

⁵⁰ In the sense that he combined Toryism with a genuine passion for the social condition of the people. Wesley would not, of course, have approved of Stephens' violence, or his views on disestablishment. See also ref. 53.

⁵¹ Ward, *The Factory Movement*, p. 246, says that Maurice's Toryism was 'curiously akin' to Oastler's. Both saw Monarchy, Aristocracy, and Socialism as part of Christianity. The same could be said of Stephens, who like Maurice disliked the political programme of Chartism.

⁵² Sermon preached by the Rev. Mr. Stephens at Charlestown on Jan. 6th, 1839, p. 4.

⁵³ Wesley's Toryism and his tendency to theological individualism were tempered by his tracts, letters and good works displaying a practical sympathy with the lot of the people. His views on War and slavery sprang from a Christian social concern. His successors shared his Toryism and his theological individualism, but forgot his adaptability in meeting the social needs of the moment. Stephens shared Wesley's Toryism, and revived his social concern 'to meet the present age'.

⁵⁴ Other Chartists have been described as Methodist ministers, but mistakenly, e.g., the Rev. James Scholefield (or Schofield) is called a Bible Christian minister by Faulkner, pp. 28, 90, 113, 115. In fact, there was a Swedenborgian company of that name, and Scholefield was one of their ministers.

⁵⁵ A list of Methodist Chartists is bound to be incomplete, but of twenty-seven names, only one came from the Wesleyan Methodist Association.

⁵⁶ Especially by Dr Weymouth in his two works.

⁵⁷ *Learning and Living, 1790-1960*, by J. F. C. Harrison, 1961, pp. 253-9.

'ALDERSGATE' AND WESLEY'S EDITORS

Frank Baker

AT a society meeting in Aldersgate Street, London, on 24th May 1738 John Wesley felt his heart strangely warmed. This experience has proved both an inspiration and an enigma to later generations, perhaps especially our own. Although Wesley seems to have thought of it in terms of conversion, clearly it was not conversion in the conventional sense. Yet it was undoubtedly an epochal event, of such importance to Wesley himself that when he came to this date in his published *Journal* he took time out to present a spiritual autobiography, one of the longest connected passages in his *Journal*. This (or a small part of it) is perhaps the best known of his writings, yet has probably suffered more than most at the hands of his executors and admirers. A careful study of the literary transmission of this particular record will help towards a better understanding both of the significance which 'Aldersgate' held for Wesley himself, and also of the serious problems which face any conscientious editor of his writings.

It is known that Wesley was plagued by careless printers. He also suffered from careless editors, as well as over-zealous ones. In their defence it must be pointed out that he presented later generations with some literary problems difficult if not impossible to resolve neatly and consistently. Even in a definitive scholarly edition of Wesley's *Works* such as is now being prepared for publication by the Oxford University Press it is by no means as simple as at first sight it appears to prepare a text which accurately represents Wesley's most fully deliberative presentation of his thought.

Minutiae of spelling, capitalization, and of punctuation may at first seem of little concern to the general reader or the theologian, or even the historian. Wesley's thought may well make its fullest impact if he comes to us

clothed in modern dress, rather than distracting our attention to tricorne hat or knee-breeches, as would be the case if the full antiquarian flavour of his early editions were retained. Fashions in these matters change; they changed even in Wesley's lifetime, so that he used fewer capitals and italics in his later publications than in his earlier ones. Each generation reprinting his works, therefore, is likely to introduce minor variations in styling, and this is relatively unimportant provided that his original words are preserved in such a way as to convey what he originally meant by them. All such modernization, however, must be approached cautiously. His punctuation especially must be treated with care. Most modern readers prefer 'open' punctuation, which omits all punctuation marks except those absolutely essential to make the sense clear. Wesley's system was fairly 'close', attempting to mark the pauses introduced both for syntactical and for rhetorical purposes. Nevertheless, his original punctuation is sometimes far more modern, far more lucid, than that of his later editors. Occasionally, in fact, the latest edition is the worst rather than the best. Before any editors of Wesley's works cast his commas or even his colons to the winds they must be sure that they understand both his thought and his literary mannerisms.

