

## WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

A devoted Methodist, an active worker in Leyburn and area, he was deeply interested in the origin and development of local Methodism, and published many useful notes on the subject in the local Circuit Magazine. F.F.B.

### NOTES AND QUERIES.

866. WESLEY AND THE ROMAN CATHOLICS. Two footnotes may be added to Mr. Doughty's article on "John Wesley's Letters to Mr. Berington, 1780" (pp. 38-44 above). In the first place, Berington's Christian name was apparently Joseph. This appears from a correspondence between him and Hannah More in 1809, when he defended the Roman Catholics against some remarks in her *Coelebs in search of a wife*. Incidentally, he is called "Rev. Joseph Berington", not "Dr." See William Roberts: *Memoir . . . of Hannah More* iii: 286 ff.

Secondly, one of Berington's letters to Wesley has been published at least in part. In Whitehead's *Life of the Rev. John Wesley*. ii: 389, he quotes a letter written by Berington in defence of the 'Council of Constance, apparently in answer to Wesley's first letter. The extract reads:—

"There never was a decision made at Constance tending to shew, that *No faith is to be kept with heretics*. The words of the Canon are not susceptible of such a comment, unless tortured to it. At all events no Council, Pope, Bishop, Priest, or Layman of our Church, ever understood them in the sense of your interpretation. But every Catholic Divine has at all times, in writing on the subject, utterly reprobated the idea of breaking faith with heretics, as contrary to every dictate of reason and religion."

Whitehead remarks that "these undoubtedly, are very extraordinary assertions, but there is no proof", and he wonders whether Wesley ever replied—"for there would be no end of answering groundless assertions." He himself brings forward additional evidence in support of Wesley's position.

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