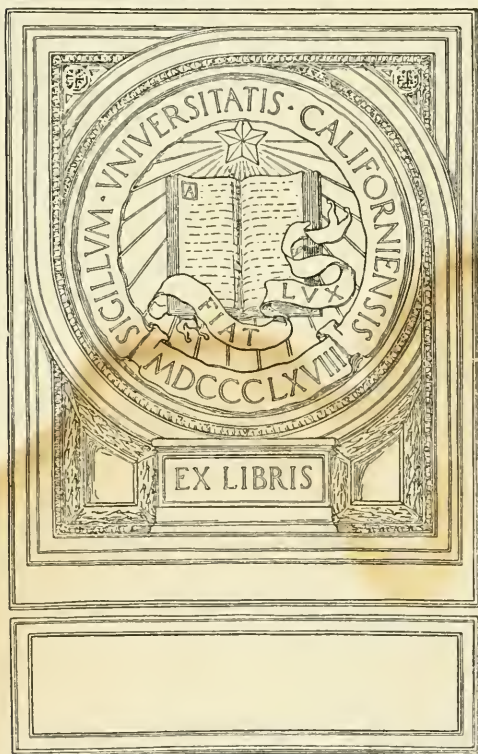


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2, CASTLE STREET, CITY ROAD, LONDON.

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







Engraved by T. W. Hunt

Chesley

London 1791

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

SOMETIME STUDENT OF CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD.

BY
JOHN TELFORD, B.A.,

Author of "Life of John Wesley," etc.

REVISED AND ENLARGED EDITION.

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INTRODUCTION.

JOHN WESLEY paid a striking tribute to his brother in one sentence of the terse obituary which was read in the Conference of 1788, "His least praise was his talent for poetry." Charles Wesley's muse contributed in no small degree to the wonderful success of the Evangelical Revival. Wherever the brothers or the Methodist preachers came in the course of their itinerancy, their vast congregations sang those inspiring hymns. Every mood of feeling, every phase of religious life, was represented in that hymnology. In it penitence and praise alike found a voice. When the itinerant passed on to another sphere of work, the hymns lingered behind him. Places that seldom saw the preacher thus preserved the influence of his visit. Epitomes of Biblical Theology which became dear to the common people were put into the hands of every member of the Methodist Societies. Tanners, colliers, weavers, and working people of all kinds, in town and country, became familiar with the great truths of religion, and found a defence against every form of error. The religious awakening of the last century owed

an immense debt to Charles Wesley as the sweet singer of Methodism.

Mr. J. R. Green says, "Charles Wesley, a Christ Church student, came to add sweetness to this sudden and startling light. He was the 'Sweet Singer' of the movement. His hymns expressed the fiery conviction of its converts in lines so chaste and beautiful that its more extravagant features disappeared. The wild throes of hysteric enthusiasm passed into a passion for hymn-singing, and a new musical impulse was aroused in the people which gradually changed the face of public devotion throughout England."

No one, however, can study the poet's life without feeling that his poetry was only one of many gifts which he contributed to the Evangelical Revival. Charles Wesley's itinerancy was for many years as laborious and as ceaseless as his brother's. His heroism in the face of the mob, his marvellous power as a preacher, his faithfulness in every branch of ministerial duty, show with what devotion he gave himself to the work. His blessed labours among prisoners exhibit his tenderness and zeal in a most attractive light. Not less interesting is it to watch his course as a domestic chaplain in the homes of his friends. Charles Wesley carried a blessing into every family. The hearts of a host of friends, young and old, clave to him. In such work he was both faithful and wise. The result was that he won many for Christ. He availed himself of every opportunity of doing good. The musical talent of his sons, and the conversion of Mrs. Rich, opened to the Methodist preacher a circle which few clergymen could

enter. Charles Wesley thus became the spiritual adviser of the Earl of Mornington, Mr. Kelway, the great organist, Dr. Boyce, the composer of church music, Mr. Lampe, the composer of operatic music, and many others.

In his home, Charles Wesley was admirable indeed. His children found encouragement and guidance in all their pursuits, and were early taught the blessing of true religion. His humility, his freedom from all self-seeking, his affection, and his hearty interest in everything that concerned his friends, find many illustrations in these pages.

Charles Wesley often disturbed himself by fears as to the future of Methodism. He was supremely anxious that it should remain a society within the Church of England. He watched it drifting away from his ideal with grave apprehension. He was not always wise in the action which he took, or wished to take, in reference to this matter. No one who understands his character would expect that he should be. Charles Wesley was not a calm, judicious statesman, like his brother, but a poet, with all a poet's emotion and impulsiveness. He was never made to stand alone, but to work with others who might be roused and cheered by his devotion and his love.

All available sources have been carefully consulted in preparing this life. Charles Wesley appears to have written his journal from day to day on loose sheets of paper, some of which were afterwards destroyed or lost. It was purchased from his son Charles. Thomas Jackson says, "A little while before it was purchased, it was in

great danger of being irrecoverably lost. It was found among some loose straw on the floor of a public warehouse in London, where the furniture of the owner was for a time deposited ; several leaves in the volume being cut from the binding, and not yet removed." That journal and the poet's letters have been the main authorities for this volume ; but Thomas Jackson's painstaking and judicious biography, which has been called the best history of Methodism, has been of special value. He was a personal friend of the poet's family, and thus obtained many precious particulars, which would otherwise have been lost. To his insight and promptness we also owe the preservation of many valuable manuscripts, which he purchased for the Methodist Connexion. Some interesting facts about the poet's family have been gathered from Mr. Stevenson's "Wesley Family." Mr. Forshall's "Westminster School" has also furnished particulars, and supplied clues, which have made that part of the narrative more complete than in any previous life of Charles Wesley. Dr. Byrom's journals have thrown much light on the early days of the Great Awakening. I owe special thanks to the Rev. C. H. Kelly for the fac-simile of a wedding-day letter, and to the Rev. H. J. Foster for a view of the house which he thinks to have been the poet's home in Bristol. The chapter entitled "The Poet of the Evangelical Revival" gives a view of Charles Wesley's work as the "Sweet Singer of Methodism," which will, it is hoped, be of special interest.

THE LIFE
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CHAPTER I.

ANCESTRY AND PARENTAGE.

Bartholomew Wesley and Charles II.—The First John Wesley—His Journals and Labours—Marries Miss White—Days of Suffering—A True Wesley—Samuel Wesley's Training among the Dissenters—His Life at Oxford—Marriage to Susanna Annesley—Life at South Ormsby and Epworth—A Long Fight with Trouble.

THE Wesley ancestry is a tempting subject for the student of the Evangelical Revival. Great as was the work John and Charles Wesley accomplished, we almost cease to wonder at their gifts and graces when we become familiar with the details of their family history. The Rector of Epworth belonged to an old Saxon stock, and might trace his line far back through a long roll of English gentlemen. The grandfather, Bartholomew Wesley, was the son of Sir Herbert Westley, or Wesley, of Westleigh, Devonshire. His mother came from Dangan in Ireland, and his wife was the daughter of Sir Henry

Colley of Kildare. After studying medicine and divinity at Oxford, he became in 1640 Rector of Catherston in Dorset. With this was joined the living of Charmouth, a mile away; but both together only yielded an income of about £35 10s.

The one historic event of Bartholomew Wesley's life was connected with the flight of Charles II. after the battle of Worcester. It was arranged that the king should cross over to France from Charmouth on the night of September 22nd, 1651; but the boat which was to take Charles and his friends to their vessel did not arrive in time, so that the party had to wait at the inn. The man who was to bring it had been locked into his room at Lyme by his wife, who suspected that he was bent on some perilous undertaking. Whilst Lord Wilmot was making inquiries, one of the horses was sent to be shod. The blacksmith declared that its shoes were made in the north of England; and when the ostler of the inn reported that the company had sat up all night and had kept their horses saddled, suspicion awoke. The two men surmised that the king or some of his principal adherents were thus seeking to escape from the country. The ostler ran to ask Bartholomew Wesley's advice. But the clergyman was at morning prayers, and wore out the ostler's patience by his protracted devotions, so that he returned without consulting him. When at last the blacksmith told the rector, it was too late. Charles and his party were pursued, but managed to escape. It is probable that the king himself had been for a little while at morning prayers in the church. In the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1785 it is stated that Mr. Wesley made no secret of the fact that it was his intention and wish to capture the king, and told a friend that, "if ever the king came back, he would be certain to love long prayers; for if he (Wesley) had not

been at that time longer than ordinary at his devotion, he would surely have snapt him."

Beyond this incident there is no evidence to prove that Bartholomew Wesley was a political partisan. He was a devout Christian, who exemplified his religion in all relations of daily life, and laboured earnestly among his parishioners, to whom the medical training he had received was of great service. After the Restoration he was ejected from his living. His medical skill then provided him with the means of earning a livelihood in his old parish. Dr. Calamy states that "Mr. Wesley lived several years after he was legally silenced; but the death of his son made a sensible alteration in the father, so that he afterwards declined apace, and did not long survive him."

This son was John Wesley, the grandfather of the Founder of Methodism. He died about 1678, when his father was more than eighty years old. Even as a school-boy he was an earnest Christian. Like his great namesake he kept a diary, in which he recorded his spiritual progress and the providential interpositions of his life. In many other respects his history resembles that of his distinguished grandson. His journal was kept almost to the end of his life. It was entrusted to the care of Dr. Calamy, but no trace of it can now be found.

This John Wesley became a student at New Inn Hall, Oxford, where he was noted for his seriousness and diligence. He made considerable progress in Oriental languages. Dr. Owen, the Vice-Chancellor of the University, had a great esteem for him. After taking his degree, he returned to Charmouth. He did not receive episcopal ordination, but joined a "gathered church" at Weymouth, composed of those who had separated themselves from the Established Church. Here he preached

his first sermons. He also laboured earnestly among the neighbouring fishermen. At Radipole, a village two miles from Weymouth, he gathered a congregation of his own. Conversions attended his work here, and his labours were held in high esteem both by able ministers and judicious Christian people.

In May, 1658, when twenty-two years old, he was appointed Vicar of Winterborn-Whitchurch, in Dorset. He was chosen by the people, and approved by the Triers. He received no episcopal ordination, but appeared before the thirty-eight commissioners whom Cromwell had appointed to examine all candidates for orders. Dr. Owen, Wesley's warm friend, was one of the leading men among these Triers, so that the young preacher had no difficulty in securing the approval of this Board. The living yielded only £30 a year, and though an augmentation of £100 a year was promised, the unsettled state of public affairs robbed the pastor of this much-needed help.

A year or two after his appointment to Winterborn, John Wesley married Miss White, a niece of Dr. Thomas Fuller, the Church historian. Her father, the patriarch of Dorchester, who died in 1648, was a remarkable man. He was a perpetual Fellow of New College, Oxford, and in 1606 became Rector of Trinity Church, Dorchester. Laud prosecuted him because he resisted Arminianism and High Church ceremonies; Prince Rupert's soldiers plundered his house and carried off his library. When at last he took refuge in London, he was appointed minister at the Savoy. He was a member of the famous "Committee of Religion" and of the Westminster Assembly. When the rector of Lambeth was ejected in 1645, Mr. White was appointed his successor, and had the use of the former rector's library till his own was restored. He refused the Wardenship of New College, and returned to his loved

flock at Dorchester, among whom he died at the age of seventy-four.

This noble man died eleven or twelve years before the marriage of his daughter. Her early orphan life had known many privations. Still sadder days were in store when she became the wife of John Wesley. For two or three years they were allowed to enjoy their modest income in peace; but St. Bartholomew's Day, 1662, brought desolation to the young vicar and his wife. They were ejected from their home. Then began a series of troubles and privations which brought the young minister to an early grave. He was compelled to leave Whitchurch, and the corporation of Melcombe made an order against his settlement in that place. He went to live at Ilminster, then at Bridgwater and Taunton. His ministry was now divided between Joseph Alleine's congregation at Taunton and Mr. Norman's at Bridgwater. Sometimes he also preached among the Baptists and Independents of the district. Alleine and Norman were ejected ministers, and in May, 1663, both of them were thrown into Ilchester gaol. Here fifty Quakers, seventeen Baptists, and fifteen other ministers were confined for many months in one room. Mr. Wesley narrowly escaped their fate.

That month a ray of comfort appeared. A gentleman offered him a house rent free at Preston, near Weymouth. This timely help seems to have removed him from the friends with whom he had been associated just in time to escape imprisonment. For awhile the stress of persecution compelled him to give up preaching. By-and-by, however, he ventured to gather together a little company in Preston, to whom he ministered. He also preached in Weymouth and other neighbouring places. At last he settled at Poole, where some godly people had invited him to become

their pastor. Besides his work as minister, he taught a school for the support of his family. He was often in trouble. Three months he spent in gaol at Dorchester; six months at Poole; once he was obliged to leave his people and his family, that he might hide himself till the storm of persecution swept by.

Dr. Calamy says, "John Wesley was in many straits and difficulties, but was wonderfully supported and comforted, and was many times very seasonably and surprisingly relieved and delivered." Death robbed him of many eminent men—his fellow-sufferers and his devoted friends; and the troubles of the time weighed heavily on his spirits. He died in 1678 at the early age of forty-two, leaving his widow and four children to struggle with the world. Matthew became a prosperous medical man in London, Samuel was the Rector of Epworth; Timothy and Elizabeth were the names of the other children.

John Wesley's widow lived thirty-two years after her husband. She was dependent on the care of her two sons. In 1700, Samuel Wesley says that, "having an aged mother (who must have gone to prison if I had not assisted her), she cost me upwards of forty pounds." He is speaking of an exceptionally heavy period. He generally allowed her £10 a year.

The first John Wesley was a man of great acuteness of mind and of unwavering fidelity to his principles. A full account is preserved of a conversation which he had with Dr. Ironside, Bishop of Bristol, about his right to preach. He clearly lays down the threefold qualification—gifts, grace, and fruits—which the Founder of Methodism recognised as essential for his preachers. Few men would have rejoiced more devoutly over the success of Methodism, or have been more quick to recognise in its methods the fundamental principles which shaped his own

ministry. He was near akin in spirit and labours to his distinguished grandson, the Founder of Methodism. His itinerant preaching, his evangelical views, above all, his success as a winner of souls, make him appear like some herald of the Great Awakening.

Samuel Wesley was born on December 17th, 1662, and entered the Academy of Edward Veal, of Stepney, in the year of his father's death. He had already received a careful training at the Free School, Dorchester. The Nonconformists also generously provided an exhibition of £30 a year to complete the education of a boy who gave such promise of future usefulness.

Samuel Wesley spent two years at Stepney. His pen was already busy. He wrote lampoons upon the Church party, and was fired, as he afterwards said, with hopes of suffering in the cause which had cost his family such poverty and pain. His patrons printed some of these first-fruits of his pen. Dr. Owen, who had esteemed his father so highly, added £10 a year to the young scholar's allowance, and urged him to devote himself especially to critical scholarship.

When persecution broke up the Academy at Stepney, Samuel Wesley was transferred to the care of Mr. Morton, of Newington Green, whose school then enjoyed a high reputation. Here he was brought into contact with the most distinguished Nonconformist ministers. He was intended for the ministry, and had been carefully trained in Nonconformist principles. It was natural, therefore, that when some severe invectives against the Dissenters appeared, Samuel Wesley should be chosen as their champion. The course of reading to which he was thus led produced a rapid, but decided, change in his views. He not only abandoned his purpose of writing

a defence of Nonconformity, but resolved himself to go over to the Church of England.

The young student was not yet twenty-one. He had been supported and educated by the Nonconformists for five years, and lived with his mother and an old aunt, both warmly attached to their cause. He now saw himself constrained to make choice between his dearest friends and his new convictions. Samuel Wesley was not the man to temporise. One morning he rose very early, and, without saying a word to his relatives, set out on foot for Oxford, where he entered himself as a "poor scholar" at Exeter College. Such is John Wesley's account of this crisis in his father's history.

Samuel Wesley himself says that Dr. Owen wished him to graduate at the university, as better times seemed at hand for the Nonconformists. When he began to feel doubtful about his position, he earnestly implored the blessing of God in a matter on which his whole future seemed to depend, and examined the controverted points as calmly as possible. To his surprise the subject gradually began to wear an entirely new aspect. The fact that he must forsake a struggling party troubled him greatly. "So far," he wrote, "were the sufferings of the Dissenters at that time from influencing my resolution to leave them that I profess that it was a thing which retarded me most of any." He was not acquainted with one soul in the Church of England to whom he could apply for assistance or advice. It will be evident to any one who weighs these facts that Samuel Wesley's choice was conscientious and unselfish. The Nonconformists would have stood by him as they had already done with such unfailing kindness. To go to Oxford to prepare for the Church was to cut himself loose from those generous friends who had supported his family in its troubles.

Samuel Wesley entered the university with forty-five shillings in his pocket. During the five years he remained there he only received five shillings from his family or friends. Nevertheless, he left Oxford with £10. As a poor scholar he had to discharge many menial duties, which must have heavily taxed his time; but he took his degree, and earned money by giving instruction or writing exercises for his fellow-students. During his stay at Oxford he collected his boyish verses into a volume, which was published by John Dunton, the eccentric London bookseller, with whom he had become acquainted before he left Stoke Newington. The little book bore the strange title, "Maggots." The author's portrait, with a maggot on his head, adorns this curious collection of satires on the vices of his age.

Busy as the poor student was, he found time to care for the prisoners in the Castle. The father of the Wesleys is thus linked, in spirit and temper, to the Oxford Methodists who incurred such reproach by their devotion in similar work. In 1730 he wrote to his sons, "Go on, in God's name, in the path to which your Saviour has directed you, and that track wherein your father has gone before you. For when I was an undergraduate at Oxford I visited those in the Castle there, and reflect on it with great satisfaction to this day. Walk as prudently as you can, though not fearfully, and my heart and prayers are with you."

On August 7th, 1688, he was ordained deacon by Dr. Sprat, Bishop of Rochester, at his palace at Bromley. The following February Dr. Compton, Bishop of London, gave him priest's orders in St. Andrew's Church, Holborn. His first curacy brought him only £28 a year; then he was appointed chaplain to a man-of-war, with a salary of £70. In the ample leisure which he here enjoyed he

began to write his poem on the Life of Christ, which afterwards helped to secure for him the living of Epworth. He soon resigned his chaplaincy, and settled down to work as a London curate, with a stipend of £30. In the second year his busy pen added another £30 to his income, so that in 1689 he ventured to take a wife.

His bride, Susanna Annesley, had been brought up in a home adorned by every Christian grace. She was the youngest child of Dr. Samuel Annesley, nephew of the first Earl of Anglesea. The doctor was known as the St. Paul of the Nonconformists. He lived in Spital Yard, and was pastor of a church in Little St. Helen's, Bishopsgate Street. His wife was also a Miss White, daughter of the Puritan barrister, John White, who was Member of Parliament for Southwark in 1640. He took an active part in the events which led up to the execution of Charles I. Miss Annesley, like her husband, had been brought up among the Dissenters; but she also had deliberately left them to join the Church of England. As a child she had been remarkable for conscientiousness and vigour of mind. When she found herself too much addicted to youthful diversions, she resolved never to spend more time in one day in any mere recreation than she devoted to private religious duties. She was carefully trained by her parents, and in early life devoted herself to God. The fierce controversies between the Church and the Nonconformists, which were characteristic of these times, somewhat chilled the girl's early piety, but she determined to master the points at issue. Before she was thirteen years old she had firmly adopted the principles of the Church of England. Whatever the feelings of Dr. Annesley and his wife may have been, they gave their daughter the fullest religious liberty.

A few months after her decision, Samuel Wesley went

to Oxford. He had been a visitor at Dr. Annesley's house, and was present in 1682 at the marriage of one of the sisters to Dunton, the publisher. Dr. Annesley's daughters were women of great personal attractions. Susanna was both graceful and beautiful; but she was most remarkable for her force of character, her ripe judgment, her clear insight, and her devotion to her husband, her family, and her neighbours. She had a life of many trials, but bore herself amid them all with a grace and dignity which are above praise. Her training laid the foundation for the future usefulness of John and Charles Wesley; and her sage counsels have left an abiding mark upon Methodist history.

Mrs. Wesley was only twenty years old at the time of her marriage. The young people had lodgings somewhere near Holborn, where their first son, Samuel, was born on February 10th, 1690. A few months later, probably through the good offices of the Marquis of Normanby, Mr. Wesley was presented with the living of South Ormsby, in Lincolnshire, worth £50 a year.

At South Ormsby the Wesleys lived till 1697. Here six of their children were born. Three of them died in infancy. The parish had only thirty-six houses, with two hundred and sixty inhabitants. The little church, dedicated to St. Leonard, had a tower, nave, and chancel, with a small chapel on its north side. It stood on rising ground, with the rectory, which its master describes as "a mean cot, composed of reeds and clay," adjoining the churchyard. There were many difficulties in Mr. Wesley's position. For a time the hall, which stood close to the parsonage, was let to Earl Castleton, a nobleman of dissipated life. Mr. Wesley says that he had to "see misses drinking, gaming, etc., and dare not open his mouth against them." The Earl had a house in the parish where a woman

who lived with him usually resided. She persisted in cultivating acquaintance with Mrs. Wesley. One day, when the rector came home, he found this visitor sitting with his wife. He went up to her, took her by the hand, and politely handed her out of his house. The Earl was so much incensed that it became necessary for the rector to resign the living. Notwithstanding this incident, Samuel Wesley seems to have retained the friendship of the Marquis of Normanby, for four years afterward he was still his chaplain. In 1701 he dedicated one of his books to the Marchioness, who sent him twenty guineas to help him in his financial troubles. The Marquis himself added five guineas.

Soon after he left South Ormsby, Queen Mary presented him with the rectory of Epworth. This she did without any solicitation on Mr. Wesley's part. In 1693 he had dedicated to her his heroic poem on the Life of Christ. It was in ten books, with notes on difficult points, and was illustrated by sixty copper plates.

✓ The spring of 1697 found the family settled in their new home. Epworth was a market town with two thousand inhabitants. It was the chief place in the Isle of Axholme. This district, long cut off from the rest of the county by three rivers, had a population of ten thousand people. It was a region of fens and floods; and though it had been drained, the people retained much of the turbulent spirit for which they had become notorious.

The fine parish church, with its massive tower, was dedicated to St. Andrew. The parsonage was only built of timber and plaster, and thatched with straw, so that it fell an easy prey to the flames in 1709. It had three storeys, with a kitchen, hall, parlour, buttery, three large upper rooms and some small ones; there was also a barn and a pleasant garden. The house and grounds

occupied about three acres. Such is the description given of the rectory in 1607. The living was worth about £200 a year. But Mr. Wesley had to pay heavy fees before he could take possession, and a considerable sum was necessary to stock the farm and furnish the house. Other expenses were also very heavy, so that the poor rector and his wife at once entered upon a long fight with poverty and debt.

In 1731 Matthew Wesley, the rector's brother, visited Epworth on his way to the spa at Scarborough. He was distressed by the straitened circumstances of his brother's family, and wrote a sharp letter to the rector. "You have," he says, "a numerous offspring; you have had a long time a plentiful estate, great and generous benefactions, and have made no provision for those of your own house, who can have nothing in view at your exit but distress. This, I think, a black account, let the case be folly, or vanity, or ungovernable appetites. I hope Providence has restored you again to give you time to settle this balance, which shocks me to think of. To this end I must advise you to be frequent in your perusal of Father Beveridge on Repentance, and Dr. Tillotson on Restitution; for it is not saying, 'Lord! Lord!' will bring us to the Kingdom of Heaven, but doing justice to all our fellow-creatures, and not a poetical imagination that we do so. A serious consideration of these things, and suitable actions, I doubt not, will qualify you to meet me where sorrow shall be no more, which is the highest hope and expectation of yours, etc., Matthew Wesley."

This letter sorely tried Samuel Wesley's patience. His defence is triumphant. He calls it "John O'Styles' Apology against the imputation of his ill-husbandry." The first few words will show how he treated the charges: "When I had read this to my friend John O'Styles, I

was a little surprised that he did not fall into flouncing and bouncing, as I have too often seen him do on far less provocation, which I ascribed to a fit of sickness he had lately, and which I hope may have brought him to something of a better mind. He stood calm and composed for a minute or two, and then desired he might peruse the letter, adding, that if the matter of fact therein were true, and not aggravated or misrepresented, he was obliged in conscience to acknowledge it, and ask pardon, at least of his family, if he could make them no other satisfaction." He gives a careful statement of his income since he went to Oxford. The Epworth living seldom yielded above £160 a year, out of which he allowed £20 to his son-in-law, John Whitelamb. Between 1723-5 the living of Wroot had been joined to that of Epworth, but this had done little more than pay the expense of serving it. The charges to be paid on entering into possession of the living of Epworth were £160; rebuilding the parsonage after the fire in 1709 cost £400; £60 had been spent in a similar way after a former fire. His large family had brought heavy expenses. Eleven children had been born to him at Epworth, and his three sons had received the best education he could get them in England. To all this was to be added £150 which his attendance at Convocation for three years had cost.

The rector's vindication of his husbandry was certainly complete. The years spent at Epworth were full of trouble. His attempt to farm his own land was disastrous. It is hard to say what would have been the fate of the family had it not been for the kindness of Dr. Sharpe, then Archbishop of York. On December 30th, 1700, his letter to this generous friend shows what a struggle his life had been ever since he came to Epworth. But a greater struggle was near. On

June 25th, 1705, he writes to the Archbishop from Lincoln Castle: "Now I am at rest, for I have come to the haven where I've long expected to be." His troubles had reached this unhappy climax through a series of misfortunes—the falling of his barn, the burning of a large part of the parsonage and all his flax. The low price of grain had reduced his income by one half, and the crop of flax, on which he depended for the larger half of his revenue, almost entirely failed. During a contested county election the rector had espoused the unpopular side. He thus made himself obnoxious both to the mob and to influential gentlemen of the opposite political party. His enemies managed to deprive him of the chaplaincy of a regiment, which he had obtained at great expense and trouble. This was the last blow. When he was arrested in his churchyard, he was almost relieved to think that he had drained the dregs of his bitter cup.

Whilst friends bestirred themselves on his behalf, he himself was not idle. He did not despair of doing good. He said it might be that he would do more in his new parish than in his old one. "I have leave," he writes to the Archbishop, "to read prayers every morning and afternoon here in the prison, and to preach once a Sunday, which I choose to do in the afternoon, when there is no sermon at the Minster. And I'm getting acquainted with my brother jailbirds as fast as I can, and shall write to London next post to the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, who, I hope, will send me some books to distribute among them." The calm resignation and faith in God which is evident in his letters show how the rector was supported in his trouble. He lay in Lincoln Castle more than three months. At last, by the exertions of many friends, above all by the generous help of Archbishop Sharpe, he was able to return to Epworth.

The rector was built of sturdy stuff: misfortune had no power to turn him from the path of duty; troubles did not shake his confidence in God. It would be hard to find a finer illustration of his own grand words: "a wise, a brave, and a virtuous man will stand by his principles, as they will stand by him, though the world should be turned topsy-turvy, or even crumbled into atoms."

To the last day of his life Samuel Wesley was a man of unwearying industry. His best qualities lived again in his two noble sons, and made them mighty for their mission as the founders of Methodism.

A striking feature of this time of sorrow is the assured confidence with which the rector leaves all the cares of home and parish in the hands of his wife. When he was hurried to prison he had only about ten shillings in his pocket; his wife had little more at home. As she had nothing else with which to relieve him, she sent her rings, but these he returned to her. She herself has recorded a touching conversation with the Archbishop. "Tell me, Mrs. Wesley," said his Grace, "whether you ever really wanted bread." "My lord," she answered, "I will freely own to your Grace that, strictly speaking, I never did want bread. But then I had so much care to get it before it was eat, and to pay for it after, as has often made it very unpleasant to me. And I think to have bread on such terms is the next degree of wretchedness to having none at all."

How Mrs. Wesley trained her children will be seen in the following chapter. The mother of the Wesleys is recognised, on all hands, as one of the noblest of English wives and mothers. Dr. Adam Clarke said, "I have been acquainted with many pious females; I have read the lives of others; but such a woman, take her for all in all, I have not heard of, I have not read of, nor with her

equal have I been acquainted." Her heroic patience in trouble, her wonderful control and education of her large family, her ripe judgment, and her evangelistic labours, give Susanna Wesley a title to honour such as very few women possess.

CHAPTER II.

EPWORTH, WESTMINSTER, AND CHRIST CHURCH.

Birth of Charles Wesley—Early Training—Life at Westminster School—Visit of Mr. Garret Wesley—Social Surroundings—Enters Christ Church—First Year at Oxford—Becomes Serious—The First Methodists—Bible Studies—Works of Charity—Samuel Wesley's Last Days—Friendship with James Hutton.

ON December 18th, 1707, the struggling parsonage was startled by the premature birth of its eighteenth child. This was Charles Wesley, the poet of the Evangelical Revival. The infant seemed dead rather than alive. It neither cried nor opened its eyes, but was kept wrapped up in wool until the time when it should have been born. Then it opened its eyes and cried. Such is the romance of Charles Wesley's infancy told by Dr. Whitehead, who attended him on his death-bed. Samuel Wesley, the eldest son of the parsonage, was nearly nineteen at the time of his brother's birth; John was four and a half. All the histories and biographies give December, 1708, as the date of Charles Wesley's birth; but Mr. Stevenson, in his "Memorials of the Wesley Family," has pointed out the evident error here. If he was born in December, 1708, Charles Wesley was only seven weeks old when the parsonage was burnt down on February 9th, 1709. Yet his father, in describing that catastrophe to the Duke of Buckingham, says, "I hope

my wife will not miscarry, but God will give me my nineteenth child." This, and the fact that Charles Wesley was born prematurely—so that it would not have been safe for him to sleep with the nurse on the night of the fire, as described in letters written at the time—compel us to seek an earlier date than 1708. His father says that the maid escaped from the fire with a child in her arms that could not "go." This was Charles. If he was born in 1707, he was nearly fourteen months old at this time, and the father's remark becomes natural.

Thomas Jackson gives the date as December, 1708, but says in another place that Charles was somewhat more than thirteen months old at the time of the fire in February, 1709. The circumstances make it almost certain that Charles Wesley was born in 1707. How, then, did the mistake arise? The registers of birth had been destroyed in the fire, so that there was no documentary evidence. Charles Wesley himself makes two references to his age in his journal. On December 18th, 1736, he says, "I began my twenty-seventh year in a murmuring, discontented spirit; reading over and over the third of Job." This would place his birth in 1710. On December 18th, 1749, he writes, "My birthday. Forty years long have I now grieved and tempted God, proved Him, and seen His works." Here the date of birth is 1709. In 1772 he wrote to his brother to make enquiries. John replied, "My sister Kezzy was born about March, 1710; therefore you could not be born later than December 1708; consequently, if you live till December, 1772, you will enter your sixty-fifth year." Charles has added a note, "Or, according to Sister Martha's account, my sixty-second." The family were quite at sea as to the date.

One particular that we have found in the registers of

the Westminster School seems conclusive. The name of Charles Wesley appears among the admissions to St. Peter's College in 1721. His age is given as thirteen. The elections were in April, so that Charles Wesley, if born in 1707, was thirteen on December 18th, 1720. His parents were then living, and the circumstances of his birth must have been fresh in their memory at this early date, so that we may fairly conclude that Charles Wesley was born on December 18th, 1707.

A mistake might easily arise in the date, for it was December 18th, Old Style. Eleven days, added for the change of style, would bring Charles Wesley's birth to the last day of the year but two; 1708 might thus easily be substituted for 1707. We shall therefore probably be correct if we take the date of the poet's birth as December 29th, 1707, New Style.

Charles Wesley's childhood was perhaps the most troubled period the Epworth Parsonage knew. The fire in February, 1709, totally destroyed the house, with its furniture, library, and all the clothes of the family. It cost £400 to build their new home. But thirteen years later Mrs. Wesley says, in a letter to her brother, that it was not half furnished, nor were she and her children half clothed to that very day. If, however, Charles Wesley was familiar with poverty, he enjoyed the best training that even Mrs. Wesley could give. Whilst the parsonage was being rebuilt, her children were received into the homes of various neighbours. This seasonable help had some drawbacks. When all were together again under their own roof, Mrs. Wesley found that her children had caught many bad habits from their companions. She immediately set about a reform.

From this time her training became more thorough. Her children were early taught regularity in sleep and

meals. They were expected to be courteous to the servants and to each other. Above all, they were trained to obey. To conquer a child's will was the cardinal point of Mrs. Wesley's educational system. No time was lost in beginning religious instruction. The children were expected to ask a blessing on their food by signs before they could speak, and were taught to distinguish the Sabbath from other days of the week before they could walk.

School life began with the fifth birthday. Each child was expected to master the alphabet on the first day. All accomplished this feat except two girls, who were thought dull indeed. Mrs. Wesley changed her opinion, however, when she knew other children better. Her style of teaching must, no doubt, be credited with a large share of the success which the three sons of the parsonage won at school and college. Unwearying, clear, and interesting, it was just the teaching for children. After the parsonage was rebuilt, the custom of singing psalms was introduced at the opening and close of school. The children were also divided into pairs, to read together the Psalms for the day, with a chapter in the Old or New Testament. These seasons of retirement were before breakfast and at five o'clock. Nothing seems to have escaped this vigilant mother. She encouraged her children to confess their faults by the promise of forgiveness. By this means she removed many temptations to falsehood. No sign of obedience or desire to please passed unrecognised.

This sketch of the training at Epworth will show how Charles Wesley's childhood was spent. During the first three or four years of his school life he was under the care of his mother, who, according to the testimony of her grandson, Samuel Wesley, the organist, had the happy

talent of teaching all useful knowledge to her children in a way that fixed it indelibly on their memory. Self-restraint, diligence, respect for others, obedience to superiors, were all taught at Epworth. Those lessons Charles Wesley never forgot. For a time he seemed careless about religion, but the seed sown in his heart soon bore fruit in those gatherings at Oxford which won the little company of students the name of Methodists.

Charles Wesley entered Westminster School in 1716. Dr. Busby, the greatest of all its head-masters, died in 1695, after more than fifty-five years' work at Westminster. He had made his school the most famous in England. In Charles Wesley's time there were more than 400 boys, almost equally divided between the upper and under schools; 434 is the highest number ever given in the records. The Rector of Epworth was justified in saying that he had secured for his three sons the best education he could get them in England. Samuel went to Westminster in 1704, and John, in 1714, to the Charterhouse. When Charles entered Westminster, his brother Samuel was usher. Samuel became a King's Scholar in 1707, and was elected to Oxford in 1711. He returned to Westminster as head usher of the school. Samuel Wesley had distinguished himself as a classic, and had won the special regard of Thomas Sprat, Bishop of Rochester and Dean of Westminster, who used to take the promising pupil with him in his carriage when he went to his seat at Bromley, in Kent, so that he might read to him on the way. Atterbury, the Dean of Westminster who succeeded Sprat, was also a warm friend of young Wesley. About a year before Charles came to Westminster, his brother had married the daughter of the Rev. John Berry, who kept a boarding-house for Westminster scholars. An inscription cut on a flagstone

in the south cloister of Westminster Abbey, by order of Dean Stanley, preserves the memory of these days :—

NUTTY, SUSANNA, URSULA, SAMUEL
WESLEY

1725

1726

1727

1731

Infant children of Samuel Wesley, Brother of John Wesley.

His marriage and position enabled Samuel Wesley to offer a home and education to Charles. Samuel seemed in a fair way to realise his cherished ambition, and become head-master of Westminster. When Dr. Freind resigned, the under-master, Dr. Nichol, succeeded him in 1733. Samuel Wesley expected to become second master, but the position was refused him. James Johnson was chosen as under-master. That trouble was far off in the days when the youngest brother came from Epworth.

The old dormitory for the King's Scholars was still standing in Dean's Yard. A row of three houses stretched into the Green opposite the head-master's house. The dormitory, which had been the granary of the monastery, was erected by Abbot Littlington about 1380. It ran across the Green from the archway of Little Dean's Yard, towards the terrace now standing on the south of the enclosure. It was a two-storied building, with a tower at its western end, and with pointed windows. In 1708 an old scholar left £1,000 towards rebuilding this dormitory, which was in a ruinous condition. After long debate, and an appeal to the House of Lords, it was determined to build the new dormitory in the College Gardens. George I. subscribed £1,000, the Prince of Wales £500; Parliament made a grant of £1,200. On April 24th, 1722, the foundation-stone was laid. Charles Wesley had been elected a King's Scholar the previous year, so that he must have followed the

course of these preparations for the new building with all a schoolboy's interest.

From 1716 to 1721 Samuel Wesley provided a home for his youngest brother. In 1719 he writes to their father, "My brother Jack, I can faithfully assure you, gives you no manner of discouragement from breeding your third son a scholar." In 1721 Charles won a place in "St. Peter's College." As a King's Scholar his board and schooling were free. He was only thirteen at the time of his election. His name stands seventh on the list of nine boys admitted that year. Samuel, in 1707, had been sixth on the list. In Mr. Forshall's "Westminster School" there are some particulars which will throw light on the elections of King's Scholars. As early as 1525, Stow gives an account of the Scholastic disputations out of which the "Challenges" seem to have sprung. The honour of being a King's Scholar was much coveted, and became the object of fierce competition. This will be easily understood when it is known that a boy who was elected into "College" could, by ordinary application, make sure of a scholarship at Christ Church, Oxford, or Trinity College, Cambridge. When any one became a candidate, he was said to "stand out for College." Soon after the summer vacation he engaged a "help"—a King's Scholar of the senior or third year. The first three boys in each of these years were in most request. Sometimes a help would take three boys for preparation. The fee was ten guineas, or an equivalent in books. The young coach who managed to get the first place for his candidate received fifteen guineas. Soon after Christmas preparation began. This consisted of some months' severe work, under the most enthusiastic tuition. At half-past six or a quarter to seven every morning the candidate came "up college" to the bedside of his help with his Latin

and Greek grammars. Hundreds of questions and answers upon these were gradually mastered. Some of the rules which had been handed down from generation to generation bore witness to no small ingenuity in puzzling an antagonist.

As the time drew near, preparation filled every leisure moment. The help caned his man if he was idle or did not attend at the appointed time. At last, on the first Monday in Lent, the "Challenges" began. For eight or ten weeks the struggle lasted, both morning and afternoon, on three or four days a week. A hundred Greek epigrams and a book of selections from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* were the only books, but the questions on grammar were such that a challenge between two boys has been known to last from early in the morning till nine at night.

When the head-master finished the Sixth Form lesson, he took his chair and called "Challenge." The two candidates who were lowest on the list placed themselves in front of the table, with their helps seated near the head-master, with grammar and epigram books in hand. Then the boys set questions to each other, their helps interfering whenever there was an opportunity to support their candidates. As the last day drew near the interest increased.

The boy who was then at the head of the list of King's Scholars became during his fourth year in College the captain of the School. Only one circumstance could afterwards rob him of that position. Charles Wesley, as seventh boy, was not entitled to this honour. Nevertheless, in 1725, he was captain of the School. The explanation is, that a boy who was under fourteen when he became a candidate could remain five years instead of four, if the head-master gave his consent. He then

became captain. This arrangement was often a great disappointment to some boy who had looked forward to the honour of being captain, but it encouraged a clever boy to "stand out" early. If Charles Wesley had been first in 1721, he would have been captain in 1724, but as he took his position because of his age, he was captain in 1725.

The captain was the link of communication between masters and boys. He was responsible for order among the scholars on the foundation. It was no small dignity. "To have been Captain of Westminster School," says Mr. Forshall, "confers through life a feeling of pride such as, perhaps, no boy in any other school ever experiences. To have been a Queen's Scholar is no mean honour."

In one accomplishment the future poet was specially distinguished. At this time he is described as exceedingly sprightly and active; very apt to learn, but arch and unlucky, though not ill-natured. He was full of courage, so that he became famous among his schoolfellows in pugilistic encounters. The scene of the fights at Westminster was the Green within the Cloisters, where the shouts of the onlookers sometimes disturbed the services in the Abbey. Charles Wesley won one warm friendship by his bravery. Two years after he reached Westminster a Scotch boy came from the Grammar School at Perth. His strange dialect at first exposed him to no little ridicule. The fact that his ancestors had taken an active part in favour of the Pretender was often used to annoy him. Charles Wesley became the companion of William Murray, and fought many battles for him. In after life, when he had become Chief Justice of England and Earl of Mansfield, he renewed his intimacy with Charles Wesley. The great judge lived in Bloomsbury Square, and would often walk over in an evening to Chester-

field Street, Marylebone, where the Methodist preacher lived.

Whilst Charles Wesley was at Westminster, Garret Wesley, a wealthy Irish gentleman, wrote to the Rector of Epworth, asking whether he had a son named Charles, as he wished to adopt a youth of that name. For several years afterwards he sent money for Charles Wesley's education. Then he seems to have come himself to see the boy whom he wished to make his heir. He asked him whether he would live with him in Ireland. Charles consulted his father, who left him free to make his own choice. When he declined the generous offer, the estates were left to Richard Colley, Esq., another and more distant connection, on condition that he should assume the name of Wesley.

Garret Wesley died in 1728, two years after Charles Wesley entered Oxford. The fortunes of his heir are remarkable. In 1747 he was created Baron Mornington by George II. His son, the Earl of Mornington, himself a talented musician, was a warm friend of Charles Wesley's gifted sons, the great organists. The Duke of Wellington was his third son. His name appeared in the Army List for 1800 as the Hon. Arthur Wesley; next year it was changed to Wellesley, which was probably the original form of the name, from Welswe, near Wells. John Wesley wrote an account of this memorable passage in his brother's early life, in which he calls Charles's loss of fortune "a fair escape."

In 1726 Charles Wesley was elected to Christ Church, Oxford. His name heads the list of five Westminster scholars who entered Oxford University that year; three others were elected to Trinity College, Cambridge. The Fellowships at Trinity were more valuable than the Studentships at Christ Church; but the best Westminster

boys preferred to go to Oxford, so that when Newton, afterwards Bishop of Bristol, asked Dr. Bentley to elect him for Cambridge, it caused some surprise. The boys generally asked him *not* to elect them. Westminster School had long been connected with Christ Church and Trinity. Queen Elizabeth made a statute regulating the election of Queen's Scholars, and the number who should go every year to a college in each of the universities. The association with Oxford and Cambridge of course formed one of the great advantages of a Westminster education. These prizes were reserved for the boys who became Queen's Scholars. The Christ Church Studentships seem to have been worth £100 a year, and were tenable as long as the holder remained unmarried. But they led to other valuable university gifts. The election to the university proceeded by merit. Want of moral character or progress in learning would bar the election of a Queen's Scholar, put him down on the list, or send him to Cambridge instead of Oxford. The representatives of the university seem to have chosen, alternately, first one, then the other. Charles Wesley's position shows what progress he had made at Westminster.

Dr. Byrom gives an interesting account in his journal of the Westminster election on April 27th, 1725. "Dr. Bentley gave me a ticket in the School, and I dined in the hall. I ate some hashed calf's head, pigeon pie, lobster. They were none of them good, nor the wine. Went to a coffee-house after dinner with Ord and Gordon; two dishes, 4d. About five went to the School again. I sat within the bar and heard all the declamations; pretty good verses. Gave my verses about St. George and the Dragon to a lad, that is, Davis did. The subject was, *Ne sit pro teste vetustus*. They took, and the lad had some money given him."

The third name on the list of scholars elected to Christ Church with Charles Wesley in 1726 is that of Richard Robinson, afterwards Primate of Ireland. He was the sixth son of Sir William Robinson, of Rokeby Park, Yorkshire. He became Bishop of Killala in 1751; then he was translated three times, finding his way to the Archbishopric of Armagh in 1765. He died in 1794. His name appears with that of Charles Wesley in the Westminster play for 1725. Terence's "Andria" was acted that year. Wesley was Davus; Robinson, Chremes. The captain had the privilege of escorting the head-master's wife to her seat on play-night, and spoke the prologue. We shall have to refer to a very different scene in which the two friends took part in later life.

Some idea of the high social position of the School may be gained by reference to a few of Charles Wesley's contemporaries at Westminster. Dr. Robert Freind was then head-master. He was appointed under-master in 1699, and became head of the School in 1711. The Court influence of his brother, the famous London physician, Dr. John Freind, who was the medical attendant of Queen Caroline and the Prince of Wales, probably helped the School, but the head-master was himself a man of great social gifts, with numerous friends. Under his rule the School reached its highest prosperity in 1727, when there were 434 scholars, exclusive of those on the foundation. Charles Wesley was in the School in 1723 when, on the day after the physician had been committed to the Tower for alleged complicity in Atterbury's plot, the head-master gave out as a theme for the boys, *Frater ne desere fratrem*, "Brother, forsake not thy brother." The whole of Atterbury's sad history must also have been familiar to him. The great Dean was his brother's warm friend. Samuel Wesley was so faithful to his patron that he lost

his chance of becoming second master. Atterbury endeared himself to the Westminster boys by his unvarying kindness. Through his exertions the Royal Family and the Parliament assisted largely in the building of the new dormitory. Some of the King's Scholars visited him in the Tower to bid him farewell before his exile. As he took leave of them he quoted Milton's words :—

The world is all before me where to choose
My place of rest, and Providence my guide.

Such incidents must have left an abiding impression on Charles Wesley and his contemporaries. At the dinner on Founder's Day, January 15th, 1726-7, the Duke of Devonshire, the Earl of Oxford, Henry Pelham, Henry Pulteney, and Dr. Freind were stewards. All had been educated at the School. Ten lords, six baronets, thirteen honourables are mentioned in the company. We have already referred to Lord Mansfield, the most distinguished of Charles Wesley's schoolfellows. Bishop Newton of Bristol; Andrew Stone, afterwards Under-Secretary of State, Sub-Governor to the Prince of Wales, and Treasurer to the Queen; George Stone, Primate of Ireland; Johnson, Bishop of Worcester; Sir Thomas Clarke, Master of the Rolls, and many others who attained eminence, were his schoolfellows. Bishop Newton entered the School a year after Charles Wesley. His memoirs state that there were more young men who afterwards made a distinguished figure in the world in his time than at any period before or since. This eminent prelate always maintained that the mode of education in St. Peter's College, and the tastes there, were as much superior to that of the "school" at Westminster as that itself was superior to any country school of the time. But it was not merely in methods that the College was superior.

There were so many ingenious spirits among the King's Scholars that they provoked one another to emulation. Stone, Newton, and Johnson each stayed a year longer at Westminster, as Charles Wesley did, to take the position of Captain of the School. The captains for 1721-5 were Stone, Newton, Johnson, Andrewes, Charles Wesley. It was no small honour to stand in such a succession—the future Under-Secretary of State, the Bishops of Bristol and Worcester, the Master of the Free School at Leicester and Rector of St. Nicholas, and the Methodist poet and preacher. Johnson, who was captain in 1723, became Samuel Wesley's successful opponent for the position of second master in 1733. Charles Wesley sometimes met the friends of former days during his itinerant life. In July, 1748, when he preached in the orchard at Bristol, there was a coach with Mrs. Knight, Miss Cheyne, Mr. Edwin, and Sir William Bunbury. "The latter," he says, "challenged me for his old school-fellow in the face of the sun, and was not ashamed to join heartily in our hymns." Next day they attended again whilst the Methodist clergymen spoke on the Good Samaritan. This was on Wednesday. On Thursday he waited on Miss Cheyne, then on Mrs. Knight at the Wells. "Both assented to the truth." "Mrs. Knight," he says, "sent for her brother, my old friend, Robinson of Christ Church. He called me to defend the lay-preachers, and would fain have brought me to confess *we* sent them. I declared the matter of fact that, when God sent any one forth and owned him by repeated conversions, then we durst not reject him. He talked with great candour and remains of his old kindness for me." On October 25th, 1749, he refers again to old Westminster friends: "Among my hearers to-day at Bath were a son of Lord Chief Justice Lee, my old schoolfellow, Sir

Danvers Osborn, and Lord Halifax. They behaved decently, and were particularly taken with the singing."

The nine years which Charles Wesley spent at Westminster laid the foundation of his scholarship. He enjoyed all the advantages which Bishop Newton remembered with such gratitude, and was under the care of his brother Samuel, whose fine scholarship, poetic genius, and Christian feeling made him a fit guide and counsellor for his younger brother. The social advantages of the school were also of no small value to Charles Wesley in after life. In later years he mixed with men and women of high birth and breeding, and was recognised in every circle as a true Christian gentleman.

In 1726 Charles Wesley went up to Christ Church. Oxford was the family university. The great-grandfather, grandfather, father, and three sons all studied there. The three sons of Samuel Wesley all belonged to Christ Church. Dr. William Bradshaw was Dean when Charles Wesley entered. He held that high post from 1724 to 1732, and was also Bishop of Bristol at the same time. On January 17th, 1732, Dr. John Conybeare became his successor. He afterwards received the bishopric which had belonged to three former deans. One reason for this arrangement was that Christ Church was the most expensive deanery, because strangers of distinction generally bore letters of introduction to its Dean, and thus compelled him to entertain them during their stay in Oxford. Bristol was the poorest bishopric. No accurate information as to the scale of allowances for students at the time of Charles Wesley's residence can be obtained. The most favoured students received £30 a year from the corn rents, £5 6s. 8d. for "livery and wages," £15 15s. for rooms, and a very small daily dinner allowance. This was worth more than £50, exclusive of the dinner allowance.

A few months before Charles left Westminster, John Wesley, who had been elected to Christ Church from the Charterhouse, became Fellow of Lincoln. His classical taste and manly character had already won him a high reputation at Oxford. On November 7th he was chosen Greek Lecturer and Moderator of the Classes. He was then twenty-three years old. His reading of Jeremy Taylor, Thomas à Kempis, and William Law had already inspired him with the firm determination to be a Christian indeed. He had separated himself from his light and gay friends, resolved to lead a new life.

This was John Wesley's position when his younger brother came to Oxford. Charles was eager to enjoy his liberty, and anxious to take his fill of university pleasures. He lost the first twelve months at college in "diversions." His brother says, "If I spoke to him about religion, he would warmly answer, 'What, would you have me to be a saint all at once?' and would hear no more."

A letter has been preserved from John Whitelamb, Rector of Wroot, to Charles Wesley, dated September 2nd, 1742.* Whitelamb had married Mary Wesley, one of the Epworth sisters, but she had died in 1834. He asks, "Dear brother, are you in earnest in what you teach? I cannot persuade any of my friends that you are. If you be, give me your prayers. If not, do not, as you have formerly done, ridicule me for being too religious. You little thought, when you laughed at me for being shocked at your gay discourse, that you yourself should come to maintain the very notions which I had then."

Within a few months after Charles came into residence, John Wesley went to assist his father, as Curate of Wroot. Whilst he was in Lincolnshire, Charles was brought to a

* *Arminian Magazine*, 1778, p. 184.

better state of mind. "Diligence," he says, "led me into serious thinking. I went to the weekly sacrament, and persuaded two or three young students to accompany me, and to observe the method of study prescribed by the statutes of the University. This gained me the harmless name of Methodist." He was now anxious for the help which he had formerly refused. In January, 1729, he wrote to John about keeping a diary. He knew that his brother had for some time made a careful record of his daily work, so that he was in a position to advise in this matter. He asks whether he must note in it his thoughts and words as well as his deeds; his progress in learning as well as in religion; and inquires what cipher he must use. "If you would direct me to the same, or like method to your own, I would gladly follow it, for I am fully convinced of the usefulness of such an undertaking. I shall be at a stand till I hear from you."

The next passage is peculiarly interesting. It shows how the two brothers, who were to be associated so closely in after years, were being drawn nearer to one another. Up to this time they had seen comparatively little of each other; henceforth, in Oxford, in Georgia, in London, they were knit together as few brothers have been. "God has thought fit," he wrote, "it may be to increase my wariness, to deny me at present your company and assistance. It is through Him strengthening me I trust to maintain my ground till we meet. And I hope that, neither before nor after that time, I shall relapse into my former state of insensibility. It is through your means, I firmly believe, that God will establish what He has begun in me: and there is no person I would so willingly have to be the instrument of good to me as you. It is owing, in great measure, to somebody's prayers (my mother's, most likely) that I am come to think as I do;

for I cannot tell myself how or when I awoke out of my lethargy—only that it was not long after you went away.”

Charles Wesley was not content with seeking his own blessing. He was made for friendship and for social religion. In May, 1729, he is able to report to John a pleasing instance of success in his work. “A modest, well-disposed young fellow, who lived next door to him, had fallen into vile hands.” He wished to be religious, and yet retain his worldly companions. Charles prevailed upon him to break loose from these evil influences. He assisted him to do this, and also to keep out of the hands of bad companions. He durst not receive the sacrament except at the usual times, for fear of being laughed at; but Charles overcame these fears, and the two friends went together to Communion every week.

John Wesley's return to Oxford was now eagerly anticipated by his brother. “I earnestly long for and desire the blessing God is about to send me in you.” Charles adds that a solemn feeling rested on him that this was his day of grace, and that his condition for eternity would in great measure depend on the use he made of his opportunity.

When John Wesley came into residence in November, 1729, he found a band of students associated with Charles who were known as “Methodists.” There were only three of them, but their seriousness and diligence had already attracted general attention. A student of Charles Wesley's own college happened to say, “Here is a new set of Methodists sprung up.” The quaint name took at once. It was soon in every mouth at Oxford. It was not a new name. It seems to have been first applied to a school of ancient physicians who laid down strict rules for their diet and practice. It appears again and again before it found its most famous application to the

methodical students at Oxford. Robert Wodrow writes on September 16th, 1717, to a correspondent going to Leyden, "I would know the state of doctrine among the professors of Geneva and other Calvinist places in Germany. How far Arminianism is crept in among them, or the opinions of the new Methodists." Charles Wesley, who was best able to explain it, says "that it was bestowed upon himself and his friends because of their strict conformity to the method of study prescribed by the statutes of the University." John Wesley, in the definition given in his English Dictionary, makes excellent use of the word. He says that a Methodist is "one that lives according to the *method* laid down in the Bible." The Oxford Methodists certainly laboured hard to reach that standard.

When John Wesley returned to Oxford, the new movement found a worthy head. The gifts of generalship which were afterwards so conspicuous in the leader of the great Evangelical Revival became visible when he took the oversight of the work so happily begun by his brother. Gambold says that Charles followed John entirely, and that he had never observed in any one a more real deference for another than he constantly had for his brother. The time was ripe for the new movement. Infidelity was gaining such hold in the University that the Vice-Chancellor called the attention of all the tutors to the efforts made by "these wicked advocates for pretended reason against divine revelation." He urged them to explain to their pupils the Articles of Religion, to direct them to frequent and careful reading of the Scriptures and such books as might strengthen their faith and Christian principle. This was precisely what the Wesleys wished to accomplish.

The despised Methodists were soon devoting themselves to their Bible studies with all the ardour that the Vice-

Chancellor could desire. John Wesley, by his position as Fellow of Lincoln, and still more by his own conspicuous gifts, was marked out as the leader, and soon became known as the Curator of the Holy Club. Charles Wesley, now about twenty-two, had taken his Bachelor's degree, and was tutor of his college. Mr. Morgan, Commoner of Christ Church, the son of an Irish gentleman, and Mr. Kirkham, of Merton, made up the first little company of Oxford Methodists. At the beginning they met together every Sunday evening ; then twice a week. Afterwards they spent every evening together from six to nine o'clock. These meetings began with prayer and closed with a quiet supper. The friends studied the Greek Testament and the classics, reviewed the work of the past day, and discussed their plans for the next day. They received the Lord's Supper once a week, fasted twice a week, and used an elaborate system of self-examination. On Sunday evenings they read theology.