Certainly a scholarly editor is never at liberty to alter the actual words or syntax of his author without a clear indication of what has been done. Nor may an editor omit words or passages which seem to him obscure, or unnecessary, or mistaken, nor introduce words or phrases which he believes his author intended to say or should have said, unless in each rare instance he makes it clear how he is intruding himself between author and reader. In fact, however, Wesley's editors through the centuries have taken all these liberties and others with his writings, sometimes with the very best of intentions, sometimes (apparently) with the worst, and often with no intention at all, sinning in ignorance.

This is true even of the classical Aldersgate autobiography, which may thus serve as an exemplar and a warning for both editors and students. Most of the scores of variations in the two dozen different editions here summarized introduce no basic change in the general tenor of the narrative, but they have the general cumulative effect of sandpapering down its idiosyncrasies of style so that it becomes more like a machine-made article than the work of an individual craftsman. Much of the real Wesley is thereby lost. True, his portrait does not in the process become a caricature—merely a touched-up print for mass-production in the glossy magazines. His features are made to appear more regular than in fact they were, and one of his prominent warts has been painted out.

THE HISTORY OF THE TEXT

Before examining in some detail how this has happened it is desirable to familiarize ourselves with the history of the text in general. We know that Wesley's *Journal* was in fact a series of 'extracts' prepared for publication sometimes long after the events which they described, prepared on the basis of a shorthand diary that recorded the bare facts, supplemented by occasional memoranda, lengthy letters in the form of connected accounts, pos-

sibly a fuller consecutive journal, and of course by Wesley's memory. He published twenty-one such extracts. The first covered the period (as the title-page announced) 'from his embarking for Georgia to his return to London'. It is the second part that concerns us here—*An Extract of the Rev. Mr. John Wesley's Journal from February 1, 1737-8, to his return from Germany* [on 16th September 1738].

This was first printed for Wesley by William Strahan of London in 1740, though no record of it appears in Strahan's ledgers. The second edition appeared from the Bristol press of Felix Farley in 1743, and the third also was printed in Bristol, by William Pine in 1765. From 1743 onwards the first and second parts were always printed together, though they were usually paged separately.

In 1771 Wesley began to issue his collected *Works* in periodical numbers which made up thirty-two volumes. The closing volumes contained the *Journal*, Part 2 occupying pages 242-359 in volume 26 (1774). A most important addition to this volume (missing from many copies) was the errata leaf in which Wesley added some mature comments about his religious experience—Wesley editing himself, as well as correcting his printer's errors, which were many. This version of the second extract was almost certainly regarded as the fourth edition, and the next to appear was therefore described as the fifth. This was printed by Robert Hawes of London in 1775, and was apparently closely supervised by John Wesley himself, errors being corrected and supplementary footnotes added. The last separate issue of this extract was published by the Methodist Book Steward, George Whitfield, in 1797, prepared apparently by George Story, who served as Con-nexional Editor from 1794-1804.

Meantime John Dickins of Philadelphia had set on foot an uncompleted collected edition of the twenty-one extracts. Volume 1 appeared in 1795, containing Nos. 1-3, and volume 2 in 1806, adding Nos. 4-6. This task was again attempted (successfully this time) by Robert Napper of Dublin, who in 1809 issued the *Journal* complete in six volumes. Joseph Benson had succeeded Story as Editor in 1804, and to him we are indebted for the second edition of Wesley's collected *Works*, in seventeen volumes (1809-13). For his opening six volumes he used Napper's edition of the *Journal*. Upon Benson's edition of the *Works* was based the 'First American Edition' of 1826-27, in ten volumes. Thomas Jackson followed Benson as Editor, serving from 1824 to 1842. He republished the six-volume edition of the complete *Journal* in 1825, and in 1827 compressed it into four volumes. A reprint of these four volumes formed the opening section of his third edition of Wesley's *Works* (1829-31). Jackson's edition of the *Works* was reproduced in the 'First Complete and Standard American Edition' of 1831 except that the material was rearranged and compressed into half as many volumes, the *Journal* itself occupying volumes 3 and 4. Most subsequent editions have been based on Jackson's, and it is sad to state that although in many ways he greatly improved the presentation of Wesley's writings, in others they suffered badly at his hands.

