The Society was keen to know all about other Religious Societies for the "establishment and growth of Faith and Holiness." But in 1653 there were none such.

The closest agreement is found in the concluding aims: the Association directs its consultations to the good of souls, the Propagation of the Gospel, the Unity, Peace and Reformation of the Church, and the Glory and Pleasing of God in all; the Society has "no other design than to promote the Honour of God, and the success of the Gospel in the work of the ministry."

Baxter's Association pivoted around its "Profession"—a beautiful expression of the Apostle's Creed that deserves to be better known. But it became more than a county "fraternal," and served as a means of corporate expression for communication with the world outside. (The Judgment and Advice of the Assembly of the Associated Ministers of Worcestershire 1658, Concerning the Endeavours of Educational Peace, etc.) It would lead me too far afield to deal with its dependence upon the church meetings, or the influence of its first Thursday meeting upon the wider world through The Reformed Pastor, 1657, and in other ways.

STAMP.

Methodism and Literature in the Eighteenth Century

Of recent years the attention of students has increasingly turned to the relationships of early Methodism with sociology and literature. The first notable contribution to the study of Methodism and literature was Dr. F. C. Gill's The Romantic Movement and Methodism, published in 1937 by the Epworth Press.

This year (1940) has seen the publication of two other works, one American, the other English. The first is John Wesley as Editor and Author, by Dr. Thomas Walter Herbert, published by the Princeton University Press, being No. 17 of the Princeton Studies in English; and the second, another publication of the Epworth Press, Methodism and the Literature of the Eighteenth Century by T. B. Shepherd, M.A., Ph. D. "the shortened form of a thesis approved for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the University of London."
As its title indicates, Dr. Herbert's 150-page volume is a survey of Wesley's attempt to provide the Methodist people with suitable literature. The wide scope of this attempt is graphically illustrated in the preface:

John Wesley, open-air preacher to an ignorant mob, became also a historian, a biographer, a magazine editor, a writer of medical treatises, a producer of novels, a lexicographer, a translator of poems, a music critic, a philologist, a grammarian in half a dozen languages, a writer in natural philosophy, a poetry anthologist, a writer on logic, a political controversialist, an economist, an ecclesiastical historian, a Bible commentator, and one of the most thorough literary dictators in history. Seldom in modern times has any other man even attempted to cover so vast an intellectual field. Jack of all trades, perhaps; nor was he disposed to pretend to mastery in them—it was his voluntary task to introduce the masters to his people. And yet to many of those people he must have seemed a universal genius.

After giving an appreciation of the Journal and Letters the author turns to less familiar topics, dealing with "The Christian Library," "The Arminian Magazine," "John Wesley as Poet," "Methodist Hymns," "The Editor of Poems," "Fiction and Biography," "Political Writings," and "Instructional Writings." Of set purpose he omits any discussion of Wesley's devotional, doctrinal, and controversial publications, as falling "under the classification of technical or professional literature."

Over a quarter of the book is devoted to hymns and poetry, on which Dr. Herbert has some useful things to say. He carefully describes Wesley's aims and method in issuing the Collection of Moral and Sacred Poems, showing how he endeavoured to wed "Puritanical narrowness" in his followers with an appreciation of poetry for its own sake, and concluding, The Collection of Moral and Sacred Poems is such a work as could be executed only by a man of broad, liberal culture whose extensive reading had reinforced a sound, independent critical judgment." The manner in which Wesley revised Milton's Paradise Lost and Young's Night Thoughts is dealt with very thoroughly, and there is an interesting section on George Herbert, including a discussion of the pamphlet Select Parts of Mr. Herbert's Sacred Poems from a purely bibliographical point of view. (Eighteenth century bibliography is a little-explored field which has much of interest and value to offer to the painstaking investigator.) Attention is also paid to the musical side of Methodist hymn-singing.

Other sections in the book to which attention should be drawn are the descriptions of Wesley's use of Dr. Samuel Johnson's Taxation no Tyranny, and of his abridgement of Henry Brooke's
novel *The Fool of Quality.* Mr. Herbert strongly disagrees with Dean W. H. Hutton's condemnation of Wesley's version of this latter, and his careful analysis and appreciation of it can hardly fail to convince most readers that Wesley did not merit Dr. Hutton's censure.

