.<sup>3</sup>

The numerous regulations<sup>4</sup> of Francke's schools seem quite severe to the modern student, and their severity can be understood only by keeping two considerations in mind. It was due to Francke's doctrine of human depravity and to his earnest attempt to stem the tide of license and laxity which was threatening to overwhelm the German schools. His regulations, though springing from a noble heart, show that he understood the child mind even less than Spener. The children were to be under constant supervision, even during play hours. But play, as we understand it, was not for a moment considered. Children were not allowed to act as they pleased, but were to find recreation in change of occupation, doing something that was useful. Walks could be taken (with the ubiquitous "infor-

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Kramer, Francke, *Einleitung*, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup>Von d. Anführung zur Gottseligkeit, Richter, pp. 65ff.

<sup>3</sup>Idea Studiosi Theologiae, Kramer, pp. 391ff.

<sup>4</sup>Anführ. z. Gottseligkeit, Richter, pp. 45ff., Kramer, pp. 114ff.

mator”); and as a relief from other work mathematics, astronomy, and geography might be studied.<sup>1</sup> Older students were not exempt from these regulations, which went into the most minute affairs of their personal interests. Advice, whether sought or not, was frequently given.<sup>2</sup>

Francke might be called an educational pragmatist, for he constantly kept the practical end in view and emphasized that part of education which would show results in the building of character. This led him to train workmen for all trades. And it was his ardent wish that this training might serve as an effectual help in leavening the whole nation.<sup>3</sup> He made a distinct advance in establishing a laboratory, or clinic, for the training of those who expected to teach. There was abundant opportunity at Halle for young men to “experiment” in the art of teaching and for prospective pastors to attempt actual catechization.<sup>4</sup> Francke also recognized the value of higher education and advised his students to get a thorough knowledge of theological science, since piety alone was not sufficient.<sup>5</sup> But the basis of all

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<sup>1</sup>Anfuehrung z. Gottesligkeit, Richter, p. 70.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Ordnung und Lehrart der Waisenhaus-Schulen, Kramer, pp. 114ff.; Leges welche die Scholaren observiren sollen, *ibid.*, pp. 241ff.

<sup>3</sup>Pietas Hal., p. 38; Von. d. Anfuehr. z. Klugheit, Richter, pp. 84ff.

<sup>4</sup>Appendix to Idea, Kramer, p. 428f.; cf. Guerike, p. 279.

<sup>5</sup>Erinnerungen an Stud. d. Theologie, Richter, p. 605f.



true knowledge rested upon a living faith in Christ, the main reason for acquiring a higher education being to glorify God's name and to become a fit instrument in his hands in the service of mankind.<sup>1</sup>

Theology, the main field of study, was based upon Scripture, but both could be understood in their essence only by the converted.<sup>2</sup> Francke goes to the extreme in his statement that the carnal mind could hardly penetrate into the sense of the letter of Scripture.<sup>3</sup> When the mere letter of the Bible was under consideration he advocated a critical study in which he distinguished a grammatical, historical, and a logical reading.<sup>4</sup> Because the practical application was constantly kept in the foreground, little effort was made to get at the exact historical sense of the passages.<sup>5</sup> Beginnings were made for a better Bible text, however, because of the changes which were recommended in the translations. As a fitting close to this account of Francke's educational efforts might be placed his own expressed relation to the liberal arts. He repelled the charge that he neglected "*studia humaniora & elegantiora*," with the denial that these studies were better taught anywhere else.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Erinnerungen an Stud. d. Theologie, Richter, p. 609; *Idea Studiosi Theol.*, Kramer, p. 403.

<sup>2</sup>*Idea St. Theol.*, p. 391; *A Guide to Holy Scripture*, Ch. II.

<sup>3</sup>*A Guide*, p. 157. <sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, First Part.

<sup>5</sup>*Idea St. Theol.*, p. 392.

<sup>6</sup>*Idea St. Theol. Anhang.*, Kramer, p. 429.

Francke went farther than Spener in the direction of asceticism, frequently insisting where the latter had merely suggested. Although he was a man of cheerful temperament, his teaching was apt to inculcate an almost morbid fear of showing even an appearance of evil.<sup>1</sup> Like Wesley, he constantly warned against extravagant spiritual claims and enthusiasm,<sup>2</sup> but it cannot be doubted that some of his own doctrines tended to bring people to a condition where they would naturally make those claims. Francke's conception of the Christian life brought about his unreserved condemnation of the theater and all theatrical plays and the dance.<sup>3</sup> Music received a qualified condemnation because of its frequent abuse; it was to be permitted only when of a certain nature and under special direction.<sup>4</sup> Useless laughter and extravagant stories were to be eschewed.<sup>5</sup> Obviously this opposition toward the world threatened to create a dependence upon a new external *opus operatum*. But Francke, as well as Spener, constantly asserted that the externals would vanish with the renewal of the heart, for only those elements pertaining to the honor of God would flow

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<sup>1</sup>De Christiana filiorum Dei Simplicitate, p. 119.

<sup>2</sup>Programmata, p. 32f.

<sup>3</sup>Tract, On the Dance, Guerike, pp. 174ff; tract, Kurze Anleitung zum Christenthum, *ibid.*, pp. 152ff.

<sup>4</sup>Verbesserte Methode des Paedagogiums, Part I., Ch. III., Kramer, pp. 347ff., 357.

<sup>5</sup>Tract, Schriftmaessige Lebensregeln, Guerike, p. 168.

out as an expression of the inner life.<sup>1</sup> And to keep this inner life pure and holy was only possible, as he thought, by refraining from indulging in anything that might lead to sin. The proper outward expression of that renewed inner life was the important thing to be considered. Francke consequently sought to draw a line beyond which a true Christian would not allow himself to go, and that line he drew very tight and in places where other Christians would not approve.<sup>2</sup> In his tract on the dance he admitted that in itself a thing might be indifferent, but contended that it immediately changed character when brought into vital relationship with a person. Man should not seek to escape from the world because of the ever-present evils, but should seek to separate himself from the evil while remaining in the world and congregating with others.<sup>3</sup> He showed his sympathy, however, for those who separated themselves from the "spoiled masses" in the sincere desire to avoid contamination.<sup>4</sup>

That the Moravian Brethren accomplished the most in the early days of foreign missions ought not to detract from the pioneer work with which

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<sup>1</sup>Tract, *On the Dance*, Guericke, pp. 174ff.

<sup>2</sup>For instance, when he states that an earnest Christian would no more think of dancing "than a sane man would think of playing with boys on the street."

<sup>3</sup>Zweifache schiftliche Ansprache, Guericke, pp. 185ff.

<sup>4</sup>Francke's 14te paranaetische Lection, Guericke, p. 248. Cf. *Idea Stud. Theo.*, Kramer, p. 400.

Francke was connected. The King of Denmark applied to him for missionaries to send to his colony in the East Indies in 1705. Ziegenbalg and Pluetschau were sent, and others followed. Francke kept up a correspondence with these missionaries, published missionary news, and thus increased the interest in this field of labor.<sup>1</sup> Baron Canstein had established a Bible publishing house intimately related to the Halle Orphan Home, and this was directed by Francke after the death of its founder.<sup>2</sup> And, like Spener, he also attempted the conversion of the Jews, but with little success.

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<sup>1</sup>In a letter to Cotton Mather, in *Pietas Hallensis*, Francke refers to his relations with foreign missionaries.

<sup>2</sup>Guerike, p. 437f.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE BACKGROUND OF METHODISM

THE English Reformation was not so much a change in the doctrines and in the constitution of the Church as it was a change of head. Much of the medieval Church was retained, though the apologists of the establishment contended that the "via media" implied a continuation of the true Catholic Church minus the pre-Reformation abuses. The attitude of the individual toward the Church remained practically the same, for his relation to God was made dependent upon his relation to the Church. After a checkered career through a succession of reigns, the semi-Catholicism of Henry VIII. gradually merged into a semi-Protestantism in the time of Queen Elizabeth and thereafter remained a sort of compromise between the two, notwithstanding the "purging" efforts of the Puritans.<sup>1</sup> The religious life of the Church gained little, if at all, and it is only from the standpoint of statecraft that the institution may be said to have progressed. But as a department of the State the Church was governed in the interests of the State.

The various sects which arose in the seventeenth

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Act of Uniformity, Robinson Readings in European History, II., pp. 256ff.

century promised much, but accomplished little because they suffered systematic repression.<sup>1</sup> The ejection of the Puritans after the restoration and the withdrawal of the nonjurors after the "glorious revolution"<sup>2</sup> was in each case a distinct loss to the Church. Owing to the peculiar nature of the English Reformation, heresy took the form of opposition to the institution instead of divergence from the accepted doctrines. Submission to ecclesiastical authority covered a multitude of heretical opinions. In this respect the Anglican Church resembled Catholicism more than Lutheranism.

The wide latitude allowed to doctrinal expression becomes explicable when the Anglican Church is regarded as the resultant of numerous compromises. The orthodox position varied from time to time. Arianism gradually gained control of the High Church party, while Calvinism found its staunchest exponents among the Dissenters.<sup>3</sup> The Latitudinarian spirit arose, reacting against the sacerdotal theory of ecclesiasticism and the Puritanical theory of doctrinal exclusiveness.<sup>4</sup> Although the Cambridge Platonists recognized a sense in man corresponding

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Act against Dissenters, Robinson Readings, II., p. 258f.

<sup>2</sup>The nonjurors stood for the immutability of the order of succession to the crown. Makower, *Const. Hist.*, p. 95.

<sup>3</sup>The catholicity of the Ang. Church has been called a heterogeneous combination and toleration of Popish liturgy, a Calvinistic creed, and an Arminian clergy. Cf. Hastie, *Theol. of Ref. Church*, p. 95.

<sup>4</sup>*Cam. Mod. Hist. Lat. and Pietism*, V., p. 742.

with the Deity<sup>1</sup> and stood for a true catholicity of spirit, lesser minds lowered the position of religion by identifying it with refinement and decorousness of life. Christianity was held up for respect on the ground that it was the religion of the civilized world. A deep desire to do away with all religious controversy led many to affirm that, since love was the main thing, doctrinal error was not so bad, after all. Intellectual activity, however, found expression in several important controversies, the Bangorian and Trinitarian within the Church and the Deistic with outside opponents. The latter alone concerns us because of its relation to Methodism. The general aim of the Deists was to do away with revelation in religion by basing all upon natural religion. But with some, the former was accepted simply as an aid to the latter. The immanence of God was lost in his transcendence. In general, the Christian religion was regarded as a system of opinion which admitted of external proof,<sup>2</sup> while the inner experience of the individual, his immediate vision of spiritual realities, was overlooked. Jesus still kept his place as the revealer of divine truth; and Christian-

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<sup>1</sup>Pattison, *Essay*, II., p. 79.

<sup>2</sup>Cr. Dörner, *Prot. Theol.*, II., p. 91. The great question of the time was whether Christianity was conformable to reason. Wesley was willing to put his teaching upon that basis, but he differed from others in the assertion that Christianity was not so much a rational system to be demonstrated as a life to be lived.

ity, purged from all ecclesiasticism and traditionalism,<sup>1</sup> was still regarded as true and useful. Utilitarianism came to the point where the admission was made that it might be safest to be a Christian.<sup>2</sup> Although a rational supranaturalism finally won the field,<sup>3</sup> it must be admitted that the apologists did little more than bring the matter to a crisis. They unconsciously showed that a new basis of religious faith was to be sought besides that of external rational demonstration. The main difference between the opponents was a difference of attitude toward ecclesiastical authorities and traditional institutions.<sup>4</sup> The logical outcome of the controversy was the skepticism of Hume. Atheism began to spread.<sup>5</sup> Since the external evidence failed to give sufficient proof of Christianity, religious men began to look elsewhere.

Although his intellectual defense of religion dealt less with the speculative than with the ethical and practical considerations of life, it did not bring a corresponding activity in practical religion. On the

<sup>1</sup>Cf. Bury, *Naked Gospel*. He demanded that all additions after apostolic days be discarded. Pp. 78ff., 90ff.

<sup>2</sup>Pattison, *Essays*, II., p. 85.

<sup>3</sup>Troeltsch, *Deismus, Real-ency*, IV., p. 546.

<sup>4</sup>McGiffert, *Prot. Thought*, pp. 229ff. Butler's Analogy was the last "trench" of defense, from which retreat led to the position that both Christianity and natural religion might be equally irrational. P. 237.

<sup>5</sup>Tholuck, *Kirch. Leben d. 17 Jahr.*, II., p. 25, mentions a "Society of Hell Fire."



contrary, we find that in this, as well as in the period immediately following, the Church was brought to its nadir.<sup>1</sup> A brief survey of the religious situation will be sufficient to substantiate this statement. A colorless moderation lacking in energizing power was the result of the attempt to steer safely between

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<sup>1</sup>There has been substantial agreement among historians that the English Church was in a most deplorable condition. But recently this position has been attacked by J. Wickham Legg, *English Church Life*, London, 1914. In the preface he argues that the nineteenth-century historians endeavored to enhance the luster of their own age by depicting the previous one in dark colors (page viii). But he forgets that the darkest picture we have comes from the eighteenth-century writers themselves, not only from the satirists, from enemies of the Church, from sensation writers, from reformers and evangelists, but also from churchmen who loved the Established Church. The author supports his position by marshaling numerous statistics before the reader. From the long array the most important are the following: Daily services; frequent celebration of the Eucharist; the establishment of guilds, religious societies, societies for the reformation of manners, charity schools, the S. P. C. K., the S. P. G. F. P., etc. He also states that good literature found a ready market. The main facts thus given seem quite conclusive, and a doubt might be raised in some minds whether the somber accounts invariably given are not overdrawn. But the heaping up of all evidence on one side of the question does not make a fair proof. In comparison with the evidence on the other side the author's argument is weak. Even the religious societies worked in the narrow sphere of the conventicle. And the interest of people in the external affairs of the Church does not prove their interest in spiritual religion. All that the author proves is that there were some redeeming features in an otherwise exceptionally decadent age.

the Charybdis of Romanism and the Scylla of Puritanism. Sermons were generally dry moral dissertations on disputed subjects for which the people had little concern and less understanding.<sup>1</sup> The pulpit was often used for the display of polemical tirades and sometimes for political purposes. Religious toleration was, indeed, the virtue of the eighteenth century, but it acted as a deterrent rather than as a promoter of religious zeal. Nonresidence and pluralities and the abuse of ecclesiastical patronage in the interests of politics were widely prevalent. The gulf between the higher and the lower clergy became deeper. The former were rich and powerful, the latter generally poverty-stricken and almost invariably controlled by the landowners on whose estates they lived. Younger sons of the nobility were often given bishoprics, while many of the clergy spent their time in preferment-hunting.<sup>2</sup> The country parson had some redeeming features, but as a rule he lacked spiritual vision and was often given to profanity and sometimes to immorality.<sup>3</sup> Amid this general decay the poor were neglected, their

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Goldsmith, *Essays*, III., 207. Sermons were "dry, methodical, and unaffecting, delivered with the most insipid calmness."

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Overton, chapter on Church Abuses, in *Abbey and Overton, Eng. Church in Eighteenth Century*.

<sup>3</sup>This was not one of the main charges. Woodward, *Soc. for the Ref. of Manners*, p. 4, refers to the people in general: "It was reckoned breeding to swear, gallantry to be lewd, good humor to be drunk, and wit to despise sacred things."

children seldom catechized, and Church discipline as seldom enforced. The seeming outward prosperity of the Church<sup>1</sup> covered an interior which presented a true reflection of the *Zeitgeist*, for it was a listless calm with scarcely more life than the stagnant pool.<sup>2</sup>

The political situation increased the number and the intensity of the evils. The spirit of Jacobitism had not died out and was an ever-threatening source of ferment; for the Whig bishop, who was in harmony with the government, was inclined to assume that his Tory clergy were Jacobites.<sup>3</sup> Partisan politics thus often decided ecclesiastical questions.<sup>4</sup> Erastian principles caused religion to be regarded as simply one phase of civil life.<sup>5</sup> Since the reins of ecclesiastical control were in the hands of the government, the Dissenters not being free from this jurisdiction, the corruption in politics<sup>6</sup> passed over into the Church. Walpole's political policy cast a blighting atmosphere over the whole Church. He opposed all religious activity on the ground that it was inimical to the tranquil condition of the State.

The majority of the people, though seemingly at-

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<sup>1</sup>Especially true from 1700 to 1715.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. *Diocesan Histories*. Wesley, Works, V., 123ff.; VII., 496f.

<sup>3</sup>Wakeman, *Hist. of Eng.*, 412ff.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Sachererell trial, nonjuror. Bangorian controversy.

<sup>5</sup>Church wardens were supposed to be spiritual policemen taking note of absentees from Church, J. Wedgwood, 137.

<sup>6</sup>Lecky, *Hist. of Eng. in Eighteenth Century*, I., 470ff.

tached to the outward establishment,<sup>1</sup> refused the obedience of their lives to its teaching. They loved the Church, scouted the clergy, and obeyed neither. The religious situation among the Dissenters was almost equally bad. Presbyterian congregations lapsed into a sort of Arianism, and the religious life among the Baptists and Independents was in a lamentable condition.

So far we have dealt mainly with the upper and ruling classes; and if we were to judge the masses only by the standard set by the former, their condition would have been deplorable indeed. But the lower classes have left little information about themselves, and it is quite likely that their home life was not so bad as the accounts would lead us to believe. These people were left practically untouched by the prevailing spirit of skepticism, for the disintegrating influences of Deism were felt chiefly in the fashionable circles.<sup>2</sup> These reservations must be kept in mind in the following characterization of the masses.<sup>3</sup> Drunkenness, gambling, and immorality are found in every age, but they seem to have been prevalent to an extraordinary extent in the period under discussion.<sup>4</sup> Some defended

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<sup>1</sup>Abbey and Overton, *Eng. Ch. in Eighteenth Cent.*, I., 27.

<sup>2</sup>Pattison *Essays*, II., 102f.

<sup>3</sup>Sidney, *Eng. and the English in the Eighteenth Century*; Lecky, II., Ch. IX.; Green, Macaulay, etc.

<sup>4</sup>Besides the evidence mentioned on page 71 (note), we have Hogarth's pictures and the unconscious evidence which may be

vice on the score that it would be profitable to the State.<sup>1</sup> The nature of a people's amusements may be taken as a fair index to its character, and at this time they were cruel and brutal.<sup>2</sup> The criminal law of the age likewise reveals its character. Gallows were seen everywhere, and they were needed in view of the numerous crimes that were punishable with death. It is easy to imagine the effect of these spectacles upon a people who made public executions the occasion of hilarious celebration.<sup>3</sup> The brutalized masses were so numerous that they often rose *en masse* and terrified the authorities, breaking into prisons, burning houses, and spreading consternation far and wide.<sup>4</sup> The infamous Mohocks, a club of wealthy young men of London, often terrorized that city at night.<sup>5</sup> Superstition still flourished, the death penalty for witchcraft not being abolished till 1736.<sup>6</sup> As a last item we mention the disgraceful fleet marriages, a real traffic in matrimony.<sup>7</sup>

Another element of primary importance was the great industrial revolution which began to transform

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found in the laws, diaries of business and professional men, and records of various institutions.

<sup>1</sup>Tyerman, Wesley, I., p. 217.