Very few major changes were made by later editors, though there were a

few minor improvements. Jackson himself supervised the fourth edition of the *Works* in 1840-42, and there have been at least twelve subsequent editions under the general editorship of George Cubitt (1842-51), William L. Thornton (1851-56), Benjamin Frankland (1865-75), Benjamin Gregory (1875-93), William L. Watkinson (1893-1904), W. T. Davison (1904-5), and John Telford (1905-32).¹ The numbering of the editions is chaotic. Cubitt introduced a 10th in 1849, apparently with the idea of including all American as well as British predecessors. To the 11th in 1856 Thornton added as volume 15, Wesley's *Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament*. This was followed by the 5th in 1860-61, an unnumbered edition of 1872 (recently reproduced by the Zondervan Press), and still another 5th in 1877. In some cases the reigning editor probably had little hand in preparing the text, and we are left with the conviction that Jackson's imprint is on all later editions of the *Works*, which have remained substantially unaltered into the present century.

Meantime separate editions of the *Journal* only, both complete and abridged, continued to appear on both sides of the Atlantic. Of these probably the best known was the *Everyman* edition in four volumes, first published in 1906. In 1909-16 came the monumental *Standard Edition of the Journal* in eight volumes, edited by Nehemiah Curnock, and 'enlarged from original MSS, with notes from unpublished diaries, annotations, maps and illustrations'. Curnock's preface claims: 'The utmost care has been taken to preserve unaltered Wesley's own phraseology, even to the grammatical peculiarities which he shared with other writers of the day.' He admits, however, that occasionally he has substituted for Wesley's printed text 'a more vigorous or picturesque phrase, borrowed from another copy in Wesley's handwriting'—though this was not possible with the second extract, for which no manuscript has so far been found. Curnock noted and followed far too literally Richard Green's advice that 'in the preparation of a Standard Edition the first edition should be practically discarded' because it was 'full of inaccuracies, as indeed were all the editions published during Wesley's lifetime', including that in the 1771-1774 *Works*. Benson, Curnock went on, had made 'no serious attempt . . . to produce a strictly accurate text', as well as overlooking Wesley's errata. Similarly, in spite of higher literary ideals and closer application, Jackson had retained far too many factual errors, not all of which were eliminated in subsequent issues. As his basic copy-text, therefore, Curnock took the fifth edition of the *Works* (1860-61), corrected and expanded with the aid of much manuscript material and the diligence of a host of scholars. The *Journal* is immeasurably richer for the labours of the editor and others in this Standard Edition, but the serious student may justly complain that far too many undocumented liberties have been taken with the text published by Wesley himself, and that by relying almost exclusively on a posthumous edition something important has been lost. This will be illustrated from the vicissitudes of the first edition of the Aldersgate narrative, which with all its shortcomings we will quote as our basic text. Wesley's methodical numbering of the eighteen sections will provide us with a reference system adequate for our purpose.

THE PROBLEM OF ITALICS

The most frequent problem in reproducing Wesley's text for modern readers is caused by his use of italics for three completely different purposes: to distinguish names of persons and places, to denote quotations (especially from the Bible), and to secure emphasis.² What we may call his appellative use of italics causes little trouble. Even during his own lifetime such proper names were increasingly appearing in the roman type that is normal for them today. In a few cases, however, some doubt remains as to whether he intended to use a word emphatically rather than descriptively, as in '*Mystick*' (§8) and '*Presbyterians*' (§11), and even '*by-word*' (§6). All these retained their italics until Jackson transformed them to roman.

Much more complicated is the matter of quotations. Wesley almost invariably italicized scriptural quotations, and frequently passages (especially brief phrases) from other works. Obvious and accurate quotations from known sources seldom caused his editors any trouble, most of them remaining in italics until Jackson's pen enclosed them with the quotation marks which were usually accepted uncritically by his successors. Many of Wesley's italics, however, denoted quasi-quotations, either inexact or incomplete in some particular, or general reminiscences of some scriptural passage or passages. A typical example comes in the opening paragraph, where '*washing of the Holy Ghost*' represents 'washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost' of Titus 3⁵. No editor has been pedantic enough to mark the ellipsis here or in similar passages, and it is very doubtful whether this is indeed desirable. Nevertheless there is a problem here of editorial accuracy, rendered more acute by the necessary interposing quotation marks to replace the use of italic type.