The Methodists were soon busy in works of charity. Here Mr. Morgan led the way. He visited the villages near Holt, instructed the children in religious duties, and taught them to pray. He also found his way to the gaol, to see a man who had killed his wife. There he discovered a fine opening for usefulness. He mentioned this so often that, on August 24th, 1730, the two Wesleys went with him to the prison. They were much touched by this visit. Henceforth they resolved to visit the prisoners once or twice a week. Mr. Morgan's zeal thus introduced the Wesleys to a sphere where they afterwards won some of their greatest triumphs. Even in extreme old age Charles Wesley was a constant visitor at Newgate. Few men have been so much blessed in this painful work. Mr. Morgan also took John Wesley to see a sick woman. The Oxford Methodists thus began to devote themselves to

another branch of service in which they reaped much fruit. By great self-denial the friends were able to support poor children at school, and supply the poor with many little comforts.

The Holy Club never gained many adherents. When the Wesleys sailed for Georgia it had fourteen members, three of whom were college tutors. Some pupils of the Wesleys and other serious men from various colleges joined them. George Whitefield, who became a member in 1735, has given a full account of the means by which he found his way among the Oxford Methodists. He had been deeply impressed by reading Law's "Serious Call," and had heard about the Holy Club with great interest before he came to Pembroke College. For twelve months he watched the little company, whom he had long loved in his heart, pass through the jeering crowd to take the sacrament at St. Mary's. He durst not essay to join himself to them. At last the door was opened in a remarkable way. A poor woman in one of the work-houses attempted to commit suicide, but was prevented. Whitefield sent an old apple-woman to tell Charles Wesley, laying her under strict orders not to mention him. The messenger, however, disclosed his name. Charles Wesley had seen Whitefield at the sacrament, and had frequently met him walking alone. He now sent him an invitation to breakfast with him next morning. He soon saw that his guest was longing for spiritual counsel, and, to use Whitefield's own words, "like a wise winner of souls, made all his discourse tend that way." He lent him devotional books, instructed him, and by degrees introduced him to the little society. Whitefield at once began, like them, to make the best use of his time, to attend the weekly sacrament, and to join in all those works of charity to which the Methodists devoted themselves. He

also had to drink of the cup of reproach, but, though this was no small trial, he stood firm, and soon had himself the joy of winning a convert.

A pleasant glimpse of Charles Wesley at Oxford is given by the Rev. John Gambold, afterwards a Moravian bishop, who became acquainted with him in March, 1730, four months after John returned from Wroot. Gambold had been four years at Christ Church, but knew nothing of Charles Wesley's character. One day an old acquaintance entertained him with some reflections on the whimsical Mr. Wesley, his preciseness and pious extravagances. These strictures produced quite a different result from that which was intended. Gambold had just come "from the country, determined to find some pious friends." He went at once to Charles Wesley's room, and desired the benefit of his conversation. From that time hardly a day passed when they were not together. His tribute to his friend shows us how attractive Charles Wesley was in those days. "He was a man made for friendship; who, by his cheerfulness and vivacity, would refresh his friend's heart; with attentive consideration, would enter into and settle all his concerns; so far as he was able, would do anything for him, great or small; and, by a habit of openness and freedom, leave no room for misunderstanding."

Charles Wesley's life already bore promise of the best usefulness. In January, 1730, when he had become a tutor, his father wrote to him, "You are now launched fairly, Charles. Hold up your head, and swim like a man; and when you cuff the wave beneath you, say to it, much as another hero did,

Carolum vehis, et Caroli fortunam.

But always keep your eye fixed above the Pole Star, and so God send you a good voyage through the troublesome

sea of life, which is the hearty prayer of your loving father."

The old rector was spared to watch the course of his two sons at Oxford for five years longer; then he died. They were both at his side. He had been their adviser in the perplexities of their work at Oxford, and had greatly strengthened them by his warm approval of their labour. "I have the highest reason to bless God," he says in one letter, "that He has given me two sons together at Oxford, to whom He has given grace and courage to turn the war against the world and the devil, which is the best way to conquer them." Then again he wrote, "Be never weary of well-doing. Never look back; for you know the prize and the crown are before you. . . . Preserve an equal temper of mind under whatever treatment you meet with from a not very just or well-natured world. Bear no more sail than is necessary, but steer steady." These words show how closely Samuel Wesley was identified with Methodism at Oxford.

On April 25th, 1735, the rector died. For more than two years his strength had been gradually failing. His family watched over him with unceasing devotion, but he was worn out by hard toil and many privations. His two younger sons listened to his dying words of hope and resignation. Charles wrote a full account of the scene to his brother Samuel, then master of Tiverton Grammar School. "You have reason to envy us," he says, "who could attend him in the last stage of his illness. The few words he could utter I saved, and hope never to forget. Some of them were, 'Nothing too much to suffer for heaven. The weaker I am in body, the stronger and more sensible support I feel from God.'" He had entirely conquered the fear of death. So greatly was he sustained by his faith and peace that his family almost hoped that he

would yet recover. He often laid his hand upon Charles's head, and said, "Be steady." "The Christian faith will surely revive in this kingdom. You shall see it, though I shall not." When his youngest son asked him if he did not find himself worse, he replied, "Oh, my Charles, I feel a great deal! God chastens me with strong pain; but I praise Him for it; I thank Him for it; I love Him for it."

Such words were the legacy of the dying man to his children. He was buried very frugally, yet decently, in the churchyard, according to his own desire. The words on his tomb,

AS HE LIV'D SO HE DIED,
IN THE TRUE CATHOLIC FAITH
OF THE HOLY TRINITY IN UNITY,
AND THAT JESUS CHRIST IS GOD INCARNATE :
AND THE ONLY SAVIOUR OF MANKIND
Acts iv. 12

were said to be written by his wife; but Charles Wesley's hymn, "Hail, the incarnate Deity," seems to show that he had a share in the epitaph. The rector left debts of more than £100. One creditor seized the live stock, and it needed all John's skill to wind up his father's affairs. Mrs. Wesley went to live for a while with her daughter Emily, at Gainsborough. She had the interest of £1,000 left her for life by her brother's widow, so that she was not without some provision for her last days.

The academic life of John and Charles Wesley closed soon after their father's death. One of the last friendships formed at Oxford deserves record, because it forms the introduction to other days and other scenes. Not long before the Wesleys determined to go to Georgia, young James Hutton, who had been educated at Westminster, visited some of his old schoolfellows at Oxford. Here he met Charles Wesley, who introduced him, as

he had formerly introduced Gambold, to his brother. James Hutton invited the Wesleys to visit his father's house when they came to London. An acquaintance was thus formed which soon ripened into the closest friendship. When John Wesley came to Westminster, both James Hutton and his sister were thoroughly awakened under a sermon that he preached. James Hutton greatly desired to accompany the brothers on their mission, but the claims of business would not allow him to leave London. He had been apprenticed to Mr. William Innys, the bookseller, at the west end of St. Paul's Churchyard, and afterwards set up in business for himself near Temple Bar.

CHAPTER III.

MISSION TO GEORGIA.

The Colony and its Governor—Life on Board Ship—Work among the Colonists—Trouble and Privation—Returns to England—A Trying Voyage.

WITHIN six months after their father's death John and Charles Wesley were on board the *Simmonds*, on their way to Georgia. The new colony to which the Wesleys were bound had been formed by royal charter in 1732 as an outlet for poor debtors from the mother country. They were to be assisted by a free passage and grant of land. The little settlement lay between the river Savannah and the Alatomaha, with a coast line sixty to seventy miles in extent. It was called Georgia in honour of George II. Trustees were appointed to apportion the Parliamentary grant and administer the affairs of the colony.

Colonel, afterwards General Oglethorpe, was the first governor. The colony owed its origin to him. As a member of Parliament he obtained a committee to inquire into the case of those who were imprisoned for debt. A large number were thus set at liberty. His care for them extended still further. He was bent on finding a new home for these unfortunate people, where they might start life afresh with happier prospects. The land was

granted. Parliament voted £10,000, the Bank of England subscribed £10,000, subscriptions poured in which raised the amount to £36,000.

On February 1st, 1733, the first company of settlers, composed of debtors and other poor people, reached their new home. There were forty families, numbering about a hundred and twenty persons. After fifteen months hard work, devoted to the allotment of land and the building and fortification of the new settlement, Oglethorpe returned to England. A month before he left America he had welcomed a party of German exiles to his colony. Twenty-three thousand Protestants had recently been expelled from Saltzburg through Papist persecution. Prussia offered an asylum for many. England did her share by sending a large company of them to Georgia, where they arrived in March, 1734. A month later the governor returned to England with a report of the work, which called forth fresh interest in his scheme.

The Rector of Epworth had earnestly hoped that John Wesley would be his successor there. That prospect did not tempt the Fellow of Lincoln. He rightly thought that he could do more good at Oxford than in a country parish. Soon after his father's death, John Wesley was urged to go to Georgia as a missionary to the Indians. When he consented, and Charles resolved to accompany him, Samuel Wesley strenuously opposed his youngest brother's intention; but Charles was firm. He became secretary to General Oglethorpe, the Governor of the new colony, and also Secretary for Indian affairs. He dreaded the idea of taking orders; but Dr. Burton, Fellow of Corpus Christi College, one of the trustees of the colony, urged him to seek ordination before he left England. John Wesley at last overcame his brother's scruples. Dr. Potter, Bishop of Oxford, ordained him deacon;

Dr. Gibson, of London, admitted him to priest's orders on the following Sunday.

The brothers were drawn to this work by its very hardships. So far as comfort and advancement was concerned, they had everything to lose by leaving Oxford, but they were determined to work out their own salvation. For this the mission to Georgia seemed to offer many opportunities. Benjamin Ingham, a devoted young Yorkshireman, who had been one of the Oxford Methodists, went with them. Charles Delamotte, the son of a prosperous London merchant and magistrate, who had formed the most ardent attachment for Mr. Wesley, and would not be separated from him, also cast in his lot with the Wesleys. The four friends, accompanied by Mr. Burton (one of the trustees), Mr. Charles Morgan, brother of their old Oxford friend, and Mr. James Hutton, took boat from Westminster on October 14th, 1735, for Gravesend, which they reached about four in the afternoon. They immediately went on board the *Simmonds*. She did not leave Gravesend till the 22nd; contrary winds delayed her at Cowes until December 10th. Their manner of life was as methodical as at the University. From four to five every morning was given to private prayer; then for two hours the four friends read the Bible together, and compared it with the Fathers. Breakfast and public prayers filled up two more hours. From nine to twelve Charles Wesley wrote sermons, whilst John studied German, and Delamotte read Greek. Meanwhile, Ingham was busily teaching the children of the emigrants. All the day was carefully mapped out till nine or ten, when they retired to rest.

Charles Wesley, having just been ordained, made diligent preparation for his future ministry. Whilst the vessel was detained at Cowes he preached three or four

times in the parish church, at the request of the clergyman, who was a friend of his.* He also read to a number of people in an old woman's house, and distributed some books among them before the vessel sailed. Samuel Wesley, who was still opposed to his younger brother's mission to Georgia, hoped Charles would be convinced by the success he had at Cowes, where great crowds attended the church, that he had no need to go all the way to Georgia to convert sinners.

On Monday, November 3rd, the four friends took a walk into the island, where they agreed to three resolutions, binding themselves to consult each other in all matters of importance, to give up their own judgment where it was opposed to that of the rest, and in case of equality to decide the matter by lot. Mr. Oglethorpe, wishing them to be disturbed as little as possible, assigned the party two cabins in the forecastle. Ingham and Delamotte had one, the two brothers had another, which was "pretty large," says Ingham, "so that we could all meet together to read or pray in it."

The emigrants sailed in two vessels, which were under the escort of a man-of-war. About one hundred were on board the *Simmonds*, including twenty-six Moravians, who were going to the colony with their bishop. The voyage was very rough. Three or four heavy storms burst upon the vessel, and sometimes the passengers were in great peril. But amid all the howling of the tempest, and even when the sea broke over the vessel as though it would swallow it up, the Moravians sang on unmoved. The contrast between them and the screaming

* The volume of Sermons published by Mrs. Charles Wesley, in 1816, contains sermons preached at Cowes, Frederica, and on board the *Simmonds* and the *London Galley*.

English passengers taught the brothers to admire the sublime trust in God of the pious Germans.

On February 5th, 1736, the *Simmonds* sailed into the Savannah River. It was Thursday, between two and three in the afternoon. She cast anchor near Tybee Island. Groves of pines running along its shore seemed to give the bloom of spring in the depth of winter. Next morning, at eight o'clock, the little party first set foot on American ground. They had not yet reached the town of Savannah. The landing point was a small uninhabited island, where all knelt down to thank God for their safety. Mr. Oglethorpe then hastened on to the settlement; the rest of the company gathered together for morning prayer.

Charles Wesley spent nearly a month with his brother in Savannah. Neither of them was able to enter on his ministry till March. The first month passed quietly. One day they took boat and visited the Indian settlement. On Tuesday, March 9th, Charles Wesley reached St. Simon's Island—a hundred miles south of Savannah. The island was twenty miles long, from two to five broad. Here, at Frederica, the governor had fixed his quarters. There was no town as yet, but the settlers were busy laying it out and building houses. Charles was his secretary, and he also had spiritual charge of the people. As the young clergyman landed, he received a Yorkshire welcome from his friend Ingham. But the news Ingham had to give was ominous. The people had bitterly resented his protest against their open Sabbath-breaking. At first all was bright for Charles Wesley; the people seemed overjoyed to see him. Mr. Oglethorpe especially received him with great kindness.

The new pastor lost no time. He landed at three in the afternoon. His spirit revived as he set foot on the

island. "No sooner," he says, "did I enter upon my ministry than God gave me, like Saul, another heart." The same day he visited his parishioners, and at seven read prayers in the open air. The governor was present. Next morning, between five and six, in a shower of rain, he read some short prayers to a handful of parishioners, who met by the fire in front of Mr. Oglethorpe's tent. He entered on his work with a heavy sense of responsibility. After speaking of his parishioners, he adds, "With what trembling ought I to call them mine!" All was in its infancy at Frederica. The governor and people lived in tents. Services were conducted in the open air or in the storehouse. The worshippers were called together by beat of drum. Four services a day were now arranged. Brief prayers were read to the men before they went to work; about ten o'clock the full service was read to about a dozen women of the place. The chaplain often gave an exposition of one of the lessons at morning or evening prayer.

Charles Wesley threw himself into his work with his wonted ardour. But no period of his history was so painful as the first two months of his life at Frederica. Few attended service at all; a very small number came to the Lord's Supper. Very soon those who were living in open sin began to lay schemes for the ruin of their faithful reprove. Charles Wesley had sharply reprove their vices, and denounced the pleasures of the world as vain and sinful. Such sermons were not likely to be acceptable at Frederica. The preacher had not yet learned the way of faith. His teaching, like his experience, was leavened by a spirit of formalism and hardness which must have repelled all save those who were as earnest and devoted as himself. He was a stiff Churchman, and baptized one child by trine immersion before a large congregation.

His troubles soon began. He landed at Frederica on Tuesday. On Thursday Mr. Oglethorpe spoke harshly to him when he asked for something for a poor woman. In less than a fortnight, he says, "I was enabled to pray earnestly for my enemies, particularly Mr. Oglethorpe, whom I now looked upon as the chief of them." The governor's temper was naturally hasty; but the root of the mischief, as Charles Wesley's shorthand notes show, was an infamous plot formed by two women, to alienate Oglethorpe and the Wesleys. These women whispered lying slanders into the ears of the two friends, and even accused themselves of adultery to gain their vile purpose. Instead of trying to come to some explanation, Oglethorpe began to treat Charles Wesley with such harshness and suspicion that life became a burden to the sensitive young minister. The people seeing the governor's feeling, began to imitate his conduct. Once, as Charles Wesley was in his favourite "myrtle-walk" in the woods, a gun was fired from the bushes. He had barely turned from the spot when the shot whizzed through. At the very moment he was saying, "I will thank Thee, for Thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation."

He endured great privations. For three weeks he slept every night on the ground in a corner of a hut. He tried to get some boards to lie upon, but found that they could be given to every one except himself. Knowing that he was to live with Mr. Oglethorpe, he had brought nothing from England except his clothes and books. When he wanted a tea-kettle, however, the servant told him that the governor had given orders that no one should use any of his things. Charles said that he supposed this order did not extend to him. "Yes, sir," said the maid; "you was excepted by name." Even the servant who used to wash his linen sent it back unwashed, because he had lost

favour in the governor's eyes. The Oxford Methodist was no stranger to such trouble. "I sometimes pitied," he says, "and sometimes diverted myself, with the odd expressions of their contempt; but found the benefit of having undergone a much lower degree of obloquy at Oxford."

Exposure and hardship brought on an attack of fever, which was soon followed by the bloody flux from which others were suffering. Charles Wesley had escaped this hitherto by his vegetable diet. He managed at last to get the bed on which a poor scout-boat man, who was injured through the bursting of a cannon, had died. Two days later Mr. Oglethorpe gave this bed away from under him; he would not even allow one of the carpenters to mend another for him. "Mr. Davison," he said, "my Good Samaritan, would often call, or send his wife to tend me; and to their care, under God, I owe my life." The arrival of John Wesley from Savannah, on April 10th, changed the aspect of affairs. A fortnight before, Charles had sent his friend Ingham to explain the situation at Frederica. John set out at once; but adverse winds made the voyage stretch out to six days. Charles began to gain strength as soon as his brother came. Before they could speak in private, John had to help him into the woods; "for there was no talking among a people of spies and ruffians; nor even in the woods, unless in an unknown tongue."

This visit restored friendly relations between the governor and his secretary. The breach had been a sore trial to Charles Wesley, and had well-nigh cost him his life. A week after John had returned to Savannah, the governor's old love and confidence in his secretary were restored. He promised to have a house built for him immediately, and ordered him whatever he wanted. During the anxious weeks that followed, the little settle-

ment was in constant fear of an attack from the Spaniards; but Oglethorpe's prudence and promptness averted this peril.

Charles Wesley's prospects had now become brighter. There was some promise of success. His health was restored; his personal comfort provided for. But he was not to stay in Frederica. About two months after his arrival he returned to Savannah, where the Indian traders were coming to take out licences. "I was overjoyed," he says, "at my deliverance out of this furnace, and not a little ashamed of myself for being so." He had no idea that the deliverance was to be so complete. From Savannah he was sent with despatches to England, and never again crossed the Atlantic.

But we are anticipating. Charles Wesley reached Savannah late on Sunday, May 16th. No one expected him. Ingham, Delamotte, and his brother expressed no little surprise when he walked in. All the arrangements were primitive enough. "We each retired to his respective corner of the room, where, without the help of a bed, we slept soundly till the morning." On Wednesday John Wesley started for Frederica; Charles took charge of the work at Savannah. His time was spent in visiting his parishioners and in studying the lessons for the day—no light task, as he generally expounded them morning and evening to one hundred hearers. The intervals of leisure were spent with his friends. When Mr. Oglethorpe arrived, less congenial duties were added. One of the first entries in his journal at Frederica is a lament over his distasteful duties. "I was wholly spent in writing letters for Mr. Oglethorpe. I would not spend six days more in the same manner for all Georgia." He attended the court over which Mr. Oglethorpe presided, spent many days in drawing up bonds, affidavits, licences, and

instructions for the traders, and in the evening wrote letters for the governor. They seldom gave up work before midnight. On July 25th he resigned his position as secretary. He was entrusted with despatches for the Georgia trustees in England.

By his resignation, Charles Wesley gave up, as he says, his salary and certain hope of preferment. But no one who reads the history of his work in Georgia can regret the resolution at which he had arrived. His character passed triumphantly through the severe trial, but nothing was to be gained by further endurance of it. His experience in Georgia was of great value to him at home; but the position of private secretary to the governor of a little settlement was no fit post for such a man as Charles Wesley.

He landed in America on February 6th, 1736, and sailed for England on July 26th. A third of the time had been spent in Frederica, the rest at Savannah. When he started for Charlestown, whence he was to take ship for England, he says he was surprised that he felt no more joy in leaving such a scene of sorrows. John Wesley accompanied his brother to Charlestown, where they spent five days together. Then John returned to his post, whilst Charles waited for his ship. The horrors of slavery moved him deeply. His soul was stirred within him as he listened to the shocking instances of diabolical cruelty which these men (as they called themselves) daily practised upon their fellow-creatures, and that on the most trivial occasions. The penalty for killing a slave was only £7. Half of that amount was usually saved by the criminal informing against himself. His journal recounts some instances of the fiendish spirit of the slave-owners which more than justify his words.

On August 11th he went on board his vessel with

Mr. Appee, a young Dutch gentleman of engaging manners, who was returning to Holland to look after his property. He had generally taken breakfast and supper with the Wesleys in Savannah, where he professed to be an earnest seeker of religion, and Charles had even urged him to accept his own position as secretary to the governor. He expected great comfort from his company during the voyage, but within a week Appee had laid aside his mask. It was soon evident that he was a knave, a liar, and a hypocrite, who despised those generous friends who had too readily believed in his sincerity. He even accused them of pride and self-seeking. It was afterwards found that he had gambled away an estate given him by his father. When he reached London he was imprisoned in Newgate for the passage money of which he tried to defraud the captain. Then he stole a watch, and escaped to Paris. Charles Wesley saw him for the last time in 1744, when he lay in the Tower under sentence of transportation.

The conduct of Appee was peculiarly distressing. The master of the vessel had let Charles Wesley's cabin to some one else, so that his only bed was a chest, on which he threw himself in his boots. "The captain was," he says, "the most beastly man I ever saw ; a lewd, drunken, quarrelsome fool ; praying, and yet swearing continually. The first sight I had of him was upon the cabin floor, stark naked, and dead drunk." For six weeks Charles Wesley lived in this vessel. The captain, in his drunken fits, interfered with the orders of his officers. Several times he brought the lives of all on board into the gravest peril. He let fly the mainsail when the vessel struck on the bar in leaving Charlestown, so that the mate said it was a thousand to one that she had not been lost by the captain's folly and ignorance. He also interfered with the

management of the vessel in some heavy squalls, so that it was a mercy' all were not lost. Two of the twelve sailors were obliged to be at the pumps every half-hour. Charles Wesley did not think that it would be possible for them to reach England in the ship. He sharply reproved the captain for his lewd conversation. This, however, only increased the mischief. He told the young clergyman that he was "drunk, mad, an emissary, a Jesuit, a devil," but he received no answer. Charles Wesley simply talked Latin and Greek to another passenger.

It was no small relief when they arrived at Boston. After a month's stay, he sailed again in the *Hannah*, Captain Corney.*

The greatest kindness was shown him in Boston. He preached there, and enjoyed much pleasant intercourse with many friends. But the sickness from which he had suffered at Frederica returned with great violence. It seemed as if he could not possibly pursue his voyage. He tried every means. "I vomited, purged, bled, sweated, and took laudanum, which entirely drained me of the little

* Mr. Jackson says, in his "Life of Charles Wesley," that he refused to re-embark if the ship were still under command of Captain Indivine, and that another master, Captain Corney, was obtained; but Dr. Whitehead quotes from Charles's correspondence with his brother. In one letter he says that he has to pay a second time for the passage, and at last reports that he is on board the *Hannah*, Captain Corney. His friends wished him not to sail in this vessel, because she was very leaky, and had such a bad captain; but he felt bound to use every effort to reach England as soon as possible. His memory of danger and deliverance is still enshrined in his verse published in 1740:

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

strength I had left." Dr. Graves came over from Charlestown to see him, and would take no fee. Other medical men showed him similar kindness. At last, on October 25th, he was able to go on board the ship for England.

Their voyage was a series of storms. Three days after they left Boston the sea washed away the sheep and half the pigs. Most of the fowls were drowned. The water streamed in at the sides of the ship, so that it was as much as four men could do, by constant pumping, to keep her afloat. The captain cut down the mizen-mast to lighten his vessel. It was a wonder to all that they kept afloat, for the captain stopped several openings in the sides of the ship wide enough to lay his fingers in. After many dangers, they arrived off Deal on Thursday, December 2nd, 1736. At six o'clock next morning the pilot came on board. The sea was so rough that the passengers got into his boat with no small difficulty. When at last they reached the shore, Charles Wesley says, "I knelt down and blessed the Hand that had conducted me through such inextricable mazes; and desired I might give up my country again to God, when He should require." Before eleven o'clock the party started for London in a coach. They slept at Sittingbourne. By six o'clock on Saturday evening they were in London. Here Mr. Wesley took coach for Charles Rivington's. "My namesake," he says, "was much rejoiced to see me, and gave me great cause of rejoicing by his account of our Oxford friends." This Mr. Rivington, the bookseller of St. Paul's Churchyard, was a warm friend of the Wesleys. He had published their father's work on Job, and his beautiful letter of "Advice to a Young Clergyman," besides John Wesley's edition of à Kempis, and his sermon on the "Trouble and Rest of Good Men."

CHAPTER IV.

EVANGELICAL CONVERSION AND LABOURS.

Meets his Friends—Interview with Count Zinzendorf—Journals of Dr. Byrom—Influence of William Law—Charles Wesley's Friends—Stopped by a Highwayman—Return of John Wesley from Georgia—Letter from Dr. Byrom—Introduction to Peter Böhler—Mr. Bray the Brazier—Evangelical Conversion—Labour among his Friends—Visits to Newgate—Becomes Curate at Islington.

CHARLES WESLEY reached London on Saturday night. Next morning he received the sacrament at St. Paul's, to his great comfort. After service he called upon his friends in London. The entries in the journal show in what respect and affection he was held. Two of Mr. Oglethorpe's special supporters urged the young clergyman to make their house his home. From them he learnt that the governor was expected from Georgia daily. "Good old Sir John Philips," of Picton Castle, whom he waited upon on the first Sunday, gave him a most blessed account of the Methodists at the University. They had increased in zeal and in numbers. Sir John was a faithful supporter of the Oxford Methodists. When some one spoke to him of Whitefield's zeal, he generously sent word that he would allow him £30 a year if he would continue at Oxford. By this means George Whitefield was able to minister to the prisoners, who had lost the Wesleys' help, and also to labour among the undergraduates at the University. His testimony to Sir John is worth quoting: "He is very much



REV. CHARLES WESLEY.

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From a painting by Hudson.

in our interest, and a blessed instrument of supplying our wants, and of encouraging us in our weak endeavours to promote the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." After this tribute it is easy to understand the gratitude with which the first Oxford Methodist must have listened to their generous friend's report of the work at the University.

At last young Hutton, who had traced his friend thither, entered the house of Mr. Vernon, where Charles Wesley had come to deliver his letters. Hutton took his friend home with him at once. His father lived in College Street, Westminster, next door to the house in which Samuel Wesley had lived whilst he was usher at the school. Mr. Hutton's house became a London home for the brothers. He was an ordained clergyman, who had resigned his position because he could not take the oaths on the accession of George I. He afterwards took Westminster scholars as boarders; and his wife also received some lady boarders. At his house one of the religious societies of the time assembled. Its members had become formal and dead; but when John Wesley came up from Oxford, his sermon on "One thing is needful" led, as we have already stated, to the conversion of Mr. Hutton's son, who had been "very wild," and his daughter. Henceforth the Society had fresh vigour, and met regularly every Sunday evening. James Hutton was only twenty-one. Charles Wesley found a hearty welcome. "My reception was such as I expected from a family that entirely loved me, but had given me over for dead, and bewailed me as their own child."

He was welcomed in all circles. The general interest taken in the settlement in Georgia had been increased by the perusal of their journals. John Wesley's manuscript was "in every one's hands," and "Mr. Ingham's magnifi-

cent journal" had, Charles Wesley says, won him many admirers. Much of his time during these first weeks was spent in interviews with distinguished people, who were anxious to know about the colony. The Bishop of London asked him "abundance of curious questions"; Lord Egmont sent for him to hear of the points in dispute between Georgia and Carolina. He had also a long conference with Lord Fitzwalter. Wherever he went, he was surrounded by listeners. On Sunday evening, December 12th, he reports that "a multitude came and went; most to inquire of their friends or relations in Georgia. I sent them away advocates for the colony."

The first two months after his return were spent in London. The motion of the coaches brought on the painful and exhausting illness from which he had suffered so much in America. He was not able to preach, nor to talk much to his friends. His desire to see them, and to arrange important business with the trustees for Georgia, made him somewhat careless of his health. His medical man expostulated with him earnestly. He told him that if he had not had an iron constitution he could not have held out so long.

Mr. Oglethorpe reached England in the beginning of January. Charles Wesley had seen the trustees and delivered his papers into their hands. He now had many consultations with the governor. One incident is worth noting. It is a fair instance of the candour and directness which were characteristic of Charles Wesley. "Oglethorpe," he says, "told me he had read my journal, which was writ with a great deal of spirit. I replied, all I could answer for was, that it was writ with a great deal of truth."

On January 19th, 1737, Count Zinzendorf, who had just arrived from Germany, to consult the leaders of the

Church of England as to the validity of episcopal ordination among the Moravians, sent for Charles Wesley. He had heard of the interest he and his brother had shown in the Moravian settlers of Georgia. He received Charles with all possible affection, and made him promise to call every day. Charles became a frequent visitor at the Count's. His friendship with Dr. Secker, Bishop of Oxford, helped him to render some service to Zinzendorf in the business which had brought him to England. One of the Moravian services which he attended specially impressed him. He thought himself in a choir of angels. He was introduced to the Countess, a woman of great seriousness and sweetness. Zinzendorf urged him to go with him to Germany. This Charles Wesley was quite ready to do, but circumstances would not permit him to take such a journey.

On Tuesday, February 8th, 1737, Charles Wesley was again in Oxford. He lodged with his friend Mr. Sarney. The same evening he met the Oxford Methodists, whom he encouraged by the example of Zinzendorf and the Moravians. He found Mr. Kinchin, Rector of Dunmer and Fellow of Corpus Christi College, changed into a courageous soldier of Christ. Charles Wesley read his brother's journal to the little company. It must have been a happy reunion. The faithful band at the University had carried on their labours of love. Charles had been in many perils from tempest, from disease, and from the malice of wicked men; yet he had returned in peace.

Next day he attended Convocation on the business which had brought him to Oxford, to vote for Mr. Bromley, the old Member for the University. After this election had been carried, he visited the prisoners at the Castle. The evening was again spent in mutual exhortation. The rest of the week passed in the same pleasant way. He

visited his old college friends, confirming or exhorting as he saw need. He paid his respects to Dr. Conybeare, the dean of his college, who had published, five years before, his famous reply to Tindal's "Christianity as old as the Creation." "The dean," he says, "met me with a sharp expostulation for voting against him (as he called it). In an hour we came to a right understanding, and parted friends." The rector of his brother's college gave him a very affectionate welcome.

After a week in London he set out for Tiverton. Up to this time the journal mentions no visit to any member of his family save his uncle Matthew, the surgeon. He had spent an hour with him, "equally welcome and unexpected," on the Monday after his return from Georgia. A fortnight later he dined there. His uncle, who had once insulted Oglethorpe before the Wesleys sailed with him, bestowed abundance of wit on John Wesley and his apostolical work in Georgia. Charles says, "He told me the French, if they had any remarkably dull fellow among them, sent him to convert the Indians. I checked his eloquence by those lines of my brother :

To distant realms the apostle need not roam,
Darkness, alas ! and heathens are at home.

He made no reply ; and I heard no more of my brother's apostleship."

On the way to Tiverton Charles Wesley spent a week with his brother-in-law, Mr. Hall, then Curate of Wootton, near Marlborough.* Here he found his sisters Patty (Mrs. Hall) and Kezia. At Tiverton he received a warm welcome from his brother and from Mrs. Samuel Wesley. At last he had the joy of seeing his mother again. Six

* Mr. Hall afterwards removed to Fisherton, a village near Salisbury.

days later he set out for London. His journal illustrates the perils of travelling in those days. The Marlborough coach, by which he returned, had been robbed, morning and evening, for four days before. The fifth morning the passengers were unmolested, but scarcely was Charles Wesley in town before the robbers were at work again. Such a state of things shows both the boldness of the highwaymen and the strangely defenceless state of travellers on one of the great highways of England.

At this point the journals of Dr. Byrom furnish many pleasing details. On March 31st, 1737, he followed General Oglethorpe, who was leaving the Pennsylvania Coffee House, and asked him about Charles Wesley, "who," he said, "was in the country somewhere. Mr. Rivington's son told me when I inquired that he was gone to Tiverton." On April 22nd he called again at Rivington's to inquire after Charles Wesley, and learned that he would be in town soon. They met on June 10th, when Charles Wesley told him that Benjamin Ingham, the friend and companion of the Wesleys in Georgia, "had applied the universal alphabet, which I had given to his brother when he was at Manchester, to the Indian language; it did very well for all its letters and sounds." Charles Wesley also said "that he had several books of shorthand, which had been of great use to him in America." That afternoon the friends had tea together at Byrom's lodgings. Oglethorpe, Charles Wesley said, would not allow St. Paul's remarks about celibacy "to be as much as a permission, and Charles himself talked, I thought, prettily at last."

From this time they met frequently. We find Byrom waiting for Charles Wesley at Tom's Coffee House. On July 2nd, 1737, Charles Wesley called as Byrom was shaving, and brought two letters about the mystics, one

from his brother John in Georgia, the other an answer to it from Samuel Wesley at Tiverton. This was a dangerous subject. Byrom thought that "neither of the brothers had any apprehension of mystics, if I had myself, which query ; but if I have I find it necessary to be very cautious how one talks of deep matters to everybody." He also notes that Charles Wesley criticised Law's statement that there is no command for public worship in Scripture. Byrom himself inclines to Law's side : "I believe that Mr. Law had given his brother, or him, or both, very good and strong advice, which they had strained to a meaning different to his." But if they differed as to Law and the mystics, shorthand was a great bond between them. Charles Wesley had first learned Weston's system, and was going to teach a Mr. Hooke, a clergyman in Hertfordshire. He writes to Byrom on September 25th, 1737, "An uninterrupted hurry has prevented my writing sooner. I am now forced to borrow a piece of Sunday. Next week I return to Oxford." Byrom was thinking of printing a book on shorthand, and Charles Wesley was eager to help. "By your leave and written communication, I would immediately begin to take subscriptions."

The second half of the year 1737 was passed principally in London and Oxford. He was waiting till arrangements were complete for his return to Georgia. He would not consent to resume his work as secretary, but wished to be simply a missionary in the colony. During the year he gave evidence before the Board of Trade on the questions in dispute between Carolina and Georgia. His brother Samuel spent three weeks in London. They waited upon the archbishop, who received them very kindly. On another occasion they dined at Lord Oxford's. In August Charles had the honour of presenting an address from Oxford University to the King at Hampton Court. Here

he met the archbishop. He says, "We both kissed their Majesties' hands, and were invited to dinner. The next day we waited upon His Royal Highness, and dined all together at St. James's."

Several visits were paid to Oxford, where he found the prisoners very attentive. Once he had threescore communicants at the Castle. The pages of his journal show that he carried a blessing with him into the homes of all his friends. Law was still his favourite devotional writer. At Mrs. Benson's, of Cheshunt Nunnery, where he was a frequent visitor, he usually spent the evening in reading Law's books to the family. He had two interviews with Law at Putney. The sum of the advice he received was, "Renounce yourself, and be not impatient." At the second visit Law answered his questions, but evidently felt unable to satisfy his inquirer. When Charles asked if he might write, Law replied, "Nothing I can either speak or write will do you any good." This was not encouraging. Law's work for the brothers was now nearly done. Charles Wesley used to say, even in old age, "Mr. Law was our John the Baptist." His solemn appeals led them to seek a life of devotion to God. But Law's influence would never have made the Wesleys the leaders of a great religious movement. "It cannot be doubted," says a competent critic,* "by any one who looks into the subject, that if Wesley had continued to be a disciple of William Law, the Evangelical Revival, so far as it depended on Wesley, would never have existed. When Wesley broke from Law, he struck on the way of salvation." We are anticipating, however. At this time he recommended Mr. Law's writings as a guide for all inquirers. His youngest sister was seeking

* Dr. Robertson Nicoll, *British Weekly*, July 8th, 1897.

Christ. Charles read to her Law's account of redemption, and prayed frequently with her. He was much encouraged by the seriousness of the Delamottes, of Blendon. Mr. Delamotte was the Middlesex magistrate whose son went to Georgia with John Wesley. His mother was afraid that Charles Wesley's religious views would make one of her daughters "run mad." She therefore sent her to London when he had arranged to come to Blendon. Charles happened, however, to call at the house to which the young lady had been exiled. The mother's plot thus secured him some hours' close and serious conversation with the daughter. Mrs. Delamotte was greatly moved by a sermon which he preached at Bexley on the love of God. She afterwards joined in conversation on the subject. From that time her behaviour towards Charles Wesley was quite altered. "Good old Mr. Delamotte" confessed that there could be no happiness in anything save the love of God. Next day, Charles Wesley adds, "Little Molly burst into tears upon my telling her God loved her. The whole family now appear not far from the kingdom of God."

Charles Wesley had not yet found the way of faith, but he was a true seeker after God. He took his friends to hear Mr. Whitefield, who was already so popular that the churches would not hold the multitudes that thronged to hear him. At Oxford, where he was staying when he heard that he must sail for Georgia in a fortnight, Charles tried to pledge the serious inquirers to meet as the Holy Club had done whilst he was at the University. He carefully sought out any whom he had reason to hope that he might help. Mr. Charles Graves, one of his friends, had been carried off by his family, who thought him "stark mad" because he was in earnest about his salvation. The young collegian returned to Oxford

unshaken by this treatment. Charles Wesley went to his brother's rooms, and talked over the matter till Mr. Richard Graves was entirely satisfied. His explanation of true religion was a home-thrust for this opposer: "No other than what you once laboured after, till the gentleman swallowed up the Christian." The interview was very affecting. The young clergyman says, "I earnestly recommended Law, and daily retirement, as my last legacy."

Whilst riding back to London he fell into the hands of a highwayman. When he had gone a mile his horse fell lame. He sang the ninety-first Psalm, and "put himself under divine protection." Just then a man came up to him on Shotover Hill, and demanded his money. The robber showed his pistol, so that Charles Wesley could do nothing but hand over his purse, which contained thirty shillings. When the man asked, "Have you no more?" he answered, "I will see," and drew out some coppers. The robber repeated his question. Charles had £30 in a private pocket. He told the man to search for himself. Happily he refused. Charles Wesley had to dismount, but begged so hard for his horse that he was allowed to keep it, after promising that he would make no attempt to pursue the robber. He saved his horse, bags, watch, and £30 in gold. He reached Westminster that night, thankful for the protection of God in his peril.

His return to America was still delayed; but at the end of November Mr. Oglethorpe advised him to go to Tiverton, to take leave of his friends. At Salisbury he found his mother, who was then staying with her daughter, Mrs. Hall. She vehemently protested against the return to Georgia. She had said in 1735, when the brothers asked her consent to their mission, "If I had twenty sons, I should rejoice that they were all so

employed, though I should never see them again." She now protested vehemently against their return. There is no doubt that she was right. She saw that her sons were wasting their gifts in Georgia, and wished them to be labouring at home. That, she felt, was their true sphere.

The providence of God was steadily leading the Wesleys to their life-work. Charles, who was ready to sail, was by various means delayed in England. On February 3rd, 1738, John Wesley reached London with a report of the deplorable state of the colony. At first the bad news only strengthened Charles Wesley's desire to return. Before the month closed, however, a violent attack of sickness, at Oxford, brought him to death's door. John Wesley hurried from Salisbury when the news of his brother's illness reached him, and stayed till the danger was over. After his recovery Charles wrote the beautiful hymn :

And live I yet by power divine ?
And have I still my course to run ?
Again brought back in its decline,
The shadow of my setting sun.

Some of its best verses appear in the Wesleyan hymn book.* When Charles recovered a little, the doctor told him that to undertake a voyage now would be certain death. On April 3rd, acting on his brother's advice, he formally resigned his position as secretary to Mr. Oglethorpe. The governor offered to find a deputy if he would consent to retain his post, but that he could not see his way to do. His friends advised him to stay at college, where, as senior master, he might expect honours and preferment. At last he abandoned all thoughts of return to the colony. Hence-

* No. 155.

forth George Whitefield becomes the apostle of Georgia. His famous Orphan House was, however, suggested to him by Charles Wesley, who had concerted a scheme for such an institution with General Oglethorpe, and had been requested by the trustees to prepare a plan for carrying it into effect.

Dr. Byrom wrote Charles Wesley on March 3rd, 1738 :

“DEAR SIR,—I take the opportunity of Mr. Chaddock’s going up to London from us to return you thanks for your last letter and the good wishes therein contained. I begin to think that your brother’s arrival will be the occasion of your staying some time at least in England, and especially because you say that you are going to Oxford. We are in expectation of seeing your brother in these parts, from Mr. Clayton’s intimation to us that he would come hither. . . . When you go to Oxford, I beg my hearty respects to all our shorthand friends and others there. I have thought often of writing to Mr. Kinchin about contractions ; but the tediousness of explaining that matter by writing and the ease of doing by conversation have made me defer it in hopes of meeting with some occasion of doing it in the latter way. But as I have had the pleasure of talking with you a little upon that subject, you will be able to give him some satisfaction in that particular, or anything relating to the art whereof you are so complete a master that I shame at my own writing when I see the neatness of yours.

“I wish you and your brother happiness and holiness. Your most obliged and humble servant I am,

“J. BYROM.”

A few days before his illness at Oxford, Charles Wesley had been introduced to Peter Böhler. This young Moravian had just been ordained by Count Zinzendorf as

a missionary to Georgia and to the negroes of South Carolina. He reached London in February. John Wesley met him, and found him lodging near Mr. Hutton's, at Westminster. Charles Wesley had a close conversation with him. Böhler urged that it was essential for the Oxford students to unite together if they were to keep the fire of grace burning. He talked much also of the necessity of prayer and faith. Böhler came in one day when Charles Wesley was suffering extreme pain. He asked Böhler to pray for him. The Moravian seemed unwilling at first, but at last began very faintly. He raised his voice by degrees, and prayed for his friend's recovery with strange confidence. Then he took his hand and calmly said, "You will not die now." The words were the more remarkable because Charles felt that he could not live if his pain held out till morning. "Do you hope to be saved?" he asked. The sufferer answered "Yes." When Böhler inquired the ground of his hope, Charles replied, "Because I have used my best endeavours to serve God." The Moravian shook his head, but said nothing. Charles caught his meaning, and thought him strangely uncharitable to rob him of his only trust. "Are not my endeavours a sufficient ground of hope?" he asked himself. This conversation shows how far he still was from the way of faith.

When he was able to return to London, he met Böhler again. Another sharp attack of sickness came on whilst Charles was staying with young Mr. Hutton. "In the morning," he says, "Dr. Cockburn came to see me; and a better physician, Peter Böhler, whom God had detained in England for my good." Böhler prayed that his friend might now at last see God's purpose in his sickness. Charles thought that this might be to lead him to examine himself, and not rest till he was in the faith. From this

time until that never-to-be-forgotten Whit Sunday, three weeks later, when he found rest, his journal bears witness to the eagerness with which he sought salvation.

This was a memorable time for both the brothers. They were shaking themselves loose from life-long prejudices. Whilst at Blendon they fell into a dispute whether conversion was gradual or instantaneous. John Wesley was very positive that it was instantaneous, and spoke of some gross sinners who had believed in a moment. Charles says, "I was much offended at his worse than unedifying discourse. Mrs. Delamotte left us abruptly. I stayed, and insisted a man need not know when first he had faith. His obstinacy in favouring the contrary opinion drove me at last out of the room. Mr. Broughton was only not so much scandalised as myself. After dinner he and my brother returned to town. I stayed behind and read them the 'Life of Mr. Haliburton'—one instance, but only one, of instantaneous conversion." The brothers were feeling their way towards the light.

Before Böhler left England Charles Wesley was earnestly seeking simple faith in Christ. In a long and particular conversation with him the day before he started from London, Charles confessed his unbelief and want of forgiveness, but declared his firm persuasion that he should receive the atonement before he died. It is to that conversion John Wesley refers when he says, "It now pleased God to open his eyes; so that he also saw clearly what was the nature of that one true living faith, whereby alone, through grace, we are saved."

Charles had found some measure of peace in receiving the Lord's Supper. This he fancied to be a demonstration that the Moravians were wrong, when they said that a man cannot have peace without assurance of pardon. But several times afterwards, when he went to the Lord's

Table, he had no comfort, not even bare attention. He felt that God could no longer trust him with comfort, which he would immediately use against Himself. He now longed for faith. He could pray for nothing else, and spoke of it to all who visited him.

Whilst in this state of mind he had made arrangements to return to Mr. Hutton's, at Westminster. At the moment, however, a Mr. Bray came to see him. This man was a brazier in Little Britain, whose house is said to have been at the west corner, near Christ's Hospital. "A poor ignorant mechanic" is Charles Wesley's description of the friend who was made such a blessing to him, "who knows nothing but Christ, yet, by knowing Him, knows and discerns all things."

As they prayed together for saving faith, Charles was so melted and overpowered that he was persuaded it was God's will he should go to this good man's house. He was too weak to walk, but was carried there in a chair. A pleasant description of Mr. Bray is given by Dr. Byrom, who came up to London from Manchester about this time. Charles Wesley had returned the previous day from a short visit to his friend the Rev. Henry Piers of Bexley, who, with his wife and manservant, found peace during a visit from the Methodist poet. He gave Dr. Byrom "a great character" of Mr. Piers. But Byrom has something to tell us about another notable figure of these days. He wrote to his wife on June 15th, 1738, "I lie at the Ax, but am out all day. I have dined yesterday and to-day with Mr. Charles Wesley, at a very honest man's house, a brazier, where he lodges, with whose behaviour and conversation I have been very much pleased." A week later, when chafing under the somewhat condescending treatment he had received from the Bishop of Ely, he writes, "I confess myself full as well pleased with the

sentiments of the poor brazier, whom I think I've mentioned, and with whom I have been to-day and had much talk with him. He talks more like a bishop, in one sense ; but as yet I do not know whether I rightly apprehend what doctrine these Moravians have brought amongst 'em which so highly delights some and displeases others."

On February 7th, 1739, he put on his cloak after breakfast and went to see Bray, who was not in. When he called again, he says, "Mr. John Wesley came down to me, and I went, after some invitation, up stairs, where they were at dinner, but I ate none. His brother Hall there, who talked of inward matters. Evans of Oxford, a tradesman, was there. I went with John Wesley to Islington to his brother at Mr. Stonehouse's (who paid five guineas to Mr. Lambert for learning my shorthand, but had made one of his own, a strange, ugly one, and could not be persuaded to learn ours). . . . Went with them to the church, where a fat woman was baptized. Thence came to his house, where they prayed, after a hymn, in their society room. Thence Mr. John Wesley went away ; and we three went up stairs, and drank tea, and ate bread and butter, and talked about faith."

These references help us to estimate the man who was made such a blessing to Charles Wesley. Mrs. Hutton was not pleased that her son's friend went to lodge with him in Little Britain. In her letter to Samuel Wesley, on June 6th, 1738, she says, "Mr. Charles went from my son's, where he lay ill for some time, and would not come to our house, where I offered him the choice of two of my best rooms, but chose to go to a poor brazier's in Little Britain, that that brazier might help him forward in his conversion, which was completed on May 22nd, as his brother was praying." Mrs. Hutton is wrong both in the date and in her reference to John Wesley.

When Charles Wesley went to Little Britain he found Mr. Bray's sister earnestly seeking Christ; his wife "well inclined to conversion." For ten days he earnestly prayed for the same blessing. Mr. Bray became his spiritual guide. Many friends came to read the Scripture and seek the rest of faith. One night John Wesley visited his brother, "exceeding heavy." Charles says, "I forced him (as he had often forced me) to sing a hymn to Christ, and almost thought He would come while we were singing: assured He would come quickly." Luther's "Commentary on the Galatians," so "nobly full of faith," was especially blessed to him. He says, "I marvelled that we were so soon and so entirely removed from him that called us into the grace of Christ, unto another Gospel. Who would believe that our Church had been founded upon this important article of justification by faith alone?" Mr. Bray's sister (Mrs. Turner) found peace, but Charles remained in heaviness. Another sharp attack of pleurisy prostrated him. His host was somewhat discouraged, but opened his New Testament, saying that when his faith began to fail God gave him some sign to support it. His eye fell on the ninth chapter of Matthew. By that chapter, which describes the man sick of the palsy, who was brought by his friends to be healed, Charles Wesley was encouraged to believe that Mr. Bray's faith would avail for his salvation.

The following morning he found rest. It was the day of Pentecost. He awoke "in hope and expectation of His coming." At nine that morning John Wesley and some friends came to his room. They sang a hymn to the Holy Ghost, which greatly comforted him. The visitors stayed half an hour. Then Charles began to pray earnestly for the promised Comforter. He was composing himself to sleep when he heard some one say, "In the name of Jesus

of Nazareth, arise, and believe, and thou shalt be healed of all thy infirmities." The words struck him to the heart. "Oh that Christ would speak thus to me!" he sighed. He thought that Mrs. Musgrave had brought the message. Suddenly he said to himself, "What if it should be Christ? I will send at least to see."

It was Mr. Bray's sister who had spoken. On the previous Thursday night she dreamed that Christ knocked at the door. She caught hold of Him, and with great vehemence cried out, "Come in, come in!" At evening prayers on Friday she found the full power of faith. She felt constrained, by her sympathy for the young clergyman's weakness and distress of mind, to go and assure him of the recovery of both soul and body. Courage failed her, however. On the Sunday morning she told Mr. Bray that she felt herself unfit to go to a minister and try to lead him to the Saviour. Mr. Bray encouraged her. After a great struggle, she ventured to speak the words which were so greatly blessed to Charles Wesley. He now laid hold on the atonement by simple faith. He soon found himself at peace with God, and rejoiced in hope of loving Christ. His great weakness and his need of constant support were very present to his mind, but he lay down to rest that night confident in Christ's protection. John Wesley had gone from his brother's room to hear Dr. Heylyn. He assisted the doctor in the administration of the sacrament, as his curate was taken ill in church. He soon heard of the happy event in Little Britain. "I received," he says in his journal, "the surprising news that my brother had found rest to his soul. His bodily strength returned also from that hour. "Who is so great a God as our God?"

The new convert devoted himself more than ever to the study of the Bible, and eagerly availed himself of every

means of grace. He seems to have received the Lord's Supper almost every day. Seasons of darkness came, but they were not like the darkness of earlier days. He had, moreover, a quiet confidence that all clouds would soon be dispersed.

Charles Wesley found rest on Whit Sunday, May 21st, 1738. Next day his brother John came to Mr. Bray's, where the friends joined in intercession for him. Whilst they prayed, it almost seemed as if the Spirit would fall on him also. That happiness was not long delayed. On Wednesday night, about ten o'clock, John was brought in triumph to Little Britain by a troop of friends, and declared, "I believe." A hymn was sung, and the friends parted with prayer. The brothers were thus consecrated for their life-work. They had long been seekers after peace. At Oxford and in Georgia they had borne persecution, endured privation, fasted, prayed, and laboured with almost apostolic devotion. But noble as was their spirit, there was an evident lack of spontaneity and peace. They were exemplary, but bigoted, Churchmen, whose almost servile attention to rubrics and means showed that they had not yet attained the righteousness of faith.

Gradually they were led into the light. Their father's prophecy, that after his death God would begin to reveal Himself to his family, was remarkably fulfilled. The voyage to America and the sojourn in the colony introduced them to those devout Moravians who did so much to show the brothers their own weakness and want of faith. To Peter Böhler they owed more than to any other of their spiritual guides.

The brothers now had a message for their countrymen, which they faithfully proclaimed till their dying day. It was no new doctrine. When their prejudices were overcome, they recognised that this was the teaching of the

New Testament and the Reformation, as well as of the Homilies and Articles of their own Church. Their personal experience explained Christ's teaching, and helped them to understand the yearnings of those who had not found rest. For dealing wisely and tenderly with all who sought salvation, no preparation could well have been more complete than theirs.

During the remainder of the year Charles Wesley was incessantly engaged in overcoming the prejudices of his friends. He visited all, urging them to become partakers of like precious faith. His work is best described as that of a domestic chaplain, for he carried salvation into the homes of all his friends. Two days after his conversion he began to compose a hymn on that event, but fear of pride made him lay it aside. Mr. Bray encouraged him to proceed, however, and he finished this hymn. He saw that the enemy generally preached humility, when speaking would endanger his kingdom or do honour to Christ. From that hour he determined that he would not hide God's righteousness within his heart.

He bore his testimony everywhere, and generally with the happiest results. God seemed to have prepared his friends to receive his testimony. On June 7th, after he had been among some religious friends, he says, "Returning home in triumph, I found Dr. Byrom; and in defiance of the tempter, simply told him the great things Jesus had done for me and many others. This drew on a full explanation of the doctrine of faith, which he received with wonderful readiness." The Delamottes had a special share in his labours. On the Wednesday of Whit Week he found Miss Delamotte unconvinced and full of argument. He told her plainly what God had done for him. The confession bore fruit. She soon became more athirst for Christ than ever. When Charles Wesley stayed with

the family at Blendon, he found that another daughter had been filled with unspeakable joy whilst receiving the sacrament. All her life she thought would be too short to thank God for that day. Since then doubts had arisen, but these were put to flight whilst the friends prayed together. Three days afterwards another daughter declared that she believed Christ died for her. Two sons, two maids, and the gardener, all found peace during this memorable visit. Mr. Piers, the Vicar of Bexley, with his wife and his servant-man, shared the same blessing. Charles Wesley was exceedingly zealous. The coach between Eltham and London was full of young ladies. He felt himself forced to leave off reading, that he might interrupt their scandal. Two days later, as he went back again to Blendon, he got out when the coach stopped, to reprove a man for swearing. He received hearty thanks for his seasonable words. In a meeting at Mr. Piers' house, whilst John Wesley's sermon on faith was being read, two of the little company found peace; the sermon had already been blessed to the gardener at Blendon.

A cloud fell over the company when Mrs. Delamotte and her son William returned. William Delamotte had been greatly prejudiced against the doctrines of faith and free grace. Charles prayed and argued till all objections were overcome. His friend did not yet see how God could give faith instantaneously. The day after Charles Wesley returned to town, William Delamotte was convinced. His mother was much opposed to these views. She severely criticised the doctrine of a sermon which Charles preached. When he told her more than thirty people had, in his presence, received faith in a moment, she ran out of the house. Her daughter prevailed on her to return, but nothing more could be said. The whole house was in trouble. The two maids who had found

peace came to Charles Wesley at the door, as he was leaving, and caught his hand. "Don't be discouraged, sir," said one of them; "I hope we shall all continue steadfast." He was unable to keep back his tears. At Bexley he and his friend Mr. Piers sang :

Shall I, for fear of feeble man,
Thy Spirit's course in me restrain ?
Or, undismayed, in deed and word,
Be a true witness for my Lord ?

Then they prayed together for their friend.

