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Dear Brother Wayne,

Now to begin an analysis of the 13th issue of the WTJ that you sent me, and how much time it will take me to get thru these addresses with my observations, depends somewhat on the post-midnight oil I burn. If your summer schedule is very heavy, it is possible that you may not be able to give what I send more than a hurried scanning, and be unable to make the connections between what I wrote and the contents of the addresses of the WTJ. This issue purports to be a report on "The Development of Wesleyan Holiness Theology." One modification should be added general theme: "The Development of (American) Wesleyan Holiness Theology," for the focus seems to be entirely in America, with nothing being developed on the subject elsewhere in the world.

We begin with the presidential address, and the best that I can say about it, is that it doesn't seem to be very scholarly. A fifteen minute investigation on "wisdom" in The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, would provide a very thoro analysis of the Hebrew words that have been translated as "wisdom" including the one that is the one nearest to the English word. It could be noted that Wisdom Literature is quite extensively more than in the OT canon, as represented in the Apocryphical Literature. Whether we have any interest in that literature or not, it rates wisdom a lot more high is spiritual quality than is generally attributed to the word in the canonical books of the OT. The "wisdom from above" as emphasized in the epistle of James, can be best understood only because it is based on the background of "wisdom from above" in the Apocryphical Literature.

We don't find the definition of the Hebrew word hokhmah to corresponde with that in an English dictionary for the word "wisdom." Altho the epistle of James was written in Greek, its thought-patterns are either on the Old Testament Hebrew meaning of the word, or else on the Greek pagan concept of wisdom. The general meaning of the Hebrew word is "the art of reaching ones end by the use of right means; and predominantly that which comes thru experience, and the "wise man" is generally at his best when he is old," and thus has much experience in life. In religion, "the wise man is he who gives to the things of God the same acuteness that other men give to worldly affairs. He is distinguished from the prophets as not having personal inspiration, (and) from the priestly school as not having primary stress on the cultus, and from the scribes as not devoted simply to the study of the sacred Scriptures. A wise man need not in any way be a religious man."

The Jews regarded that section of the OT that contained the Wisdom Literature of low quality, compared with the Torah that was rated as the most sacred, and the Nabi'im (Prophets) as the next highest. In Christian tradition most of the Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament is disregarded altogether by Protestants because it is apocryphical. During the prophetic era in Jewish history, wisdom was generally regarded as irreligious and heathenish. It was during the Exile that the Apocryphical Literature on wisdom was written, and more interest was given to Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes than during national history. One notable characteristic of wisdom literature is the outlook that there is no life beyond the grave.

Now the address on the epistle of James undertakes to associate its message with other New Testament teachings, and there is so little connection that Luther refused to recognize the epistle of James belonging in the NT at all. The uniqueness of James' use of the word "wisdom" would not be apparent, were we to note how very definitely it relates to the same two applications of wisdom from above in the Apocryphical Literature, and the wisdom from beneath in the Prophetic Literature of the Old Testament. Much more could have been noted of how Jesus used the wisdom method of the antithetical statement (ie "the last shall be first, and the first shall be last."), and His recognition of the two types of wisdom.



The address on "John Fletcher's Influence" is primarily informative in a general way of a biographical sketch of his life and influence on John Wesley and his works, and thinking. It also provides evidence for the charge that Wesley and those of the Wesleyan tradition are not theologians. That we all are not left in the toils of Calvinism and the deviation of Augustine, is largely a consequence of the effectiveness of John Fletcher. Where was there one to rise and challenge the encroachment of the European theologians in their Lutheran and Reformation traditions on a "sinning religion", when Modernism took over American Methodism? Where was there a second John Fletcher to counteract the revived Calvinism in Fundamentalism that was the only answer made to counteract Modernism? Even this address seems to deal with incidentals.

The main thrust of emphasis in Wesleyan traditionalism has been a dependence on and a defense of the Arminian position on Free Will. There is yet to be a definitive theological analysis of the meaning of grace, which has been attached to a doctrine of the sovereignty of God, interpreted on the pattern of the sophistry of the divine right of kings. Therefore the discussion on the balancing of Free Will with Free Grace is of little consequence until a basic definition of grace is determined. In all the emphasis that Wesleyans make of Arminius, it is notable that their only knowledge of his works, is that which Wesley and Fletcher selected and not the whole of his works that were mostly in line within the traditions of Reformational Calvinism.

On the emphasis on "works", however this was considered in the thinking of John Wesley, its basis was for the most part unconsciously and habitually practiced in its form from his Anglican traditionalism. He considered it his constant duty to perform all the rituals of the Church, and to regard that institution as a means of grace from God. It has been thoroly incorporated in all Wesleyan traditionalism, a doctrine of the Church as essential to the maintenance of salvation, and that very few if any are saved outside of the Church. The basic element in the doctrine of the Church, is that it provides the means of salvation thru its rituals, and the observance of those rituals, whether deliberately formalized or very informally applied.