Section 9 of the Aldersgate narrative contains a catena of quotations from Romans 7^{14, 23}, two-thirds of this paragraph being italicized in the early editions. Whitfield's edition of 1797 placed several of these phrases in quotation marks, but failed to distinguish them either from each other or from Wesley's link words. Jackson tidied up this situation, but retained one other minor error that had been introduced as early as 1743, when the correct '*even the Law in my . . . Mind*' had been altered to '*even the Law in my . . . Mind.*' Two other quasi-quotations distinguished by Wesley with italics were run into the roman text by Jackson and thus lost: 'I rejoiced that *my Name was cast out as Evil*' (§6, cf. Luke 6²²), and 'All the time I was at *Savannah* I was thus *beating the Air*' (§9, cf. I Cor. 9²⁶). Jackson at least partially atoned by marking as a quotation one ignored by Wesley—'to show me "a more excellent way"' (§8, I Cor. 12³¹). It cannot be too much stressed that where Jackson led Curnock was almost sure to follow, for although Curnock used other manuscript sources he deliberately discarded Wesley's own editions in favour of Jackson, and thus perpetuated errors that he might have corrected.

There is one particularly interesting quotation that was lost by Jackson because (we assume) he could not trace it. It occurs in §12, and the fact that it is indeed a quotation is made quite clear by the intrusion of the word 'other' in roman into the otherwise italic type. Wesley is describing his

search for faith, 'by adding to *the constant Use of all the other Means of Grace*, continual Prayer for this very Thing, Justifying, Saving Faith.' From the evidence of the concordance this does not come from the Bible, nor have I so far been able to find it elsewhere, though I am convinced that it will be found in some Anglican devotional work. Of the importance of the sentiment to Wesley we need no convincing. The importance of the quotation itself may be underscored by the fact that he used the same passage, again in italics, in the spiritual retrospect on landing in England with which his first *Extract* closed: 'Does all I ever did or can, *know, say, give, do or suffer*, justify me in his Sight? Yea, or *the constant Use of all the Means of Grace?* (which nevertheless is meet, right and our bounden Duty).' (This latter quotation from the *Book of Common Prayer*, strangely enough, is *not* shown as a quotation—though surely not because Wesley felt that he had used too many italics already.) Whether in fact the phrase was italicized for emphasis or as a quotation, however, it must surely be differentiated from the remainder of the text in order to show that for Wesley at least it held particular significance.

Our loss in the matter of italicized quotations is comparatively slight. It is more serious when we turn to Wesley's use of italics for emphasis. Here we must still further subdivide into two main categories, which we may describe as the summarizing or *synopic* use, and the specific or *accental* use. One of his most important devices was to summarize the argument of a paragraph by placing a key phrase in italics—a practice akin to the provision of frequent subheadings within an article, so that the principal points can be seen at a glance. By this means Wesley emphasized what he regarded as the salient features of his spiritual pilgrimage, providing such summaries for most of the early sections of the Aldersgate narrative.

Jackson did not realize what Wesley was doing. In two cases he treated these passages as if they were quotations: '[I had been] carefully taught that I could only be saved by *universal Obedience, by keeping all the Commandments of God*' (§1), and 'so that now, *doing so much, and living so good a Life*, I doubted not but I was a good Christian' (§4). In other instances Jackson (followed by Curnock) ran the italicized passages into the text in roman type. It seems worth while to recover more of these key phrases of Wesley's self-analysis: 'And what I now hoped to be saved by, was, 1. *Not being so bad as other People*. 2. *Having still a Kindness for Religion*. And 3. *Reading the Bible, and going to Church, and saying my Prayers*.' (§2); '... I hoped to be saved by ... *Repentance*' (§3); 'And by my continued *Endeavour to keep his whole Law*, Inward and Outward, to the utmost of my Power, I was persuaded, that I should be accepted of him, and that I was even then in a State of Salvation.' (§5); 'I knew not that I was *wholly void of this Faith*; but only thought, *I had not enough of it*.' (§11); 'Then was I taught, that *Peace and Victory over Sin, are essential to Faith in the Captain of our Salvation: But, that as to the Transports of Joy* that usually attend the Beginning of it ... *GOD sometimes giveth, sometimes withholdeth them, according to the Counsels of his own Will*.' (§15)⁴; 'I have *Now Peace with GOD: And I Sin not to Day*' (§17)⁵.