A week later Charles Wesley heard that Mrs. Delamotte was convinced of unbelief, and felt much ashamed of her conduct towards him. When he went to Bexley, she sought an interview. "Well, Mr. Wesley," she said, "are you still angry with me ?" The memory of his own prejudices was strong upon him. "No, madam," he answered, "nor ever was. Before I gave myself time to consider, I was myself so violent against the truth that I know to make allowance for others." She seemed convinced of her error, took him in her coach to Blendon, where the servants were overjoyed to see him once more. She seemed melted into a humble, contrite, longing spirit. Before he left next morning the work of faith began, though Charles Wesley did not know this till he received a letter from her son William. Her mind was more and more enlightened, till she marvelled that she had so obstinately opposed the plain teaching of Scripture. When Charles next saw her at Blendon, she confessed that she had long watched every word he spoke, and sought to affront him and make him angry, as well as to persecute all who professed the truth. Great was their rejoicing together over the happy change.

This history sets Charles Wesley in a very attractive

light. He was endeared to every member of this family. Stubborn prejudices were broken down by his loving arguments and prayers. Servants, children, and parents were alike the objects of his solicitude. God made him a blessing to them all. What he was to the Delamottes he was to many other families. Young people were always attracted by his frank and hearty spirit.

Not less interesting is the record of his labours at Newgate. On July 10th, 1738, he went with some friends to the prison, where he preached to ten malefactors under sentence of death. His prejudices against death-bed repentance made him doubt whether there could be mercy for those whose time was so short in this world. But in the midst of his discourse, his faith was quickened; he offered pardon to all the prisoners if they would repent and believe the Gospel. He felt constrained to say that he had no doubt but God would give him every soul. This happy beginning encouraged him. He visited the prison every day. One poor negro, who had robbed his master, lay ill of fever. The devoted young clergyman saw him in his cell. Tears trickled down the cheeks of the criminal when he heard of the sufferings of Christ for him; he was soon able to rejoice in the Saviour.

Charles Wesley's attentions were unceasing. He and Mr. Bray spent one night in a cell with all the prisoners. The day before the execution he administered the sacrament to nine criminals. Joy, he says, was visible in all their faces. They sang his father's hymn, preserved so strangely on a charred sheet of paper when the rectory had been burned to the ground:

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

"It was one of the most triumphant hours I have ever known": that is his testimony, as he rejoiced over them and with them. Next day they suffered at Tyburn. The influence which rested upon them made that hour under the gallows the most blessed of his life. They sang his father's hymn again at Tyburn. All the ten men were full of comfort, peace, and triumph, assuredly persuaded Christ had died for them and waited to receive them into Paradise. He had never seen such calm triumph, such incredible indifference to dying. The conviction that he felt when he first preached to them was thus gloriously fulfilled. The Ordinary of Newgate had not won their confidence. He preached most miserably to them before they left for Tyburn. When Mr. Charles Wesley and two of his friends got on the cart there, the men begged that the ordinary might not come. The mob kept him down. Thus the poor fellows had by their side the young clergyman who had won their hearts and brought them to the feet of the Saviour.

During these months Charles Wesley preached in any churches that were open to him. His health was so feeble that for six weeks after Whit Sunday he could do little but work quietly among his friends and at Newgate. He gradually regained strength. At Bexley, where he preached on June 25th, he says that he was so faint and full of pain that he had not power to speak; but he had no sooner begun his sermon than all his weakness vanished, and after an hour's speaking he found himself perfectly well. Next Sunday he preached at Basingshaw Church to a deeply attentive audience. He helped to administer the Lord's Supper, and preached again at London Wall in the afternoon. God set His seal to the first sermon that day. As he was going into the church at London Wall, a woman caught hold of his hand and

blessed him ; she had found forgiveness of sins that morning, under his ministry. Next Sunday he twice preached his brother's sermon on faith.

In July, 1738, he became curate to his friend Mr. Stonehouse, Vicar of Islington, whom Byrom describes as "a very agreeable young gentleman." Regular work began to restore his physical strength. He read prayers almost every day at Islington. On Sunday he preached there, and in various London churches. One Sunday he offered salvation by faith in Westminster Abbey, and assisted in the Communion. He filled the pulpit of St. Margaret's (Westminster), St. John's (Clerkenwell), St. Botolph's, St. George's, St. Clement's, and other churches. Mr. Sparks, of St. Helen's, Bishopsgate, received the truth, and lent his pulpit to his friend. Reference seems to be made to him in James Hutton's "Memoirs": "One aged and infirm clergyman, whose incumbency included the enjoyment of a stipend for an occasional sermon, willingly accepted the offer of a gratuitous sermon from the Methodist ministers, one of whom occupied his pulpit every Tuesday in Great St. Helen's Church, Bishopsgate." This minister being recommended by Whitefield, the members of the new society flocked to hear him. But Islington enjoyed the principal share in Charles Wesley's ministry. Here opposition soon awoke. On September 24th he read prayers and preached with great boldness. "There was a vast audience, and better disposed than usual. None went out, as they had threatened, and frequently done heretofore, especially the well-dressed hearers, 'whene'er I mentioned hell to ears polite,' and urged that rude question, 'Do you deserve to be damned?'"

This quotation may be illustrated by one or two passages which make one smile. The devoted and loving

young minister wished to bring all to feel their peril and flee for refuge. He must have startled some good people. At Bexley he says that he and William Delamotte took a woman home from church, and laboured hard to convince her she deserved hell. Three weeks later, whilst riding in the coach from Blendon to London, a lady was extremely offended when he preached faith in Christ. She asserted her own merit, asked if he were not a Methodist, and threatened to beat him. Nothing daunted by this formidable threat, he told her that he "deserved nothing but hell ; so did she ; and must confess it before she could have a title to heaven." The lady could not bear such words, but the other passengers listened with interest, and asked where he preached.

In such labours the months of this memorable year passed quickly by. The close dealing with individual inquirers in the families he visited, the labours at Newgate, and the preaching in so many different churches, all helped to prepare him for the glorious work of the following year.

CHAPTER V.

FIRST STAGES OF THE EVANGELICAL REVIVAL.

John Wesley at Hernhuth—Driven out of his Curacy—George Whitefield's Popularity—Becomes a Field Preacher—Dr. Byrom's Notes—Church Dignitaries—Grave Disorders—Preaches before the University—Open-Air Services—First Visit to Bristol—Heard by Joseph Williams—Views about Death—Early Persecutions—Samuel Wesley's Anxieties—Illness of Mr. Seward.

WHILST Charles was thus employed, John Wesley was visiting the Moravian settlement at Hernhuth. The news of his brother's departure surprised Charles when he returned from Blendon on June 14th, but did not, he says, disquiet him. John Wesley had sailed the previous day with Mr. Ingham, his companion in Georgia, and Mr. Tilchig, a Moravian. He reached London again on September 16th, 1738.

The same night the brothers took sweet counsel together. Each had much to tell. John had written briefly to his brother from Germany, promising him a full account of the Hernhuth community on his return; "when I hope," he adds, "we shall part no more." Charles also, as we have seen, had much to report. On the Sunday night they had another meeting. "John entertained us," his brother writes, "with his Moravian experiences."

Charles Wesley still indulged the hope that he might return to Georgia. His mother had written after John

started for Hernhuth, complaining that he had forsaken her, and requiring Charles to accept of the first preferment that offered, on pain of disobedience. Six weeks after his mother's letter, however, he met Lord Egmont, and greatly pleased him by expressing his intention of going to Georgia, if his health permitted. A month later, one of his friends told him that God plainly forbade his return by the success he was giving him in England. Early in January, 1739, his brother John, Mr. Whitefield, and five other friends urged him to settle at Oxford ; but he could not do so without further evidence that this was the right path. When Cowley living was vacant, his friends wished him to offer himself. He yielded so far as to do this, but rejoiced when he heard it was otherwise disposed of.

Everything was uncertain. His position at Islington as Mr. Stonehouse's curate was becoming intolerable. The churchwardens demanded his local licence, fully aware that he had not obtained one. They could not daunt the brave preacher, however. They became abusive, and forbade him to preach. One of them said that Mr. Whitefield, the vicar, and his curate all had the spirit of the devil. After prayers, when Mr. Stonehouse made way for Charles Wesley to the pulpit, two men, employed by the churchwardens, forcibly kept him back. Unwilling to provoke a scene, and mindful that the servant of the Lord must not strive, he drew back and allowed some one else to preach. Sir John Gunson and Mr. Justice Elliot went into the vestry, and severely reproved the churchwardens. But they remained obstinate. On the following Tuesday they kept guard on the pulpit stairs. Charles Wesley would not demean himself by fighting his way through, but the vicar preached a thundering sermon, which would have awed any other men. Whitefield

handled these obstinate men most skilfully. When they placed themselves at the bottom of the pulpit stairs, after the prayers were over, to bar his way up to the pulpit, he quietly turned and walked into the churchyard. Standing on a tombstone there, he preached to all the people, who streamed out of the church and left the disconcerted churchwardens alone at the foot of the pulpit stairs. The churchwardens' factious opposition, however, gained its end. The Bishop of London appears to have supported their action, and Mr. Stonehouse was weak enough to consent that his old friend should preach in his church no more. The only appointment which Charles Wesley held in the Church of England thus came to an end.

But other doors were opening. George Whitefield had returned from his first visit to America in December, 1738. His popularity was unabated. Wherever he preached, people crowded to hear him. But he soon found that the churches were closed against him. The great preacher had a message which thousands wished to hear. In his emergency he remembered that his Master preached on the mountain and by the sea shore to an innumerable multitude. He ventured at last to imitate that example. The result far surpassed his expectations. The people in Bristol and Kingswood climbed up trees and stood on walls or house-tops, eager to catch every word. As he was not able to remain in the West of England, he wrote an urgent entreaty that John Wesley would come to take charge of the great work thus begun. The society in Fetter Lane urged him not to go. Charles Wesley had an unaccountable fear that the journey would prove fatal. When there seemed no hope that the friends would come to one mind, the matter was decided by lot. In this way it was decided that John Wesley should go to Bristol. Next morning he set out, commended by his

friends to the grace of God. Charles says, "I desired to die with him." On April 2nd, 1739, John Wesley "submitted to be more vile," and preached to about three thousand people out of doors.

Whitefield had left for London on the previous day. Charles Wesley was one of his congregation in Islington churchyard, on Friday, April 27th. He was favourably impressed. He saw that the hearers could not have been more affected within the walls. On the following Sunday, when he was himself forcibly kept out of the pulpit, he heard that Whitefield had above ten thousand hearers. He went with him to Blackheath and other places, where he saw the effect of his friend's words on his vast congregations. Once, while he stood by Whitefield's side on the mount at Blackheath, the cries of the mourners were heard on every side. "What," he asks, "has Satan gained by turning him out of the churches?"

He himself soon became a field preacher. On May 29th Mr. Franklin, a farmer at Broadoaks, a village in Essex, about forty miles from London, invited Charles to preach in his field. He had a congregation of about five hundred, to whom he spoke from the words, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." He returned to the house rejoicing. Two days later a Quaker urged him to preach at Thaxted. Here more than seven hundred people, many of whom were Quakers, heard him. These were his earliest open-air services.

On June 13th John Wesley returned from Bristol. Next day Charles went with him and Mr. Whitefield to Blackheath. There were twelve to fourteen thousand hearers. Somewhat to his surprise, Mr. Whitefield asked John Wesley to preach. Ten days later Charles Wesley followed his brother's example. The services he had previously held out of doors seem to have been in quiet

country places. George Whitefield urged him to make a beginning in London. He had a fierce conflict, but was able to offer up "friends, liberty, and even life" for the Gospel. On Sunday, June 24th, he found near ten thousand people waiting in Moorfields. He preached from the words, "Come unto Me, all ye that travail, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "The Lord was with me, even me, His meanest messenger, according to His promise," is his acknowledgment. Whitefield and John Wesley were already experienced field preachers. Charles now followed their example. After conducting service in Newington Church, the same evening he preached "to multitudes upon multitudes" on Kennington Common. On Sundays he generally preached at Moorfields in the morning, and on Kennington Common later in the day. On July 9th ten thousand were present at Moorfields; numbers seemed greatly affected. At Kennington there were twice as many. The people's hearts bowed before the word.

Some extracts from Byrom's journal may here be given which throw a vivid contemporary light on the chief actors in the new movement.

On February 16th, 1739, he went with John Wesley to Mr. Stonehouse's Church at Islington. Mr. Stonehouse thought that Wesley was too hard on the mystics, and Byrom could talk more freely with him than with Wesley, as their views were much in accordance. He had promised to go to a meeting in Newgate Street. Byrom wished to dissuade him from so doing, but he went. Stonehouse seemed to have vacillated a good deal over the matter, and gives one an unpleasant impression of irresolution. Charles Wesley read the service at Islington Church, "but I thought," says Byrom, "with an affected emphasis."

The same day our gossip is at Mr. Hutton's shop near

Temple Bar, and says, "His sister came to me and asked me to drink tea, but her brother coming in I went with him into their little room, and the sister talked away as usual and then went to a raffle ; and Mr. Hutton and I talked about Methodism, and he defended them and was eager to answer to the point, as he called it, having wrote to Mr. Durand, who yet threatened what he would do if he mentioned his name in print, which yet he said he had done. I endeavoured to mollify his eagerness, but found that it would not do."

He had other talks with Hutton, whom he found enthusiastic in praise of Wesley. He often looked in for news, and calls him "my chief intelligencer." If his work on shorthand needed a bookseller, he wrote, "it must be Mr. Hutton, because he was a scholar, and that I would rather pay him something more than others if there should be occasion."

Another entry, in February, 1739, shows us how the gulf was widening between the Wesleys and their old friends. They were already becoming marked men : "I forgot that I saw Mrs. Rivington coming out of her shop, so I went in and had some talk with Mr. Rivington about the Methodists. He said they were all wrong ; that they had left Mr. Law ; that Mr. Wogan [an Ealing layman] was against them ; that they would do a deal of mischief ; that they thought they had more of the Spirit than anybody ; that Mr. Clayton kept clear of such extravagancies. Now I remember how Mr. Hutton talked about him and said he was a good man ; how that he had writ to John Wesley about his preaching without notes, which he thought was wrong to do."

Wesley returned to London from his first field-preaching in Bristol on June 13th, 1739, because of the disturbances which had arisen in the society at Fetter Lane. Byrom

writes to his wife next day, "Mr. John Wesley is come to this town from Bristol. Mr. Whitefield preaches away at Blackheath, etc.; he is the chief topic of private conversation. . . . He had lords, dukes, etc., to hear him at Blackheath, who gave guineas and half-guineas for his orphan house. He does surprising things, and has a great number of followers, both curious and real. This field-preaching, they say, is got into France, as well as Germany, England, Scotland, Wales, etc. People are more and more alarmed at the wonder of it, but none offer to stop it that I hear of."

A fortnight later he has breakfast with Mr. Hutton, with whom, he says, "I have dined two or three times lately upon my own sort of fare." Of the previous night, he adds, "The so-much-talked-of Mr. Whitefield came in, and company with him. He stayed about a quarter of an hour, taking leave with his friends; and then the Cirencester coach called, and he went to Gloucestershire therein that night. He has a world of people that like him. I should have satisfied my curiosity a little if he had not been in haste. I am surprised at the progress which he had made, to which the weakness of his printing adversaries does not a little contribute."

Byrom was quite out of sympathy with the new movement. It did not commend itself to his somewhat mystical mind. He writes to his son on April 26th, "Mr. Charles Wesley is in town, but I very seldom see him, not being quite agreed in all our opinions, though I have called now and then just to ask him how he does, because I wish him to do well heartily. . . . They have together printed a book of hymns, amongst which they have inserted two of Mrs. Bourignon's, one which they call a 'Farewell to the World, translated from the French,' and the other, 'Renouncing all for Christ,' (I think), 'translated from the

French.'” The old friendship was not broken by their change of views. Somewhat later Charles Wesley’s name appears in the proposals for printing Byrom’s *Shorthand*, as one of those who recommend the system.

On August 4th, 1739, Byrom is busy with a domestic commission, and turns to his Moravian friend in Little Britain: “I called yesterday at Mr. Bray’s, brazier, about a tea-kettle. He says round ones are the most commodious, not with flat tops, but raised a little; there are others like the shape of the old one. . . . I found Mr. Charles Wesley there, and drank tea with him, and he asked me to come on Monday morning at eight, being to go out of town, and I should see him no more. I came out with him as far as Guildhall, in his way to Kennington Common, where he was to go with Mr. Whitefield for the last time, Mr. Whitefield being to go abroad, etc. On Monday Mr. Wesley preaches at Moorfields, and Kennington on Sunday morning and night. He asked me if he should invite me to come and hear him. ‘Shall I invite you to stay at home?’ said I. ‘No,’ said he. ‘Then says I, ‘don’t invite me to come.’ We do not agree, nor differ as to matters of doctrine that I can find, nor have I any occasion to condemn him.” On the following Monday he had breakfast with his friend at Mr. Bray’s.

Meanwhile the Wesley’s relations to the leaders of their own Church were in a state of tension. The brothers had several times visited the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London since their return from Georgia. In October they were summoned to answer the complaints made to the bishop, that they preached an absolute assurance of salvation.

When Charles waited on Bishop Gibson in November, 1738, to give notice, according to the rubric, that a woman who was not satisfied with her baptism by a Dissenter

wished him to baptize her, his lordship immediately took fire, and said, "I wholly disapprove of it; it is irregular." Charles greatly disturbed him by his attitude in this interview, so that the bishop exclaimed at last, "Oh, why will you push things to an extreme?" The bishop must have been very anxious about the course things would take after such an interview. A few months later he upheld the action of the churchwardens at Islington.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Potter, showed the Wesleys great kindness. He spoke mildly of Mr. Whitefield, cautioned them to give no more umbrage than was necessary for their own defence, to avoid exceptional phrases, and to keep to the doctrines of the Church. They told him that they expected persecution, but would abide by the Church till her Articles and Homilies were repealed. He said he would be pleased to see them as often as they would come. Within three months, however, Charles Wesley was cited to Lambeth, with his friend, the Rev. Henry Piers of Bexley. His Grace expressly forbade Mr. Piers to allow any of the little company of Methodists to preach in his church, where some opposed the faithful ministry of Charles Wesley. The archbishop asked Charles what call he had, and told him that he would not proceed to excommunication yet. Mr. Piers was dismissed with kind words; Charles with all the marks of his displeasure. It was on the next Sunday that he preached for the first time at Moorfields and Kennington Common.

When Charles Wesley visited Oxford, at the end of June, 1739, the dean of his college spoke with unusual severity against field-preaching and Mr. Whitefield. Charles says he explained away all inward religion and union with God. The vice-chancellor was more friendly. He was much pleased with the account of the Methodists which

Charles gave him, but objected to the irregularity of their doing good in other men's parishes. Charles preached on "justification" before the University "with great boldness. All were attentive. One could not help weeping." The sermon did not, however, please the heads of houses. They considered that it was liable to be misunderstood. The night before he returned to London he had another conference with the dean of Christ Church, who used his utmost address to persuade him to give up field-preaching, expounding in houses, and singing psalms. He still denied justification by faith only and vital religion, but promised to read Law and Pascal.

Charles Wesley soon became a powerful field-preacher. He was encouraged by many remarkable conversions, but was often ready to run away from this service. Writing to Whitefield on August 10th, 1739, he says, "Do not reckon upon me, my brother, in the work God is doing; for I cannot expect He should long employ one who is ever longing and murmuring to be discharged." "I could not preach out of doors on week-days," he adds, "because of the expense of coach-hire." Mr. Seward, of Bengeworth, offered to bear the cost, but he was already doing so much for God's cause that Charles would not consent. In a letter to this friend he said that he was so buffeted both before and after he preached that if he were not forcibly detained he should flee from every human face. "If God does make a way for me to escape, I shall not easily be brought back again. I cannot like advertising. It looks like sounding a trumpet." The poet's finely strung nature was his strength as well as his weakness. The very day after this letter he mentions that the whole congregation at Kennington was moved by his discourse on "He shall reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment." He was hardly able

to get away from the people. Every day they heard of more and more who were blessed under the Word.

Two days later, on August 16th, 1739, he set out for Bristol to relieve his brother. After cheering the Methodists at Oxford, he found his way to the house of Mr. Seward, near Evesham. This gentleman possessed a large fortune, and had been educated at Cambridge. During a severe illness he was led to the truth. He became a great friend and supporter of Whitefield. He had been a Particular Baptist, but he now saw that God would have all men to be saved. Mrs. Seward stoutly held to her narrow views. She was so bigoted that she refused to see Charles, as she had previously refused to see Whitefield. Her husband was away, so that his visitor took up his quarters at an inn. At seven o'clock at night, when Mr. Seward returned, he found out his friend, and took him to his house. The guest must have found himself in rather a strange position. There were no discussions, but Mrs. Seward was irreconcilably angry with him because he offered Christ to all. Even her maids shared her spirit. When the master of the house tried to awaken one of them to some care for her own salvation, she replied that "it was to no purpose; she could do nothing." Even his little daughter, only seven years old, gave him the same answer.

Despite these hindrances, the three days which Charles Wesley spent here were made a blessing. He preached from George Whitefield's pulpit, the wall, and held three services a day. Some were brought to Christ, others were greatly quickened. One lady bore witness to God's grace before two hundred people, many of them gay young gentlewomen, who crowded round her afterwards and begged her to visit them. At Gloucester Charles Wesley held some successful open-air services. According

to his custom, he sent to ask the clergyman for the use of his church. In reply, he received a friendly invitation to call and drink a glass of wine, but was told that the vicar durst not lend him his pulpit for fifty guineas. This only gave the stranger a finer congregation. Mr. Whitefield, apparently the master of the Bell Inn, and brother of his friend, lent Charles Wesley his field, where above two thousand heard his message.

One afternoon, whilst on his way to this preaching place, he met Mrs. Kirkham. Her son, Robert Kirkham, had been a member of the Holy Club at Oxford, and greatly wished that John Wesley might marry his younger sister. Charles speaks of Mrs. Kirkham as an old intimate acquaintance. She it was who stood in his way as he went to his field-preaching. "What, Mr. Wesley," she said, "is it you I see? Is it possible that you, who can preach at Christ Church, St. Mary's, etc., should come hither after a mob?" He had a ready answer as usual. "I cut her short with, 'The work which my Master giveth me, must I not do it?' and went to my mob." Thousands heard him gladly. He continued his discourse till night. This was on August 25th. His service began at five, so that it must have continued a long time, even for a preacher whose outdoor meetings were often two, sometimes three, hours long.

The most interesting service of this journey was at Runwick. The minister here lent him his pulpit. A window was taken out, and Charles Wesley stood where he could be heard by those inside, and by the still larger congregation of two thousand people outside. In the afternoon he preached again to what he calls a Kennington congregation. The church was densely packed. But the congregation outside formed, the preacher says, "the most beautiful sight he ever beheld." Thousands of people

stood in the churchyard. They filled a gradually rising area, shut in on three sides by a vast perpendicular hill, at the top and bottom of which was a circular row of trees. In this beautiful amphitheatre all stood, deeply attentive, whilst he preached from the words, "Come unto Me, all that are weary." He lifted up his voice like a trumpet, so that the vast concourse heard distinctly. The tears of many showed that they did not hear in vain. "I concluded," he adds, "with singing an invitation to sinners." Amidst prayers and blessings he managed to pass through this host of friends. Though he had already preached twice, he expounded the second lesson for two hours at Ebly,

At Bristol he laboured, with signal acceptance and success, from the end of August to the beginning of November. This seems to have been his first visit to the city where he spent so many years of his happy married life. John Wesley introduced his brother to the Society before he set out to London. Charles began his ministry by expounding Isaiah's prophecy with such power that all were melted into tears. At one o'clock the bands met to keep the Church fast. Charles "fell all at once into the strictest intimacy with these delightful souls." Such was the first day of his ministry in Bristol. He often preached to five thousand people in the open air. The work among the colliers of Kingswood awakened his devout joy. "I triumphed in God's mercy to these poor outcasts (for He hath called them a people which were not a people), and in the accomplishment of that Scripture, 'Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,' etc. Oh, how gladly do the poor receive the Gospel! We hardly knew how to part."

How faithfully he did his work many entries in the journal show. Some members of the Society at Bristol

had brought reproach upon religion by rioting and drunkenness. When he visited them he was filled with such love of their souls as he had not known before. They could not withstand his appeal. He left them with strong hope of their restoration. In the Women's Society he lovingly reproved them for lightness, dress, and self-indulgence. The preacher evidently took a position that must have sorely tried some of the ladies, and which appears somewhat amusing nowadays. When he reached the third chapter of Isaiah in his expositions, he showed that the prophet "alike condemns notorious profligates, worldly-minded men, and well-dressed ladies."

He was learning much by his work in Bristol. One poor woman to whom he was called to preach Christ in her last agony showed all signs of eager desire, and died within an hour. "How comfortable is it that I can now hope for her, so often as I have disputed the possibility of a death-bed repentance!" One woman, seventy-three years old, was convinced of sin. He says, "I look upon this instance as a peculiar blessing to me, for I had scarce any faith for old people; they are so strong in self-righteousness, so intrenched in their own works, so hardened by *the abuse of means*." The old woman was soon filled with peace and joy. Some notorious sinners were converted under his searching ministry. With Pharisees he made no truce. One woman cried out vehemently against a notorious drunkard, who gave glory to God for his salvation. Charles says, "I took and turned her inside out, and showed her her spirit in those who murmured at Christ for receiving sinners." The woman was soon in an agony of conviction. The fruits of his ministry began to appear on every hand. He invited those who had received blessing to see him after his exposition. In this way numbers were led to Christ.

Meetings for inquirers were held, to which more came than he was able to converse with in two hours. He made short excursions to places in the neighbourhood, and several times visited Bradford, in Wilts. Wherever he went he carried a blessing.

About this time Mr. Joseph Williams, of Kidderminster, invited Charles Wesley to that town. Soon afterwards he came himself to Bristol, and was present at a meeting of the Society. Charles Wesley says, "Of what denomination he is, I know not ; nor is it material, for he has the mind which was in Jesus." Mr. Williams wrote a letter for the *Gentleman's Magazine*, describing his impressions of the work. When he showed it to Mr. Charles Wesley, he modestly objected to its publication ; but it was found among his papers after his death. When he reached Bristol Mr. Williams was told that Charles Wesley would preach in the afternoon outside the city, and hastened to the place. There the preacher stood on a table with his hands lifted in prayer. For a quarter of an hour he prayed with uncommon fervency, fluency, and propriety of expression. His sermon, from 2 Corinthians v. 17-21, bore witness to his vehement desire to convince all that they were by nature in a state of enmity to God, and needed to be reconciled to God. Faith in Christ was clearly held out as the way to peace. The preacher supported his statements by texts of Scripture, which he explained and illustrated, "and then freely invited all, even the chief of sinners, and used a great variety of the most moving arguments and expostulations, in order to persuade, allure, instigate, and, if possible, compel all to come to Christ, and believe in Him for pardon and salvation." He showed that their faith must work by love, purifying the heart, and reforming the life.

Mr. Williams afterwards introduced himself to the

preacher. He was greatly pleased with his answers to the questions he put. The same evening he went with him to the Society meeting. The room was so crowded that they reached the rostrum with difficulty. When Charles Wesley stepped up the people ceased singing. He prayed, expounded part of the twelfth chapter of St. John, then sang a hymn, expounded and sang again. Before pronouncing the benediction, twenty requests for prayer were spread before the Lord. Mr. Williams had never heard such praying or singing. "At the close of every single petition a serious Amen, like a rushing sound of waters, ran through the whole Society; and their singing was not only the most harmonious and delightful I ever heard," but, as Mr. Whitefield writes in his journals, they "sang lustily and with good courage." He speaks of the heavenly music, and of the "heaven upon earth" which numbers in the Society seemed to enjoy. For himself he bears witness that he never remembered having been so elevated in prayer and praise, either in collegiate, parochial, or private worship. No one who reads this testimony can doubt that God signally blessed Charles Wesley's ministry at Bristol.

He was often sorely depressed. There is something morbid in his remarks about death. "What would I give to be on that death-bed!" he writes, after giving the sacrament to one who stood on the threshold of eternity in the full triumph of faith. The longing finds expression again and again in the pages of his journal. It is characteristic of the poet-preacher. It must not be forgotten that at this time he was recovering from the long illness caused by his exposure and trouble in Georgia. His physical strength was taxed to the utmost by his unwearying labours. His devotion bore him up whilst he was preaching; strength returned whenever he stood

before the eager congregations that drank in every word he spoke. But when the day's work was over reaction began. Bodily vigour and spiritual force failed him. "I can pray for others, but not for myself. God by me strengthens the weak hands, and confirms the feeble knees; yet am I myself as a man in whom is no strength. I am weary and faint in my mind, longing continually to be discharged." This was a heavy price to pay for his incessant and exhausting labours. But his strength gradually returned. His labour proved a blessing to him, both in body and mind.

We have not yet reached the time of persecution. But signs of the impending storm appeared. Whilst he was preaching to about six thousand people at the Bristol bowling-green, on September 16th, 1739, he says, "Before I began, and after, the enemy raged exceedingly. A troop of his children, soldiers and polite gentlemen, had taken possession of a corner of the green, and roared like their brethren the two Gergesenes, before the devils were sent into the civiller swine. They provoked the spirit of jealousy to lift up a standard against them. I never felt such a power before, and promised the people that they should feel it too; for I saw God had a great work to do among us by Satan's opposition. I lifted up my voice like a trumpet, and in a few minutes drove him out of the field. For above an hour I preached the Gospel with extraordinary power from blind Bartimæus, and am confident it could not fall to the ground."

This passage is a fit preface to Charles Wesley's encounters with the mob in later days. His spirits rose when he was in danger. Nothing daunted the brave soldier of Christ. It is evident, too, that the biting satire to which this passage bears witness must have been a formidable weapon in many an encounter with the mob.

The members of the Bristol societies were early called to endure affliction. During the September of 1739 Charles says that every Sunday the Wesleys were denounced as Jesuits, seducers, and bringers-in of the Pretender. The clergy complained of the number of communicants, and threatened to repel them. Charles offered his help to one minister who thus murmured, but it was declined. There were a hundred new communicants last Sunday, said this minister, and I am credibly informed some of them came out of spite to me. Some of the members lost all they had for Christ. One man beat his daughter, and thrust her out of doors, following her with oaths, and threatening to murder her if she ever returned. Whilst she was a drunkard and a swearer her father and she were agreed.

Charles Wesley's journal from November 6th, 1739, to March 14th, 1740, has not been preserved. On November 6th he was called to see a woman at Bedminster who was groaning for mercy. She received immediate relief in prayer, and at noon came to tell him that the burden was gone. The same day his brother Samuel died suddenly at Tiverton, at the age of forty-nine. Charles does not seem to have heard this sad news till he reached Oxford, whither he had been called to respond in the divinity disputations. He and John Wesley left Oxford for Tiverton on November 15th. They halted at Bristol for two or three days, and reached their widowed sister on the 21st.

Samuel Wesley had been for many years a second father to Charles. The two brothers were knit together by the closest affection. Samuel's position had enabled him to help in all the family troubles. He had provided for Charles at Westminster School, had assisted his father in many straits, and had shown special care for his widowed

mother. The death of such a brother was no ordinary blow. For some time his health had been failing, but the end came suddenly. He went to bed apparently as well as for some time past. At three o'clock in the morning he became very ill ; at seven he was gone.

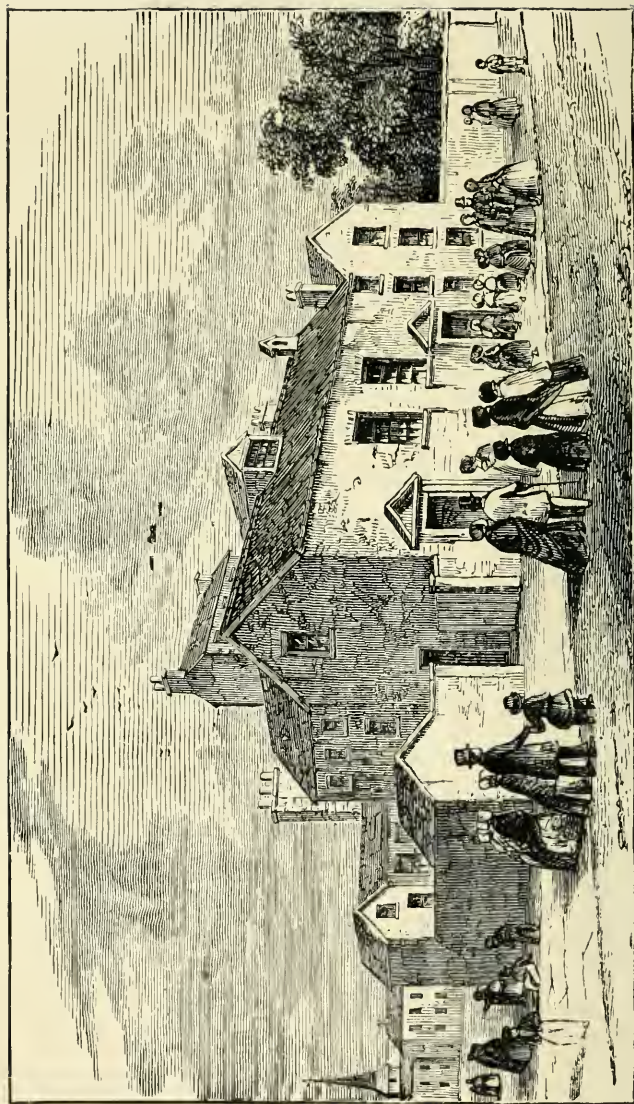
Samuel Wesley had followed the later developments of his brothers' work with grave anxiety. He was so far from London that he was not able to judge of it for himself, and his friend Mrs. Hutton sent him reports which filled him with concern. Correspondence with his brothers did not allay his fears. Only seventeen days before his death he writes to his mother : " For my own part, I had much rather have them picking straws within the walls than preaching in the area of Moorfields. It was with exceeding concern and grief I heard you had countenanced a spreading delusion so far as to be one of Jack's congregation. Is it not enough that I am bereft of both my brothers, but must my mother follow too ? " He accuses his brothers of a design to separate from the Church, and complains that they leave off the liturgy in the fields. It was manifestly unfair to add, " though Mr. Whitefield expresses his value for it, he never once read it to his tatterdemalions on a common." But, whatever Samuel Wesley's prejudices against the new movement, he was a devoted Christian. Soon after this letter was written he seems to have been led more fully into the light. Several days before his death he enjoyed a calm and full assurance of his interest in Christ.

Charles Wesley seems to have remained in Bristol till nearly the middle of March, 1740. Then he left for Oxford. He was sorely tried at Bengeworth, where Mr. Seward's relatives would not allow him to see his old friend, who was lying ill. Mr. Henry Seward was peculiarly offensive. He accused Charles Wesley of

robbing his brother, and threatened to beat him if he caught him on the common. This zealous opponent endeavoured to stop the preaching, but his efforts only increased the congregations. They also added fuel to the zeal of the undaunted preacher. When he was told that it be wise for him to go away for a time, as his enemies were resolved to do him a mischief, he met them with Nehemiah's fearless question, "Should such a man as I flee?" The schoolmaster was brought by a troop of opposers who poured in from a neighbouring alehouse. They set him upon a bench opposite to the preacher. The squire and the rector had hatched this plot, but it did not succeed. The schoolmaster was no match for the preacher. "For near an hour," Mr. Charles Wesley writes, "he spoke for his master, and I for mine; but my voice prevailed. Sometimes we prayed, sometimes sang and gave thanks. The Lord our God was with us, and the shout of a king amongst us. In the midst of tumult, reproach, and blasphemy, I enjoyed a sweet calm within, even while I preached the Gospel with most contention. These slighter conflicts must fit me for greater."

He left on Wednesday for Oxford, but returned the following Monday, and spent the rest of the week in the place. The little daughter of one of his friends managed to slip a note into Mr. Seward's hand. During his illness all news about his friend had been carefully kept from him. When he knew that Charles Wesley was in the place, he drove at once to the house where he was staying. His brother Henry, who had made all the trouble, sat on the box. When Charles Wesley went home with his friend, both Mrs. Seward and this opponent were "surprisingly civil, and full of apology." But Mr. Henry's abject apologies did not teach him to curb his temper. His crowning affront was committed when the man he

had so grievously wronged was taking leave of his brother. He called Charles Wesley "a rogue, rascal, villain, pick-pocket," because he advised Mr. Seward to keep up the Society. When his brother interposed to stop this unseemly conduct, Charles begged him not to answer a fool according to his folly. This was too much for Mr. Henry. He "started up," says his victim, "and courageously took me by the nose." Charles bore patiently this gross insult, which roused Mr. Seward's indignation, and departed, rejoicing that he had been counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Christ.



THE FOUNDRY, LONDON.

CHAPTER VI.

A SEASON OF CONTROVERSY.

Purchase of the Foundery—Breach with the Moravians—Letter from Joseph Humphreys—Strange Scenes in Bristol—A Colliers' Riot—Visits Wales—Meets Howel Harris—John Cennick—Calvinistic Troubles—Feeling toward the Moravians.

CHARLES WESLEY reached London on Thursday, April 3rd, 1740. One notable advance had been made since he was last in the metropolis. Methodism now had a centre of operations. In November, 1739, two gentlemen who were then unknown to Mr. Wesley begged him to preach in the Foundery, at Moorfields. This had been the place for casting cannon, but a serious explosion occurred which caused the removal of the works to Woolwich. The disused and ruined building was purchased for £115, but it needed such extensive repairs that the entire cost reached £800. It would seat one thousand five hundred people, and had a band-room where three hundred could meet. Over this room were apartments for the Wesleys. A house for servants and assistants, with a coach-house and stable, completed the arrangements. The Wesleys now had a preaching-place from which no one could exclude them. Charles occupied the pulpit on the day of his arrival in London. His first text was, "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

One great advantage was secured by the Foundery. The Society which met there was from the first under the direct care of the Wesleys. On May 1st, 1738, John Wesley had taken an active part in the formation of the Society in Fetter Lane. The Moravian element there was very strong. It soon became evident that it must eventually become a Moravian society. The determined stand made by the Wesleys checked this tendency for a time. "Stillness" was the ideal of the Moravian teachers. Ordinances they held to be not merely useless, but mischievous. One man said, "If we read, the devil reads with us ; if we pray, he prays with us ; if we go to church or sacrament, he goes with us." Another man even said, "You may as well go to heaven in praying as in thieving."

It was a time of much wild fanaticism. Grave disorders were creeping into the religious societies with which the Wesleys had been associated. In December, 1739, when in Wycombe, Charles stayed with a Mr. Hollis, who spoke of the French prophets as equal, if not superior, to the Old Testament ones. While he and Charles Wesley were undressing, this man fell into violent agitations, and gobbled like a turkey-cock. Charles, in his terror, began to exorcise him with the words, "Thou deaf and dumb devil," etc. The man soon recovered, and they lay down ; but Charles says, "I did not sleep so very sound with Satan so near me."

Similar abuses were springing up in London. On the first Sunday of 1739 Charles was much offended at some orders which Bray and others were imposing on the Society. On the last day of February he met the bands at Bray's house, where he felt it necessary to caution them against schism. Charles Wesley was especially obnoxious to some of the fanatics because of his fearless opposition to their proceedings. The friction between himself and

them was becoming so severe that they urged him to go to Oxford in order to have him out of the way.

Matters soon grew worse. A Mr. Shaw insisted that there was no priesthood. He maintained that he himself had as much right to baptize and administer the Lord's Supper as any man. Charles warned his friends strongly against the schism to which such teaching must lead. Next day he is warning others against Shaw's "pestilent errors." He spoke strongly at the Savoy Society in defence of the Church of England. Bray himself, who had been a pillar of the Church, began to tremble. Count Zinzendorf, who was then in England, spoke against the intended separation. Whitefield, and Howel Harris, the great Welsh preacher, insisted on the expulsion of Shaw, who had done no small mischief at Oxford by his views; but he was allowed to remain. A dispute arose as to lay-preaching, to which Charles Wesley and Whitefield were much opposed. In this matter Bray and those who were in favour of lay-preaching had a good cause. The Wesleys afterwards found their lay-preachers most effective workers in the great Evangelical Revival.

All these occasions of dispute were as nothing compared with later developments. Shaw charged Charles Wesley with loving pre-eminence, and making his converts two-fold more children of the devil than before. Another member of the Society declared that he regarded Charles Wesley as delivered over to Satan. Amid all such trials he was kept "tolerably meek," but he let the Society know that when they renounced the Church of England, Charles Wesley felt that they discharged him. Next day he found a French prophetess at Bray's. She prayed most pompously, addressing particular encomiums to Bray, and concluded with "an horrible hellish laugh." Thus she endeavoured afterwards to turn off. On the first

anniversary of his conversion Charles read to the Society an account of this woman's lewd life and conversation. Bray vindicated her. All besides were melted down. At another interview with her in Bray's house she flew upon Charles Wesley and his friends in a passion, abused him roundly, and roared outrageously. Happily, when John Wesley returned from Bristol next day, all, even Bray himself, agreed to disown this lying prophetess. The names of Shaw and another were erased from the Society books because they declared themselves no longer members of the Church of England. This was on June 13th, 1739.

On his return to London next April, Charles Wesley foresaw that a separation was inevitable. His dearest friends had been misled; Mr. Stonehouse, the Vicar of Islington, and his wife were led astray. Stonehouse taught that there was no forgiveness or faith where any unbelief, doubt, fear, or sorrow remains. He refused to pray with a dying woman to whom he had been called. She had nothing to do but to be "still." Charles Delamotte, Wesley's companion and friend in Georgia, no longer considered it a duty to attend the ordinances of God. Mr. Bray asked Charles Wesley whether he would come to his "band" on Monday, and on receiving the answer "No," rejoined, "Then you shall be expelled." When Charles Wesley visited the Delamottes at Blendon, "they had to force themselves to be barely civil." He spoke faithfully to them, but in vain. Again and again they bade him be silent. His heart was sad indeed when he turned from the home of those who were once his dearest friends. "With Blendon," is his bitter comment, "I give up all expectation of gratitude upon earth."

Charles Wesley was the object of no small suspicion and ill-will. At this time, he says that a new "commandment, called 'stillness,' had repealed all God's commandments,

and given a full indulgence to lazy, corrupt nature. The still ones rage above measure against me." They looked upon him as a Saul who persecuted the Church of Christ. They pretended that John Wesley approved their conduct, and thus tried to weaken Charles's hands. Nothing was further from the truth, as John Wesley showed both by his preaching and his withdrawal from the Fetter Lane Society after he returned to London.

Meanwhile Charles Wesley, who was preaching at the Foundery and holding services at Kennington and Moorfields, set himself to recover those who had gone astray, and to confirm the wavering. In Fetter Lane none durst speak for the ordinances; he took care that at the Foundery none should speak against them. The members of the Fetter Lane Society had been accustomed to take the sacrament together at St. Paul's. Now they refused to attend. Their bigotry was overwhelming. Bray said that it was impossible for any one to be a true Christian out of the Moravian Church. Another man roundly affirmed that there were only four Christians in London. "Bell," he dared to say, "was holier than Moses, the meekest of men; than Abraham, the friend of God; than David, the man after God's own heart; than Elijah and Enoch, who walked with God and were translated." He denied that Abraham had any right faith at all.

A pleasing incident of this time is given in a letter of Joseph Humphreys, one of the first lay-preachers.* He says that he went to hear Charles Wesley preach at Wapping. "His text was, 'When they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both.' He held forth Christ freely to poor sinners in a most clear light. I found that Christ belonged *to me*, and all *such* as I was. I had no

* *Wesleyan Magazine*, March, 1884.

doubt, but could lay hold of Christ and believe on Him with the utmost freedom. The Spirit of God in the Word witnessed in my heart that Christ *died for me*. 'He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself.' This I found to be true. By faith I ventured to lay hold on the Saviour *for myself*, and to claim Him as *mine*. The Spirit directly witnessed to it. All my doubts and darkness fled away in a moment. I saw clearly that Christ, who knew no sin, had been made sin *for me*, and that I was now made the *righteousness* of God in Him. I was inwardly *still* before the Lord. I cared not to talk much about it to others. If any one asked me how it was with my soul, I cared to make no other reply than that *Christ had died for me*. Here I kept, and found my soul daily established upon that sure foundation, *the death of Christ*." Charles Wesley's journal refers to this service. "At Wapping I preached the pure Gospel from the woman washing her Saviour's feet. Many joined their tears with hers." Humphreys afterwards became a strong Calvinist, but wrote to Charles Wesley, "Rev. Sir,—I would have been joined with you to all eternity, if I could."

John Wesley returned from Bristol towards the end of April, greatly to his brother's relief. Howel Harris was also a great support at this crisis. When he gave his experience before the Society at the Foundry, Charles Wesley says, "Oh, what a flame was kindled! Never man spake, in my hearing, as this man spake. Such love, such power, such simplicity, was irresistible." The Foundry Society was greatly blessed by his words. Good care had been taken to keep the Fetter Lane Society away, so that scarcely any of them were present at a service which they needed so much.

Before Charles Wesley set out again for Bristol, in June, it was arranged that those who disapproved of the

doctrine of stillness should be gathered together in new bands. They had been scattered, one or two in a band of disputers, so that scarcely even a remnant was left. Nine out of ten had been perverted. Charles says, "We gathered up our wreck—*raros nantes in gurgite vasto* (some scattered swimmers in the vast abyss): for nine out of ten are swallowed up in the dead sea of stillness. O, why was not this done six months ago? How fatal was our delay and false moderation?" The day before he set out for Oxford and Bristol he held an extraordinary meeting of the Foundry Society, now increased from twelve, in November of the previous year, to three hundred. These accessions were the fruit of the field-preaching and the service at the Foundry. He took leave of them with hearty prayer on June 17th, 1740. On July 20th, John Wesley read a paper at the close of the love-feast in Fetter Lane, in which he pointed out the contradiction between their teaching and the Word of God. He told them that he had warned them and borne long with them; now he must leave them with God. "You that are of the same judgment follow me," was his concluding sentence. Eighteen or nineteen members of the Society withdrew with him. Twenty-five men, and forty-eight of the fifty women who met in band, joined the Foundry Society. The separation, which was essential to the purity and growth of Methodism, was welcomed by the Fetter Lane Society, which now united itself to the Moravian Church. Charles Wesley escaped the last month of trouble. He had his share afterwards. On September 1st, 1740, he writes to George Whitefield: "The great work goes forward maugre all the opposition of earth and hell. The most violent opposers of all are our own brethren of Fetter Lane, that were. Innumerable have been the devices of Satan to scatter this little

flock. The roaring lion is turned a still lion, and makes havock of the Church by means of our spiritual brethren. They are indefatigable in bringing us off from our 'carnal ordinances,' and speak with such wisdom from beneath, that, if it were possible, they would deceive the very elect." The unity and love of the Bristol Society made him wish that the "London brethren would come to school at Kingswood."

In Bristol, however, he had some painful proofs of the constant need of watchfulness. In meeting the bands he was forced to cut off "a rotten member, but felt such love and pity at the time as humbled me into the dust. It was as if one criminal was made to execute another." His faithfulness and love of souls were never more manifest than when he was called to reprove and admonish the flock.

At Bristol many strange scenes had been witnessed under John Wesley's preaching. His hearers would sometimes break out with loud cries for mercy, or fall down trembling or in strong convulsions. Once his voice could scarcely be heard for the groans and cries of the people. Those who found most fault with these manifestations were sometimes themselves overwhelmed in the same way by conviction. There is no doubt that some of these scenes were simply cases of deception. Others were due to great excitement, but many were caused by deep and genuine conviction for sin. Charles Wesley, during his visit to Bristol in the latter part of 1740, notes that he talked sharply to a girl of twelve, who confessed that more than thirty times she had pretended to have fits, and had cried out, so that Mr. Wesley might take notice of her. In this respect Charles was not so easily imposed upon. During one of his exhortations a woman disturbed him much with her outcries. He took no notice of her at first, seeing that she could not control herself, but said at last, "I do not think the better of

you for this." Immediately her trouble was over. She became quite hushed and unconcerned.

In August he was laid aside by a severe attack of fever, which prostrated him for six weeks. For ten days his pain and weakness increased, so that no hope of his recovery was entertained, and it was even reported in the papers that he was dead. Great kindness was shown him. One of the Methodists took him to her house. Dr. Middleton, of Bristol, an entire stranger to the patient, attended him with constant care. He would accept no fee, and even told the apothecary that he would pay for the medicine if Charles Wesley could not do this. This kind friend died twenty years afterwards in perfect peace. He attended the poor Methodists of Bristol without fee, and always begged an interest in their prayers. When they were reviled he would often say, "A people who live and die so well must be good." He was seventy years old when he himself found the Saviour. Charles Wesley wrote a beautiful memorial hymn upon his death.

When his brother was so far recovered that he was able to stand, John came to Bristol. They rode out together nearly every day, comparing their dangers, temptations, and deliverances. By-and-by the invalid's strength returned. Two or three days spent with a friend in Kingswood helped him much. Before he went there he had been so utterly exhausted that he could scarcely read or think.

He had scarcely recovered when he helped to quell a riot among the Kingswood colliers, caused by the high price of corn. About a thousand of them met him at Lawrence Hill, on their way to Bristol. They thronged around him and saluted him affectionately. It was their first glimpse of him since his illness. He addressed them from a piece of rising ground. Many seemed inclined to

return with him to Kingswood School, but the more violent agitators rushed upon the rest, striking them, and tearing them away from the preacher. Charles rode up to one ruffian who was beating a Methodist, and asked him rather to smite himself. The man said he would not for the world. Wherever he turned, the rioters gave way, but the most desperate men mustered all their strength, and drove the rest towards the town. Charles prevailed on a few to stay with him. With their help he stopped each party of colliers as they came along, and exhorted them to join him at Kingswood School. Thither they went, singing. Their numbers increased every moment. From one to three o'clock they united in prayers that God would avert mischief. At last they received the welcome news that the men had walked into the city without violence. Some went to the mayor, and told their grievance; then all returned quietly. The marked contrast to former risings showed what a blessed change the Gospel had wrought in Kingswood. The Methodist colliers had joined the company sorely against their will. Some were compelled by the threat that, if they refused, their pit should be filled up, so as to bury them alive. A pleasant little incident which happened in May, 1741, during a Kingswood prayer-meeting, will show how the work spread. While Charles Wesley was praying for an increase of their spiritual children, a rough collier brought four of his children. He threw the youngest on the table before him, crying, "You have got the mother, take the bairns too." The preacher felt that this was a good omen.

On July 27th 1740, Charles Wesley attended Temple Church, where he heard a miserable sermon in praise of religion as the most likely means to make a fortune. Before the sacrament, all who were not of the parish were ordered to depart. Charles stayed, suspecting nothing,

till the clerk came with a message, "Mr. Beacher bids you go away, for he will not give you the sacrament." He went to the vestry to remonstrate, but in vain. Mr. Beacher shouted to the constables in attendance, "Here, take away this man." The despised Methodist saved them the trouble. He walked away with a sad heart. Another minister gave orders that the Wesleys should be repelled from the sacrament; but when Charles presented himself, he was not driven away. He received the sacrament with comfort. One clergyman preached against the Methodists because they did not catechise their children, nor reform men in the ordinary way. This was not, however, a railing sermon, like many that were preached against them. It was no wonder that such experiences saddened Charles Wesley, who was so warmly attached to the Established Church. His journal proves that he was filled with the tenderest concern for her well-being. He writes, "I spoke in much grief and love of our desolate mother, the Church of England. My heart yearns towards her when I think upon her ruins, and it pitieth me to see her in the dust."

In November, 1740, he paid a visit to Wales, where he spent a fortnight. In Cardiff and the district most of the churches were still open to him. It must have refreshed his spirit to gain a hearing in his own Church. Even here, however, he had trouble. A Cardiff doctor walked out of the building during his sermon. Two days later he came, unusually heated with wine, to the house where the preacher was staying, and demanded an apology because he had been called a Pharisee. When Charles Wesley tried to show him his own heart, the doctor lifted up his cane and struck him. The lady of the house intercepted and broke the blow. A gentleman tripped up the heels of this doughty Pharisee; then the company

rushed in between him and the object of his wrath. The doctor struck several of the ladies present. He raged like one possessed, but the men at last forced him out, and shut the door.

Another adventure might have been more serious. After the doctor had been expelled, a justice of the peace and the bailiff or head magistrate came in. They were disposed to take the doctor's part, but soon became Charles Wesley's friends, and repulsed the medical man when he made another attempt to enter the house. The company quietly sang hymns together. Meanwhile the actors of the town gathered round the house, which they threatened to burn down because the preaching had thinned their audiences. These men were armed with weapons. One of them stole into the house unobserved, and was discovered at Charles Wesley's side with a sword in his hand. It was wrested from him, and the man was secured. He protested that he did not mean to do the preacher any harm. That was by no means proved; but Charles Wesley's last request before he left was that the actor should be released. He assured his enemy of his good wishes, and walked undisturbed to his vessel. The low tide compelled them to return, so that Charles had another service, when his word was like a "fire that melteth the rocks." He waited on the bailiff to thank him for his kindness, and presented him with the player's sword as a memento of the visit.

During his stay in Wales Charles Wesley and Howel Harris were knit together more closely. The Calvinistic controversy had already begun. At Bristol Mr. W. Seward, an old friend of Charles Wesley's, after having spent some happy hours with him on the previous day, was persuaded to renounce both him and his brother in bitter words of hatred. A month later he was dead.

John Cennick, the master of Kingswood School, showed Charles Wesley a letter from Howel Harris, in which he justified Mr. Seward, and talked of declaring against the Wesleys himself. Cennick was afterwards present whilst Charles preached from Titus ii. 11,—“And was carried out more than ever before, till all were drowned in tears of love.” Whilst the preacher was declaring that Christ died for all, Cennick flatly contradicted him. His friend calmly told him afterwards, “If I speak not the truth as it is in Jesus, may I decrease, and you increase.”

This incident was the more painful because, in July, 1740, when Charles Wesley preached at Kingswood on “Comfort ye, comfort ye, My people, saith your God,” he had said before his sermon that Cennick entirely agreed with him in the doctrine of universal redemption, and Cennick confirmed the statement by repeating a hymn he had written. His friend says, “Never did I find my spirit more knit to him.” But soon afterwards he began to waver, and joined the Calvinistic party. Cennick’s position at Kingswood gave him great influence with the people. He was the master of the school for colliers’ children which Mr. Whitefield founded. Nearly all the burden, however, fell on John Wesley, who completed and supported it. Cennick at last formed a separate society in Kingswood. Charles Wesley wrote a faithful letter of remonstrance, in which he pointed out his unhandsome conduct in using his position in order to undermine his benefactor’s authority and oppose his teaching.

Cennick showed the letter from Howel Harris, to which we have referred, to Charles Wesley only two days before the visit to Wales, in November, 1740. This was not a good preparation for an interview with the great evangelist of the Principality. There was much angry feeling against Harris in Wales because of his Calvinism, but

Charles Wesley acted everywhere as a peacemaker. He pacified some who were exceedingly exasperated because Harris had preached predestination among them. On the Sunday evening he bore public testimony to his friend, and mildly upbraided the people for their ingratitude to the greatest evangelist their country ever had. Hearty prayer was offered for Harris. Next day Charles Wesley wrote this beautiful letter to the Welsh itinerant :—

“My dearest Friend and Brother,—In the name of Jesus Christ I beseech you, if you have His glory and the good of souls at heart, come immediately, and meet me here. I trust we shall never be two in time or eternity. O my brother, I am grieved that Satan should get a moment’s advantage over us ; and am ready to lay my neck under your feet for Christ’s sake. If your heart is as my heart, hasten, in the name of our dear Lord, to your second self, C. Wesley.