Somewhere in the history of Christianity, there was a departure from the earlier Biblical emphasis that salvation was in the keeping of the Commandments and this by man "doing" something about it. There is a need for those in the Wesleyan tradition to examine the theological emphases in Judaism, which also has its own traditionalism back to Scriptural origins. Judaism today is no more comparable to what it was in the days of Jesus, than Wesleyanism is to Catholicism, which is the direct ancestry of our traditions rather than the Reformation. For instance, what is the nature of the doctrine of sin in Judaism? Is the form of the doctrine generally held in Christian traditions actually based on Biblical concepts or from the Hellenic or the Hindu concepts of what sin is? The answers to these questions will affect how we should deal with questions of works and faith.

On the analysis of Fletcher's theology in this address, I cannot give discriminating observations, since I have not read any of his writings nor even possess copies of his books. What is reported about him impresses me far more than all the idolizing that has been done about Wesley, who has been generally credited with being the only means by his revivalism of saving England from the fate that had overwhelmed France in the Revolution that occurred there. Evidently there was an Evangelical Revival that took place in England, quite independent of all that Wesley did, and that his revival efforts were simply a part of that larger movement, with his part leading to the institution of the Methodist Church.

One effect of the influence of Fletcher that has provided a weakness in the Wesleyan traditionalism in America, was his "Middle Way" emphasis. This has led that tradition to a position of indecisiveness on all serious problems in persons and in society. The social problem of Slavery, Methodism was torn apart over the issue by maintaining a do-nothing position of allowing the problem to solve itself. At the present time the problem of Homosexuality is a personal



problem that is likewise an issue about which nothing is being done, either to understand it or to find a way to solve it. The matter is being publicly considered in Methodist Conferences but kept private in holiness denominations, which does not mean that homosexuals are prevented from having any part in the activities of such churches, for they are allowed to cover up their condition and remain unsolved while they advance to positions of high responsibility in the churches.

In the attempts to formulate an interpretation of the work of the Holy Spirit, I am not sure that any of the theologians have arrived at any correct doctrine, as all efforts to determine when and how the Holy Spirit works tend to limit and restrict the Holy Spirit as working according to the understanding of the minds of men. It is easier to arrive at a meteorological science for determining which direction the wind will blow, than it is to produce a theological understanding of how the Spirit of God works, for this is matched with the way the spirit within man works, and we do know ourselves well enough to understand at all the working of our own spirit in bringing it into subjection to our fleshly nature, or of allowing it to be in command of our fleshly nature. Wesley and Fletcher and others, have had to invent terminology in their attempt to define the conditions and the states of grace.

The final section of this address considers Fletcher's doctrine of Dispensationalism that neatly classifies the conditions of all mankind at the expense of separating the Trinity of God in compartments for the application of their work for mankind. And for me there is no dispensationalistic limitations that disrupts the absolute unity of the Trinity of God in the simultaneous working on the lives of all men. I do not see the point of the conclusion of this address about dispensationalism. There is a logical progression from the first dispensation to the next, but does not that progression cease when the third stage is reached? And is this not the illusion that affects all in the holiness movement, that once a person has been sanctified, that he has arrived?

On the specialized study of history of Sanctification in Early Methodism, the main objective of this address seems to be to refute the book by John Peters that the doctrine had been neglected at an early period in the 19th century. As I read this address, however, I felt that it was too specialized to tell the whole story. The impression given in the address, is as tho Methodism was the only religious representation of Christianity in American during that era. But the truth is that there was considerable competition among the denominations for evangelizing and reaching unchurched people. This competition led to lively debates on the essential importance of the doctrines of salvation that were preached. What tactics did the Baptists and the Presbyterians use to match the success of the Methodists?

It was during the 1830's that the rise of the movement of Mormonism took place, with a Methodist and a Baptist joining together to promote its effect on the people. Was it a reaction to the zeal of the Methodists, or the competition among the denominations? Altho sanctification seemed to be adequately disseminated, yet what of the fruits in the lives of those that professed the experience? In the history of Wesleyan traditionalism after Wesley, there were two lines formed, one in England and the other in America. It is mentioned in this address, that there was not any American publications by indigenous theologians and only reprints of literature from England was available. Were there any writers of literature among the Wesleyans of England after Wesley and Fletcher in that era? And what was the cause of the rise of the Primitive Methodist withdrawal from American Methodism in that early era? The point is, what was the setting beyond Methodism and within the Church that affected the direction of the development of the tradition?

The beginning of the Holiness Movement that extended beyond Methodism into other denominations, and the disintegration of the Methodist Church into separated denominations, took place in the central third of the 19th century. There



was much more taking place in American history of Christianity, that is much more significant, than these isolated instances that indicated that Methodism was consistently attached to its heritage from Wesley in the early era.