<sup>2</sup>Lecky, I., 552; II., 490ff., 519ff.; Ashton, *Social Life*, I., 296.

<sup>3</sup>Twenty were strung up one morning. Cf. Hurst, *Ch. Hist.*, II., 811.

<sup>4</sup>Lecky, I., 523f., 529.

<sup>5</sup>Lecky, I., 522; Ashton, II., 179ff.

<sup>6</sup>Terry, *Hist. of England*, p. 880.

<sup>7</sup>Sydney, *Eng. and the English*, II., Ch. XX.

England about the middle of the century. After the death of William, manufacturing industries had begun to attract large numbers of the rural population to the cities. The inventions of Hargreaves, Watt, Cartwright, and others rapidly changed the industrial situation, transforming farming and trading England into a nation of artisans and capitalists.<sup>1</sup> Outwardly the change promised much, and England soon felt the thrill of a new energy. But the economic change caused suffering and hardship, and the new problems with which nobody seemed able to cope were not even considered by the Anglican Church. The masses were hoarded together in new congested districts. They were without schools and churches and were as wax in the hands of demagogues. Labor organizations were unknown, and so these poor, illiterate human machines were at the mercy of unscrupulous capitalists.<sup>2</sup> Wesley's portraiture of the colliers of Kingswood applied with equal force to these new elements, "so ignorant of the things of God that they seemed but one removed from the beasts that perish."<sup>3</sup> An agrarian revolution of almost equal importance added more misery. In spite of the general increase in wealth, pauperism spread, because unjust laws enabled landowners to reap all the profits.<sup>4</sup> The establishment did practically nothing to supply the material and spiritual

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<sup>1</sup>Terry, *Hist. of Eng.*, pp. 911ff.   <sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, 916f.

<sup>3</sup>Journal, November 27, 1739.

<sup>4</sup>Terry, *Hist. of Eng.*, p. 918.

needs of a vast number of virtual heathen who lived within the pale of the Church. The spirit of practical materialism and cold rationalism kept the leaders of the nation in a state of enervating self-complacency, and the common people were left to shift for themselves. Idealism and self-sacrifice were swallowed up by an extremely sordid individualism, each man for himself. Conditions in England were rapidly approaching those which deluged France in blood toward the close of the century, and Lecky affirms that the new religious enthusiasm enabled England to escape the contagion by enlisting the turbulent spirits in its service.<sup>1</sup>

Sporadic and isolated attempts to stem the tide of irreligion were ineffectual because of improper methods, incapable leaders, and unripeness of conditions.<sup>2</sup> The driving power of the master spirit was needed to concentrate the scattered efforts.

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<sup>1</sup>Hist. of Eng. in Eighteenth Century, II., 691f.

<sup>2</sup>See Chapter XI. for an extended discussion of these efforts.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE DOCTRINAL POSITION OF WESLEY

WESLEY, like Spener, claimed that he was teaching nothing new, but merely emphasizing those fundamental truths which were found in the Scriptures. Although he made light of the importance of having certain set opinions about the various dogmas of the Church, we find that he constantly emphasized those doctrines which he deemed essential. And these, he argued, were identical with the orthodox teaching of the Liturgy, Articles, and Homilies.<sup>1</sup>

Because of rationalistic opposition, Wesley made much of the doctrines of the Godhead of Christ and the atonement.<sup>2</sup> The doctrine of the Trinity was considered necessary to vital religion,<sup>3</sup> while God himself was regarded both immanent and transcendent. This immanence, however, pertained more to the regenerate than to life and nature in general.<sup>4</sup> Man's fall and total depravity assumed great importance in Wesley's system.<sup>5</sup> All humanity was in Adam's loins, became corrupt and helpless through

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<sup>1</sup>Farther Appeal, Works, V., 38ff.; Journal, II., 274ff., Sept. 13, 1739.

<sup>2</sup>Works, II., 24, 178; VI., 777.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, II., 20ff., sermon on the Trinity.

<sup>4</sup>See below on doctrine of the witness of the Spirit.

<sup>5</sup>Deism had denied these doctrines.



original sin, for the atonement of which the death of the second Adam was necessary.<sup>1</sup> And yet, though the natural man was regarded as asleep, unable to discern the spiritual good, ignorant of God and under the guilt and power of sin, a measure of his natural free will was supernaturally restored by means of prevenient grace given in lieu of Christ's atonement.<sup>2</sup> This enabled him to work together with God for his own salvation.

The sacraments were simply means of grace and possessed no inherent power.<sup>3</sup> Wesley's statements about baptism are not entirely consistent; for he wished to retain its regenerative significance, as in the case of infant baptism, which implied new birth while virtually denying it in the case of adults.<sup>4</sup> He was more consistent in his remarks about the Lord's Supper. It was an outward means by which God conveyed to our souls spiritual grace purchased for us by Christ, and the mystical relation which the bread by consecration had to Christ's body was sufficient to give it the name of his body.<sup>5</sup> The reading of Scripture was another means of grace, because it was the self-sufficient rule of faith.<sup>6</sup> Scripture was

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<sup>1</sup>Works, I., 401; II., 31ff., 532f.; sermon, Orig. Sin, II., 398.

<sup>2</sup>Works, I., 76ff.; VI., 42.   <sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, I., 138.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, I., 160, 403; treatise on Baptism, VI., 12ff. In a sermon, Works, I., 161: "Who denies that ye were then made children of God? But ye are now children of the devil."

<sup>5</sup>Works, I., 142; II., 350f; V., 788; Journal, II., 361f.

<sup>6</sup>Works, I., 102. Since the Bible was not the work of either good or bad men or angels, it was the work of God (VI., 554).

to be interpreted through Scripture by the help of reason, which in turn needed the assistance of the Spirit.<sup>1</sup>

Wesley believed in an invisible Church, to which all true believers belonged, in all ages and among all nations.<sup>2</sup> He feared that the Nineteenth Article on the Church was too inclusive and recommended that the phrase "congregation of faithful men" be changed to "men endued with living faith."<sup>3</sup> True members of the Anglican Church would, therefore, include those inhabitants of England only who were members of the invisible Church. Membership in the invisible Church alone was regarded as essential, because external adherence to any special visible form of it availed nothing.<sup>4</sup> It is easily seen how this Donatist view of Wesley's would tend to lead him away from institutionalism.

Eschatological considerations did not seem to make much impression upon Wesley. Though he felt that the current evils in the Church would be overcome, he did not consider her glorious era as imminent.<sup>5</sup> He accepted the doctrines of the Church concerning immortality, resurrection of the dead, the general judgment, and the eternity of hell.<sup>6</sup>

In his attitude toward doctrine Wesley ap-

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<sup>1</sup>Works, II., 128; V., 769ff.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, II., 154ff.; V., 763.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, II., 157.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, II., 160.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, II., 81f.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, I., 454; II., 16.

proached the Latitudinarian position in the emphasis he placed upon life at the expense of correct belief. He stated that his work was not to bring men to a belief in a specified set of opinions, but to bring them "to a calm love of God and one another, to a uniform practice of justice, mercy, and truth."<sup>1</sup> Orthodoxy and true religion were not necessarily convertible terms; for men of true religion, though bound up with erroneous opinions, were to be found in the Catholic Church.<sup>2</sup> He refused to believe that the current notions of heresy and schism were found in the Bible.<sup>3</sup> And yet he constantly insisted that those truths which were more important than others because of their close relationship with vital religion were to be emphasized. Though opinion did not constitute religion, he always opposed wrong opinions with all his might, because they seemed to him to retard the promotion of practical religion.<sup>4</sup> Creeds were not opposed when used as helpful summaries of Christian thought, but were never to be made obligatory.<sup>5</sup> In an age which glorified reason we find Wesley placing a high value upon its usefulness and power within certain well-defined limits.

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<sup>1</sup>Works, V., 174. Cf. Journal, April 5, 1768, V., 253f., where Wesley felt that he had to speak "strongly and explicitly" on what he deemed vital to religion.

<sup>2</sup>Works, VII., 287. <sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, 286. <sup>4</sup>Cf. Works, V., 172f.

<sup>5</sup>The General Rules do not contain a single dogmatic condition of admission to the Societies. These rules are found in the Methodist Discipline, Portraiture of Meth., p. 206ff., etc.

In his sermon on "Reason"<sup>1</sup> he granted that it enabled man to understand God's providential leadings and the importance of repentance, faith, and holiness, but insisted, on the other hand, that it was helpless when placed before eternal verities, that it was unable to produce faith, hope, or love. Intricate reasonings, extravagances, and mysterious teachings were to be avoided, in place of which he would have the plain unvarnished truth taught and preached. Philosophy had little in common with religion, but its study was not to be discredited on that account.<sup>2</sup>

The way of salvation and everything connected with it was at the very center of Wesley's system. Consequently those doctrines received most emphasis which had a bearing upon the personal religious life. Wesley himself narrowed them<sup>3</sup> down to three—repentance, the porch of religion; faith, the door; and holiness, religion itself.<sup>4</sup>

In true repentance man recognized his inbred corruption and felt that God's wrath was deserved. In addition to this conviction of sin came sorrow of heart and an earnest desire to cease from evil and do good.<sup>5</sup> This conviction was often attended by extraordinary circumstances, anguish, convulsions,

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<sup>1</sup>Works, II., 126ff.   <sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, V., 670; VI., 219.

<sup>3</sup>Repentance, justification, faith, regeneration, sanctification or perfection, assurance or witness of the Spirit.

<sup>4</sup>Principles of a Meth. Farther Explained, Works, V., 333.

<sup>5</sup>Works, I., 64ff.; V., 35.

and conflicts, which Wesley seemed to have viewed with favor,<sup>1</sup> more at first, however, than later in life. He contended that both Scripture and reason offered explanations for the varying degrees of anguish and bodily symptoms accompanying a deep conviction of sin.<sup>2</sup> In his sermon, "Spirit of Bondage and Adoption,"<sup>3</sup> he describes with graphic touches the sudden or gradual opening of the sinner's eyes as he beholds the horrors of his condition and contemplates death and hell as the manifest end of his sinfulness, with the righteous God, terrible as a consuming fire, constantly before his vision. Boasted reason merely increases his guilt, and his freedom of will is hardly more than freedom to wander farther from God. The verdict of the Third Conference, 1746, was to the effect that people were to be made inconsolable; for "the stronger the conviction, the speedier the deliverance."<sup>4</sup>

After the Holy Spirit had enlightened and inclined the sinner to repent of his sins, he received the forgiveness of his sins the moment he believed that Christ died for him.<sup>5</sup> This act is instantaneous, for it must have a beginning; but here Wesley insists on substance, and not on circumstance. Clear conceptions on the doctrine were not necessary to

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<sup>1</sup>Farther Appeal, Works, V., 93ff.

<sup>2</sup>Principles of a Methodist Farther Explained, V., 334.

<sup>3</sup>Works, I., 78ff.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, V., 203. Wesley was the Conference.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, V., 35.

salvation.<sup>1</sup> Man is thus said to be justified by faith because of what Christ had done for him, a faith which was to be considered the immediate and direct condition of salvation.<sup>2</sup> Justification does not mean that man is actually made just, and it was to be distinguished from trusting in the merits of Christ which alone (against Luther) could be called *articulus stantis vel cadentis Ecclesiæ*.<sup>3</sup> Wesley felt that Luther's teaching went too far in the direction of solifidianism. Faith itself he called a supernatural evidence or conviction that God reconciles this world unto himself through Christ<sup>4</sup> and then made it intensely individualistic by asserting that it included a confidence on "my part that Christ died for my sins, that he loved me and gave himself for me."<sup>5</sup>

Justification by faith was generally believed, but practically forgotten, as is shown by the treatment it received when Wesley first preached it.<sup>6</sup> The people were shocked when they heard from his lips that a man had no good thing in him until he was justified and that all his so-called good works before that time amounted to nothing.<sup>7</sup> But this justification was still only the door. Man entered into the heart of religion when he experienced the new birth.

<sup>1</sup>Journal, Dec. 1, 1767, V., 243f.      <sup>2</sup>Works, I., 388; V., 41.

<sup>3</sup>Remarks on Mr. Hill's Farrago Double-Distilled, Works, VI., 184. Cf. p. 86, n. 5.

<sup>4</sup>Works, I., 50f.; VII., 108.      <sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, I., 50.

<sup>6</sup>Cf. Journal, II.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*

After God had done something *for* him, he now does something *in* him.<sup>1</sup> Justifying faith restored man to the favor, sanctifying faith to the image, of God. The former took away the guilt, the latter took away the power, of sin.<sup>2</sup> When man received pardon he at the same time became a new creature in Christ. Justification and regeneration were thus considered as simultaneous acts, both occurring "in a short time, if not in a moment."<sup>3</sup> The new birth produced a radical change in the whole being of man, transforming his earthly mind into that which was in Christ.<sup>4</sup> Its immediate effects were peace in God, rejoicing in hope, and the beginning of sanctification.<sup>5</sup> The Spirit of God working upon the understanding, the will, and the affections was the author of faith and salvation; but that did not imply that God saved man without the latter's coöperation. No man was without "preventing grace." This gave him some measure of light and enabled him to work together with God.<sup>6</sup> Over against Calvinism and Antinomianism, Wesley taught a modified doctrine of good works in his endeavor to show that the Christian life consisted in doing good, fearing God, and working righteousness. Man was to work

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<sup>1</sup>Works, I., 162; V., 35.   <sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, I., 319.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, I., 385, 406.   <sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, V., 479.

<sup>5</sup>Works, I., 385; V., 201. Here, as elsewhere, Wesley refers to the order in which these experiences are supposed to take place in thought rather than in time.

<sup>6</sup>Works, II., 235ff.; V., 36, 478.

for life as well as *from* it. But these works were never to be considered the meritorious cause of salvation, being only the condition of it.<sup>1</sup> They were, therefore, necessary to the continuance of faith, though true faith, while producing both good works and holiness, included neither essentially.<sup>2</sup> Wesley feared that too much reliance might be placed upon a work that was done in a moment and consequently felt constrained to emphasize the inward tempers and the outward behavior of the individual after his conversion.<sup>3</sup> In his system sanctifying faith was placed on a level with justifying faith.<sup>4</sup>

There were two additional experiences which Wesley claimed might be the privilege of all Christians and not simply the enjoyment of a few rare souls, the witness of the Spirit and entire sanctification, or perfection.<sup>5</sup> Although he would not deny the possibility of saving faith (faith of a servant) in which the element of assurance was lacking,<sup>6</sup> he felt that the higher gift, the inward assurance of the Holy Spirit to the fact of present pardon and adoption,<sup>7</sup> was freely given to all who sought it.<sup>8</sup> He

<sup>1</sup>Works, I., 48, 152; V., 239.   <sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, V., 195, 592; VII., 167.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, V., 239.

<sup>4</sup>Wesley praised Luther for his clear conceptions and able defense of justification, but condemned him for his ignorance concerning sanctification (Works, I., 389).

<sup>5</sup>Character of a Methodist, Works, V., 240ff.; VI., 647.

<sup>6</sup>Works, II., 385ff.; VII., 107.

<sup>7</sup>Not final perseverance, Journal, II., 83f., Oct. 6, 1738.

<sup>8</sup>Letter to Miss Roe, Works, VII., 193.



claimed that Methodism was especially commissioned to preach this doctrine, which "had been practically lost."<sup>1</sup> This witness was more than God's standing testimony in Scripture, more than the testimony of a man's own spirit to the fact of his conversion.<sup>2</sup> It was a direct testimony of God's Spirit producing an inward impression upon the soul. Wesley admitted that it might be termed immediate revelation and did not deny that he, like the Quakers, taught sensible communications supernaturally given.<sup>3</sup> And false pretenders to the witness of the Spirit did not invalidate it any more than pretenders to the love of God made that of no account.<sup>4</sup> The necessity of distinguishing the divine testimony from false testimonies produced by human presumption led Wesley to state that the witness was to be tested by Scripture and by experience. The fruits of the Spirit would bear testimony to the believer that he was not deceived.<sup>5</sup> But entirely clear conceptions as to the nature of the experience are strangely wanting. A miraculous appearance was out of the question, the attestation of the Spirit was not to be considered infallible, neither could the manner of the operations of the Spirit be known, as he stated in his letters to Mr. John

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<sup>1</sup>Sermon, Witness of the Spirit, Works, I., 93. In J., IV., 423f., Dec. 20, 1760, he quotes the Homily in support of the doctrine.

<sup>2</sup>Works, VI., 649; I., 87.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, VI., 654; I., 99.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, VI., 649f.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, I., 100, 92.

Smith.<sup>1</sup> As a last resort the exponent of assurance fell back on the Scriptures. The doctrine was to be held because it was in Scripture.<sup>2</sup>

The doctrine of perfection needs careful and detailed restatement because of its importance in Wesley's system and because of its frequent misrepresentation. Our theologian himself opposed the phrase "sinless perfection," denying that this life contained a perfection which excluded all involuntary transgressions arising from infirmities and ignorance. But these he objects to having called sins.<sup>3</sup> Sin he defined as voluntary transgression of a known law and not as all transgression of the law; and, according to this definition of sin, he denied that all Christians must and do commit sin "as long as they live."<sup>4</sup> Salvation from all sin was, however, only the negative phase of perfection. Its positive expression in inward and outward righteousness, in the whole-hearted love of God and man, was the most important part of it.<sup>5</sup> Although this state might be attained gradually or in a moment, its attainment did not preclude growth. That was possible and even necessary, for a stationary perfection was not to be thought of.<sup>6</sup> After a Christian had attained to entire sanctification through faith by

<sup>1</sup>Works, VI., 622-655,

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.* Cf. Bowne, *The Christian Life*, 79f.

<sup>3</sup>Works, VI., 501, 138; I., 111; II., 215.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, II., 172; I., 360f. <sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, I., 170, 167ff.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, I., 356ff., 424; V., 573; VII., 553.

the grace of God, it was possible for him to lose it.<sup>1</sup> This demanded constant effort on his part to retain the experiences he had and likewise prevented him from placing a false dependence upon his attainments. Wesley realized the dangers connected with the doctrine in its tendency to bring man into bondage or fear at the thought of not having attained it and, therefore, advised that it be not harshly preached to the quenching of joy and hope.<sup>2</sup> Anxious cares were not to stand in the way of striving for perfection, for an increase in love implied that there should also be an increase in joy. Perfection was thus considered as a relative attainment which did not free man from temptation, nor from the need of the mediation of Christ, nor from the possibility of error, wrong judgments, and a "thousand other infirmities."<sup>3</sup> The soul could not be free from these until the corruptible body was laid down.<sup>4</sup> Although Wesley did not doubt that others attained entire sanctification, he hesitated to affirm the same of himself.<sup>5</sup>

The founder of Methodism has probably never been included among the Mystics. He himself con-

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<sup>1</sup>Journal, July 25, 1774.

<sup>2</sup>Conference Minutes, 1747; Works, V., 210f. Wesley insisted that the doctrine be not placed too high. (Works, VII., 552.) The Scriptural basis is never to be lost sight of. (Minutes, 1747; Works, V., 208ff.)

<sup>3</sup>Works, II., 168f., 215; VI., 501. <sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, VI., 741.