Harris came. All misunderstandings vanished, and the hearts of these true friends were knit together as they had been in London. They sang a hymn of triumph. In one meeting several people urged Charles Wesley to reprove Harris openly. A gentleman even went so far as to interrupt his exposition with a request that he would confute his friend’s errors. He was proof against all such importunity. “I am unwilling,” he said, “to speak of my brother Howel Harris, because, when I begin, I know not how to leave off, and should say so much good of him as some of you could not bear.” The gentleman withdrew from the place at once.

Very different was the spirit of Cennick. At Kingswood, ten days after his return from Wales, Charles

Wesley expounded the sixth chapter of Hebrews. He says, "the poison of Calvin has drunk up their spirit of love." Two women railed against him, but Cennick never interposed. "Alas! we have set the wolf to keep the sheep! God gave me great moderation toward him, who, for many months, has been undermining our doctrine and authority." He held a conference with Cennick and his friends, but could come to no agreement, although he offered entirely to drop the controversy, if they would do so. He wrote his brother a full account of the designs of the party. They wished to have a church of their own, and to give themselves the sacrament in bread and water.

The Calvinistic controversy made a breach between the Wesleys and their old friend Whitefield. When the great preacher returned from Georgia in March, 1741, he submitted to Charles Wesley a tract that he had prepared in answer to his brother's sermon on "Free Grace." Charles returned it, endorsed with the words, "Put up again thy sword into its place." Whitefield delayed the publication, though his zeal for his new opinions would not allow him to hold it back altogether. He preached against the brothers in Moorfields and other public places. He even went so far as to teach the absolute decrees in a most peremptory manner from the pulpit at the Foundery whilst Charles Wesley was sitting at his side.

On Christmas Eve, 1740, Charles Wesley and his companion, Thomas Maxfield, set out for London. After only an hour's rest Charles preached to a crowded congregation at the Foundery, at six o'clock in the evening of Christmas Day. During this visit to London he seems to have leaned too much to the Moravians. Molther, their pastor at Fetter Lane, who had caused such mischief by his teaching, had been recalled to Germany. Peter Böhler,

the friend and guide of the Wesleys, took his place. This change brought the brothers into closer relations with the Society in Fetter Lane. Charles Wesley's journal for the first and last quarters of this year is lost; we are therefore entirely dependent on others for the facts. John Wesley, who had come in haste to London because of accounts that reached him, says that on January 22nd, 1741, he began to expound the First Epistle of St. John, where his brother had left off. "He had not preached the morning before, nor intended to do it any more.

The Philistines are upon thee, Samson,' but the Lord is not 'departed from thee.' He shall strengthen thee yet again, and thou shalt be 'avenged of them for the loss of thine eyes.'"

On February 12th he says that Charles returned from Oxford, and preached on the true way of waiting for God, thereby dispelling at once the fears of some and the vain hopes of others, who had confidently affirmed that Mr. Charles Wesley was *still* already, and would come to London no more. John Wesley had his fears, however. On April 21st he writes to Charles, "O my brother, my soul is grieved for you; the poison is in you; fair words have stolen away your heart. 'No English man or woman is like the Moravians!'" This last sentence Charles seems to have used in a letter to his brother.

The following month the bands met at the Foundery to consider whether the Methodist and the Moravian societies should be reunited. It was clear to all that the time for this had not come, because the brethren at Fetter Lane had not really given up their most erroneous doctrines, and because there was so much guile in their words that their real opinions could scarcely be ascertained. The brothers were evidently discussing this matter. Charles, disturbed and irritated by the Calvinistic controversy, had

somewhat forgotten the bitterness of the earlier struggle. He evidently thought that a better spirit had come over his Moravian friends since Böhler's return.

His heart still clave to the people whom he had admired so much on his voyage to America, and from whom he had received such spiritual help in London. This is the most probable explanation of the sentence quoted by his brother. That the Moravian poison had not taken much hold is evident from his journal. A few days before his brother's letter he administered the sacrament to the bands at Kingswood, and urged them to receive it as often as they could be admitted to the churches. Just about the time the letter reached him he "gathered up a stray sheep at Bristol, and carried her to the Word which she had long forsaken."

Whatever longing he may have felt to restore friendly relations with the Moravian Society, he had no sympathy with their neglect of the means of grace. Whilst John was writing his letter, Charles was preparing a "Short Account of Mrs. Hannah Richardson," which indirectly confutes all Molther's teaching. The danger was not altogether past, however. The Countess of Huntingdon wrote to John Wesley on October 24th, 1741, "I believe your brother's journal will clear up my meaning more fully to you, for I should labour very much to have as few snares in his way as possible. Since you left us the *still ones* are not without their attacks. I fear much more for him than for myself, as the conquest of the one would be nothing to the other. They have, by one of their agents, reviled me very much, but I have taken no sort of notice, as if I had never heard it. I comfort myself very much that you will approve a step with respect to them your brother and I have taken: no less than his declaring open war with them. He seemed

under some difficulty about it at first, till he had free liberty given him to use my name, as the instrument, in God's hand, that had delivered him from them. I rejoiced much at it, hoping it might be a means of working my deliverance from them. I have desired him to enclose to them yours on Christian perfection. The doctrine therein contained I hope to live and die by; it is absolutely the most complete thing I know. God hath helped your infirmities; His Spirit was with you of a truth. You cannot guess how I in spirit rejoice over it.

"Your brother is also to give his reasons for quite separating, and I am to have a copy of the letter he sends them to keep by me. I have great faith God will not let him fall; He will surely have mercy on him—and not on him only, for many would fall with him. I feel he would make me stagger through his fall; but I fly from them as far as pole from pole, for I will be sound in my obedience. His natural parts, his judgment, and the improvement he has made are so far above the very highest of them that I should imagine nothing but frenzy had seized upon him; but when I consider him, with so many advocates for the flesh about him having the form of angels of light, my flesh trembleth for fear of him, and I should have no comfort did I not know assuredly that He that is for him is greater than he that is against him."

She adds, "When you receive his journal you will rejoice much when you come to Thursday, October 15th. I think you must have felt our happiness; it was more than I can express." Unhappily this piece of the journal also is lost. On March 15th, 1742, she writes Mr. Wesley about his brother: "Our friend, now in town, seems as a lamb in the midst of wolves. May the Lord give him the wisdom of the serpent and the innocence of the dove.

Divine grace and the uprightness of his heart will make him more than conqueror."

The Moravian Church recovered from the blight which worked so much mischief in 1740. It is pleasant to add that in the last years of his life Charles Wesley formed a warm friendship for Mr. Latrobe, one of the Moravian ministers in London. Miss Wesley frequently attended his services, with her father's consent.

CHAPTER VI.

ITINERANT LIFE, AND PERSECUTION IN 1743.

A Busy Itinerant—Physical Strain of the Work—Persecution and Riot in Staffordshire—A Scene in Walsall—The Mob in Sheffield—Visits Birstal, Leeds, Newcastle—Three Weeks in Cornwall—Meets John Wesley after the Riot in Walsall—Opposers Overcome.

UP to 1742 the work of the Wesleys had been almost entirely confined to London and Bristol. During that year John Wesley first visited Newcastle. Methodism now spread rapidly over the kingdom. Charles Wesley took an active share in working this enormous circuit. A sketch of his work during the year 1743 will show how zealously he laboured.

On Sunday morning, January 2nd, he rode to Bexley and preached there ; then returned to conduct service at the Foundery. Next day he was at Brentford and Eton. On Wednesday he reached Bristol, where he remained till the following Tuesday morning, when he set out for London at three o'clock. He reached the Foundery next day. In London he remained six weeks, visiting the prisoners in Newgate and supplying the Methodist pulpits ; then he returned to Bath. In the middle of May he visited the north of England, where he laboured amid the hottest persecution. During his six weeks' journey he visited more than thirty places, including Wednesbury, Walsall, Birmingham, Nottingham, Sheffield, Birstal, Leeds, New-

castle, Sunderland, Shields, Epworth, and Oxford. After a busy fortnight in London, he went through Bristol to Exeter and Cornwall, then the scene of fierce and constant riots. A month later he returned to London for two months of scarcely less exhausting work. He then journeyed northwards again, to meet his brother at Nottingham. On October 29th he was in Bristol, where he had only spent one day during the last six months. His friends in that city kept him two days. Then he visited Wales. The last month of the year was spent in London. He and his brother were generally accompanied in their itinerant tours by one of the preachers, who was not only a companion and helper, but also a witness, in those times of gross slander, to their conduct and behaviour.

The year is a fair sample of Charles Wesley's itinerant life. The physical strain of such long rides on horseback was severe. On Sunday, July 17th, 1743, after he had come from the north of England to the Foundery, and ridden on to Cornwall, he says, "I rose, and forgot that I had travelled from Newcastle." The night before, he had been worn out. The men and boys of St. Ives gave the Methodist preacher a rough salute at the house where he was staying ; but he was "too weary to regard them." Another passage of the journals bears more emphatic testimony to the strain of the itinerancy. John Wesley had summoned his brother to London to attend a conference with the leading Moravians and Predestinarians. "We had near three hundred miles to ride in five days," he says. "I was willing to undertake that labour for peace, though the journey was too great for us and our weary beasts, which we have used almost every day for these three months." It was mortifying to find that his labour was in vain. John Wesley came from Newcastle, Charles from

Cornwall, and John Nelson from Yorkshire ; but there was no conference after all.

Charles Wesley never spared his strength. Five services a day were by no means unusual. On July 11th, 1741, he preached at Bristol ; then to the Kingswood colliers ; at Bath ; at Sawford, and, for the fifth time, in the Wood. "Let God have the glory," is his comment ; "preaching five times a day, when He calls me to it, no more wearies the flesh than preaching once." This was on a Saturday. The record may be compared with the work of one Sunday in September, 1744. He preached at five in the Horse-fair ; gave the sacrament at Kingswood ; baptized a child at Felix Farley's ; preached again in the Wood ; rode into Bristol ; preached there ; and returned to the colliers' love-feast. It was almost midnight before he retired to rest in the Horse-fair.

The mere enumeration of such services gives no adequate idea of the strain upon Charles Wesley. His preaching was so tender, so pathetic, so full of convincing power, that it made heavy demands upon his physical strength. Speaking of one service, ten days before this busy Sunday, he says, "The word was as a fire, and as a hammer. The rocks were broken in pieces, particularly a hardened sinner, who withstood me some time before he was struck down. Many were melted down ; some testified their then receiving the atonement." At times he was so drawn out in his zeal for the souls of the people that he continued speaking for three hours. Once he notes that he began again and again after he thought that he had concluded. The sight of a multitude thirsting for the Word of God, in days when the Methodist preacher was often their only guide and helper, made Charles Wesley eager to declare to them all the counsel of God.

On Sunday, April 4th, 1742, he preached before the

University. John Wesley says in his journal, "About two in the afternoon, being the time my brother was preaching at Oxford before the University, I desired a few persons to meet with me and join in prayer. We continued herein much longer than we at first designed, and believed we had the petition we asked of God." The text was, "Awake, thou that sleepest." In April, 1750, Charles Wesley read an account of this service given by Mr. Salmon, an old High Church friend whom he had once much admired, in his "Foreigner's Companion through the Universities of Cambridge and Oxford." Mr. Salmon said that the sermon on Sunday afternoons usually lasted about half an hour. "But when I happened to be in Oxford, in 1742, Mr. Wesley, the Methodist, of Christ Church, entertained his audience two hours; and having insulted and abused all degrees, from the highest to the lowest, was in a manner hissed out of the pulpit by the lads." Charles Wesley adds his comment, "And high time for them to do so, if the historian said true; but, unfortunately for him, I measured the time by my watch, and it was within the hour. I abused neither high nor low, as my sermon, in print, will prove; neither was I hissed out of the pulpit, or treated with the least incivility, either by young or old." In July, 1748, he gave the sacrament to Mrs. Neal, "one who received the atonement in reading my sermon before the University."

The journal from September 22nd, 1741, to January 2nd, 1743, has not been preserved. The loss of the record for 1742 is the more to be regretted, because during that summer Charles Wesley seems to have visited Wednesbury, Leeds, and Newcastle for the first time. In Staffordshire he was breaking new ground. Two references to this former visit can be gleaned from the journal of 1743. He says, "I got once more to our dear colliers

of Wednesbury." He had evidently formed a warm friendship for them on his visit in 1742. They at once won a place in his heart, as the colliers of Kingswood had done. When he reached Leeds, in 1743, he tells us that not a year had passed since he walked to and fro in the streets and could not find a man. Now there was a little Society of fifty members in the town.

His visit to the north in May, 1743, was a preparation for the storm of persecution which soon burst on the Methodists of Staffordshire. There was a "very lively Society" of three hundred members at Wednesbury, whom he comforted and exhorted with his wonted power. There was no "preaching-house"; he had to address his congregation in a garden. But a friend had already given them a piece of land on which to build a room. This Charles Wesley consecrated by a hymn. From Wednesbury he walked over to Walsall with a band of Methodists, who sang their much-loved hymns. The opposers gave them a noisy greeting, but the Methodist preacher marched straight through their ranks till he reached the steps of the market-house. He opened the Bible at these appropriate words, "But none of these things move me."

Calm confidence in God and love of souls sustained the evangelist in the trying scene which followed. His own description is marked by that graphic power which made Charles Wesley such a convincing and popular preacher. "The street was full of fierce Ephesian beasts (the principal man setting them on), who roared and shouted, and threw stones incessantly. Many struck without hurting me. I besought them in calm love to be reconciled to God in Christ. While I was departing, a stream of ruffians was suffered to bear me from the steps. I rose, and having given the blessing, was beat down again. So the

third time, when we had returned thanks to the God of our salvation. I then, from the steps, bade them depart in peace, and walked quietly back through the thickest rioters. They reviled us, but had no commission to touch a hair of our heads." This was on Saturday. On Monday the Wednesbury Methodists, who were soon to pass through the hottest fire of the enemy, sent their beloved friend on his way to Newcastle with many tears and blessings.

On Wednesday, May 25th, 1743, he was at Sheffield. Here the ministers of the town had so stirred up the people that they were ready to tear the Methodists in pieces. A remarkable instance of his presence of mind is given in the account of his visit. He had scarcely taken his place at the desk at the "Society House" when an officer began to contradict and blaspheme. Charles Wesley quietly sang on. The stones flew thick, he says, hitting the desk and congregation. To save the people and the building, he gave notice that he would preach outside, and look the enemy in the face. This was a bold step. The persecutors streamed after him. The officer laid hold on him. Charles quietly gave him a copy of his brother's "Advice to a Soldier." Whilst he preached, the stones struck him in the face. When he prayed for sinners, as servants of their master the devil, the quarrelsome soldier rushed upon him in great fury, threatening revenge because he pretended that "the king, his master, had been abused in the prayer." He forced his way through the ring of Methodists, and presented his sword at the preacher's breast. Charles Wesley laid bare his breast, and smiled at his enemy. Then, fixing his eye upon him, he said, "I fear God and honour the king." The captain's countenance fell; he sighed deeply, put up his sword, and quietly left the place. He had boasted to

one of the company, "You shall see, if I do but hold my sword to his breast he will faint away." He found that true religion makes men brave indeed.

When the Methodists returned to Mr. Bennett's house, the rioters followed. Charles Wesley says that they exceeded all he had seen before. "Those of Moorfields, Cardiff, and Walsall were lambs to these. As there is no king in Israel (no magistrate, I mean, in Sheffield), every man does as seems good in his eyes." The constable came, but not to protect the Methodists; he simply advised the preacher to quit the town. When he refused, this guardian of the peace went to encourage the mob. Charles Wesley would have gone out to them, but his devoted friends would not allow him to expose himself. The rioters then vented their rage on the preaching-house; by morning they had managed to pull down one end of it. Their fierce outcries often awaked Charles Wesley during the night. Undaunted by opposition, he preached next morning in the middle of the town; then walked back with his companion to Bennet's house, the mob following at his heels. By this time the preaching-place was an utter wreck. It seemed as if the house of their host would share the same fate. The mob threatened to pull it down, and smashed the windows in an instant. When they were ready to rush in, Charles Wesley stepped into their midst. A friend had a copy of the Riot Act, which the preacher read, with a suitable exhortation. The constable seized one of the ringleaders. The crowd gradually melted away. Long before the rioters had gone, Charles Wesley was fast asleep in the dismantled room.

Next day he was under fire again. The people of Thorpe met him near their town with stones, eggs, and dirt. His horse flew from side to side of the crowd, and

forced a way for its master. Wesley's travelling companion, David Taylor, was less fortunate. He lost his hat, and received a wound in the forehead, which bled profusely. Charles Wesley turned back to ask why they could not allow a clergyman to pass on his way without such treatment. The rioters scattered, but their captain, with horrible oaths, began to fling stones "that would have killed both man and beast, had they not been turned aside by a hand unseen." Charles escaped unhurt, though much bespattered by eggs and dirt. A little pain from a blow received at Sheffield was the only memento of this trying week.

At four in the afternoon, he says, "We came to a land of rest, for the brethren of Birstal have stopped the mouths of gainsayers, and fairly overcome evil with good. At present peace is in all their borders." Such a scene must have been like a prophecy. Methodism was gradually to live down persecution and win the hearts of the people. With such a prospect the troubles of the present were lightened. At Leeds, on Sunday, he found eager congregations. He stood at William Shent's door at seven in the morning, after he had met the little Society. There he cried to thousands of people, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters." They drank in every word he spoke. At two in the afternoon another vast multitude assembled.

Still more remarkable was the honour paid him when he went to the great church. He was shown into the minister's pew. "Their whole behaviour said, 'Friend, go up higher.' Five clergymen were there, who a little confounded me by making me take the place of my elders and betters. They made me help administer the sacrament; would not let me steal into a corner, but placed me at the table opposite to him that consecrated. I assisted with

eight more ministers, for whom my soul was much drawn out in prayer. But I dreaded their favour more than the stones in Sheffield."

At Newcastle he spent three successful weeks. He was able to gather in some backsliders, and was also especially careful to build up the Society. He says, "We have certainly been too rash and easy in allowing persons for believers on their own testimony; nay, and even persuading them into a false opinion of themselves. Some souls it is doubtless necessary to encourage, but it should be done with the utmost caution. To tell one in darkness he has faith is to keep him in darkness still, or to make him trust in a false light—a faith that stands in the words of men, not in the power of God." This subject was evidently much on his mind. A few days later he wrote to a friend, "Be not oversure that so many are justified. By their fruits you shall know them. You will see reason to be more and more deliberate in the judgment you pass on souls. Wait for their conversation. I do not know whether we can infallibly pronounce *at the time* that any one is justified. I once thought several in that state who, I am now convinced, were only under the drawings of the Father. Try the spirits, therefore, lest you should lay the stumbling-block of pride in their way, and by allowing them to have faith too soon, keep them out of it for ever." Any one who has had experience of seasons of spiritual awakening will know the wisdom of such words. Churches sometimes discourage and dishonour themselves by counting as converts those who are simply under the gracious influence of the Spirit. Charles Wesley was anxious to lay a firm foundation of repentance.

In Newcastle he adopted his usual policy in reference to those who disturbed the services by cries or fits. He did not forget that many were struck down in an agony

when they first awoke to a sense of sin. But counterfeits followed, and these Charles Wesley soon detected. One drunken man fell into a fit and beat himself heartily. The preacher thought it might do him good, and instead of singing over him, as was sometimes done in such cases, left him quietly to recover at his leisure. A girl was carried out in convulsions, but soon walked off when they laid her down outside the door. Some women who kept near the preacher, and seemed to vie with each other which should cry loudest, became quiet as lambs when they were removed out of his sight. The Orphan House at Newcastle would hold two thousand people. The first night Charles Wesley preached there, half his words were lost through these outcries. He determined to cure this. He gave notice that if any cried so as to drown his voice, they should be quietly removed to the farthest corner of the room. His porters had no work ; but though all was quiet the service was full of power. He told the people that he did not think the better of any one for crying out or interrupting the work. When these scenes ceased, many more of the gentry came to the services. Charles Wesley says that he was more and more convinced that it had been a device of Satan to stop the course of the Gospel. Certainly he never preached with greater power or blessing.

He visited Sunderland and Shields, though he felt a strong aversion to preaching there. He had learned, he says, that *the freedom of heart* about which the Moravians and Quakers spoke so much "was a rule of the devil's inventing, to supersede the written Word." A thousand wild people at Sunderland listened to him with profound attention. At Shields he preached to a vast multitude in the churchyard. The churchwardens and others threw dirt and money among the people in order

to disturb the preacher, but he delivered his message. Crossing the ferry, he found the mob of North Shields, with the minister at their head. One man blew a horn, and his companions shouted. But Methodism was gaining ground. "Others were almost as violent in their approbation. We went through honour and dishonour, but neither of them hurt us."

It was hard to part from the loving friends at Newcastle, as both the Wesleys knew. The long journey and the faithful ministry of the Methodist preacher were not without a reward. Charles Wesley thus describes his departure, on June 19th, 1743: "Some cried aloud; others knelt down for my blessing; some laid hold on me as I passed; all wept and made lamentation."

The three weeks he spent in Cornwall this summer were equally laborious and successful. Between Exeter and Bodmin he missed his way, so that he had a ride of sixty miles. The preacher and his horse were "worked down" by the heavy travelling of the last few weeks.

The Cornish clergy were conspicuous among the opposers. Charles Wesley heard the Rector of St. Ives on the words, "Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees," etc. "His application was downright railing at the new sect, as he calls us, those enemies to the Church, seducers, troublers, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites." The same day he went with nearly all the Methodist brethren to Wednock. Here he stood within two yards of the pulpit, and heard from the curate "such a hodge-potch of railing, foolish lies as Satan himself might have been ashamed of!" When he stayed quietly behind, to show the preacher that he had been misinformed, he was bluntly told that he was a liar. It was no use to say more. The Methodist preacher reminded his detractor of the great day, assured

him of his good will, and went out to preach to the people. This clergyman had often said that the Methodists ought to be driven away by blows, not arguments.

In St. Ives the Methodists found a firm friend in the mayor, an honest Presbyterian, who was determined to protect the unoffending people from the mob. As Charles Wesley and his friends returned from the market-place, where the enemy mustered in force with a drum, and shouted so loud that his voice was drowned, they met the mayor, who greeted them kindly, and threatened the rioters. It is hard to tell to what lengths opposition in St. Ives might have gone but for this timely help. When the evangelist found that the rioters would not let him preach, he tried to speak to the most violent of them. They stopped their ears, ran upon him, crying that he should not preach there, and tried to pull him down. This was on Monday. On Friday he had just announced his text in the meeting-house at St. Ives, when the rioters burst upon them, threatening to murder the people if they did not go out that moment. "They broke the sconces, dashed the windows in pieces, tore away the shutters, benches, poor box, and all but the stone walls." Charles Wesley stood looking on. Several times hands and clubs were raised to strike him, but he received no injury. The mayor's son headed the rioters. He struck out the candles with his cane, and began to beat the women. Charles Wesley laid his hand upon him and said, "Sir, you appear like a gentleman : I desire you would show it by restraining those of the baser sort. Let them strike the men, or me, if they please, but not hurt poor helpless women and children." From that moment the young man exerted himself to quiet the disturbers. Some who were not Methodists stood up for the members, and opposed the ruffians. The meekness of the sufferers and the

malice of the persecutors were so striking that the very sight turned some of their bitterest enemies into friends. After an hour's tumult the rioters began to quarrel, broke the head of the town clerk, their captain, and drove each other out of the room.

Another attempt was made to destroy the place, but the mayor took such prompt measures to repress it that this mischief was averted. He expressed his determination to swear in twenty new constables, sent and seized the rioters' drum, and stood at a little distance whilst Charles Wesley was preaching, to awe the opposers. The whole town was set against him by his firm defence of the Methodists, but he plainly told the clergyman who had called Charles Wesley a liar that he would not be perjured to gratify any man's malice. When the Methodist preacher left St. Ives, he paid a farewell visit to the mayor, whom he acknowledged as their providential deliverer from the hands of unrighteous and cruel men. Charles Wesley says, "He expressed the same affection for us as from the beginning; listened to our report, for which our Lord gave us a fair opportunity; ordered his servant to light us home; in a word, received and sent away the messengers in peace."

In other places opposition was less pronounced. Many proofs of the power of the Word were seen. Whilst Charles preached on Cannegy Downs many wept, "particularly the captain-general of the tinnerns, a man famous in his generation for acts of valour and violence, and his usual challenge to fight any six men with his club." He was known everywhere as "the Destroyer," but there was good hope that he would soon be "a new creature." The people were already becoming firm friends of the Methodists. At Poole a drunkard got within two or three yards of Charles Wesley, apparently with the

intention of pushing him down the hill. The men seized him, and would have given him bitter cause to regret his folly had not the preacher interceded for him. He was then quietly handed down by his arms and legs, till he was put outside the congregation, and was heard no more. At another place, when there seemed no way of escape from the "minister's mob," one of the persecutors relented, took the preacher's hand, and begged him to leave, with an assurance that he would protect him from all violence. When he preached at Gwennap Pit, on July 23rd, half his congregation were tinnerns from Redruth, which, he says, was *taken*. "God has given us their hearts. If any man speak against us, say they, he deserves to be stoned." The parish of Zunnor "came in, to a man, at the joyful news."

The people at Gwennap were exceedingly moved when he bade them good-bye. They were eager to know when he would return, and when John Wesley or some one else would visit them. Next day such a company assembled there as he had not seen, except a few times at Kennington. For an hour he lifted up his voice "like a trumpet," so that all his vast congregation heard. "The convincing Spirit was in the midst, as I have seldom, if ever, known. I am inclined to think that most present were convinced of righteousness or of sin. God hath now set before us an open door, and who shall be able to shut it?" A fortnight later John Wesley set out for Cornwall to carry on the work.

Charles was at Nottingham on October 21st, 1743, when John came from Wednesbury with his clothes torn to tatters. The mob of three towns had dragged him about for three hours, determined to murder him, but he had been wonderfully delivered. Their ringleader, the greatest profligate in the country, carried the preacher

through the river on his shoulders. Charles carefully preserved the particulars of his brother's memorable escape, and ventured into the very scene of the riot, where he received Munchin, the captain of the mob, into the Society. He asked this man what he thought of his brother. "Think of him!" was the answer: "that he is a mon of God; and God was on his side, when so many of us could not kill one mon."

The rest of the year passed quietly. One entry in the journal shows the power of his ministry. At Cardiff, on November 1st, where the gentlemen had threatened great things if he appeared among them again, the Word was irresistible. One of the most violent opposers took him by the hand after the service, and begged that he would visit him. Others were equally friendly. Even a drunkard, who made some disturbance, sent to ask pardon when he was sober. On Christmas Day, at Bexley, he heard that one of the fiercest persecutors, "who had cut his throat and lay for dead some hours, was miraculously revived, as a monument of Divine mercy." Many of his companions had been hurried into eternity whilst persecuting God's people. This man was now seeking mercy. He was quite overcome when Charles Wesley paid him a visit and gave him a small alms. "He could only thank me with his tears." On the last day of the year he visited another opposer of the truth who had been subdued by the approach of death. This man now expressed "incredible eagerness for redemption in the blood of Jesus." These are pleasant words for the last line of his diary during a year which had been so full of opposition. Even the opposers were to be subdued and saved at last.

CHAPTER VIII.

LABOURS IN ENGLAND AND IRELAND, 1744—1748.

Hard Days for Methodists—Floor of the Preaching Room at Leeds Gives Way—Appears before the Magistrates at Wakefield—Happy Cornish Visit—Influence of Methodism in the County—Hears his Brother Preach at Oxford—Triumphs in the West Riding—Winter Journeys—Trouble caused by Thomas Williams—London and Bristol—Conversion of Mrs. Rich—A Theatrical and Musical Circle—Accident at Shepton Mallet—Visit to Cornwall in 1746—Work in Newcastle—The Riot at Devizes—First Visit to Dublin—Dr. Byrom in London—Second Visit to Ireland.

THE year 1744 was much like its predecessor. On New Year's Day, when Charles Wesley walked down the streets of Bexley, there was a surprising contrast between the reception he received and that given him on former visits. Kind salutations had taken the place of stones and curses. This was a happy omen for the year. At the end of January he set out for Newcastle. He passed through Staffordshire, which he aptly describes as the seat of war, and visited Wednesbury, "the field of battle." Not long before, a Methodist preacher had been cruelly treated by a mob of Papists and of Dissenters, headed by their minister. A good Quaker lent the preacher his broad-brimmed hat and coat, and thus probably saved his life. Charles Wesley preached unharmed within sight of the place. At Wednesbury he found some of the Society ready to turn upon their persecutors. It was no wonder they felt thus embittered,

Their friend was able, however, to allay "the fiery, self-avenging spirit of resistance." When the storm burst, those who had saved some little property were willing to be stripped of all things rather than dishonour their religion. The magistrates of the district supported the mob; one of them even said that he would give £5 to drive the Methodists out of the country. The result was disastrous. At Darlaston the rioters sent out the crier to summon the members to a public house. They were to be forced to promise never to hear the Methodist preachers, on pain of having their houses pulled down. If any singing or reading of the Scriptures was heard in a house, the mob forced open the doors. They robbed and beat the Methodists with impunity. These persecutors were the dregs of the district, who thus snatched the bread for which they would not work out of the mouth of the Methodists.

After spending a few days among them, Charles Wesley pursued his journey northwards. The way to Nottingham led him and his companion, Mr. Webb, through Walsall. A notice had recently been posted here, inviting all the country to rise and destroy the Methodists. Charles Wesley would rather have gone another mile than venture into the place. His anxiety increased when he heard some one hallooing with might and main. Then there arose a great noise as if the whole town was preparing to greet them. Oddly enough, the clamour was made by a hunter, a bitter enemy of the Methodists. It was just daybreak. The Methodist itinerants fell in with this gentleman and his pack, so that they passed for good hunters. "Brother Webb," Charles Wesley says, "would needs ride through the market-place, to see the flag and paper our enemies had set up—and to show his courage. Had he returned with a broken head,

"I should not have greatly pitied him." This comment is characteristic. When his work required it, Charles Wesley was always ready to venture among the fiercest rioters, but he looked upon his friend's conduct in this case as tempting Providence. In Nottingham the mayor offered his protection ; but when the preacher stood at the Cross amid the rabble and greatly needed help, this magistrate passed by laughing. After half an hour's struggle for a hearing they had to withdraw, pursued with stones by the mob. The day's experience taught Charles Wesley how necessary it was to wait more earnestly on God for direction when and where to preach, lest false courage should betray them into unnecessary dangers. He saw also the inexpediency of seeking redress by law, unless they were sure of obtaining it. In other cases the attempt would simply discover their weakness and irritate their enemies.

These were troubled times. One good Methodist was struck on the temples with a large log of wood, and would probably have been murdered but for the cries of a child. Next day news came that the Staffordshire mob had been out. Two of the sufferers wrote to say they had lost everything, but even in this hour of trouble their joy was unspeakable. The travellers found that though persecution abounded in some places, others were quite changed. In Sheffield, where he had received such a warm reception on his previous visit, not a stone was thrown. Thorpe, too, was subdued. The woman who led the mob, the bitterest of all their persecutors, had died in horrible despair. Her daughter and several others were converted, and a little Society met in this former stronghold of opposition.

They reached Newcastle on February 16th. For three weeks Charles Wesley laboured here with much peace. He breakfasted with a gentleman who now professed the

faith for which he had formerly persecuted his daughters. This Mr. Watson was one of the town sergeants, and had been the greatest swearer in the place. The mayor asked him publicly, "What, Mr. Watson, do you go to hear these men?" "Yes," he answered, "at every proper opportunity, and I wish you would hear them too."

On the return journey Charles Wesley met the Society at Leeds in an old upper room on March 14th. Some one begged him to take his stand nearer the door, so that those who were outside might hear. As soon as he did this, the floor sank. The preacher lost consciousness for a moment. When he recovered, he says he was filled with power from above. A hundred people lay under him, heaps upon heaps. He cried out, "Fear not; the Lord is with us; our lives are all safe," and then—

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

He lifted up those who had fallen, and saw to his great relief that none were killed. When the dust and tumult were settled, it was found that the rafters had broken off short by the main beam. Two women and a child in its cradle were in the room below, but a minute before the accident they had moved to the side which remained standing. By this means all were preserved. Charles Wesley himself did not fall, but slipped softly down, alighting on his feet. His hand was bruised, and part of the skin was rubbed off his head. One member broke her arm, another was so badly crushed that she expected instant death. But all the Methodists were full of peace and joy. A boy of eighteen, who had come to make a disturbance, and had struck several of the women as they went in, had his leg broken in two places, and was taken up roaring, "I will be good, I will be good!" After the accident Charles Wesley managed to preach outside the town, in

weariness and painfulness. This event is said to have suggested his hymn "The great Archangel's trump shall sound."

Next day he rode to Wakefield. A justice of the peace had ordered certain persons to appear before him there at the White Hart Inn, to give "information against one Westley, or any other of the Methodist speakers, for speaking any treasonable words or exhortations, as praying for the banished, or for the Pretender." No one expected "Westley" himself to appear. When he presented himself before the three justices, one of whom was a clergyman, he was told that they had nothing to say to him. The Methodist preacher was not to be shaken off thus. He knew that unless he fully cleared himself and his people from the charge of disloyalty, their enemies would soon avail themselves of this slander to stir up a violent persecution. The magistrates told him they were informed that the Methodists constantly prayed for the Pretender in all their societies, or "nocturnal meetings." He replied that, on the contrary, they constantly prayed for King George by name. He handed them copies of the hymns sung by the Methodists, with John Wesley's "Appeals," and other publications. "I am as true a Church of England man, and as loyal a subject, as any man in the kingdom," he added.

The witnesses melted away when it was known that Charles Wesley himself would confront them. Only one came. Even he started back, trembling in every limb, when he saw that the preacher was present. This man was at last compelled to make a statement. "I have nothing to say against the gentleman," he said; "I only heard him pray that the Lord would call home his banished." That beautiful Bible phrase had been made the occasion of this malicious charge. "Now, gentlemen,"

Charles Wesley said, when he heard the accusation, "give me leave to explain my own words. I had no thoughts of praying for the Pretender, but for those that confess themselves strangers and pilgrims upon earth, who seek a country, knowing this is not their place. The Scriptures, you, sir, know," he continued, turning to the clergyman, "speak of us as captive exiles, who are absent from the Lord while in the body. We are not at home till we are in heaven." The magistrates at last acknowledged, in explicit terms, that his loyalty was unquestionable. He returned to Birstal in peace. There he saw the wisdom of his conduct. The enemies of the Methodists were rising. They had even begun to pull down John Nelson's house, but when they heard the lusty singing of the Methodists returning in triumph, they were put to flight at once. John Nelson says that on this visit to Birstal the Lord was with Charles Wesley "in such a manner that the pillars of hell seemed to tremble: many that were famous for supporting the devil's kingdom fell to the ground while he was preaching as if they had been thunderstruck." One day he had preached four times; and at night a friend who had been amongst the people said, that twenty-two had received forgiveness of their sins during the day.

On his way to London Charles Wesley visited Nottingham, where the mayor was the friend of the mob. The Methodists presented a petition to one of the judges, who severely rebuked the mayor for his conduct. When the judge left the town, the Methodists were persecuted more than ever. "Why don't you go to my lord judge?" was the mayor's taunt when they appealed to him for protection. Charles Wesley exhorted the little persecuted company to keep well together, and rode on to the Foundry. With the exception of a week in Bristol and Bath, he remained in London for more than three months.

He collected and sent £60 for the sufferers at Wednesbury. One of the Methodists there was about to make an affidavit against the justices, but Charles Wesley persuaded him to give up his intention. He urged the people to suffer all things patiently. His services in London were full of power. Once, he says, the whole congregation was in tears under the Word. At West Street there was for a moment no small risk of a repetition of the Leeds disaster. The floor began to sink whilst he was preaching, but the people got off quietly, without a cry or disturbance. In 1759, when the chapel was repaired, the timbers were found to be so rotten that a man's fingers could be thrust into them. If the work had been delayed a few months, John Wesley thought that the building might have fallen to the ground.

Charles Wesley's Cornish visit, in July, filled his heart with praise. "What an amazing work," he says, "hath God done in one year! The whole country is alarmed, and gone forth after the sound of the Gospel. In vain do the pulpits ring of 'Popery, madness, enthusiasm.' Our preachers are daily pressed to new places, and enabled to preach five or six times a day. Persecution is kept off till the seed takes root. Societies are springing up everywhere; and still the cry from all sides is, 'Come and help us.'" Everywhere the people seemed athirst for the Word. When he went to meet the Society at Gwennap, almost the whole congregation was quietly waiting at the door. He stood at the window, so that all might hear. "I felt what manner of spirit they were of, and had sweet fellowship with them, and strong consolation." He took breakfast with one who had been a fierce persecutor when he was last in the county; now she was a witness to the truth. At another place he admitted the greatest persecutor in Cornwall to the Society. The clergy were still

opposed to the work. Some of them were enraged because the Methodists were so familiar with the Scriptures. One even expressed a wish that the Bible were in Latin only, so that none of the vulgar might be able to read it. A member went to the Rev. Dr. Borlase, a magistrate, to seek redress, because a rioter had broken into his house and stolen his goods. "They may burn thy house if they will," was the doctor's reply; "thou shalt have no justice."

At St. Ives, in Cornwall, about the year 1744, Charles Wesley told Henry Moore that after hearing himself abused longer than usual in a sermon at church, he stayed to the sacrament. The minister, who noticed him waiting in his pew, called his clerk and talked to him for some time within the communion rails. The service then proceeded. When Charles Wesley approached, the clergyman retreated towards the wall, and the clerk advanced holding out the large Prayer-book and crying, "Avaunt, Satan! avaunt!" Charles remained some time; but as nothing would quiet the clerk he retired to his pew, and the service went on.

St. Ives was still the headquarters of the rioting. A Methodist complained to the magistrate that stones of many pounds' weight had been thrown into the house, and fell on the pillow within a few inches of her infant. "You shall have no justice here," was his answer. The following passage from Charles Wesley's Journal has a fine vein of irony: "The last midnight assault upon our brethren, I am now informed, was made by the townsmen and a crew that are here fitting out for privateers, who thought it prudent to make the first proof of their courage upon their own unarmed countrymen. They made their regular approaches with beat of drum, to take the poor people's houses by storm. But they were only permitted to batter

them with stones, and endanger the lives of a few women and children. Woe be to the first French or Spaniards who fall into the hands of men so flushed with victory! They only want the captain who drew upon me" (at Sheffield) "to head them, and then they would carry the world before them!"

Methodism was now firmly planted in Cornwall. It was producing a moral and spiritual reformation throughout the county. One notice of a service held in the courtyard of a large gentleman's seat near Penryn will show what counsels Charles Wesley gave the people. They came pouring in from Falmouth and all the country round, till there were two thousand hearers. Gentlemen and ladies came, as well as miners. They listened with deep attention, whilst the preacher, who stood in a gallery overlooking the courtyard, exhorted them "to attend all the ordinances of the Church; to submit to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake; to stop the mouth of gainsayers by fearing God and honouring the king; and to prevent the judgments hanging over our heads by a general reformation." Such was the moral and social teaching of primitive Methodism. The next entry in the journal shows what fruit this teaching had already borne. "On Saturday, August 4th, 1744, I preached at Gwennap, where the awakening is general. Very many who have not courage to enter into the Society have yet broke off their sins by repentance, and are waiting for forgiveness. The whole country is sensible of the change; for last assizes there was a jail-delivery,—not one felon to be found in their prisons, which has not been known before in the memory of man. At their last revel they had not men enough to make a wrestling match, all the Gwennap men being struck off the devil's list, and found wrestling against him, not for him."

Next day the farewell service at Gwennap was held. "My Father's children," he says, "were comforted on every side." An innumerable multitude assembled on the green plain before the preacher, and on the hill that surrounded it. The discourse lasted two hours. The preacher could scarcely break off. The people were not less moved. With great difficulty Charles Wesley and his companion got through the host of friends, and set forward on their journey. Even then several men and women kept up with the horses for two or three miles.

After leaving Cornwall, Charles Wesley visited Wales and Bristol. The end of August found him at Oxford, listening to his brother's last sermon before the University. Mr. Piers and Mr. Meriton walked with the Wesleys to and from St. Mary's. There was a crowded congregation. Charles Wesley had never seen a more attentive one. The service was at ten ; at noon John set out for London, Charles for Bristol. Charles had, the previous day, attended prayers at Christ Church, spent two or three hours in conference with his brother, and preached to a multitude of the brethren, gownsmen, and gentry from the races, who filled the inn and yard. The strangers seemed astonished at the joy of Charles and his friends. "Oh, that all the world had a taste for *our* diversion !" he adds.

At the end of September he spent a fortnight in London before he set out for the north. He had a triumphant progress through the West Riding, though he found that a Mr. Viney, who had been received on Wesley's recommendation, had done great mischief in Birstal by "bringing them off their *animal love* for their pastors, their prayers, fastings, works, and holiness." John Nelson had been pressed for a soldier, and this wolf in sheep's clothing had almost destroyed the work of God by the time that Nelson returned from his captivity. On October 24th

Charles Wesley says, "I preached at Leeds from 'As for thee, by the blood of the covenant I have sent up thy prisoners out of the pit.' Here the great blessing is. One, as far as can yet be discerned, received forgiveness: all were comforted or convinced." Next day, he says, "I preached at Bradford on 'This is He that came by water and by blood.' The whole congregation was in a flame. Surely God hath a great work to do among this people. I met the Birstal Society, whom Mr. Viney had almost quite perverted; so that they laughed at all fasting and self-denial and family prayer and such-like works of the law. They were so alienated by that cunning supplanter that they took no notice of John Nelson when he came back; for all that, Viney taught them, was animal love." On the Sunday, when preaching on Birstal Hill, he sharply rebuked those who had been led astray, and the spirit of contrition fell upon them. "It was a blessed mourning, and continued at the Society. Then first my heart was enlarged, and my faith returned for these poor shattered sheep. They confessed their sin, and God showed Himself faithful and just. Our love-feast began with sorrow, but ended with joy. The Lord received our petitions, and assured us in prayer that the plague was stayed."

Having done this good work, he pushed further north. Persecution had in great measure ceased, though it was still experienced around Newcastle. The weather was perhaps the roughest Charles Wesley ever met. On November 17th the snow made the roads almost impassable for horses. He followed a friend on foot. Next day he walked to Sunderland and back again. The hail and snow were so violent that he was often on the point of lying down in the road, because he could neither walk nor stand. The following day he struggled across

the fields up to his knees in snow ; then he rode and walked to a second place where he was to preach, with his "jaw quite stiffened and disabled by the snow." After a night's rest he waded back to Newcastle, "ofttimes up to my middle in snow." The same afternoon he rode or rather walked to Plessy to preach. On Thursday, two days later, he returned to Newcastle ; then preached at Wickham and Spen. He was so feeble that he could not walk to Spen. The road was, however, so bad that he had to struggle on foot the last mile. The horses often sank up to their shoulders. He was rewarded for this weary journey by a congregation that surprised him. Both preacher and people were comforted abundantly. The intense cold continued throughout his visit to the north. He reached London safely, however, on December 29th, and spent the last days of 1744 at the Foundery.

The great sorrow of this busy year was the conduct of Thomas Williams, a young man whom the Wesleys had warmly befriended until they found out his worthless character. When they publicly disowned him, he propagated slanders against them, so plausibly supported that some of the unwary Methodists were led astray. He tried to obtain orders from the Archbishop of Canterbury. Because Charles Wesley did not support his application as he wished, he railed against the Wesleys as Papists, tyrants, enemies of the Church. He was "haughty, revengeful, headlong, unmanageable." Charles Wesley remonstrated ; but though his heart seemed touched, he soon relapsed into his old ways. In the bitterness of his soul, Charles Wesley wrote to a friend, "Such depth of ingratitude I did not think was in the devils of hell." The trouble caused by Williams lasted till the end of the year. Charles Wesley showed the greatest kindness to

him. He prayed earnestly for his restoration ; but the man remained impenitent, and tried to form a conspiracy against his benefactor. From Newcastle the troubled preacher wrote to the Society in London. He had just received letters from the Foundery, which described the ill-feeling caused by Williams. The blessed service that night steeled him against the temptation to abandon his work. "My dearest Brethren,—Last night I was informed that the Philistines shouted against me, and the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon us. To Him give all the glory, that I find my heart so enlarged toward you as never before. Now I can truly say, 'Ye are not straitened in me.' All my pining desires after rest are vanished, and I am at last content to do what is more than dying for you, even to live for you, and suffer out my time. Here, then, I give up myself your servant for Christ's sake, to wait upon you till all are gathered home. Where ye go I will go ; and where ye lodge I will lodge : where ye die will I die, and there will I be buried. Neither shall death itself part you and me. Such a night of consolation as the last I have seldom known. Our souls were filled with faith and prayer, and knit to yours in love unchangeable. Lift up holy hands, that I may approve myself a true minister of Jesus Christ in all things."

The trouble still weighed upon him, however. On December 17th he wrote to a friend, "The joint may perhaps be set, but the halting will continue till I come to the land where all things are forgotten."

The year 1745 was comparatively uneventful for Charles Wesley. He spent more than eight months in London ; the rest of his time was devoted to three visits to Bristol and the neighbourhood. It was no small privilege for London Methodism to have so large a share of his

awakening and comforting ministry. He generally expounded the Gospel for the day with great power. In his journal he says, "I found, both in the Word and in prayer, and at the altar, the double blessing which now continually attends us." Another entry is, "I received the never-failing blessing at the sacrament. Our prayer, after it, always opens heaven." Such was his London ministry in these days.

At West Street he rejoiced over one notable conversion. Mrs. Rich, the wife of the proprietor of Covent Garden Theatre, heard him there apparently about the year 1745. An interesting article in the *Wesleyan Magazine** shows that she is first mentioned when serving as a barmaid in Bret's Coffee House, Covent Garden ; and after appearing as an actress at Rich's theatre, became his housekeeper, and then his third wife on October 25th, 1744. Priscilla Stevens was thirty-one, Rich being fifty-two. She was a lady of great beauty and accomplishments, as well as a fine actress. Under Charles Wesley's ministry she was convinced of sin, and found forgiveness. Her husband was much displeased. He persecuted her for her Methodism, and insisted upon her re-appearance on the stage. She told him that if he forced her to appear, she must bear her testimony in public against the theatre ; so she was at last left in peace. Samuel Wesley, the musician, says that she was one of the first who attended West Street. An entry in Charles Wesley's journal, October 26th, 1745, seems to prove that her decision for Christ was taken not long before. "I dined," he says, "at Mrs. R.'s. The family concealed their fright tolerably well. Mr. R. behaved with great civility. I foresee the

* "By-ways of Methodist History." By Rev. Richard Butterworth, May, 1897.

storm my visit will bring upon him." Mr. Rich occupied a commanding position in the theatrical world. His father had been the patentee of Drury Lane, and afterwards built Lincoln's Inn Theatre. He died before the new theatre was ready for opening, so that the management devolved on his son. To struggle successfully against the attractions of Drury Lane, he arranged those pantomimic effects to which Garrick referred when he said of Rich—

He gave the power of speech to every limb.

So great was his success that he needed a larger place, and built the first Covent Garden Theatre in 1732. His friend Hogarth prepared a caricature for the opening—"Rich's glory ; or, his triumphal entry into Covent Garden." The room in which he painted his scenes and put in action the small pasteboard models of the pantomime with his own hand was frequented by such men as Hogarth, and his father-in-law, Sir James Thornhill. The Earl of Peterborough was a constant visitor. Once he stayed late. Rich was a regular man, and his dinner-hour found the earl still in the room. He drew out his gridiron and prepared his steak, then asked Peterborough to join him. The nobleman was highly pleased, came again with some friends, and thus Rich became the founder of the famous Beefsteak Club.

Mr. Rich now came under the influence of Methodism, though he seems to have fought against conviction. His wife retained her affection for Charles Wesley, who had been the means of such spiritual blessing to her, to the close of her long life. After he removed to London, he often visited her at Chelsea, or at Cowley Grove, Uxbridge, with his wife and children. One letter from Mrs. Rich to Charles Wesley presents a striking picture of the effects of this conversion.

"LONDON, Nov. 27th, 1746.

"DEAR AND REV. SIR,—I am infinitely obliged to you for your kind letter. It gave me great comfort, and at a time I had much need of it ; for I have been very ill, both in body and mind. Some part arose from my poor partner, who, I fear, has in a great measure stifled his convictions which God gave him. As to myself, God has been pleased to show me so much of my own unworthiness and helplessness that the light has almost broken my heart ; and I might truly be called 'a woman of a sorrowful spirit.'

"O, think what it is to be obliged to conceal this from the eyes of those that know nothing of these things, but call it all madness ! The Lord teach them better ; at whose Table I have been greatly strengthened ; and through His grace I still hope to conquer all the enemies of my soul.

"I gave a copy of the hymn to Mr. Lampe, who, at the reading, shed some tears, and said he would write to you ; for he loved you as well as if you were his own brother. The Lord increase it, for I hope it is a good sign.

"As to the sale of the hymns, he could give me no account as yet, not having received any himself ; nor have I got my dear little girl's.

"The enclosed is a copy of a song Mr. Rich has sung in a new scene, added to one of his old entertainments, in the character of Harlequin-Preacher, to convince the town he is not a Methodist. O, pray for him that he may be a Christian indeed, and then he will be no more concerned about what he is called, and for me,

"YOUR UNWORTHY DAUGHTER IN CHRIST."

This conversion opened a new circle to Charles Wesley, where he often enjoyed the musical talent of his new friends, and was made a blessing to many whom no other

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TIMOTHY iv. 22.

The Lord Jesus Christ be
with thy Spirit.. Grace be
with you. Amen.

(52)

BLESSED Word of Salutation,
Which the great Apostle spake!
Jesus, Giver of Salvation,
He, who did our Curse revoke,
He, who by the precious Merit
Of his all-atoning Blood,
Purchas'd the indwelling Spirit,
Fill you with the Life of God.

Come, Thou everlasting Saviour,
To a waiting Sinner come.
Let me in Thy Sight find Favour,
Make my Heart Thy constant Home:
By Thy Grace in me abiding,
Cleanse my Soul, and keep me clean:
Here continually residing; —
LORD, Thy Spirit cries, — AMEN!

Methodist could reach. We find Mrs. Rich accompanying him to Brentford with other Methodist "sisters," on March 24th, 1746. On the following Good Friday she and her two youngest step-daughters—one, the "greatest miracle of all accomplishments, both of mind and body," that Charles Wesley had ever seen—took tea at his sister's, Mrs. Wright's, in Frith Street, Soho.

Next afternoon there was a Methodist party at Mrs. Rich's house. Much of the time was spent in praise. They "caught a physician by the ear, through the help of Mr. Lampe and some of our sisters. This is the true use of music." Mrs. Rich sometimes took Charles Wesley in her coach to her home in Chelsea, and showed the warmest interest in his family. She gave her friend's son Charles, the brilliant boy musician, a copy of Handel's songs, and invited him from Bristol to London that he might attend all the oratorios, for which she promised to provide tickets. Mr. Beard, one of the most eminent of English tenors, for whom Handel composed the tenor parts in the *Messiah*, *Israel in Egypt*, *Jephthah*, *Judas*, and *Samson*, had married Mrs. Rich's step-daughter Charlotte, in 1759. His first wife, the daughter of Earl Waldegrave, and widow of Lord Edward Herbert, had died six years before. Mr. Beard was the first London authority to confirm the verdict of Bristol musicians on little Charles Wesley's rare musical talent. He also gave the boy Scarlatti's lessons and Purcell.

Rich himself was greatly impressed by the Methodist influences around him. Charles Wesley wrote, "Poor Mr. R. has got an hook within him which shall bring him at last to land." The change was manifest to many. Smollett says, "The poor man's head, which was not naturally very clear, had been disordered with superstition; and he laboured under the tyranny of a wife and the

terror of hell-fire at the same time." A current lampoon ran :

Fraught with the spirit of a Gothic monk,
Let Rich, with dulness and devotion drunk, etc.

He died on November 26th, 1761, and was buried in Hillingdon churchyard, not far from his house at Cowley Grove. His tombstone says, "In him were united the various virtues that could endear him to family, friends, and acquaintances. Distress never failed to find relief in his bounty, unfortunate merit a refuge in his generosity." His widow died on February 28th, 1783, and was buried at Hillingdon, where a marble stone was placed "by her brother, Edward Wilford, Esq., and by the surviving daughters of the said John Rich, Esq. (by Amy, his second wife), who remember her tender care of them from infancy with respect, affection, and gratitude."

Charles Wesley spent a few days at Bristol in June, 1745. He was greatly comforted by the prosperity of the Society there. In a letter to a friend he says, "The work of God goes on successfully. Great is the constancy of them that believe. Neither error nor sin can shake them!" He speaks of three death-beds which were lighted up by Christian hope, and adds these inspiring words, "I have observed that all our people, without exception, be they ever so dark or weak before, when they come to die, recover their confidence. Would to God every soul, of every Christian denomination, might witness the same confession of eternal life in them when they turn their faces to the wall!"

During this year he was laid aside for nearly a month by a severe sprain. In springing up some rising ground at Shepton Mallet he injured his leg, and fell down when he attempted to put it to the ground. The principal

man of the place sent his bath-chair, with an invitation to his house, but the pain was so great that the preacher felt unfit "for any company, except that of my best friends—the poor." Their love quite delighted him. Those were happiest who could come near to minister to his wants. They prayed, sang, and rejoiced together for two hours, then laid the exhausted sufferer on the best bed they had. His pain caused him a sleepless night, yet such was his devotion to his work that at six o'clock next morning he met the Society and took in twenty new members. At eight the surgeon came, and found that his leg was not broken, but violently sprained. It was Sunday. Many had come from far to hear him preach. He would not have them disappointed. The brethren took him out in a chair, which they set on a table; then he preached kneeling. He was afterwards carried to Oakhill, where he preached another hour on his knees. The rain fell fast, but all heard him gladly. He felt no pain or weariness. The greatest trial was the twenty miles' ride to Bristol. "They set me on the horse," he says, "and by night I performed the journey, but in such extreme pain as I have not known, with all my broken bones and sicknesses." From Bristol he sailed to Cardiff on the Wednesday, and stayed with his friend Mrs. Jones, of Fonmon Castle, Glamorganshire, three weeks, in what he called "my delightful confinement." Mr. Jones, who had been, like himself, a Christ-Church man, died in 1742. He had been led to the truth by Charles Wesley, and had joined himself to the despised Methodists. His widow was still a faithful friend.

In 1746 he spent three months and a half in London, with his usual success. He was able to pay a visit to Cornwall at the end of June. Persecution had been blessed to the Church. Even the opposers were surprised at

the steadfastness and godly conversation of the Methodists. Seven happy weeks were given to these old friends. During the persecution the people had been kept together by exhorters, who had been raised up in almost every society. Charles Wesley met four of them at Gwennap. He talked closely with them. "I advised and charged them," he says, "not to stretch themselves beyond their line, by speaking out of the Society, or fancying themselves public teachers. If they keep within their bounds, as they promise, they may be useful in the Church; and I would to God that all the Lord's people were prophets, like these!" This was a liberal sentiment for Charles Wesley. He was able to overlook irregularities when they were so evidently owned of God.