However, this address was very much interesting reading to the extent that it did provide historical insights into the record of early Methodism. The questions raised were not in criticism of what was reported, but that it was less than telling the whole story of the development of Methodism within the expanding multi-cultured conditions in America among peoples who had abandoned their way of life as they had lived it in Europe. It is only when they begin to do their own interpreting of their beliefs, that we have a clue to see whether they understand their heritage or are more influenced by local circumstances to work out their own ideas. For instance, early Methodists felt no basis for relationship with the Americanized Protestant Episcopal Church as Wesley had with the Anglican Church of England. Nor did they feel any affinity to American Catholicism or the literature of that Church that was used by Wesley.

<sup>II</sup>  
The next address examines a philosopher who found holiness to be in line with his reasoning of what is important in life. The first statement of the quotation from his views, is somewhat questionable. A man's philosophy and Theology may not be in line with one another. The traditional background of his life may make the difference. This was true in the life of Augustine, whose parents were from radically different traditions, so that he was faced with the project of trying to merge them into a view of life that incorporated the best of both traditions. How similar or otherwise was the background for the life of Asa Mahan? He wrote: "False philosophy is the mother of a false religion." Was this true in the experience of Augustine? "False" is too strong a term to be used here, and he would have been closer to the truth to have used the word "faulty". Because no philosophy is altogether false.

His definition of the "Nature of Philosophy" was to some extent true, that is, as far as it went. What he leaves out, is that philosophy can be specialized in different directions, for instance, into theoretical speculations or into practical applications. His primary conception of philosophy, "to observe, to analyse, to order, to elucidate and to account for the facts of human consciousness" -- are really the elements of science methodology, altho in his day, science was regarded as within the realm of philosophy. His further statements do get into the actual nature of philosophy, which we could sum up as: the formulation of the laws of relationship that unifies all data into a coherent whole. This is generally initiated in the direction of the theoretical and proved in the demonstration of the practical, altho there are philosophers who do not go farther than the theoretical. And there are other philosophers who remain with the traditional.

On the second point of the "Philosophic Spirit", he is idealistic, to the extent that most people are not encouraged in childhood to develop their rational mind. How many of us are allowed by our parents to have "an independent mind"? Only those parents that are indifferent or negligent about disciplining their children. Another way for saying "a teachable spirit", is to have an open mind. He puts "love of truth" first, and this aspect is severely tested when parents seek to compel their children to accept that which is false or expedient. Youthful rebelliousness is generally an evidence of this love of truth, because too many adults tend to become indifferent to the truth for self-indulging interests. He lists "intellectual humility" as one of the elements, and I do not know how to illustrate this with an example. The final aspect mentioned "a spirit of wonder" for me seems closer to the "religious Spirit" rather than the philosophic. But perhaps it is the final step that leads to religious awakening.

Further explanation of "intellectual humility" directs us to the attitude when we reach maturity, that our education is not complete. Unfortunately, it is lacking among most people who are attached to religious traditions. Too many stop expanding their mind beyond their adolescent understanding of life.



Their lack of humility is demonstrated when they resent any kind of criticism that is offered about their views. What they call "constructive criticism" is to be understood as meaning that the one offering it agrees and accepts the views and interpretations that were expressed. Very few people have such humility.

On the third point, I am not sure of his definition of theology. Does he imply it to mean religion? For basically, "theology" is an attempt to interpret religious interests from the standpoint of philosophy. The illustration given does not clarify or answer the question. It is true that "philosophy is to assess theological truth claims", altho "assess" may not be the right word to use here, and examine or analyse such claims may be more in order. To assess means to evaluate, and that more properly belong to religious discipline. But 1) Theism in general is a philosophic concept, as is true also of Christian Theism as a theological interpretation. 3) Special teachings of the Bible, represent special understanding and interpretation of the Bible, that do not necessarily represent the actual contents of the Bible.

But let's examine the expression "rational verification." It means that human reason is capable of proving that which is true. The truth about God, can we acquire such truth from the standpoint of reason, or must God reveal the truth about Himself before we can have and know that truth? Can an atheist from the standpoint of reason prove rationally that there is no God? Can a theist from the same standpoint without resort to any revelation from God, prove that God is? And, let us examine the proposal of "the whole Bible as a revelation from God." Is this actually true for what the apostle Paul called "the natural man"? Can any man receive a revelation from God without first being spiritually awakened to a consciousness of the reality of God? Is it not the testimony of all persons that when they tried to read the Bible while in an unawakened spiritual condition, that it made no sense at all to them? But after they were awakened spiritually that only then did the Bible become a revelation to them?

Or consider the statement: "Nature as well as the Bible teaches us of God as creator". Students of "nature" are the scientists, who by their research may be able to penetrate deeply into the phenomena of everything that they study, but it leads them no farther than what this philosopher called the spirit of wonder, actually the sense of wonder, or the last step before entering into religious experience and spiritual awakening to the consciousness and revelation of God. They do not discover God as creator in their study of nature. They only come to the threshold, beyond which is religious experience. The Russian astronaut who did not find God in his venture into orbit around the earth, did experience that sense of awe, of wonder, but he did not make the step into religious experience, and so did not find God at all (only unless he has made the step since then after getting back on the ground!)

