

hedonism as it was, dominated moral philosophy for more than one hundred years up to the time of John Stuart Mill. Is it not probable that in speaking of the pleasantness of religion Watts was answering Hobbes and showing that the pursuit of pleasure was not inconsistent with the service of God? Such a philosophical background is certainly suggested in Matthew Henry's sermon on the "Pleasantness of Religion". Henry More, the Cambridge Platonist, is quoted in the preface to the sermon; "That distinction that the learned Dr. Henry More insists so much upon, in his explanation of the Grand Mystery of Godliness, between the Animal life and the Divine life, is certainly of great use to lead us into the understanding of that mystery." And again later; "The conflict is between these two" (the animal and the divine life). "Nothing draws more forcibly than Pleasure; in order therefore to the advancing of the interests of the Divine Life in myself and others, I have here endeavoured, as God has enabled me, to make it evident, that the pleasures of the Divine Life are unspeakably better, and more deserving, than those of the Animal Life." When we remember that the Cambridge Platonists were among the chief opponents of Hobbes' philosophy, there can be little doubt that in his sermon Matthew Henry had in mind the ethical theory associated with the names of Gassendi and Hobbes.

It seems to me therefore that in Wesley's hymns on the "Pleasantness of Religion" we catch an echo of Isaac Watts and of Matthew Henry and beyond them of one of the most famous of English philosophers.

A. KINGSLEY LLOYD-

NOTES AND QUERIES.

863. JOHN HICKLING, THE LAST OF WESLEY'S PREACHERS. One of our members, Mr. A. W. Edwards, has kindly sent us a transcription of an interesting bill from the collection of the late Mr. J. Steel, of Sutton. It raises an interesting point as to Wesley's ordinations. The bill reads as follows:

CHAPEL ANNIVERSARY
On Sunday, January 24th., 1858,
Two
SERMONS
will be preached in the
Wesleyan Chapel, Silsden

WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

by the
REV. J. HICKLING,
of Audley, Newcastle under Lyme,
Service to commence at half past One o'clock in the Afternoon and
and at half past Five in the Evening. [one line only]
A Collection will be made after each Sermon, and Silver will be
thankfully received from those/who enter the Gallery, in aid
of the Chapel Funds. [two lines, dividing at /]

Also on Tuesday Evening January 26th

^a
LECTURE
will be delivered in the above Chapel, on
"EARLY METHODISM"
by the
REV. J. HICKLING,
to commence at half past six o'clock

After which a Collection will be made in aid of the above Chapel.
This venerable Minister is in the 93rd year of his age, and is the
only Minister living who was ordained by the [one line]
REV. JOHN WESLEY.

J. L. Crabtree, Printer & Stationer, Changegate, Keighley.

The claim that John Hickling was ordained by Wesley is almost certainly incorrect, though it is quite probable that like many other preachers he was solemnly set apart by Wesley for the work of preaching the Gospel. (Cf. W.H.S. *Proc.* ix: 146) By Wesley's "ordinations", however, we understand the authorization to administer the Sacraments. For such an ordination there seems no confirmation. The error might have arisen either from an incautious statement made by Hickling himself, or through the over-enthusiasm of the Silsden officials responsible for the above bill.

As the last preaching link with Wesley's days, John Hickling was naturally a venerable figure. His last sermon was preached from a seat in the Kidderminster pulpit on October 17 of this same year, when the reporter added—"The appearance of the patriarch, was itself an impressive sermon." A week or two later Hickling was still delivering his lecture on "Early Methodism", saying "I am not tired yet". On November 9, however, he went to his rest, shortly before his ninety-third birthday. The official obituaries speak of him as "the last-surviving Minister of all who had been called into the work by Mr. Wesley" and "the last link that united the present race of Methodist Preachers with those who laboured under the immediate direction of Mr. Wesley". There is no suggestion, however, that he was actually ordained by Wesley. The question appears to be settled by the *Minutes*, for whilst Hickling was received as a Preacher On Trial by Wesley in 1788, he was still a Preacher On Trial at Wesley's death in 1791, not being admitted into Full Connexion until 1792.

Rev. Frank Baker, B.A., B.D.