St. Ives was now quite changed. He walked the streets with astonishment, scarcely believing that it was the place where he had been "in deaths oft." All through the country opposition had been laid low by the grace of God. In Redruth he was surprised by the general civility shown him as he walked through the streets. In another place, nearly a hundred of the fiercest rioters, who a few months before had cruelly beaten the Methodists, not sparing even women or children, came to fight for Charles Wesley, and said they would lose their lives in his defence. Happily, the disturbance which they anticipated did not arise, so that the services of these champions were not required. Hundreds of people, once persecutors, were now outwardly reformed. Though they did not join the Society, they had given up their outward sins, and would not suffer a word to be spoken against "this way."

The Society at St. Just had stood firm in the midst of severe persecution. Charles Wesley now heard that some had fallen into error and sin. He examined them one by one. "Most of them had kept their first love, even while

men were riding over their heads, and they passed through fire and water. Their exhorter appeared a solid, humble Christian, raised up to stand in the gap, and keep the trembling sheep together." Dr. Borlase's brother, a drunken spendthrift, once a gentleman of fortune, had been a bitter persecutor. He swore that there should be no preaching in St. Just, and actually tried to press John Wesley for a soldier. He dragged one good Methodist away from his home, though he was past age, for the king's service. He also tried to dispose of Mr. Meriton and Mr. Graves, two clergymen who helped the Wesleys, in the same way. Mr. Graves he seized in his bed, and hurried on board a man-of-war. Charles Wesley could only adore the grace of God which had kept this persecuted flock from going astray, and had raised up helpers in their need. For every preacher the enemy cut off, twenty sprang up, so that the work went on steadily.

Nine or ten thousand people listened to his farewell sermon at Gwennap. He spoke nearly two hours, and broke out again and again into prayer and exhortation. "I believed not one word would return empty. Seventy years' sufferings were overpaid by one such opportunity!" In the meeting of the Society the Holy Spirit was poured upon them in more abundant measure than he had ever known. The joy and hope he felt were an abundant recompense for all former troubles in Cornwall.

On September 2nd, 1746, he reached London, having visited Plymouth, Tavistock, and Bristol, on his way to town. In October he started for Newcastle with his friend Edward Perronet, son of the Vicar of Shoreham, in Kent. Not long before, when Charles Wesley visited the Perronets at Shoreham, the mob began to roar, stamp, blaspheme, and ring the bells. The preacher spoke on for half an hour, though only those nearest to him could hear. Then

the rioters followed them to the vicarage, throwing stones. Charles Perronet, another son of the Vicar of Shoreham, hung over his friend to intercept the blows, and at last they reached the house safely.

The family had held aloof from the Wesleys for some time through a mistaken notion that the brothers were enemies of the Church. That misapprehension was now removed, and a life-long friendship was formed between the Wesleys and the Perronets. The vicar became the trusted counsellor of both brothers, so that Charles called him the "Archbishop of the Methodists."

Edward Perronet's heart clave to the poet-preacher, and he joined him in his work. Wednesbury was now at rest, but Charles Wesley's companion was not left without a brush with the mob. At Penkridge they were hardly seated before the rioters beat at the door. Charles Wesley ordered it to be opened, and immediately the house was filled. He sat still in the midst of them for half an hour. Edward Perronet, who tried to reason with them before they had spent any of their violence, "got much abuse and not a little dirt for his pains." He bore all patiently, however. By and by Charles Wesley spoke to them of judgment to come. As they grew calmer he addressed them one by one. He held one man who was most hardened by the hand, and urged him by the love of Christ, "till, in spite of both his natural and diabolical courage, he trembled like a leaf." Then he broke out in earnest prayer for this man's salvation. Such treatment of the mob showed that Charles Wesley had learned how to deal with rioters. In this case it produced the happiest effect. All the enemies were changed to friends, and parted from the preacher with the greatest kindness.

In Newcastle Edward Perronet fell ill of small-pox, but he was raised up again. Charles Wesley tells his friend

Mr. Blackwell, on November 10th, "Travelling, examining societies, and nursing sick friends have quite swallowed up this present month. God has prospered me in all things hitherto. Bodily weakness and pain I reckon prosperity to my soul." In his affliction Mr. Perronet found the sense of pardon which he had been seeking for some time. His companion writes, "He has not a moment's doubt of his acceptance, for his believing heart overflows with love to *his* Saviour. O, my friends, how do I long to rejoice over *you* as now I rejoice over him! A soul triumphing in its first love is a spectacle for men and angels. It makes me forget my own sorrows and carry the cross of life without feeling it." A month later he reports that the convert "grows apace, is bold as a lion, meek as a lamb, and begins to speak in this Name to the hearts of sinners."

Charles Wesley visited many towns and villages in the neighbourhood of Newcastle. The work at Hexham was most remarkable. Mr. Wardrobe, a Dissenting minister, and some other friends, had urged him to visit the place. The clergyman indignantly refused to lend his pulpit to the stranger, but he came to hear him in the market-place. No one offered to interrupt save a squire, who had no supporters. Even his own servants and the constables hid themselves when he wished them to help him. The only place Charles Wesley could get to preach in was a cock-pit. Squire Roberts, the son of the magistrate who had ordered him to leave the town, tried to raise a mob, but even the boys ran away from him when he urged them to go to the cock-pit and cry "Fire!" The strange meeting-house was undisturbed during the first visit. The preacher imagined himself in the Pantheon or some heathen temple. He almost felt reluctant to preach here at first, but such a blessing attended the

Word that the hearts of all were melted. They scarcely knew how to part. Three weeks later, when he appeared in Hexham again, he found the butlers of the two magistrates ready to dispute possession of the cock-pit. They had brought their cocks, and set them fighting. The preacher left them in possession, and walked to the Cross, where four times as many as the cock-pit could hold heard his message. The enemies tried in vain to annoy them.

He left Newcastle before the end of December, but did not reach London till February 10th, 1747. At Grimsby there was some disturbance. Several wild creatures, almost naked, he says, ran about the room, striking down all they met. For nearly an hour this uproar lasted. When any attempt was made to drag the preacher down, other rioters interposed. Charles Wesley laid his hand on the captain, who sat down at his feet all the time like a lamb. One man struck at Charles, but a companion received the blow, which left its mark upon his face. Another of the disturbers, indignant at such conduct, cried, "What, you dog, do you strike a clergyman?" and fell upon his comrade. The struggle became general, till in a few minutes they had driven each other out of the room. For half an hour Charles Wesley preached in peace. The sequel of the story is not less remarkable. Whilst he was quietly reading the Bible, the rioters cried that they would come in and take leave of him. He says, "I ordered them to be admitted, and the poor drunken beasts were very civil and very loving. One of the ringleaders, with a great club, swore he would conduct me to my lodgings. I followed him, and he led me through his fellows to our brother Blow's. They threw but one stone afterwards, which broke the window; and departed." At Sheffield

some of the fiercest persecutors trembled while the preacher spoke of God's judgments ; and at Darlaston the ringleader of the terrible mob, one of the fiercest even in Staffordshire, was convinced of sin. As Charles Wesley rode through the town he could distinguish the houses of the Methodists by the marks of violence upon them. The windows were all stopped up, and other signs of the riot were evident.

The six months which elapsed between his return from the north, in February, 1747, and his first visit to Ireland were spent mainly in London. He paid three short visits to Bristol. The first was made memorable by the riot at Devizes, perhaps the fiercest Charles Wesley ever passed through. He reached the place with Mr. Meriton on February 24th, between three and four in the afternoon. John Wesley had told his brother that there was no such thing as raising a mob in Devizes. Since that time, however, Mr. Innys, the curate, had gone about for several days stirring up the people, and enlisting the support of the gentry. The gross slanders of this man now bore fruit. When he saw the mob surround the house where Charles Wesley and his companion Mr. Meriton were engaged in prayer with their flock, he danced for very joy. The house was soon besieged by the rabble. They broke the windows, tore down the shutters, blocked the door with a waggon, and provided themselves with lights, lest the preachers should escape. One of the Methodists stole out and persuaded the mayor to come to the spot. His rebuke, however, was so mild that it only encouraged the rioters. A Baptist, who lived next door, led the two clergymen through a passage into his own house, where they spent a quiet night. Next morning the mob got the hose, and began to pour water on the house ; but the constable seized their engine, and carried it off in spite of all

their efforts. They now obtained the larger engine, which soon flooded the rooms and destroyed the furniture. The gentlemen of the place inflamed the rioters with drink, but just as they were ready to break in, the friendly constable read the "proclamation," and the mob dispersed. After a time they surrounded the back door, vowing that they would have Charles Wesley. Such threatenings, curses, and blasphemies he had never heard. The Methodists prayed and conversed together, in full assurance that God would deliver them. Their enemies had actually untiled the roof, when suddenly all became still. By and by one of the constables came with an offer to see Charles Wesley safely out of Devizes, if he would never come there again. This he would not promise. Soon, however, the man led them out. They mounted their horses in face of the rabble, and rode through the shouting mob. "Such fierceness and diabolical malice," Charles Wesley said, "he had not seen in human faces." Two bull-dogs were set on Mr. Meriton's horse, but happily did no serious harm. When they reached Wrexal, they and their friends sang Charles Wesley's hymn—

Worship, and thanks, and blessing,
And strength ascribe to Jesus ;
Jesus alone
Defends His own,
When earth and hell oppress us.

Jesus with joy we witness,
Almighty to deliver ;
Our seal set to
That God is true,
And reigns a King for ever.

On September 9th, 1747, Charles Wesley landed in Dublin, where Methodism had been introduced by Thomas Williams a few weeks earlier. Papacy had firm hold on the

country ; evangelical truth was little known ; the parishes were so large that thousands of the people lived five or six miles from the church. The clergy were not prepared to make any bold attack on the ignorance, the immorality, and carelessness that abounded everywhere. Bible societies, temperance work, and tract societies were unknown. This was Charles Wesley's first visit to Ireland. He was now again in the midst of persecution. Those were days when, as John Trembath, one of Wesley's itinerants in Ireland, said, "No one is fit to be a preacher here who is not ready to die at any moment." Charles Wesley and his friends soon learned the truth of that saying. Dublin riots were by no means despicable. The Ormond mob and liberty mob seldom parted till one or more people were killed. Charles Wesley mentions three recent cases of violence which made him say that the city was full of murderers. Ten days before his arrival the mob had broken open the Methodist preaching-room, where they tore away the pulpit and fittings, and burnt them outside, swearing that they would murder all the Methodists. He preached in the dismantled room, at five o'clock on the evening of his arrival, from the appropriate words, "Comfort ye, comfort ye, My people, saith your God." Papists and Protestants were in arms whenever the Methodists passed through the streets. Charles Wesley came in for a full share of these troubles. On his second day in Dublin the crowd gave him their usual welcome. He says, "One I observed crying, 'Swaddler, swaddler' (our usual title here), who was a young Ishmaelite indeed, and had not long learned to speak. I am sure he could not be four years old." This strange title was afterwards explained to him by the gentleman with whom he dined. John Cennick, the Calvinistic schoolmaster of Kingswood, now had a church in Dublin. He indulged in strange

bursts of rhetoric. Once he said, "I curse and blaspheme all the gods in heaven but the Babe that lay in the manger, the Babe that lay in Mary's lap, the Babe that lay in swaddling clouts." This won him the nickname "Swaddler," or "Swaddling John." All the Methodists, and even the clergy of the city, were honoured with this title.

The brave Methodist preacher who had faced the mob of Devizes went quietly on his way. He preached at Oxmantown Green to thousands of people. Both Protestants and Papists heard him with attention. The Roman Catholics were especially gratified when he quoted à Kempis, and based his appeal to repentance and love of Christ on his authority and that of their own Liturgy. "None lifted up his voice or hand. All listened with strange attention. Many were in tears. I advised them to go to their respective places of worship. They expressed general satisfaction, especially the Papists." On the Sunday afternoon, when holiday makers flocked to the Green, the serious people thronged around him, and those who did not wish to hear withdrew on every side to the opposite hill, where they sat quietly down in rows on the grass. His congregations were as quiet as any he had seen at the Foundery. The soldiers were forbidden to attend the preaching, but they stood within hearing distance concealed behind doors and walls, for fear of their officers. If any officer came in sight the soldiers skulked down, kneeling or sitting on the ground behind the women. One soldier was put under arrest for attending preaching on the Green, but he would not give up attendance, though his officer threatened him much. Charles Wesley had the pleasure of admitting this resolute man into the Society. The mob troubled the preacher sometimes, but he did not receive a single blow until October 30th, when he and

Charles Perronet were stoned for the length of a street or two, but received no hurt.

In Dublin he had the pleasure of opening a new preaching-place at Dolphin's Barn. A house was purchased and adapted to Methodist uses. The ground floor was forty two feet long by twenty-four broad. The rooms above were for the preacher. They were sorely needed. At the lodgings they had occupied there was a family of squalling children, with one maid, who had no time to do anything for them. They had two rooms for four people, and were expecting two more to come shortly. Charles Wesley and his friend Charles Perronet groaned for elbow-room in their press-bed. Their diet was as bad as their lodgings. They had neither any one to mend their clothes nor money to buy more. A few days later, the journal reports, "I passed the day at the house we have purchased, near Dolphin's Barn, writing and meditating. I could almost have set up my rest here ; but must not look for rest on this side eternity." Charles Wesley spent one day in seeking subscriptions, and laid the matter before the Society, who "were glad to give of their little." In two days more than £70 was subscribed. At the opening of the preaching place he says, "After preaching five times to-day, I was as fresh as in the morning."

On February 8th, 1748, he rode to Tyril's Pass, where the Methodist preachers had already been at work. There was now a great awakening in that neighbourhood. A pleasant little incident on the road cheered them greatly. They overtook a boy whistling one of the Methodist tunes. He was a Roman Catholic, but constantly attended the Methodist services, and joined with the travellers in several hymns which he had learned. The people of Tyril's Pass gave them a hearty welcome. "Never have I spoke," he says, "to more hungry souls. They devoured every word.

Some expressed their satisfaction in a way peculiar to them, and *whistled* for joy. Few such feasts have I had since I left England. It refreshed my body more than meat or drink." The people of the place had been wicked to a proverb: swearers, drunkards, thieves, from time immemorial. Now all was changed. One hundred were in Society. Not an oath was heard nor a drunkard seen.

At Athlone the travellers were roughly handled. The Papists, roused by their priest, were bent on murdering the Methodist preachers. The party of seven friends rode on, suspecting nothing till within half a mile of the town, when they were attacked suddenly. Even then they thought that it was a jest until the stones flew round their heads. One struck Mr. Healey, and knocked him off his horse. He fell backward, and lay stretched insensible on the ground. The man who knocked him down was about to strike him on the head with a club, but Charles Wesley cried to him to stop. This diverted his attention, and probably saved Healey's life. The Papists had gathered great heaps of stones to receive them; one struck Charles Wesley on the back, and took away his breath. As often as they came near, the Methodists were assailed by volleys of stones. It was the priest's servant, mounted on his master's horse, who struck Healey. He was just about to kill the prostrate man with a knife, when a poor woman from a hut close by came to his rescue. The villain half killed her with a blow of Healey's riding-whip; but the woman saved the preacher's life. The poor woman herself died afterwards from the effect of the treatment she had received. A Protestant champion who had arrived on the spot struck a pitchfork into the Papist's shoulder, which was only stopped by the bone; he made a second thrust, which was turned aside by one of the Methodists. The Papists lined all the hedges, and kept

their ground until they saw the dragoons coming out of Athlone. The priest's servant was seized in a bog, and delivered to the high constable. He was soon allowed to go, but he did not altogether escape, for a Protestant met him and beat him without mercy. Charles Wesley preached, from the window of a ruined house overlooking the market-place, to more than two thousand hearers. The indignation caused by this disgraceful outrage was profound.

Charles Wesley returned to Dublin after eight days' absence. Here he remained till March 20th, 1748. He found his way to the prison, where one woman, condemned to be burned for coining, was converted. She was afterwards pardoned, and was made a blessing to the executioner, who was much affected by the Word, and "extremely officious" to wait upon Mr. Charles Wesley.

When John Wesley reached Dublin, Charles was set free to return to England. His movements this year were more rapid than usual. Five short periods were spent in London, with rapid journeys to Bristol, Cardiff, and other places in the west. The reason for his frequent visits to Garth during this period will be seen from the next chapter.

Dr. Byrom was in London this year, and on May 7th, 1748, writes, "I dined yesterday with Colonel Gumley and Charles Wesley, and went with them to the Methodist church, English Common Prayers. He preached. I met my old scholar, Mr. Erskine, there, and Lord Pitsligo's son." This nobleman came into Manchester with the Pretender in 1745. The "Methodist Church" was West Street, Seven Dials.

In August of the same year Byrom describes a visit to the Countess of Huntingdon's mansion at Chelsea. He and Dr. Doddridge went together by water. They found Whitefield talking with Charles Stanhope, and heard him

preach to the family and friends. "One, Colonel Gumley, a convert to the Wesleys, was there; also Mr. Bate-man, parson of St. Bartholomew's in Smithfield, who from a great enemy is likewise come over to them, and preaches at their chapel, and they at his church. We left him there, and the colonel, Mr. Whitefield, and I came away in a coach that Lady Huntingdon had provided to London, about six o'clock." The colonel got out at Hyde Park Corner; but as the man did not stop at Abington's (the coffee-house where he stayed) Byrom went on to Whitefield's tabernacle, and sat just behind him while he preached. The place, which held three thousand people, was crowded. Byrom afterwards had supper with Whitefield in his apartments at the tabernacle. This was the temporary shed in Moorfields, which gave place to a new building in 1753. The tabernacle in Tottenham Court Road was not opened until 1756.

In the middle of August, 1748, Charles Wesley again visited Ireland, where he spent nearly two months. A large part of the time was devoted to Cork. Here the awakening was even more general than it had been in Newcastle. "Outward wickedness had disappeared, outward religion succeeded." Swearing was seldom heard in the streets. The churches and the sacramental services were crowded. The chief men of the place were friendly, and the Methodists received the blessing of the people as they passed through the streets. Public favour was shown them all through the country. "Wherever we go," Charles Wesley says, "they receive us as angels of God. Were this to last, I should escape for my life to America." On the marsh, where he preached at five in the morning, many people assembled at one o'clock to be ready for service. On one Sunday his congregation was computed at more than ten thousand. On Sunday, August 21st, he says,

"At five I took the field again ; but such a sight I have rarely seen ! Thousands and thousands had been waiting some hours, Protestants and Papists, high and low." At another service he had as genteel an audience as he had ever seen. Several ministers of all denominations, the governor's lady, and others were present. The bishop and his family, on whom he called, received him with great kindness. Many of the priests were afraid to forbid their people to attend the preaching. A magistrate at Passage, five miles from Cork, threatened that, if the priest hindered his people from hearing Charles Wesley, he would shut up his mass-house and send him to gaol for at least a year. This strange threat shows with what general honour the Methodist preacher was received. It was at first impossible to hold meetings of the Society alone, because the people poured in to hear. At Bandon the whole town welcomed the visitor. They sent him away laden with blessings. Invitations came from all parts of the country. Some of these the preacher was able to accept. Wherever he went the people eagerly received his message. The Roman Catholics owned that "none could find fault with what the man said," and were his firm friends. One Catholic lady pressed him to visit her house, and assured him of the general good will of her Church.

Charles Wesley had a glorious report of the work for the Dublin Society, whom he met again at the end of September. The favour shown him at Cork did not make him forget that persecution would arise ; but he had proclaimed his message to the whole city. He left the result to God. After ten days spent in Dublin he returned to England. He was not mistaken in his presentiment of persecution at Cork. In 1749, Nicholas Butler, a ballad-singer, went about the streets with songs in one hand,

Bible in the other, calling on the people to suppress the heretics. Cork was soon in the hands of the mob. The Methodists scarcely dared to show themselves in the streets. The grand jury at the Assizes threw out all the charges against the rioters, and signalised themselves by reporting, "We find and present Charles Wesley to be a person of ill-fame, a vagabond, and a common disturber of his Majesty's peace ; and we pray he may be transported."

CHAPTER IX.

HIS MARRIAGE.

The Gwynnes of Garth—Miss Sarah Gwynne—A Ripening Affection—John Wesley's Approval—Ways and Means—A Timely Bequest—A Perfect Marriage—Begins Housekeeping in Bristol.

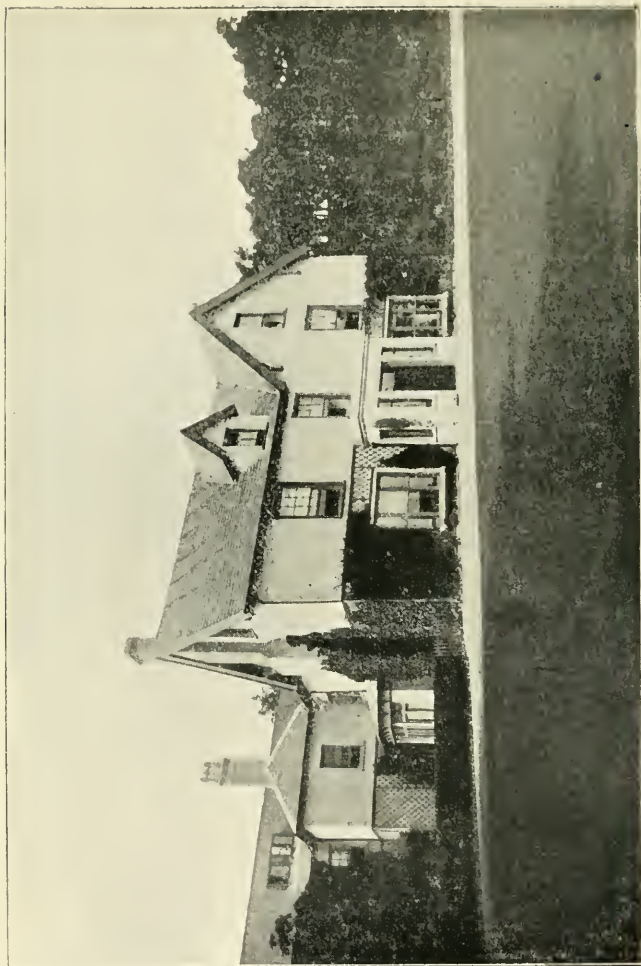
WE are now approaching one of the happiest events in Charles Wesley's life—his marriage to Miss Sarah Gwynne, of Garth. In June, 1739, when he returned to London after a short absence, he says, "The first thing I heard in town was, that my poor friend Stonehouse was actually married. It is a satisfaction to me that I had no hand in it!" The lady whom the Vicar of Islington had married was the daughter of Sir John Crisp. Three months before the marriage the journal states that Charles Wesley encouraged this lady, who was persecuted by her relatives, and defended her to his friend Stonehouse. Two days after he heard of the marriage he met the bride and bridegroom, and had some conversation with Mrs. Stonehouse, "surely a gracious, lovely soul." He adds, "we joined in prayer, and I was better reconciled to their sudden marriage."

George Whitefield advised Charles Wesley to follow his friend's example, but though he thanked Whitefield for his *love*, he did not take kindly to his counsel. Ten years

passed before his own marriage. The incessant labours and fierce persecutions crowded into those years do not allow us to regret that Charles Wesley was free to devote himself wholly to his itinerancy.

The first reference to the Gwynnes is on July 31st, 1745. At that time Mr. Gwynne was with the brothers when they examined the Society at Bristol, and rejoiced greatly in the grace given to the members. He was also present at the second Conference, which began next day. At the end of the month, when Charles Wesley was suffering from his severe sprain, Mr. Gwynne sent his servant to show him the way from Fonmon to Garth, but the sufferer could not be moved. Mr. Gwynne came himself a week later to fetch him, and spent three happy days of Christian fellowship at Fonmon, though the severe lameness would not allow his friend to return with him.

Mr. Gwynne, who was a strict Churchman, had been converted under the preaching of Howel Harris. He understood that the Welsh layman taught doctrines injurious both to Church and State. As he was a magistrate he went to hear for himself, taking the riot act in his pocket, with the intention of committing Harris to prison. He was candid enough, however, to say to his wife as he left home, "I will hear the man myself before I commit him." The sermon was so full of zeal and of sound evangelical teaching that he saw how mistaken he had been. He expected to meet a disturber of the people, he found one who seemed almost an apostle. He went up to the preacher, told him what had brought him, begged his pardon for being misled by slander, and pressed him to come back with him to Garth. Thus the Welsh magistrate and the Welsh evangelist became warm friends. This friendship did much to save the preacher



THE GARTH MANSION.

from persecution at the hands of the local gentry, who were greatly influenced by Mr. Gwynne's conduct.

His residence was about sixteen miles from Brecon, in South Wales. Nine children and twenty servants made up his household. A domestic chaplain read morning and evening prayer with the family and the guests, ten or fifteen of whom were often staying together at this hospitable mansion. Mrs. Gwynne and her five sisters had fortunes of thirty thousand pounds each. They were all married into prosperous families. It was a great shock to Mrs. Gwynne when her husband brought Howel Harris home with him. She quitted the room, and would not return till he was gone. Still more grieved was she when Mr. Gwynne and his daughter Sarah embraced every opportunity of hearing their friend. John Wesley's "Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion," supported by the testimony of those who had known the brothers at Oxford, at last led her to change her views. She heard Harris preach, and gave John Wesley a hospitable welcome when he was in South Wales.

Charles Wesley did not visit Garth till August, 1747, two years after he was laid aside at Fonmon. Then, on his way to Ireland, he spent five pleasant days there. Mr. Gwynne came, with two members of his family, to see him at the house where he was staying. "My soul seemed pleased," he says, "to take acquaintance with them." That evening he preached at Garth, where the whole family received him as a messenger of God. He preached there almost every day of his brief visit, and left them in body, not in spirit. Mr. Gwynne and another friend rode with him as far as Dolgelly. Nearly seven months later, on his return from Ireland, he was nursed by his kind friends at Garth. He had been suffering much from violent toothache, which was increased by the constant

rain and sharp wind, so that he found he could not bear to go on to London. "I rode till I could ride no more, walked the last hour, and by five dropped down at Garth. All ran to nurse me. I got a little refreshment, and at seven made a feeble attempt to preach. They quickly put me to bed. I had a terrible night, worse than ever." For ten or eleven days his friends nursed him with tender care. Mrs. Gwynne drove him out, as his strength began to return. When it was necessary for him to resume his journey, Mr. Gwynne and Miss Sally accompanied him the first hour, and received a promise that he would return if he had a relapse. He managed with some difficulty to get to the Foundery.

This visit fixed his affection for Miss Sarah Gwynne. During his brief stay in the previous autumn he had begun to think of her as a wife. When he met his brother in Ireland he communicated his "embryo intentions" to him. John neither opposed nor much encouraged him. Then, however, he had only what he calls a distant first thought, not likely ever to come to a proposal. He had not even hinted at the matter to the young lady or to her family. The second visit increased his affection. Soon after he reached London he rode over to Shoreham, on April 19th, 1748. There he told Mr. Perronet all his heart. From the time when he began to preach he had "always had a fear, but no *thought*, of marrying." During the last year, however, he had begun to wonder whether it would not be best for him to marry. "It should be now or not at all!" he adds. Mr. Perronet proved a true friend in this matter. He advised him to pray, and wait for a providential opening.

In June, 1748, Mr. Gwynne and Miss Sally joined him at Bristol, where they were introduced to the friends. The beginnings of a closer intimacy are evident in one entry,

where the young lady's name passes from "Miss Sally" to the more familiar "Sally." "Quite spent with examining the classes, I was much revived in singing with Miss Burdock and Sally." From Bristol his friends went with him to London, where they were lodged at the Foundry. They now saw Methodism at headquarters, and were able to judge for themselves of the great work accomplished. Charles Wesley took them to see his friends at Lewisham and Shoreham. For rather more than a fortnight this pleasant visit lasted. On the morning of their departure Charles rose at three, and called his friends. After they were up, Miss Sally wanted something out of the bedroom. The door was shut, with the key inside. The friend who had slept in the same room begged her to wait, but she persisted; when they called the man to break open the door, he replied that he would come after he had seen his horses. But Miss Sally urged that he should open it at once. They soon saw that the sheet was on fire. Mary Naylor had snuffed the candle, and dropped the burning wick. Delay might have been fatal to the Foundry.

Mr. Gwynne and his daughter set out with Charles Wesley, at four o'clock on July 19th, 1748, for Oxford. In Windsor Charles Wesley's horse threw him violently over its head. Miss Sally fell upon him, but happily neither of them were hurt. In Oxford he showed them the colleges; then rode on to Bristol. Miss Gwynne was keenly interested in Methodist work. She accompanied her friend to Kingswood, where he began the sacrament with fervent petitions and many tears, which almost hindered his reading the service. He broke out into prayer again and again. All hearts seemed like melting wax. At Garth Miss Sally rode with him to the Wells, where he preached in the Assembly Room. When he set out for Ireland, Mr. Gwynne, Miss Sally, and her sister

Betsy rode on with their guest to Llanidloes, where, he says, "I parted with tears from my dearest friends." For seven weeks they had thus been together every day. It is unnecessary to add that Charles Wesley's heart was now set on this marriage.

During his labours at Cork, which have been described in the previous chapter, he heard from his friends. "I got the whole morning to myself and my beloved friends in Wales. I had sweet fellowship with them in reading their letters, and saw them, as it were, all about me at the throne of grace." Next day he adds, "I prayed a second time with Sally Gwynne, a sincere mourner, just ready for *the consolation*." It is evident that she had unburdened her mind and claimed his prayers at some appointed hour. They thus met at the throne of grace.

In October, on his return from Ireland, he spent five or six days at Garth, where he preached every day, and also visited neighbouring places. Six weeks later he returned to propose for Miss Sally's hand. He had evidently won her heart, but they were both anxious as to the reception which the proposal would receive from her parents. After several consultations, Miss Becky Gwynne told her mother, who at once answered "she would rather give her child to Mr. Wesley than to any man in England." She spoke frankly to Charles Wesley, and told him that her only objection was his want of fortune. When he proposed £100 a year, she replied that her daughter could expect no more. Mrs. Gwynne treated him with the greatest friendliness, and told him he had acted like a gentleman in all things. Mr. Gwynne left all arrangements to his wife. She promised consent if a hundred a year were forthcoming.

When Charles told his brother all that was in his heart, John heartily approved his choice. He had already

mentioned three young ladies of their acquaintance to his brother, of whom Miss Gwynne was one. He advised his brother to take the journey to Garth, and talk matters over with Mrs. Gwynne. He greatly rejoiced when Charles returned with such a happy story. At first it was suggested that the £100 a year might be provided by ten or twelve friends. Charles Wesley thought it better to be under obligation to a few intimate friends than to five hundred or five thousand of the people. He spoke to Mr. Blackwell, of Lewisham, a partner in Martin's Bank, and received from him a hearty promise of help. But John Wesley made a better arrangement. He proposed that his brother should receive the £100 a year out of the profits of the Methodist Book Room. Mrs. Gwynne was not satisfied with this security, but a letter from Vincent Perronet, who acted a father's part to Charles Wesley all through the matter, set her fears at rest. He told her that he was persuaded they would not allow any worldly objections to break off the match, if they believed it to be of God, and that his own daughter was about to marry a pious gentleman whose fortune was not half that of Mr. Charles Wesley's, but whom he would not exchange for a Star and Garter. One paragraph shows that he rightly appreciated the future. "However, I have been hitherto speaking as if Mr. Wesley's circumstances really wanted an apology; but this is not the case. The very writings of these two gentlemen are, *even at this time*, a very *valuable estate*; and when it shall please God to open the minds of men more, and prejudice is worn off, it will be still more valuable. I have seen what an able bookseller has valued a great part of their works at, which is £2,500! but I will venture to say *that this is not half their value*. They are works which will last and sell while any sense of true religion and learning shall remain among us." It may be

interesting to note that the Book Room is now able to make large grants every year to various connexional funds out of its annual profits.

Mr. Perronet adds that since he had met Miss Gwynne she had often been on his mind, and that he saw so much grace and good sense in her that when the engagement was first mentioned to him he could not help rejoicing at what promised so much happiness to the Church of God. The young lady who could win such commendation from the Vicar of Shoreham was a worthy wife even for Charles Wesley. Other financial help had come. His friend, Mrs. Sparrow of Lewisham, who died on May 26th, 1748, bequeathed £50 to the poet, together with her silver-gilt cup, a large silver-gilt spoon, a picture of the Holy Family, and all her books not specifically bequeathed to other friends. He received these timely gifts a few days before he set out to propose to Sally Gwynne, and the receipt for his legacy may still be seen in a book belonging to her executor Mr. Blackwell, the banker, which is now preserved at Lewisham Parish Church. Charles Wesley preached her funeral sermon from Micah vii. 8. He says, "I spoke as freely of her faults as virtues; her love of the world, and final victory over it. The hearers appeared deeply affected." A year after her death Mr. Blackwell moved from London to take up his residence in her house at Lewisham. Mrs. Dewell (or Dewal) lived with him, and, as Charles Wesley says, "she and the banker's wife were so warmly attached to each other that they had but one heart between them." When Mrs. Blackwell died on March 27th, 1772, he wrote :

So humble, affable, and meek,
Her gentle, inoffensive mind—
None ever heard that angel speak
A railing speech or word unkind.

In 1782 he added his tribute to Blackwell :

His roughly honest soul abhorred
The polish smooth, the courtier's art,
While free from guile, in every word
He spoke the language of the heart.

He pays a deserved tribute also to the banker's generous spirit :

And still the more his wealth increased,
More treasure he laid up in heaven.

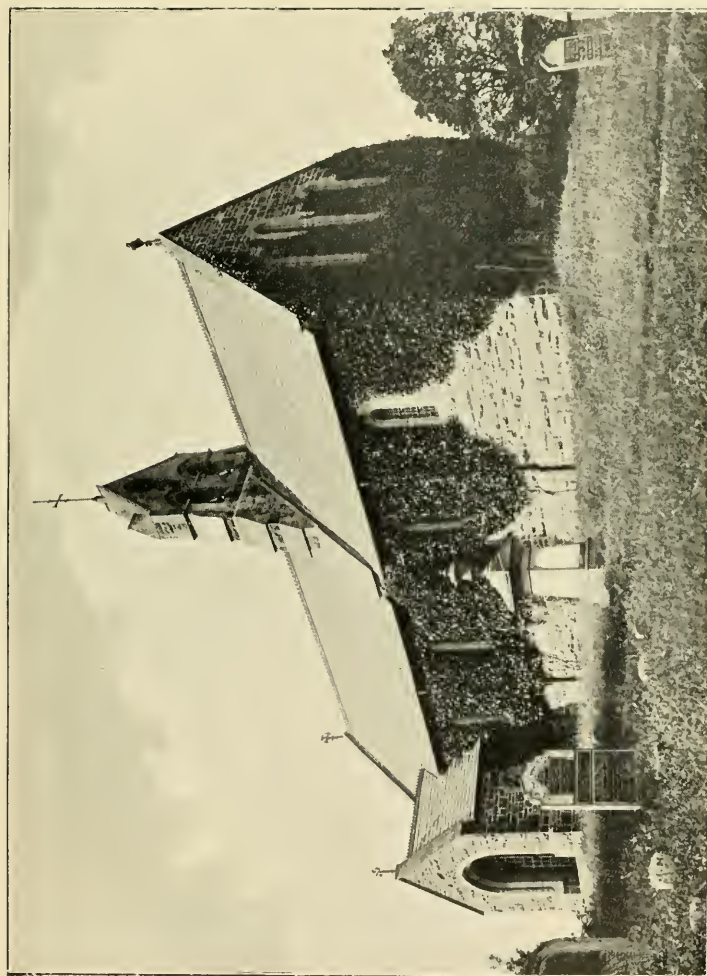
In February, 1749, Charles visited Garth, with his brother and Charles Perronet. All arrangements were happily concluded. Mr. Gwynne's eldest son was vehement against the match, and violently opposed his mother, but she stood firm. Miss Becky Gwynne told her brother that he might think the proposal a great honour. Charles Wesley soon won the heart of young Mr. Gwynne who became as friendly as the rest of the household. Mrs. Gwynne had a conference with the brothers, in which the settlement was arranged. Her husband and Mr. Perronet became trustees. A still more interesting conference was that between Miss Sally and the two brothers. Charles Wesley reports, "She promised to let me continue my vegetable diet and travelling." Mrs. Gwynne wished that her future son-in-law should not go again to Ireland, but Sally would not allow him to make such a promise, "saying she should be glad herself to visit the many gracious souls in that country."

Charles Wesley's visit lasted ten days. At Bristol he made George Whitefield happy by his good news. One entry is amusing. "I mentioned it" (his marriage) "to the select band, desiring their prayers, not their advice." All his friends expressed hearty approval. After his return to London the lawyers soon completed the settle-

ment. On the evening of Easter Sunday the bridegroom took his leave of the London Society, who expressed their satisfaction in his intentions. "Surely," he adds, with characteristic aptness, "both Jesus and His disciples are bidden."

John Wesley somewhat tried his brother at Bristol. He appeared full of scruples, and refused to go to Garth. Charles says, "I kept my temper, and promised, if he could not be satisfied there, to desist." This hesitation seems to refer to John Wesley's fears about the settlement. Methodism was only in its infancy. He felt that this was a heavy mortgage on its property; he may also have thought that marriage would somewhat rob him of his brother's assistance in the care of the societies. The lover's patience was also tried, because he found that John's preaching appointments would not allow him to be at Garth till two days later than Charles had arranged. When at last they reached their friends on Friday morning they were welcomed by all. The brothers talked over matters with Mrs. Gwynne. John Wesley's fears were scattered; he put his signature to a bond until the settlement could be signed. All arrangements having been made the happy friends crowded as much prayer as they could into the day. Thus they waited for the morrow.

The wedding was blessed with perfect weather. Not a cloud was to be seen from morning till night. The bridegroom rose at four, and spent three hours and a half in prayer or singing with his brother, his bride, and Miss Becky. Then came the great event. "At eight I led my Sally to church." Only about six people were present, besides the family. The bride and bridegroom smiled as they crossed the threshold at the prophecy of a jealous friend, "that if we were even at the church door to be



LLANLLEONFEL CHURCH, WHERE CHARLES WESLEY WAS MARRIED.

See Whole head

My Dear Friend, York April 8 1749

Dear me. I want you
Dangers rather than your long absence.
Yet I believe God had lent me a good Ship
even this day, and that I ought to be thank-
ful and employ every blessing every moment
to his glory. The following is how we sang
at the Altar You may join with us now in
singing it.

Come, thou everlasting Lord,
By our trembling Hearts ador'd
Come thou beav'n descended Guest,
(Bidden to the Marriage Feast)
Lovely, in the midst appearing,
With thy chosen followers here,
Grant us the precious grace,
Thine to all thy glorious face.

Now the veil of sin withdrawn,
Tell our Souls with sacred awe,
Now that draw out, speak or move,
Reverence of humble Love,
Love that doth its Lord desire
Ever intimately nigh,
Hearts, whom he calls to see,
Fills the Sacred Duty.

Let on us thy Spirit rest,
Dwell in each devoted breast,
Still with thy Disciples sit,
Still thy words of grace repeat,
Now the ancient words show
Manifest thy power below
All our thoughts, walk, desires,
From the Water, into Wine.

Stop the hurrying spirit's haste,
Change the dark & noble taste
Nations into by, or improve,
Earthly into the heavenly Love,
Raise our hearts to things on high,
To our Brethren in the Sky
Heaven our Hope thy heart above
Mystic Marriage of the Lamb.

A right each obtain a share,
Of the pure enjoyment there,
We are captives our sorrows
To make the Wine of Paradise
Ours, amidst the rich feast,
How hast thou the best of all
Wine that cheers the Flot above.

The Best Wine of Perfect Love

I live in hopes of spending the holy days with my Friend
in London. It were better I began writing to
Christ on Monday my Bel. proceeds to Ireland.
In quiet love he joins to salute you and our
two Friends at Lewisham; as does Mr. Grogan.

Yours faithful & Affec. Friend & Brother

To Mr. Blackwell
in Church Alley London. Obedient

Ms. A. 11. 1033

This letter has got some (scribbles)
The last lines of the 8th
are in my pen and hand

married, she was sure, by revelation, that we could get no farther." "My brother joined our hands," says the journal. "It was a most solemn season of love! Never had I more of the divine presence at the sacrament." After a hymn had been sung, John Wesley prayed over the married pair in strong faith. Charles says, "We walked back to the house, and joined again in prayer. Prayer and thanksgiving was our whole employment. We were cheerful without mirth: serious without sadness. A stranger, that intermeddled not with our joy, said, 'It looked more like a funeral than a wedding.' My brother seemed the happiest person among us." The bridegroom was in his forty-second year, the bride in her twenty-third.

The wedding took place on Saturday, April 8th, 1749, the license being granted by the Bishop of St. David's. On Sunday they all received the sacrament. Charles Wesley spent a large part of the day in writing letters, and heard his brother preach at night. Next morning John left Garth at four o'clock. Charles stayed ten days longer, preaching there and in the neighbourhood; then he resumed his itinerant life. His wife, with her father and Miss Betsy, accompanied him to Abergavenny, where he parted from them next day. "I cheerfully left my partner for the Lord's work," is his comment. A week later his first budget of news arrived at Bristol. "Some letters from Garth brought life with them. I prayed and wept over the beloved writers."

His ministry was never more owned of God than in this period after his marriage. When he reached the Foundery, he received the warmest greeting. "I am married to more than one, or one thousand, of them." On May 27th he hired a small house in Stoke's Croft, Bristol, near his friend Vigor; "such an one as suited a stranger and

pilgrim upon earth," is his description of it. Its rent was only £11 a year.

The interval between his marriage and his entrance on housekeeping had been spent in various places. On June 2nd, five weeks after he had left his wife, he found her at Hereford, where she had come with her mother and sister. After a pleasant day they went to Ludlow, whither the Gwynne family had now removed. A week later, Mrs. Charles Wesley set out with her husband on her first round as a preacher's wife. In Bristol they stayed with their friends the Vigors, as their own house was not ready. The bride received a hearty welcome. "All look upon my Sally with my eyes," he says. After three weeks in Bristol they went together to London, where they spent three weeks more; then they returned to Ludlow. Mrs. Charles Wesley stayed there for a fortnight, while her husband made another of his rapid journeys to London. The young wife had tasted the troubles of the itinerancy. On the way to the metropolis she was quite spent with heat and fatigue, and when Charles returned from a watch-night service he found her extremely ill; but these troubles were soon forgotten. As they returned to Bristol, a highwayman on Hounslow Heath crossed the road, passed them, and robbed all the coaches and passengers behind them.

On Friday, September 1st, 1749, they began house-keeping. Mrs. Charles Wesley had brought two of her sisters with her from Ludlow. Their new home was consecrated by prayer and thanksgiving; then an hour was spent at the preaching-room in prayer. The evening hour of retirement, which the Wesleys and their parents kept so carefully, from five to six o'clock, was now spent by Charles in "joint prayer," with his wife. At six Mrs. Vigor and her sisters, their first guests, "passed a

useful hour" with them before the evening service, at which Charles Wesley says, "I preached on the first words I met, Romans xii. 1. The power and blessing of God was with us. At half-past nine I slept comfortably in my own house, yet not my own." He called his home "a convent," but it was full of domestic peace and joy. In his gladness he wrote, "I rose with my partner at four. Whatsoever I do prospers." Mrs. Wesley wrote out an inventory of the furniture of her modest dwelling with her own hand, and adapted herself like a true woman to her somewhat straitened circumstances.

Bristol was Charles Wesley's home for twenty-two years, till he removed to London in 1771. In 1755, when the marriage of two of his friends brought all his own happiness before him, he wrote to his wife: "In reading over the passages of our history, you cannot think what love I feel towards every one of our family. Your mother, sister, father, cousins, nurse, so behaved as to deserve my esteem and love during life. I look back with delight on every step, every circumstance, in that whole design of providential love. I rejoice with grateful joy at our blessed union, and feel my obligations to every person instrumental therein. Above all, I desire to thank my great Benefactor for giving you to my bosom, and to fulfil His gracious end by leading you to the marriage of the Lamb."

CHAPTER X.

THE FIRST FOUR YEARS AFTER HIS MARRIAGE.

John Wesley and Grace Murray—Family Events—Mrs. Wright's Death—Earthquakes in London—Charles Wesley's Sermon—John Wesley marries Mrs. Vazeille—Inquiry into the Character of the Preachers—A Tour of the Societies—Mrs. Charles Wesley's Travels—John Wesley's Illness—Visit to Norwich.

CHARLES WESLEY'S home-life in Bristol began with abundant spiritual blessing. Before the first week had passed he writes with a full heart: "As often as I minister the Word, our Lord ministers His grace through it. He blessed me also in private as well as family prayer, and conference with my Christian friends; in a word, whatsoever I do prospers." Trouble soon burst upon him. There is no entry in his journal between September 15th and October 22nd; but this was the time when he so rashly interfered to prevent his brother's marriage with Grace Murray. She had been with John Wesley at Ludlow, in August, when he signed Mrs. Charles Wesley's marriage settlement. Five weeks afterwards the engagement, which had been more or less definite for a year, was finally arranged.

When John's letter announcing his intentions reached his brother at Bristol, Charles was overwhelmed. He considered that a woman who at one time of her life had been a domestic servant was no proper wife for his brother. He had himself married into a family of birth



CHARLES WESLEY'S HOUSE IN CHARLES STREET, STOKES
CROFT, BRISTOL.

(The further house set back a little is supposed to be the poet's home.)

[Page 184.]

From a photo by T. Letchford. Lent by Rev. H. J. Foster.

and position, so that the contrast was the more marked and painful. He lost no time in following John to Newcastle. Here he was assured that the marriage would wreck the Society, and posted off to Whitehaven to find his brother. When he stated his objections, John defended the proposed marriage. He said that he had never seen Grace Murray's qualifications for usefulness surpassed, and her behaviour, disposition, and character were such as to far outweigh any objections on the ground of birth. This was John's position. Charles found that he could not move him. He returned to Hinely Hill, where he met Grace Murray, took her to Newcastle, and within a week had her safely married to John Bennet, one of the preachers who was in love with her, and between whom and Wesley she had already vacillated considerably.

George Whitefield broke the painful news to Wesley at Leeds, and did all he could to comfort him in this trouble. Next day Charles came, and though he had almost broken his brother's heart by the step he had taken, he at once accosted him with the words, "I renounce all intercourse with you but what I would have with a heathen man or a publican." Whitefield and the faithful John Nelson were present. These friends burst into tears, and did all they could to end the storm. At last, the brothers, unable to speak, fell on each other's neck. When Charles heard his brother's explanations, he was amazed. He at once exonerated John from all blame. John Wesley behaved with characteristic patience, though he says that the trial was the most severe he had known since he was six years old. The day after this stormy interview he wrote, "The whole world fought against me, but above all, my own familiar friend. Yesterday I saw my friend (that was), and him to whom she is sacrificed. I believe you never saw such a scene." Charles Wesley's interference in

this painful matter cannot be justified. It wrecked his brother's hope of domestic happiness, though even this sorrow may have been over-ruled for the good of his great mission. Later events proved that the poet had no reason to be proud of his success.*

The remainder of 1749, with the exception of ten days in London, seems to have been spent by Charles Wesley in Bristol. The next year was divided mainly between London and Bristol. He did, indeed, set out for the north in September ; but, beyond Islington, his mare threw him and fell upon him. He managed to ride to St. Albans, but was compelled to lie down there. He could get no sleep day or night. A severe boil on the neck gave him great pain. He also seems to have hurt his hand by the fall. With considerable difficulty he got back to London, but for six weeks he was mostly confined to the house. This prevented his journey to the north. The whole of November was spent at Ludlow, where the Gwynnes were in such great trouble that he calls their home a "house of woe." Miss Elizabeth Gwynne, a younger sister of Mrs. Charles Wesley, had become engaged to Mr. Waller, a London lace merchant. Her marriage was greatly opposed by some of her family. On December 4th Charles Wesley rose in great heaviness, after a sleepless night, to perform the marriage ceremony. Though much opposed, this proved a happy union. The Wallers lived at Islington, and were often visited there by Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wesley.

The first of his visits to London, in 1750, was marked by the death of his sister, Mrs. Wright, and by the great earthquake panic. Mrs. Wright, one of the most beautiful and gifted of the daughters of the Epworth Parsonage,

* See the Author's "Life of John Wesley."

had married a plumber and glazier at Lincoln. He afterwards set up in business for himself in Frith Street, Soho, with some money given to his wife by her uncle Matthew, the surgeon. Mrs. Wright was ten years older than Charles, but he had been a great favourite with her, and had done all that he could to reform her husband when he fell into bad habits. It was a strange marriage for such a woman, but at first her husband was at least sober and industrious. By and by he began to spend his time at the public-house. Charles Wesley says, in his journal for November, 1737, that he had corrupted Mr. Lambert, to whom Annie, another of his sisters, was married, and brought him again into those drunken ways from which Charles Wesley had tried to rescue him. Charles set his conduct before him in such a light that Wright left them abruptly. When Mrs. Wright's health began to fail, in 1743, she determined to take up her position firmly as a seeker after Christ. Her husband allowed her at last to become a Methodist. Her brothers sent her to Bristol to try the Wells. During her visit she enjoyed close fellowship with some of the best members of their Society. Mrs. Vigor was especially attentive to her. Four entries in Charles Wesley's journal for March 1750 show that he was a true comforter in the last hours of this sad life. "I prayed by my sister Wright, a gracious, tender, trembling soul; a bruised reed, which the Lord will not break." On March 14th he writes, "I found my sister Wright very near the haven"; and again, on Sunday, the 18th, "yet still in darkness, doubts, and fears, against hope believing in hope." The following Wednesday he called, but his sister had, a few minutes before, entered into rest. "I had sweet fellowship with her," he says "in explaining at the chapel those solemn words, "Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon with-

draw itself ; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended." All present seemed partakers both of my sorrow and my joy. On the Monday he followed her to her quiet grave.

Mrs. Wright died during the earthquake panic. On February 8th, 1750, when Charles was in Bristol, there were what John Wesley describes as "three distinct shakes, or wavings to and fro, attended with a hoarse, rumbling noise, like thunder." A month later, on March 8th, there was another shock, far more violent than that of February 8th. It occurred at a quarter past five in the morning. Charles Wesley was just repeating his text, when the Foundery was shaken so violently by the earthquake that all expected the building to fall upon their heads. A great cry arose from the women and children. The preacher cried out, with much presence of mind, "Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be moved, and the hills be carried into the midst of the sea ; for the Lord of Hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge." "He filled my heart," he adds, "with faith and my mouth with words, shaking their souls as well as their bodies." All the metropolis felt the strong, jarring motion, which was attended with a rumbling as of distant thunder. Many chimneys fell down with the shock.

The metropolis was greatly alarmed by the return of the earthquake. Grave apprehension of further mischief seized the people's minds. The panic brought increased work to Charles Wesley. On the day after the shock he says, "Many flocked to the morning Word, and were yet more stirred up thereby. I have scarce ever seen so many at intercession. At the chapel I preached on the occasion, from Psalm xlv., with very great awakening power." This was the Psalm which, as we have seen, sprang to his lips at the Foundery. Next day he

expounded Isaiah xxiv., a chapter he had not much noticed "till this awful providence explained it." His spirit was revived by these troubles. Everywhere he preached with power. The climax of the panic came on April 4th. "Fear filled our chapel," he writes, "occasioned by a prophecy of the earthquake's return this night. I preached my written sermon on the subject with great effect, and gave out several suitable hymns. It was a glorious night for the followers of Jesus."

Next day London was in a state of consternation. A dragoon had prophesied that a great part of the city and of Westminster would be destroyed between twelve and one o'clock. At night thousands fled into the country. The places of worship, especially the Methodist chapels, and the tabernacle, where Mr. Whitefield preached, were crowded. Several of the Methodist classes passed the night in prayer. The open spaces were crowded with people, who thought that they would be safer there than in their homes. At midnight Mr. Whitefield preached to a multitude in Hyde Park. Charles Wesley conducted his service at West Street, and then went to bed as usual. He says, "I rose at four, after a night of sound sleep, while my neighbours watched."

In a letter, written next day to Mrs. Gwynne, he gives a graphic description of the panic. "The late earthquake has found me work. Yesterday I saw the Westminster end of the town full of coaches, and crowds flying out of the reach of divine justice with astonishing precipitation. Their panic was caused by a poor madman's prophecy: last night they were all to be swallowed up. The vulgar were in almost as great consternation as their betters. Most of them watched all night: multitudes in the fields and open places; several in their coaches. Many removed their goods. London looked like a sacked city. A lady,

just stepping into her coach to escape, dropped down dead. Many came all night, knocking at the Foundery door, and begging admittance for God's sake. Our poor people were calm and quiet, as at another time."

Charles Wesley's muse was busy during this time of excitement. The hymns which the congregation sang on the night of suspense are some of his finest productions. To them we must turn by and by. The notice in his journal says that he preached his written sermon. It was unusual for him to prepare so carefully, but this was a great occasion. The sermon was published under the title, "The Cause and Cure of Earthquakes." He sets himself to show that earthquakes are the work of God, and alludes to some of the most memorable instances of the desolation they had wrought. The application is one of those forcible appeals to the reason and the heart which characterised his ministry.

"How slow is the Lord to anger! how unwilling to punish! By what leisurely steps does He come to take vengeance! How many lighter afflictions before the final blow!

"Yes, thou hast now another call to repentance, another offer of mercy, whosoever thou art that hearest these words. In the name of the Lord Jesus, I warn thee once more, as a watchman over the house of Israel, to flee from the wrath to come. I put thee in remembrance (if thou hast so soon forgotten it) of the late awful judgment, whereby God shook thee over the mouth of hell. Thy body He probably awoke by it; but did He awake thy soul? The Lord was in the earthquake, and put a solemn question to thy conscience, 'Art thou ready to die? Is thy peace made with God?' Was the earth just now to open its mouth, and swallow thee up, what would become of thee? Where wouldest thou be? In Abraham's

bosom, or lifting up thine eyes in torment? Hadst thou perished by the late earthquake, wouldest thou not have died in thy sins, or rather gone down quick into hell? Who prevented thy damnation? It was the Son of God! O fall down and worship Him! Give Him the glory of the deliverance, and devote the residue of thy days to His service." Such an appeal must have stirred many a conscience on the night of terror.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wesley spent the first four months of 1751 together in London. During that time John Wesley was married to Mrs. Vazeille, the widow of a London merchant. She had a fortune of £10,000, which Mr. Wesley took care before his marriage to have settled upon herself and her four children. Eighteen months earlier Charles Wesley says, "At Ned Perronet's I met Mrs. Vazeille, a woman of a sorrowful spirit." She was evidently seeking rest in Christ. She had spent nine days at Ludlow, where the Gwynnes showed her all possible civility and love, and she seemed equally pleased with them. On their way to London Charles Wesley showed her the buildings and gardens at Oxford. He and his wife stayed eight or nine days with Mrs. Vazeille in London.

On February 2nd, 1751, John Wesley told his brother that he was resolved to marry. "I was thunderstruck," Charles says, "and could only answer, he had given me the first blow, and his marriage would come like the *coup de grâce*. Trusty Ned Perronet followed, and told me the person was Mrs. Vazeille! one of whom I had never had the least suspicion. I refused his company to the chapel, and retired to mourn with my faithful Sally. I groaned all the day, and several following ones, under my own and the people's burden. I could eat no pleasant food, nor preach, nor rest, either by night or by day." This remark-

able picture of his trouble, with the reference to his own and the people's burden, shows that he was apprehensive of the effect marriage would have on his brother's itinerancy. Charles must have felt that his own marriage had made his restless wandering very inconvenient. As family ties increased he saw that it would become increasingly difficult for him to visit the more distant societies.