Wesley also used italics for the more specific emphasis given to words or phrases singled out from their context for marked accentuation in speech, and in this more familiar usage he was more prolific than is considered desirable in our own day. Indeed it seems clear that he used these accentual italics to denote varying degrees of emphasis, whereas we tend to reserve them for only the most vehement stress. This creates a serious problem for editors living in such a different literary environment, a problem illustrated in section 7 of the Aldersgate narrative, where he describes the influence upon him of the anonymous 'contemplative man': 'I cannot but now observe, 1. That he spoke so incautiously against *trusting* in *Outward Works*, that he discouraged me from *doing* them at all. 2. That he recommended . . . *mental Prayer*, and the like Exercises . . . Now these were, in Truth, as much *my own Works* as visiting the Sick . . . , and the *Union with GOD* thus persued, was as really *my own Righteousness*, as any I had before persued, under another Name.' Here again Jackson and Curnock make no attempt to represent any of the italics except in one instance, '*mental prayer*', which in any case should probably be modernized by using roman type within quotation marks rather than by retaining Wesley's italics. Wesley's 'trusting' and 'doing' are clearly italicized for accentual emphasis alone, and in these cases the italics should be retained. 'Outward works' and 'union with God' do in fact refer back to earlier phrases in the 'contemplative man's' argument, and therefore need quotation marks, as does probably 'mental prayer', and perhaps 'my own works', 'my own righteousness'—phrases taken up again (without italics) in the following section. Similarly in Section 9 Wesley's opening phrase neatly characterized his attempts to seek salvation through mystical discipline as being nonetheless a form of salvation by works—a *refined* Way of trusting to my own Works'. This also Jackson and his successors reduced to roman type.⁶

Other emphases were lost for a time by Wesley's editors, and later replaced. Such was the case in §11: 'I well saw, no one could . . . have such a Sense of Forgiveness, and not *feel* it. But I felt it not.' 'Feel' appeared in roman type in Jackson's 1827 edition, was briefly reinstated in italic in 1829, only to reappear in roman in the fourth and subsequent editions of the *Works* until finally restored to the original italic in 1872. The same unhappy fortune temporarily befell the italics in two far more important passages, related to each other in their echo of Luther's emphasis upon the personal pronouns of salvation: 'a full reliance on the Blood of CHRIST shed for *me*; a Trust in Him, as *my* CHRIST, as my sole Justification, Santification, and Redemption', and 'an Assurance was given me, That He had taken away *my* Sins, even *mine*, and saved *me* from the Law of Sin and Death'. (§12, 14.) Other minor emphases which suffered a temporary eclipse were 'the *literal Interpretation* of those Scriptures', and 'dependence upon *my own* works' (§12). Granted that Wesley's use of italics is far too liberal for modern taste, something must surely be done to represent his nuances of thought—even when the editor is not absolutely sure what specific nuance is intended in a particular instance.

VARIATION IN SUBSTANCE

Although his editors have sometimes obscured the finer shades of Wesley's meaning, only rarely have they altered the substance of his words. In the Aldersgate narrative these substantial variations are mainly confined to the second edition of 1743, which Wesley almost certainly touched up himself. Two phrases were made a little crisper by changing 'the while' to 'this while' and 'the little light' to 'that little light' (§3), but less specific in another case, where 'that Sense of Forgiveness' became 'the Sense of Forgiveness' (§11). One word was subject to frequent changes. In 1740 Wesley claimed that the carelessness of his university years was punctuated 'with some Intermissions and short Struggles, especially before and after the Holy Communion' (§3); in 1765 'intermissions' became 'intermission' (probably through a printer's error), and remained thus in the 1774 *Works*, being restored to the original plural in 1775; Jackson, however, preferred the singular form, and so it has remained.