Apart from one or two signs of haste, such as listing Matthew Prior in the index as “Prior, William,” the only serious fault one has to find with the book is the system of annotation. In spite of the doubtful advantage to the general reader of banishing footnotes to the end of the book, it is very irritating for the student to be continually searching amongst the heterogeneous mass of notes at the end for the one he wants, especially when there is no indication linking the note up to the page to which it refers.

Dr. Shepherd’s *Methodism and the Literature of the Eighteenth Century* is a much more ambitious book than the one just discussed, as well as a much larger one. In addition to dealing with the various publications of John and Charles Wesley, Dr. Shepherd devotes chapters to “The Critical Opinions of John Wesley,” “Methodist Autobiography in the Eighteenth Century,” “Methodists and the Theatre in the Eighteenth Century,” “Methodism as seen in the Literature of the Age,” and “The Influence of Methodism on the Romantic Revival and on the Literature of the Age.” A book has already been written on the last topic, and books will probably be written about each of the other subjects. Ranging over such a wide field, great detail in any one is not to be expected. Yet Dr. Shepherd’s volume is an exceedingly competent and interesting survey of the various ways in which Methodism and Literature crossed paths in the eighteenth century. The following pages contain a number of criticisms, but they are mainly on details, and do not affect the main fact, that in this book Dr. Shepherd has rendered a valuable service, both to Methodism and to literature.

One thing which could hardly be expected in such a work came as very pleasant surprise—the wonderful little summary of Wesley’s life, viewed from a literary “slant,” which Dr. Shepherd has provided in his Introduction. This 6000-word study, one suggests, might well be published separately. It would make an admirable introductory pamphlet for educated men and women whose interest in Wesley is general rather than theological.

In his chapter on the *Journal*, Dr. Shepherd makes out a
good case against the popular view that Wesley wrote it for religious reasons only, and published it merely as a weapon of evangelical warfare. He concludes:

Whatever his reasons, or excuses, for publication, behind the *Journal* lies the artistic urge for expression which is behind all great writing. There is no moral reason why at least a quarter of the *Journal* should have been published, but this quarter has been written with great care both in choice of incident and language. Much of the *Journal* was written because Wesley enjoyed writing it, and in this he might be well be compared with Pepys.

Dealing with Wesley's many and varied publications in a necessarily restricted way Dr. Shepherd makes one or two slight errors. For instance, speaking of the *Arminian Magazine*, on page 92 he says “The magazine gave Wesley a chance to republish many of his sermons...” As a matter of fact, Wesley republished only one sermon in the magazine, although he wrote many new ones for it which were also published separately. In the Preface to the number of the magazine for January, 1781, he wrote:

> Several of my friends have been frequently importuning me to write a few more Sermons... I submit to their well-meant importunity, and design to write, with God's assistance, a few more plain, practical Discourses, on those which I judge to be the most necessary of the subjects I have not yet treated of. The former part of one of these is published this month; the latter will follow in February. And so every two months, so long as God spares my life and health, I shall publish another.

This plan Wesley followed out, although it must be noted that in 1788 he issued separately four new volumes of sermons, containing those which had already appeared in the *Arminian Magazine*, and some which had been written specially for it, but whose turn for inclusion had not yet come, (he usually prepared his material well in advance). Publication of these latter in the *Magazine* should not be looked on as a re-issue—rather was their inclusion in the collected sermons a “pre-issue.” Only two of Wesley's sermons printed in the *Arminian Magazine* were not written specifically for its pages, viz., that on Romans 8:29-30 (Green's *Bibliography*, No. 290) in 1782, and the Oxford sermon on Luke 22:19 in 1787, the latter after undergoing a thorough revision.

Speaking of Wesley's *Christian Library* Dr. Shepherd says (page 94) “The sales were not as great as he had hoped, and he estimated that he lost over £200 in the venture.” This statement is based, of course, on an entry in Wesley's *Journal* for November, 1752;—
In the remaining part of this, and in the following month, I prepared the rest of the books for *The Christian Library*, a work by which I have lost above two hundred pounds. Perhaps the next generation may know the value of it:

The usual interpretation of this as stating Wesley’s final loss on the venture must be rejected, however. Wesley undoubtedly meant that he had laid out £200 more than at that time he could envisage coming in by subscriptions and sales. Nor had he finished preparing all the books by the end of the year, for on March 1st, 1753, he had only just begun to abridge Clarke’s *Lives*, which were to occupy volumes 26 and 27 (*Journal*, 8; 160). At that time only nineteen of the fifty volumes had been published, and obviously Wesley was not in a position to give a final profit-and-loss account. The subsequent sale of unsubscribed sets and odd volumes of the *Christian Library* reduced Wesley’s expected loss by half as is shown by the following notice, which appeared in 1784 on the covers of successive numbers of the *Arminian Magazine*:

A friendly Correspondent desires me to reprint the fifty volumes of the *Christian Library*, I have lost above a hundred pounds by it before: and I cannot well afford to lose another hundred.

Nov, 12th, 1783,

John Wesley

(see Smith’s *History of Wesleyan Methodism*, Vol 1, page 667n.)

The section dealing with Wesley’s *Notes on the Old Testament* also needs some correction. Wesley only used Matthew Henry’s well-known *Exposition of the Old and New Testament* as the basis for his own work as far as the beginning of Exodus, after which Poole’s *Annotations* formed the foundation, Henry’s work being used to fill up any gaps. In his preface to the *Notes* Wesley says:

From the time that I had more maturely considered Mr. Pool’s *Annotations on the Bible*, which was soon after I had gone through the book of Genesis, I have extracted far more from him than from Mr. Henry.... Instead of short additions from Mr. Pool to supply what was wanting in Mr. Henry, which was my first design, I now only make extracts from Mr. Henry, to supply, so far as they are capable, what was wanting in Mr. Pool.

“Mr. Pool,” as Dr. Shepherd suggests in a footnote to page 84, was the nonconformist Matthew Poole (1624-1679) but the *Annotations* referred to are not his great work the *Synopsis Criticorum Biblicorum*, a massive five-volume publication in Latin intended primarily for scholars, but the *Annotations upon the Holy Bible*, a similar work in English, published posthumously in two folio vol-
umes (1683-5,) Jeremiah to Revelation being completed by other scholars. The Annotations, like the Synopsis, have often been reprinted, even as lately as 1840. Another footnote on the same page must be a slip, for it states that Matthew Henry's Exposition was "first published in 1796." The first volume was published in 1708, reappearing with volumes 2 to 5 in 1710. Like Poole, however, Henry did not live to see a complete edition of his English commentary. He had only managed to prepare the book of Acts for the sixth and last volume before his death, and the rest of the volume was completed by thirteen nonconformist ministers, although I have been unable to ascertain exactly when the completed edition first appeared. It was certainly before 1765, for in that year Wesley speaks of Henry's work as being in "six folios, each containing seven or eight hundred pages."