X John Wesley was married at Wandsworth on February 18th. Charles says that the next Sunday, after sacrament, Mr. Blackwell fell upon him "in a manner peculiar to himself, and dragged him to his dear sister." Some time afterwards he called upon Mrs. John Wesley, kissed her, and assured her that he was perfectly reconciled to her and to his brother. He took his wife to see her, and lost no opportunity of showing his respect and love. Three months later he had to act as a mediator. Mrs. Wesley poured out to him her complaints against his brother, and was greatly comforted by his kind words. Next day he passed another hour with her, in free, affectionate conference; then he talked to his brother, and at last with both of them together. The explanation ended "in prayer and perfect peace."

(This marriage was a sad contrast to Charles Wesley's own happy union. At first Mrs. Wesley travelled with her husband, and things went fairly well. Then her jealousy wrecked all their happiness. Charles Wesley himself could maintain no lasting friendship with his brother's wife. He says on one occasion, "I called, two minutes before preaching, on Mrs. Wesley, at the Foundery, and in all that time had not one quarrel." He gave her the name of his "best friend" because she told him all his faults with a candour and force peculiar to herself. An odd incident is preserved. She once shut up the brothers in a room from which they could not escape,

and poured out a long string of complaints. Charles, who had talked Latin and Greek when the drunken captain became abusive on the voyage from Charlestown, began to recite Latin verse, till at length his sister-in-law's patience was worn out, and she was glad to let her prisoners go.

At the end of June Charles Wesley set out from Bristol to examine into the moral character of every Methodist preacher. The brothers had just been compelled to expel one of their assistants, James Wheatley, for immoral conduct. He had traduced many of his brethren. The Wesleys brought him face to face with about ten of them, by whom he was clearly convicted of wilful lying; but their anxiety that their work should be above suspicion made them arrange for this inquiry. Mrs. Charles Wesley, with her sister Becky and some other friends, accompanied the poet to the north. He was grieved to find that the Wednesbury Society, which had borne its fierce persecution with such heroic patience, had been reduced from three hundred members to seventy, by vain janglings fomented by some Calvinistic teachers. He gathered in some wanderers, and joined in fervent prayer with the Society for a revival of the work. Darlaston made amends for his grief at Wednesbury. The people had conquered their fiercest persecutors by their patience and steadfastness. They were daily growing both in grace and numbers.

At Bristol an attack of fever laid him aside for a week, but he was then able to resume his journey. He reached Newcastle on August 9th, six weeks after leaving Bristol. "My companions," he wrote, "are better both in mind and body for their long journey." He himself suffered much from weakness during his fortnight in Newcastle. On the day of their arrival he writes, "I preached, but very feebly, on 'The third part I will bring through the fire.' Preaching, I perceive, is not now my principal business.

God knoweth my heart and all its burdens. Oh, that He would take the matter into His own hand, though He lay me aside as a broken vessel!"

The party turned southwards on August 24th, but did not reach London till October 4th. As they returned they visited York, Epworth, Leeds, Bradford, Haworth, Manchester, Bolton, Wednesbury, Birmingham, Evesham, Oxford, and other places. In Leeds Charles Wesley held a conference with the preachers of the neighbourhood. He spoke earnestly to them about the qualifications, work, and trials of a preacher, and parted from these faithful brethren in great love.

During this long tour of the societies Mrs. Charles Wesley became familiar with the daily life of the itinerant preachers. She used often to speak of her experiences in after life. In the gallery of the chapel at Leeds two rooms were boarded off, where the preachers slept during their visits to the town. They had to preach and meet the Society in the evening, and then to conduct service at five next morning, so that it was more convenient for them to sleep on the premises. One of these rooms was set apart for Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wesley. In the other a number of rough labouring men were sleeping together. It was a great shock to the young wife's feelings when she found that she must pass through this room to reach her own.

She generally rode behind her husband. She had travelled thus with him one day from Manchester, through Macclesfield, Congleton, and Newcastle-under-Lyme, to Stone. It was a beautiful summer evening when they reached their resting-place. After their meal she walked into the garden of the inn. Some young ladies in an adjoining garden heard her singing. Her clear, sweet voice charmed them. Their father, who was a clergyman, was equally pleased, and invited her to sing in his church

on the following Sunday. But when he found that the stranger was Mrs. Charles Wesley, and that she could not consent to sing in the church unless her husband was invited to preach, prejudice proved stronger than love of music.

The journals, which have been so full a chronicle of Charles Wesley's labours, now begin to fail. His letters to his wife only help us to catch a few glimpses of his labours. After his return from the north, in October, 1751, we have no particulars of his life till the autumn of 1753, when he seems to have paid his last visit to Cornwall. There is, however, a letter of kindly expostulation from John Wesley to his brother, written on October 20th, 1753, which seems to show that he had visited the north. "I came back from Bedford last night. I know not whether it was your will or no (I believe not); but I am sure it was God's will for you to call there. How do you judge whether a thing be God's will or no? I hope not by inward impressions. Let us walk warily. I have much constitutional enthusiasm; and you have much more." He begs his brother to act more in concert with him, and to let him know the places where he intended to labour. The reference to Bedford in this letter shows that Charles Wesley had been passing near it on some journey.

In one of his letters from Cornwall, in the autumn of 1753, he says to his wife, "The *next* time you hinder me in my work will be the first time. But we may learn even from our enemies what to guard against. The more heartily I labour in the vineyard, the longer I shall continue with you." This passage shows that he was still devoted to his itinerant labours. He found Cornwall won for Methodism. "This place," he writes, "seems quite subdued to our Lord. Their hearts are all bowed before Him.

He gives me uncommon strength. A very great door is opened. The poor people have got in their harvest, and are now at leisure to be gathered in themselves. The heavens smile upon us, and the weather seems made on purpose for preaching." He reports to his wife that he "could scarce believe it to be Cornwall, the accommodations everywhere are so good, and the people so cleanly; not a whit inferior to those in the north." Some evil reports had reached him, but he found that Cornwall flowed with milk and honey. He hoped to take his wife with him by and by, to visit the many loving friends who constantly inquired for her.

On November 29th, 1753, Lady Huntingdon and Mrs. Galatin brought Charles Wesley the news of his brother's dangerous illness. Charles made all haste from Bristol to London. He found John at Lewisham, with Mr. Blackwell. Charles fell on his neck and wept. All the friends who were present were in tears. This was on Sunday. On the previous Tuesday his death had been expected every hour. John Wesley even wrote his own epitaph. Since then he had gathered some strength. But Charles had small hopes of his restoration. "It is most probable," he wrote, "that he will not recover, being far gone in a galloping consumption, just as my elder brother was at his age." He rode with John, however, greatly surprised to see him hold out for three quarters of an hour, and gallop back the whole way.

The same night he preached at the Foundery, from 1 John v. 14, 15, "confused and overwhelmed with trouble and sorrow." He told the Society afterwards that he neither could nor would stand in his brother's place (if God took him to Himself); for he had neither a body, nor a mind, nor talents, nor grace for it. Sorrow fell heavily upon him. On Tuesday he heard that his wife was

seriously ill with small-pox. Some one had frightened her, soon after her husband left, by a report that John Wesley was dead. She sickened immediately. Charles hastened to Bristol with a sad heart. He found her tenderly cared for by many friends. Dr. Middleton had been like a father. Lady Huntingdon had put off a visit to her son, and visited her twice a day. Mrs. Vigor and other ladies were nursing her day and night. She had just expressed a longing desire to see her husband, when he arrived to comfort her. For twenty-two days she was in imminent peril; then she was brought back from the verge of the grave. Charles Wesley was compelled to return to London to supply the pulpits there, so that he passed a sad time of anxiety and suspense. All his brother's work fell upon him. Though Mrs. Wesley was restored to health her beauty was entirely destroyed by her illness. Even her features were so completely altered that no one would have been able to recognise her. Her husband often declared he admired her more than ever before. The disparity of age between husband and wife was now no longer striking; the smallpox had quite robbed her of her youthful appearance.

Before the year closed, his only child was attacked by small-pox. When his father returned to Bristol, his little boy was lying in the grave. He was called John after his uncle. A lock of his hair was preserved by his mother, with some words in her own handwriting: "My dear Jacky Wesley's hair, who died of the small-pox, on Monday, January 7th, 1753-4, aged a year, four months, and seventeen days. I shall go to him; but he shall never return to me."

In the summer of 1754 Charles Wesley set out, with his brother, Charles Perronet, and Robert Windsor, for Lakenham, a mile and a half from Norwich. John Wesley's

health was still precarious. It was thought that the journey would do him good. The party travelled leisurely till they reached the house of their friends, Captain and Mrs. Galatin, on July 10th.

John Wesley was now busy with his "Notes on the New Testament," and wanted further help from his brother in the task of transcribing and revision. They had already spent several days on this work at the Hotwells, near Bristol, in February and March. They were not long together at Norwich. John set out nine days later for Bristol, with Charles Perronet, to try if another visit to the Hotwells would restore his strength. Charles Wesley remained at Lakenham for more than a month. There was no Methodist preaching-place, but before he left a large brewhouse had been secured. This was a mere heap of rubbish, without roof, walls, floor, doors, or windows, but it was soon made fit for worship. The poet considered it a good omen that it had once been a foundry, like the Methodist headquarters in Moorfields.

At Norwich he preached out of doors regularly, with great success. The licentious conduct of James Wheatley, whom the Wesleys had expelled in 1751, had caused great scandal. He had settled there, and at first people flocked to hear him. Nearly two thousand were gathered into Christian fellowship, and a large temporary tabernacle was erected. The whole city was reformed by his ministry. Wheatley had to face severe opposition, but stood his ground bravely. A large chapel was built. He became a prosperous man. In 1754 he again brought reproach on the cause. "The streets ring all day," says Charles Wesley, "with James's wickedness."

This made the work of the Methodist preacher very difficult, but he spoke out of doors both morning and evening, and gathered together a little society. Some

attempts were made to disturb the services, but there was no serious riot. A huge, black, grisly man came to him one day. He was a tinker, who had been in all Wheatley's riots, and had fought for him forty times. He understood that Charles Wesley had come to settle in Norwich, and offered to be his champion. The preacher thanked the man for his kindness, gave him a word of advice and a book, then sent him away highly satisfied.

All who joined the Society took the Lord's Supper at the Cathedral, so that Charles Wesley's labours greatly increased the number of communicants. He found a convenient place where three thousand could stand about the door of the preaching-room, and twice as many at the end of Hog Hill. Here he preached. He had not lost his power. "Every place," he writes, "was crowded in the evening, while I enforced the faithful and acceptable saying, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. His power beat down all opposition, and cleared His own way into their hearts. All seemed melted down, or broken to pieces, either by the fire or the hammer. The Gospel had free course; the Word was glorified, and ran very swiftly."

Mrs. Charles Wesley appears to have been with her husband at Norwich during the latter part of this visit. A furious mob had risen. It was not thought advisable for her to walk along the streets with her husband, lest the rioters should try to hurt the preacher's wife. She therefore went with Mrs. Galatin. This lady, who was tall and handsome, attracted the notice of the crowd, who bestowed on her many unpleasant attentions, whilst Mrs. Charles Wesley, who was short and slight, was quite overlooked.

In the beginning of 1755 Charles Wesley hastened to Brecon to the death-bed of Grace Bowen, the much-loved

nurse of the Gwynne family. His wife stayed in London at the house of Colonel and Mrs. Gumley, in Grosvenor Square, and afterwards with her cousin, Mr. Lloyd, of Devonshire Square. Her husband did not see their friend alive, but Miss Becky Gwynne was with her, and the dying Christian bade her rejoice when she entered into rest. During this visit Charles Wesley had some pleasant intercourse with his friend Howel Harris, whose wife, he wrote, "is ready to eat me up for joy." The people would not suffer him to be idle, so anxious were all to hear their old friend. He preached to the prisoners, and made the utmost use of his short visit. He started for Bristol on January 15th, hoping to be with his wife in London before the month closed.

CHAPTER XI.

CONTROVERSY AND LABOUR.

Administers Sacrament to Kingswood Colliers—Sacrament Crisis in 1755—Fears of Charles Wesley—Visit to the North in 1756—Ceases to Itinerate—Feeling about Methodism and the Church of England—Testimony of Thomas Walsh—Visits his Niece at Barnstaple—Fears of French Invasion—Trial of Earl Ferrers—Intercourse with Whitefield—Calvinistic Controversy in 1771.

METHODISM in 1755 was approaching a serious crisis. The Wesleys considered themselves and their people members of the Church of England. They had taken large numbers of their Society with them to the sacrament in Kingswood, and Bristol especially. Some of the clergy drove them away from the Lord's Table. Charles Wesley was himself forbidden to come to the altar. This led him to take a bold step. On April 12th, 1741, many of the Methodists of Kingswood, with Charles Wesley himself, had been refused the sacrament at the Temple Church. He therefore administered it himself to the bands of Kingswood in the schoolroom there, and says that if they had not had a house, he would have justified his doing it in the midst of the wood. Even where the members of the Society were not actually shut out from a privilege which they were taught to prize so highly, they were often compelled to receive the bread and wine from the hands of those who persecuted them, or who were living immoral lives.

This difficulty was not so much felt in London or in Bristol, where the sacrament was, at an early date, given by the Wesleys themselves to their societies. It was a question which more closely affected the towns and the country villages. To these the brothers could only pay rare visits. Great dissatisfaction was felt there with existing arrangements. The year 1755 marks a crisis. The Methodist itinerants sympathised largely with the people. Joseph Cownley, whom John Wesley considered one of the best preachers in England, stated the reasons why he dare not hear a drunkard preach or read prayers. John Wesley says, "I answer, I dare; but I cannot answer his reasons." The devoted Irish evangelist, Thomas Walsh, shared Cownley's views, and the two sons of the Vicar of Shoreham, who were Methodist preachers, were of the same mind. These men did not attend the services of the Church, and occasionally went so far as to administer the Lord's Supper to the people and to each other.

Charles Wesley watched this rising tide of feeling with grave concern. He poured out his heart to a devoted clergyman, the Rev. Walter Sellon, of Smisby, in Leicestershire, who had at one time been a Methodist preacher and master of Kingswood School. Mr. Sellon wrote to John Wesley and Charles Perronet. Charles Wesley's letters to his friend show that he suspected that John might even have gone so far as to ordain these preachers. All such surmises were utterly wrong. But Charles was in great trouble. On December 14th, 1754, he says to Mr. Sellon, "Write again, and spare not. My brother took no notice to me of your letter. Since the Melchizedekians have been taken in, I have been excluded his cabinet council. They know me too well to trust him with me. He is come so far as to believe separation

quite lawful, only not yet expedient. They are indefatigable in urging him to go so far that he may not be able to retreat. He may lay on hands, say they, without separating. I charge you keep it to yourself that I stand in doubt of him, which I tell you, that you may pray for him the more earnestly, and write to him the more plainly.

"In May our Conference is. You must be there, if alive. We can hold it no longer (the Methodist preachers, I mean), but must quickly divide to the right or left, the Church or Meeting. I know none fitter for training up our young men than yourself, or John Jones. We must, among us, get the sound preachers qualified for orders."

On February 5th, 1755, after his return from Bristol, he writes more hopefully, especially about his brother. "He has spoken as strongly, of late, in behalf of the Church of England as I could wish; and everywhere declares he never intends to leave her. This has made the Melchizedekians draw in their horns and drop their design. We must know the heart of every preacher, and give them their choice of the Church or the Meeting. The wound can no longer be healed slightly. Those who are disposed to separate had best do it while we are yet alive." Charles Wesley thought that the best of their preachers might be ordained. He would have compelled them to make choice between the Church of England and Dissent. John Wesley was willing to wait for the guidance of events.

In 1755 the Conference was held in Leeds. The brothers spent a few days at Birstal, carefully explaining the question which exercised all minds. They read together "A Gentleman's Reasons for his Dissent from the Church of England." Charles preached constantly, to relieve his brother. On May 6th sixty-three preachers

assembled at the Conference at Leeds. The brothers spoke strongly, and invited all to express their views on the great question, whether the Methodists ought to separate from the Church. On the third day of the debate all agreed that, whether lawful or not, this was not expedient. Walsh and his friends engaged that they would not administer the sacrament. With this conclusion John Wesley was content. Charles, who saw that many of the preachers were unconvinced, felt that the evil day was only postponed.

He left next morning for London, without saying anything to John. On his way he visited Rotherham, Sheffield, Birmingham, and other places. In London he wrote and published a poetical epistle addressed to his brother, declaring his affection for the Church of England, and his determination to remain in its communion. He expresses his hope that God's time to visit her has come, and shows that his brother's love for her is as strong as his own. In a letter to his wife he says, "On Thursday I read my epistle a second time to a crowded audience, and yesterday at the watch-night. Seven hundred are sent by this day's carrier."

On June 20th John Wesley wrote to his brother, who was still racked with fears. He pointed out that the preachers had promised not to administer, and were all agreed not to separate from the Church. "Here," he said, "is Charles Perronet raving because his friends have given up all; and Charles Wesley, because they have given up nothing; and I, in the midst, staring and wondering both at one and the other." A few weeks later he writes, "Your gross bigotry lies here, in putting a man on a level with an adulterer because he differs from you as to Church government. What miserable confounding the degrees of good and evil is this!"

John Wesley wished his brother to visit Cornwall this year, but this task Charles declined. His letters show that he found congenial work in London. His means were straitened. He wrote to his wife that it would be impossible to get out of debt if they kept house during the winter. He wished to have her with him among his friends in London. In December he married his old vicar, Mr. Stonehouse, who had become a widower, and received a ten-guinea fee from his friend, who had a considerable private fortune. This timely help materially assisted his finances. In 1759 he writes to his wife, "How does your money hold out? As for me, I spend none, I have none to spend; yet I want nothing but the grace of Jesus Christ."

The Bristol Conference of 1756 confirmed the action of the previous year at Leeds. Soon afterwards Charles left for the north. He started on September 17th, and returned to Bristol on November 6th, after visiting Birmingham, Nottingham, Sheffield, Rotherham, Leeds, York, Bradford, Halifax, Bolton, Manchester, Wednesbury, and other places. His journal ceases with the account of this journey. It presents a striking contrast to the earlier story of persecution. No service that he held seems to have been disturbed by rioters. Methodism had conquered its foes by patience and love. Much honour was shown to the preacher in York. He occupied the pulpit of one church. Its minister treated him with great honour, and spent much time in his company. At Acomb and at Tadcaster the gentry, as well as the poor, were among his hearers. The kindness shown him by the clergy confirmed his love to the Church of England. He speaks of three churches where he preached with special blessing. At Hatfield, on Sunday, October 24th, he writes, "I never spake more convincingly. All

seemed to feel the sharp two-edged sword. Those of the Methodist preachers who have faith and patience may, by and by, have all the churches in England opened to them." The controversy of the year was in his mind when he thus wrote, but he was not a good prophet.

At Leeds Charles Wesley met George Whitefield. He was refreshed by the account of his friend's labours, and heard him preach in the Methodist pulpit. They took part together in a watch-night service. The place was packed. Charles Wesley preached first from his favourite text, "The third part I will bring through the fire." Whitefield spoke from the words, "I say unto all, Watch." "The prayers and hymns were all attended with a solemn power. Few, if any, I hope, went un-awakened away." This is the note in the journal.

A fortnight later he rejoiced to hear of the great blessing Mr. Whitefield had carried to the Methodist societies. He spoke highly of the prayers and services of the Church, charged the people to meet their classes and bands regularly, and never to leave the Methodists, or God would leave them. "In a word, he did his utmost to strengthen our hands, and deserves the thanks of all the Churches for his abundant labour of love." It is pleasant to find such a tribute to his old friend in the last journal of Charles Wesley.

He found that the Manchester Society had been reduced from two hundred to only half that number by a succession of disturbers. A "still" sister was the first troubler of Israel. She forbade them to pray, sing, or go to church, and had great influence until her extravagances opened their eyes. A succession of teachers who were either disaffected towards Methodism, or were gross Antinomians, followed. Wheatley, of Norwich, and Thomas Williams, who slandered Charles Wesley, were among

them. Charles came just in time to cut short the schemes of Roger Ball, who was perhaps the worst of all. This man had captivated the simple people by his fine presence and voice. They invited him to settle among them. Charles Wesley soon made an end of his devices. Ball attempted to gain a hearing one evening at the close of the sermon. "After I had done, the famous Mr. Ball lifted up his voice ; and a magnificent voice it was. I bade our people depart in peace, which they did. The enemy roared some time in the midst of the room (not congregation), threatening me for scandalising him, and depriving his family of their bread." Charles Wesley still knew how to deal with opposition. His zealous labours quickened the people. Before he left them, the long-delayed blessing came. This visit to Lancashire and Yorkshire, in 1756, marks the end of Charles Wesley's active itinerant life. Henceforth his labours seem to have been mainly devoted to London and Bristol, with the places in their immediate vicinity. There was a fine field for him in these historic centres of Methodism, but the record of his work in Cornwall, Lancashire, Staffordshire, Yorkshire, and Northumberland shows what a loss Methodism suffered when he ceased to visit the more distant societies.

When Charles Wesley ceased to itinerate, London Methodism had four large chapels—the Foundery, near Finsbury Square ; Spitalfields ; Snowsfields, in Southwark ; and West Street, near the Seven Dials. In these, and some smaller places, he laboured with great acceptance. He had his largest congregations and his greatest success in the metropolis, but in Bristol also there was a splendid sphere of usefulness. The Horse-fair, or Broadmead preaching-room, near St. James's Church, was the first Methodist chapel in the world. He also preached

at the Weavers' Hall in Temple Street, at Princess Street, at Baptist Mills, Bedminster, and Kingswood.

Charles Wesley himself lost much by restricting his labours. The longing for death which is so often expressed in his early journals seems gradually to have given place to a more healthy tone of mind as he passed from one scene of work to another. His blessed itinerancy showed what fruits his continued ministry might bear. He thus resigned himself to live for the people. Change of scene, country air, horse exercise, and constant preaching, renewed his vigour.

In later years his mind was greatly disturbed as to the relation of Methodism to the Church of England. His own forebodings, and the evil reports sent him by the grumblers in all parts, were not corrected by personal intercourse with the Methodist preachers and people throughout the country. Had he continued to travel from Cornwall to Newcastle, as in former years, even he would have seen that "God fulfils Himself in many ways." His devotion to the Church of England might not then have blinded him to the fact that others were not prepared by education, association, or conviction, to think as he did. He would have learned that they naturally expected to find all the means of grace in connection with the place where the grace of salvation had found them, and from the hands of the preachers who had been the means of leading them to Christ.

In 1758, when John Wesley published his "Reasons against a Separation from the Church of England," Charles added this postscript: "I think myself bound in duty to add my testimony to my brother's. His twelve reasons against our ever separating from the Church of England are mine also. I subscribe to them with all my heart. Only, with regard to the first, I am quite clear that it

is neither *expedient* nor *lawful* for me to separate ; and I never had the least inclination or temptation so to do. My affection for the Church is as strong as ever ; and I clearly see my calling, which is to live and die in her communion. This, therefore, I am determined to do, the Lord being my helper."

Thomas Jackson has stated that he could find no letter in Charles Wesley's handwriting for 1757. There is, however, a letter, among those he edited, bearing date "Moorfields, April 10th, Easter Day." The only Easter Sundays that fell on April 10th, between the poet's conversion and his death, were in 1748 and 1757. He was not married in 1748, and as the letter is written to his "dearest partner," the date is clearly fixed to 1757. It is a brief letter, overflowing with tenderness. He had found in the morning service that the Lord was risen indeed, and adds, "At the Table we received the spirit of prayer for my dear desolate mother, the Church of England." One member of his congregation gave thanks that she had found Christ under his word the previous Thursday. This letter is important. Charles Wesley's active itinerancy is said to have closed in 1756. The letter shows that, if his circle was narrower, he was still actively engaged, still abundantly blessed.

In the spring of 1758 he had a serious fall at Bristol. He says, "Mr. Ford blooded me the next day ; and Dr. Middleton, and a troop of female surgeons, joined in consultation about me. I cannot stoop without pain ; and neither do I expect a perfect cure in this world."

Soon afterwards, Thomas Walsh came to Bristol on his way to Cork. This devoted man was worn out by his incessant study and his vehement preaching. He never returned to England, but died of consumption in his own country. Thomas Walsh was one of the preachers who

had displeased Charles Wesley by administering the sacrament. But Walsh found in him one of his warmest friends and best comforters. He felt that he could not sufficiently thank him for all his kindness. In a letter written in extreme weakness, he said, "I often, with pleasure, told my friends, Mr. Charles Wesley prays for me; yea, and sings a verse for me, too."

In September, 1758, Charles Wesley paid a visit to Barnstaple, where the only child of his brother Samuel lived. She was married to Mr. Earle, a chemist. She received her uncle with great affection and joy. He spent eight or nine pleasant days here, praying with the family morning and evening. They seemed to have inherited Samuel's feelings about his brother's enthusiasm, but their fears and prejudices vanished apace when they talked freely with him. He found, to his great comfort, that Mrs. Samuel Wesley had died in perfect peace three years after her husband. Her mother, whose departure was quite triumphant, lived to be more than eighty. In connection with this visit he devoted a week to the societies in and near Tiverton. He was evidently suffering from the results of his fall, and had to guard himself against all exposure and fatigue.

In the summer of 1759, when England was in constant dread of a French invasion, Charles Wesley was in London. His letters to his wife bear witness to the general excitement that prevailed. Admiral Rodney had gone to burn the broad-bottomed vessels of the French, or to die in the attempt. It was arranged that Wednesday, July 11th, should be spent by all the societies in fasting and prayer that God might be entreated for the land. Charles reports that his brother was alarmed by false intelligence that there were only eleven thousand soldiers in England. But even Colonel Galatin estimated our force at no more

than seventeen thousand. By and by news came that Admiral Rodney had burnt some of the French boats. On November 20th Admiral Hawke gained his great victory, and the fear of invasion soon came to an end.

Charles Wesley was in London during the painful trial of Earl Ferrers for the murder of his steward, in 1760. This nobleman was the cousin of Lady Huntingdon, and the brother of the Hon. and Rev. Walter Shirley, a clergyman in Ireland, who was a warm friend of the Wesleys. For two months the Earl lay in the Tower awaiting trial. His crime, and his hardened impenitence, caused great sorrow to his pious relatives. The London Methodists kept a fast in March to pray that God would touch his heart. On April 4th many met Charles Wesley at the chapel in West Street, Seven Dials, to plead with God for the murderer. He says, "I never remember a more solemn season." Mr. Shirley and his sister then went with him to a friend's house, where he tells his wife Mr. Fletcher helped us to pray for poor Barabbas, as he calls him. Again the Spirit made intercession for him with groans unutterable. The same evening a watch-night was held at West Street. The chapel was excessively crowded, and very hot. Charles Wesley and John Fletcher preached. Both prayed earnestly for the criminal.

The friends were at the trial, with Mr. and Mrs. Whitefield and others. Most of the royal family, the peeresses, the chief gentry of the kingdom, and the foreign ambassadors were present. The members of the House of Lords came in solemn state. Charles Wesley rightly describes it as one of the most august assemblies in Europe. The trial lasted two days. The plea of insanity utterly broke down. The unhappy man was found guilty of felony and murder. This was on April 17th. On May 5th he suffered the penalty of his crime at Tyburn.

Charles Wesley did not cease to pray for him. He also urged his friends to join him in these petitions. To one preacher in the country he wrote, "Help together in your prayers for a poor murderer, Lord Ferrers." The Earl was strangely hardened, but there was some hope in his end.

In 1760 and 1761 Charles Wesley's health was feeble. For some time in the latter year he was laid aside, and went to drink the waters at Bath. The next few years were spent in the usual way between London and Bristol.

Some extracts from his letter-journal for the summer of 1764 show how he spent his days in London.

"Thursday, June 28th.—I called to see Sister Pearson, speechless and expiring. At the name of Jesus she recovered her speech and senses. I asked, 'Are you afraid to die?' 'Oh no,' she answered, 'I have no fear; death has no sting: Jesus is all in all.'

How did I even contend to lay
My limbs upon that bed!
I asked the angels to convey
My spirit in her stead.

"Friday, June 29th.—I preached on, 'Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona,' etc., with great liberty of heart and speech. I administered to a few solid souls. The Lord was very nigh.

"Saturday, June 30th.—From conferring with our preachers, I took my progress to Betsy, Mrs. Carteret, Mrs. Gumley, Mr. Romaine, and Brother Butcher. I found the greatest blessing at the last house of God. I met near two thousand of the Society at the Foundery, and rejoiced as in the months that are past, when the candle of the Lord was upon our head.

"Monday, July 2nd.—I passed two useful hours at Miss

Bosanquet's (at Leytonstone). Eight orphans she has taken to train up for God. I dined at Brother Hammond's and walked with Peggy Jackson and Nancy to a poor backslider, rejoicing and triumphing over death and hell. I picked up a stray sheep, and delivered him into the hands of his old leader, brother Parkinson. I walked home, near three miles. Adieu."

He had not yet regained his strength. The doctor told him that with care he might live a dozen years, but he adds, "He will hardly cheat me into a hope of many months longer; yet I may live to hear Charles (his son) talk Latin and Greek." His word was made a blessing. He was in favour with all the people. He preached an hour and a half at the Foundery in June, 1766. "Never," he wrote, "was I assisted more."

On September 7th he tells his wife that he had met a Mrs. Ratcliff, "a lady from Bath, begotten again in a hymn of mine. She had heard me that evening, and in deepest distress, when she came home, opened on those words—

Who is the trembling sinner, who,
That owns eternal death his due?
Waiting his fearful doom to feel,
And hanging o'er the mouth of hell?
Peace, troubled soul, thou need'st not fear,
Thy Jesus saith, 'Be of good cheer.'
Only on Jesu's blood rely;
He died, that thou mightst never die.

The Spirit applied the word 'Thy Jesus' to her heart, and assured her, God, for His sake, had forgiven her. She continued unspeakably happy for two years, and is still among the children. See keeps her chariot merely to attend the preaching. We had great fellowship together in singing and prayer."

His sermon at Spitalfields, on the same day, from the

words, "Repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ," was greatly blessed. He adds that God never failed to confirm His doctrine. He reports, "Many thanksgiving bills were put up on Sunday night, for grace received at the chapel in the morning. Among others, one poor simple woman of eighty-seven was filled with the Comforter. Some of her words were, 'The Lord has put such faith into me as I never had before, and I love Him with all my soul and heart and lungs.' Brother Kemp, who gave me the relation, believes she is clearly justified. Seldom, or never, do I hear of any such good by my ministry at Bristol."

George Whitefield had been drawn very close to the Wesleys during the last few years. In 1766 the three friends were in almost daily conference, and saw more of each other from this time than they had done since the unhappy Calvinistic controversy. Whitefield preached in the Methodist pulpits, and endured no small reproach among bigoted Calvinists for his warm friendship with the brothers. In a letter written to Charles Wesley from America, in 1770, Whitefield reported that the increase of Georgia, the once despised colony, was incredible. He added, "I am sure prayers put up about thirty years ago are now answering, and I am persuaded we shall yet see greater things than these." Such words must have comforted one who had suffered so much in 1736. The letter was probably the last that Charles Wesley received from his old friend. Before the year closed the great orator, whose life and labours had been so richly blessed, both in the Old World and in the New, died suddenly in America.

Soon after Whitefield's death the minutes of Conference for 1770 caused serious debate. Lady Huntingdon and her friends arranged for a meeting at Bristol in August,

1771, which was intended as a demonstration against Wesley's views, which they chose to brand by the words, "Popery unmasked." They were to go in a body to the Conference, to demand the withdrawal of the obnoxious minutes. John Wesley prepared these minutes as a protest against the Antinomianism which was working such mischief in many parts of the country and even among his own people, and they were drawn up for his preachers, not for popular use. This simple explanation of the use of such expressions as, "working for life," and "man's faithfulness," and "merit,"* Lady Huntingdon and her friends ignored. She wrote to Charles Wesley, telling him the resolution which they had formed. She said that "All ought to be deemed Papists who did not disown" the minutes. For more than thirty-three years John Wesley had preached justification by faith in all parts of the kingdom. To attribute such views to him showed a lack both of insight and charity. Charles Wesley simply wrote on the back of the Countess's letter, "Lady Huntingdon's LAST. UNANSWERED BY JOHN WESLEY'S BROTHER."

The deputation came to the Conference, and soon saw that they had entirely mistaken the meaning of the minutes. In the controversy that ensued Charles Wesley took no active part. John Fletcher, the Vicar of Madeley, was the most formidable champion of Wesley's minutes. He sent his manuscripts, however, to Charles Wesley for revision, and asked him to expunge any expressions that might cause needless pain. Nearly all Fletcher's writings seem thus to have passed under the eye of his friend. "Your every hint," Fletcher says, "is a blessing to me."

* This subject is treated more fully in the writer's "Life of John Wesley."

CHAPTER XII.

THE POET OF THE EVANGELICAL REVIVAL.

Influence of His Hymns—The Epworth Poets—Hymn on his Conversion—First Convert of the Hymnology—Fertility of his Muse—Poetic History of his Life—Historic and National Hymns—Gordon Riots—Poetic Tributes to Friends—Musical Celebrities—Hymns for the Festivals—Old Age in London—Scripture in the Hymns—Adaptations and Allusions—Debt to other Poets—Publication of his Hymns—Tributes from Dr. Watts and Others—Byrom's Counsel—The Dictionary of Hymnology—Dr. Stoughton's Words.

WHEN Charles Wesley died, a good woman exclaimed, "Ah! who will poetry for us now?" All the Methodist societies shared the sorrow which she expressed so quaintly. For half a century Charles Wesley's muse had been consecrated to the great revival. In his hymns the vast congregations that gathered in the churchyards, on the hill-side, at the market-cross, or in the streets of towns and cities throughout the kingdom, found expression for their conviction of sin and yearning after mercy. Here, too, when the burden of guilt and dread rolled away, their full hearts found a voice. His hymns added another application to many a powerful sermon, and lingered with the hearers long after the itinerant preacher had hurried on to another congregation. The hymns in course of time became "a body of experimental and practical divinity." "In what other publication," Wesley asks in his Preface to the Hymn Book of 1780, "have you so distinct and full an account of Scriptural Christianity; such a declaration of the heights

and depths of religion, speculative and practical ; so strong cautions against the most plausible errors, particularly those now most prevalent ; and so clear directions for making your calling and election sure ; for perfecting holiness in the fear of God ? ” The great reason for the power which Charles Wesley’s hymns exercised in the early days of Methodism, and have never ceased to exert since then, is found in the fact that they are the out-pouring of his inmost heart.

David’s lyre had many strings, because his changeful and troubled life prepared him to enter into all human sorrows and all divine deliverances. Charles Wesley, like the sweet Psalmist of Israel, was fitted by many personal struggles for his mission as the poet of Methodism. He belonged to a family of poets. The Epworth Parsonage was a nest of singing birds. His metrical “Life of Christ,” dedicated to Queen Mary, led to Samuel Wesley’s appointment to Epworth. His noble hymn, sung at some of those Tyburn executions when the grace of God triumphed over sin and death, forms a striking introduction to the hymnology of the revival.

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

Samuel, the eldest of the three brothers, who was a poet of rare gifts, wrote the beautiful hymn—

The Lord of Sabbath let us praise
In concert with the blest,
Who, joyful in harmonious lays,
Employ an endless rest.
Thus, Lord, while we remember Thee,
We blest and pious grow ;
By hymns of praise we learn to be
Triumphant here below.

John Wesley's matchless translations from the German and Spanish, as well as his original pieces, show that he shared the family gift. Their sister, Mrs. Wright, also possessed taste and skill as a poetess.

The first specimen of Charles Wesley's poetry which has been preserved is addressed to his sister Martha, when she was about to marry Mr. Hall. It was not till his return from Georgia, however, that he found his lifelong inspiration. On Whit Sunday, May 21st, 1738, he found rest to his soul. At nine o'clock on the following Tuesday he began a hymn on his conversion. For fear of pride he broke it off; but when Mr. Bray advised him to resist this temptation, he prayed to Christ to stand by him, and finished the hymn. Next day it was sung in Charles Wesley's room in Little Britain, to celebrate one of the most memorable events of Methodist history. Charles says, "Towards ten my brother was brought in triumph by a troop of our friends, and declared, 'I believe!' We sang the hymn with great joy, and parted with prayer." This expression, "*the* hymn," shows that the verses he had written to commemorate his own conversion were thus linked with his brother's. There is little doubt about the hymn referred to. The choice lies between two. One of them, however, contains a passage which is such a striking expression of the struggle he describes in his journal that it establishes its claim as the first voice of the Evangelical Revival. After describing his struggle, the poet adds, "In His name, therefore, and through His strength, I will perform my vows unto the Lord, of not hiding His righteousness within my heart, if it should ever please Him to plant it there." We quote the first three verses of this hymn. The last lines express precisely the thoughts of the journal.

Where shall my wondering soul begin ?

How shall I all to heaven aspire ?

A slave redeemed from death and sin,

A brand plucked from eternal fire.

How shall I equal triumphs raise,

Or sing my great Deliverer's praise ?

O how shall I the goodness tell,

Father, which Thou to me hast showed ?

That I, a child of wrath and hell,

I should be called a child of God,

Should know, should feel my sins forgiven,

Blest with this antepast of heaven !

And shall I slight my Father's love ?

Or basely fear His gifts to own ?

Unmindful of His favours prove ?

Shall I, the hallowed cross to shun,

Refuse His righteousness to impart,

By hiding it within my heart ?

Three weeks later Charles Wesley rejoiced over the firstfruits of that great spiritual harvest which he reaped from his hymns. On Friday, June 6th, he says, "After dinner Jack Delamotte came for me. We took coach, and, by the way, he told me that when we were last together at Blendon, in singing

Who for me, for me, hast died !

he found the words sink into his soul ; could have sung for ever, being full of delight and joy." This line is found in that sublime hymn—

O Filial Deity,

Accept my new-born cry !

See the travail of Thy soul,

Saviour, and be satisfied ;

Take me now, possess me whole,

Who for me, for me, hast died !

On July 2nd he met a Mrs. Harper, who had received the Spirit of God, but feared to confess it. They sang this verse, and at the last line "She burst out into tears and outcries, 'I believe, I believe!' and sunk down. She continued and increased in the assurance of faith; full of peace, and joy, and hope."

This last line links Charles Wesley to the German Reformation. On the Wednesday before he found rest he first saw Luther on the Galatians, "which Mr. Holland has accidentally lit upon." He says, "I spent some hours this evening in private with Martin Luther, who was greatly blessed to me, especially his conclusion of the second chapter. I laboured, waited, and prayed to feel 'who loved *me*, and gave Himself for *me*.'" Here is the inspiration of the line which was blessed to his friend Delamotte. Luther touchingly alludes to his own childhood, when he was taught only to regard Christ as a lawgiver and judge, until he was terrified, and would turn pale even at the mention of His name. He warns others against such a mistake. "Therefore, thou shouldest so read these little words *me*, and *for me*, that thou mayest ponder them well, and consider that they are full of meaning. Accustom yourself to grasp this little word *me* with sure trust, and apply it to thyself; and do not doubt that thou art among those who are named in the little word *me*. Also, thou shouldest clearly understand that Christ did not only love Peter, Paul, and other apostles and prophets, and give Himself for them, but that such grace concerns us, and comes to us as to them; therefore are we also intended by the little word *me*." He says also, "These words, 'who loved me, and gave Himself for me,' are full of great and mighty comfort, and therefore are powerful to awake faith in us." How perfectly Charles Wesley had caught Luther's spirit, and

how strikingly the great Reformer's description of the effect of the glorious phrase is corroborated by the conversion of Jack Delamotte.

Charles Wesley's muse had now found its inspiration. For fifty years there was scarcely a day without its line; even on his death-bed, "in age and feebleness extreme," his full heart overflowed in songs of praise and prayer. The Wesleys published at least fifty-seven collections of poetry in their lifetime. It is not always possible to say which of the brothers was the author of a hymn; but Charles Wesley wrote at least seven thousand pieces of poetry. His fertility was inexhaustible.

Whilst looking for salvation, the Wesleys often cheered their drooping hearts with hymns of hope. Eleven days before John's conversion, Charles says that his brother came to see him "exceedingly heavy. I forced him (as he had often forced me) to sing a hymn to Christ, and almost thought He would come while we were singing, assured He would come quickly." On the morning when Charles Wesley found rest, he says that his brother and some friends came, and sang a hymn to the Holy Ghost, by which his comfort and hope were increased. They sang hymns among their friends, and in visiting those who were feeling after Christ. At Bexley, when one who had been suffering from strong temptation at last rose from her knees with words of praise, the journal adds, "We parted in a triumphant hymn."

Before his conversion, Charles Wesley's muse was busy. His painful illness at Oxford, in the spring of 1738, has given us two fine hymns. One verse may show their spirit—

To thee, benign and saving Power,
I consecrate my lengthened days;
While marked with blessings, every hour
Shall speak Thy co-extended praise.

Poetry was for him almost another sense. It was the natural expression for every feeling of his heart. When thinking of marriage, of which hitherto he had always been afraid, he wrote, "I expressed the various searchings of my heart in many hymns on that important occasion." In 1755 he began to write poetical epistles to his friends. Mr. Whitefield, Mr. Stonehouse, Count Zinzendorf, and other friends were favoured with these faithful rebukes and warnings. His hymn on his wife's birthday is a fragment of family history—one of many such embedded in his poetry.

Come away to the skies,
My beloved, arise,
And rejoice on the day thou wast born ;
On the festival day
Come exulting away,
To thy heavenly country return.

But Charles Wesley's hymns are not only the history of his own life ; they preserve for us every aspect of the great revival. We have seen how, when he rode out of Devizes, after standing siege during the terrible riot of 1747, he and his friends poured out their hearts' gratitude in that hymn which is said to have been written to commemorate John Wesley's escape from death at Wednesbury.

The brighter aspects of his itinerancy are represented by a hymn written "After preaching to the Newcastle Colliers." His journal for Sunday, November 30th, 1746, says, "I went out into the streets of Newcastle, and called the poor, the lame, the halt, the blind, with that precious promise, 'Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out.' They had no feeling of the frost while the love of Christ warmed their hearts." This seems to have been the service which suggested his hymn—

Ye neighbours, and friends
Of Jesus, draw near ;
His love condescends
By titles so dear
To call and invite you
His promise to prove,
And freely delight you
In Jesus's love.

Three months earlier, amid the wonderful success in Cornwall, he wrote, "I expressed the gratitude of my heart in the following thanksgiving" :—

All thanks be to God,
Who scatters abroad,
Throughout every place,
By the least of His servants, His savour of grace :
Who the victory gave,
The praise let Him have,
For the work He hath done ;
All honour and glory to Jesus alone.

The Kingswood colliers, among whom Methodism won its earliest trophies, were not forgotten. The glorious reformation wrought by Methodism there is commemorated in his "Hymn for the Kingswood Colliers," published in 1740.

Glory to God, whose sovereign grace
Hath animated senseless stones,
Called us to stand before His face,
And raised us into Abraham's sons.

The people that in darkness lay,
In sin and error's deadly shade,
Have seen a glorious Gospel day
In Jesu's lovely face displayed.

Thou only, Lord, the work hast done,
And bared Thine arm in all our sight,
Hast made the reprobates Thy own,
And claimed the outcasts as Thy right.

Kingswood, Cornwall, and Newcastle have thus left their mark on the poetry of the revival.

Charles Wesley's hymns preserve the memory of all the doctrinal struggles through which Methodism passed in his day. When the Moravians were neglecting the ordinances of religion, and propagating their doctrine of "stillness" at Fetter Lane, he wrote his hymn on "The Means of Grace."

Still for thy lovingkindness, Lord,
I in Thy temple wait;
I look to find Thee in Thy Word,
Or at Thy Table meet.

Here, in Thine own appointed ways,
I wait to learn Thy will;
Silent I stand before Thy face,
And hear Thee say, "Be still."

The Calvinistic controversy often stirred the poet's muse. He thus vindicated his brother from the charges of his opponents, or bore his own share in the fray. His "Hymns of God's everlasting love" show how different his creed was from that of the Calvinistic party. When Dr. Gill published his folio on "Final Perseverance," John Wesley reprinted one of these poems, with the heading "A Full and Complete Answer to all Dr. Gill ever wrote Concerning the Final Perseverance of the Saints." Mr. Whitefield also showed his estimate of the hymns by taking special exception to their publication. "How can you say you will not dispute with me about election, and yet print such hymns?" The opening verses of one hymn will illustrate Charles Wesley's doctrine of grace.

Father, whose everlasting love,
Thy only Son for sinners gave,
Whose grace to all did freely move,
And sent Him down the world to save.

Help us Thy mercy to extol,
Immense, unfathomed, unconfined ;
To praise the Lamb who died for all,
The general Saviour of mankind.

Thy undistinguishing regard
Was cast on Adam's fallen race ;
For all Thou hast in Christ prepared
Sufficient, sovereign, saving grace.

We may add the closing verses of "The Cry of a Reprobate." Charles Wesley's reprobate is not one to whom God had denied His grace, but one who had wilfully rejected salvation.

Before I at His bar appear,
Thence into outer darkness thrust,
The Judge of all the earth I clear,
Jesus, the merciful, the just.

By my own hands, not His, I fall ;
The hellish doctrine I disprove ;
Sinners, His grace is free for all ;
Though I am damned, yet God is love.

Charles Wesley's thought almost invariably took the form of poetry. His journals and his published sermons show that he was a master of terse and striking prose, but poetry was the favourite outlet for his mind and heart. His hymns are not only the history of his own life and of Methodism, but also of the English nation. During the earthquake panic of 1750 he composed some of his finest pieces. In that season of excitement the Methodists of London first sang his inspiring verses :—

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

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

In the beginning of 1756, soon after tidings of the terrible earthquake in Lisbon had reached this country, and when England was also agitated by fears of a French invasion, he wrote his hymn—

How happy are the little flock,
Who, safe beneath their guardian Rock,
In all commotions rest !
When wars and tumult's waves run high,
Unmoved above the storm they lie,
They lodge in Jesu's breast.

The 6th of February was a national fast. Men's hearts were failing them for fear. Charles Wesley published seventeen hymns suitable for the day. Southey has pronounced one of these to be the finest lyric in our language.

Stand the Omnipotent decree !
Jehovah's will be done !
Nature's end we wait to see,
And hear her final groan :
Let this earth dissolve and blend
In death the wicked and the just,
Let those pond'rous orbs descend,
And grind us into dust.
Rests secure the righteous man !
At his Redeemer's beck,
Sure to emerge and rise again,
And mount above the wreck ;
Lo ! the heavenly spirit towers,
Like flame, o'er nature's funeral pyre,
Triumphs in immortal powers,
And claps his wings of fire !

Nothing hath the just to lose
By worlds on worlds destroyed ;
Far beneath his feet he views,
With smiles, the flaming void ;
Sees the universe renewed,
The grand millennial reign begun ;
Shouts, with all the sons of God,
Around the eternal throne.

Resting in this glorious hope
To be at last restored,
Yield we now our bodies up
To earthquake, plague, or sword :
Listening for the call divine,
The latest trumpet of the seven,
Soon our soul and dust shall join,
And both fly up to heaven.

Many illustrations of the national history, enshrined in Charles Wesley's poetry, might be added. His "Hymns for Times of Trouble" were composed in 1744, when France supported the claims of the Pretender, and England was threatened with all the horrors of a Popish invasion. Here the poet's loyalty to George II. finds full expression. How unjust were the reports of his disloyalty which the enemies of Methodism circulated may be seen from the first verse of two of these hymns.

Sovereign of all, whose will ordains
The powers on earth that be,
By whom our rightful monarch reigns,
Subject to none but Thee.*

Lord, Thou hast bid Thy people pray
For all that bear the sovereign sway,
And Thy vicegerents reign,—
Rulers, and governors, and powers ;
And lo, in faith we pray for ours,
Nor can we pray in vain ! †

* No. 465 in Wesleyan Hymn Book.

† No. 985 *Ibid.*

Seven hymns were written for the public thanksgiving held after the victory of Culloden. These were, no doubt, sung at the Foundry, which was filled at four o'clock in the morning. The poet preached from the words, "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim?" "Our hearts were melted by the long-suffering love of God, whose power we felt disposing us to the true thanksgiving." On November 29th, 1759, there was another national thanksgiving for Admiral Hawke's victory over the French fleet. Charles Wesley published fifteen more hymns for this festival.

The Gordon riots, when the mob roamed about London, destroying the houses and chapels of the Roman Catholics, and maltreating all who were thought to sympathise with them, led to the publication of his "Hymns written in the Time of the Tumults, June, 1780." Old age had now crept on him, but he was too deeply moved to keep silence. He was closely linked to those troubles. Lord George Gordon himself, who lived in Welbeck Street, was his near neighbour. The Earl of Mansfield's house, in Bloomsbury Square, was completely destroyed, with all its furniture, pictures, and the invaluable library where he had gathered the works of Pope and Bolingbroke, with their own marginal comments. As the mob streamed across from Holborn, the earl and his wife retreated by the back of the house. The "New Chapel," in City Road, seemed in peril from the mob. A little hymn entitled "Upon Notice sent One that his House was Marked," seems to show that he himself was in danger. Charles Wesley prayed with the preachers at City Road, and charged them to keep the peace. His hot indignation against the rioters, and his condemnation of the city magistrates for their want of decision and public spirit in the crisis, are all mirrored in his verse. On June 8th, the day after that night of outrage in which Lord Mansfield's house was sacked, and

his precious library destroyed, his old schoolfellow wrote some stirring verses.

“Havock !” the infernal Leader cries :
“Havock !” the associate host replies ;
The rabble shouts, the torrent pours,
The city sinks, the flame devours !

A general consternation spreads,
While furious crowds ride o’er our heads ;
Tremble the powers Thou didst ordain,
And rulers bear the sword in vain.

Three years earlier, in 1777, the poet’s deepest compassion had been stirred by the sad fate of Dr. Dodd, who suffered the extreme penalty of the law for forgery. Whilst he lay under sentence of death, Charles Wesley wrote a touching hymn of prayer for this unfortunate clergyman. On the day Dodd suffered, the keen distress with which he followed that sad tragedy found expression in another piece.

Charles Wesley commemorated the friends of a lifetime in his verse. As one after another was called away by death, he paid his tribute to the heroes of the Evangelical Revival. Thomas Walsh and George Whitefield may represent the prominent workers ; Mr. and Mrs. Blackwell, and Mr. Jones, of Fonmon Castle, the generous friends and supporters. The memory of each of these is enshrined in his poetry. John Fletcher is not commemorated. John Wesley asked his brother to prepare an elegy which might be printed with his funeral sermon, but no elegy came. Henry Moore inquired once whether it had come. “No,” said Wesley ; “my brother, I suppose, is waiting for a thought. Poets, you know, are maggoty.” This incident furnishes a rare exception ; but Charles Wesley seldom wrote on any subject that was given to him. Family friends, such as Grace Bowen, the nurse of

the Gwynne household, and Mrs. Vigor, of Bristol, who won such a warm place in the hearts of her neighbours, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wesley, are not forgotten. The beautiful epitaph written for his mother's tombstone, though open to criticism as a description of Susanna Wesley's religious experience, is a happy illustration of his power.

In sure and certain hope to rise,
And claim her mansion in the skies,
A Christian here her flesh laid down,
The cross exchanging for a crown.

True daughter of affliction, she,
Inured to pain and misery,
Mourned a long night of griefs and fears,
A legal night of seventy years.

The Father then revealed His Son,
Him in the broken bread made known ;
She knew and felt her sins forgiven,
And found the earnest of her heaven.

Meet for the fellowship above,
She heard the call, " Arise, my love ! "
" I come," her dying looks replied,
And lamb-like, as her Lord, she died.

The poet's gratitude for deeds of kindness also found acknowledgment in verse. For Dr. Middleton, of Bristol, the generous medical attendant of himself and his family, he probably wrote " the Physician's Hymn," which might be used as a prayer. When the doctor died, in 1760, Charles Wesley paid him a touching tribute.

The musical circle into which he was introduced by the conversion of Mrs. Rich, and by the genius of his own sons, found in him both a chaplain and a laureate. Here he met John Frederick Lampe, who was born in Saxony in 1703, and came over to London in 1725. He played the bassoon in Covent Garden Theatre, and composed

operatic music. On November 29th, 1745, John Wesley says, "I spent an hour with Mr. Lampe, who had been a deist for many years, till it pleased God, by the 'Earnest Appeal,' to bring him to a better mind." He became a true Christian, and set many of Charles Wesley's hymns to music. He lodged at Broad Court, Bow Street. Charles Wesley and he soon became attached friends. On March 29th, 1746, he says, "I passed the afternoon at Mrs. Rich's, where we caught a physician by the ear, through the help of Mr. Lampe and some of our sisters. This is the true use of music." For his use Charles Wesley seems to have composed "The Musician's Hymn.

With Tubal's wretched sons no more
I prostitute my sacred power,
To please the fiends beneath ;
Or modulate the wanton lay,
Or smooth with music's hand the way
To everlasting death.
Suffice for this the season past :
I come, great God, to learn at last
The lesson of Thy grace ;
Teach me the new, the Gospel song,
And let my hand, my heart, my tongue
Move only to Thy praise.

Lampe published some tunes for Charles Wesley's hymns in 1746 ; and on December 11th the poet writes from Newcastle to Mr. Blackwell, the banker, "Tell Mrs. Dewal not to mind that envious gentlemen who slandered Lampe. His tunes are universally admired here among the musical men, and have brought me into high favour with them." In March, 1750, he asks his wife, "How many of Lampe's tunes can you play ?"

Lampe and his wife were in Dublin when Charles Wesley visited the city in October, 1748, and were

overjoyed to see him. "I cannot yet give up my hope," says Charles Wesley, "that they are designed for better things than feeding swine : that is, entertaining the gay world." Mrs. Lampe, who was herself a favourite singer and actress, was the daughter of Charles Young, a popular singer. Her sister, Cecilia, who was frequently engaged by Handel to sing in his oratorios, married Dr. Arne, the operatic composer. Lampe died on July 25th, 1751, at the age of forty-eight, and was buried in Canongate Churchyard, Edinburgh.* Charles Wesley's memorial hymn shows how truly he esteemed this gifted man.

'Tis done ! the Sovereign Will's obeyed !
 The soul, by angel-guards conveyed,
 Has took its seat on high ;
 The brother of my choice is gone
 To music sweeter than his own,
 And concerts in the sky.
 He hymns the glorious Lamb *alone* ;
 No more constrained to make his moan
 In this sad wilderness ;
 To toil for sublunary pay,
 And cast his sacred strains away,
 And stoop the world to please.

Other entries in his journals enable us to understand the new world to which Charles Wesley gained entrance through Mrs. Rich's conversion. On April 29th, 1748, he says, "Mrs. Rich carried me to Dr. Pepusch, whose music entertained us much, and his conversation more." In 1737 Pepusch had become organist at the Charterhouse, where he lived for the rest of his life. He was buried in the chapel there in 1752. We may therefore conclude that this visit was paid to the Charterhouse, where John Wesley had been a scholar. How interesting

* *Wesleyan Magazine*, January, 1897.

the conversation must have been we can understand when we remember two or three circumstances of the musician's life. The son of a Berlin minister, he had left his native country in disgust because the king sentenced an officer who had displeased him to death without any trial. He had been wrecked on his way to the Bermudas, and had then come to England, where he married Margarita de L'Epine, a famous singer, who brought him a fortune of £10,000. She died eighteen months before Charles Wesley's visit, and the old man, eighty-one years of age, was left alone.