The only major alteration which was clearly tendentious in character was made in the first American edition of Wesley's collected *Journal* (1795). Wesley's description of his childhood introduced the idea of baptismal regeneration. John Dickins (if indeed he were responsible) felt that this unevangelical note must at all costs be avoided, and set about a careful rephrasing. The text before him ran: 'I believe, till I was about ten years old, I had not sinn'd away that *Washing of the Holy Ghost* which was given me in Baptism, having been strictly educated and carefully taught, that I could only be saved by *universal Obedience* . . .' (§1). All reference to baptism was expunged, and the sentence was amended to read: '. . . I had not sinned away that *initial grace* which was given me in infancy, having been strictly educated . . .' Perhaps this was a sign of the growing pains of American Methodism's theological infancy, for later American editions loyally followed Wesley's text.

A few of Wesley's original words and phrases have been lost by the editors, either through oversight or by intention. The word 'both' disappeared from the preamble as early as 1743, and should surely be replaced. The first edition read: 'Let him that cannot receive it [i.e. this narrative], ask of the Father of Lights, that he would give more Light both to him and me.' A similar error probably led to the disappearance of the first 'had' from 'meeting likewise with a religious Friend, which I had never had till now' (§4): this was in fact restored in 1775 and continued through to Napper's edition of 1809, but was dropped from Benson's edition of the *Works* that year, never to be replaced. Much more important is a lengthy omission from a piece of Wesley's invective: 'In this *refined* Way of trusting to my own Works and my own Righteousness (so zealously inculcated by the *Mystick* Writers, who I declare in my cool Judgment, and in the Presence of the most High GOD, I believe to be one Great Antichrist) I drag'd on heavily . . .' (§8). Surely it must have been as a result of 'cool judgment' cooled even farther that this was toned down in 1765 by omitting all within the parenthesis after 'Writers'—but what a pity that this passage completely disappeared from his edited works, and that no exploration of the early editions

by Jackson or Curnock brought it to light! Curnock's Standard Edition of the *Journal*, indeed, is itself guilty of introducing a new omission in a sentence which originally ran: 'I disputed . . . that Faith might be where these were not: Especially where that Sense of Forgiveness was not.' (§11). Clearly through an oversight the important clause 'Especially . . . not' has been dropped from the standard *Journal*.

Strangely enough passages have also been *added* to the Aldersgate narrative from Wesley's manuscript notes, yet lost to users of the standard *Works* and the standard *Journal*. They occurred in sections 5, 6, and 11, and in each case the effect was to modify Wesley's early scorn for his pre-Aldersgate religion. In §5 Wesley described his reactions upon reading Law's *Christian Perfection* and *Serious Call*: 'the Light flow'd in so mightily upon my Soul, that every Thing appeared in a new View.' His renewed endeavour to keep the whole law of God persuaded him that he was 'even then in a State of Salvation', though the later narrative denounced this as a delusion. In 1775, however, he added the confirmatory footnote: 'And I believe I was.' This was retained in two subsequent editions, but omitted from Benson's edition of the *Works* (1809). Benson did retain, however, a similar footnote to §6, which thus reached the 'First American Edition' of Wesley's *Works* in 1826, only to be removed by Jackson. In this case Wesley had written in the main narrative, 'not imagining I had been all this Time building on the Sand', adding in the later footnote, 'Not so: I was right, as far as I went.' The other comment was added to a passage upon assurance (a 'Sense of Forgiveness') as a proof of faith: 'If then there was no Faith without this, all my Pretensions to Faith dropp'd at once' (§11). The footnote here read, 'There is no *Christian* faith without it.' This was sadly weakened by Benson's failure to italicize 'Christian', and thus continued into the 'First American Edition', but once more with Jackson it disappeared from the scene.