<sup>5</sup>Journal, III., 154, Dec. 2, 1744.

stantly denied that he ever was in the "way of Mysticism."<sup>1</sup> A careful study of his writings, however, will reveal pronounced mystical elements. According to Wesley's own definition of Mysticism, he was no Mystic, but his definition is open to criticism.<sup>2</sup> If a Mystic is one who denied justification by faith;<sup>3</sup> who denied the imputation of Christ's righteousness;<sup>4</sup> who taught that God was insusceptible of anger<sup>5</sup> and that the work of God in the soul was best promoted by anguish and by spiritual martyrdoms by occasional absences of God;<sup>6</sup> that joy in the Spirit was not to be indulged in nor God to be selfishly loved;<sup>7</sup> who was guided solely by inward impressions and not by the written Word;<sup>8</sup> who advised retirement and entire seclusion from men;<sup>9</sup> who strove to fulfill the law by passivity, Quietism, and contemplation rather than by outward works;<sup>10</sup> who taught that we were to be justified for the sake of our inward righteousness;<sup>11</sup> who slighted the means of grace<sup>12</sup>—then Wesley's assertion that he was not to be numbered among them must be accepted. But we must likewise rule out of the way of Mysticism some who are commonly called Mystics. A Mystic

<sup>1</sup>Works., VI., 163, 187.

<sup>2</sup>See Appendix for extended discussion on Mysticism.

<sup>3</sup>Journal, V., 243, Dec. 1, 1767.      <sup>4</sup>Works, I., 175.

<sup>5</sup>Works, VI., 723. This was a "fundamental error."

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, I., 416.      <sup>7</sup>Journal, II., 494.      <sup>8</sup>Works, VII., 562.

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, 592.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, 591.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*, VI., 602.

like Arndt, for instance, would have been in sympathy with practically everything that Wesley taught. Wesley's opposition was directed mainly against speculative Mysticism, and with that form of it he really had very little in common,<sup>1</sup> but his affinity to the practical form was more intimate than he thought. Since the new birth took the place of the mystical union in his system, it will serve as a suitable starting point, with the emphasis on those elements which have a mystical color. Wesley was a trichotomist, arguing that the spirit in man was the highest principle, the soul being its immediate clothing.<sup>2</sup> This immortal spirit could come into direct relation with the eternal world by means of a sense in man called faith, and living faith was the only immediate essential means of uniting man with God.<sup>3</sup> Though Wesley as a churchman made much of the ordinary means of grace, he deprecated a slavish dependence upon them and reproved everything which smacked of the *opus operatum*. In describing Mystics and others who refrained from using the ordinary means of grace because of their "horrid profanation" he states that they experienced the grace of God without them because they were in a position where they could not use them. He thus

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<sup>1</sup>Wesley's practical mind abhorred the blending of philosophy with religion. (Works, V., 669f.) Cf. his verdict on Boehme (J., III., 17f., June 4, 1742): "Sublime nonsense; inimitable bombast; fustian not to be paralleled."

<sup>2</sup>Works, VI., 532f.   <sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, VI., 723.

implied that God might send his Spirit directly and immediately into the soul of man.<sup>1</sup> Wesley represented the new birth as being the result, not of acquired, but of infused, habits or principles.<sup>2</sup> A particular, immediate inspiration is given by the Holy Spirit which is not to be identified with the "motions of our own nature."<sup>3</sup> A special assistance of God's Spirit is needed aside from that furnished by the Scriptures, for the Scriptures cannot save the soul. How this Spirit works on the soul is inexplicable, but he thinks that it might be an "inspiring" (breathing) good thoughts into man.<sup>4</sup> And this perceptible inspiration came not only in prayer and special religious exercises, but in every phase of a man's life.<sup>5</sup> Wesley continually strove to retain the means, however mechanical the inclusion may appear to us in the light of his assertion that immediacy did not exclude the means.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, he hesitated to make the means a matter of vital concern so long as love, the end of the Christian dispensation, was attained.<sup>7</sup>

Not only did God's grace come from without and from above; but when the soul was "hid with Christ in God," man breathed unto God, and this spiritual

<sup>1</sup>Sermon, Means of Grace, Works, I., 136f., 138.

<sup>2</sup>Works, V., 634; V., 424. Notes on New Test., 477, Gal. 2:20.

<sup>3</sup>Works, V., 426. Notes on New Test., 382, Rom. 8:16; 450, 2 Cor. 1:22.

<sup>4</sup>Works, V., 36. <sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, V., 133; VI., 631.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, V., 77. <sup>7</sup>Letter to John Smith, VI., 637.

respiration sustained the life of God in the soul.<sup>1</sup> In his notes on John 15, concerning the vine and the branches, we find no comments excluding the notion of an organic union of man with God;<sup>2</sup> but we look in vain for his comment on John 17:23, which speaks of supreme union with God.<sup>3</sup> Wesley may have omitted this because of an aversion to the use of mystical language, and this aversion accounts for much of his opposition to the Mystics. In reading his letter to William Law<sup>4</sup> the fact stands out that the differences which he emphasized lay as much in divergent terminology as in different content of thought. Wesley admits this, for he complains not so much of the falsity of thought as of the "amazing queerness of language."<sup>5</sup> Where Law refers to the highest union with God, Wesley prefers to designate it as yielding the whole heart to God. This would result in such extreme resignation that all self-will would be abolished.<sup>6</sup> Both agreed that man possessed a sense through which the spiritual world communicated with his soul after the inspiration of the Holy Spirit had aroused it to activity. Wesley acquiesced in Law's statement concerning the appre-

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<sup>1</sup>Works, I., 216, 403.

<sup>2</sup>Notes on New Test., p. 258. A similar thought is expressed in a comment on Philippians 3:8, 9, p. 511. Christ is gained only after the utter loss of all things, then the believer is "ingrafted" in God.

<sup>3</sup>Notes on New Test., p. 264.

<sup>4</sup>Works, V., 669ff.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, 690.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, 691.

hension of the all of God together with our own nothingness.<sup>1</sup> Their ideas about the witness of the Spirit and the new birth are practically identical.

One explanation for the reformer's opposition to Mysticism was the feeling that it was inevitably bound up with obscurity and irrationality. Boehme, for instance, was given credit for having written many truths; but his "crude, indigested" philosophy was too much for the logical and practical reformer.<sup>2</sup> He insists that the essence of Boehme's teaching, that which dealt with vital religion, had all been taught before and with better phraseology.<sup>3</sup>

Another mystical element in connection with the new birth was the doctrine that illumination came through conversion, after the heart had been circumcised and the old Adam purged.<sup>4</sup> This was similar to the Mystical *via purgativa* preceding the *via illuminativa*. An entry in the Journal<sup>5</sup> gives the re-

<sup>1</sup>Works, 695. At the close of the letter Law is advised to reject "high-flown bombast, unintelligible jargon."

<sup>2</sup>In Works, V., 703ff., Wesley gives a specimen of Boehme's unique and absurd explanation of the Lord's Prayer, with the observation that such a distorter of the Bible ought to have been called a demonosopher. In the Journal, II., 365, July 16, 1740, the Mystic divinity of Dionysius is called "superessential darkness."

<sup>3</sup>Works, V., 701. Cf. Journal, IV., 409, Sept. 16, 1760, where he concludes that Scripture and Mystical writers were mutually exclusive. The use of metaphysical terms in religion was condemned. (Works, I., 152.)

<sup>4</sup>Sermon, Circumcision of the Heart, Works, I., 153.

<sup>5</sup>Aug. 9, 1750, III., 489.



markable experience of an old woman who would have been highly praised by the classical Mystics because she had reached the stage of illumination, for months seeing the "unclouded face of God," after having passed through a severe purgative trial. Because she wrote no book full of unintelligible phrases, Wesley has nothing but praise for her.

Wesley's doctrine of "preventing grace" corresponded to the inner light of the Mystics, though he tried to minimize its importance by calling it a faint twilight.<sup>1</sup> It was man's duty to stir up that "spark of grace" which was within him. In harmony with the Mystics, Wesley also taught that without holiness no man could see God; that the inward power was the main essential, for without it the understanding and the outward means were of no avail.<sup>2</sup> His statements about disinterested love, though somewhat ambiguous, tended toward the Mystical standpoint.<sup>3</sup> Mosheim's history was criticized by him on the ground that it condemned the Mystics in a lump, and Wesley inferred that it was done because of the author's own lack of inward religion.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Works, II., 238, 424f. Christ, who is the true Light, reveals himself in us. (Works, I., 29f.)

<sup>2</sup>Works, V., 572. Knowledge of God cannot be attained through the natural faculties. (Works, I., 394.)

<sup>3</sup>All right affections have their origin in disinterested love. (Works, V., 753.) Cf. VI., 721, where the doctrine of pure love was opposed as unscriptural. Cf. V., 384.

<sup>4</sup>Preface to A Concise Eccles. Hist., Works, VII., 577.

He felt himself in perfect harmony with à Kempis<sup>1</sup> and expressed high regard for Madame Bourignon,<sup>2</sup> Madame Guyon,<sup>3</sup> and Fénelon.<sup>4</sup>

The foregoing account proves that Wesley consciously opposed a Mysticism which he failed to understand. He judged the Mystical spirit by a criterion which he would not have had applied to his own system, for he magnified too many of the incidental by-products of Mysticism to the disparagement of the essentials. He identified the inner essence of the teaching too much with its external clothing and consequently was unable to see the close affinity which some of his own doctrines had with the Mystical way. In this regard he failed to follow the judgment expressed in his own words: "Different persons may use different expressions and yet mean the same thing."<sup>5</sup> Wesley was undoubtedly sincere in his opposition and, from his own standpoint, justified; but that does not preclude

<sup>1</sup>Wesley abridged and published the *Imitation*, Works, VII., 581. He commends the author's emphasis upon the fact that the Christian was to become "one spirit with God," so that he might become a partaker of the divine nature. (Works, VII., 513.)

<sup>2</sup>Journal, Feb. 14, 1774.

<sup>3</sup>Wesley published an extract of her life. (Works, VII., 561f.) Though he condemns some of her teachings, he concedes that she was often favored with uncommon communications of God's Spirit. (Works, 562f.)

<sup>4</sup>Madame Guyon and Fénelon were not to be styled "distracted enthusiasts." (Jour., Aug. 31, 1770, V., 382ff.)

<sup>5</sup>Works, I., 171.

the possibility of our judgment that his system contained some Mystical elements. These may be summarized as follows:

1. Immediacy of first-hand religious experience;<sup>1</sup> immediate and perceptible inspiration.

2. Man possessed a sense other than reason by which he came into direct relation with the Infinite.

3. The new birth reestablished vital union of the soul with God which sin had dissolved; man's personality became unified.

4. Illumination after purgation.

5. The Inner Light universal.

6. Without holiness no man shall see God.

Other elements found among the Mystical writers he strenuously opposed—the Quietistic, Antinomian, and passive elements; likewise the emphasis placed upon seclusion, upon solitary and unsocial forms of religious expression.<sup>2</sup>

Wesley's ideas regarding the supernatural assume an important position in his doctrinal system. Although he taught that dreams, visions, revelations, etc., were not to be trusted,<sup>3</sup> he would not discard them indiscriminately and felt that they might be

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<sup>1</sup>In Works, I., 61, he states that religion could subsist without means. True religion is no outward thing. Due administration of the sacraments he regarded as requisite to the well-being (rather than being) of the Church. (Works, V., 25.)

<sup>2</sup>Works, I., 212f.; VI., 721; VII., 165ff.; Jour., V., 46, Feb. 5, 1764; *ibid.*, III., 258f., Sept. 8, 1746.

<sup>3</sup>Jour., II., 381f., Sept. 3, 1740.

of value if properly tested by Scripture.<sup>1</sup> There were many instances in his own life when he thought he had private revelations. His practice of sortilege and bibliomancy was only another side of it.<sup>2</sup> He was true to his Puritan ancestry in his interpretation of peculiar occurrences as special interpositions of Providence.<sup>3</sup> God could, and often did, suspend the ordinary action of the laws of nature.<sup>4</sup> Witchcraft and apparitions were considered valuable proofs of the reality of the invisible world.<sup>5</sup> That the physical phenomena, often connected with the penitential conflict, were of supernatural origin seemed plausible to him who was raised in an atmosphere which was conducive to such a belief. His conclusion given in the Journal<sup>6</sup> was to the effect that these phenomena came at first from God, but were later mimicked by Satan. He felt that it would be irrational and unchristian to condemn them *in toto*, but denied that they were essential to the inward work.

A few words remain to be said about Wesley's attitude toward doctrinal toleration. He refused to be liberal in the sense of the Latitudinarianism of his day, which he deemed to be an indifference to all

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<sup>1</sup>Jour., II., 226, June 22, 1739; Minutes of 1745, Works, V., 200.

<sup>2</sup>Works, V., 318, 371.

<sup>3</sup>Works, VI., 562ff. Cases of illness cured by direct interposition of God. Works, V., 322ff.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, II., 104ff.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, VII., 571; Jour., July 4, 1770, V., 374f.

<sup>6</sup>IV., 359f., Nov. 25, 1759.

opinions. On the contrary, it was his aim to exhibit a catholic spirit in perfect harmony with settled principles.<sup>1</sup> Compulsion was never to be employed in matters of conscience.<sup>2</sup> He advocated that Catholics be granted civil and religious liberty in England, provided they were peacefully restrained from injuring or undermining the liberty of Protestants.<sup>3</sup> Although the heathen were woefully ignorant, they were not left in total darkness.<sup>4</sup> Neither they nor the Mohammedans were to be consigned to damnation.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Works, I., 353f.; VII., 321.   <sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, I., 349.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, V., 817ff.; 826f.   <sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, II., 424f.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, II., 485: "For God hateth nothing that he hath made."

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE PRACTICAL RELIGIOUS REFORMS OF WESLEY

WESLEY felt that political interests had little in common with his religious aims and therefore did not concern himself much about them. He accepted the fact that he owed allegiance to the "powers that be" and deemed it as religious to "honor the king" as to fear God.<sup>1</sup> On numerous occasions he gave proof of his loyalty to the existing government.<sup>2</sup> In the various addresses to the inhabitants of England Wesley urged that obedience be rendered to the government, in spite of evils that might be present.<sup>3</sup> He realized that corruption was widespread, but did not seek the remedy so much in external changes of the government as in the revolution of the inward man. In a few instances, however, he sounded no uncertain note because moral issues were involved. He censured the practice of smuggling<sup>4</sup> and protested vehemently against the government's connection with the slave trade.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Works, VII., 84. In VI., 247, he affirms: "Politics lie quite out of my province."

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Calm Address to Our American Colonies, Works, VI., 293ff.

<sup>3</sup>Works, VI., 321ff.

<sup>4</sup>Journal, IV., 220, June 16, 1757.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, V., 445f., Feb. 12, 1772.

Wesley affirmed that he had nothing to do with the relation of Church and State. Although he regarded the Anglican Church more as a legal institution than a spiritual organization, he swore his allegiance despite the fact that he deplored the introduction of conditions similar to those existing in the time of Constantine.<sup>1</sup> He claimed that the Church of England was nearer the Scriptural plan than any of the other Churches.<sup>2</sup> But with all of his love for the Church, Wesley could not close his eyes to the evils bound up with the establishment. Consequently he mourns that there were few real Christians in the Church, that she was in a fallen state, that discipline was neglected, that the parishioners constituted a rope of sand, that the "putrid and dead" were too often retained when they ought to have been excluded.<sup>3</sup> This pastor of many parishes believed that the majority of the clergy did not preach pure doctrine, that they were in a fallen state, and that they fell far short of performing the duties of Christian pastors.<sup>4</sup> His denunciation of the common vices of the people need not detain us, as his whole life was an expression of protest. His numerous descriptions of their low moral condition are of value, be-

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<sup>1</sup>Works, II., 63, 266, 361. Wesley restricted the political preaching of the minister to a defense of the government and of its officials against slander. VI., 346.

<sup>2</sup>Works, V., 798ff.; VII., 233. <sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, V., 104, 143, 159, 474.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, VII., 497f.; Farther Appeal, V., 123ff.; Jour., II., 274ff.

cause he knew their life better, probably, than any man in England.<sup>1</sup> However, the energetic protests of Wesley might have availed little if he had not followed them up with constructive work.

The positive contribution of Wesley can be justly appreciated only by keeping his main aim in mind. He cannot be condemned for not accomplishing what was entirely outside his purpose. His object was, as he often stated it himself, "to spread Scriptural holiness over the land." It was not to set up a new Church establishment in opposition to the Anglican, not to teach a new set of doctrines, but to promote the power of godliness where only the mere form of it was present.<sup>2</sup> While the Dissenters strove to show how fallen the Established Church was, Wesley and his preachers constantly insisted on the fallen state of their hearers.<sup>3</sup> As late as 1756 he even refutes the charge that his aim was to enhance the reputation of Methodism, asserting, on the contrary, that it was to promote vital, practical religion.<sup>4</sup> The English reformer did not have a high opinion of the Protestant Reformation, though he granted that Luther had accomplished a great and necessary work. Its results, however, had not been commensurate with the efforts put forth.

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<sup>1</sup>He was, however, given to exaggeration.

<sup>2</sup>Works, V., 190.   <sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, V., 227.

<sup>4</sup>Letter to Walker, Works, VII., 276. In *Farther Thoughts on Separation*, Works, VII., 325, he states that his aim was "to enliven our neighbors, those of the Church in particular."



He held that the English Reformation, though a visitation of God, had accomplished little more. Decay soon set in on account of the Church's acquisition of wealth and power, and the deterioration was accentuated by the relapse at the Restoration.<sup>1</sup> To restore the Church to a condition approaching the model found in the New Testament and to spiritualize her members and those beyond her pale was the ideal to the realization of which Wesley devoted all his talents and energies.<sup>2</sup> Because the various methods which he employed to reach his goal will not be given in strict chronological sequence, certain reservations must be kept in mind. He did not begin his great work with a well-thought-out, comprehensive plan, and in this respect differed from Richelieu, with whom he has been compared. According to his own admission,<sup>3</sup> methods were chosen when the need for them arose. Sometimes a chance circumstance presented a method ready for use; at other times they were adopted only after lengthy consultation. Wesley himself never intentionally swerved from his principal aim, but this did not keep him from setting forces in motion which defeated some of his cherished plans.

Wesley frequently expressed his opposition to schismatical tendencies and labored faithfully to

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<sup>1</sup>Works, II., 110f.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, VII., 325.

<sup>3</sup>A Plain Account of the People Called Methodists, Works, V., 176.

keep his movement within the Church,<sup>1</sup> though as early as the First Conference, 1744, a qualified adherence to the Church was already asserted. In a short tract of 1758 he gave twelve reasons why separation was to be considered inexpedient (his brother Charles insisted that the word "unlawful" be used).<sup>2</sup> Later he admitted that a kind of separation was going on against which he would not remonstrate, which involved a temporary separation from those who neither lived nor preached the gospel.<sup>3</sup> The numerous utterances and acts of the man prove that there was an increasing tendency away from sacramentarianism, which manifested itself especially in his ordination of ministers and "superintendents,"<sup>4</sup> the institution of the lay ministry, and the deed of declaration.<sup>5</sup> He gradually deviated from the High Church position in doctrinal matters, as when he affirmed that the uninterrupted succession from the apostles was incapable of proof.<sup>6</sup> In harmony with this was the assertion that bishops and presbyters were originally of one order, which gave the latter as much right to ordain as the former. This he gave as the justification of his ordinations for America. In this master stroke of poli-

<sup>1</sup>Works, V., 166f., 178; VII., 132.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, VII., 293ff.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, VII., 319, 326.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, 311.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, 309f. Cf. Faulkner, Wesley as a Churchman, who proves conclusively that the whole tendency of Wesley's life was away from sacramentarianism.