But the most that can be said about this philosopher, is that he has ventured beyond traditionalism to the second stage of venturing into theoretical analysis of the accumulation of information which he has received from traditional sources. He has not discovered what is true and false in that traditionalism, nor has he advanced in his theoretical speculations far enough to discover what is true and false in his philosophical outlook. He has reached the adolescent stage in intellectual development and spiritual awakening, to attain the evaluation and the possibility of "moral beauty and perfection."

"Faith must be rooted in reason's assent: far from being a leap in the dark." The discussion that follows on this statement is not logically coherent. A "rational conviction rooted in solid evidence" is supposed to be the confirmation of the statement, but "evidence" has the intimation of light. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Here is a man who was born blind, and he does not have even any mental concept of what light is. Since he has never had any visual sense, he likewise has no mental concept of darkness. The circumstances of his life by means of his other senses, do give him a clear mental concept of his environment as it is possible for him to have



within the restrictions of his limitations. Here comes Jesus ready to bring him a visual sense for the first time in his life. Since he has no mental concept of what vision is, from the standpoint of faith and of reason, what can he hope for or believe? He has been told that he is blind and not like other people, but that statement has no meaning for him. The most that he can "hope for" is to be made like what he has been told other people are able to sense more than he can. All he can do is to do what he is told to do, and to wait for the light to come to reveal both light and darkness by this new sense which he never has had before.

It is true that faith is never a leap in the dark, but a trust in someone to lead one out of the dark into the light. Faith is not a faculty gift that we use from our own standpoint without reference to others; faith is a trust in relationship to someone else who communicates with us, and tells us what to do. To take a leap in the dark is not faith but presumption, because one has not waited to receive the communication worthy of being trusted to give the truth of what to do. Reason is one of our mental faculties and cannot do for us what only relationship with others can bring to us. "Evidence" can only mean enlightenment or the provision of a sense that was not a means of gathering the data on the phenomena on which our rational faculty formulates the interrelationships of the data.

"God has revealed Himself both in the natural order and in the Bible" -- only to those who have been awaked to a spiritual vision. There is no revelation in the natural order or in the Bible for those who are not spiritually awakened. It is useless to appeal to them on the basis of reason, because reason does not awaken them spiritually. The most that can be done for them in nature or in the Bible is to manifest a love and concern for them until they are won to trust you to the extent of making the step of faith into religious experience. That is why no philosopher exercising reason, and no theologian with the most reasonable interpretation, can ever lead a person to enlightenment and faith, without involving himself personally in loving concern that will win confidence and trust.

He makes a distinction between what he calls "natural and Biblical revelation" which in truth do not exist. We must remember that at a historical time there was no Bible, and the only revelation available was only that directly from God to the spiritually awakened person, who had no literature to read and only "nature" as the basis for God to reveal truth to that person. All the religions of the world are evidence of people being awakened spiritually and attempting to share and to interpret their understanding of their spiritual experience. That such religions are not reliable as systems to lead the adherents to God, is only because the traditions from the originally awakened persons have built up interpretations and misunderstandings of the truth that was revealed to them. This has also happened in the history of Christianity, and it cannot be denied. Catholicism represented Christianity but its traditionalisms went so far astray that the Reformation had to take place to bring the truth of Christianity out of obscurity. Even in the shorter history of Methodism that same veering away toward obscuring the truth in Christianity has taken place

What the Bible is, must be understood as a record of the revelations of spiritual experience as have come to others before us. It is no revelation to us until we are spiritually awakened, and only then do we recognize that what they wrote is comparable and similar to what we experience. Then the Bible is useful as a means of keeping our spiritual experience from veering off toward error and of seeing the error in the experiences of those who were before us. Revelation is not that which happened only when the Bible was written, it is a continual event in the living experience of every person who reaches that point of spiritual awakening, Christian or non-Christian. The consequence in every person's life is determined by what that person does with the truth after it has been disclosed to him. Those who profess to be Christian are no closer to God than the Jews who thought they possessed the truth but did nothing beneficial with it. Knowledge of the truth does not mean that we are conforming ourselves to the truth.



"We should renew our independent investigations in each domain for the purpose of detecting error into which we have fallen." This refers to disharmony or discrepancy between what was called "natural revelation" and "biblical revelation." The error referred to is not necessarily all in our experience, but it may have been in the experience of those who were the writers or the translators of the Bible. That is why it is important to compare the various translations of the Bible, more than merely depending altogether on some English version.