All this is very strange in view of the fact that Jackson had himself rescued and inserted similar comments from the errata to volume 26 of Wesley's *Works* of 1774. It seems clear that he had not deliberately suppressed them, but simply missed them. These particular footnotes first appeared in 1775, and thus were almost contemporaneous with the 1774 *Works* errata. They constitute Wesley's mature reflections on those earlier years when he had so roundly declared 'I was not a Christian till May the 24th [1738].'⁷ Now he corrects such rashness. Perhaps his best modification was a sentence in one of the 1774 errata which was also incorporated as part of a footnote (in a different context) in this same 1775 edition of the *Journal*. On 25th April 1738 Thomas Broughton objected, said Wesley, that 'He could never think that I had not Faith, who had done and suffered such Things.' To which the aged Wesley added the comment: 'He was in the right. I certainly then had the Faith of a *Servant*, tho' not the Faith of a *Son*.'⁸

The collation of the varying recensions of the Aldersgate narrative enables us to see more clearly its significance for Wesley. Not only was it his considered opinion in later years that in his early enthusiasm he had somewhat exaggerated the magnitude of the transformation and misread the theological content of the experience, but he wanted this to be known by

his followers. To issue a recanting pamphlet on the subject would have been both too dramatic and too drastic, to suppress every over-enthusiastic reference impracticable. What he had written he had written. He had given an accurate account of his earlier views. Even though these had now changed in detail, his main position remained the same. He therefore added comments at several of the key points in what he designed as the definitive edition of his spiritual autobiography, carefully prepared for his collected *Works*. Possibly because he had only lately arrived at his spiritual re-assessment, possibly through some oversight or printer's error, six of the corrections imparting the revised viewpoint missed publication in the text of volume 26, and were buried in the errata.⁹ He hastened to put things right by reprinting the crucial first two parts of his *Journal*—and only these—incorporating therein similar yet independent footnotes, for the most part in different contexts, so that we are forced to the conclusion that in revising the 1775 edition for the press he did not have the 1774 volume of his *Works* at hand but, simply an urgent memory that emendations were needed. Yet these too were overlooked by his later editors. And so the Aldersgate event became a legend, no longer subject to the interpretation of its central figure.

An enquiry such as this, however, has a wider significance. It proves that no serious student of Wesley's writings dare depend slavishly upon his later editors, even those like Jackson and Curnock who have provided us with valuable 'standard' editions. The first editions must be fully used, for they are likely to retain the sparkle of Wesley's original emphases, the occasional suppressed passage, and the word or phrase omitted by accident. Nor can the 1771-1774 *Works* be relied upon to supply us with Wesley's last word, no more than his best word. Whichever basic text an editor takes for Wesley's writings he must engage in constant, painful, yet occasionally profitable collation with those editions which preceded and those which followed.

¹ For fuller details see Frank Cumbers, *The Book Room*, Epworth Press, 1956, pp. 115-25.

² He also occasionally uses what might be termed 'italics of substitution', familiar in liturgical services, where 'give *him* grace' might equally be read according to the occasion as 'give *her* grace', 'give *them* grace', etc.

³ From the second edition of 1743 onwards the italics ended at 'enough'.

⁴ This contains several reminiscences of Scripture, and the 1797 placed the whole passage, including link-words, within quotation marks; it seems almost certain, however, that the main purpose of the italics here also is that of general emphasis.

⁵ Jackson (and Curnock) placed the first phrase within quotation marks, and ignored the second. This undermined Wesley's insistence upon the importance of present experience rather than the past or the future—an insistence essential to understanding his teaching both on assurance of salvation and on Christian perfection. If the first passage only were to be distinguished, and distinguished as a quotation from Romans 5¹, at the very least Wesley's additional 'now' should be placed in italics, rather than presented as if it were a part of Paul's phrase.

⁶ In this they had been preceded by the 1774 edition of Wesley's *Works*, though this was almost certainly a printer's error which was put right in the 1775 edition.

⁷ *Letters*, Standard Edition, 1931, 1262.

⁸ *Journal*, Part 2, 5th edn, 1775, p. 17; the *Works* erratum refers to Wesley's soliloquy summarizing his Georgia ministry, see *Works* (3rd edn, 1829) 1.76, and *Journal* (Standard Edition) 1.423.

⁹ At least one related emendation was correctly entered, the comment '(Not so.)' after an account of Zinzendorf's equation of justification and regeneration, which Wesley independently corrected in the 1775 edition with the footnote 'No: this is a mistake.'