<sup>6</sup>Journal, Feb. 19, 1761, IV., 438.

cy he cast his scruples to the winds.<sup>1</sup> Sacramentarianism also received a setback not only in the emphasis which he placed upon conversion,<sup>2</sup> but also in his assertion that lay preaching was more essential than the administration of sacraments, because souls were saved by the former rather than by the latter.<sup>3</sup> Despite these tendencies in his life, Wesley's immediate aim was bound up with the general stimulation of Church life. His general rule prescribed that the regular Church service take precedence over the meetings at the chapels, owing to the fact that the latter seldom had all the essential parts of public prayer.<sup>4</sup> Only when the parish minister was notoriously wicked or taught pernicious doctrines were the services to be allowed in Church hours.<sup>5</sup> Since these revival efforts were grounded upon the Bible, the revivalist would have nothing to do with any doctrines or any Church system which seemed to him contrary to the explicit statements of Scripture. The Bible was his constant authority and inspiration—the oracles of God, as he called it—by whose guidance he sought to lead the people to a deeper religious experience.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Works, VII., 187, 284, 286, 311.

<sup>2</sup>Though the influence of ritualistic enthusiasm of his pre-conversion days persisted in ascetical prescriptions. Cf. Faulkner, *Wesley as a Churchman*, 166f.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, 176. <sup>4</sup>Works, V., 227f. <sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, VII., 315.

<sup>6</sup>Works, I., 102; V., 769f. In *Jour.*, V., 522f., Aug. 8, 1773, he asserts that he had no sympathy for the so-called "menders of the Bible," who endangered the cause of religion more than Hume or Voltaire.

Guided by his master passion, Wesley gradually built up a marvelous ecclesiastical structure, the component parts of which demand attention commensurate to their importance. We have from his own pen an account of the spontaneous rise of the society.<sup>1</sup> When he saw that those who were not closely united with others soon fell away from their awakened condition, he felt the need of joining them into some order or connection. The principle that solitary religion was a "device of Satan" may also have influenced him, for he considered the social kind the only religion worthy of the name.<sup>2</sup> That he had primitive Church examples for his organization came to him only upon reflection. He repelled the charge that this was merely "gathering Churches out of Churches," stating that it was no more than an association of those who wished to help each other in working out their salvation.<sup>3</sup>

The most significant and original element was the class meeting. This, as the smaller nucleus, was often formed before the society and in such cases normally developed into the other in its process of growth.<sup>4</sup> Its original financial purpose soon developed into a more comprehensive scheme whereby

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<sup>1</sup>A Plain Account of the Methodists, Works, V., 177ff.

<sup>2</sup>Works, I., 211, 216; Jour., Aug. 25, 1763, V., 26.

<sup>3</sup>Works, V., 178.

<sup>4</sup>These had their origin in the fiscal policy which was adopted by Wesley at the suggestion of another. Works, V., 179.

Wesley made effective use of the class leaders as watchers "over the souls of their brethren."<sup>1</sup> This prudential regulation was followed by another, the band meeting, in which married or single men or women met separately in smaller companies, allowing greater freedom in the discussion of personal religious experiences.<sup>2</sup> The select societies were still more exclusive, comprising those only who seemingly had reached a higher stage of Christian experience. A good share of the time in all of these meetings was devoted to mutual exhortation and confession.

Another feature peculiar to Methodism was the issuance of quarterly tickets to members who were in good standing.<sup>3</sup> An obstinate offender was easily dealt with by this arrangement, for the retention of his ticket meant exclusion from the society.<sup>4</sup> By this method, as well as through the various band and class meetings, the Methodist leader was enabled to exercise a strict moral and religious control over his followers. The watch night services and the love feasts were early instituted for the purpose of bringing about a closer union.<sup>5</sup> This was only another instance which, with the other so-called in-

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<sup>1</sup>Works, VII., 316.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup>Works, V., 182; Jour., Feb. 24, 1741; II., 429ff. These also served as traveling certificates.

<sup>4</sup>Jour., April 7, 1741; II., 442. Some were kept "on trial."

<sup>5</sup>Works, V., 418; Jour., Dec. 9, 1759; IV., 361.

novations, illustrates Wesley's aim of cementing the bonds of Christian fellowship firmer than the "rope-of-sand" arrangement in the Anglican Church.

It will be unnecessary to set forth in detail the other elements in the intricate system which enabled this organizing genius, by means of his assistants,<sup>1</sup> to direct every phase of the rapidly expanding movement with an authority in his own sphere equal to that of the Pope in his. The utilization of lay help and the development of an itinerant lay ministry cannot be omitted, however, for they proved to be one of the greatest dynamic forces of Methodism. Since Wesley had few ordained clergymen to assist him, he was forced to rely upon the assistance of men from the rank and file of life. Their duties were similar to those of their spiritual commander, with the exception of administering the sacraments. Their right to preach was defended on the score of their being evangelists and not priests.<sup>2</sup> Although expedient, it was not necessary that a man have an outward as well as an inward call.<sup>3</sup> Though unlettered in the main, the lay helpers were not wanting in matters pertaining to "substantial, practical, experimental divinity."<sup>4</sup> The lack of trained helpers soon forced him to institute the itinerancy, which was probably the only method, because of the rapid

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<sup>1</sup>Assistants, stewards, trustees, visitors of the sick, etc.

<sup>2</sup>The Ministerial Office, Works, II., 539ff.

<sup>3</sup>Works, I., 344; VII., 277.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, V., 156ff.

increase in the number of societies, by which pastoral supervision could have been maintained.<sup>1</sup> That Wesley was unable to see all the good which painstaking parish labor might accomplish through a series of years must be attributed partly to his own experiences at Epworth and partly to the abuses of the system which were so prevalent in his day.<sup>2</sup> These itinerants met annually to confer with their general superintendent, and thus arose the Conference.

Serious efforts were made in the field of educational training. Wesley commended catechetical instruction, because he saw its importance in the religious training of children and in this instance deplored the unfitness of the books used by the clergy in England.<sup>3</sup> But in spite of his love for children and his earnest attempts to train those who came to his school in Kingswood, he made little progress because of his failure to understand the child mind.<sup>4</sup> Wesley knew the value of an educated ministry and did all that was in his power to train

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<sup>1</sup>Works, VII., 329f., 275f. In Cornwall were thirty-four societies and only four preachers in 1756.

<sup>2</sup>His own active nature demanded movement. Cf. Works, VII., 73.

<sup>3</sup>Works, VII., 170; Journal, April 11, 1756, IV., 157.

<sup>4</sup>The rigid monastic rule at Kingswood granted no vacation days and prohibited all play. Much time was to be given to devotional exercises, and the children were kept under constant supervision. Works, VII., 333f., Short Account of the School in Kingswood.

his own, even to the extent of demanding that his lay helpers contract a taste for reading or return to their old trades.<sup>1</sup> The members of the United Societies were not overlooked, and for their benefit numerous tracts were written and published. This prolific writer also abridged, purged, and published many works for the benefit of those who were unable to buy the originals. The results of this unique educational propaganda cannot be ascertained, but they must have been profitable to the people concerned as well as to Methodism in general.<sup>2</sup>

The ascetical tendencies in Wesley's life were probably intimately related to his early ritualistic enthusiasm,<sup>3</sup> but they were also due to his theology. Love of the world was regarded as a disease of human nature produced by the Fall.<sup>4</sup> Although he would have Christians avoid intimacy with unholy men, he had no sympathy for the monastic ideal of escape from the world.<sup>5</sup> But it is true that his emphasis upon the second creation (new birth) caused him to think little of the value inherent in the first creation. He granted that the natural man had his earthly pleasures, but contended that they were nothing but pleasing dreams and fumes of opiates which were entirely dispelled when the anguish of the conviction of sin overtook him.<sup>6</sup> Joy and pleas-

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<sup>1</sup>Works, V., 223.

<sup>3</sup>See page 105, Note 2.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, II., 113, 374.

<sup>2</sup>Journal, Dec. 18, 1745, III., 228.

<sup>4</sup>Works, I., 103; II., 198, 310ff.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, I., 77ff.



ure were, therefore, justifiable only when they were the expression of the grace of God manifested in the heart. Diversion and recreation were regarded as necessary for mind and body, but allowable only when of a useful nature.<sup>1</sup> His general principle of strict self-denial and of keeping the glory of God constantly in view led him to adopt a philosophy of life in which there was no room for certain innocent pleasures like play and the reading of novels and newspapers.<sup>2</sup> Although this serious man had a sense of humor and knew how to regale friends with pleasant tales, he objected to all idle talk and immoderate laughter.<sup>3</sup> The low moral tone of the plays of his day goes far to explain his hostility to the theater.<sup>4</sup> The dance and cards were not properly evil in themselves, but were to be eschewed because of their evil associations and consequences.<sup>5</sup> Wesley would not go to the extreme of prescribing hair shirts and bodily austerities, but his injunctions against costly dress and luxurious living were numerous.<sup>6</sup> In harmony with these positions was his Puritanical notion concerning the proper observance

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<sup>1</sup>Works, II., 271f., such as work in the open air, visiting, doing good, reading elevating books, prayer.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, VII., 333f. Cf. I., 105, 416.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, V., 454, 381. Cf. II., 266ff., sermon, The More Excellent Way.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, II., 271; VI., 667. <sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, II., 272; VII., 244.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, II., 259; V., 184; VI., 581f. In Conference Minutes, V., 217, wearing "calashes, high heads, or enormous bonnets" was sufficient to cause expulsion from the society.

of the Sabbath. The day was to be spent in religious worship and Scripture-reading, in devotions and meditation, and not in going to the fields or to the public houses, nor in any kind of diversion.<sup>1</sup> An appreciation of the æsthetical in worship as well as in nature was not one of the reformer's strong points. Very seldom does he describe a scene that is "inexpressibly beautiful," though he must have seen many in his travels.<sup>2</sup> His master passion simply dwarfed everything and every instinct that may have longed for expression.

The social and economic life of the nation interested Wesley because of its bearing upon religion. He frequently spoke of the essentially social nature of religion and sought to sanctify the social relationships.<sup>3</sup> Though he deplored war and its attendant evils as destructive of God's work, he did not condemn the soldier's life.<sup>4</sup> He not only abhorred dueling, but deprecated contention and fighting of any kind, asserting that peaceful means were always to be employed.<sup>5</sup> The religious authorities were to be obeyed so far as their demands were consistent with the word of God.<sup>6</sup> He advocated that all classes have equal rights before the law, but in the General Rules<sup>7</sup> he admonished his followers not to

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<sup>1</sup>Works, VI., 352ff., 464; VII., 235f.

<sup>2</sup>Journal, Aug. 21, 1787. <sup>3</sup>Works, I., 211f.; II., 164.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, VII., 10; Journal, Nov. 16, 1746, III., 267f.

<sup>5</sup>Works, VI., 564; Journal, July 19, 1749, III., 409.

<sup>6</sup>Works, V., 86, 198. <sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, V., 117, 191; VII., 132.

go to law at all. The economic concerns of the nation also received his attention. Besides preaching and writing against the evils connected with avarice and unscrupulous methods of obtaining and spending money, he had suggestions to give to the government in regard to its financial policy.<sup>1</sup> Political and religious liberty found a staunch defender in him, though he opposed Locke's original compact idea in his contention that government did not have its origin in the people, but in God.<sup>2</sup>

Under the direction of Wesley and his helpers Methodism planned and executed large charitable undertakings. A special class of officials appointed to visit the sick seem to have had much success.<sup>3</sup> Provision was likewise made for the poor, especially the widows; while the children of the poor were taken care of and given free instruction, except in cases where parents were able to pay.<sup>4</sup> A system of poor relief was begun for the temporary assistance of those in need of work.<sup>5</sup> A similar organization was the Strangers' Society for "poor, sick, friendless strangers."<sup>6</sup> Wesley made personal efforts to

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<sup>1</sup>Works, I., 445; II., 188, 197; Journal, Oct. 19, 1763, V., 30f. Free Thoughts on Public Affairs, Works, VI., 247ff.

<sup>2</sup>Thoughts upon Liberty, VI., 261ff.; VI., 300ff.; Thoughts Concerning the Origin of Power, VI., 269ff.

<sup>3</sup>Works, V., 186f.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, 188f.

<sup>5</sup>Two hundred and fifty helped in a year. Works, V., 189; Journal, May 7, 1741, II., 453f.; Feb. 27, 1744, III., 122.

<sup>6</sup>Journal, March 4, 1890.

raise funds and gave liberally from his own income.<sup>1</sup>

If toleration was the virtue of eighteenth-century England, the founder of Methodism may lay claim to the honor of having been one of her most virtuous sons. Although he always cherished the Anglican Church, he became less and less interested in maintaining a narrow confessionalism, insisting that members of the invisible Church were to be found in every visible form of it.<sup>2</sup> He took exception to the definition of the Church given in the Articles, for he felt that the exclusion of those Churches which did not have the preaching of the pure word of God nor the due administration of the sacraments was unjust. He even expressed a willingness to receive them into his own Church.<sup>3</sup> He constantly struggled against the increase of bigotry and narrowness of spirit among his followers and consequently often presented to them the work that other Churches were doing to advance religion.<sup>4</sup> It seems that he formulated no plan for an outward union of the different confessions, deeming the union of heart and purpose sufficient.

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<sup>1</sup>Journal, Jan. 4, Feb. 20, 1785. Cf. North, *Early Methodist Philanthropy*.

<sup>2</sup>Aside from its politico-ecclesiastical organization, he defined the Church of England as the company of those subjects of England who were believers, for the pretenders to its forms were not real members. Journal, Jan. 5, 1761, IV., 428f.

<sup>3</sup>Works, II., 158. <sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, V., 182.

Methodism gradually developed into a great home and foreign missionary movement, and this phase of the work her founder always kept in the foreground. His well-known statement—"I look upon all the world as my parish; thus far, I mean, that, in whatever part of it I am, I judge it meet, right, and my bounden duty to declare unto all that are willing to hear the glad tidings of salvation"<sup>1</sup>—found its ideal expression in one of his sermons,<sup>2</sup> which was prophetic of much that was to follow in the missionary efforts of the next century. Wesley had no set opinions about the millennium,<sup>3</sup> but he felt that the Church had a bright future. He actively encouraged Dr. Coke in his missionary propaganda and seriously considered the proposition of sending missionaries to the East Indies.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The Heart of John Wesley's Journal, edited by Parker, p. 55f.

<sup>2</sup>General Spread of the Gospel, Works, II., 74ff.

<sup>3</sup>Works, VII., 86.

<sup>4</sup>Journal, Feb. 14, 1784.

## CHAPTER IX

### PIETISM AND METHODISM: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

A PERUSAL of the foregoing chapters reveals many analogies between the Pietism of Spener and Francke and the Methodism of Wesley. An attempt will be made to place them in juxtaposition, so that the elements common to both may stand forth in bolder relief. The points of difference will also be noted as they appear.

A comparison of the background of both movements shows that the social, economic, and religious conditions were pointing toward an impending crisis. That this crisis was met in the form of a religious revival instead of a social upheaval was largely due to the men under consideration. Each leader claimed to be an advocate of the form which the Reformation took in his own land; but while Wesley, with less appreciation for it, sought to supplement it, Spener aimed merely to complete it. The alleged goal in both cases was the reestablishment of religion which had fallen into decay. The religious conditions of primitive Christianity served as a model and an inspiration.

Pietists and Methodists stood in perfect agreement in regard to the old doctrines of the Church, upon some of which, however, they placed a differ-

ent emphasis. The doctrine of the divinity of Christ in connection with the doctrine of the Trinity was emphasized more by Wesley over against his rationalistic foes. An effort was made by both movements to bring God into closer relationship with his creation, for both German orthodoxy and English Deism had virtually placed him in a position of lofty transcendence. The latter movement considered the teaching that he came into direct relations to man as a form of fanaticism. But, it must be conceded, the religious revivals practically limited the immanence of God to spiritual-minded Christians. The current ideas about man's fall, original sin, and human depravity were retained; and here again Methodism laid greater stress because of the doubts cast upon these dogmas by the Deists, who stood for man's natural worth and ability.<sup>1</sup> Wesley gave the human element of free choice more assertive power than Spener, who still adhered to Luther's definition that man was free only in the external things of life.<sup>2</sup> Through his doctrine of prevenient grace the English reformer taught that man received a certain measure of free will, so that his salvation depended upon his own free

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<sup>1</sup>Wesley went so far in his opposition to the Deists as to assert that these were the cardinal doctrines of Christianity which differentiated it from heathenism. Cf. sermon, Original Sin, Works, II., 398.

<sup>2</sup>Auf. Ueb., 296f., in *moralibus, naturalibus* man may choose the good or the evil.

choice of the remedy which God graciously offered to him.

The means of grace were interpreted similarly, though receiving less emphasis than the orthodox teaching upon the subject. Theoretically, however, both stood for baptismal regeneration and the necessity of participation in the Lord's Supper. We have seen that the doctrine of the new birth really implied that baptismal regeneration, however essential and efficacious in the case of children dying in infancy, had to be supplemented by a new and conscious vital religious experience. It thus lost its position of primary importance. The words which were used in support of the orthodox teaching of the Church should not obscure the trend which the doctrinal emphasis of the revivalists really took. Their ideas about the other sacrament diverged considerably. Spener adhered to Luther's position in regarding the Eucharist as a real participation of the body and blood of Christ,<sup>1</sup> while Wesley agreed with Calvin's idea of a spiritual reception.<sup>2</sup>

The Lutheran confessional was an eyesore to Spener, who desired its abolishment,<sup>3</sup> wherein Wesley would have gladly followed him, notwithstanding his own introduction of a sort of confessional in which members confessed their faults one to another.

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. *Bed.*, 4, 494f.

<sup>2</sup>*Works*, V., 689.

<sup>3</sup>Francke favored its retention, but did away with the *Beichtgeld* (confessional fee).



er.<sup>1</sup> In its defense he argued that it was not like the Popish confessional, where a single person confessed to a priest.

There was no disagreement among them concerning the doctrine of the Church. Membership in the invisible rather than in the visible Church was regarded as essential to salvation. Each identified the purest expression of that invisible Church with his own denomination. Self-evidencing Scripture was raised to a high position of authority. Its virtual infallibility, however, was neutralized by the doctrine of the Spirit. Of each of the leaders it could be said that he was a man of one book, but Spener's and Francke's position was in greater harmony with the modern historical attitude in its recognition of the different values of diverse portions of Scripture. Wesley's doctrine of inspiration forced him to accept the Bible as being of about equal value in all its parts. But he, on the other hand, allowed more room for man's rational faculties in the interpretation of Scripture.

The Calvinistic doctrine of limited grace was opposed, the Pietists agreeing with the Methodists (the Wesleyan branch) that grace was actually offered to all men. In eschatological matters there was substantial agreement, with the one exception that Wesley taught that judgment did not take place immediately after death. The reality and eternity

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<sup>1</sup>Works, V., 184.

of hell received greater emphasis among the Methodists because of rationalistic opposition.