From "evidence" of revelation, the next proposition in the address, is the "understanding" or interpretation and application of the revelation to life. The concept of "the Idea of Perfection" is therefore brought to our attention. There is a problem here in the fact that perfection is not explicitly defined. "Whenever a being's action is in full harmony with the requirements of its individual sphere, that being is perfect.", The exception that is made does not apply, for that perfect is absolute. "Be ye therefor perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect", is the standard, we in our own sphere and God in the sphere of deity. For man, his particular sphere is assumed to be that of morality, (but this is a theoretical position and not a Biblical revelation.)

That "man is 'morally or ethically perfect when his entire moral activities are in full harmony with the moral law, or the idea of duty'", is only an assumption and not a verified analysis of man's condition. What evidence can there be that a man's "activities are in full harmony with the moral law"? Furthermore, what is this "moral law" that is assumed? "The idea of duty" is a philosophic concept. Moral law is likewise only a philosophic concept, unless there is some evidence that it is a revelation of truth beyond philosophic comprehension and as a consequence of religious experience. There can be a full conviction of the appearance of harmony, and yet be altogether a mere illusion. This is true in the experience of every person who claims that his life is in perfect harmony with the moral law of his life, without any need for reference or dependence on God.

The next point on "The simplicity of Moral Action" is based on what he designates as "ultimate intention." This would imply that consequent actions may not harmonize with that intention. This was the problem expressed in the 7th chapter of Romans. The "ultimate intention" was to do good, but the consequent action turned out to be not good. The proposition is therefore theoretical and has a further deficiency, in that it is not related to any insights in the Bible. Rational logic may appear to lead to basic truth apart from revelation, but when analysed to see what it actually does, the error in the theory is exposed.

Related to "Entire Sanctification" there is a faultiness in the premise of applying this philosophic theorizing to religious experience. "He infers from the nature of repentance, from the fact that forgiveness in the Bible hinges on intentional abandonment of known sin." But the truth is that "forgiveness" is not conditioned on repentance. Forgiveness is an unconditional gift from God that is offered to every man, regardless of what any man decides to do with the gift. Forgiveness can only be accepted or rejected, as far as man is concerned. His willingness and decision to accept forgiveness from God comes first. It is only then that the consequence of his decision is the act of repentance and the abandonment of sin. The undefined concept of "perfection" seems irrelevant here.

Subsequently, the discussion of the nature of spiritual experience thru the stages of new birth and confirmed maturity of "a state of moral purity", seems quite incidental. The question arises, What is the basis in rational understanding of spiritual experience? Is not spiritual understanding a way of knowing that is beyond the limits of rational understanding, as rational understanding is beyond the limits of sensate comprehension of phenomena? From the standpoint of our sense we do not see the interrelations in the data that we accumulate, it is at the higher level of mental reasoning that we see the interrelationships. So likewise from the standpoint of reason, we cannot comprehend nor explain the processes of spiritual experience in that knowledge that is above reason.



In the next to the last paragraph of the address, is the statement: "It is morally impossible to choose to be pure in heart in a non-social sense". This is true, and unfortunately too many attempt to attain heart purity without reference to how it affects their relationships with others. It can be judged of them, that whatever they have decided or assumed that they have experienced in becoming sanctified, that if their attitudes toward others is not changed, they have not yet arrived at sanctification, no matter what they profess of having fulfilled all the ritual conditions for obtaining it. But "Purity of heart implies a right relationship to moral principles", is a statement that misses the mark. The "right relationship" is to actual persons, not to abstract "moral principles." And the concluding remarks of the address fail to note this distinction. Society is an abstract term that does not substitute for actual persons.

There isn't much that I can write about the next address, as it consists of a report of the history in the Nazarene Church, of its struggle and involvement with the Fundamentalism position about the Bible. The account would probably be of more concern to those of that Church, particularly in the way that ambiguity was allowed to obscure the issue. I have never been approached by a radical fundamentalist on whether I believed the Bible to be the infallible and inerrant Word of God. My answer to such a question would have to be: Which Bible? The reason is that those who put so much stress on the Bible, are not really students of it to know what they are talking about. This was also true of the theologians in the Nazarene Church. They were theologians and not Bible students.

For me, only the active responsiveness of a person to the Spirit of God is in any position to participate in the revelation of the Bible. Apart from the Spirit of God, men manipulate the Bible to fit their own philosophy of life. This is evident in every translation of the Bible from one language into another. For languages are the medium of philosophy, and not of religion, and one must be able to get beyond the language into the meaning intended to get the insights that belong to religion. And the actual WORD of God is always oral and thus beyond the means of men to wrest it to fit their own interpretations of life. Even the doctrine that Christ is the "Living Word" of God, is based on a misunderstanding of John 1:1, and the formulation of a Logos Theology. The word LOGOS from the Greek standpoint, means a word that is specifically oral and never written.