The chapter on Wesley's critical opinions is a good summary of the main points. The section dealing with Prior is especially detailed and valuable. That on Cowper, however, can be supplemented. Wesley's admiration of William Cowper's poetry was greater than has often been suspected, though the fact is obscured by his annoying habit of extracting passages from authors without acknowledging the source. Wesley knew the Olney Hymns, and reprinted some in the Arminian Magazines for 1781 and 1782. There is evidence, also, that he not only read Cowper's first volume. Poems by William Cowper, of the Inner Temple, Esq., but appreciated it more than did the general public, and much more than did the Critical Review. This 1782 volume contained the long poems, "The Progress of Error," "Truth," "Table Talk," "Expostulation," "Hope," "Charity," "Conversation," and "Retirement," as well as a number of shorter ones. Wesley showed his admiration in a practical way, by reprinting in the Arminian Magazine (in a more or less abridged form) "Conversation," "Charity," "The Progress of Error," "Retirement," and "Truth," as well as some of the shorter poems, including the well-known verses on Alexander Selkirk ("I am monarch of all I survey") and some translations from Vincent Bourne. Wesley continued to reprint them in the Arminian Magazine even after The Task had appeared, the theme of which seemed to him so feeble. The manner in which these reprints from Cowper's Poems are spread over the years 1782 to 1789 suggest that Wesley had a real appreciation of Cowper's worth as a poet, nor must his views on The Task be allowed to obscure this fact.
Speaking of Wesley's reading of well-known prose writers Dr. Shepherd says "The Diary shows that at Oxford he often read volumes of the Spectator and the Guardian, as well as Daniel Defoe's Pyrates (Robinson Crusoe.)" The implied identity of Defoe's Robinson Crusoe with the Pyrates that Wesley admittedly read cannot be maintained. The actual diary references (see Journal, vol. 1 pages 21, 54, 57) are to a "History of Pyrates," which Dr. Harrison mentions in W.H.S. Proceedings xv, 164 as "a book ... which we have been unable to trace." In a note to Dr. Harrison's article, however, Rev. T. E. Brigden suggested that possibly Robinson Crusoe was intended, or rather Defoe's lesser-known Captain Singleton. In a later article he discarded this suggestion in favour of the much more likely theory that Wesley was reading A General History of the Pyrates, by "Captain Charles Johnson," which had just been reprinted (this was in 1928.) Now the wheel has romantically turned full circle, and "Captain Charles Johnson" turns out to be none other than Daniel Defoe! The pseudonymous General History of the Pyrates is now generally accepted as being Defoe's work, of which Wesley would read the first volume, the second not being published until 1728. (For a fuller discussion of Defoe and the Pyrates see Notes and Queries, Vol. 179, page 7, and J. R. Moore's Defoe in the Pillory and other Studies.) Dr. Shepherd's comparison of Defoe's style with that of Wesley and his preachers (see pages 45, 68, 157, 162) is very interesting, and there is an undoubted likeness to Defoe in Wesley's "homely descriptions and in detail which gives a feeling of veracity." It is fairly certain, of course, that Wesley did not consciously imitate Defoe. He had read Robinson Crusoe, however, though not on the occasion mentioned above, for he describes Captain Cook's Voyages as a work of fiction after the style of Defoe's famous book (see Journal 6:7.) Wesley had also read at least one more of Defoe's many anonymous works, viz. An Account of some remarkable passages in the life of a private gentleman, with reflections thereon. This he read on a journey to Oxford in March, 1739.

One of the most interesting chapters in Dr. Shepherd's book is that on "Methodist Autobiography in the Eighteenth Century," which consists largely of a review of The Lives of The Early Methodist Preachers. He follows Dr. Bett and Dr. A. Caldecott in pointing out that Wesley's helpers were by no means the unbalanced and illiterate ranters which tradition has suggested. The direct and homely style of their autobiographies he compares with that
of Defoe, although he believes that it may owe something to Wesley's editorial pen.

The chapter on "Other Methodist Writers of the Eighteenth Century" deals with Charles Wesley's Journal and the writings of George Whitefield, James Hervey, John Fletcher, Walter Churchey, and a few authors of lesser importance. Dr. Shepherd is perhaps a little unkind to James Hervey, though modern taste is admittedly repelled by that author's luxurious circumlocution. On page 174 Theron and Aspasio is apparently confused with Aspasio Vindicated. In Eleven Letters from the late Rev. Mr Hervey, to the Rev Mr. John Wesley; containing an Answer to that Gentleman's Remarks on Theron and Aspasio.

Volumes xx and xxi of the W.H.S. Proceedings contain an interesting series of articles by Dr. Shepherd which he has apparently revised and expanded to form the chapter on "Methodists and the Theatre in the Eighteenth Century." It is a very useful and comprehensive summary, although material exists to make it still fuller. Wesley's reading of Greek and Latin plays is not dealt with, nor is his reading of Ben Jonson's famous Silent Woman in 1725 mentioned. Wesley was also acquainted with the work of other well-known dramatists whom Dr. Shepherd does not mention, as is shown by a letter which he wrote to Lloyd's Evening Post in 1760, in which he asked the question "Whether the Stage in later years has ever ridiculed anything really serious?" answering "Yes; a thousand times. Who that reads Dryden's, Wycherley's, or Congreve's plays can doubt it?" (Letters 4:118.) In his Oxford days Wesley not only read plays and watched performances of them, but even tried his hand at acting, though, we imagine, not with the same flair for it which George Whitefield possessed. One of his greatest temptations in those days he described as "Listening too much to idle talk, or reading vain plays or books."