Though Pietism and Methodism both contended for purity of doctrine, they did not make it the main issue, insisting that the acceptance of no article of faith was to be made necessary to salvation. The fundamentals (Wesley disliked the term) were to be emphasized. In this class were included those doctrines which were vitally related to the inner religious life, the others assuming merely a secondary position. Each doctrine was to be tested in a two-fold manner—(1) its derivation from, and harmony with, Scripture; (2) its value to correspond to its close or remote relationship with saving faith.<sup>1</sup> The practical value of a doctrine was thus to be a test of its importance. In this assertion both systems approached the rationalistic declaration that whatever could not be used for the betterment of mankind was mere speculative rubbish. The ethical had more value than the dogmatic, and the subjective factor more than the objective, in the demand that theology be grounded in experience. And the Pietists went farther than the Methodists in asserting that only the twice-born were really able to understand it. In this field the former also restricted the use of natural reason more than the latter would have deemed necessary. The most essential likeness between the two systems is found in the general

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<sup>1</sup>Bed., 3, 420f.; Works, II., 20.

principle that correctness of life was always to be placed above correctness of doctrine. Wesley would have found himself in perfect sympathy with Spener's averment that the main thing was the "faith which believes," not the "faith which is believed." Because of the vital importance of this faith to life, its speculative involutions were to be resolved into a plain and simple expression readily understood by all. A study of religious (or other) truth for the sake of truth alone was quite foreign to their interests, still more so to those of their followers. We do not wish to suggest that the value of learning was not appreciated, for the leaders themselves were learned men, though they did, it must be admitted, depreciate the importance of some fields of knowledge.<sup>2</sup> Methodism was more at fault than Pietism and consequently failed to make a similar impression upon the educated classes.<sup>3</sup> The search for truth was made a means to a practical end, the development of a Christian character.

The way of salvation was the very center about which all other doctrines and interests revolved. This salvation was conceived not merely as a deliv-

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Works, I., 62, where Wesley states that a man might be as "orthodox as the devil" and yet have no more religion than a Turk or pagan.

<sup>2</sup>For instance, philosophy, æsthetics, etc.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Moore, *Christian Thought Since Kant*, 31. It must be said, however, that early Methodism made very little conscious effort to reach the educated classes.

erance from hell nor as the assurance of a place in heaven, but as a present change in the soul, tantamount to a present deliverance from sin and a renewal of God's image in the heart.<sup>1</sup> Starting with the doctrine of man's inbred corruption, sincere repentance, including the penitential conflict, was regarded as the first step toward salvation. Because of their own experiences, we find Francke and Wesley insisting upon the importance of penitential pains with greater emphasis than the mild Spener, who even professed that they were not necessary.<sup>2</sup> Though repentance was necessary because it produced the death of the old Adam, and through it man realized his own utter worthlessness, faith alone was viewed as the essential condition of salvation. We thus come to the new-birth experience upon which as a foundation both Pietism and Methodism built the whole superstructure of their systems. In the order of thinking, justification was regarded as coming before the new birth (regeneration), but from the standpoint of time this was not true. Francke placed the most emphasis upon knowing the exact time of conversion. All agreed that baptism created in the child what corresponded to the new birth in the adult, but they hesitated to identify the two. Wesley affirmed that the baptismal rite was nothing more than the outward sign of

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. *Farther Appeal*, Works, V., 35; Gl. L., 707ff.

<sup>2</sup>*Bed.*, I., 323f.; Gl. L., 990.

the inward grace, while Spener declared that it was only the "bath of the new birth."<sup>1</sup>

After a man had truly repented, turned away from sin, crucified the flesh, and turned to God in faith, he was justified—not actually made just (sanctification), but pardoned by God. This act was regarded as instantaneous in so far as it had a beginning. But where the distinctive emphasis of the two movements became significant for their times lay in the tenet that faith included sanctification as well as justification. Sanctification was generally regarded as a process starting with justification, though Wesley looked with favor upon the notion of an instantaneous sanctification as an experience coming with or after the conversion experience.

Because of their insistence upon holiness of life, these revivalists gave their opponents the impression that they were reviving the old doctrine of justification by works. Their emphatic denial took the form of the assertion that good works were of no avail before justification, but were to be regarded only as the fruits of the new life. Though necessary to the continuance of faith, they were not a part of the meritorious cause of salvation. Against a false dependence upon Christ's atonement, which threatened to reduce Luther's doctrine of justification by faith to solifidianism<sup>2</sup> and against the Calvinistic

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<sup>1</sup>Works, I., 404f.; Gl. L., 714f.

<sup>2</sup>This was especially true in Germany.

doctrine of irresistible grace, they placed the emphasis upon man's coöperation with God, insisting that his good works were the legitimate expression of a holy life. Wesley quotes the statement of Augustine, "*Qui fecit nos sine nobis, non salvabit nos sine nobis,*" to support his position.<sup>1</sup>

Although both movements denied the possibility of a quantitative perfection in the fulfillment of the law, they claimed that a relative perfection was not only possible, but a requirement in the life of the true Christian. As the opponents of Pietism considered this the common ground upon which the various Pietistic groups stood,<sup>2</sup> so the opponents of Methodism agreed that the doctrine of perfection was the folly of the new enthusiasm. But in neither case was indefectibility claimed. Instead it was regarded as a state in which sin did not reign in spite of its presence.<sup>3</sup> It was a perfection of love, not of knowledge nor of attainment.

Luther's doctrine of assurance had been practically forgotten in England as well as in Germany, and its rehabilitation was begun in earnest by Spener and by Wesley. They agreed that the convert was to be sensible (inwardly persuaded) of present pardon

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<sup>1</sup>Works, II., 235ff., "He who has made us without ourselves will not save us without ourselves," literally translated. Cf. Gl. L., 964ff.

<sup>2</sup>Professor Alberti's accusation, in Ritschl II., 213.

<sup>3</sup>Works, I., III. In Spener's words, though "having" sin, "doing" it was out of the question. Gl. L., 1070.

(not ultimate salvation). This did not mean salvation by "feeling," for these men hesitated to place much reliance upon man's varying moods. The experience, on the contrary, stood for a clear conviction of acceptance by God produced in the heart by the Spirit. The witness of the Spirit was the privilege of each believer, though he might have justifying faith without it. Spener did not feel so sure about the sealing of the Spirit, admitting that joy and peace, the usual concomitants of a regenerated heart, were not always present.<sup>1</sup> Wesley was more insistent in his emphasis, though he made a distinction between a clear assurance, which admitted the possibility of doubt and fear, and the full assurance, or pleophory, which excluded them.<sup>2</sup> Neither gave a satisfactory explanation of the manner of this divine testimony, but simply accepted it as a fact. They claimed that the fruits which necessarily followed the witness of the Spirit would prove its genuineness.<sup>3</sup> Both movements thus stood for a position quite distinct from that of their respective Churches, which taught that man had sufficient assurance of salvation when he accepted the correct doctrines of the Church and obediently received her ministrations.

With all this insistence upon the inner life, it was perfectly natural that tendencies toward a hypochondriacal introspection should appear. This was,

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<sup>1</sup>Bed., I, 324.   <sup>2</sup>Answer to Rev. Church, Works, V., 277.

<sup>3</sup>Works, I., 89, 100; Bed., 1b, 197.

however, more a passing phase in the development of Methodism, for the note of joy was certainly one of its most pronounced characteristics. Pietism cannot escape the accusation so easily, notwithstanding the cheering influences which must have radiated from Francke's genial personality.

Any religious emphasis which dwells largely upon the inner life exhibits tendencies which are in harmony with Mysticism, and we have found that Pietism and Methodism were no exceptions to this rule. Though Spener hesitated to express his open appreciation for the Mystics, and Francke energetically opposed their extravagances, both were more in harmony with this religious attitude than they thought.<sup>1</sup> Wesley's attitude was very much like that of Francke's. The main element of Methodism was individualism, notwithstanding its social emphasis; and, in harmony with Mysticism, the religious feelings were made immediate. It is easy to be led astray in a general estimate by dwelling too much upon those statements of the revivalists which were ostensibly made to show their agreement with the orthodox teaching of the Church and thus lose sight of an unmistakable trend in the direction of anti-ecclesiasticism and anti-sacerdotalism. The leaders of both movements aimed to be orthodox and succeeded, but only according to their own definitions of orthodoxy. These considerations will help to

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Francke, *Sancta et tuta vita fidei*, 122.



explain the presence of mystical elements in the systems under discussion. In addition to what has been given in previous chapters, the conclusion may here be drawn that in the use of phrases common to the Mystics Spener far outstripped Wesley, the latter studiously avoiding them. With both immediacy was a cardinal doctrine in spite of the reservations made to retain the means of grace. Both expressed the idea that man possessed a sense other than (above) reason with which he apprehended the spiritual world. Wesley favored the notion of an infusion of something supernatural (in new birth), which corresponded to Spener's idea of a direct divine illumination of the soul.<sup>1</sup> The more passive Pietism favored certain elements in Mysticism for which Methodism, temperamentally active, had little sympathy. Wesley abhorred a "solitary" religion and had no use for the extravagant form of Quietism with which he came in contact. While Francke had similar predilections, Spener was more inclined to view "stillness" with favor.<sup>2</sup> But all agreed that the constituted means of grace were not to be neglected, though contending that God was not slavishly bound to them. Another element common to both found expression in their opposition to the authoritative teaching of the Church that the Holy Spirit was present only with the Church in general and,

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<sup>1</sup>Gl. L., 648. Wesley argued that God could confirm a man immutably good by an instantaneous act. Works, VI., 721.

<sup>2</sup>E. G. S. I., 1097.

though given in extraordinary measure in the apostolic age, was then lodged in the Scriptures once for all to work through them and through the Church upon man's heart. Pietists and Methodists taught that the Spirit was present personally in the individual believer. But when special revelations from God were claimed, they were to be tested by Scripture and by experience.<sup>1</sup>

Mystical was also the thought that the being one with Christ—amazing union, as Wesley called it<sup>2</sup>—resulted in the unification of man's personality. In the system of the revivalists the new-birth experience assumed the chief place, corresponding to the importance which the mystical union had with the Mystics.

Spener was more in harmony with the Mystics in teaching the liability of extreme changes in religious feelings, grounding it upon the thought that God sometimes allowed us to experience absence of joy in order to increase our hunger for him.<sup>3</sup> Wesley, on the other hand, expressly denied that such experiences were conducive to spirituality, contending that God did not arbitrarily send heaviness and darkness by withdrawing himself from the soul in order to purify it.<sup>4</sup> Notwithstanding numerous assertions to the contrary, Pietism and Methodism,

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<sup>1</sup>Bed., 1a, 236f.; Gl. L., 1199f.; Works, I., 146; V., 466ff.

<sup>2</sup>Notes on N. T., 231. Cf. Bed., 3., 303; Gl. L., 674.

<sup>3</sup>Bed., 1a, 328f.

<sup>4</sup>Sermon on Wilderness State, Works, I., 416f., 423f.

through their chief exponents, showed marked affinities to the Mystical attitude in connection with the doctrine of the new birth, the emphasis upon the supersensual, the principle of unity, direct perceptible inspiration, the inner light, and individualism.

Much of Wesley's teaching was in harmony with Spener's doctrine of a theology of the regenerate, but he did not make so much of it. Though he also demanded that theology be grounded in a living experience and claimed that the natural faculties could not teach a man true religion, he nevertheless ascribed greater powers to natural reason.<sup>1</sup>

The doctrine of the millennium exerted a greater influence upon Pietism than upon Methodism. Spener received constant inspiration from the thought of the better times which were imminent. Wesley and, to a lesser degree, Francke were more active in their practical endeavors to hasten the coming of the kingdom.

In the realm of religious toleration Spener and Wesley were shining examples, the latter, it is true, having greater support from the *Zeitgeist*. Confessionalism and rigid religious opinions were not to stand in the way of Christian fellowship, provided the motives were sincere and the heart was right.<sup>2</sup> They granted that the heathen had sufficient light to know about the reality of Providence and asserted

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<sup>1</sup>Works, V., 464.

<sup>2</sup>Works, V., 245; *Bed.*, I, 38ff.; 3, 183.

that their condemnation could result only from sin consciously committed.<sup>1</sup>

A final similarity in the doctrinal realm was a mixture of superstition and religion in the matter of sortilege, bibliomancy, vague beliefs in witchcraft and in apparitions, and, with Spener, even a faint belief in magic and demonology.<sup>2</sup> But this unimportant phase of their thought life simply indicated that they were not in this particular ahead of their times.

The practical systems which the evangelists reared upon a similar doctrinal foundation also reveal marked points of likeness. If Wesley evinced greater interest in the political movements of the day,<sup>3</sup> Spener was more energetic in denouncing the evils resulting from the union of Church and State. But they were much alike in their vehement protests against the common public and private vices and in the methods suggested and employed to do away with the evils and to promote the good.

The primitive Church was both model and inspiration, because the Bible was regarded as the divine book of instruction and guidance. In general, the attempt was made to reform the institution through the individual rather than the individual by means of a purified institution. All the elements of life<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Works, II., 99f.; Bed., 4, 53f.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. E. G. S. I., 262f.

<sup>3</sup>England was ahead of Germany in political progress.

<sup>4</sup>All elements were, however, not included.

were to contribute, provided they could legitimately be used in the cause of religion. This thought is very important for a correct understanding of both systems, because it will prevent an undue exaggeration of their incidental defects. Since the aim was religious rather than purely theological, and dealt with the will and the emotions rather than with the intellect, and was concerned with the promotion of godliness rather than the establishment of a new institution, we can readily see how certain elements would receive a one-sided emphasis at the expense of others equally important. Practical interests threatened to drive legitimate speculative elements from the field. The supremely intellectual sometimes received scant notice. The spirit of individualism likewise tended to obscure the idea of solidarity. With these reservations in mind, we can now proceed to a comparison of the concrete reforms attempted by both movements.

Besides general recommendations involving the reformation of the clergy, a change in the methods and content of preaching, and greater diligence in pastoral work, much was made of the avowed purpose of stimulating Church service and Church life. There was to be a reformation of religion within, and by means of, the Church, not through separation. But the stated agencies of the Church were regarded as insufficient. This led to the adoption (gradually in the case of Wesley, more premeditatedly in the case of the German reformers) of meth-

ods which were generally regarded as innovations and opposed as such.

Because the Established Churches failed to bring their members into a close bond of religious union,<sup>1</sup> the *collegia societatis* in Germany and the class meeting in England sought to remedy this deficiency. Wesley was influenced by his oft-repeated principle regarding the necessity of nourishing the spirit of Christian fellowship.<sup>2</sup> Spener's attempt had its origin in the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers and in a feeling of despair of making any impression upon the masses or of reforming the Church by simply training the young.<sup>3</sup> The same doctrine, though differently interpreted, influenced the English evangelist, who likewise differed from Spener by asserting and demonstrating that the masses could be reached.<sup>4</sup> Pietism placed its hope in the leavening power of the *collegia*, trusting that it would gradually spiritualize the Church through the influence of Christian example;<sup>5</sup> while Methodism had bolder and larger hopes, trusting not so much in the power of example as in the active, aggressive proclamation of the gospel to all who would

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<sup>1</sup>At least those who were in earnest about their souls' salvation.

<sup>2</sup>Works, V., 178.

<sup>3</sup>Bed., 3, 397f. Cf. Bed., 1a, 625.

<sup>4</sup>This objective really arose later, after an impression had been made upon the masses.

<sup>5</sup>Bed., 1, 697ff.

and to some who would not hear. This fact partially explains the difference in the development of the two movements, for even Francke's administrative genius failed to accomplish the extensive results achieved by Methodism. While the Methodist "society" gradually became more inclusive, the Pietist conventicle developed an esoteric character. The latter soon came to be regarded as the special congregation of the saints and in this respect resembled the "select societies" of Methodism.

The spiritual exercises were much alike, with the exception that the confessing of brother to brother in the various Methodist meetings received a different expression in Pietism, which had fallen heir to the Lutheran confessional. The public lay prayer meetings of Wesley<sup>1</sup> differed from those forms of social prayer which were under the direct leading of the clergy, as was the case with Spener's meetings. The latter failed to use lay help to any great extent, though his theory of the priesthood of believers demanded it, while Wesley was exceptionally successful in that department of his work. It must be admitted, however, that he allowed his laymen little authority in Church government,<sup>2</sup> though they were given exceptional liberty in everything that pertained to worship and the exercise of their religious natures. In the for-

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<sup>1</sup>Works, V., 232.

<sup>2</sup>Wesley had practically all control in his own hands.

mer sphere Spener theoretically was more advanced, because he advocated greater congregational authority and a fuller recognition of the rights of the common people in Church government.<sup>1</sup> In both movements there was contemplated the shifting of the center of gravity from the clergy and the established Church to the laity and the congregation. Although deliberate separation was repudiated, there were strong tendencies in that direction, for which the leaders were partly responsible. A glance at the two movements from the standpoint of organization will show that the well-developed, though intricate, Methodist organization was better adapted to a separate career than that of Pietism.<sup>2</sup>

The principles which governed the educational efforts of both movements were identical. Whatever differences occurred were merely incidental and need not be considered. They practically agreed that the ultimate aim of education was to build up Christian character after the student had been led to experience living faith. Catechetical instruction was, therefore, of the utmost importance. It was probably more strenuously pursued in Germany than in England. In an age when the child was ignored these faint and faulty attempts did credit to the

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<sup>1</sup>L. Bed., 3, 92. Spener recommended the form as found in the French Reformed Church.

<sup>2</sup>The Methodist organization was Presbyterian in the main, with Congregational and Episcopal elements. Pietism leaned more toward Congregationalism.



hearts of these men. It is true they failed to understand the child mind, ignored or suppressed his play instincts, and expected too much of the reflective powers of the child;<sup>1</sup> but their attempts in some respects were in advance of current methods of instruction and, taken as imperfect methods, were a start in the right direction.

So far from being ignored, learning was deemed of great value; yet none of these leaders made education the highest requirement for the ministry. The primary object was never lost sight of, and that was education of the will rather than of the mind. Men were to be made pious rather than learned. This was even true of Francke's work, in spite of the fact that he made great advances in vocational studies and in the use of the laboratory method. The publication and distribution of tracts, written in a popular style, was characteristic of both movements and proved to be an educational asset of inestimable value.

Philanthropy, with its emphasis upon poor relief, was also a striking characteristic of each movement. The sick were not forgotten, however, and the first weak attempts toward their systematic relief were made. This was especially true of Methodism.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Bed., 4, 262ff., where model questions are given; Kramer, *Ordnung und Lehrart der Waisenhaus Schulen*, 114-175; Works, VI., 417ff., which contains Wesley's prayers for children.

<sup>2</sup>Wesley is said to have instituted what was probably the first dispensary. With the help of a surgeon and an apothecary

Ascetical tendencies were quite pronounced in both movements. Though the leaders did not go to the extreme of inculcating escape from the world,<sup>1</sup> nature and grace were regarded by them as almost irreconcilable opposites. A sharp distinction was made between the sacred and the secular, the latter being relegated to a subordinate position. Differing slightly in details, they agreed in the main contention that all forms of recreation and pleasure which were not directly useful and did not tend to godliness<sup>2</sup> could find no place in the life of a sincere Christian. Natural man was lightly esteemed because the world was regarded as lying under the curse of Adam's fall. His natural wants and desires, his worldly ambitions and interests were, therefore, depreciated. The things of this world had value, not in themselves, but as they served a purpose in the great plan of salvation. With the extreme emphasis upon self-denial went hand in hand a puritanical observance of the Sabbath. This ascetical spirit in the revivalists was due, not merely to their theology, but also to a reaction on their part against extreme and widespread worldliness.<sup>3</sup>

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cary, about five hundred people were treated in five months. Works, V., 187f., Plain Account of the Methodists. Cf. Eric North, *Early Methodist Philanthropy*; D. D. Thompson, *Wesley as a Social Reformer*.