In the Old Testament era, the key word for God was in the word SHEM, which means name. The power of God was thought to be available to men who appealed to the NAME of God. This was evident in the conversation that Moses had with God on Mount Sinai, before he returned to Egypt to lead the Israelites out of that land. Moses wanted to know the NAME of God, as the basis of any authority and the source of any power to undertake the responsibility of tackling the Egyptians. And the NAME of God was given in the tetragrammic letters JHVH (YHWH). But as LOGOS has come to be the key word in Christian theology, SHEM was the key word in the religious theology that antedated Moses among the Semitic Peoples, in whose tradition Moses established the religion of the Israelites. Its influence in the religion of Israel took the form of not speaking the name YHWH of their God, altho always writing it in their Scriptures. And when reading their Scriptures, they always substituted the word ADONI, which has the meaning of LORD. And it is significant of something, that the word LORD has been consistently translated from Hebrew into Greek KURIOS, into Latin DOMINUS, and into English LORD. But the word GOD is expressed in different concepts in all four languages.

But this does not relate to the address under consideration. Altho the Wesleyans are the oldest of the holiness denominations in the Wesleyan tradition, they have not had their own theologian to interpret their beliefs for them as the Nazarenes have had. It would be interesting some time to examine the "theologies" recommended as basic in the various denominations for their preparatory ministers. I do not recall the theology text that was used at MWC when I attended there, but I believe that it was that of A M Hills. I do not know what text was used at Marion while I was there, for it was not one of



subjects of the course that I took while there. I do remember that I did not concern myself with all the theological terminology in defining the Bible that was emphasized, and is in the WTS. These are terms that were never applied to the Bible until about 100 years ago, and Christianity did very well without them, including John Wesley the founder of our tradition.

The address on Finney's Synthesis is by a scholar who is an astute student of Wesleyans in America, in the broadest sense of the word beyond the narrow application to just the people of that name. Years ago when his first book came out, "Revivalism and Social Reform," I obtained a copy. At that time I was interest in research on the interpretation of the Holy Life as it is currently understood and taught in all denominations. I was in pastoral commitments at the time, so had no contact with theological libraries to do any academic research, not did I extend my research very far. I see that this address has covered the ground of the extension of holiness in many of the Protestant denominations, with the exception of the Lutherans in which I can't imagine them having any emphasis on a devotional life of holiness. The Catholics have some literature on holiness, but the most exhaustive treatises have not been translated from the Latin, and are even unknown to the average parish priest.

Altho this address is purportedly about Finney, the one more notable seems to be William Lloyd Garrison, the Abolitionist, and a more definitive study on his life would seem to be more enlightening, than that of Finney. Of course, Finney was the theologian and Garrison was the activist, and since the emphasis in these addresses in on theology, the study of the life of Finney is before us. He was of the Revivalist Movement which began as far as American Christianity is concerned, with Jonathan Edwards. Dwight L Moody, Billy Sunday, and Billy Graham have continued the tradition of the Revivalism Movement. The Holiness Movement at its beginnings is the particular background for this address, with Finney being one who was drawn into it, and for Wesleyans he is regarded as one who presumably synthesized Wesleyan and Covenant Theologies, from the standpoint of the latter. The year 1835 is designated as the annus mirabilis, altho not all religious activities in that year are reported. For there were the Baptists and the Millerite Movement about the coming of Christ, that has formed a continuing tradition ever since, and the rise of the Mormons, who of course have established themselves as a denomination that has continued since.

There is another side of the Finney story than that given by this speaker. In a book I have by Gilbert Seldes, "The Stammering Century", a report is made of the 19th century in United States about the idealist cults of various kinds that sprang up with their experiments and existed briefly before burning out and disappearing. The author had some first-hand contact somewhat with one of them, being "born in the ruins of an idealist community in New Jersey, and the first twenty years of his life were spent in more or less constant communication with radicals, reformers, faddists, cranks, colonists of the ideal." It was during that era that the word "perfection" was in vogue, not just in connection with religious doctrine of Christian perfection, but also secularly. Edward Everett is quoted as saying, "Our government is in its theory perfect, and in its operation it is perfect also. Thus we have solved the great problem in human affairs." In contrast, the 20th century is one of disillusionment.

The author of the book, he attributes the various idealistic cults as follows: "But their full bearing only begins to be seen when we discover that they were all children of the 1830 revivals when Charles Grandison Finney, the brigadier general of Jesus Christ, stamped up and down the state of New York." He also explains why American history is different in the 20th century, even tho his book it was published 50 years ago. "There is a dislocation of the center of fear. Laws, lobbies, censors, and spies, have displaced God as the object of awe and veneration, sometimes even as the object of faith. The great social and religious movements of the middle of the (19th) century were based on the belief that man could be made perfect. The current belief is that machinery, includ-



ing the machinery of government, can be made perfect.... The change demanded in those days was in the human heart, not in civil law; it was moral, not legal. Even in religious disputes there has been a marked degradation for, so long as the Bible was not challenged, all men were concerned with the awful tragedy of sin; they were all fundamentalists quarreling about the essence of religion, not about the mistakes of Moses. For a hundred years, there was but one question among men of religion: Are we saved or damned? It was not an academic question. It was present. It was real, urgent, more important than questions of health, or wealth, or social standing. It was a question of life and death. From the moment that the answer was "Saved," all disputes lost dignity and significance." The author regards the Prohibition Amendment to the Constitution as evidence that the center of motivation had been moved from God to government.