Mr. Rich's daughters were taught music by Handel. He had quarrelled with the conductors of the Opera House, and Mr. Rich put Covent Garden Theatre at his service for the performance of his oratorios. Handel lived fourteen years after Charles Wesley's introduction to Mrs. Rich. At her house the poet and his wife met him. In 1826 Samuel Wesley found in the library of the Fitzwilliam Museum, at Cambridge, three tunes composed by Handel and in his own writing, set to three of his father's hymns: "Sinners obey the Gospel-word"; "O Love Divine, how sweet Thou art!" "Rejoice, the Lord is King!" His setting of tunes to these hymns is itself evidence of the influence Methodism exerted on that brilliant and irritable musician. In his fits of passion he was known to swear in three different languages. But his last days gave evidence of a striking change. He became a regular attendant at divine worship, and showed by his gestures the depth of his feelings. His whole spirit seemed subdued and softened.

These facts show how closely the Methodist poet was associated with the musical celebrities of his day. The memorial verses written after the death of Dr. Boyce, the great composer of cathedral music, who was young

Charles Wesley's teacher, contain a striking reference to Handel's genius. Dr. Boyce was a man of singular modesty. Charles Wesley says that he never heard him speak a vain, ill-natured word. We may quote one fine verse from the poet's tribute—

Thy generous, good, and upright heart,
Which sighed for a celestial lyre,
Was tuned on earth to bear a part
Symphonious with the heavenly choir,
Where Handel strikes the warbling strings,
And 'plausive angels clap their wings.

These memorial verses were set to music by the poet's son Charles, and sung, to the great gratification of the audience, at one of the concerts in Chesterfield Street. Samuel Wesley, the organist, says, in his MS. reminiscences, that there were several interesting airs and three splendid and highly wrought choruses. The poem which Charles Wesley wrote on the death of Miss Ray, who was shot by the Rev. Mr. Hackman, was also set to music by Lord Mornington, with proper instrumental accompaniments. The verses written on the death of Mr. Lampe express his yearning to join the harmony of heaven.

Our number and our bliss complete,
And summon all the choir to meet
Thy glorious throne around ;
The whole musician-band bring in,
And give the signal to begin,
And let the trumpet sound !

John Wesley tells us that "Garrick also knew his brother "well; and he knew him not only far superior in learning, but in poetry, to Mr. Thomson and all his theatrical writers put together."

In the fourth edition of his "Funeral Hymns," published in 1759, Charles Wesley commemorates a host of departed

friends. Three pieces in this collection are among the finest that he produced:—"How happy every child of grace," "And let this feeble body fail," "Come let us join our friends above." John Wesley and his congregation in Staffordshire were singing the last hymn when Charles died in London. When he preached his farewell sermon in Dublin, on July 12th, 1789, he gave out the same hymn, commented upon it, and pronounced it the sweetest hymn his brother ever wrote.*

Every Methodist means of grace was enriched with suitable hymns. The love-feast, the watch-night, and covenant services called forth some of Charles Wesley's best poetry. The Lord's Supper, at which his whole soul was often aflame with devotion and rapturous joy, was made still more blessed by his glorious strains. Church festivals were not forgotten. The year after their conversion the brothers published a hymn book in which are hymns for Christmas Day, the Epiphany, Easter Day, Ascension Day, and Whit Sunday. They are all in the same measure, and are a remarkable proof of the fertility and power of his poetry. Two of them have become the voice of universal Christendom on her greatest festivals.

Hark how all the welkin rings,
"Glory to the King of kings,"
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!

That is *the* Christmas hymn of every Church. Not less popular is the "Hymn for Easter Day."

"Christ the Lord is risen to-day,"
Sons of men and angels say!
Raise your joys and triumphs high;
Sing, ye heavens; and, earth, reply.

* "Crookshank's Methodism in Ireland," i., 483.

The hymn for Ascension Day is one of the finest of this bright constellation.

Hail the day that sees Him rise,
Ravished from our wishful eyes !
Christ, awhile to mortals given,
Reascends His native heaven !

There the pompous triumph waits ;
“ Lift your heads, eternal gates,
Wide unfold the radiant scene,
Take the King of Glory in ! ”

Charles Wesley's hymns for children include one that has become a household prayer for Christendom.

Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,
Look upon a little child ;
Pity my simplicity,
Suffer me to come to Thee.

He published hymns for the use of families, and hymns upon all the great doctrines of Christianity. His paraphrases of Scripture are especially fine. His muse seems to have been inexhaustible. Every step of his own domestic life is mirrored in his poetry. His love-letters were in verse, his sorrows over the illness of his wife and the death of his infant children naturally took the same form of expression. When his youngest son joined the Roman Catholic Church, his father's bitter grief is seen in his touching poetry. The more playful aspect of his muse may be illustrated by some lines written to guard his son Charles against the ambition that despises ordinary duties.

“ Take time by the forelock,” is old Charles's word ;
“ Time enough,” quoth his son, with the air of a lord ;
“ Let the vulgar be punctual ; my humour and passion
To make people wait, or I can't be in fashion.

If I follow the great only when they do well,
To the size of a hero I never shall swell.
But for me, insignificant wight, it suffices
To follow them close in their follies and vices."

Charles Wesley was making poetry all his life. As he went to Wakefield, on March 15th, 1744, to answer the charge of disloyalty, he wrote a hymn in which he committed himself into the hands of his Master ; when he had won the day, he poured forth his gratitude in strains of thanksgiving. In September, 1748, he made a hymn for the Roman Catholics in Ireland, on his way from Cork to Bandon. He rode with a loose rein, jotting down his thoughts, and thus beguiled many a journey. A sentence from a letter to his wife gives a glimpse of the itinerant poet in one of his happy veins. "I crept on, singing or making hymns, till I got unawares to Canterbury."

A pleasant picture of the poet's old age in London is given by Henry Moore. When he was nearly eighty he rode a little horse, grey with age, which was brought from the Foundery every morning to Chesterfield Street. Even in the height of summer he was dressed in winter clothes. As he jogged leisurely along, he jotted down any thoughts that struck him, and continued to expand and arrange them. He kept a card in his pocket for this purpose, on which he wrote his hymn in shorthand. "Not unfrequently he has come to our house in the City Road, and, having left the pony in the garden in front, he would enter, crying out, "Pen and ink ! pen and ink !" These being supplied, he wrote the hymn he had been composing. When this was done, he would look round on those present, and salute them with much kindness, ask after their health, give out a short hymn, and thus put all in mind of eternity. He was fond upon these occasions of giving out the lines—

There all the ship's company meet,
Who sailed with the Saviour beneath;
With shouting, each other they greet,
And triumph o'er sorrow and death:

The voyage of life's at an end,
The mortal affliction is past;
The age that in heaven they spend,
For ever and ever shall last.

The wealth of Scripture reference in Charles Wesley's hymns is only revealed when closely studied. The Allan Library contains a hymn book, kept in constant use by the founder of the library, which has a Scripture text written opposite to almost every line of some of the hymns.

In the "Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society," vol. i., part I, the Rev. Dr. Moulton writes of that "singularly beautiful hymn" *—

With glorious clouds encompassed round,
Whom angels dimly see.

He says, "The character of the hymn—what we should now call its solidarity—might of itself account for the sparing use of the hymn in public. It is of one piece. We cannot remove a verse without disturbing the flow and marring the cohesion of the whole poem. Probably, however, the real obstacle to frequent use has lain in certain expressions in verses 5, 6, which offend modern taste. Verse 5 John Wesley himself 'scrupled singing'; to him the words, 'That dear disfigured face,' savoured of 'too much familiarity,' seemed to speak of 'our blessed Lord . . . as a mere man.' To us probably verse 6 presents still greater difficulty, in the words, 'wrap me in Thy crimson vest.' To this figure I do not remember

* Wesleyan Hymn Book, 128.

any exact parallel, either in the volumes of the Wesley poetry or elsewhere. Were it found in some ancient writer, or in some well-known Latin or Moravian hymn, we could more easily understand its sudden appearance here. I shall be glad to know if any parallel has been found by others.

"I suppose that we shall all agree as to the meaning. He whose name is 'the Word of God' (Rev. xix. 13) is seen 'arrayed in a garment sprinkled with,' or 'dipped in, blood.' In Wesley's Notes this is rightly explained of 'the blood of the enemies He hath already conquered' (Isa. lxiii. 1, etc.); but at least one ancient writer (Hippolytus) interpreted the words 'as referring to Christ's own blood, by which the incarnate Word cleansed the world.' In verse 12 we read that 'He hath a name which no one knoweth but He Himself.' With his characteristic tendency to combine allusions and unite symbols, Charles Wesley seizes on the cognate thought of Gen. xxxii. 29, so exquisitely rendered in Hymns 140, 141. In consonance with this he pleads, 'O Saviour, take me to Thy heart, enfold me in Thy vesture dipped in Thine own atoning blood. Only when sprinkled with, encompassed with, the blood of atonement can I understand Thy name. When I am thus enabled to receive the revelation, tell me *all* Thy name.'

"The whole hymn well illustrates the extent to which the words of Scripture are embedded in the Wesley hymns. If we would trace up the thoughts and phraseology of the hymn to their source, we cannot quote fewer than the following texts: Ex. xxiv. 16, 17; Ps. xcvi. 2; Ezek. x. 4; Isa. vi. 2; Job xi. 7, xxiii. 3, 8, 9; 1 Tim. vi. 16; Hab. i. 13; Isa. lix. 2; Ps. ciii. 19; Isa. vi. 1; Ex. iii. 8; Job xxv. 6; Ps. xxii. 6; Isa. xli. 14; Isa. liii. 3; Rev. i. 5; John i. 18; 1 John iv. 9; John xiv. 21; Col. i. 26, 27;

Acts xx. 28 ; John xvii. 26 ; John i. 14 ; 1 Tim. iii. 16 ; Eph. ii. 13 ; Tit. ii. 13, 14 ; 2 Cor. viii. 9 ; Eph. iii. 18 ; Isa. liii. 4, 5, lii. 14 ; 1 Pet. ii. 24 ; Rev. v. 6, xix. 12, 13 ; Gen. xxxii. 29 ; 2 Cor. v. 19 ; Eph. iv. 32 (Gk. and R.V.) ; 1 Tim. iii. 16 ; 1 Pet. i. 2 ; Col. ii. 13-15 ; Rev. vii. 14.

"Partial parallels to the language of verses 5, 6, will be found in vol. vii. (of the Poetical Works), pp. 66, 92, 191, 215, 372 ; vol. xii., p. 90 ; vol. xiii., pp. 131, 258."

The poet enriched his work by some striking adaptations of the ideas of other masters of his art. In July, 1754, he says, "I began once more transcribing Young's 'Night Thoughts.'" No writings but the inspired are more useful to me. Young's influence is especially seen in that sublime hymn—

Stand the omnipotent decree,

where some of his most striking thoughts are pressed into service. Young's passage is, however, dull and lifeless compared with Charles Wesley's soul-stirring lyric. The two poets have other links. Lady Huntingdon, seeing Dr. Young's settled melancholy after the death of his step-daughter, introduced him to Charles Wesley in the hope of removing the load of domestic grief. The two poets conversed freely, and Dr. Young afterwards spoke very highly of Charles Wesley to the Countess. He attended Methodist services, from which he derived consolation and support.

The touching refrain—

My Lord, my Love is crucified—

is drawn from Ignatius' Epistle to the Romans ("Amor meus crucifixus est"), but the thought is lifted from human love to the divine.

Gerhard's thought—

O te felicem, qui gnosti gaudia vera
Gaudia quae nullo sunt peritura die—

shapes the couplet—

In joy that none can take away,
In life which shall for ever stay.

The closing lines of hymn 229—

Like Moses to thyself convey,
And kiss my raptured soul away—

are based on the old Jewish tradition that God "bent over the face of Moses and kissed him. Then the soul leaped up in joy, and went with the kiss of God to paradise." Dr. Watts has used the same incident in his "Death of Moses."

Softly his fainting head he lay
Upon his Maker's breast ;
His Maker kissed his soul away
And laid his flesh to rest.

Mr. F. W. H. Myers also has his reference—

Moses on the mount
Died of the kisses of the lips of God.

The tradition about the death of Thomas Aquinas, that the Saviour appeared in a vision and said, "Thou hast written well of Me ; what shall thy reward be ?" and that the seraphic doctor replied, "Nothing but Thyself," may have suggested the verse *—

Give me Thyself ; from every boast,
From every wish set free ;
Let all I am in Thee be lost,
But give Thyself to me.

* See article by Rev. R. Butterworth, in the *Wesleyan Magazine*, December, 1893.

A well-known instance of the poet's use of classical allusions is found in his reference to the history of Damocles.

Show me the naked sword
Impending o'er my head ;
O let me tremble at Thy word,
And to my ways take heed !

Eve's beautiful tribute to her husband—

With Thee conversing, I forget all time,
All seasons and their change ; all please alike,
“ Paradise Lost,” iv. 639—

suggests his verse—

With Thee conversing, we forget
All time, and toil, and care ;
Labour is rest, and pain is sweet,
If Thou, my God, art here.

Pope's line in “ Eloisa to Abelard ”—

Tears that delight, and sighs that waft to heaven,

becomes—

The godly grief, the pleasing smart,
The meltings of a broken heart,
The tears that tell your sins forgiven,
The sighs that waft your soul to heav'n.

Mr. C. L. Ford, of Bath, has pointed out, in the journals of the Wesley Historical Society, other instances where Charles Wesley has drawn freely on “ Eloisa to Abelard ”—

Hymn 201. Thine eye diffused a quickening ray
Pope, line 145. Thine eyes diffused a reconciling ray.
Hymn 330. Here let me ever, ever stay.
Pope, line 171. Yet here for ever, ever must I stay.
Hymn 270. To hate the sin with all my heart,
But still the sinner love.
Pope, line 192. And love the offender, yet detest the offence.

- Hymn 325. I sink in blissful dreams away,
 And visions of eternal day.
Pope, line 221. To sounds of heavenly harps she dies away,
 And melts in visions of eternal day.
Hymn 131. Till Thy Spirit blow,
 And bid the obedient waters flow.
Pope, line 253. Ere winds were taught to blow,
 Or moving Spirit bade the waters flow.

Pope's poem was published in 1717, and there is little doubt, as Mr. Ford suggests, that Charles Wesley had become so familiar with it that it had become part of his own thought. The way in which the poet of Methodism enriched his work by such parallels is only grasped by such a detailed study as this.

John Howe's magnificent passage in his sermon, "The Redeemer's tears wept over lost souls," had evidently laid hold on the poet. "If thou understandest not these things thyself," Howe pleads, "believe Him that did; at least believe His tears." The sentiment loses none of its pathos in Charles Wesley's hands.

See ! the suffering God appears !
Jesus weeps ! believe His tears !
Mingled with His blood they cry,
Why will you resolve to die ?

Dr. Brevint's treatise on "Christian Sacrifice" furnished the suggestion for the splendid sacramental hymn—

Victim Divine, Thy grace we claim,
While thus Thy precious death we show.

In the preface to two volumes of "Short Hymns on Select Passages of the Holy Scriptures" Charles Wesley says, "many of the thoughts are borrowed from Mr. Henry's Commentary, Dr. Gill's on the Pentateuch, and Bengelius on the New Testament." Almost every line of

his fine hymn on Exodus xxxiv. 5, 6 shows the use he made of Matthew Henry.

Mercy is Thy distinguished name,
Which suits a sinner best,

is his rendering of the note "He is merciful. This is put first, because it is the first wheel in all the instances of God's goodwill to fallen man, whose misery makes him an object of pity."

Another verse is generally regarded as a description of the Land's End, with its bold promontory standing between two seas.

Lo ! on a narrow neck of land,
'Twixt two unbounded seas, I stand,
Secure, insensible ;
A point of time, a moment's space,
Removes me to that heavenly place,
Or shuts me up in hell.

In a letter to his wife, dated October 11th, 1819, Adam Clarke says, "I write this, my dear Mary, in a situation that would make your soul freeze with horror ; it is on the last projecting point of rock on the Land's End, upward of two hundred feet perpendicular above the sea, which is raging and roaring most tremendously, threatening destruction to myself and the narrow point of rock on which I am now sitting. On my right hand is the Bristol Channel, and before me the vast Atlantic Ocean. There is not one inch of land from the place on which my feet rest to the vast American Continent. This is the place, though probably not so far advanced on the tremendous cliff, where Charles Wesley composed those fine lines—

Lo ! on a narrow neck of land,
'Twixt two unbounded seas, I stand

"The point of rock itself is about three feet broad at its termination, and the fearless adventurer will here place his foot in order to be able to say that he has been on the uttermost inch of land in the British Empire westward; and on this spot the foot of your husband now rests."

A recent discovery has shown that the hymn was written in America. When Charles Wesley was secretary to General Oglethorpe, he stayed at his residence on Jekyl Island, close to the governor's settlements upon St. Simon's Island, near the coast of Southern Georgia. Some of the records and correspondence of the early colonists have fortunately been preserved, and are now in the custody of the Georgia Historical Society. Mr. Franklin H. Heard, a magazine writer, recently examined these original papers, and found many interesting facts, and among them something concerning this hymn.

Oglethorpe's wife, in a letter to her father-in-law, wrote, "The Secretary of the Colony, Charles Wesley, dwells with us upon the island, and is zealous to save the souls of the Indians who come hither to fish and hunt. . . . Mr. Wesley has the gift of verse, and has written many sweet hymns which we sing."

In a letter to this lady who was temporarily at Savannah, Charles Wesley wrote from Jekyl Island, in 1736, "Last evening I wandered to the north end of the island, and stood upon the narrow point which your ladyship will recall as there projecting into the ocean. The vastness of the watery waste, as compared with my standing place, called to mind the briefness of human life and the immensity of its consequences, and my surroundings inspired me to write the inclosed hymn, beginning—

Lo! on a narrow neck of land,
'Twixt two unbounded seas, I stand—

which, I trust, may pleasure your ladyship, weak and feeble as it is when compared with the songs of the sweet Psalmist of Israel."

This settles the question of locality, but the illustration is Prior's ("Solomon," iii. 613):—

Amid two seas on one small point of land,
Wearied, uncertain, and amazed we stand;
On either side our thoughts incessant turn,
Forward we dread; and looking back we mourn;
Losing the present in this dubious haste;
And lost ourselves betwixt the future and the past.

Addison, in the *Spectator*, No. 590, has a similar thought: "Many witty authors compare the present time to an isthmus, or narrow neck of land, that rises in the midst of an ocean, immeasurably diffused on either side of it."

How Charles Wesley pressed local surroundings into his service is seen from the hymn written before preaching to the men employed in the Portland stone-quarries.

Come, O Thou all-victorious Lord!
Thy power to us make known;
Strike with the hammer of Thy word,
And break these hearts of stone.

He once mastered a troublesome mob by a clever stroke. Some drunken sailors had disturbed his congregation by singing "Nancy Dawson"—the famous song of that day. At the next service, when they were about to repeat their device, the Methodists struck up the song-tune to a hymn which their poet-preacher had just written. The good-humoured tars were quick to confess that they were fairly defeated.

Listed into the cause of sin,
Why should a good be evil?
Music, alas! too long hath been
Pressed to obey the devil!
Drunken, or lewd, or light the lay
Flowed to the soul's undoing;
Widened and strewn with flowers the way,
Down to eternal ruin.

Come, let us try if Jesu's love
Will not as well inspire us:
This is the theme of those above,
This upon earth shall fire us.
Say, if your hearts are tuned to sing,
Is there a subject greater?
Harmony all its strains may bring,
Jesu's name is greater.

Charles Wesley was publishing hymn books from his conversion to the end of his life. His letters to his wife show that he took a watchful interest in the sales. He says that Salthouse, his intended companion on a journey from London to Bristol, could not leave the books without great loss and "disappointment of my subscribers." In another letter he complains that he cannot lean upon J. Jones, and will look after his books himself on his return to Bristol. In 1760, during the imprisonment of Earl Ferrers, Miss Shirley gave him a guinea for his hymn book. His hymns were published in all forms. On one fast-day we find that he issued a penny hymn book. The fruits of his muse were published in pamphlets and in volumes; a few hymns suitable for some Church festival or special time of national excitement, or a large collection on general subjects. About the year 1745 he first began to issue tracts of hymns for special festivals and other occasions. In 1749 he published two volumes of "Hymns and Sacred Poems." Hitherto the poetry had been

published in the name of the two brothers; now, for the first time, his own name appeared alone. He has left a list of the 1,145 subscribers to these volumes. London furnished 513; Bristol, 136; 367 were scattered over other parts of England and Wales; Ireland sent 129 subscriptions. We learn from such a record how widely the poet's gifts were appreciated.

The care with which Charles Wesley revised his poetry is seen from some notes at the end of the five quarto volumes of hymns on the Gospels and Acts of the Apostles which he left in MS. "Finished, April 24th, 1765 O.A. The revisal finished, April 24th, 1774 O.A. Another revisal finished, January 28th, 1779 O.A. A third revisal finished, February 29th, 1780 O.A. A fifth revisal finished, August 6th, 1783 O.A. A sixth finished, October 28th, 1784 O.A. The seventh, if not the last, January 11th, 1786. Gloria Tri-uni Deo! The LAST finished, May 11th, 1787. Hallelujah!"

Dr. Watts' tribute to his brother poet is well known. The volume of hymns published in 1743 contained his verses on "Wrestling Jacob." When Dr. Watts read them he said, "That single poem, 'Wrestling Jacob,' is worth all the verses I have ever written!" John Fletcher generally selected some part of Charles Wesley's "Primitive Christianity" for the time which he spent after dinner in devotion. Those lines—

O that my Lord would count me meet
To wash His dear disciples' feet!

often caused tears of joy and gratitude to stream down his face, when he realised that this Christianity was in his own heart.

Dean Stanley prized most of all Charles Wesley's hymns the verses on "Catholic Love," which were first

printed at the close of his brother's sermon on "Catholic Spirit." We quote three verses :—

Weary of all this wordy strife,
These notions, forms, and modes, and names,
To Thee, the Way, the Truth, the Life,
Whose love my simple heart inflames,
Divinely taught, at last I fly,
With Thee, and Thine, to live and die.

My brethren, friends, and kinsmen these,
Who do my Heavenly Father's will ;
Who *aim* at perfect holiness,
And all Thy counsels to fulfil,
Athirst to be whate'er Thou art,
And love their God with all their heart.

For these, howe'er in flesh disjoined,
Where'er dispersed o'er earth abroad,
Unfeigned, unbounded love I find,
And constant as the life of God ;
Fountain of life, from thence it sprung,
As pure, as even, and as strong.

Henry Ward Beecher says, "I would rather have written that hymn of Wesley's—

Jesu, Lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly—

than to have the fame of all the kings that ever sat on the earth. It is more glorious. It has more power in it." When Beecher's father lay on his death-bed, the last sign of life was given in response to those blessed lines.

Some beautiful instances of the blessing brought by his hymns may be culled from the journals. In 1741 about twenty of his congregation at Cardiff were felons. The

Gospel message melted them down. Many tears, he says, were shed at the singing of that verse—

Outcasts of men, to you I call,
Harlots, and publicans, and thieves ;
He spreads His arms to embrace you all ;
Sinners alone His grace receives :
No need of Him the righteous have ;
He came the lost to seek and save !

Every page of the Methodist hymn-book is fragrant with hallowed associations. Unnumbered illustrations might be given of the blessing brought by Charles Wesley's poetry to the Church of God in every land. No hymnology has been so mighty to break and bind up the heart, or to lead the soul to God, as that which the Church owes to the poet of Methodism. John Fletcher said, "One of the greatest blessings that God has bestowed upon the Methodists, next to the Bible, is their collection of hymns." All who know the heart of Methodism would indorse that verdict. His old friend, Dr. Byrom, writing to him on March 3rd, 1738, refers to two translations from the French of Madame Bourignon which had been prepared for publication. He feared that they were not worthy of a place in the collection of hymns which was soon to be published. "As your brother has brought so many hymns translated from the French, you will have a sufficient number, and no occasion to increase them by the small addition of Madame Bourignon's two little pieces, which I desire you to favour my present weakness, if I judge wrong, and not to publish them. I do not at all desire to discourage your publication," he adds ; "but when you tell me that you write, not for the critic, but for the Christian, it occurs to my mind that you might as well write for both, or in such a manner that the critic may by your writing be moved to turn Christian, rather than the Chris-

tian turn critic. I should be wanting, I fear, in speaking freely and friendly upon this matter if I did not give it as my humble opinion that before you publish you might lay before some experienced Christian critic or judges the design which you are upon. But I speak this with all submission ; it is very likely that in these matters I may want a spur more than you want a bridle." To the principle laid down by Byrom Charles Wesley adhered faithfully. His hymns became the songs of the great revival. Tinnets, colliers, weavers, artisans, and labourers all over England found in them an expression for all the aspects of their religious life ; but there is little in them to offend the taste even of the most fastidious critic.

Some of the later hymns have a slight flavour of mysticism. Charles Wesley inclined to the view that God sometimes withdraws the light of His face in order to awake desire after Himself, so that He might lead His people on to holiness. John Wesley felt it necessary to caution some of his friends against this phase of his brother's teaching.

A fortnight after his brother's death, John Wesley was at Bolton. He gave out as the second hymn—

Come, O Thou traveller unknown,
Whom still I hold, but cannot see !
My company before is gone,
And I am left alone with Thee ;
With Thee all night I mean to stay,
And wrestle till the break of day.

When he reached the third line, the sense of his recent loss quite overpowered him ; he burst into tears, and sat down in the pulpit, covering his face with his hands. The congregation joined in the mourning, so that the singing ceased. Wesley recovered himself after a time, and was

able to go on with the service ; but no one who was present could forget that memorable scene. The same verse was quoted by Dean Stanley at the unveiling of the tablet to John and Charles Wesley in Westminster Abbey. The pathos of that touching reference to Lady Augusta Stanley, in all the first bitterness of the Dean's great bereavement, is still fresh in the hearts of those who were in the Chapter House on that memorable morning, when the old Westminster boy found a fitting memorial in the Abbey he knew and loved so well.

Dr. Watts had led the way in the great revival of hymnology at the beginning of the eighteenth century. His devout and inspiring strains early found a place with Charles Wesley's hymns, and are still loved and sung every Sabbath in Methodist churches. Other writers added their contributions to the treasures of sacred song : Philip Doddridge, John Cennick, Thomas Olivers, and others have left behind them hymns which never die. But Charles Wesley, with the exhaustless fertility and inspired devotion of his muse, holds undisputed rank as the Poet of Methodism and the Poet of the Evangelical Revival.

Southey wrote, "No hymns have been so much treasured in the memory or so frequently quoted on a death-bed." Canon Overton says, in the "Dictionary of Hymnology," that Charles Wesley was "perhaps, taking quantity and quality into consideration, the great hymn-writer of all ages." In summing up he adds, "As a hymn-writer Charles Wesley was unique. He is said to have written no less than 6,500 hymns, and though, of course, in so vast a number some are of unequal merit, it is perfectly marvellous how many there are which rise to the highest degree of excellence. His feelings on every occasion of importance, whether private or public, found

their best expression in a hymn. His own conversion, his own marriage, the earthquake panic, the rumours of an invasion from France, the defeat of Prince Charles Edward at Culloden, the Gordon riots, every festival of the Christian Church, every doctrine of the Christian faith, striking scenes in Scripture history, striking scenes which came within his own view, the deaths of friends as they passed away one by one before him, all furnished occasions for the exercise of his divine gift. Nor must we forget his hymns for little children, a branch of sacred poetry in which the mantle of Dr. Watts seems to have fallen upon him. It would be simply impossible within our space to enumerate even those of his hymns which have become really classical. The saying that a really good hymn is as rare an appearance as that of a comet is falsified by the work of Charles Wesley ; for hymns, which are really good in every respect, followed from his pen in quick succession, and death alone stopped the course of the perennial stream."

We may close this chapter by quoting Dr. Stoughton's estimate of the poetry of the Evangelical Revival, given in "Religion in England in 1800-1850": "Psalmody, which had been neglected in England beyond what some readers would suppose, the Wesleys took up from the beginning, with a clear-sighted view of its importance, and with a zeal that ensured success. Methodism never could have become what it did without its unparalleled hymn book. That, perhaps, has been more effective in preserving its evangelical theology than Wesley's Sermons and his 'Notes on the New Testament.' Where one man read the homilies and the exposition, a thousand sang the hymns. All divisions in Christendom have a stamp imprinted on their piety by which they are easily known. As to the *fervour* of Methodism, there can be no mistake ;

and it is owing largely to the concrete and personal character of its psalmody. It does not deal in the calm, intellectual contemplation of abstract themes, however sacred and sublime ; but in the experience of believers, as soldiers of Christ, ' fighting,' ' watching,' ' suffering,' ' working,' and ' seeking for full redemption.' You catch in them the trumpet-blast, the cry of the wounded, the shout of victory, and the dirge at a warrior's funeral."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE POET AND HIS FAMILY IN LONDON.

Seeking a House in London—Some Family Letters—Marylebone in 1771
—John Wesley's Regret—The Poet's Children—Musical Genius of his
Sons—His Daughter Sarah—Devotion to his Home—Young Charles
Wesley and his Brother Samuel.

IN 1771 Charles Wesley and his family removed to London. His little house in Bristol had long been too small, and he had been meditating a change for some years. In April, 1760, he wrote to his wife, "As I shall probably take much more public care upon me than I have ever done heretofore, my office will require me to spend more time in town, *perhaps to settle here.*" His friends in London thought it a pity that he should be so often and so long separated from his family. His way was not yet clear. "At present," he says, "I look no further than Bristol, and Michael's Hill. Perhaps I may live to see you settled there ; perhaps not. What says friend Vigor to your mounting the hill ? I shall not dislike our being farther removed from the room." It was finally arranged that they should come to London. This resolution gave great satisfaction to John Wesley. He had long regretted that he and his brother met so seldom. In 1763 he wrote, "I perceive, *verba sunt mortuo* : so I say no more about your coming to London. Here stand I ; and I shall stand, with or without human help, if God is with us." In

1766 he says, "I think you and I have abundantly too little intercourse with each other. Are we not old acquaintance? Have we not known each other for half a century? And are we not jointly engaged in such a work as probably no two other men upon earth are? Why, then, do we keep at such a distance? It is a mere device of Satan? But surely we ought not, at this time of day, to be ignorant of his devices. Let us therefore make the full use of the little time that remains. We, at least, should think aloud, and use to the uttermost the light and grace on each bestowed. We should help each other

Of little life the best to make,
And manage wisely the last stake."

His letters show that as early as August, 1766, Charles Wesley was looking for a house in London. Friends in the metropolis and in Bristol were prepared to subscribe towards the cost of the removal. At first Hoxton was proposed as the place of residence.

On August 9th, 1766, he wrote to his wife from London, "Mr. Collinson and my friends here assure me it will greatly encourage subscribers if there *is* a particular house pitched upon to purchase. Perhaps my Bristol friends cannot find one out because the Master is providing one elsewhere." On August 25th, 1766, he wrote again, "My business here is to get you a house. In order to do this, I must have a list of your subscribers. I have objected to Mr. Blackwell here, to Lord Dartmouth, and every *rich* person I am supposed to be acquainted with. None but my own children have a right to supply my necessities." In another letter he returns to this topic. "Let Mr. James know how long my stay here will be, and desire him to write when he has any intelligence to communicate. He is too prudent to show any forwardness for the house, and

too friendly to lose time about it, especially as it will encourage the subscribers here to hear a house is actually secured. I should have his list of subscribers, if any are added, to show ours."

Subscriptions proved unnecessary. In 1771, when Mrs. Gumley, the wife of Colonel Gumley, of Bath, heard that he intended to remove to London, she at once offered him the lease of her town house, in Chesterfield Street, Marylebone, which had twenty years to run.* She refused several good offers for it, and told Mr. Charles Wesley that she would not put up the bill again until she heard whether his wife and he would accept her proposal. She left them the house, richly furnished, and supplied with everything a family could need—"even small beer." They had only to maintain it, and pay the ground rent to the Duke of Portland.

The poet was in London with his son Charles; Mrs. Wesley was in Bristol with her younger boy and her daughter. On March 30th her husband wrote, "Mrs. Gumley has left this house quite complete. I want nothing but money to *keep* it. Then you could not refuse to bring me yourself and children, whom I long to see more than Charles *can* do. Farewell, my dearest of all.

"P.S.—The first hundred, or even fifty, pounds that is given me, expect a bill to bring you up."

On May 16th, 1771, he writes from Brewer Street, "We rejoice in the hope of seeing you all next week. On what day? By what carriage? We saw with our own eyes the cleanness of the streets and dryness of the house, from which we are come hither to dinner. Mrs. Ashlin thinks

* The house was rebuilt nearly forty years ago. It stood on the site of 1, Great Chesterfield Street, but projected further into the roadway.

the person now employed in airing the beds, etc., would be a very proper servant. She is cleanly, sober, diligent, an hearer of the Word, though not in Society. We shall keep her to keep up the fires, to keep the windows open, and to lie in the beds. When you come, you will do as you like." Then follow various instructions. "Morse will take good care of the harpsichord ; but who of the cat ? If you cannot leave him in safe hands, Prudence must bring him up in a cage : and if I finish my course here, I may bequeath him to Miss Darby."

The district to which Charles Wesley removed, in 1771, was not quite entitled to Hogarth's description of thirty-six years before. He says that "the *Rake's* wedding was at Marylebone, a small village in the outskirts of London." It was still, however, a pleasant rural retreat. Thomas Lord did not open his first cricket ground, in the fields where Dorset Square now stands, till 1780. Even after the Battle of Waterloo, Edgware Road was the extreme west of London. Beyond it lay fields, with tea-gardens, and "low haunts of debauchery." The Duke of Portland's property in Marylebone was not let out on building leases till 1786-92, so that all around Chesterfield Street there were pleasant country walks when Charles Wesley came to live there. The New Road (as the Marylebone and Euston Roads were then called) was only made in 1757. Near Portland Road Station was the Jew's Harp Tavern, a favourite rural retreat for holiday parties. Speaker Onslow used to visit it in plain clothes, and sit in the chimney corner joining in the humour of the visitors, till one unlucky day the landlord recognised him as he was going to Parliament in his state carriage. Onslow found on his next visit that he was treated as a great man, and he appeared no more at the tavern. The shady tea-gardens, with tennis and skittle grounds, were much

frequented, and a large upper room with outside staircase was used for balls and parties. Not far away was the "Queen's Head and Artichoke," so called from one of Queen Elizabeth's gardeners, who set up business there. Near to Portland Road Station was a turnstile, which led through green meadows to the pleasant old house. A cluster of small dwellings lay near it, but fields stretched out on all sides. There also was the indispensable skittle ground, with shady bowers, where delicious cream and tea awaited tired visitors. Green fields stretched from Whitefield's Tabernacle in Tottenham Court Road to Charles Wesley's home.

The only objection to his house was its distance from the Foundery. John Wesley could not consult his brother so closely as he wished on many subjects connected with their work. In May, 1786, he expresses his regret on this matter to his brother: "Commonly, when I am in London, I am so taken up that I cannot often spare time to go three miles backward and forward. That was the *πρώτον ψεῦδος*; the getting you a house so far from me, as well as far from both the chapels." The previous year he had said, with a touch of pathos, "Perhaps, if you had kept close to me, I might have done better. However, with or without help I creep on." Mrs. Charles Wesley attended the Sunday services at West Street and the Foundery, but found the distance too great to allow her to be at Moorfields as often as she wished during the week.

Eight children had been born to Charles Wesley in Bristol. Five died there in infancy, and were buried in St. James' Churchyard; three came with their parents to London, and lived to advanced age. Samuel Wesley says that the children who died were all put out to nurse, whilst the three who lived were nursed at home. He does not forget to draw a moral. The first child, John,

died of the small-pox on January 7th, 1753-4, at the age of sixteen months ; Martha Maria died on July 25th, 1755, when a month old ; Susanna, on April 11th, 1761, aged eleven months ; Selina, aged five weeks, on October 11th, 1764 ; John James, their last child, on July 5th, 1768, at the age of seven months. The mother sacredly preserved a lock of hair as a memento of each of her lost infants. Folded and labelled by her own hand, they lay before Thomas Jackson when he wrote his "Life of Charles Wesley."

Charles Wesley, the eldest of the three children who were spared to them, was born on December 11th, 1757 ; Sarah, their daughter, on April 1st, 1759 ; Samuel, on February 24th, 1766. The two boys early showed a remarkable musical talent. Mrs. Wesley had a voice of delightful quality, though not very strong, nor of extensive compass. She sang the solos from Handel's oratorios, and played well on the harpsichord. She had a fine ear for music. Her husband never played any instrument save a little German flute at Oxford, but his son Samuel says that he was extremely fond of music in his early life. He was always partial to the old masters. If there were repetitions in a piece of music, he knew exactly what part was to be played or sung twice ; and when any one failed to give these, he would say, "You have cheated me of a repeat." He had not a vocal talent, but could join in a hymn or simple melody, tolerably well in tune. He used to say to friends, "The boys have music by the mother's side." These reminiscences were written late in life, when Samuel Wesley's memory was failing. Judging from the notices in the journals, we should be inclined to say that he somewhat underrates his father's gifts : he must have been a fairly good singer to break out in praise as he did sometimes in his sermons.

The first child, who died when only sixteen months, actually sang a tune and beat time when he was a year old. Charles was two years and three quarters when his father first noticed his musical talent. He was then surprised to hear him play a tune on the harpsichord readily and in good time. Soon afterwards he began to play whatever he heard. His mother had been accustomed to quiet and amuse him with her music ; if she used one hand only, the child would take the other and put it to the keys before he could speak. When he first began to play himself, he was so little that his mother had to tie him to the back of the chair. From the first he played without study or hesitation, and would put a true bass to every tune. His style struck every one. A Bristol organist who heard him pronounced that he was destined to be a great musician.

Through Mrs. Rich, as already noticed, Charles Wesley moved in the highest musical circle of the time. He took his precocious son to London when he was only four years old. Mr. Beard, the great singer, for whom Handel wrote the tenor parts in the *Messiah* and his other great oratorios, had married one of Mr. Rich's daughters. He confirmed the judgment of the Bristol musician, and gave the boy Purcell's songs, with Scarlatti's Lessons. Mrs. Rich gave him Handel's, and afterwards promised to supply him with tickets for all the oratorios, if his father would bring him up to town. When they returned to London, after their first visit, the boy was allowed to ramble on under a master, who sat by more to observe than control him. His father saw no means of procuring the best masters and music for his son. Friends helped him, however. When they visited London, Lady Gertrude Hotham was so delighted with the boy's playing that she presented all her music to him. Her son, Sir Charles

Hotham, nephew to Lord Chesterfield and Groom of the Bed-chamber to George III., promised him an organ, and assured him of all encouragement he needed in his art. He died, however, in 1767, before he could fulfil his promise. The poet's beautiful and tender tribute to Lady Clara Hotham must have been very grateful to her husband. On Whit Sunday, 1760, Charles Wesley writes that on the previous day, "At Hyde Park Gate, a gentleman called after me. I stopped, and Sir Charles Hotham ran up to my horse, and saluted me with the same joy as if returned from the dead."

When the young musician was about ten years old, he came again to London, with his father. Kelway, the organist of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, whose voluntaries Handel delighted to hear, had been mentioned to Charles Wesley as the only man in London who could teach his son Handel's Lessons, "but," it was added, "he will not, neither for love nor for money." When Kelway heard the boy, however, he confirmed the flattering predictions. He actually taught him for two years without fee. He said, "I will maintain before all the world that there is not a master in London that can play this sonata as he does ; one cannot hear him play four bars without knowing him to be a genius. It is a divine gift. He is the greatest genius in music I ever met with." John Wesley "enriched him," says his father, "with an inestimable present of Dr. Boyce's three volumes of cathedral music." Mrs. Gumley, who presented the lease of her house in Chesterfield Street to his father, was the boy's godmother, and gave him a handsome sum of money for a new harpsichord. She told him that if he had any other wants, she would be pleased to help him.

Samuel, the younger son, gave promise of equal genius, by playing a tune when he was two years and eleven

months old. The superior opportunities which London presented for the training of such precocious musicians was one reason why Charles Wesley was the more willing to leave Bristol. The Methodists there are also said to have been somewhat jealous of the future of young Charles Wesley, and uneasy about the society into which music seemed likely to lead him. The boy had already taken part in a concert there in 1769. One of the local papers said of his performance, "The singular abilities of Master Wesley, who played a concerto on the harpsichord, are almost apt to stagger credibility itself." It is worthy of note that Master Herschel, afterwards famous as Sir William Herschel, the astronomer, gave a concerto on the hautboy at the same concert. The two young musicians then formed a life-long friendship.

Samuel Wesley, the younger brother, was about three and a half years old when the family came to London. When Mr. Kelway came to teach Charles, he accompanied the music on the chair. If his brother ever began to play his Scarlatti before Sam was called, the boy would roar as if he were beaten. When he was between four and five years old he taught himself to read from the oratorio of *Samson*. Then he taught himself to write. When little more than five he had all the airs, recitatives, and choruses of *Samson* and the *Messiah*—words and notes—by heart. He composed music before he could write. He used to lay the words of an oratorio before him, and sing them through to his own music. He always repeated the words to the same tunes. At the age of eight he wrote out, in his boyish scrawl, the music which he had composed to the oratorio of *Ruth*. One day Dr. Boyce called at Chesterfield Street, and said to his father that he understood he had got an English Mozart in his house. Sam showed him his oratorio. His verdict,

after careful examination, was flattering indeed : " These airs are some of the prettiest I have seen : this boy writes by nature as true a bass as I can by rule and study. There is no man in England has two such sons."

Samuel composed a march for one of the regiments of Guards. The Hon. Daines Barrington, a friend of his father, took him to hear it played at the military concert. When it was finished he asked the young composer if the execution pleased him. " By no means," was his answer. Mr. Barrington immediately introduced him to the band. Sam said, " You have not done justice to my composition." With some contempt they replied, " Your composition ? " His friend assured them that it was certainly his. They then told him that they had copied the music correctly. The boy asked for the original score, and showed them that the French horns were at fault. When he had pointed out the mistake, he ordered them to play the march over again, which they did at once, to his entire satisfaction.

For several years the boys gave a series of concerts in their father's house in Chesterfield Street. A large room, which would hold about eighty persons, was generally crowded. The ticket for each course was three guineas ; profits were, however, small, owing to the expenses for performers and refreshments. The Bishop of London, Lord Dartmouth, Lord Barrington, Lord and Lady De Spencer, the Danish and Saxon Ambassadors, and many other distinguished persons were regular subscribers. John Wesley, in gown and bands, attended one of the concerts with his wife, to show that he did not consider that there was any sin in such entertainments, as some of the Methodists were inclined to think. General Oglethorpe, now more than eighty years old, came, on February 25th, 1781, to hear the sons of his old secretary. Here

he met John Wesley, and kissed his hand in token of respect. Wesley says, "I spent an agreeable hour at a concert at my nephews'; but I was a little out of my element among lords and ladies. I love plain music and plain company best." Of all the friends whom the boys won, the Earl of Mornington, father of the Duke of Wellington, was perhaps the most intimate. For some years he breakfasted once a week at Chesterfield Street, and practised with the young musicians on various instruments. He brought his violin under his coat, and often told his friends at Chesterfield Street that he should never be ashamed to be taken for a teacher of music. He had, in fact, been professor of music at Trinity College, Dublin. He was himself an accomplished musician. Samuel's playing pleased him so much that he ordered him a court suit of scarlet, which the boy generally wore at the concerts. He also had Samuel's portrait taken when he was eight years old. The engraving was much sought after at the time by the clergy and nobility.

Young Charles Wesley was honoured with the special favour of George III. In 1775, when he was about eighteen years old, the king sent Mr. Nicolay, the Queen's page, to Chesterfield Street, to summon him to Buckingham House that night at seven. He went in a chair, in full dress, feeling no small tremor at the thought that he was to play before the King. Mr. Kelway had spoken so highly of his pupil that his Majesty wished to hear him without delay. On another occasion he played at the private chapel and the Queen's Lodge at Windsor. For many years he was summoned at least once a year to Windsor. When the chapter of St. Paul's refused his application for the post of organist, with the words, "We want no Wesleys here," he presented a memorial to his Majesty, who sent him £100 next morning. Charles

thanked him heartily. The King interrupted, "Oh, nothing; I mean to take care of you." His Majesty intended him to have Kelway's pension of £200 a year; but the return of his mental disease destroyed the musician's hopes.

Besides his gifted sons, Charles Wesley had one daughter. Sarah Wesley is said to have been very pretty as a child, but she lost her beauty through a severe attack of small-pox. Her father rejoiced that a strong temptation was thus removed from the girl's path. It is interesting to find that when his wife lost her loveliness through a similar illness in 1753, the philosophical husband could take comfort, so Mrs. Charles Wesley used to say, in the fact that she now looked older and better suited to be his companion. Sarah Wesley did not show any musical talent, but was devoted to literature. Hannah More, Miss Aikin, Miss Porter, Mrs. Barbauld, Dr. Gregory, and many other eminent literary people of that day became her friends. She had the poetic gift of the Wesleys. In October, 1777, when she was staying with Mr. Russel, the landscape and portrait painter, at Guildford, where the little Methodist met with an accident through what her father calls her "narrow, fashionable heels," Charles Wesley wrote to her, "I think you may avail yourself of my small knowledge of books and poetry. I am not yet too old to assist you a little in your reading, and perhaps improve your taste in versifying. You need not dread my severity. I have a laudable partiality for my own children. Witness your brothers, whom I do not love a jot better than you; only be you as ready to show me your verses as they their music."

This quotation sets Charles Wesley's devotion to his home and children in an attractive light. Here his warm and tender affection struck deep root. The children of

the Epworth Parsonage have almost become a proverb for their unhappy marriages. But no shadow ever fell on Charles Wesley's marriage. His children received his constant care. When absent from home he tells his wife, "You, or Charles, or Sally, or Sam may write me a letter every post; and if you can get franks, more than one may write at a time." On another occasion he encloses a frank to Charles, and asks for a punctual account of his proceedings, readings, composings, etc. Another sentence sounds strange in the days of the penny post: "My dearest Sally may write without putting *me* to any expense. You hear seldomer from me, to avoid postage." Charles Wesley was almost as zealous an advocate of early rising as his brother. "Go to bed at nine," he tells his daughter, "and you may rise at six. It is good for soul, body, and estate, to rise early." When away from home, he wished to be assured that Charles rose at six, Sally at seven, her mother before eight; and that his little scholars went on with their Latin. Charles, his eldest son, attended a school in Bristol; but he showed little capacity for any study except that of music. In 1777 the poet tells his daughter that he has set aside the evenings for reading with her and her brothers. "We should begin," he says, "with history. A plan or order of study is absolutely necessary; without that, the more you read the more you are confused, and never rise above a smatterer in learning. Take care you do not devour all Mr. Russel's library; if you do, you will never be able to digest it." One day he was teaching Sarah Latin. She tried to repeat her lesson before she had made due preparation. "Sarah," said her hasty-tempered tutor, "you are as stupid as an ass." When her father caught the child's meek and affectionate look of surprise, he burst into tears, adding, "And as patient."

Above all else, Charles Wesley was anxious for the spiritual welfare of his children. Writing from Bristol, he mentions that his brother had said, "Sally was much awakened, while she met her equals here. Pity we could not find her suitable companions in London. Among the serious she would be serious, and more." Her father did not press her to meet in Society, lest anything might prejudice her against religion, but he pointed out to her the advantages of Christian fellowship. "That you gained by the despised Methodists, if nothing more, the knowledge of what true religion consists in : namely, in happiness and holiness ; in peace and love ; in the favour and image of God restored ; in paradise regained ; in a birth from above ; a kingdom within you ; a participation of the divine nature. The principal means or instrument of this is faith, which faith is the gift of God, given to every one that asks." To Charles he gives the same counsels. He was humble, affectionate, and obedient ; but his father did not see in him that true seriousness which he so much desired. His son had formed an attachment to an amiable girl, with neither fortune nor birth. His mother mentioned the matter with much concern to John Wesley. " Then," he said, " there is no family blood ? I hear the girl is good, but of no family." " No fortune either," she added. Mr. Wesley went away without making any reply, but showed what was his feeling by sending his nephew £50 towards the wedding expenses. Charles was then twenty-five. He never married, but the girl continued to be a friend of the family. His father wrote from Bristol, in 1782, " Hitherto, my dear Charles, your thoughts of marriage have not made you more serious, but more light, more unadvisable, more distracted. This has slackened my desire to see you settled before I leave you. You do not yet take the way to be happy

in a married state : you do not sufficiently take God into your counsels."

One striking proof of filial obedience young Charles Wesley gave when his father lay on his death-bed in March, 1788. It was intimated to him that if he applied immediately for the post of organist to the Chapel Royal at Windsor he would receive the appointment to that lucrative office. His father feared that the position would not be conducive to his son's piety. He therefore made it his dying request that Charles should not solicit it. The son cheerfully resigned this flattering prospect, that he might not grieve his father, "whom," he says, "I have every reason to respect and love." He was organist at the Lock Chapel, in Grosvenor Place, near Hyde Park Corner, and afterwards at Marylebone new parish church. The last appointment he held at the time of his death.

Samuel Wesley was a remarkable contrast to his elder brother. Charles seems, says Thomas Jackson, to have been incapable of excelling in anything but music. "It is doubtful whether, through the entire course of his life, he was able to dress himself without assistance. Samuel, on the other hand, was possessed of great intellectual power and acuteness. His mind was truly Wesleyan—quick, shrewd, and penetrating. He was mostly educated by his father, especially in Latin. His knowledge was extensive ; his conversation elegant, agreeable, instructive, and varied ; and he was capable of excelling in any science or profession to which he might apply himself. Yet his natural disposition was not so harmless or kindly as that of Charles ; nor did he cherish that deep filial affection by which his brother was always distinguished. The father's principal concern respecting Charles was, that he did not give his heart to God. Samuel, even in his youth, showed a waywardness of temper that cost his father many a pang of sorrow."

The Rev. Martin Madan, who mixed much in society as a popular London clergyman, used to take his little godson to the houses of his friends. The boy was admired almost as much for his manners as for his music. Mr. Kelway said, "I never in my life saw so free and *degagé* a gentleman." He was as regular and punctual as John Wesley himself. Eight was his hour for rest. Nothing was allowed to interfere with this rule. Once he got up after the first part of the *Messiah*, saying, "Come, mamma, let us go home, or I shan't be in bed by eight." As he grew up, his extensive knowledge and agreeable conversation made him one of the pleasantest of companions.

He gradually got estranged, and was greatly offended because his father would not allow him to attend the theatre. He seems also to have felt humiliated by his exhibition as a musical prodigy in his boyhood. There had been days when better influences seemed likely to prevail. In a letter to his elder son, written from Bristol in 1778, Charles Wesley says, "Your mother tells me Sam is very seriously inclined. You and your sister must increase my satisfaction on his account. My father I have heard say, 'God had shown him he should have all his nineteen children about him in heaven.' I have the same blessed hope for my eight." When Samuel was seven years old his father wrote him a beautifully simple and persuasive letter urging him to pray in some quiet corner, and "begin to live by reason and religion."

Dark days were in store for the poet. Miss Mary Freeman Shepherd, a Roman Catholic lady related to Wesley's old friend, Mr. Blackwell, of Lewisham, had much literary intercourse with Miss Sarah Wesley. She persuaded Samuel to make an open avowal of Popery. He had been induced by a young Frenchman,

one of his companions, to join the Church of Rome, and took part in its services; but his father was in utter ignorance of all this. Samuel's new friends consulted as to the way in which the tidings should be broken to Charles Wesley. Mrs. Shepherd successfully overruled the first intention, that Father O'Leary, who had written against John Wesley "in the spirit and manner of a buffoon," should break the news to him. At last it was determined to ask the Duchess of Norfolk to wait upon him at Chesterfield Street. She had herself endured a similar trial when her own son had become a Protestant. The eventful day came. The Duchess arrived, and broke the painful news. When she saw the father's crushing sorrow, she attempted to console him by suggesting that his son might have been moved to take this step by divine grace. But the father, pacing his drawing-room in his agitation, was unable to take the proffered comfort. "Say, 'the loaves and fishes,' madam, 'the loaves and fishes!'" was his only answer. His son had been allured by the music, and then seduced by the flattery that was lavished upon him.

The father's burdened mind sought relief as usual in his muse.

Farewell, my all of earthly hope,
My nature's stay, my age's prop,
 Irrevocably gone!
Submissive to the will divine,
I acquiesce, and make it mine;
 I offer up my son!

But while an exile here I live,
I live for a lost son to grieve,
 And in thy Spirit to groan,
Thy blessings on his soul to claim,
Through Jesu's all-prevailing name,
 Presented at Thy throne.

John Wesley wrote his erring nephew a letter distinguished by his usual directness and catholicity of spirit.

“August 19th, 1784.

“DEAR SAMMY,—“As I have had a regard for you ever since you was a little one, I have often thought of writing to you freely. And I am persuaded, what is spoken in love will be taken in love ; and, if so, if it does you no good, it will do you no harm.

“Many years ago I observed that as it had pleased God to give you a remarkable talent for music, so He had given you a quick apprehension of other things, a capacity for making some progress in learning, and, what is of far greater value, a desire to be a Christian. But, meantime, I have often been pained for you, fearing you did not set out the right way. I do not mean with regard to this or that set of opinions, Protestant or Romish. All these I trample under foot. But with regard to those weightier matters, wherein, if they go wrong, either Protestants or Papists will perish everlastingly. I feared you was not *born again*, . . . whether of this Church or that, I care not. You may be saved in either, or damned in either. But I fear you are not born again : and except you are born again, you cannot see the kingdom of God.”

When Samuel's brother and sister expressed deep sorrow to their uncle at the change in their brother, Wesley urged them, in a touching letter, to seek personal religion without delay.

The reception of John Wesley's nephew into the Roman Catholic Church naturally caused no small exultation in Popish circles. The pervert wrote a high mass for the Papal chapel, and received for it the Pontiff's thanks through the Vicar Apostolic. But Samuel Wesley was

never a Romanist at heart. In a controversy with one of the priests in London he claimed the right of private judgment, and said, "The crackers of the Vatican are no longer taken for the thunderbolts of heaven: for excommunication I care not three straws." A few years later he withdrew from the Roman Catholic Church with the characteristic speech that he "did not care a straw for any excommunication that her priesthood could utter."

CHAPTER XIV.

OLD AGE AND DEATH.

John Wesley's Illness—Death of John Fletcher—Preachers at City Road—Visits the Prisoners at Newgate—Death of Old Friends—A Brilliant Circle—Happy Influence on his Visitors—John Wesley's Ordinations—Last Days, Death, and Burial—John Wesley's Tender Care over his Brother's Family—History of the Poet's Wife and Children.

AFTER his family settled in London, Charles Wesley devoted himself to the Methodist societies there with his usual earnestness. One great trouble darkened the early part of his residence in the metropolis. In 1775 Joseph Bradford, who was travelling with his brother in Ireland, wrote announcing the serious illness of John Wesley. The fever from which he was suffering had taken such hold upon him that he lay for three days more dead than alive. Charles Wesley received this news in Bristol. In his reply he writes that "the people there, and in London, and in every place, are swallowed up in sorrow."