<sup>1</sup>Spener seemed to favor it at times.

<sup>2</sup>Their own interpretation was put upon what could and what could not be done to the glory of God.

<sup>3</sup>Spener's attitude was less extreme.

Pietism and Methodism alike made an advance in discarding a narrow confessionalism, for confessional bonds were broken in the United Societies as well as in the *collegia pietatis*.<sup>1</sup> Spener even made definite suggestions in regard to some outward form of union, but this does not seem to have entered Wesley's mind. Instead he looked forward to the time when the revival of religion with which he was connected would spread to all parts of the world, bringing in its train a general unity of spirit.<sup>2</sup>

The emphasis upon missions was strong. With Spener it was hardly more than an idealistic vision connected with his eschatological doctrine. Wesley was more in harmony with Francke in attempting actual Christian conquest of the foreign field. If little was accomplished, it must be remembered that these efforts were among the first made in the realm of Protestant missions.

This short comparison shows that Spener and Francke anticipated Wesley in the most important parts of his theological message, the ethical emphasis, and the emphasis upon individualism, empiricism, and subjectivism; that most of the principles at the basis of Methodism had their analogies in Pietism; and that many of Methodism's institutions and practices found a precedent in the German revival.

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<sup>1</sup>Bed., 3, 261.

<sup>2</sup>Works, II., 78f., Sermon, General Spread of the Gospel.

## CHAPTER X

### THE INFLUENCE OF PIETISM UPON METHODISM

SINCE Methodism arose in England shortly after the rise and triumph of Pietism in Germany, the most natural inference would be that their similarities were due to influences exerted by the latter upon the former movement. But a thorough examination often dispels results apparently grounded in fact. It will probably be impossible to state with complete accuracy to what extent and in what particulars Wesley was directly or indirectly influenced by Pietism, because we are thrown upon slender and often precarious resources. Where we have definite statements we can be tolerably certain, but it is possible that some influences were exerted of which no record has been left. The attempt will be made in this chapter to show how far and in what respects Pietism may have been directly or indirectly responsible for certain elements which developed in Methodism. If they are not so numerous as a superficial glance at the two systems would suggest, the negative results obtained will be of value, provided they are true to history.

We know that Spener corresponded with scholars in various countries and that his influence conse-

quently went beyond the borders of Germany, but just how much he may have affected men in England cannot be ascertained. It is true that Pietistical literature from the Independents in England<sup>1</sup> was read by Spener; but whether any of his works were read in England is not so certain, however plausible it might seem.<sup>2</sup> Translations were not numerous, and the number of those who could have read his works in the original, even if they had had the opportunity, was not large, for the German language did not have the importance in the intellectual world which it since has acquired.<sup>3</sup> But the book which was the most significant forerunner of Pietism, Arndt's "True Christianity," was also known to England as early as 1648.<sup>4</sup> Wesley felt its beneficent influence, for he made an extract from it for his Christian library.<sup>5</sup> Francke made a greater impression upon England than Spener, due partly to his more heroic character and partly to the fame of his orphan house. His "Segensvolle Fuszstapfen" was translated and given the title "Pietas Hallensis," published in the second edition in 1707. Josiah

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<sup>1</sup>Bailey's *Praxis Pietatis*, etc.

<sup>2</sup>A. W. Boehm, in his account of Pietism in *Pietas Hallensis*, refers to the success which Spener had in catechizing the children of Dresden.

<sup>3</sup>His Latin works would have been more accessible.

<sup>4</sup>Boehm, *Pietas Hallensis*, 6. In 1708 Boehm published a Latin edition of Arndt.

<sup>5</sup>Journal, March 3, 1749, III., 391.

Woodward<sup>1</sup> wrote a preface to it in which he referred to the noble work which had already been accomplished through the efforts of the Pietists at Halle. Wesley was acquainted with this "Pietas Hallensis," though how early in life is unknown.<sup>2</sup> Woodward's preface must have impressed him with its glowing account of Francke's efforts toward the suppression of scandalous impiety and vice, the religious instruction of youth and the ignorant, the cultivation of religion by pious conferences, and the propagation of religion among the heathen. Francke's own account would have influenced him because it was so clearly in line with his own sympathies.<sup>3</sup> In his *Journal* Wesley expresses the highest regard for the German Pietist. This was at the time of his visit to Germany, and it seems strange that he should not have received information regarding the connection of Francke with the revival of piety till a much later date.<sup>4</sup> That Halle

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<sup>1</sup>Known as the writer on the Religious Societies and the Societies for the Reformation of Manners.

<sup>2</sup>*Journal*, Dec. 1, 1764, V., 102. Cf. Note 4 below.

<sup>3</sup>If Wesley read the second edition, his eye would have noted the short history of Pietism by a certain A. W. Boehm, who was probably the same person frequently mentioned by him and whose sermons and life he commended. Cf. *Journal*, March 1, 1778; *Works*, VI., 785; VII., 93.

<sup>4</sup>*Journal*, July 24, 1738, II., 16. Wesley wrote about Francke, "whose name is indeed as precious ointment. O may I follow him as he did Christ!" But, April 20, 1748, III., 347, he states that he then learned that the revival in Germany was due to Francke.

Pietism made an impression upon England is evident from the Preface of Part III., "Pietas Hallensis." Contributions to the Orphan House were sent from England, and an account of the work was published in English in 1705.<sup>1</sup> In his letter to Cotton Mather, Francke stated that twelve students were provided for with the aid sent from England and that a special house was at the disposal of those who came from that country.<sup>2</sup> The first missionaries sent by Francke became corresponding members of the London Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge.<sup>3</sup>

The publisher of "Pietas Hallensis" also issued an account of the children of Silesia which contained the religious experiences of children under the influence of Pietism. And J. Lange's works<sup>4</sup> found their way into England, issued by the same press. Another evidence of the relation of Pietism to England is found in the order against Pietism given by George II. for his German realm.<sup>5</sup> How far Wesley himself was influenced by the literary connections of an earlier day cannot be computed, but that it was perceptible can hardly be disputed. The German language did not stand in the way as a barrier after the Georgia trip, and Latin was a familiar tongue.

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<sup>1</sup>Pietas Hallensis, 22, 25.      <sup>2</sup>Page 16. Written in 1714.

<sup>3</sup>Pietas Hallensis, 53.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. published advertisement in Pietas Hallensis.

<sup>5</sup>Ritschl, II., 281, Note 3. Halle is mentioned. In 1733.

Another significant relation was brought about through similar influences received by both movements from a common source, Mysticism. This was more pronounced in Spener than in Wesley, as we have seen,<sup>1</sup> but the latter was not so hostile to the Mystical attitude as his constant assertions to that effect seem to indicate.<sup>2</sup> Boehm influenced Arndt, Spener, and Francke, and through the latter, Zinzendorf and the Moravians. Wesley was influenced to a less degree through Law, who in turn had received his inspiration from Boehm.<sup>3</sup> The Mysticism of Arndt cast its influence upon both movements. It was, however, very slight in the case of the English revival. Fénelon was influential in both lands, his "Telemachus" being especially revered in England.<sup>4</sup> Ideas about the inner light filtered into Britain through the books of Madame Guyon, Madame Bourignon, and other Mystics. The Friends not only influenced English life, but also came in contact with the Pietists in Germany.

The practical expression of Mysticism in its em-

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<sup>1</sup>See above, 126ff.

<sup>2</sup>Just as Manichæism, though repudiated, influenced Augustine through life, so did Mysticism, which Wesley failed to understand, leave its mark upon his mind.

<sup>3</sup>Wesley received his greatest contribution from Law before the latter came under the sway of Boehm's spirit. But Wesley later admitted that his criticism of Boehm had been too harsh. Cf. Tyerman, III., 389.

<sup>4</sup>Abbey and Overon, Eng. Ch. Hist., Eighteenth Cent., II., 568ff.



phasis upon the inner religious life and its energetic ethical tone impressed both English and German evangelists. The contemplative form, however, with its tendency toward antinomianism and spiritualistic Pantheism was foreign to their practical natures. One important fact in connection with this part of the study is that Mysticism had more to do with the origin of revivals than is commonly admitted. The Mysticism in Pietism was one cause of the violent opposition of Lutheran Orthodoxy. The elements of Mysticism imbedded in Methodism brought forth a similar opposition on the part of the unmystical Churchmen of the eighteenth century, to whom the notion of a direct personal communication between God and man was a "very horrid thing."<sup>1</sup> They limited the inspiration of God to a book, but denied it to the soul.

Wesley came personally in contact with the work of Pietism before he made his trip to Germany. This came about through the organization of the religious societies about 1678, in which a Pietist from Germany, Dr. Horneck, was one of the prime movers. Because of the importance of these societies in the formation of Wesleyanism, the life of at least one of the founders becomes significant. He anticipated Wesley in many particulars, both in doctrine and in practice.<sup>2</sup> His aim was similar, for he

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<sup>1</sup>Words used by Bishop Butler to Wesley.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Horneck's Law of Consideration. Life, by R. B. Hone.

strove to fill men's hearts with fire rather than their heads with opinions.<sup>1</sup> His daily life was almost a counterpart of Wesley's with its introspection, ascetical elements, methodical habits, etc.<sup>2</sup> The rules of Horneck's societies corresponded very closely with those adopted by Wesley.<sup>3</sup> Uncertainty prevails as regards the proper number of these societies which can be traced directly back to Horneck, for imitations were numerous.<sup>4</sup> But aside from this uncertainty, the fact stands plainly before us that Pietism influenced Methodism in the person of Horneck through his religious societies. About the middle of the eighteenth century Steinmetz, a Pietist in England, gave expression to his astonishment at seeing a movement (Methodism) which in so many respects was similar to his own.<sup>5</sup> Before closing this paragraph reference ought to be made to Wesley's indebtedness to Bengel, "that great light of the Christian world,"<sup>6</sup> for the basis of his "Explanatory Notes on the New Testament."

Through the Moravians, Pietism entered into intimate relationship with Methodism and was instru-

<sup>1</sup>Law of Consideration, Preface.

<sup>2</sup>Hone, *Life*, 348ff. He was more mystical, less joyous.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Rules given in Legg, *Eng. Ch. Life*, Appendix. One is inclined to believe that Wesley copied some of them.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Curnock, II., 71, Note 1.

<sup>5</sup>Closterbergische Sammlung, 5 Band, 401, fr. Ritschl, II., 507.

<sup>6</sup>Wesley's Notes, Preface, 4. Wesley acknowledges his indebtedness.

mental in permanently influencing some of its institutions.<sup>1</sup>

Wesley's trip to Georgia<sup>2</sup> first brought him into direct contact with the Moravians. Their calmness during a violent storm led him to the conviction that

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<sup>1</sup>This is based upon the assumption that the Renewed Church of the Bohemian-Moravian Brethren with the founding of Herrnhut, 1722, was an offshoot of Pietism. Spener stood sponsor at Zinzendorf's baptism. The latter had a tutor from Francke's school at Halle before he went to Halle itself at the age of ten. (Cranz, 164.) In Francke's home he met returned missionaries, which undoubtedly gave rise to his zeal for foreign missions. When he studied at Wittenberg he gained the reputation of being a rigid Pietist. (Hutton, *A Short History of the Moravian Church*, 110.) August G. Spangenberg received impressions from Pietism while at school in Jena, where he was also attracted to Zinzendorf. (Journal, Wesley, Feb. 9, 1738; Aug. 21, 1739.) Later he taught at Halle and then became a Moravian. Boehler also received influences from Spener, for he read one of his pamphlets which had been recommended by Spangenberg. (McTyeire, *History of Methodism*, 111.) And Christian David, influenced by the Pietist Schaefer, resuscitated the Brethren in Moravia, and through Zinzendorf's permission and help they migrated to Berthelsdorf. The *Unitas Fratrum*, with Herrnhut as their New Jerusalem, were recognized as an independent Church in 1747, although Zinzendorf had been ordained bishop by the Lutherans and had opposed the establishment of a separate sect. (Thompson, 52; Hutton, 178.) Though the Moravians separated from the Church, they were free from the sectarian spirit. Their aim was to edify and build up rather than to proselytize. Their interests were narrower than those of Halle Pietism, with the "Buszkampf" virtually omitted. Immediacy of religious feeling was with them closely allied to the spirit of fellowship.

<sup>2</sup>Account from Wesley's Journal, Jan. 25, 1736, and after.

they possessed something which he lacked. He went to America to save his own soul, and the attitude of these Germans convinced him that he was afraid of death and consequently unsaved. After receiving further impressions from them, notably from Spangenberg and Bishop Nitschman,<sup>1</sup> he returned to England with the "inward feeling" that he was still unconverted.<sup>2</sup> Because a man who experiences the pangs of a severe spiritual struggle is apt to undervalue his previous experiences, we must take Wesley's verdict that his heart was "corrupt and abominable" with a grain of salt.<sup>3</sup> His religious experience in London after his well-known conversations with Peter Boehler<sup>4</sup> does not, consequently, mark such a sudden transition as the new convert would have us believe. Whatever theory is suggested as an explanation of the experience, the fact remains that this experience did play a very important rôle in Wesley's subsequent career. And what is of special interest in our study is the other fact that the Moravian, Boehler, was at least partly responsible for the change.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Journal, Feb. 7, 9, 1736; also Feb. 24.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, Jan. 8, 1738. Later qualified "faith of a servant."

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, Feb. 1, 1738, I., 423.

<sup>4</sup>Feb. 7, 1738 to May 4. Hutton's *Memoirs*, 27, state that Boehler's "exposition of saving faith was new even to the London Moravians." From Tyerman, I., 181.

<sup>5</sup>Though compare the letter found in the Archives at Herrnhut, Wesley to Zinzendorf, stating that his meeting with Boehler did not make him a better Christian. Hutton, 191, note.

As early as 1728 there was a Moravian missionary colony in London, but the organized propaganda began at a later date. Even the Fetter Lane Society of 1738-39 was really a new religious society of the Anglican Church.<sup>1</sup> But this society did adopt rules suggested by Boehler, and Wesley's connection with it must have given him ideas for his own societies.<sup>2</sup> Moravian influence upon Wesley reached its climax with his visit to Germany, which was undertaken with the express purpose of "conversing with those holy men who were themselves living witnesses of the full power of faith."<sup>3</sup> Pietism was at its height in the generation ending about 1750, and yet one scans the pages of Wesley's Journal in vain to find any references indicating that he knew much about the significance of the revival.<sup>4</sup> In several places, on the other hand, he mentions the need of Germany for reform.<sup>5</sup> In his sermons he likewise maintained that the land of Luther needed the gospel.<sup>6</sup> We get the impression from the Journal that Wesley returned to England without thinking of giving to his native land what Pietism had given to Germany.

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<sup>1</sup>Curnock, II., 129, Note 2.      <sup>2</sup>Cf. Tyerman, I., 194-211.

<sup>3</sup>Journal, June 7, 1738, II., 483.

<sup>4</sup>Not till April 20, 1748, does he seem to have been informed of the extent to which the influence of Pietism had spread and of Francke's relation to that work. III., 347.

<sup>5</sup>Journal, July 30, 1738, II., 18f.

<sup>6</sup>Works. II., 78, 360.

The English scholar sat at the feet of uneducated Herrnhuters and listened intently to their stories of life experiences, of instantaneous conversion, and of an additional blessing, the witness of the Spirit, which banished all doubt and fear.<sup>1</sup> At Jena and at Halle Wesley was impressed with the extensive work carried on along educational and charitable lines.<sup>2</sup> He seems to have studied the institutions carefully, for he gives us a minute description, together with a short historical sketch.<sup>3</sup>

That Wesley was influenced by his contact with Halle Pietism and with the Moravians goes without saying. Some instances already have been referred to, and it remains to discuss in general the extent and the significance of that influence. It is obvious that caution must be exercised throughout to avoid placing reliance upon the deceptive *post hoc, ergo propter hoc*.<sup>4</sup> With the exception of a few cases where definite statements suggest that borrowing has taken place, we must content ourselves with the more or less probable.

The molding of Wesley's religious opinions by the Moravians is not such a clear case of influence as many historians assume. Boehler has been represented as the human agent who brought Wesley to

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<sup>1</sup>Journal, II., 25ff.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, II., 58. He was received by the son of A. H. Francke.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, II., 17, 58ff.

<sup>4</sup>"After this, therefore on account of it."

his conversion experience;<sup>1</sup> but Spangenberg had probably as much to do with it, and Toeltschig cannot be omitted.<sup>2</sup> And Wesley's previous experiences must always be taken into account despite the fact that he constantly minimized their importance. But the notion of an instantaneous conversion Wesley seems to have received from the Moravians.<sup>3</sup> And their insistence upon assurance may have been instrumental in turning his attention to the emphasis which might be placed upon that phase of religious experience.<sup>4</sup> The idea of a penitential conflict came from Halle Pietism,<sup>5</sup> not from the Moravians, for the latter had no place in their system for anything that tended toward legalism.<sup>6</sup> And in general doctrinal matters Wesley was more in sympathy with the energetic and active Halle Pietism than with the passive Moravian interpretation of the gospel, notwithstanding the fact that the direct influences from the latter were more pronounced. That Wesley

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<sup>1</sup>Journal, March 4, 1738. Wesley states that Boehler convinced him that he lacked saving faith. May 24 he had the new-birth experience, but Dec. 16 and Jan. 4, the next year, he is still unsatisfied. And cf. page 147, Note 5, where Wesley denied that Boehler had influenced him very much.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Curnock, 59, Note 2; also Journal, May 26, 1738, and Curnock, I., 478, Note 2.

<sup>3</sup>Journal, April 22, 1738, I., 454f.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Wesley's account in the Journal, Visit to Herrnhut.

<sup>5</sup>Halle Pietism opposed Zinzendorf because he had not experienced the spasmodic form of conversion. Hutton, 148.

<sup>6</sup>Cf. C. David's sermon which Wesley heard at Herrnhut, Aug., 1738.

later found practically all these new (?) doctrines formally expressed in the homilies of his Church does not militate against the fact that he may have received first suggestions elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> The conclusion may thus be drawn that Pietism, notably through Moravianism, was partly responsible for the emphasis which Methodism placed upon certain doctrines. And those influences which led to his conversion were especially significant because that experience gave him a central fact about which to group his whole system. His legalism and ritualism began to wane.<sup>2</sup>

The Moravians were more prolific in the realm of hymnody than the Pietists proper. Zinzendorf was their most noted author, and his hymns reflect his practice of æsthetical joy in the love of Jesus.<sup>3</sup> If there is any truth in the statement that "Charles Wesley's hymns were simply Moravian hymns re-sung,"<sup>4</sup> then Methodism owes a great debt to Herrnhut. But granting that Charles Wesley had his inspiration kindled from a knowledge of the Moravian hymns, which cannot be demonstrated, he certainly did not receive his poetic gift from that quarter. Given a deep religious experience combined with

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. *Journal*, Nov. 12, 1738, II., 101.