He gives a whole chapter on Finney and his labors, which is quite a contrast to that reported in the address of the WTJ. In the address, Finney's work at the Oberlin College is emphasized and discussed in great detail; in the book the work of Finney before he was called to Oberlin, which was late in his life, is related. It was rather difficult to follow the thought in the address, perhaps because so much information was summarized into the small space of the talk. But it would seem that it was Nathaniel W Taylor, rather than Finney, who was the one to synthesize the Wesleyan and Covenant theologies. At least it was said of him that "by grafting onto covenant theology the doctrine of the moral nature of divine government,...by locating depravity not in our natures but in our dispositions,... and by adopting the idea that disinterested benevolence was the sum of the Christian's duty, (he) transformed Calvinist dogma into a practical Arminianism." This was done in cooperation with Lyman Beecher.

However, the book spells out these same ideas about Finney: "His doctrinal teaching developed very little after his student days and can be summed up in negative statements of what he did not believe. He rejected first of all, the orthodox doctrine of original sin, of the utter depravity of the human constitution. Following that, he took the next step and asserted that men are able to repent and to believe. He denied that men were free to commit evil and incapable of performing any good. He refused to believe that God had condemned men for their sinful nature and that death was the reward for their transgressions. He rejected the doctrine that the Holy Ghost acts in a physical way upon the substance of the soul in cases of regeneration. He gave the function of the will a great place and insisted that man should be active, not passive, in seeking regeneration." The result was that "he cut away from Calvinism precisely those elements which made it vulnerable to the attack of the Universalist." This made it possible for him to become an effective evangelist, for he "arrived at a composite theology which was remarkable proof against assault from either side." This is not disclosed in the address on his "synthesis."

Rather, the emphasis seems to be that he and Mahan were more scholarly than back-woodsy. It is certain that his theology was quite different from that in the Wesleyan tradition, even tho his experiences eventually led him to "two works of grace." Furthermore, in the address, "the movement to reform society" is emphasized, and that was the basic thesis which the speaker had for his original doctoral dissertation, and would be uppermost in his mind for the years of his life since then, (just as my thesis of the ways doctrines have changed thru the centuries of Christianity, thru the change in the meaning of words from one language to another language.) And he points out that Finney drew the basis of his doctrinal outlook on life, from his Calvinist traditionalism in a way that Wesley built on his Anglican traditionalism. That for Finney was "more deeply upon Moses and the prophets", whereas Wesley built more on the ritual Scriptures of his tradition.

A summary of Finney's "Lectures" showed the matured thinking of his outlook on life, altho no specific comparison was made with Wesley's "Sermons". (I think



that I have a book in my library on the Lectures of Finney, but I don't recall whether it was his early lectures or the later ones on holiness.) Finney seems to have been less restrictive to the ministers he trained and sent out than Wesley was of those he appointed to serve the Methodist Societies he had started. The speaker does not disclose that one of the major concerns of Finney's ministry, was his opposition to the Universalism that was the reaction to the rigid Calvinism of his tradition, a problem that never faced Wesley, in his opposition to Calvinists.

For Finney, "the immediate background (of his outlook) was the revitalized Calvinist ethics of Samuel Hopkins, rather than the Anglican moralism which launched Wesley on his quest, or the pietism which helped him at a crucial juncture to see he could realise it thru trust in Christ." The social difference was the decadent nation of England for Wesley, and the optimistic ascendant nation of United States for Finney. "He had discovered a Pentecostal version of covenant theology which opened the door to an evangelical unity for which Wesley and Whitfield prayed but were never able to grasp." What the speaker touched upon but did not point out with emphasis, that "Methodists did not adopt from Finney, and possibly did not consider, was the revitalized form which his Biblical study gave to covenant theology. Grafted onto the tap-root of the Wesleyan doctrine of a sanctifying atonement, this Puritan perspective on Old and New Testament truth, would have deeply enriched the Methodist tradition."

The consequence was that "Christian perfection" as an interdenominational emphasis, became parochialised into the Holiness Movement limited within the Wesleyan tradition. The address really ends with the statement, "Finney's labored effort to put together Wesleyan and Covenant theology reminds us that since the days when Wesley and Whitfield found themselves pulled apart, their followers have never been able to pull themselves together." Our nation is no longer in the ascendant condition that it was a 150 years ago, but in its decline. Wesleyan traditionalism does not have the vitality that Wesley had in counteracting the decadence of his nation. The Charismatic Movement has become the activist unifying force among the denominations of the nation, not in revitalizing the Churches but the lives of those who turn from the Churches into the Movement. So far, it has no astuteness of theological interpretation to establish it more effectually in the main life of the denominations.