The papers actually announced that Wesley was dead. John Fletcher wrote on July 2nd to Charles, urging him to stand in the gap if his brother's illness proved fatal. "The Methodists," he says, "will not expect from you your brother's labours; but they have, I think, a right to expect that you will preside over them while God spares you in the land of the living. A committee of the oldest and steadiest preachers may help you to bear the burden,

and to keep up a proper discipline, both among the people and the rest of the preachers ; and if at any time you should want my mite of assistance, I hope I shall throw it into the treasury with the simplicity and readiness of the poor widow who cheerfully offered her next-to-nothing." Happily, Methodism was spared such a stroke. Wesley outlived both his brother and Fletcher. Charles had declared, in 1753, that he had "neither a body, nor a mind, nor talents, nor grace," to fill his brother's place. He was much less fit to do this in 1775. He could not even venture to Ireland during his brother's illness. "I have not, and never more shall have, strength for such a journey."

Next summer Charles Perronet died, after long and painful suffering. Mr. Fletcher's health also failed. Charles Wesley wrote a hymn of prayer for his dearly loved friend, which was probably intended to be sung by the Methodist societies when the sacrament was administered. Fletcher rallied again, and lived till August, 1785.

Charles Wesley made occasional visits to Bristol during the last years of his life, rejoicing to be again with his "dear colliers," and a host of loving friends in the city. He was still actively engaged in his happy work. When City Road Chapel was opened in November, 1778, as the successor of the Foundery, he often filled the pulpit. He would have preached there twice every Sunday, but the trustees and people were naturally anxious that the "Preachers," who were men of marked ability, should not be excluded from the chief chapel of London Methodism.

The poet was becoming feeble. When thoughts did not flow freely he would make long pauses, as if waiting for divine help. At such times he closed his eyes, fumbled with his hands about his breast, leaned with his elbows on

the Bible. His whole body was in motion. Sometimes he was so much exhausted that he had to ask the congregation to sing once or twice in the course of the sermon. When he felt stronger, and was under some happy influence, he expressed himself with fluency and force. His short and pointed sentences, rich in Scripture phraseology, and full of evangelical truth, made a great impression on the people. His prayers were still marked by special power.

The old man thus continued his labours till within a few months of his death. One of his last services affords an amusing illustration of his vigour. Dr. Coke, who had read the prayers at City Road one Sunday morning, remained in the reading desk while Charles Wesley, in gown and bands, stood preaching in the pulpit above. Before the sermon was half over the preacher swept the hymn book off the cushion with the sleeves of his gown. It fell upon the poor doctor's head. He had reason to be thankful even for this sharp warning. Looking up, he saw the Bible already half over the pulpit. He managed to stand up in time to receive it in his arms instead of on his head. The preacher was so wrapt in his discourse that he was not even aware of the consternation he had caused in the lower desk.

In the last years of his life Charles Wesley devoted much time to the prisoners at Newgate. He took a keen interest in the fate of poor Dr. Dodd, the popular preacher and writer, who suffered capital punishment for forgery, and visited him in prison. The poetry that he wrote during his imprisonment, and before and after his execution, show how deeply he was moved by this painful tragedy. He had been fortunate enough to make the acquaintance of the Rev. Mr. Villette, then Ordinary of Newgate, so that he had free admission to the prison, and

often preached the "condemned sermon." He also composed many hymns for the prisoners. He would ride to the preacher's house at City Road, and after reading these hymns to his friends there would invite them to join in prayer for the outcasts. As soon as they arose from their knees he would say, "Can you *believe*?" When they replied, "Yes, sir," he would flourish his hand over his head, and cry out, "We shall have them all!" He then hastened to the cells, to hold out life to the dead. Henry Moore once went with him when he preached the condemned sermon. He says, "I witnessed with feelings which I cannot describe the gracious tenderness of his heart. I saw the advantage of proclaiming the Gospel to those who knew they were soon to die, and who felt that they had greatly sinned."

The poet's last publication was a tract of twelve pages, "Prayers for condemned malefactors," written in order to lead them to Christ even though at the eleventh hour. These hymns were published in 1785. On one copy he added a manuscript note: "These prayers were answered, Thursday, April 28th, 1785, on nineteen malefactors, who all died penitent. Not unto me, O Lord, not unto me."

Some glorious trophies of grace were won by Charles Wesley from the prisons of his day. The toils of his itinerant ministry would not always allow him to devote much time to this work, but his heart was in it to the end. His old age in London shows that he was as zealous and as successful at Newgate, in his last days, as he had been nearly half a century before. An entry in the little West Street steward's book, which is still preserved, gives a pleasing glimpse of his work among the poor in his old age: "March 22nd, 1778, collection for Mr. Charles Wesley's poor, £2 14s. 6d." The poet never forgot this important branch of ministerial work.

During the last years of his long life he lost many of his dearest friends. The Rev. Henry Piers, of Bexley, died twenty years before him. In 1782 Mr. Blackwell, the banker, died at Lewisham. His home had always been open to the brothers. Four months after his death they went over to spend a few pensive hours with his widow. The two old men took one last walk round the garden and meadow, full of memories of the past. It was here that Charles arrived on December 2nd, 1753, and fell upon the neck of his brother, whom he expected soon to lose; here John Wesley wrote his funeral sermon for George Whitefield. That August visit to the old house, which still stands by the main road, must have been one of the memorable days of Charles Wesley's later life. In Lewisham lived Mrs. Sparrow, who left him a legacy in 1748. He received £50 of this timely bequest, as we have already seen, a few days before he set out to propose for Sally Gwynne. The whole place was rich in associations.

The old Vicar of Shoreham, who had been his counsellor in all matters relating to his marriage, and the wise adviser of the brothers in many a crisis, died in May, 1785. Pleasant intercourse had been kept up between the vicarage and the home in Chesterfield Street. A few weeks before he entered his ninetieth year, Mr. Perronet, wrote to his friend, "Fear not for your dear son Charles. I trust he will pass through the court untainted, like Daniel and his three companions." Mr. Perronet had not only been the friend and counsellor of the Wesleys; two of his sons had become Methodist preachers. His house had been the home of the Methodist preachers, and a room fitted up under his roof was the Methodist preaching place. Charles Wesley hastened to Shoreham when the news of the vicar's death was received. He read the funeral service for his venerable friend, and preached the next day from

the words, "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright ; for the end of that man is peace." The saintly Fletcher, one of the dearest of all Charles Wesley's friends, died in August of the same year.

In his last days the poet enjoyed the friendship of many eminent men. Lord Mansfield, his old schoolfellow at Westminster, was then living in Bloomsbury Square. The great lawyer had twice refused the Lord Chancellorship. He gave Charles Wesley important advice on many questions affecting the relation of Methodism to the Church of England, and expressed his readiness to help the brothers in whatever way he could. The old schoolfellows had much pleasant and familiar intercourse in their last days.

The Earl of Dartmouth became Charles Wesley's warm friend, and often sought his counsel in religious matters. In a letter to his daughter the poet mentions that he has just returned "from a visit to that most amiable of men, Lord Dartmouth." Dr. Johnson also came to Chesterfield Street. He greatly admired Mrs. Hall, Charles Wesley's sister, and wished her to reside under his roof, but she feared that this step would arouse the jealousy of Johnson's other lady friends. He once called on Charles Wesley. "I understand, sir," he said, "your boys are skilled in music ; pray let me hear them." When they began to play, Johnson took up a book which lay in the window seat and began "reading and rolling." As soon as the noise ceased he seemed to wake from a trance. He simply said, "Young gentlemen, I am much obliged to you," and walked off. Two of his letters of invitation are preserved. To Charles Wesley he wrote :—

"SIR,—I beg that you, and Mrs. and Miss Wesley, will dine with your brother and Mrs. Hall, at my house in

Bolt Court, Fleet Street, to-morrow. That I have not sent sooner, if you knew the disordered state of my health, you would easily forgive me.

“I am, sir, your most humble servant,

“Wednesday.

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

To Miss Wesley he wrote :—

“MADAM,—I will have the first day that you mention, my dear, on Saturday next; and, if you can, bring your aunt with you, to

“Your most humble servant,

“Oct. 28th, 1783.

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

Hannah More was also his friend. At her house William Wilberforce first met the old man. The interview produced a great impression on the mind of the young statesman. He says, “I went, I think in 1786, to see her, and when I came into the room Charles Wesley arose from the table, around which a numerous party sat at tea, and coming forwards to me, gave me solemnly his blessing. I was scarcely ever more affected. Such was the effect of his manner and appearance that it altogether overset me, and I burst into tears, unable to restrain myself.” The philanthropist became a life-long friend to Charles Wesley’s family.

The Methodist preacher availed himself of all opportunities which the musical talent of his sons afforded him to speak words that might lead their friends to religious decision. The Earl of Mornington’s beautiful letter to him on September 9th, 1778, shows his appreciation of the interest which Charles Wesley took in his spiritual welfare. “All I can pray for,” he says, “is to be made more perfect in the true faith and knowledge of my

Saviour, by whose merits alone I can hope for the pardon of my sins. . . . I have, in truth, my revered friend, a most lively faith, and so strong an assurance that it is my own fault if I am not eternally happy, that it is impossible for me to find words to express myself." The Earl died within three years after he wrote this letter. Charles Wesley endorsed it with the words, "Serious Lord Mornington."

When Mr. Kelway, his son Charles's tutor, then more than seventy years old, recovered from a dangerous illness, Charles Wesley wrote him an affectionate letter of Christian counsel, in which he subscribes himself as "the faithful servant and friend of your soul." He explains the way of peace with touching simplicity and directness, and says "you are convinced of my sincere love for your soul, and therefore allow me the liberty of a friend. As such I write, not to teach you what you do not know, but to stir up your mind by way of remembrance." His beautiful ode on the death of Dr. Boyce, under whom young Charles Wesley also studied, shows that he was convinced that the great musician was meet for the inheritance. Dr. Boyce died in 1779.

Father of harmony, farewell !
 Farewell for a few fleeting years !
 Translated from the mournful vale,
 Jehovah's flaming ministers
 Have borne thee to thy place above,
 Where all is harmony and love.

The relations of Methodism to the Established Church caused Charles Wesley grave anxiety in his last years. His brother had a serious illness during the Bristol Conference of 1783, which showed the preachers how essential it was to make provision for carrying on the work when their Founder was taken from them. In

February, 1784, Wesley executed the Deed of Declaration, which gave a legal constitution to the Conference, and empowered it to appoint preachers to the Methodist chapels, after the death of himself and his brother. This charter of Methodism was followed by Wesley's first ordinations. The United States were now separated from the mother country. Most of the clergy connected with the English Church had left their posts. Eighteen thousand Methodists were without the sacraments. In this emergency John Wesley solemnly set apart Dr. Coke as superintendent of American Methodism. Dr. Coke, a clergyman of the Church of England, had been providentially raised up to help Wesley when the burden of his societies was becoming too heavy for him to bear. He was wealthy, learned, full of apostolic zeal. When Coke reached the States, he was instructed to set apart Francis Asbury, the great itinerant preacher of the States, whose zeal and success almost entitle him to be called the "Wesley of America," as his co-superintendent. They were then to ordain the Methodist preachers, so as to provide for the due administration of the sacraments among the people.

In setting apart Dr. Coke for his office, Wesley was assisted by the Rev. James Creighton, a clergyman who administered the sacraments in the Methodist societies of London and the adjoining counties. Wesley, Coke, and Creighton then ordained Mr. Whatcoat and Mr. Vasey as elders, to administer the sacraments in America. Afterwards Wesley set apart some of his well-tried preachers for similar work in Scotland, and even in England.

These ordinations troubled Charles Wesley more than anything his brother ever did. He wrote to the Rev. Dr. Chandler, a clergyman about to sail for America, an

account of the rise of Methodism, and of the efforts which he had made to guard against separation from the Established Church. "I can scarcely yet believe it, that, in his eighty-second year, my brother, my old intimate friend and companion, should have assumed the episcopal character, ordained elders, consecrated a bishop, and sent him to ordain our lay preachers in America! I was then in Bristol, at his elbow: yet he never gave me the least hint of his intention. How was he surprised into so rash an action? He certainly persuaded himself that it was right." He makes a very gloomy forecast of the fate "of those poor sheep in the wilderness, the American Methodists," after his brother's death. "They will lose all their influence and importance; they will turn aside to vain janglings; they will settle again upon their lees; and, like other sects of Dissenters, come to nothing!" What would Charles Wesley have said had he seen American Methodism to-day, with 32,369 ministers, and 5,124,636 communicants.

If judgment is to be passed on the basis of results, John Wesley's policy is triumphantly vindicated. It was somewhat inconsistent for Charles Wesley, who had the privilege of a weekly celebration of the Lord's Supper, and found his prayer in that ordinance "always open heaven," to deny the American societies, from which the Church of England had virtually retired, the sacrament which he himself regarded as such a vital means of grace. The Scotch Methodists were little better off than those in America.

Several letters on this subject passed between the brothers in the autumn of 1785. Charles pleads that he should be allowed to go to his grave before the bridge between Methodism and the Church of England was quite broken down. To this John replies, "I firmly believe

I am a Scriptural ἐπίσκοπος, as much as any man in England or in Europe : for the uninterrupted succession. I know to be a fable, which no man ever did, or can prove." He adds, in reference to his brother's retirement from the more active duties of the itinerancy, words which we have already quoted : " Perhaps, if you had kept close to me, I might have done better. However, with or without help, I creep on : and as I have been hitherto, so I trust I shall always be, your affectionate friend and brother."

However much the Wesleys differed on this important matter, there was no loss of affection between them. Charles was present at the Bristol Conference of the following year. This was his last Conference. It is interesting to find that he preached from his favourite text, "I will bring the third part through the fire." It must have had many different applications during its prolonged course ; on this occasion it was used to predict that after the death of himself and his brother, not more than a third of the preachers and people would be faithful to the Established Church.

Charles Wesley still pursued his labours in London. Less than a year before his death he writes to his brother, "I served West Street Chapel on Friday and yesterday. Next Saturday I propose to sleep in your bed. Samuel Bradburn and I shall not disagree.

"Stand to your own proposal. Let us agree to differ. I leave America and Scotland to your latest thoughts and recognitions."

The brothers took several journeys together to and from Bristol in the last years of Charles Wesley's life. In October, 1778, on their way from Bristol to London, they visited Devizes together, where Charles Wesley had stood siege more than thirty years before. There were many

other pleasant times of fellowship in labour in the West of England. Only five months before Charles Wesley's death, he and his brother were in Bristol. On Sunday morning, September 23rd, 1787, Charles read prayers and John preached. In the afternoon Mr. Wesley says, "I preached in Temple Church to a very large and serious congregation. My brother desired to preach in the evening; so by the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established." The following Sunday John read prayers, and his brother preached in Bristol. These pleasant days closed their united ministry in the city to which they had devoted so large a part of their busy lives.

In February, 1788, Charles Wesley grew very feeble. He was still able to go out occasionally, but the end was evidently near. On the 18th of the month John Wesley wrote, "Dear brother, you must go out every day, or die. Do not die to save charges. You certainly need not want anything as long as I live." On February 28th John Wesley left London for Bristol and the north. Four days later he wrote again. "Many," he reports, "inquired after you, and expressed much affection, and desire of seeing you." He urges his brother to go out at least an hour a day. "Never mind expense. I can make that up. You shall not die to save charges. I shall shortly have a word to say to Charles, or his brother, or both. Peace be with all your spirits!"

Three days later he expresses his conviction that if Charles would ride out thus for an hour a day he would in another month be as well as he was a year before. In a letter to his niece he is more explicit. "When my appetite was entirely gone, so that all I could take at dinner was a roasted turnip, it was restored in a few days by riding out daily, after taking ten drops of elixir of

vitriol in a glass of water. It is highly probable this would have the same effect in my brother's case." He urged them to call in Dr. Whitehead, in whose skill he had almost unbounded confidence.

His last letter to his brother must be given in full :—

"BRISTOL, *March 17th*, 1785.

"DEAR BROTHER,—I am just setting out on my northern journey, but must snatch time to write two or three lines. I stand and admire the wise and gracious dispensations of Divine Providence. Never was there before so loud a call to all that are under your roof. If they have not hitherto sufficiently regarded either you or the God of their fathers, what is more calculated to convince them than to see you so long hovering upon the borders of the grave? And, I verily believe, if they receive the admonition, God will raise you up again. I know you have the sentence of death in yourself: so had I more than twelve years ago. I know nature is utterly exhausted: but is not nature subject to His word? I do not depend upon physicians, but upon Him that raiseth the dead. Only let your whole family stir themselves up, and be instant in prayer; then I have only to say to each, 'If thou canst believe, thou shalt see the glory of God!' 'Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might.' Adieu.

"JOHN WESLEY."

He wrote again from Worcester on March 20th to his niece, with some remarkable prescriptions.

"MY DEAR SALLY,—Mr. Whitefield had, for a considerable time, thrown up all the food he took. I advised him to split a large onion across the grain, and bind it warm on

the pit of his stomach. He vomited no more. Pray apply this to my brother's stomach the next time he eats.

"One in Yorkshire, who was dying for want of food, as she threw up all she took, was saved by the following means :—Boil crusts of white bread to the consistence of a jelly ; add a few drops of lemon juice and a little loaf-sugar. Take a spoonful once or twice an hour. By all means let him try this.

"If neither of these avail (which I think will not be the case), remember the lady at Paris, who lived several weeks without swallowing a grain by applying thin slices of beef to the stomach.

"But, above all, let prayer be made continually ; and probably he will be stronger after this illness than he has been these ten years. Is anything too hard for God ?

"On Sunday I am to be at Birmingham ; on Sunday se'nnight, at Madeley, near Shifnal, Salop. My dear Sally, adieu !"

Nine days later, on March 29th, 1788, Charles Wesley died. It was found, by a careful comparison of the time, that as he passed to join the host above, John Wesley and his congregation in Shropshire were singing one of his brother's funeral hymns.

Come let us join our friends above
That have obtained the prize,
And on the eagle wings of love
To joys celestial rise :
Let all the saints terrestrial sing,
With those to glory gone ;
For all the servants of our King,
In heaven and earth, are one.

One family, we dwell in Him,
One Church, above, beneath,
Though now divided by the stream,
The narrow stream, of death ;
One army of the living God,
To His command we bow ;
Part of His host have crossed the flood,
And part are crossing now.

Dr. Whitehead, the physician whom John Wesley urged them to call in, says that Charles Wesley was reduced to the most extreme weakness. "I visited him several times in his last sickness, and his body was indeed reduced to the most extreme state of weakness. He possessed that state of mind which he had been always pleased to see in others—unaffected humility, and holy resignation to the will of God. He had no transports of joy, but solid hope and unshaken confidence in Christ, which kept his mind in perfect peace."

Samuel Bradburn, one of the preachers then stationed in London, saw him often in his illness, and sat up with him the last night but one of his life. He says that "He had no disorder but old age. He had very little pain. His mind was as calm as a summer evening. He frequently said, 'I am a mere sinner, saved by the grace of God my Saviour.'" On the day of his death Bradburn wrote a brief note to John Wesley ; Sarah Wesley sent fuller particulars. She said that for some months her father seemed detached from all earthly things. He spoke little, and only wished to have the Bible read to him. His prayer was, "Patience, and an easy death." He asked all his friends to plead for these, and often repeated "An easy death!" A week before he died he told his wife that no fiend was permitted to approach him, and that he had "a good hope." When asked if he

wanted anything, he often replied, "Nothing but Christ." Some one said that the valley of the shadow of death was hard to be crossed. "Not with Christ," was his answer.

Ten days before his death, when his son Samuel, whose perversion to Popery had caused him such pain, came into the room, his father took his hand, and said, "I shall bless God to all eternity that ever you was born; I am persuaded I shall."

His last hymn, written shortly before his death, shows that his soul was set on God. It was based on the words, "Take away all iniquity and give good" (Hosea xiv. 2).

How long, how often shall I pray,
Take all iniquity away;
And give the plenitude of good,
The blessing bought by Jesu's blood;
Concupiscence and pride remove,
And fill me, Lord, with humble love?

Again I take the words to me
Prescribed, and offer them to Thee;
Thy kingdom come, to root out sin,
And perfect holiness bring in;
And swallow up my will in Thine,
And human change into divine.

So shall I render Thee Thine own,
And tell the wonders Thou hast done,
The power and faithfulness declare
Of God, who hears and answers prayer,
Extol the riches of Thy grace,
And spend my latest breath in praise.

O that the joyful hour was come,
Which calls Thy ready servant home,
Unites me to the Church above,
Where angels chant the song of love,
And saints eternally proclaim
The glories of the heavenly Lamb.

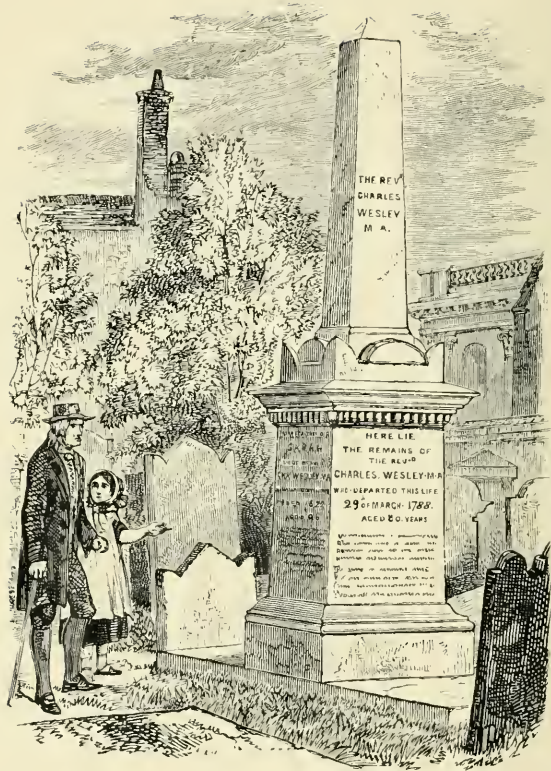
A few days before his death he called to his wife, and requested her to write down the following lines :—

In age and feebleness extreme,
Who shall a sinful worm redeem ?
Jesus, my only hope Thou art,
Strength of my failing flesh and heart ;
O could I catch a smile from Thee,
And drop into eternity !

This was the last effort of his muse. On the Tuesday and Wednesday he was not entirely conscious. He slept much without being refreshed, and was restless to be gone. On Saturday morning, when unable to speak, his wife entreated him to press her hand if he knew her. This he did, feebly. All his family were in the room. His hand lay in his daughter's for five minutes before his death. The last words which she could hear were, "Lord—my heart—my God." Whilst she still held his hand his breath grew shorter, till at last it ceased so gently that the watchers could not tell the moment when his spirit passed to rest.

Charles Wesley died on Saturday, March 29th, 1788. Mr. Bradburn's letter did not reach John Wesley till April 4th, the day before the funeral. By some mistake it was not sent to Birmingham, where he was at the time. Had it been sent there, he would have taken coach on the Sunday, and reached Chesterfield Street on the 31st. As it was, he could not reach London for the funeral. He wrote at once to Mrs. Charles Wesley, assuring her of his utmost help in her sorrow and loneliness.

On Saturday, April 5th, Charles Wesley was laid to rest in the graveyard of Marylebone parish church. As he lay on his death-bed he sent for the clergyman of the parish, and said, "Sir, whatever the world may have thought of me, I have lived, and I die, in the communion



CHARLES WESLEY'S GRAVE IN MARYLEBONE CHURCHYARD.

of the Church of England, and I will be buried in the yard of my parish church." Eight clergymen bore the pall, and at his own special request his wife and children followed him to the grave. Some time before his death, John Wesley had been deeply grieved that his brother would not consent to rest in the burial ground of City Road Chapel, where he had prepared a grave for himself. Charles refused because the ground was not consecrated. The two brothers, who had been joined together in one of the greatest religious movements of history, and loved each other as their own soul, rest apart. From the High Street, Marylebone, the obelisk which marks the grave of Charles Wesley may be seen in the quiet graveyard of the old parish church. The original tombstone was so decayed that, fifty years later, it was replaced by the present stone.

On the tombstone are some lines written by Charles Wesley for his friend Mr. Latrobe, a Moravian minister.

With poverty of spirit blest,
Rest, happy saint, in Jesus rest ;
A sinner saved, through grace forgiven,
Redeemed from earth to reign in heaven.

Thy labours of unwearied love,
By thee forgot, are crowned above ;
Crowned, through the mercy of thy Lord,
With a free, full, immense reward.

Samuel Bradburn, whose eloquence and power won him the title of the Demosthenes of Methodism, preached Charles Wesley's funeral sermon on Sunday, April 6th, the day after his burial, from the words, "A prince and a great man is fallen this day in Israel." The sermon was given both at West Street and at City Road. An inconceivable concourse of people of every description hung upon

Bradburn's words. The chapels were draped with black, and all the congregation was in mourning.

We, who have traced Charles Wesley's history, can enter into the solemnities of that memorable day when metropolitan Methodism mourned for the great psalmist and preacher who had laboured for her with such untiring devotion for nearly half a century. West Street Chapel had been familiar ground to him ever since the year 1743, when it passed into his brother's hands. Here he ministered in the vigour of his youth and in the feebleness of his old age. Fletcher and Whitefield stood beside him in its services; Lady Huntingdon and a host of notable men and women listened there to his inspiring and convincing words. No wonder its people mourned and rejoiced for him at last. City Road, if it was only associated with his declining years, inherited the memories of the Foundery, where Methodism began its work in London. It could bear witness to one who had kept the faith with an apostle's constancy and an apostle's zeal when Moravian "stillness" despised the ordinances of God. Bradburn was laden with messages from the death-bed of their sainted father. He had come to tell them many things which he spoke about the cause of God. Best of all, he could say that the sweet singer of Methodism died as he lived, in perfect peace with God, "A mere sinner, saved by the grace of God" his Saviour.

John Wesley's kindness to his brother's widow and children could not have been surpassed. He had always taken a warm interest in them during his brother's lifetime. Sarah Wesley especially had a tender place in her uncle's heart. She sometimes accompanied him on his shorter journeys. A letter from her pen is preserved at Headingley College, which places the relations between her and her uncle in the happiest light, and helps us to

understand Wesley's entire devotion to his work and his perfect confidence in God. It is dated April 9th, 1821, and is addressed to Dr. Adam Clarke.

"Your design of writing the life of my venerated Uncle is so near my heart that to communicate every little anecdote I can glean from the lapse of years seems a duty (as you kindly refer to me) and, tho' I am not able to enrich your History as I wish, I cannot withhold my mite of information small as it will be.

"The most remarkable Events of his Life pass'd long before my Birth and are recorded. I was accustomed to spend a few weeks in every year at the Foundery and the Chapel House to which he kindly invited me, but excepting these seasons, I only saw him (with others) in public and when he visited us.

"But his distinguished kindness to me from the earliest period I can remember made an indelible impression. I can retrace no word but of Tenderness, no action but of Condescension and Generosity.

"I feel repugnance to bring in myself, but as his Character has been represented as stoical and stern, the little incidents fresh still in my Memory, can refute the censure; and it behoves a Relation to render this justice to his private virtues and attest from experience that no human Being was more alive to all the tender Charities of domestic Life than John Wesley. His indifference to calumny and inflexible perseverance in what he believed his Duty, has been the cause of this idea.

"You must have remarked, my dear Sir, thro' life, that when any one is unmoved by Injury and Insult, those, who cannot provoke, stigmatise them as unfeeling, as if Impatience, Revenge, and the diabolical passions deserved the name of Sensibility. In such Sensibility the Evil

Spirits abound while the meek are impregnable thro' the power of Divine Grace.

"I know not anything which so provokes *me* (who alas! do not abound by nature in Meekness) as to hear this prostitution of words and see the excellent of the earth reviled for heavenly Virtues.

"But I am not writing my opinions but Facts. I think it was about the year 1775 my Uncle promised to take me with him to Canterbury and Dover. At this time his Wife had obtained by plundering his bureau some Letters address'd to him which she used to the most dishonourable purposes. These she read to some Calvinists (Toplady behaved very honorably and refused to hear them), misinterpreting spiritual expressions, and interpolating words as she pleased; they were to be sent to one of the papers for insertion, when a Calvinist Gentleman (the late Mr. Russell) who was an intimate Friend of my Father's and esteemed my Uncle, came to the former to induce him for the sake of Religion to persuade his Brother to vindicate himself and stop the Publication, observing that as his Wife had read not *shewn* the Letters, there was a doubt of their authenticity, and might be Forgeries or at least ungrounded surmises for no one could be answerable for the misconstruction of silly people. At any rate it was necessary Mr. J. W. should be heard and delay his journey at such a moment.

"My dear Father (to whom the reputation of my Uncle was far dearer than his own) immediately saw the importance of refutation, and set off to the Foundry,—leaving me to lament the disappointment of such a journey having anticipated it with all the impatience natural to an early age. Never shall I forget the manner in which my Father announced his ill-success on his return home.

"He accosted my Mother with : 'He is a most extraor-

dinary man ; I placed before him every evil consequence which could result from his leaving London—the stumbling Blocks he might cast in the way of the weak—the advantage he gave to his Enemies—the importance of his character—and when I had finished he replied with the utmost calmness : When I devoted to God, my Ease, my Time, my Fortune, my Life did I except my Reputation ? No.—Tell Sally I will take her to Canterbury to-morrow.’ And to Canterbury we went ; he said in the carriage You are just the right age to travel with me. No one can censure you and I.

“ The instances of his tender care are fresh in my mind as we journey’d. The weather was very cold. The preacher who rode on Horseback by the side of the carriage at the first stage brought a Hassock with some straw to keep his Feet warm :—instantly he ask’d where is one for my little Girl ? nor would he proceed till I was as well accommodated as himself ?

“ You knew him—did you ever see him inattentive to the feelings of others when those feelings did not impede his plan of usefulness ? As we proceeded he pointed out every remarkable place we pass’d, and condescended to delight and instruct with the same benign Spirit which distinguished him in public.”

After his brother’s death John Wesley became a second father to the children. He sent several letters to the family after the painful news reached him. From Blackburn he wrote, on April 21st, “ You will excuse me, my dear sister, for troubling you with so many letters, for I know not how to help it ; I find you and your family so much upon my heart, both for your own sakes and for the sake of my brother.” When he returned to London in July, he found his way at once to Chesterfield

Street, and spent an hour with his widowed sister and her children. "They all seem inclined," he adds, "to make the right use of the late providential dispensation." His thoughtful care and wise counsel were a constant stay to them whilst he lived. After his death the family seemed to fear that Methodism would not long survive its Founder. They therefore requested that the sum settled on Mrs. Charles Wesley at her marriage might be handed over to them instead of the interest upon it, which had been regularly paid ever since. It was arranged, however, that Dr. Coke should give his personal security for the payment, as well as that of the Methodist Conference, and this satisfied Mrs. Charles Wesley and her children. When William Wilberforce heard that Mrs. Wesley needed help, he and two of his friends generously gave her an annuity of £60, which began in 1792 and was continued for thirty years. Her long widowhood was thus spent in peace. Methodism was not less generous. The annuity settled upon Mrs. Wesley was continued to her children after her death.

For ten or twelve years the family lived in Chesterfield Street. When that lease ran out, they removed to a smaller house. Mrs. Charles Wesley reached the venerable age of ninety-six. She was a woman of a gentle spirit. On one occasion a confidential servant robbed her of £30, but her whole anxiety was lest she should be called on to prosecute the thief. The woman, however, succeeded in getting away, to Mrs. Charles Wesley's intense satisfaction. Love for the poor and pity for the wrongdoer were marked features of her character. "When she heard of a crime, her usual remark was that the heart of every human being would be the same if divine grace did not prevent. If any reminded her of her pious youth, and the sacrifices she had made in that period of her life, she



MRS. CHARLES WESLEY,

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instantly checked" the speaker with the words, "My only plea is, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.'" She died at her house, No. 14, Nottingham Street, Marylebone, on December 28th, 1822. Only her youngest son married. Charles and Sarah Wesley lived together, till Miss Wesley's death, during a visit to Bristol, in September, 1828, left him alone. The great organist was helpless as a child in all things except music, so that he sorely missed his watchful sister. So unfit was he to be left alone that after her death he returned from Bristol in post-chaises, which cost him £30. The brother and sister were both members of the Methodist Society at Hinde Street Chapel, Manchester Square, where they met in Mrs. Barker's class. In December, 1822, Charles Wesley, the musician, was mourning for the top-coat which his father had bought thirty-five years before. It was an old-fashioned blue coat with a large cape, and was worn by both father and son. This venerable relic was stolen out of the lobby of their house in Nottingham Street. The musician died on May 23rd, 1834.

His younger brother, Samuel, died on October 11th, 1837. After his marriage, in 1792, he lived at Ridge, near Barnet. When he visited his mother he occupied his old room at Chesterfield Street. There is a curious letter from his young wife to Mrs. Charles Wesley, written on July 1st, 1799. "I was infinitely obliged to you for the loan of Betty Olivers, who, notwithstanding her indisposition, was of great service. She is a very good-natured girl." Then she proposes coming to Marylebone, as she can scarcely bear the country solitude, and says, "Betty Olivers will nurse the baby for me." Betty was the daughter of Thomas Olivers, the Methodist controversialist, editor, poet, and preacher, who wrote—

The God of Abraham praise,
Who reigns enthroned above.

Samuel Wesley was the last survivor of his family. He died on October 11th, 1837, at the age of seventy-one. Just before his death he exclaimed, "O Lord Jesus! Lord Jesus!" Then he raised his hands, saying, "I am coming," and passed to join the company above.

An impressive service was held in the little graveyard when the tomb was opened to receive the last of the family. His sons, Dr. Wesley, Sub-Dean of the Chapel Royal, and Samuel Sebastian Wesley, the famous doctor of music and organist at Gloucester Cathedral, arranged a choral service. The Rev. Thomas Jackson, the biographer of Charles Wesley, and the unwearying friend of his family, was present when Samuel was buried. He has given this striking picture of the scene: "Out of respect for his memory, as one of the most distinguished musicians of the age, some of the finest singers, belonging to the most eminent of the London choirs, especially that of Westminster Abbey, attended his funeral, and, after chanting a considerable part of the service in the church, formed a large circle in the burying-ground, and sang an appropriate anthem with wonderful power and effect. I was impressed beyond all that I had ever felt before from the combination of human voices." Samuel Wesley left a numerous family. His sister Sarah Wesley was honoured with Dr. Johnson's special friendship, and engaged in various literary work in connection with Dr. Gregory. In 1828, when she was nearly seventy, she and her brother Charles went on a visit to their old friends at Bristol. She was suffering from some affection of the throat which prevented her from taking solid food. Joseph Entwisle visited her, and found that she had peace, but not joy. She often quoted the lines which had been on John Wesley's lips when he was ill at Bristol forty-five years before :—

I the chief of sinners am,
But Jesus died for me.

She died on September 19th, 1828, and was buried in St. James' Churchyard, Bristol. Her father's verse was put upon her tomb.

Hosanna to Jesus on high,
Another has entered her rest ;
Another is 'scaped to the sky,
And lodged in Immanuel's breast.

The soul of our sister is gone
To heighten the triumph above,
Exalted to Jesus's Throne,
And clasped in the arms of His love.

It was the same churchyard where the poet of Methodism had buried his five infant children. The church lay near to the first Methodist preaching place, in the Horse-fair, Bristol, afterwards known as "Broadmead Preaching House," and was therefore the Wesleys parish church. The poet's wife and his two sons rest with him in the little graveyard of Marylebone Old Church. There was hope in the death of all.

CHAPTER XV.

CHARACTER AND WORK.

John Wesley's Tribute—Early Advantages—Power of his Preaching—His Ready Wit—His Character—Faculty for Winning Friends—A Poet's Moods.

JOHN WESLEY intended to write a life of his brother, but the claims of his vast Methodist parish, and the infirmities of old age, did not permit him to carry out this design. It is much to be regretted that he did not accomplish it. No one knew better the wonderful chain of events by which God had guided his brother and himself. "All our lives, and all God's dealings with us," he said in 1760, "have been extraordinary from the beginning." His love for Charles is beautifully expressed in his own words: "I have a brother who is as my own soul." He inserted in the Minutes for 1788 that gem of obituaries. It is under the question, "Who have died this year?" :—

"Mr. Charles Wesley, who, after spending fourscore years with much sorrow and pain, quietly retired into Abraham's bosom. He had no disease; but, after a gradual decay of some months,

The weary wheels of life stood still at last.

His least praise was his talent for poetry, although Dr. Watts did not scruple to say that that single poem, 'Wrestling Jacob,' was worth all the verses he himself had written."

His early advantages at Westminster and Christ Church had stored Charles Wesley's mind with the classics. He was long under the special care of his brother Samuel, an elegant and accomplished scholar. His knowledge of the Latin poets and his appreciation of their beauties surprised Henry Moore. One day, after they had talked together on religious subjects for some time, Charles suddenly exclaimed, "Come, I'll give you two hundred lines of Virgil." He poured out the poetry in the best style, to the great delight of his friend. Charles Wesley's scholarship was of considerable service to his brother when he was preparing his "Notes on the New Testament." After he was released from the restraints of school and college, he seems to have studied little. He threw himself with enthusiasm into his itinerant labours, and was surrounded by such a host of friends that even before his marriage he could have had little leisure for any regular course of reading.

The power of his preaching is attested by almost every page of his journals. People who expected a regular and carefully prepared sermon were often disappointed. Dr. Adam Clarke has given a somewhat disparaging account of his preaching. He says that Charles Wesley would open the Bible, and speak from the first passage that caught his eye. If he failed, he would repeat the process. After two or three ineffectual attempts of this kind, some preacher who was in the congregation would take his place, whilst Charles retired to the vestry. A hymn would be given out. When its last lines were being sung, he would ascend the pulpit again. Sometimes he would not attempt a text again, but would utter two or three words, such as "believe, love, obey." Upon these he would make a few pointed remarks, and then suddenly close. Dr. Clarke says that a young preacher, who had left his circuit in a fit of despair, heard Charles Wesley preach in

a northern town. The service was no small blessing to him. "Well," he said to himself as it closed, "bad as I am, I never stammered, hesitated, and floundered through a sermon like that! I will take courage, go back to my circuit, and try again." He took courage, and lived and died a Methodist preacher. All this may be true in part. Charles Wesley was too much the creature of impulse to be unfamiliar with such an experience. He was, nevertheless, a soul-stirring preacher. Dr. Whitehead says, "In fatigues, in dangers, and in ministerial labours, he was, for many years, not inferior to his brother, and his sermons were generally more awakening and useful."*

At the beginning of his ministry he carefully wrote his sermons. On the voyage to Georgia he spent his mornings in this way. On the Saturday after his conversion, he says, "I then began writing my first sermon in the name of Christ, my Prophet." After that time he often gave addresses or expositions of Scripture in the religious societies which he and his friends frequented, so that he gradually acquired confidence. He still used his manuscript in the pulpit, however. At last, on Friday, October 20th, 1738, he writes, "Seeing so few present at St. Antholin's, I thought of preaching extempore: afraid; yet ventured on the promise, 'Lo, I am with you alway,' and spoke on justification, from Romans iii., for three quarters of an hour without hesitation. Glory be to God, who keepeth His promise for ever." The next entry on this subject shows that he ventured to preach without notes on the story of blind Bartimæus, in Islington Church, on Sunday, February 11th, 1739: "The Lord being greatly my helper, let Him have all the glory." Before the summer was over his field preaching had begun. He

* "Life," vol. i., p. 292.

must then have recognised the value of this preparation for his labours.

His sermons were seldom written after his itinerant life began. During the earthquake panic of 1750 he preached a written sermon, from which we have given an extract.* Three months later he refers to another at Spitalfields, on the death of his beloved friend Hogg. His sermon at the University, on April 4th, 1742, from the words, "Awake, thou that sleepest," is a fine specimen of his best style. It is a close appeal to the conscience, enforced by copious and most appropriate quotations of Scripture. Its luminous clearness and its crisp Saxon diction are marked features of the whole discourse. It reached a sixteenth edition within seven years. Mr. Jackson says that "it is doubtful whether any sermon has passed through so many editions, or been productive of so much spiritual good." As a rule, however, Charles Wesley's sermons were purely extempore. As he stood up to speak, he would sometimes open the Bible and preach from whatever verse presented itself. The fact is, that whatever text he took, he soon got to his one subject, entreating men to be reconciled to God. This freedom was his power. His sermon before the University "falls short of many discourses which he delivered in the highways, and to large auditories in his own chapels." Such is the verdict of Henry Moore, who often heard him preach, and was greatly blessed by his ministry. He says that Charles Wesley had a remarkable talent for uttering the most striking truth with simplicity, force, and brevity. Moore, in fact, confirms what a thousand passages of the journals show, that "where only God and conscious sinners were before him, it seemed as if nothing could

* See pp. 190, 191.

withstand the wisdom and power with which he spake : to use the expression of a pious man, 'It was all thunder and lightning.' Even in later life Moore had known him so mighty in proclaiming Christ that he would not have been surprised to see the whole congregation on their knees, or prostrate on their faces before God crying for mercy.

The power of the Spirit rested on no worker of the Evangelical Revival more mightily than on Charles Wesley. He sometimes spoke for two or three hours, and then scarce knew how to break off. Later in life he seems somewhat to have altered his style. He says, in March, 1760, "God has remarkably owned the word since Mr. Fletcher and I changed our manner of preaching it. Great is our confidence towards the mourners, who are comforted on every side." He thought that he had judged people too much by what they said instead of by what they showed themselves to be. Now he understood Christ's word, "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted."

In 1766 John Wesley marked the difference between his own and his brother's preaching with his usual discrimination. "Oh, insist everywhere on full redemption, receivable now by faith alone ! consequently to be looked for now. You are made, as it were, for this very thing. Just here you are in your element. In connection I beat you ; but in strong, short, pointed sentences, you beat me. Go on, in your own way, what God has peculiarly called you to. Press the instantaneous blessings. Then I shall have more time for my peculiar calling, enforcing the gradual work." When Henry Moore, who knew both the brothers intimately, was asked to describe their preaching, he replied, " John's preaching was all principles, Charles's was all aphorisms."

Another instance of the success with which Charles

Wesley reproved sin must be added to those which have been referred to in the course of the narrative. It is one of the most beautiful pictures of his life. We should have liked to have been at his side in the crowd, and to have followed him and his converts to Moorfields. "September 24th, 1743 : I reproved one for swearing, among an army of porters and carmen. I spoke to them for some time, till all were overpowered. I carried two away with me to the Foundry. They received my sayings and books, and departed with their eyes full of tears and their hearts of good desires."

Henry Moore heard the following anecdote from Charles Wesley himself. The Methodist preacher once met Dr. Robinson, afterwards Primate of Ireland, at the Hotwells, near Bristol. They had been together at Westminster, and were both elected the same year to Christ Church. Robinson seemed glad to see Charles Wesley, and talked freely with him. He told him that he had not believed many things he had heard about the brothers, but had always been surprised that they employed laymen. "It is your fault, my lord," said Charles. "My fault, Mr. Wesley?" "Yes, my lord, yours and your brethren's." "How so, sir?" said Dr. Robinson. "Why, my lord, you hold your peace, and so the stones cry out." The friends took a turn round the pump-room in silence. Then Dr. Robinson said, "But I hear they are unlearned men." "Very true, my lord; in general they are so: so the dumb ass rebukes the prophet." Moore, or Charles Wesley himself, seems to have forgotten that Robinson did not become a bishop till 1755. At the date of this conversation, in 1748, he was Rector of Etton, near Beverley, Prebend of York, and probably still Chaplain to the Archbishop of York.

This conversation is not only interesting as a specimen

of Charles Wesley's readiness ; it puts in a nutshell the vindication of those Methodist practices which were branded as irregular. Stout Churchman as he was, Charles Wesley triumphantly vindicated such action. The actual necessities of the work broke down many of his prejudices, and taught him that men had better be saved by irregular ministries than not saved at all. Whilst he was in the full tide of his evangelistic work, he was at least as irregular as his brother ; and had he continued, as John Wesley continued, to visit the Methodist societies in England and Ireland, he would have been much nearer to his brother's views in later life. He stayed at home and nursed his theory ; John went throughout the country, and saw what it was necessary to do.

Charles Wesley's widow published twelve of his sermons in 1816. In a graceful sketch of her husband's character, which accompanied the volume, she said that he was full of sensibility and fire ; his patience and meekness were neither the effect of temperament nor reason, but of divine principles. He was ready to forgive ; but he could not take the offender to his heart again, as John Wesley could. " His most striking excellence was humility ; it extended to his talents as well as virtues ; he not only acknowledged and pointed out, but *delighted* in the superiority of another ; and if there ever was a human being who disliked power, avoided pre-eminence, and shrunk from praise, it was Charles Wesley." In one of his letters to his brother there is a sentence which may corroborate this. He says that " he never sought great things for his sons, nor greater for himself, than that he might escape to land on a broken piece of the ship."

One day he was telling Henry Moore, with much pleasure, how useful his father had been when he was in Lincoln Castle for debt. " By his constantly reading

prayers and preaching, the whole gaol was reformed." Mrs. Hall, who was present, exclaimed, "Brother! how can you speak of these things?" Charles replied in his usual abrupt way, "If you are ashamed of poverty, you are ashamed of your Master."

Few men have had so many attached friends as Charles Wesley; he had a rare faculty of winning all hearts. The affection of the Gwynne household was secured on his first visit; the Delamottes of Blendon loved him as one of themselves until they were led astray by the Moravians; George Whitefield, John Fletcher, and Thomas Walsh were knit to him as by a threefold cord. Henry Moore and Samuel Bradburn regarded him with special affection; despite the agitations caused by the sacramental controversy and the question of ordination, he both loved and honoured them. There is no need to add further particulars, for his whole life reveals his affectionate relations to the Methodist societies and to his own large circle of friends. The general interest shown in his marriage to Miss Gwynne proves how he was loved by the societies in London and Bristol. When he was an old man he writes from the latter city, "This people think they cannot do enough for me. Yesterday, my barber put a new wig on my head, ordered by I know not who."

The poet was impetuous and hasty. In this respect he was a marked contrast to his calm, self-possessed brother. In one of the early Conferences Charles was very indignant because a preacher took up the time in relating his experience. "Stop that man from speaking," he said; "let us attend to business." The preacher still went on. "Unless he stops, I'll leave the Conference," said Charles. John effectually checked this outburst by saying, "Reach him his hat." The story is characteristic. Yet no man

was more generous or more truly affectionate than Charles Wesley.

He suffered much from illness. Dr. Whitehead thinks that he laid the foundation of his ill-health at Oxford, by too close application to study and abstinence from food. After his return from Georgia, his pain and weakness were so great that he was reluctantly compelled to abandon all thoughts of further labour in the Colony. Amid the stirring scenes of his early itinerancy he never spared himself, and he never enjoyed better health. His riding on horseback seems to have greatly strengthened him. In after years his weakness returned. The contrast between his first itinerant journeys and his ride to Barnstaple in 1758 shows how his strength had broken down. The fearless, dashing rider who said, in 1748, "I never slack my pace for way or weather," now writes, "I stood up in my stirrups, and ventured a trot." In 1760 he suffered much from gout, the family disease of which his mother died, and to which John Wesley was no stranger.

His spirits varied greatly. Sometimes he was full of life, bright and vigorous; then he sank into the depths. He was a poet, swayed by all a poet's moods. He greatly needed pleasant work and kind friends. There could have been no better tonic for him than that which his itinerant life supplied. He forgot himself in the joys of his glorious mission; when he ceased to travel he suffered and drooped.

John Wesley says, "Whilst my brother remained with me he was joyous in his spirit, and his labour saddened him not. But when he departed from that activity to which the Lord called him, and in which He so greatly blessed him, his spirit became depressed; and being surrounded with 'croakers' he often looked through the same clouds which enveloped them." When he saw anything that grieved him, he was afraid that there might be

much more which he did not see. Thus his spirits were often weighed down, when more full knowledge might have shown him that these troubles were only occasional incidents of the work.

Charles Wesley might in the latter half of his life have done more to deepen and extend the influence of the Evangelical Revival; but under how great a debt does the whole Christian world lie to the sweet singer of Methodism! His own voice is hushed, but he still pleads with sinners, he still comforts saints. The yearning of Christendom still finds expression in his words—

Jesu, Lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly,
While the nearer waters roll,
While the tempest still is high;
Hide me, O my Saviour, hide,
Till the storm of life be past;
Safe into the haven guide,
O receive my soul at last!

DATES OF CHARLES WESLEY'S LIFE.

- 1707. December 18th, Birth.
- 1716. Enters Westminster School.
- 1726. Elected to Christ Church, Oxford.
- 1735. April 25th, Father's death.
October 14th, Embarks for Georgia.
- 1736. February 6th, Lands at Savannah.
July 26th, Starts for England.
December 2nd, Arrives at Deal.
- 1738. May 21st, Evangelical conversion.
July, Curate at Islington.
- 1739. May 29th, Becomes a field preacher.
- 1739-1756. Active itinerancy.
- 1749. April 8th, Marries Miss Sarah Gwynne.
September 1st, Begins housekeeping in Bristol.
- 1750. March, Earthquake panic in London.
- 1751. February 18th, Marriage of John Wesley.
- 1753. November, Illness of John Wesley.
- 1757. December 11th, Son Charles born.
- 1759. April 1st, Sarah Wesley born.
- 1766. February 24th, Samuel Wesley born.
- 1785. May 9th, Death of Rev. V. Perronet.
August 14th, Death of Rev. John Fletcher.
- 1788. March 28th, Died in Marylebone, aged 80.
April 5th, Buried in Marylebone Churchyard.
- 1822. December 28th, Death of his widow, aged 96.
- 1828. September 19th, Death of Sarah Wesley.
- 1834. May 23rd, Death of Charles Wesley, jun.
- 1837. October 11th, Death of Samuel Wesley.

WORKS OF CHARLES WESLEY.

[For further details consult "*Wesley Bibliography*," by Rev.
Richard Green].

1739. Hymns and Sacred Poems.
1740. Hymns and Sacred Poems.
1741. A Short Account of the Death of Mrs. Hannah
Richardson.
A Collection of Psalms and Hymns.
Hymns on God's Everlasting Love.
1742. Sermon preached before University of Oxford on
April 4th, "Awake thou that sleepest."
Elegy on Death of Robert Jones.
Hymns and Sacred Poems.
A Collection of Hymns.
1744. Hymns for Times of Trouble and Persecution.
Hymns for Times of Trouble.
A Hymn at the Sacrament (910 in Wesleyan Hymn
Book).
1745. Hymns on the Lord's Supper.
Hymns for the Nativity of Our Lord.
1746. Hymns for Our Lord's Resurrection.
Hymns for Ascension Day.
Hymns of Petition and Thanksgiving for the Promise
of the Father.
Hymns to the Trinity.
Hymns on the Great Festivals.
Hymns for the Public Thanksgiving Day, 1746.

1746. Funeral Hymns.
Hymns for the Watchnight.
Graces before Meat.
Hymns for Children.
1747. Hymns for those that Seek Redemption, etc.
Hymns and Sacred Poems.
1749. Hymns and Sacred Poems. 2 volumes.
1750. Sermon: The Cause and Cure of Earthquakes.
Hymns for New Year's Day.
Hymns occasioned by the Earthquake.
1753. Hymns and Spiritual Songs.
1755. Epistle to Rev. Mr. John Wesley.
1757. Hymns for the Year 1756.
1758. Hymns of Intercession for all Mankind.
1759. Funeral Hymns.
Hymns on the Expected Invasion.
Hymns to be used on Thanksgiving Day, November
29th, 1759.
1761. Hymns for those to whom Christ is all in all.
Select Hymns.
1762. Short Hymns on Select Passages of the Holy Scrip-
tures.
1763. Hymns for Children.
1767. Hymns for the use of Families.
Hymns on the Trinity.
1771. Epistle to Rev. Mr. George Whitefield.
Elegy on late Rev. George Whitefield.
1772. Preparation for Death in several Hymns.
1780. Hymns written in the Time of the Tumults, June, 1780.
A Collection of Hymns for the use of the People
called Methodists.
1782. Hymns for the National Fast.
Hymns for the Nation.
Hymns for the Nation. Part II.
1784. Collection of Psalms and Hymns for the Lord's Day.
1785. Prayers for Condemned Malefactors.

-
1785. Pocket Hymn Book for use of Christians of all Denominations.
1787. Pocket Hymn Book for use of Christians of all Denominations.
1791. Hymns for Children, selected from those published in 1763.
1816. Volumes of Sermons, published by his Widow.
1841. Jackson's Life of Charles Wesley.
1849. Journal and Letters of Charles Wesley.
1872. The Poetical Works of John and Charles Wesley. Arranged by Dr. Osborn. 13 volumes.

CHARLES WESLEY'S LETTERS.

ARRANGED IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER.

[The page and number refer to the "Journal and Letters," Vol. II.]

THE following attempt to arrange Charles Wesley's letters in chronological order may help future workers in this field. The difficulties in the way of such a task are considerable, and several of the letters give little or no clue to their date.

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284 .	104 .	Dec. 9, 1782
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267 .	90 .	Sept. 1, 1784
274 .	96 .	Aug. 14, 1786

CHARLES WESLEY'S FUNERAL.

MR. WARD, the Steward for West Street, paid over, on July 11th, 1788, the following subscriptions for the poet's funeral: Miss Wells, £2 2s.; Mrs. Keysall, Mrs. Maschew, Mr. Mortimer, Mr. Row, £1 1s. each; Mr. Horn, Mr. Rogers, Mr. Squires, 10s. 6d. each; "O.," 6s.; Messrs. Barry, Bowen, Milbourne, Rowley, Scarlett, Robert Scott, Sprague, Stubbs, Tate, Vince, 5s. each. On July 22nd Mr. Marriott added £3 3s., making a total of £13 16s. 6d. July 15th, loss on light gold, 1s. 6d. December 29th, paid Mr. Chappell's bill by order of Mr. Collinson, £13 15s.

MRS. CHARLES WESLEY'S SINGING.

THE Rev. John Reacher has kindly furnished the following Extract from the MSS. Journal of Rev. Francis Fortescue Knottesford, A.B., Assistant Preacher at St. Mary, Stoke Newington; and in same year (1797) Curate of St. Benedict, Gracechurch Street:—

"Tuesday, Jan. 24, 1797,—My Mother and I went to London [from Tottenham] at twelve. . . . Went to Mr. Downing's and dined there. I called upon Mr. Walker. We went in the evening with Mr. and Mrs. Downing and Miss Maria Downing to Mr. Greenwood's, where there was a music party. The company consisted of Mrs. and Mr. Charles Wesley, Mr. Battishill, Mrs. and Miss Smiths, Mr. and Mrs. Vaughan, Mr. and Miss Collinsons, Mrs. Josiah Greenwood, Mr. La Trobe the Moravian Minister, Mr. and Mrs. ———, and Miss Miles, Miss Maxwells and Mr. Perry. We were much delighted at hearing Mr. Wesley play upon the Harpsichord. He is one of the best performers in England. Mrs. Wesley, his mother, who is upwards of eighty years of age, sung, to our great astonishment, two of Handel's songs most delightfully—'He shall feed His flock,' etc., and 'If God be with us,' etc. A part of the company staid supper, and we did not return till near 2."

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