<sup>2</sup>Use of free prayer was the first break. *Journal*, April 1, 1738. Presbyterian Highlanders of Darien had influenced him. *Curnock*, I., 448, Note 1.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. *Ritschl*, II., 485ff., for examples of some which were gruesome in their references to the wounds of Jesus; others contained tasteless expressions, etc. <sup>4</sup>Hutton, 262.



emotional warmth in the heart of a poetic genius, the result will not be hard to compute. Charles Wesley's religious experience and poetic gift will explain his hymns, but only so far as that experience was brought about through Moravian influence can the quoted statement given above hold good. A more direct influence upon Methodist hymnody was exerted through John Wesley, who had sufficient knowledge of the German language to enable him to translate some of the best German hymns.<sup>1</sup> Freylinghausen-Gesangbuch was used by Wesley, and his own hymn book contained his translations of German hymns sung according to the psalm tunes of the Moravians.<sup>2</sup> His source in the Georgia hymn translations was "*Das Gesang-Buch der Gemeinde in Herrnhut.*"<sup>3</sup> The Moravians were not the cause of the introduction of congregational singing, because it had already become common among the sects before their advent.<sup>4</sup> But hymn-singing had reached a low ebb just before the rise of Methodism, and the Moravians may be given some credit for its re-invigoration.<sup>5</sup>

Wesley's educational efforts at Kingswood<sup>6</sup> were so much like those made by the Pietists and Mora-

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<sup>1</sup>Telford, *The Methodist Hymn Book, Illustrated*, 2.

<sup>2</sup>Curnock, I., 299, note. "Singing" was one of the most prominent words in Wesley's diary. Curnock II., 71, Note 2.

<sup>3</sup>Curnock, II., 6, Note 2. <sup>4</sup>Barclay, *Rel. Soc.*, 458ff.

<sup>5</sup>Cf. Appendix in *New Hist. of Meth.*, II., 557-562.

<sup>6</sup>His own Account, *Works*, VII., 332ff.

vians that a direct borrowing seems to have taken place.<sup>1</sup> He probably adopted more "circumstances" from Germany than the one he definitely mentions<sup>2</sup> in reference to the constant presence of the instructor. He adopted the same stringent rules regarding discipline, devotions, and play, and, like the Pietists, treated the child as if he were an adult.<sup>3</sup> When we consider that Wesley's mind was directed toward the practical and that he was always ready to receive suggestions, the origin of some of these peculiar regulations may be explained by referring them to the first experiments in that field made by Halle Pietism. Most of them, however, may be explained by a recognition of Wesley's intensely practical religious aim, his stern, methodical habits, and his natural inability to understand the child.

Wesley also had his Orphan House (at Newcastle), built on a less pretentious scale than its prototype at Halle, but probably inspired by it.<sup>4</sup> The extensive missionary operations of the Moravian Church, with its "Warrior Band," ready to "pro-

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<sup>1</sup>Curnock, II., 51, Note 1, states that Kingswood was modeled largely after the Brethren.

<sup>2</sup>Plain Account of Kingswood School, Works, VII., 340.

<sup>3</sup>This largely explains his lack of success, admitted by himself. Cf. Remarks on the State of Kingswood School, Works, VII., 344f. A general training of children was not attempted except possibly among the Moravians, who sought to organize Christian schools in every congregation. Their boarding schools emphasized religion. Hutton, 242.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Tyerman, I., 392ff.

claim the Saviour to the world,"<sup>1</sup> could not fail to leave a mark on him who asserted that the world was his parish. But the expansive instinct was inherent in Methodism, an essentially missionary movement;<sup>2</sup> and its gradual extension over the globe cannot, therefore, be ascribed to extraneous influences.

Into various old forms which Wesley had before him he put new life and some new elements, but it is difficult to state just what these were. At Herrnhut he saw models for his love feasts, watch night services, band and class meetings, his schools, the elaborate system of Church government which left no individual out of consideration, etc.<sup>3</sup> How much of this Wesley received directly from the Moravians cannot be ascertained, for he had models for much of his ecclesiastical organization closer at home.<sup>4</sup> He commended their organization, conferences, and bands,<sup>5</sup> but ascribes the origin of similar Methodist institutions to spontaneous needs arising in his own societies.<sup>6</sup> But he invariably followed the

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<sup>1</sup>Hutton, 166.

<sup>2</sup>Stevens, *History of Methodism*, II., 486f.

<sup>3</sup>Compare Account in Hutton, 134ff., with Wesley's Journal describing the Herrnhut visit, II., 49ff.

<sup>4</sup>See Chapter XI.

<sup>5</sup>It is sometimes stated that the band was borrowed from the Moravians (Hutton, 191), but the band society was started in London before Wesley left for Germany. Works, V., 268, Note 2.

<sup>6</sup>Plain Account of Methodists, Works, V., 177ff.

Moravian plan in regard to the bands<sup>1</sup> and was advised by Boehler in the formation of his first society.<sup>2</sup> It is quite possible, as Tyerman suggested,<sup>3</sup> that the notion of putting inquisitorial questions to the converts had a Moravian source. According to Wesley's own statement, he received the suggestion of the love feast from the practice of the ancient Christians;<sup>4</sup> but it is barely possible that his attention was first directed to this celebration by his contact with the Moravians, and then, after the custom had been adopted, it would have been natural for the reverer of primitive Christianity to seek the sanction of the "ancient Church."<sup>5</sup> The origin of the watch night service was explained in a similar way, while the origin of the class meeting he ascribed to an accidental regulation connected with the financial needs of the Bristol society.<sup>6</sup> The spectacle of Moravian lay preachers may have influenced Wesley in the adoption of a similar institution,<sup>7</sup> and the sight

<sup>1</sup>Cf. Curnock, II., 53, and Note 3; page 94, Note 2.

<sup>2</sup>May 1, 1738. But it was originally neither strictly Methodist nor Moravian, but a Religious Society of the Anglican Church. Cf. Curnock, II., 121, Note 1.

<sup>3</sup>Volume I., 464. But cf. page 165, Note 1.

<sup>4</sup>Plain Account, Works, V., 183.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, 184. Here Wesley also states that some of these customs were followed "unawares"—that is, dividing the believers from the rest and these again from the penitents.

<sup>6</sup>Plain Account, Works, V., 179, 181. Journal, Feb. 15, 1741.

<sup>7</sup>Though the Independents employed them according to Barclay (Rel. Soc., 150ff.), it is doubtful whether Wesley knew it or was in any way influenced by them.

of women active in Church life probably explains the sympathy of early Methodism for this phase of practical religion.<sup>1</sup>

The break with the Moravians<sup>2</sup> did not destroy the influences which had been exerted upon Wesley previous to that event. In a letter to his brother<sup>3</sup> he mentioned five errors of the Moravians, which he later placed under three heads—Quietism, Universal Salvation, and Antinomianism.<sup>4</sup> Zinzendorf, on his part, referred to the erroneous doctrines and practices of the Wesleys.<sup>5</sup> Ignoring the question concerning the justice of the respective accusations, it will be sufficient to state that the complete separation which followed the controversy precluded further opportunities for influence from the Moravians.

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Curnock, II., 25, Note 1.

<sup>2</sup>Professor Francke (Journal, Aug. 19, 1738) probably influenced Wesley against the Moravians. Cf. Curnock, II., 58, Note 2.

<sup>3</sup>Journal, April 21, 1741, II., 448f.

<sup>4</sup>Answer to Church, Works, V., 267. Wesley thought Luther was partly to be blamed for these errors. June 15, 1741, II., 467.

<sup>5</sup>Cranz, 370. Cf. Latin conversation between Wesley and Zinzendorf. Journal, Sept. 3, 1741, II., 488ff.

## CHAPTER XI

### METHODISM INDEPENDENT OF PIETISM

IN this chapter we shall consider those developments in and previous to Methodism which were independent of Pietism. Pietism had practically nothing to do either with the background of Methodism, which was given by the English Reformation, or with the subsequent religious, political, economic, and social conditions. Methodism arose in the Anglican Church and, therefore, had much of the material with which it worked ready at hand.

In the second place, the conditions in England before the rise of Methodism were ripe for such an outburst.<sup>1</sup> Reason had been unduly glorified. The demands of the head had been satisfied at the expense of the heart, and the protest was simply the pendulum swinging in the opposite direction. Various tendencies were at work in spheres other than the religious to reëstablish a balance. But the great occasion for the rise of Methodism was the inelasticity of the Anglican Church, which rendered it incapable of meeting conditions brought about mainly through the industrial revolution. The national Church was unable to meet a great national need.

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<sup>1</sup>See Chapter VI.

Pre-Methodist forces in England, working silently, spasmodically, and sometimes inefficiently, were, on the whole, independent of German Pietism. As precursors of the Methodist revival they assume more than ordinary importance.

Although Puritanism as a political force or an organized system was practically dead in the eighteenth century, its spirit had not altogether died out. Wesley esteemed the Puritans highly<sup>1</sup> and was in perfect accord with their insistence upon individualism and the authority of conscience, though he deprecated their controversial spirit and political aspirations. The Puritan contribution was especially significant in furnishing at least part of the background which proved receptive to the new evangelism.<sup>2</sup> Wesley was regarded by some of his opponents as simply an old Puritan "writ large." The Puritans had favored the idea of "gathered Churches" or congregations as distinct from parishes<sup>3</sup> and in this way indirectly prepared the ground for Wesley. And the spirit of Puritanism went over into the sects which in turn came into direct contact with Methodism.

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<sup>1</sup>Journal, March 13, 1747; Works, VI., 643f. Wesley had a Puritan ancestry. His grandfather was a Dissenter.

<sup>2</sup>Not all Puritans were Calvinists. One prominent Puritan, John Goodwin, upheld the Arminian doctrine, with the emphasis upon faith, conversion, and sanctification. Cf. Sheldon, *History of the Christian Church*, III., 557.

<sup>3</sup>Henson, 171.

Barclay refers to various institutions, existing before the rise of Methodism, which at least prepared the ground for the later movement. He states that the Dissenters had a traveling ministry in which women were allowed to participate,<sup>1</sup> ministers' meetings conducted by means of the question-and-answer method,<sup>2</sup> watch night services,<sup>3</sup> lay preaching,<sup>4</sup> field preaching with effects similar to those of Wesley's day,<sup>5</sup> and love feasts.<sup>6</sup> But the assistance of the lay element was gradually abandoned in the desire to keep on peaceful relations with the Established Church.<sup>7</sup> It is interesting to note in this connection that the Independents practiced infant baptism, but demanded a definite decision from the individual in later years, thus emphasizing conversion rather than birthright membership.<sup>8</sup> From this brief survey we see that Wesley's innovations were not so much innovations, after all, except in their relation to the Establishment. Wesley's institutions may have arisen without any direct connection with these just mentioned,<sup>9</sup> but it is of interest to know that the minds of the people were prepared for some of the "innovations" when they occurred.

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<sup>1</sup>The Inner Life of the Rel. Soc., 379ff.    <sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, 380ff.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, 383f.    <sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, 150ff.    <sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, 311f.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, 374ff.    <sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, 591f.    <sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, 680.

<sup>9</sup>In Works, VII., 330, Wesley states that there were itinerant preachers in the time of Elizabeth. But he seldom refers to any outside influences when referring to the origin of his own institutions. Works, V., 176-190.



One element of Puritanism found a new lease of life in the Mysticism of the Friends. George Fox was a precursor of Wesley in preaching a spiritual Christianity.<sup>1</sup> Wesley had his own doctrine of the inner light and would have agreed with much that Fox wrote about the spiritual light from Christ,<sup>2</sup> the continued agency of the Holy Spirit,<sup>3</sup> and that "Christ died for us, rose for our justification, and is now in us."<sup>4</sup> Wesley expressed his highest praise for a follower of Fox,<sup>5</sup> though in general he avoided the Friends. Vaughan asserts<sup>6</sup> that spirituality of belief and the emphasis upon the inner Christian life was more widespread in the early eighteenth century than is commonly supposed. That there should have been some influences exerted upon a movement in many respects so similar can hardly be disputed. Wesley's opposition to the Friends was based upon superficial differences. He agreed with them that "the Spirit is our first and principal leader," but opposed their passiveness and disregard for the externals.<sup>7</sup> The universal light of the Friends was taught in a different form by Wesley

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<sup>1</sup>A comparison of their Journals proves this.

<sup>2</sup>Fox, Journal, 167, 241. <sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, 79, 253, 504f.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, 481.

<sup>5</sup>July 17, 1765, V., 136f.

<sup>6</sup>Hours with the Mystics, II., 391.

<sup>7</sup>Works, VI., 5. Letter to a Quaker. VI., 637. The Friends would not have objected to Wesley's assertion that true religion did not consist in outward things, but in the life of God in the soul of man.

in his doctrine of the supernatural light, which was given to fallen man through the atonement of Christ, including in its effectual saving power both infants and heathen. With both the supreme test was the presence and the power of the Holy Spirit. The Friends anticipated Wesley not only in doctrinal matters, but in the field of Church practice as well, for in 1727 they introduced "ruling elders" (laymen), who were to encourage and to assist young ministers.<sup>1</sup>

Another protest against the externalism of the times was the Philadelphian Society of Jane Leade, who was a theosophist influenced by Boehme.<sup>2</sup> An interesting phenomenon appeared in England about this time in the persons of French prophets. Their extravagances cast discredit upon Wesley's efforts when similar bodily effects were occasioned by his preaching.<sup>3</sup> Other influences from the Continent came through the Quietists.<sup>4</sup> Wesley seems to have known something concerning Pietro Martire Vermigli (d. 1562).<sup>5</sup>

The Religious Societies deserve additional consideration besides that which has been given them,<sup>6</sup> because they furnished the form into which Wesley

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<sup>1</sup>Barclay, *Rel. Soc.*, 523, 533.

<sup>2</sup>*Nouvelle, Biog. Générale*, XIII., 50.

<sup>3</sup>*Journal*, April 3, 1786.

<sup>4</sup>*Journal*, Aug. 30, 1770; *Works*, VII., 95, 561ff.

<sup>5</sup>*Works*, VI., 66.

<sup>6</sup>See above, 144f.

placed the "new enthusiasm."<sup>1</sup> Their importance in the beginnings of Methodism has always been recognized, but additional evidence from Wesley's diary recently discovered has emphasized it still more.<sup>2</sup> Abortive attempts were made in 1659 and 1670 to organize Church societies, the main aim of which was devotion to quiet and seclusion.<sup>3</sup> The most significant attempt produced the famous Religious Societies, which Wesley found of such great value when the parish Churches were closed to him. The design of these societies was to promote holiness of heart and life. Efforts were also made to catechize the young, relieve the poor, and minister to prisoners. Pre-Methodist class meetings were held which branched out into charitable institutions.<sup>4</sup> But the spirit of these societies was that against which the great revivalist reacted, the spirit of Churchism and traditionalism. The primary aim of these societies was mutual edification. The saving of one's own soul was thought of even in the performance of works of charity.<sup>5</sup> This difference, however, must not detract from their importance in Wesley's work, for they not only exalted religious

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Rigg, *The Living Wesley*, 157. "The Religious Societies supplied only the body to Methodism; the Moravians gave it a soul."

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Curnock, II., Note on 71, 72. Wesley's diary has but recently been deciphered.

<sup>3</sup>Legg, *English Church Life*, 281ff.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, 308f.

<sup>5</sup>Cf. Woodward, *Hist. of Soc. for Ref. of Manners*, 15ff.

ideals in a barren age, but also provided the reformer with suggestions.<sup>1</sup> Wesley's father had been interested in these societies, and the encouragement he had given them was probably known to the son.

Societies with a different aim were those for the Reformation of Manners.<sup>2</sup> Magistrates were expected to coöperate in the attempt to legislate virtue into the people.<sup>3</sup> Religion and virtue, it was hoped, would supplant their opposites, become fashionable in turn, and the reformation thus be completed.<sup>4</sup> But very little of abiding value seems to have been accomplished.<sup>5</sup>

Other efforts to promote religion found concrete expression in the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1698-99, and the Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts, 1701. But the nobility of the aim did not produce corresponding results. The period of religious activity during the reign of Queen Anne, 1702-14, promised much, to mention only the increase in the number of charity schools and the enactment of a scheme in 1710 by which fifty-two new churches were to be built. The interest died out, however, with the death of the Queen.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Cf. Rules of Society of St. Giles's Cripplegate, in Legg, 309ff., with those of Wesley's societies. Cf. Journal, April 1, 1738, Oct. 21, 1738, etc.

<sup>2</sup>Woodward, 22ff.; Works, I., 459. <sup>3</sup>Woodward, 35ff.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, 52, 62. <sup>5</sup>Journal, Feb. 2, 1766, V., 154.

<sup>6</sup>Overton, *The Church in England*, II., 208ff.

The intellectual activities of the following period helped to prepare the way for the revival, though not to such a great extent as is sometimes claimed.<sup>1</sup> In their failure to vanquish the Rationalists the Apologists furnished merely a negative contribution for the revival, for they virtually undermined the common religious platform of the day and compelled men to seek a new basis of religious faith.<sup>2</sup> The position of Methodism was foreshadowed by Henry Dodwell the Younger, who emphasized the necessity of proving religion, not by demonstration, but by an inner spiritual experience.<sup>3</sup> Deists and Methodists were so far in harmony that they asserted the insufficiency of the external evidence. Wesley suggested that God probably permitted the external evidence to become more or less clogged that the importance of the light shining in the heart might be better appreciated.<sup>4</sup> He strongly commended Locke's "Essay on Human Understanding" and felt that the doctrine that there were no innate ideas was in harmony with his own position. Because the

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Overton and Relton, *History of England*, Introduction, 4ff. Historians of the English Church generally assume that the Apologists were completely victorious.

<sup>2</sup>See page 70.

<sup>3</sup>McGiffert, *Protestant Thought*, 240f.

<sup>4</sup>*Works*, V., 759f. Wesley bids the Deists go on and rout those who depended upon empty forms and "then He whom neither they nor you know now shall rise and gird Himself with strength, and go forth in His almighty love, and sweetly conquer you all together."

natural senses were insufficient, a spiritual sense, faith, was necessary in order to apprehend spiritual things.<sup>1</sup>

In the *Journal* Wesley makes a lengthy preface to his conversion experience of May 24,<sup>2</sup> which demonstrates that his awakening began long before he met the Moravians. He refers not only to devotional books, Taylor's "Holy Living and Dying," à Kempis's "Imitation of Christ," Law's "Serious Call" and "Christian Perfection," but also to a "religious friend" who seems to have been the first person to direct his serious attention toward religion. On the basis of unpublished diaries Curnock proves<sup>3</sup> that all the circumstantial evidence points to Miss Betty Kirkham, whom Wesley called "Varanese." He also shows that Wesley's mother was not the person who first kindled in his heart a longing for devotional works. This personal influence (previous to his meeting with the Moravians) must be duly considered in any attempt to fathom the events leading up to his conversion.<sup>4</sup> A similar influence came through a "contemplative man"<sup>5</sup> who instructed him to pursue inward holiness; while another friend, "a

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<sup>1</sup>Works, VII., 445.

<sup>2</sup>Curnock, I., 465ff.

<sup>3</sup>Volume I., 13ff. The influence of Wesley's mother was powerful and must not be overlooked, but it was not so significant in that which made Methodism as is commonly supposed. In a limited sense only was she the mother of Methodism.