At least one of the early Methodists was not only extremely fond of reading plays before his conversion, but even wrote one shortly afterwards. This was John Gambold, although his play, The Martyrdom of Ignatius: a Tragedy, was not intended for public performance, and was only published posthumously (see Tyerman's Oxford Methodists, pages 156, 173-5.) The general attitude of the Methodists towards the theatre however, was undoubtedly one of suspicion, if not of hatred. The well-known bookseller James Hutton proved himself a good Methodist and was "stigmatized as mad" because he held hymn-singing meetings at his house and
refused to sell plays. As far as the general practice of the early
Methodists is concerned Wesley clinches the matter in a passage
in his Advice to the People called Methodists. He says, "Your
Strictness of Life taking the whole of it together, may likewise be
accounted new. I mean, your making it a Rule, to abstain from
fashionable Diversions, from reading Plays, Romances, or Books
of Humour . . ."

The chapter on "Methodism as seen in the Literature of the
Age" reviews the attitude of various periodicals towards Methodism
and goes on to describe Graves' Spiritual Quixote, Smollett's Hum-
phry Clinker, and Lackington's Memoirs and Confessions. The
chapter also contains a fairly full description of Horace Walpole's
views on the Methodists (pages 226-9,) and a good section on Dr.
Samuel Johnson —although Dr. Shepherd apparently is not aware
that Wesley was acquainted with Rasselas, from which he gave an
extract in the Arminius Magazine for 1787. Bishop Warburton's
Doctrine of Grace is twice referred to as a "pamphlet"—actually
it was a two-volume work of over 350 pages!

Dr. Shepherd's last chapter, "The Influence of Methodism
on the Romantic Revival and on the Literature of the Age" covers
similar ground to Dr. F. C. Gill's book, though he does not agree
with Dr. Gill in regarding Wesley's attitude towards Nature as
tending towards the Romantic view. His summary of the chapter
is cautious, but, we believe, correct:

In so far as Romanticism is closely bound up with a love of liberty, a
deeper interest in man, a love of nature and simple domestic joys, a freer
expression of emotion, and an outburst of lyrical poetry, Methodism
encouraged it, or was part of the same spirit. Wesley himself was rooted
in his own age and his personal ideal was for the life of the early part of
his century purified from its abuses, but he started something far vaster
and deeper than he realised . . His ideal of literature was Classicism, and
he prepared the way for Romanticism.

The sectionalised Bibliography at the end of the book gives
some idea of the wide field of labours in which Dr. Shepherd has
toiled so fruitfully. One is amazed, however, to find no reference
to Dr. G. Osborn's Outlines of Wesleyan Bibliography. Admittedly
Richard Green's fine work has superseded this as far as Wesley's
publications are concerned, but no adequate idea of the writings
of the less important eighteenth century Methodists can be gained
without reference to the far bulkier second part of Osborn's book,
inadequate though it unavoidably is in some respects. It is
surprising also to find Dr. Shepherd referring to the W.H.S.
PROCEEDINGS

quarterly Proceedings as being circulated to members "three times each year." One other point may be added, though this does not refer only to Dr. Shepherd's Bibliography. Dr. Shepherd, in common with the New History of Methodism and many Methodist scholars, lists the Life and Times of Selina, Countess of Huntingdon as anonymous. The title-page states that it was written "By a member of the Houses of Shirley and Hastings." The actual author was the hymn-writer Aaron Crossley Hobart Seymour (1789-1870), a memoir of whom appears in the Dictionary of National Biography.

FRANK BAKER.

We are indebted to Dr. Paul N. Garber of Duke University, Durham, North Carolina, U.S.A., for his kindness in sending a copy of Mr. Herbert's book.

Referring to what is said above about Daniel Defoe, it is interesting to note that in Proceedings xx, 47 we quote the opinion of Prof. Henry Morley that there is some reason to think that Defoe's second wife was sister of Wesley's mother.

F.F.B.

THE "RICHMOND" LETTERS OF CHARLES WESLEY.

(Continued)

VI

This letter was written to Blackwell on October 8, 1749. It is printed by Jackson, and tells of a reconciliation between the two Wesleys and George Whitefield, and of their re-union in the work. At the end of the Richmond copy there are two memoranda which Charles Wesley seems to have jotted down here merely because there was room on the paper. The first runs as follows,—'Mem. Mon. Nov. 25, 1751. At Shoreham agreed with my Bror (present Mr. Perronet) to receive or reject Preachers.' Then there is another note,—'A Purge—Dr. L. ½ oz. of Senna; ½ oz of Manna; 4 oz of Tamarinds, pint boiling