In the last address of this series, "The Baptism of the Holy Spirit", is considered. The speaker made investigation for the "Theological Roots of Pentecostalism,...especially the baptism of the Holy Spirit." He noted that Wesley was primarily Christocentric in his theology, and that the Charismatic Movement today is primarily a Pneumocentric theology, in practice but not in theology. In other words, there is considerable emphasis on the "Spirit" without an understanding that the Holy Spirit is but one of the persons of the Trinity. As was noted in an earlier address, it has a unitarianism of the Spirit, to the ignoring of the unified Trinity of God. I do not see the point that Wesley preferred, "the covenantal to the dispensational way of describing Christian history." Christian experience for Wesley was primarily theoretical and experimental rather than an established tradition into which he could commit himself.

This address tends to be primarily an incomplete investigation into the subject, and thus only a preliminary report of the various aspects of the subject before definitive conclusions can be expressed. The actual roots of the Charismatic Movement have not been discovered or disclosed. The trend toward emphasizing the Pentecostal even with the spiritual experience of sanctification, was noted in the Wesleyan tradition, and eventually was the main emphasis of the Charismatic Movement. Let me point out one particular course of a traditionalism. In England, there was the one break with the denomination that Wesley instituted, when the Booths established the Salvation Army. One feature of that Movement introduced women as equal with men in the ranks of the ministry, a feature that has never been established in Methodism. Thru the Salva-



tion Army, Aimie Semple MacPherson started her Four Square Gospel Movement that gave women an even more extensive responsibility in the official ministry of the Church.. Out of her "denomination" there went forth another Movement that is primarily known in Iowa, because that is where it started, and where the national headquarters is located, the Open Bible denomination. It seeks to establish a theological basis for the Pentecostal emphasis on the "Baptism of the Holy Spirit" and being "Filled with the Holy Spirit." Ecstatic utterance, physical healing, gifts of the Spirit, and power of the Spirit, are the main items emphasized. Conversion is not emphasized, and put at a level that everyone is a seeker, so the unconverted are asked to join in the seeking, as the whole congregation moves forward for a season of prayer in every public service. The unconverted are offered three options: 1) To go forward with those who brought them to Church, 2) To make themselves conspicuous by remaining at their seats waiting to leave with those who brought them, 3) To leave the service on their own initiative without those who brought them. In other words, the motivation for conversion is from the standpoint of social pressure, rather than the fact that someone cares and is concerned about their unconverted condition.

The point I am making, is the use of motivation for becoming a Christian. There was Wesley's motivation in resort to logic to make reasonable steps to a act of faith for personal salvation. There is the emotional motivation in appealing to various self-interests, the most common being that off fear for ones personal security in the universe. There is the social pressure motivation of emphasis on conformity for one to belong with the "in" crowd. And there is the motivation of Jesus in compassion for those who are bereft of the important elements essential to life. This basic motivation is not actively persuded by any of evangelical minded promoters of Christianity.

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This issue of the WTJ was more definitive of one theme, as the addresses were centralized on aspects of the "Development of (American) Wesleyan Holiness Theology." It does disclose where we were in the 19th century, but not where we are in the 20th century. It does disclose that the Nazarene Church has been the one to provide the theological literature which the smaller denominations in the Holiness Movement, have used as the standard for training young men for the ministry. However, there are independent Bible Colleges that have varying traditions behind them, many of them being established thru the National Holiness Association. Others began as Methodist Colleges that became independent of that denomination. There are questions that remain unanswered. What is the theological tradition for the Salvation Army, in the training of its ministry? And so far in the WTS, I have not heard of any reporting of the Free Methodist Church and its traditions and development. And what of the Free Will Baptists and the Negro Methodist denominations, are they connected in any way with the Holiness Movement and Wesleyan traditionalism?

With these three reports of my manner of giving full attention to the contents of the WTJ, you now have a basis for knowing my approach to an involvement in the WTS. I am definitely in the Wesleyan tradition and have followed my own personal development in my thinking. There are positions held in the "Doctrines" of the WTS which I think are untenable and need to be revised, particularly in defining the nature of what the Bible is. As it is given, it implies that those who have undertaken to define it theologically, have not really studied to Bible to know what it is, nor have understood the positions of those who have downgraded the Bible as being unreliable, so as to understand them and disclose the nature of their misunderstanding of the Bible.

Enclosed with this final report is the \$6 for the price of the three copies of the WYJ which you sent to me. May I expect to hear from you some kind of a response to my observations about the three issues that you sent? Or among the membership in the WTS, the name of anyone who might be willing to read what I wrote and to enter into discussion?

Sincerely Tom Hersey.