<sup>4</sup>Curnock, I., 16, 19f.

<sup>5</sup>Wesley's Account, Curnock, I., 468f. Probably Mr. Law.

serious man,"<sup>1</sup> soon afterwards warned him against solitary religion, giving him the sensible advice that he must find companions or make them. To all appearances this was the first suggestion that Wesley received regarding the value and the importance of Christian fellowship,<sup>2</sup> and to Taylor's "Holy Living" he was indebted in framing the "Rules" which he adopted for his own life.<sup>3</sup>

William Law did notable preparatory work for the revival. He was a promoter of the Religious Societies of the Anglican Church and published books which exhaled the spirit of monastic religiosity. Many people were led into a deeper religious life, and Wesley once confessed that the "Serious Call" was the spark which started the revival. There the young disciple<sup>4</sup> read about the need of a change of heart and renunciation of the world. He was led to see that legalistic traditionalism, with its dependence upon forms and rites, was insufficient. Although we cannot agree with Warburton<sup>5</sup> that Law was the father of Methodism, his great influence at the beginning of Wesley's career is patent from numerous references in the Journal. John

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<sup>1</sup>Curnock, I., Note, 468, 469. This was probably Mr. Hoole, Samuel Wesley's friend and nearest neighbor, whom John Wesley frequently visited.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup>Curnock, I., 51. The suggestion is also made that Wesley probably received his first impressions of the band meeting, with inquisitorial questions, from the same source.

<sup>4</sup>Law was his "oracle." <sup>5</sup>Works, 1788, IV., 626.

Byrom, who was the poetic echo of Law's prose writings, was highly commended by Wesley.<sup>1</sup>

One of the beginnings of Methodism was the Holy Club at Oxford.<sup>2</sup> Although Wesley was still the ritualist at Oxford,<sup>3</sup> using the punctilious observance of outward forms and charitable work for others as a means to save his own soul and thus working *toward* salvation instead of *from* it, Oxford Methodism helped to save him from religious selfishness.<sup>4</sup> The life of the small group at Oxford foreshadowed in faint outlines the greater work that was to be attempted. At this time Mystical writers exerted the greatest influence upon the future reformer. Wesley's diaries give the best commentary on this period of his life, and they show that this awakening began even before the founding of the Holy Club.<sup>5</sup>

While Wesley was still a child sporadic attempts toward a revival of religion were made in different parts of Great Britain. Griffith Jones, with his "circulating schools," and Howell Harris, with his societies, spread the revival interest throughout the principality of Wales.<sup>6</sup> An increased interest in

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<sup>1</sup>Journal, July 12, 1773; Works, VII., 569.

<sup>2</sup>Tyerman, *The Oxford Methodists*, I.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, 60. In this respect closely allied to the Catholic revival of the following century.

<sup>4</sup>Curnock, I., 35.

<sup>5</sup>Cf. above pages 163ff.; Curnock, I., 12, 33f.; diaries in Vol. I.

<sup>6</sup>Stevens, *History of Methodism*, I., 118ff.



experimental religion was also manifested in West Cornwall and in some parts of Scotland. These awakenings, together with those in New England and other places, prove that a reaction against formalism was in progress even before the rise of the united societies.

Sufficient material has been presented to show the significance of pre-Methodist forces and influences in the origin of the great revival itself; and this goes far toward proving that these elements (German Pietism not included) not only contributed to the formation of a foundation, but were likewise instrumental in erecting a part of the Methodist superstructure. We are also forced to the conclusion that much in Methodism may be explained without taking Pietism into consideration. This position will find further support through a recognition of those elements which may be regarded as distinctively Methodistic.

The class meeting is the most important original contribution of Methodism. Its ultimate rise can be traced back to the time preceding the founding of the united societies. In his *Journal* Wesley subjoins several letters from converts,<sup>1</sup> which reveal the beginnings of that social expression of edification in which accounts of personal experiences were used for mutual encouragement, later so much in vogue in the class meetings. After Wesley had

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<sup>1</sup>Journal, Dec., 1738; Curnock, II., 108ff.

written an account of his own conversion he advised others to do the same, and this practice gradually changed the order of the Oxford Methodist Society meetings into "the joyful experience of the Methodist class meeting."<sup>1</sup> The immediate occasion of their institution has been noted.

Another feature which may lay claim to originality was the method of purification adopted.<sup>2</sup> This was accomplished by issuing quarterly membership tickets to those who were in good standing. A refusal to renew it on the part of the preacher would thus disqualify a member.<sup>3</sup> By this method Wesley was enabled to exert strict religious and moral control over the societies.<sup>4</sup> In addition, he had a probationers' class, or group, comprising professed sinners who were seeking salvation. They were "on trial," but were to be instructed and exhorted in special penitent meetings.

In doctrinal matters some elements might be styled original, but only because of the new emphasis they received. Those generally mentioned are:<sup>5</sup> (1) Divine grace universally offered; (2) assurance of present salvation based upon subjective experi-

<sup>1</sup>Curnock, II., 113, note.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Loofs, *Realency, Methodismus*, 770.

<sup>3</sup>Journal, Feb. 24, 1741.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, April 7, 1741; Curnock, II., 442. Cf. *Plain Account, Works*, V., 184.

<sup>5</sup>Cf. Schaff, *Creeds*, I., 896ff.; Curtiss, *History of Creeds*, 332f.

ence rather than upon the promises of God; (3) a relative Christian perfection as a possibility. Although Spener had taught the same doctrines, his emphasis upon them had been less insistent.

Before we proceed to our general conclusions, a short explanation of the similarities and the differences between Pietism and Methodism will be in order. Direct and indirect influences may explain a few of the similarities, while others were due to the fact that both were Protestant movements. The similarity of the conditions and needs which called forth both revivals will serve as an explanation for others. The almost identical aims in both movements would account for some likenesses, and the characters of the men at the head of both propagandas were sufficiently alike to lead them to adopt similar methods when confronted by analogous situations.

The differences may be variously interpreted. In the first place, national characteristics<sup>1</sup> played an important part in the development of both movements. The expansive activity of the Englishman would lead to different results from those due to the intensive activity of the German.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. suggestive article by Paul Sorge in *Zeits. f. Theol. u. Kirche*, Jan., 1914. *Wie ist deutsche Unkirchlichkeit im Verhaeltnis zu englischer Kirchlichkeit zu erklaren*, which may be translated, "What explanations may be given for the fact that the English are a more churchgoing people than the Germans?"

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, 36ff. The German is more "Innenmensch."

The personal equation can never be ignored. Methodism was to a great extent simply an enlargement or extension of John Wesley, who impressed his own practical, common-sense, logical character upon the organization. To a lesser degree Spener bore the same relation to Pietism. The movements differed because the leaders, with all their resemblances, nevertheless left somewhat dissimilar stamps upon their respective systems.<sup>1</sup>

The relations that both movements had to another interesting phenomenon brought about a difference in emphasis which otherwise might not have occurred. The English revival arose after Deism, reacted against it, and consequently made much of certain doctrines which the rationalists had repudiated. Pietism, on the other hand, flourished before the *Aufklaerung* in Germany and simply took for granted what was not opposed. According to some authorities, Pietism was partly responsible for the outbreak of rationalism in Germany, but the disintegrating forces of the latter caused the former eventually to fall into a condition resembling the old sterile orthodoxy. Methodism, instead, was instrumental in hastening the downfall of rationalism in England and, after that event, continued to expand and prosper.

Moreover, the industrial situation, creating con-

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<sup>1</sup>Curnock, II., 115, Note 2. Cf. Influence of Whitefield in regard to field preaching. *Journal*, March 31, 1739.

ditions in England which were wholly lacking in Germany, was largely responsible for the fact that Methodism worked outward among the masses, while Pietism retained throughout more of an esoteric character.<sup>1</sup>

And, finally, since Pietism was an affair of the theologians to a greater degree than that could be predicated of Methodism, it failed to become a popular movement in the sense that the latter did. This fact offers another reason for the rapid decline of the one and the continued growth of the other.

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<sup>1</sup>A German revival corresponding more closely to the Methodist movement in this respect was the home mission propaganda beginning about the second decade in the nineteenth century.

## CHAPTER XII

### GENERAL CONCLUSION

THE present investigation, we hope, has demonstrated the justification of our thesis that Pietism was significant in the origin and development of Methodism. The German movement anticipated the theological message of the English revival in many of its most important characteristics.

Religious empiricism was the most important contribution of either system. Spiritual phenomena were regarded as possessing a reality of their own. In both movements we find the desire to possess the power as well as the form of religion. It might be expressed as a manifestation through life rather than through doctrine, through doing rather than through knowing. Religious subjectivism, with its emphasis upon the relation of the individual to God, was opposed to ecclesiastical objectivism, with its affinity to externalism and dogmatism. Both movements were against a thoroughgoing sacerdotalism, though neither cast aside the corporate experience of the Church. Sympathy was expressed for the Donatist position that the religious life of the minister was a matter of vital importance to the efficacy of his official work.

Present salvation, rather than its postponement to a future blissful state, was the constant theme in the preaching of the German as well as the English revivalists. Insistence upon the necessity of the new birth was closely related to the doctrine that grace was actually and universally offered. And this salvation received its abiding guarantee only when justification by faith was intimately connected with sanctification of life, which in itself was regarded as both negative and positive. The former element resulted in a denial of the pleasures of the world and tended toward asceticism. The positive element demanded an active participation in the work of increasing the kingdom of the regenerate in this world.<sup>1</sup> Entire sanctification (a relative perfection) was set forth as an attainable goal in this life. This doctrine, as well as the doctrine of assurance, was emphasized with greater persistence by the Methodists than by the Pietists. The latter over against orthodoxy, the former over against the Deists and the Churchmen, asserted the direct, continuous influence of the Holy Spirit on the believer. Mystical elements were essentially a part of both movements. Of the four elements of religious authority—self-evidencing Scripture, the inward light (witness of the Spirit), reason, and Church author-

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Dörner, *Prot. Theol.*, 217. Pietism was the first great movement to call the mind from the exclusively transcendental to moral efforts here in this world.

ity—Methodism and Pietism emphasized the former two more than the latter two.

The mission of these revivalists was not the reformation of theology nor the presentation of new theories of Church polity, though changes were made in both spheres, but it was, instead, the reinvigoration of the Church. In the case of the Methodists it included the saving of those whom the Church did not reach. A closer fellowship for those already converted was likewise a powerful motive in the work, and this deficiency in the Established Churches was met by the Collegia of Spener and the Society of Wesley. Both movements caused a strict differentiation to be made between the converted and the unconverted. Along educational and philanthropic lines Pietism anticipated nearly all the essential features of Methodism. The chief aims of both movements are thus seen to have been virtually identical, the greatest variations arising from the methods employed to attain the end.

The revivals were, moreover, strikingly alike in their defects. All spheres of life were not included. Whatever was not directly conducive to religion was relegated to a subordinate position and sometimes disregarded (arts, sciences, æsthetical, philosophical). With the emphasis placed upon the will and the emotions, the intellectual often receded into the background. There was lacking that phase of the modern spirit which demands a positive spiritual impact upon all spheres of life with a view to their



transformation. In place of this both movements emphasized the withdrawal from that part of the world conceived as evil. Pietism was more self-centered than Methodism, occasionally employing service in behalf of others as a means to its own salvation, while the later movement placed more emphasis upon self-forgetting love and service to others.

Pietism was not only anticipatory in the content of its message, but exerted perceptible influences upon Methodism, faintly, through literary connections and through Horneck's work in the founding of the Religious Societies, more pronouncedly and immediately through Wesley's personal contact with Pietism and with Moravianism. But definite and exact knowledge in regard to any direct borrowing which may have taken place is exceedingly meager and often grounded in evidence which must be considered too insufficient to make it conclusive. On the whole, therefore, Methodism may be regarded as a distinct English movement slightly modified rather than caused by extraneous influences. It had its ultimate source in the religious needs of the English people. Wesley, like Luther and Spener, was able to accomplish what he did because he proclaimed with prophetic clearness and insight what was already being dimly sensed in the depths of the nation's heart. This was sometimes done unconsciously on the part of the people; but in those cases, as with the brutalized colliers of Kingswood, Wes-

ley struck a sympathetic chord which quickly responded to the message of him who understood them and their needs. Whether Wesley would have experienced the new birth, the most significant part of his connection with Pietism, if he had not met the Moravians lies without the realm of knowable facts, but that he did experience it under their tutelage will always remain a monument to their devotion and faithfulness. They were largely instrumental in helping him break away from the legalistic type of piety, and this break was necessary to the transformation of sacramentarian Oxford Methodism into the great evangelical revival.

## APPENDIX

### MYSTICISM

IT is next to impossible to give a satisfactory definition of Mysticism. It is apt to be too exclusive, as Hall's definition (in "Essays in Modern Theology and Related Subjects," page 262), which limits it to a metaphysical union with the Source of all being; or too comprehensive, as the statement that it is nothing more than the simple religious longing for union with God; or it may be too vague, as Harnack's "Generally speaking, Mysticism is rationalism warmed up, and rationalism is Mysticism cooled off" (in editorial, *Methodist Review*, January, 1915, page 148); or "all religiosity apart from the historical revelation in the person of Jesus Christ" (*ibid.*, page 148). Mysticism (the German "Mysticismus" as distinct from "Mystik") may be regarded as a distinct religion, a separate historic magnitude ("die mystische Sonderreligion," as Koepf, Arndt, page 293, calls it) standing over against Christianity and having no concern whatever about the person of the historical Founder of Christianity, seeking direct union with God and regarding all means as well as historical facts in religion as burdensome. An adherent of this form would regard it as the very essence of religion.

There might have been some Mystics who would have stood upon this platform. But there certainly were others, commonly called Mystics, who cannot claim that appellation if Mysticism is not made to include more. As with Pietism, the difficulty of obtaining a satisfactory definition is due to the fact that we have no official statement from those designated Mystics as to what Mysticism really is. The Mystics also differ so much from each other (Wesley noted this when writing against them) that it is extremely difficult to find elements which are common to all. Each definition which has been attempted (Inge, "Christian Mysticism," Appendix, gives many definitions by leading scholars) reveals the subjective attitude of the writer. And when we add to all these facts the other, that Mysticism is an attitude rather than a system, the difficulties loom up still greater.

Without attempting to define the term as such and then arbitrarily "placing" the Mystics, let us attempt to find those elements which are common to most of those, if not to all, who are commonly accepted as Mystics.

Complete union (not necessarily metaphysical) with God (Christ) seems to be the goal. The manner of the manifestation of that union in life (physical phenomena, visions, ecstasies, etc.) must be considered as merely incidental and not of the essence of Mysticism. Immediacy of this union was emphasized. (Immediacy of religious feeling

was the main thing, including a desire to get away from the sensible, finite world.) This did not necessarily imply that all means were discarded, for we find Mystics (Bernard, Tauler, Arndt, etc.) who emphasized and employed the ordinary means of grace. The Bible and Christ were retained and even deemed necessary. Not the manner, but the fact of union, was the essential. There was, however, a strong tendency present to discard the means of grace and everything else that was regarded as external.

As an individual personal experience this union implied that man possessed a sense through which he might communicate with the spiritual world. To know God there must be something divine in man. This sense was sometimes called the inner light (other than, but not opposed to, the rational faculty), the light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. Through a personal experience above the common experiences of everyday life (new birth with Boehme), brought about in various ways, man becomes convinced, he knows (not through reason, but through a "seeing"; cf. Jones's "Spiritual Reformers," page xxv) that he is in union with God. His personality becomes unified, where before there had been discord. The "old man" dies with the birth of the new life. The result is generally represented as an inrush of ecstatic feelings, joy, and peace. Man is sanctified and full of a new energy. He is raised above him-

self. Three stages in this development are sometimes given—the purgative, illuminative, and unitive—but need not be regarded as essential. The last stage and goal brings the Mystic into such a lofty spiritual state that words fail him when he attempts to describe his experience. This accounts for his frequent use of language which is merely symbolic of the indescribable experience.

The *unio mystice* may be brought into the closest connection with Christology. (Cf. Bernard and “Jesus Mysticism.”) The supreme revelation of God through Christ seems to have been of the utmost importance, for it enabled the Mystic to interpret his own revelation by means of the historical revelation. (Jones, “Studies in Mystical Religion,” page xxxv.) Various expressions have been used by the Mystics, as “union with Christ,” “love of the soul for the Bridegroom,” “languishing love of God,” “Christ in us,” etc. Mysticism is extremely individualistic. The soul’s welfare is the main interest; and an external organization like the Church is, therefore, not deemed essential, though it might be helpful as an aid. There was manifested a strong tendency to quietude and aloofness, and we seldom find the Mystics in groups (but compare the Friends). An element of negation is present in the Mystical attitude. The Quietists even went so far as to demand negation of self. Mysticism may easily go over into extravagances and fanaticism, but these outgrowths will not be dwelt upon, be-

cause they do not constitute the essence of the Mystical attitude.

Various kinds of Mysticism have been distinguished. J. F. Clarke ("Events and Epochs," page 276f.) made a distinction between the religious, philosophical, and thaumaturgic Mysticism. But the emphasis is generally placed on two phases, the speculative (theoretical) and the practical. In the former phase, metaphysical expressions and ideas are common. (The flight of the alone to the Alone; God must be worshiped as the not God, not Spirit, etc., in whom "we must sink from nothingness to nothingness." Cf. Jones, "Spiritual Reformers," page xxvii.) As a religious philosophy Mysticism may be opposed to Christianity, though the speculative Mysticism of Eckhart served concrete religion. In this, as well as in the practical form, there is present a phenomenal dualism which is to be overcome. So-called practical Mysticism does not concern itself so much with the metaphysical elements (Spanish Mystics were generally nonmetaphysical; cf. James, "Varieties," page 425) as with the concrete forms of life. Some of the Mystics were intensely interested in the practical religious concerns of man. Tauler asserted that making shoes was a gift of the Holy Ghost. And it was he who said: "Works of love are more acceptable to God than lofty contemplation." (W. R. Inge, "Christian Mysticism," page 188.)

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## ABBREVIATIONS

BECAUSE a few authorities have been frequently referred to they are designated by abbreviations.

### SPENER

*Auf. Ueb.*—Aufrichtige Uebereinstimmung mit der . . .

*Gl. L.*—Die Evangelische Glaubenslehre.

*Bed.*—Theologische Bedenken. This is divided into four books. The first book contains two parts, designated 1a and 1b; others as 2, 3, 4.

*L. Bed.*—Letzte Theologische Bedenken. The three parts are designated 1, 2, 3.

*Cons.*—Consilia et judicia Theologica Latina. The three parts are designated, each as 1, 2, 3.

*Pred. u. Arndt.*—Predigten ueber des seeligen J. Arndt's Geistreiche Buecher vom Wahren Christentum.

*Pia Des.*—Pia Desideria.

*Allg. Gottesg.*—Allegemeine Gottesgelahrtheit aller glaeubigen Christen und . . .

### FRANCKE

Educational works designated by works in which they are found, as Kramer, Richter, Guerike.

### WESLEY

Works, I., II., stand for his sermons. V., VI., VII. stand for his miscellaneous writings.

Jour. or J. stands for Curnock's standard edition.

Ritschl, I. or II., without title, stands for A. Ritschl, Geschichte des Pietismus.

Other references are sufficiently designated to be plain.











